



# PHILIPPINES SECURITY ANALYSIS REPORT

## AI-Assisted Open Source Intelligence Assessment

Analysis Period: March 24, 2026 - March 31, 2026

This report was produced using 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.

---

# Security Analysis Report: Philippines (March 24 - March 31, 2026)

## Executive Summary

The Philippines experienced a week marked by heightened maritime tensions in the South China Sea, significant diplomatic overtures with China, and a declared national energy emergency. The Philippine Coast Guard actively countered renewed Chinese aggression at Scarborough Shoal, while simultaneously, Manila engaged Beijing in discussions regarding potential oil and gas exploration, signaling a complex diplomatic balancing act. Domestically, cybersecurity remained a critical focus with a major summit and ongoing concerns about state-sponsored cyberattacks. The nation also continued to bolster its defense posture through joint exercises with the United States, emphasizing a shift towards external defense capabilities amidst evolving regional threats.

## Key Security Developments

- Renewed Chinese Aggression at Scarborough Shoal

On March 24, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) reported fresh Chinese aggression at Bajo de Masinloc (Scarborough or Panatag Shoal), documenting a heavy Chinese presence including six China Coast Guard (CCG) vessels, 20 China maritime militia ships, and one Chinese People's Liberation Army-Navy (PLA-N) warship. In response, the Philippine government dispatched two PCG ships and five fishery patrol vessels to protect over 20 Filipino fishing boats being harassed by Chinese vessels. PCG Commandant, Admiral Ronnie Gil Gavan, emphasized that the country's sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) is "non-negotiable" and rooted in the 2016 Arbitral Award.

- Philippines-China Bilateral Dialogue and Oil Exploration Talks

From March 27 to 28, the Philippines and China convened the 24th Foreign Ministry Consultations and the 11th Meeting of the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism (BCM) on the South China Sea in Quanzhou City, China. During these meetings, both sides engaged in "initial exchanges" on potential oil and gas exploration in the South China Sea, a significant development given the termination of previous talks in 2022. The

discussions also covered the importance of stable access to energy and fertilizers, and potential cooperation in green energy, trade, and agriculture, against the backdrop of global uncertainties.

- President Marcos Jr. Signals "Reset" with China

On March 24, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. indicated a potential "reset" of relations between Manila and Beijing, and called for joint oil and gas exploration in the South China Sea. This statement came as the Philippines faces an immense economic and social crisis due to rising oil prices, prompting a strategic re-evaluation of its diplomatic approach.

- Declaration of National Energy Emergency

On March 24, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. declared a state of national energy emergency in response to the Middle East conflict, citing an "imminent danger" to the nation's energy supply. This declaration, effective for one year, authorizes the government to procure fuel and petroleum products more swiftly to ensure timely and sufficient supply. The Department of Energy (DOE) chief warned that the Philippines could face a severe fuel shortage in the coming months if Middle East tensions escalate further.

- Conclusion of US-Philippines Humanitarian Training in Cagayan de Oro

US troops deployed at Lumbia Air Base and Macabalan Port in Cagayan de Oro concluded their two-week humanitarian assistance and disaster relief training with Philippine troops between March 24 and March 28. This exercise was part of the annual Balikatan (shoulder-to-shoulder) exercises, with approximately 50 US soldiers having already departed and the remainder scheduled to leave within this period.

- Cyber Security Summit Philippines 2026

The Cyber Security Summit Philippines 2026 was held on March 27 in Manila, bringing together over 200 senior security decision-makers from public and private sectors. The summit focused on critical topics such as regional threat intelligence, data protection, regulatory trends, and building cyber resilience tailored to the Philippine context, reflecting the nation's rapid digital expansion and increasing cyber threats.

- Launch of "I AM SECURE 2026" Initiative

On March 26, the "I AM SECURE 2026" initiative was officially launched, bringing together cybersecurity experts, government institutions, and enterprise leaders to foster a unified approach to cybersecurity. This initiative, now in its 9th year, aims to strengthen the country's digital defense landscape against increasingly sophisticated and intelligent cyber risks.

- Philippine Army Shifts to External Defense Role

On March 19, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. directed the Philippine Army to accelerate its transition from internal security operations to an external defense role.

Speaking at the Army's 129th founding anniversary, Marcos emphasized the need to prepare for new challenges beyond the country's borders, building on gains in addressing insurgency.

- Philippine Military Releases Insider Threat Indicators

On March 24, the Philippine military released a list of indicators of potential insider threats. This follows an earlier announcement in early March by the National Security Council (NSC) about uncovering and dismantling a Chinese espionage network operating within government agencies, with Filipino nationals allegedly involved in "foreign-directed malign activities."

- Philippine Coast Guard Deploys for Holy Week Security

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) announced the deployment of 17,000 personnel across the country from March 28 to April 5, 2026, to ensure maritime safety and security during the Holy Week. This deployment aims to manage the expected surge of sea travelers, implementing stricter vessel inspections and round-the-clock monitoring of passenger vessels and key inter-island routes.

## Geopolitical Impact and Regional Dynamics

The period from March 24-31, 2026, highlights the Philippines' complex and evolving geopolitical position, particularly concerning its relations with China and the United States. The continued maritime confrontations at Scarborough Shoal underscore the persistent challenge to Philippine sovereignty and resource rights in the South China Sea, directly impacting regional stability. China's assertive presence, including coast guard, militia, and naval vessels, demonstrates its unwavering stance on its expansive claims, which are rejected by the 2016 Arbitral Award. This ongoing friction risks miscalculation and normalizes confrontation, drawing in more regional and external actors.

Simultaneously, President Marcos Jr.'s call for a "reset" in relations with Beijing and the resumption of bilateral talks on oil and gas exploration represent a pragmatic diplomatic maneuver driven by the Philippines' urgent energy needs, exacerbated by the Middle East conflict. This dual approach of asserting sovereignty while seeking cooperation with China reflects a delicate balancing act, aiming to de-escalate tensions without compromising national interests. However, this could be viewed with caution by allies who advocate for a firmer stance against China's assertiveness.

The deepening security ties with the United States remain a cornerstone of Philippine foreign policy, evidenced by the conclusion of joint training exercises and plans for broader engagements, including the deployment of US missiles and uncrewed systems. The upcoming Balikatan 2026 exercises, involving Japanese troops for the

first time, further solidify a multilateral approach to regional security. This robust alliance with the US and other democratic partners like Japan is crucial for bolstering deterrence and maintaining freedom of navigation in the Indo-Pacific. The Philippines, as the ASEAN chair in 2026, faces the strategic dilemma of balancing its enhanced defense cooperation with Western powers while ensuring stable ties with China and maintaining ASEAN consensus.

## Military and Defense Analysis

The Philippine military is undergoing a significant strategic reorientation, shifting its primary focus from internal security operations to external defense. President Marcos Jr.'s directive to the Philippine Army on March 19 to accelerate this transition underscores the recognition of evolving threats beyond domestic insurgency. This shift is critical for the Philippines to effectively respond to maritime challenges, particularly in the West Philippine Sea, and to protect its territorial integrity and exclusive economic zone.

Modernization programs are being bolstered through enhanced cooperation with the United States. The US has committed an additional \$144 million in 2026 to invest in Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) sites, which grant US forces access to nine locations across the Philippines. These investments aim to improve infrastructure and facilitate cooperative exercises, joint training, and humanitarian assistance. The planned deployment of US cutting-edge missile and uncrewed systems to the Philippines in 2026 is a significant capability development, intended to strengthen deterrence against aggression in the South China Sea.

Joint exercises like the recently concluded humanitarian assistance and disaster relief training in Cagayan de Oro, and the upcoming Balikatan 2026, are vital for improving interoperability and readiness between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the US military. Balikatan 2026 is set to be the largest iteration yet, involving 8,000 personnel, including 1,000 Japanese troops, and will emphasize cyber defense, space operations, and multi-domain operations incorporating different missile systems. While these developments enhance the Philippines' defense capabilities, concerns remain regarding the sufficiency of its integrated air and missile defense (IAMD) networks, which are crucial for offsetting the risks of hosting US forces and defending against potential attacks. The Philippine Army's KATIHAN 2026 live-fire drill also signals ongoing efforts to enhance combat readiness and coordination.

## Outlook and Forecast

### Short-term trends (1-3 months):

In the immediate future, tensions in the South China Sea are likely to remain elevated, with continued Chinese assertiveness at disputed features like Scarborough Shoal. The Philippines will likely maintain its strategy of publicly asserting its sovereign rights while pursuing diplomatic channels, as seen in the recent bilateral talks on oil and gas exploration. The upcoming Balikatan 2026 exercises in April, with the unprecedented participation of Japanese troops, will be a key event, showcasing strengthened multilateral defense cooperation and potentially drawing strong reactions from China. Domestically, the declared national energy emergency will necessitate swift government action to secure fuel supplies, and its economic impact will be closely monitored. Cybersecurity efforts will intensify, driven by recent summits and ongoing threats.

### Critical flashpoints and risk areas:

The Scarborough Shoal (Bajo de Masinloc) remains a critical flashpoint, with the persistent presence of Chinese vessels and the potential for direct confrontation with Philippine assets. Any escalation in this area, particularly involving the harassment of Filipino fishermen or attempts to restrict access, could trigger a significant diplomatic and security crisis. The South China Sea more broadly, especially areas targeted for potential joint oil and gas exploration, could also become a flashpoint if agreements are not carefully managed or if new Chinese incursions occur. The EDCA sites hosting US forces present a theoretical risk, though the immediate threat of direct attack is considered low. However, any perceived increase in US military presence could be met with rhetorical condemnation from China.

### Indicators to monitor:

Key indicators to monitor include the frequency and intensity of Chinese maritime activities in the West Philippine Sea, particularly around Scarborough Shoal and Second Thomas Shoal. The progress and outcomes of any further Philippines-China bilateral discussions, especially concerning resource sharing, will be crucial. Statements and actions from the US and its allies regarding their support for Philippine maritime security and freedom of navigation should also be closely watched. Domestically, the effectiveness of the government's response to the energy crisis and the success of cybersecurity initiatives in mitigating threats will be important. Any new intelligence reports on foreign espionage or internal security threats will also be significant.

### Strategic recommendations:

The Philippines should continue to diversify its security partnerships beyond the traditional US alliance, actively engaging with other like-minded nations in the Indo-Pacific to build a broader coalition for maritime security and adherence to international law. While pursuing diplomatic engagement with China, Manila must

ensure that any agreements, particularly on resource exploration, are fully consistent with Philippine law and the 2016 Arbitral Award, and do not implicitly or explicitly concede sovereign rights. Furthermore, the government should accelerate its military modernization program, focusing on integrated air and missile defense capabilities to create a more credible deterrence posture. Investing in maritime domain awareness (MDA) capabilities and strengthening the Philippine Coast Guard's assets and training are paramount for monitoring and responding to incursions. Finally, a robust national cybersecurity framework with enhanced public-private collaboration and continuous capacity building is essential to protect critical infrastructure and government agencies from sophisticated cyber threats.

## Structured Assessment

```
```\njson\n{\n  "threat_level": "Elevated",\n  "hotspots": [\n    {\n      "label": "Scarborough Shoal (Bajo de Masinloc)",\n      "detail": "Site of ongoing Chinese maritime aggression and Philippine counter-deployments, posing a high risk of confrontation.",\n      "lat": 15.1333,\n      "lng": 117.7667,\n      "intensity": 4\n    },\n    {\n      "label": "West Philippine Sea",\n      "detail": "Broader area of maritime disputes with China, including potential oil and gas exploration zones, impacting regional stability.",\n      "lat": 10.0000,\n      "lng": 116.0000,\n      "intensity": 3\n    },\n  ]\n}
```

```
{
  "label": "Manila (Cybersecurity)",
  "detail": "Location of major cybersecurity summits and a hub for government agencies
targeted by state-sponsored cyberattacks.",
  "lat": 14.5995,
  "lng": 120.9842,
  "intensity": 3
},
{
  "label": "Cagayan de Oro (Lumbia Air Base)",
  "detail": "Location where US troops conducted humanitarian assistance and disaster
relief training, part of ongoing US-Philippines military cooperation.",
  "lat": 8.1167,
  "lng": 124.6167,
  "intensity": 2
},
{
  "label": "Quanzhou City, Fujian, China",
  "detail": "Location of recent Philippines-China bilateral talks on South China Sea
disputes and potential oil/gas cooperation.",
  "lat": 24.9000,
  "lng": 118.6000,
  "intensity": 2
}
]
}
```

---

## ANNEX: COLLECTED ARTICLES BY SOURCE

### Source: GMA Network

- [DTI eyes more talks with manufacturers to avoid price hikes after April 16](#) (2026-03-31 05:47)

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is eyeing more discussions with manufacturers to prevent price increases of basic consumer goods even after April 16, Malacañang said Tuesday.

- [PNP cracks down on illegal fare hikes amid fuel price surge](#) (2026-03-31 05:07)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has intensified operations against unauthorized fare increases, deploying personnel to assist transport regulators in monitoring public utility vehicles as fuel prices continue to rise.

- [Palace: Half day WFH for gov't workers on Holy Wednesday; afternoon off](#) (2026-03-31 04:05)

Malacañang on Tuesday announced that government employees will observe a half-day work-from-home (WFH) arrangement on April 1, Wednesday, in line with the Holy Week observance.

- [Marcos eyes talks with Iran for safe passage of PH-bound vessels in Strait of Hormuz](#) (2026-03-31 03:56)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. wants high-level discussions with Iran to ensure the safe passage of Philippine-bound vessels through the Strait of Hormuz amid the Middle East conflict.

- [Holy Week 2026: DOTr logs more land passengers amid fuel price hikes](#) (2026-03-31 03:49)

The Department of Transportation (DOTr) reported Tuesday more travelers on public land transport on Holy Week 2026 compared to last year amid soaring fuel prices due to the Middle East crisis.

- [CLLEX Aliaga-Cabanatuan segment toll free until December --Marcos](#) (2026-03-31 03:13)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Tuesday announced that the Aliaga-Cabanatuan segment of the Central Luzon Expressway would be toll free until December.

- [90 unauthorized Chinese vessels spotted in WPS in March 2026 --AFP](#) (2026-03-31 03:01)

At least 90 unauthorized Chinese vessels were monitored in the West Philippine Sea in March, the Armed Forces of the Philippines said Tuesday.

- [Marcos to spend Holy Week in Ilocos Norte](#) (2026-03-31 02:00)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. said Tuesday that he would be spending the Holy Week in his hometown, Ilocos Norte.

- [Carpio warns PH-China joint oil, gas explorations in WPS could be a trap](#) (2026-03-31 01:27)

Retired Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonio Carpio has warned that the joint oil and gas explorations between the Philippines and China in the West Philippine Sea could be a trap.

- [LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East \(March 31, 2026\)](#) (2026-03-30 23:13)

LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East (March 31, 2026)

- [PNP: More than P2B in smuggled cigarettes seized in Q1 2026](#) (2026-03-30 19:55)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has confiscated more than P2 billion worth of smuggled cigarettes from January 1 to March 29 of this year.

- [PNP: 740 personnel faced admin sanctions from Jan to March 2026](#) (2026-03-30 18:54)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Monday vowed to sternly enforce discipline and uphold integrity in its ranks amid President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s call for the PNP not to tolerate corruption and human rights abuses.

- [DSWD: 256k PUV drivers in Metro Manila received P1.28B cash aid](#) (2026-03-30 18:34)

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on Monday said it has distributed P1.28 billion in cash aid to more than 256,000 public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers in Metro Manila.

- [Senior citizen who won 6/58 jackpot waited 8 days before claiming P100M prize](#) (2026-03-30 17:14)

A senior citizen from Cebu City won the P100,331,631.91 jackpot prize in the Ultra Lotto 6/58 draw last March 17.

- [LTFRB summons 8 bus companies over alleged illegal fare hikes](#) (2026-03-30 16:14)

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has issued a show cause order (SCO) against eight bus companies for allegedly implementing fare increases without the government's approval.

- [PCSO: No jackpot winners for March 30 major lotto draws](#) (2026-03-30 14:29)

No one won the jackpot prizes in the major lotto draws of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) on Monday, March 30.

- [SWS: Pinoys' personal well-being scores dipped to record low in Nov. 2025](#) (2026-03-30 14:08)

The Social Weather Stations on Monday reported a record low in the mean scores of adult Filipinos in the Anamnestic Comparative Self-Assessment (ACSA), a personal well-being indicator that includes the best and worst times in a person's life.

- [Lawyers group to file impeachment complaint vs. Comelec commissioners](#) (2026-03-30 12:25)

A group of lawyers urges the impeachment of the Comelec chairperson and commissioners, accusing them of betrayal of public trust, violation of the Constitution and other high crimes.

- [LTFRB: P651M in fuel subsidy given to transport workers so far](#) (2026-03-30 12:22)

Over P651 million in cash assistance has been distributed so far to drivers and operators of public utility vehicles as part of the government's fuel subsidy program amid rising pump prices due to the Middle East conflict, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) said on Monday.

- [GMA News renews commitment to 'Serbisyon Totoo'](#) (2026-03-30 12:03)

In a bold move to strengthen its legacy and sharpen its identity in an evolving media landscape, GMA News ushers in a renewed era this 2026, reaffirming its enduring commitment to its core

mission: delivering truthful, balanced, and credible journalism to Filipinos around the world.

- [Iloilo City, San Fernando \(Pampanga\) among UN's 20 Cities Towards Zero Waste](#) (2026-03-30 11:29)

Iloilo City and San Fernando, Pampanga have been named among the United Nations' 20 Cities Towards Zero Waste, recognizing local governments that have demonstrated ambitious and innovative approaches to reducing waste.

- [NTC targets uninterrupted communications for Holy Week 2026](#) (2026-03-30 11:03)

The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) has mobilized nationwide public assistance operations as it targets reliable and uninterrupted communications during Holy Week.

- [GUIDE: Key PH government acronyms to know](#) (2026-03-30 10:30)

Government acronyms such as DepEd, DOH, and DPWH are frequently mentioned in news reports, school discussions, and public advisories.

- [Duterte supporters submit third batch of signatures to SC](#) (2026-03-30 10:25)

Senator Robin Padilla, along with other supporters of former President Rodrigo Duterte, on Monday submitted the third batch of their signature campaign to the Supreme Court (SC).

- [Imee Marcos apologizes to dad for rift with Bongbong](#) (2026-03-30 09:58)

Senator Imee Marcos is seeking forgiveness from her father, late president Ferdinand Marcos, for not being able to watch over her brother, President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr., whom she has had a falling-out with over issues on politics and alleged drug use.

- [DPWH ramps up road projects in Quezon, Davao ahead of Holy Week rush](#) (2026-03-30 09:27)

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) is accelerating key road projects in Luzon and Mindanao to ease travel and support local livelihoods ahead of the Holy Week exodus.

- [Palace: No PH interest will be lost in possible joint oil exploration with China](#) (2026-03-30 08:31)

Malacañang on Monday ensured that the government would protect the country's national interests in the possible joint oil and gas exploration with China amid present energy challenges.

- [Recto: Marcos wants gov't offices taking lead in energy saving measures](#) (2026-03-30 07:48)

Malacañang has rolled out energy austerity measures, directing all government agencies to significantly reduce power and fuel consumption amid the recent oil price shocks brought by the Middle East tension.

- [MMDA notes leaner Holy Week travel amid rising oil prices](#) (2026-03-30 07:34)

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) said Monday it has observed a decline in passenger volume at terminals and along major thoroughfares, as rising fuel prices appear to have dampened this year's Holy Week exodus.

- [Angara to Class of 2026: 'Resilience will matter beyond the classroom'](#) (2026-03-30 07:21)

Education Secretary Sonny Angara on Monday urged graduating students to carry the resilience they built in school into the next stage of their lives, as nearly 48,000 public schools hold end-of-school-year (EOSY) rites nationwide.

- [SC junks Harry Roque's petition vs House QuadComm](#) (2026-03-30 07:08)

The Supreme Court (SC) has dismissed former presidential spokesperson Harry Roque's petition challenging his arrest during the House of Representatives' Quad Committee (QuadCom) investigation into alleged illegal Philippine offshore gaming operations (POGO) in 2024.

- [SC admits for review petition vs. Comelec ruling on Chiz campaign donation](#) (2026-03-30 06:39)

The Supreme Court has admitted for review a petition seeking to nullify a Commission on Elections department ruling that cleared Senator Francis “Chiz” Escudero in connection with a P30-million campaign donation from a contractor.

- [DSWD: 10,000 TNVS, motorcycle taxi riders miss P5,000 aid as firms withhold lists](#) (2026-03-30 06:27)

More than 10,000 motorcycle taxi and transport network vehicle service (TNVS) drivers failed to receive the government's P5,000 cash assistance after some ride-hailing companies did not

fully submit their driver lists, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) said on Monday.

- [Sara Duterte's SALNs as Davao City exec 'irrelevant' to impeachment -lawyer](#) (2026-03-30 06:04)

The Statements of Assets, Liabilities, and Networth (SALNs) of Vice President Sara Duterte during her tenure as mayor and vice mayor in Davao City are not relevant to the ongoing impeachment proceedings, Atty. Michael Poa said Monday.

- [PAGCOR voids P310M in casino winnings of gov't officials in 2025](#) (2026-03-30 05:59)

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) has voided around P310 million in winnings of public officials from gaming venues in 2025, chairperson Alejandro Tengco said Monday.

- [7 cases filed vs hoarding, other violations amid rising fuel prices --PNP](#) (2026-03-30 05:35)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has filed seven cases related to alleged fuel hoarding and other violations amid rising fuel prices due to the tensions in the Middle East.

- [PNP eyes posthumous awards for 5 cops killed in Maguindanao del Sur ambush](#) (2026-03-30 05:31)

Posthumous awards will be given to five police officers who were killed in an ambush in Maguindanao del Sur, the Philippine National Police said on Monday.

- [DOJ, PAGCOR sign pact to curb officials' presence in gambling venues](#) (2026-03-30 05:26)

The Department of Justice (DOJ) and its attached agencies signed an agreement with the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) to share employee information, in order to help prevent government workers from going to gambling venues.

- [Ex-Usecs. Bersamin, Olaivar face complaint over alleged flood control kickback](#) (2026-03-30 05:07)

Complaints for graft and violation of Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials complaints, among others, were filed Monday against former Presidential Legislative Liason Office undersecretary Adrian Bersamin and former Education undersecretary Trygve Olaivar for allegedly collecting money off anomalous flood control projects.

- [CAAP places airports on heightened alert for Holy Week](#) (2026-03-30 04:29)

The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) has placed all its operated airports on heightened alert, as it said it expects 550,000 passengers across all its operated airports during the Holy Week period.

- [PNP on heightened alert for Holy Week 2026](#) (2026-03-30 04:07)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has placed its organization on heightened alert in anticipation of a surge in travelers during the Holy Week.

- [Sara Duterte's camp won't object if House has enough numbers to impeach VP](#) (2026-03-30 03:56)

The defense team of Vice President Sara Duterte will not oppose should the House of Representatives gather sufficient votes to impeach her and transmit the complaints to the Senate for the trial proper, Atty. Michael Poa said Monday.

- [DSWD keeps manual payout for PUV aid, cites verification issues](#) (2026-03-30 03:50)

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) said it is prioritizing verification over speed in the rollout of cash assistance for public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers, explaining why payouts have yet to be fully digitized.

- [PNP: Closed gas stations due to rising fuel prices down to 365](#) (2026-03-30 03:34)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Monday said the number of gas stations that have temporarily closed amid rising fuel prices has gone down to 365.

- [MMDA allows provincial buses on EDSA for Holy Week 2026 exodus](#) (2026-03-30 03:16)

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will temporarily allow provincial buses to use EDSA during the Holy Week period to accommodate the surge of passengers traveling to the provinces.

- [PITX: 8 bus operators reported to LTFRB over unauthorized fare hikes](#) (2026-03-30 02:56)

Eight bus operators have been reported to the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) for allegedly increasing fares without approval, an official of the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) said Monday.

- [Sara Duterte underscores Middle East OFWs' sacrifices on Holy Week](#) (2026-03-30 02:43)

As Catholics observe this year's Holy Week, Vice President Sara Duterte underscored the sacrifices made by overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in the Middle East amid the heightened tensions in the region.

- [Marcos says CAVITEX-C5 segment 3B toll free this April](#) (2026-03-30 02:01)

President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. on Monday announced that the new CAVITEX-C5 segment would be toll free for travelers for the month of April.

- [Travelers face crowds, higher fares at terminals on Holy Monday](#) (2026-03-30 00:13)

A surge of passengers was observed flocking to ports, airports, and bus terminals on Holy Monday during the Holy Week exodus despite rising fuel prices and travel costs.

- [LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East \(March 30, 2026\)](#) (2026-03-29 23:07)

Here are the latest news and updates regarding the US-Israel war against Iran and related developments.

- [BI to Holy Week travelers: Arrive at airports early, have docs ready](#) (2026-03-29 18:50)

Anticipating increased passenger traffic this Holy Week, the Bureau of Immigration (BI) on Sunday reminded travelers to arrive at the airport at least three hours before their flight and ensure that all travel documents are in order to avoid delays.

- [NAPOLCOM: Better disciplinary, investigative action vs corruption, abuses](#) (2026-03-29 17:49)

The National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) on Sunday vowed to continue strengthening its disciplinary mechanisms and investigative processes in support of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s order for the Philippine National Police (PNP) to enforce a zero tolerance policy against corruption and human rights abuses.

- [PCSO: 6/49 prize now at P151M with no jackpot prize winners in March 29 draws](#) (2026-03-29 14:11)

The prize for the Superlotto 6/49 has grown to over P151 million after no one won the jackpot in the major lotto draws of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) on Sunday night, March 29.

- [Holy Week exodus underway amid higher fuel prices and fares, fewer trips](#) (2026-03-29 13:09)

Filipinos headed to the roads, the airports, the seaports and the bus terminals on Sunday for trips back their hometowns for Holy Week, amid rising fuel prices and trip cancellations.

- [China conducts patrol around Bajo de Masinloc](#) (2026-03-29 11:37)

China conducted naval, air and coast guard patrols around the Scarborough Shoal in the West Philippine Sea on Sunday, its military and Coast Guard said.

- [PCSO to deploy landing craft in Batanes to improve patient mobility](#) (2026-03-29 09:18)

The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) announced a plan to provide a landing craft vessel (LCV) for Batanes to improve patient transport in the island province, with deployment scheduled later this year.

- [Ridon: SC likely to junk TRO bid vs VP Sara impeachment](#) (2026-03-29 09:07)

Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry Ridon on Sunday said he believes the Supreme Court will likely dismiss a petition seeking to stop the House of Representatives from proceeding with impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte.

- [Erwin Tulfo pushes for WFH setup in gov't, private workplaces amid oil crisis](#) (2026-03-29 08:52)

Senator Erwin Tulfo has raised the idea of bringing back work-from-home arrangements in both private and government offices amid rising oil prices.

- [Marcos orders smooth Holy Week travel amid Maharlika Highway repairs](#) (2026-03-29 08:32)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has ordered authorities to ensure smooth and safe travel along the Maharlika Highway as thousands of Filipinos are expected to head to the provinces for the Holy Week break.

- [Bong Go seeks prayers for ex-ES Medialdea's recovery](#) (2026-03-29 07:36)

Senator Christopher “Bong” Go on Saturday sought prayers for Salvador Medialdea, who served as executive secretary to former president Rodrigo Duterte, after the former official was

hospitalized.

- [PH saves 145.43 MW energy in Earth Hour 2026](#) (2026-03-29 06:54)

The Department of Energy (DOE) said Sunday the Philippines recorded a 145.43 megawatt reduction in electricity consumption during the observance of Earth Hour 2026.

- [DOLE looking into possible assistance for drivers via TUPAD program](#) (2026-03-29 06:46)

The Department of Labor and Employment is checking what assistance may be extended to public utility vehicle drivers affected by the rising cost of fuel as a result of the war in the Middle East, its spokesperson said Sunday.

- [Cardinal Advincula urges Catholics to surrender to God amid Holy Week](#) (2026-03-29 05:47)

Manila Archbishop Jose Cardinal Advincula on Sunday challenged the faithful to shift their perspective on surrender, as doing so to God is a form of redemption, not defeat.

- [Loan moratorium, penalty condonation being studied to ease economic burdens, says SSS](#) (2026-03-29 03:35)

The Social Security System (SSS) said Sunday that it is actively studying the feasibility of offering a loan moratorium for members and a condonation program for contribution penalties for employers as relief measures amid economic challenges.

- [PCG: 3 million passengers expected in seaports for Holy Week 2026](#) (2026-03-29 03:09)

The Philippine Coast Guard is operating around the clock in seaports across the country as about 3 million passengers are expected to travel for the Holy Week, spokesperson Commodore Noemi Cayabyab said Sunday.

- [Pulong Duterte, supporters celebrate Rodrigo Duterte's birthday in The Hague](#) (2026-03-29 02:44)

Davao City 1st District Representative Paolo “Pulong” Duterte joined supporters gathered outside the International Criminal Court Detention Center on Saturday to mark the 81st birthday of former President Rodrigo Duterte.

- [CAAP: Airports have enough fuel in case of power interruptions](#) (2026-03-29 01:59)

Airports under the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines have enough reserve fuel in case of

power interruptions, CAAP spokesperson Eric Apolonio said Sunday amid the surging fuel prices due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

- [Pinoy Catholics observe Palm Sunday, the start of Holy Week](#) (2026-03-29 00:59)

Filipino Catholics trooped to churches around the country to observe Palm Sunday, the start of the Holy Week.

- [LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East \(March 29, 2026\)](#) (2026-03-28 23:38)

Here are the latest news and updates on the US-Israel war against Iran and related developments.

- [Holy Week: Catholics encouraged to experience Jesus's presence in churches](#) (2026-03-28 22:00)

The Holy Week is the time to commemorate the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which begins on Palm Sunday and concludes on Easter Sunday.

- [Marcos highlights compassion, service for Holy Week 2026](#) (2026-03-28 22:00)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Sunday underscored the values of compassion and service as he welcomed the observance of Holy Week.

- [How does crude oil become petroleum?](#) (2026-03-28 16:40)

In response to the ongoing global oil price surge, the Philippines recently received over 700,000 barrels of Russian crude oil that arrived in Bataan.

- [Bettor in Pampanga wins P10M Lotto 6/42 jackpot](#) (2026-03-28 16:26)

A bettor in Pampanga clinched the Lotto 6/42 jackpot worth P10 million on Saturday.

- [Filipinos join Earth Hour 2026 amid energy supply concerns](#) (2026-03-28 15:01)

Filipinos participated in the annual Earth Hour on Saturday amid concerns about the world's energy supply due to the Middle East conflict.

- [DOJ commits to zero GCTA application backlogs](#) (2026-03-28 13:32)

The Department of Justice (DOJ) has vowed to eliminate backlogs in the review of Good Conduct

Time Allowance (GCTA) applications of persons deprived of liberty (PDLs).

- ['Cicada' COVID-19 variant not yet detected in PH - DOH](#) (2026-03-28 11:07)

The Philippines has not yet recorded a COVID-19 case linked to the strain known as "Cicada," which has been found in several nations, including the United States, the Department of Health (DOH) said Saturday.

- [PH committed to peaceful approaches on WPS, senior officials say](#) (2026-03-28 09:56)

The Philippines is strengthening a multi-layered strategy with its allies to protect its rights in the West Philippine Sea, combining diplomacy, legal action, and expanded security cooperation amid rising tensions in the region.

- [DTI: No price hike of basic goods until April 16](#) (2026-03-28 09:06)

Amid concerns over the effects of rising oil prices due to the Middle East crisis, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) said Saturday the prices of basic consumer goods have remained steady but might start rising in the second half of April.

- [Win Gatchalian urges DOE, DTI to consider price cap on LPG](#) (2026-03-28 07:33)

Senator Sherwin Gatchalian on Saturday called on the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to consider imposing a price cap on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) amid the fuel price shocks due to the Middle East crisis.

- [House justice panel's Zamora on votes to impeach VP Sara: 'We have the numbers'](#) (2026-03-28 06:58)

House Committee on Justice Vice Chairperson and San Juan City Representative Ysabel Zamora on Saturday expressed confidence that the lower chamber has enough numbers to impeach Vice President Sara Duterte.

- [Over 1.35M passengers to pass through NAIA for Holy Week travel --NNIC](#) (2026-03-28 06:44)

New NAIA Infra Corp., operator of Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA), on Saturday said it is expecting over 1.35 million passengers to pass through the country's main gateway during the peak travel period during Holy Week -- March 28 to April 5, 2026.

- [PPA issues reminders for fur parents, plantitas for Holy Week 2026 travel](#) (2026-03-28 04:57)

Thinking of bringing your fur pet or plant companion on a sea trip for the Holy Week? Before setting sail, read the government's reminders for fur parents, plantitos, and plantitas.

- [Quiboloy camp to appeal ocular inspections of KOJC properties](#) (2026-03-28 02:59)

The camp of preacher Apollo Quiboloy will appeal the Pasig court's order directing ocular inspections of Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KOJC) properties in relation to his qualified trafficking case.

- [VP Sara Duterte calls for vigilance on dad Rodrigo Duterte's birthday celebration](#) (2026-03-28 02:51)

Vice President Sara Duterte, on the occasion of the birthday of her father, former president Rodrigo Duterte on Saturday, called for vigilance against what she calls "weaponization of the law" and the "intrusion of foreign bodies" allegedly seeking to bypass Philippine courts.

- [LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East \(March 28, 2026\)](#) (2026-03-28 02:02)

Here are the latest news and updates on the Middle East conflict and related developments.

- [LTFRB grants special permits to 1,297 buses for Holy Week 2026](#) (2026-03-28 01:53)

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) said Saturday it granted special permits to 1,297 passenger bus units across the country to ensure adequate supply for the expected influx of passengers during the Holy Week break.

- [NLEX ready for traffic volume due to Holy Week exodus](#) (2026-03-28 01:12)

The operator of North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) on Saturday said it is ready for the influx of vehicles as Filipinos head to provinces for the Holy Week exodus to their hometowns.

- ['GAS-AND-RUN': Drivers flee after filling tank without paying](#) (2026-03-27 14:20)

Two incidents of gas-and-run were reported in Quezon City and Bacolod City as the nation reels from the high prices of fuel brought about by the Middle East conflict.

- [Philippines-China cooperation talks resume amid ongoing oil crisis](#) (2026-03-27 14:13)

The Philippines and China have resumed talks under the 11th Bilateral Consultation Mechanism (BCM) in Fujian to discuss issues in the West Philippine Sea and negotiations on a Code of Conduct (COC) in the area, amid the conflict in the Middle East and the steep rise in the price of oil globally.

- [Women in politics face harm from non-physical violence, advocates warn](#) (2026-03-27 13:35)

Advocates belonging to liberal parties in Asia have called for an end to the non-physical violence against women in politics.

- [DOH on Code White alert for Holy Week 2026](#) (2026-03-27 13:24)

The Department of Health (DOH) will activate its Code White alert for the Holy Week.

- [VP Sara impeachment hearings continue amid Supreme Court petition](#) (2026-03-27 12:50)

The House Committee on Justice will continue its hearings on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte even after a petition questioning its legality was filed before the Supreme Court, its members said on Friday.

- [DOH monitors drug prices amid fuel crisis](#) (2026-03-27 11:14)

The Department of Health (DOH) on Friday said it is closely monitoring medicine prices amid the oil crisis.

- [Pasig court orders ocular inspections of KOJC properties](#) (2026-03-27 10:41)

A Pasig court on Friday ordered ocular inspections of Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KOJC) properties in Davao, Quezon City, and Pasig City to gain a clearer understanding of the premises identified in the qualified trafficking case against the religious group's founder, Apollo Quiboloy, and other co-accused.

- [Imee: Suspend SSS, GSIS, Pag-IBIG, PhilHealth contributions amid price hikes](#) (2026-03-27 09:05)

Senator Imee Marcos on Friday called on concerned government agencies to temporarily suspend the collection of monthly mandatory government contributions amid the increasing prices of fuel and other basic commodities due to the Middle East crisis.

- [PH first to declare energy emergency? Palace cites Marcos admin's swift response](#) (2026-03-27 08:57)

The Philippines' declaration of a state of national energy emergency--the first of its kind in the world amid the ongoing Middle East crisis--showed the Marcos government's swift action to address challenges confronting the country during these times, Malacañang said Friday.

- [BOC auction of 11 seized luxury cars stalled as no bidders registered](#) (2026-03-27 08:28)

The Bureau of Customs' (BOC) scheduled public auction of 11 seized luxury vehicles on Friday, March 27, 2026, did not proceed because no bidders registered for the event.

- [Marcos urged to take 'decisive actions' on CAB implementation](#) (2026-03-27 08:27)

An alliance of peace advocates on Friday warned the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) is at risk of “drift and deterioration,” urging President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to take decisive action to restore direction to its implementation more than a decade after it was signed.

- [Lawyers seek TRO vs. Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings](#) (2026-03-27 08:22)

Several lawyers on Friday asked the Supreme Court (SC) to issue a temporary restraining order (TRO) preventing the House of Representatives from proceeding with the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte.

- [Gov't can save up to P170B by cutting non-essential expenses -Gatchalian](#) (2026-03-27 07:59)

Senator Sherwin Gatchalian on Friday said the government could save up to P170 billion if it would reduce expenses for non-essential activities by 20%.

- [PH talking to India, Argentina, Canada for oil sources --Palace](#) (2026-03-27 07:43)

The Philippine government is talking with India, Argentina, and Canada for possible alternative petroleum sources amid the oil price shocks brought by the conflict in the Middle East, Malacañang said Friday.

- [Luistro insists House justice panel mandated to hear impeach raps vs VP Sara](#) (2026-03-27 07:31)

Batangas Representative Gerville Luistro insisted Friday that it is within the mandate of the

House committee on justice to conduct a hearing and subpoena documents and witnesses to determine probable cause in the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte.

- [Marcos ordered removal of tarp with his photo in cash aid payout --Palace](#) (2026-03-27 07:02)

Malacañang on Friday said President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. has instructed the removal of a tarpaulin bearing his photo, which was placed during a distribution of assistance amid the energy challenges faced by the country.

- [Over 1,400 SHS, ALS grads land jobs in gov't job fair](#) (2026-03-27 06:51)

Over 1,400 SHS, ALS grads land jobs in gov't job fair

- [EXPLAINER: How Russian crude oil could impact fuel supply in PH](#) (2026-03-27 06:36)

A fresh shipment of crude oil from Russia has arrived in the Philippines, offering some relief as global supply tightens and fuel prices remain volatile.

- [House leader eyes pause of non-essential projects, select GAD activities](#) (2026-03-27 06:30)

A House leader has called for the suspension of non-essential projects, as well as certain Gender and Development (GAD) activities, in government agencies amid the exponential oil price hikes brought about by the conflict in the Middle East.

- [PH, Japan sign 2 loan agreements for infra projects in NCR, Mindanao](#) (2026-03-27 06:01)

Amid continued concerns over rising petroleum prices and transport efficiency, the Philippines and Japan on Friday signed major loan agreements for two infrastructure projects aimed at improving connectivity in Metro Manila and Mindanao.

- [Nationwide transport strike generally peaceful so far -- PNP](#) (2026-03-27 05:48)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) said Friday morning the two-day nationwide transport strike amid tensions in the Middle East has remained generally peaceful despite reports of stranded commuters in Metro Manila.

- [Closed gas stations due to fuel price hikes now 425](#) (2026-03-27 05:18)

Closed gas stations due to fuel price hikes now 425

- [Marcos to PNP: No room for cops who break the law](#) (2026-03-27 04:53)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. called on Friday the Philippine National Police to ensure a zero tolerance policy for corrupt practices as well as human rights abuses in the organization.

- [Madriaga not a 'polluted source,' Luistro says](#) (2026-03-27 04:50)

Madriaga not a 'polluted source,' Luistro says

- [LIST: Tips to safeguard your home during a Holy Week vacation](#) (2026-03-27 03:45)

LIST: Tips to safeguard your home during a Holy Week vacation

- [Marcos: ASEAN Summit to push through in May, to focus on oil, food, migrant workers](#) (2026-03-27 03:45)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. said Friday the scheduled ASEAN Leaders' Summit in May would push through despite energy challenges brought by the Middle East conflict.

- [Robin Padilla calls for revival of PH's claim over Sabah amid oil crisis](#) (2026-03-27 03:33)

Senator Robin Padilla has urged President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. to revive the Philippines' claim over Sabah--a Malaysian state known to be rich in oil and gas--as prices of petroleum products continue to shoot up due to the Middle East crisis.

- [EXPLAINER: How long will PH oil supply last amid Middle East tensions?](#) (2026-03-27 03:30)

As the conflict in the Middle East continues to affect global petroleum flows, concerns have been raised about the Philippines' fuel security, particularly how long its oil supply can meet consumer and industry demand.

- [PNPA Class 2026 top cadet driven by promise to late mother](#) (2026-03-27 03:01)

A 24-year-old female cadet from Baybay City, Leyte has emerged as the top graduate of the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) “Silang Paglaom” Class of 2026.

- [Teves wants Madriaga dead? Sara Duterte's lawyer says claim 'comical'](#) (2026-03-27 02:31)

A lawyer of Vice President Sara Duterte on Friday dismissed the allegation that former Negros Oriental representative Arnolfo “Arnie” Teves was supposedly behind the threats to Ramil

Madriaga's life.

- [Marcos: PH has enough crude oil until June 30, 2026](#) (2026-03-27 00:58)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. said Friday that the country has sufficient crude oil supply until June 30, 2026.

- [Transport strike vs fuel price surge resumes on Day 2](#) (2026-03-27 00:34)

Transport strike vs fuel price surge resumes on Day 2

- [LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East \(March 27, 2026\)](#) (2026-03-27 00:11)

Here are the latest news and updates on the conflict in the Middle East and related developments.

- [Duterte's defense team dismisses concern over confidential information](#) (2026-03-26 21:21)

A public redacted version of the response of former President Rodrigo Duterte's legal team regarding the issues of the prosecution on confidential information was released by the International Criminal Court (ICC) early Friday morning.

- [Cardinal David presides over Mother Ignacia's cause for beatification relaunch](#) (2026-03-26 19:18)

The cause for the beatification and canonization of the Religious of the Virgin Mary (RVM) congregation foundress, Venerable Mother Ignacia del Espiritu Santo, was relaunched on Wednesday, according to a CBCP News report.

- [PH Navy vessel avoids collision with China's PLA Navy ship --WESCOM](#) (2026-03-26 16:32)

The Philippine Navy's BRP Benguet escaped a potential collision near Pag-asa Island after a People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy missile frigate of China performed a dangerous maneuver on Wednesday, March 25, the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Western Command (WESCOM) said.

- [No tsunami threat following strong Japan quake, says PHIVOLCS](#) (2026-03-26 16:21)

There is no tsunami threat to the country following the recorded magnitude 6.5 earthquake off the coast of Sanriku in Japan, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS)

reported.

- [VP Sara announces cost-cutting measures to aid public amid oil crisis](#) (2026-03-26 15:37)

The Office of the Vice President (OVP) will take cost-cutting measures to ensure that more funds will be redirected to programs that would help the public amid the rising prices of commodities, said Vice President Sara Duterte on Thursday.

- [PPA expects more passengers in Holy Week despite high fares](#) (2026-03-26 14:07)

The Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) is expecting that there will be more sea-bound passengers leaving for the provinces this year for the Holy Week despite the fare hike.

- [DOE faces criticism from Marcoleta over lax fuel price monitoring](#) (2026-03-26 13:05)

Senator Rodante Marcoleta on Thursday fumed over the Department of Energy's (DOE) supposed inadequate monitoring of the soaring prices of fuel products.

- [Langis na mula sa Russia, dumating sa Pilipinas na nahaharap sa 'energy emergency'](#) (2026-03-26 12:41)

Isang barko na may kargang mahigit 700,000 bariles ng krudong langis mula Russia ang dumating sa Pilipinas, ayon sa isang source na may nalalaman sa usapin ang nagsalita sa Agence France-Presse nitong Huwebes. Nangyari ito ilang araw matapos ideklara sa bansa ang national energy emergency dahil sa nangyayaring kaguluhan sa Middle East.

- [Philippines urged to cut ASEAN hosting budget to P10B amid fuel crisis](#) (2026-03-26 12:04)

Batangas Representative Leandro Leviste has called on President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. to reduce the budget for the country's hosting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) Summit and other related meetings this year from P22 billion to P10 billion.

- [VP Sara impeachment hearings part of due process SC required, says solon](#) (2026-03-26 11:17)

The hearings on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte are part of the due process the Supreme Court required from the House of Representatives when it declared her impeachment in 2025 unconstitutional, a member of the House Committee on Justice said on Thursday.

- [72-year-old jeepney driver meets DSWD chief after viral ayuda exclusion incident](#) (2026-03-26 10:58)

Jaime Ricafrente, the 72-year-old jeepney driver who went viral online after his name was not included in the list of cash assistance beneficiaries, met Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) chief Rex Gatchalian on Thursday.

- [House rolls out Suporta sa Bayan public assistance desk](#) (2026-03-26 10:07)

The House of Representatives has rolled out a public assistance program that aims to help individuals seeking assistance from certain government agencies.

- [Marcos bares successful testing of Camago-3 well](#) (2026-03-26 10:06)

Amid the energy challenges, President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. on Thursday announced the successful drilling and testing of the Camago-3 well, a second major milestone under the \$893 million Malampaya Phase 4.

- [DepEd eyes direct farm-to-school supply to feed students, help farmers](#) (2026-03-26 09:23)

Education Secretary Sonny Angara on Thursday pushed for a simpler idea: buy vegetables directly from farmers and serve them in public schools.

- [Marcos may issue EO on reduced fuel tax by mid-April, says DOF](#) (2026-03-26 08:46)

President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. may issue the executive order whether to suspend or reduce the excise tax rate on petroleum products by April 12 or April 13, the Department of Finance (DOF) said Thursday.

- [SC affirms conviction of ex-Agusan del Norte mayor for malversation](#) (2026-03-26 08:17)

The Supreme Court (SC) has affirmed the conviction of a former mayor of a municipality in Agusan del Norte for malversation of public funds due to her failure to liquidate cash advances from municipal development funds.

- [Palace defends DOE's Garin amid energy challenges](#) (2026-03-26 08:03)

Malacañang on Thursday defended Department of Energy Secretary Sharon Garin amid the energy challenges in the country brought about by the Middle East crisis.

- [Ombudsman moves to end 'parking' of cases involving high-ranking officials](#) (2026-03-26 07:54)

The Office of the Ombudsman is cracking down on the alleged “parking” of cases after discovering at least 350 complaints involving high-ranking officials pending before the agency prior to Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla's assumption of office in October 2025, Assistant Ombudsman Mico Clavano said Thursday.

- [Wealth tax? Palace says all suggestions being considered](#) (2026-03-26 07:34)

Wealth tax? Palace says all suggestions being considered

- [Universities shift to hybrid classes, work setups to save energy](#) (2026-03-26 07:17)

Universities across Metro Manila are rolling out energy conservation measures--from hybrid learning to compressed workweeks--as global fuel supply pressures linked to the Middle East conflict begin to affect operations in the Philippines.

- [LIST: Who are qualified for coding, truck ban exemption amid fuel disruption](#) (2026-03-26 07:03)

LIST: Who are qualified for coding, truck ban exemption amid fuel disruption

- [Russian oil arrives as Philippines battles 'energy emergency'](#) (2026-03-26 06:55)

A ship carrying more than 700,000 barrels of Russian crude oil has arrived in the Philippines, a source with knowledge of the matter told Agence France-Presse Thursday, days after the country declared a national energy emergency over the Middle East war.

- [PNP urges public to stay safe from drowning during summer vacation activities](#) (2026-03-26 06:48)

PNP urges public to stay safe from drowning during summer vacation activities

- [UP, Ateneo, La Salle hold ground in 2026 QS rankings](#) (2026-03-26 06:10)

Philippine universities held steady positions in the 2026 QS World University Rankings by Subject, with leading institutions maintaining their global brackets in English and improving placements in broader fields such as Arts and Humanities.

- [Ombudsman Remulla on filing flood control raps: Ngayong tag-init, iinit](#) (2026-03-26 05:32)

Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla said Thursday that his office is set to file high-profile flood control related cases that would make the dry season even hotter.

- [Ombudsman: Assets of flood control kickback suspects remain frozen](#) (2026-03-26 05:10)

Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla on Thursday assured the public that the assets of individuals allegedly involved in the flood control kickback scheme remain frozen.

- [Ombudsman to comply with House subpoena on VP Duterte SALNs](#) (2026-03-26 04:04)

The Office of the Ombudsman will comply with the House Committee on Justice's subpoena for documents requiring the submission of Vice President Sara Duterte's Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALNs) covering all her years in public office, Assistant Ombudsman Mico Clavano said Thursday.

- [Recto to essential offices: Ensure uninterrupted services](#) (2026-03-26 03:13)

Malacanang on Thursday reminded public offices rendering essential services to ensure that their operations would be uninterrupted amid the present challenges caused by the Middle East conflict.

- [HPG names Rommel Batangan as new acting director](#) (2026-03-26 03:09)

Police Brigadier General Rommel Batangan is the new acting director of the Philippine National Police (PNP) - Highway Patrol Group (HPG), according to police officials.

- [Gov't lacks capacity to take over oil firms -- DOE's Garin](#) (2026-03-26 02:43)

Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said Thursday it is not a good idea for the government to temporarily take over the operations of oil companies in the country, even as fuel prices continue to rise amid tensions in the Middle East.

- [PH-China oil exploration talks made 'positive progress,' embassy says](#) (2026-03-26 02:12)

PH-China joint oil exploration talks made 'positive progress,' embassy says

- [Transport groups kick off two-day nationwide strike vs rising fuel prices](#) (2026-03-26 00:08)

Transport groups kick off two-day nationwide strike vs rising fuel prices

- [LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East \(March 26, 2026\)](#) (2026-03-25 23:14)

Here are the latest news and updates on the conflict in the Middle East and related developments.

- [Luzon, Mindanao grids stable; Visayas may face yellow alert in Q2](#) (2026-03-25 18:40)

The power grids of Luzon and Mindanao are expected to remain stable, but the Visayas grid may face a yellow alert in the second quarter of 2026, a study said.

- [Marcos vows to strengthen support, promote healthcare workers' welfare](#) (2026-03-25 17:38)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday assured that the government will continue to beef up its support for healthcare workers through better training and improved safety and well-being initiatives.

- [CPD: Reproductive health education age-appropriate, aims to protect vs. sex abuse](#) (2026-03-25 16:41)

The Commission on Population Development (CPD) on Wednesday said reproductive health education in schools is age-appropriate and intends to protect minors from sexual abuse.

- [Delivery service riders in NCR to get P5k cash aid in 3-day payout](#) (2026-03-25 15:58)

Over 137,700 delivery service riders in Metro Manila will receive their P5,000 cash relief assistance from the government on March 26, 27, and 30, 2026 to help them cope with the recent surges in pump prices.

- [One bettor wins Megalotto P15M jackpot on March 25, 2026 draw](#) (2026-03-25 13:57)

A lone bettor won the Megalotto jackpot prize of P15 million in Wednesday night's draw, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said.

- [CICC warns vs. staycation scam](#) (2026-03-25 13:09)

This vacation season, the Cybercrime Investigation and Coordinating Center (CICC) warned the public against the "staycation scam."

- [Seafarer who won P45M Grand Lotto 6/55 jackpot says he no longer needs to leave family for work](#) (2026-03-25 12:44)

After a decade of playing lotto, a seafarer won the P45 million from the Grand Lotto 6/55 draw on March 9, 2026. With his winnings, the lucky bettor will no longer set sail to be closer to his family.

- [DepEd: 3-term school calendar won't add to teachers' workload](#) (2026-03-25 12:24)

DepEd pushed back against concerns over its planned shift to a three-term school calendar, insisting the reform will not add to teachers' workload and will instead improve learning time.

- [Marcos OKs law resetting BARMM polls to September 14](#) (2026-03-25 11:37)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday signed the law resetting the first regular elections in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) to September 14, 2026.

- [US Embassy advises American citizens to stay alert amid two-day transport strike](#) (2026-03-25 11:31)

The United States Embassy in the Philippines advised American citizens to stay alert and make necessary adjustments to their schedules ahead of the scheduled nationwide transport strike on March 26 and 27, 2026.

- [Justice panel chair: Impeachment proceedings vs. VP Sara constitutional](#) (2026-03-25 11:26)

The ongoing impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte are in accordance with the Constitution, House justice panel chairperson Gerville Luistro said.

- [Spotted a Philippine deer? Don't make it a pet, says DENR](#) (2026-03-25 11:17)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on Wednesday advised the public that endangered species like the Philippine deer (*Rusa marianna*), which was recently sighted in Marinduque after it was thought to be extinct, are not allowed to become pets.

- [BJMP prepares for heat and dry-season diseases, increases hazard pay](#) (2026-03-25 10:41)

The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) said on Wednesday that it is continuing decongestion efforts in its facilities to prevent the spread of diseases connected to the dry season.

- [Edgardo Vistan reappointed as UP Diliman chancellor](#) (2026-03-25 10:36)

Edgardo Carlo Vistan II has been reappointed as chancellor of the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman and will serve for another three years until 2029.

- [DepEd, DOLE roll out one-stop job fairs to aid SHS, ALS graduates](#) (2026-03-25 10:16)

The government is rolling out nationwide “one-stop” job fairs in schools to help senior high school (SHS) and Alternative Learning System (ALS) graduates secure employment faster while reducing the cost of applying for work.

- [SET junks quo warranto petition vs Erwin Tulfo](#) (2026-03-25 10:10)

The Senate Electoral Tribunal (SET) has dismissed the quo warranto petition seeking the removal of Senator Erwin Tulfo from office due to his supposed citizenship issues.

- [DepEd: Private schools not required to adopt 3-term calendar](#) (2026-03-25 09:33)

Private schools will not be required to adopt the planned three-term school calendar, and will continue to enjoy flexibility in setting their own academic schedules, DepEd said.

- [PH secures AU\\$45-M Aussie grant to improve ease of doing business](#) (2026-03-25 09:32)

The Philippine government, through the Department of Finance (DOF), has secured a grant from the Australian government to support an initiative aimed at improving the country's policy and business environment.

- [SP Sotto: All senators expected to attend possible special session amid oil crisis](#) (2026-03-25 09:26)

Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III acknowledged Wednesday that the Senate may conduct a special legislative session even when it's on a break to respond to the problems resulting from the global oil crisis.

- [SC: DSWD certification required in adopting surrendered children](#) (2026-03-25 09:23)

Individuals who seek to adopt surrendered children must first secure a certification from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) that the child is legally available for adoption, the Supreme Court (SC) said.

- [VP Duterte in PH despite skipping House impeach hearing - lawyer](#) (2026-03-25 08:55)

Vice President Sara Duterte is in the country even as she decided not to attend the first hearing of the House justice committee on the impeachment complaints against her, her lawyer Michael Poa said on Wednesday.

- [Marcos brushes aside 'discussion' on gov't takeover of PH oil industry](#) (2026-03-25 08:36)

"We don't want to get into that discussion." This was the response of President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Wednesday when asked if the government would temporarily take over the oil industry amid the Middle East crisis that resulted in oil price shocks in the country.

- [Marcos: Gov't can intervene to prevent power rate hikes](#) (2026-03-25 08:24)

Following the declaration of a state of national energy emergency, President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Wednesday said the government can intervene to ensure that electricity rates will not spike.

- [PH says talks with China for joint oil, gas exploration 'may be forthcoming'](#) (2026-03-25 05:43)

The Philippines is not currently engaged in joint oil and gas exploration with China, although such an arrangement is possible in the future to ensure energy security amid supply concerns due to the Middle East conflict, Manila's top diplomat said Tuesday.

- [Marcos: PH resetting ties with China amid Middle East conflict](#) (2026-03-25 05:34)

Marcos: PH resetting ties with China amid Middle East conflict

- [House panel issues subpoena for VP Sara's SALNs, NBI probe on death threat](#) (2026-03-25 05:21)

The House justice committee has issued a subpoena or compelled the submission of the Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net (SALN) worth of Vice President Sara Duterte during her tenure as Davao City mayor and as Vice President.

- [Teachers 'surprised' by three-term school calendar --ACT](#) (2026-03-25 04:43)

Teachers' group Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) on Wednesday disputed the Department of Education's (DepEd) claim that educators were "widely consulted" on the shift to a three-term school calendar.

- [NAPOLCOM: HPG chief faces admin raps over alleged sexual harassment](#) (2026-03-25 03:51)

A senior official in the Philippine National Police (PNP) is facing an administrative complaint for alleged sexual harassment filed before the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM).

- [Sara Duterte skipping impeach hearing is constitutional violation --Luistro](#) (2026-03-25 03:43)

House justice committee chairperson Gerville Luistro questioned Wednesday Vice President Sara Duterte's faithfulness to her oath of office to follow the Constitution amid her absence in the impeachment proceedings.

- [Ferry and bus fares to remain unchanged during Holy Week, Marcos says](#) (2026-03-25 03:28)

Ferry and bus fares to remain unchanged during Holy Week, Marcos says

- [Filipinos trust Marcos due to his anti-corruption efforts, Pulse survey shows](#) (2026-03-25 03:07)

Filipinos trust Marcos due to his anti-corruption Efforts, Pulse Survey shows

- [Sara Duterte skips impeachment hearing, says complaints should be junked](#) (2026-03-25 03:03)

Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday did not attend the initial hearing of the House committee on justice on the impeachment complaints against her, insisting that no policy requires respondents to do so.

- [PH says working with Washington to obtain oil from US-sanctioned countries](#) (2026-03-25 02:41)

The Philippines is working with Washington to secure waivers and exemptions so it can obtain oil from US-sanctioned countries to ensure supply, its ambassador to the United States said.

- [PNP heightens security for energy sites after energy emergency declaration](#) (2026-03-25 01:53)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has heightened security measures in key energy facilities following President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s declaration of a national energy emergency amid

rising fuel prices.

- [Commuters stranded in Metro Manila amid transport workers' aid payout](#) (2026-03-25 01:46)

Commuters were reported stranded in parts of Metro Manila on Wednesday morning amid limited public utility vehicle (PUV) operations, according to the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

- [LIVE UPDATES: VP Sara Duterte impeachment hearing \(March 25, 2026\)](#) (2026-03-25 01:37)

The House Committee on Justice on Wednesday, March 25, 2026, will start its hearings on the impeachment complaints filed against Vice President Sara Duterte. Here are the latest news and updates.

- [Jeepney, PUV drivers, operators get cash aid from DSWD, DOTr](#) (2026-03-25 01:14)

The Department of Transportation (DOTr) has started distributing fuel subsidies to public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers and operators amid the rising fuel prices due to the Middle East tensions.

- [LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East \(March 25, 2026\)](#) (2026-03-24 23:27)

Here are the latest news and updates on the conflict in the Middle East and related developments.

- [House panel begins Sara Duterte impeachment hearings](#) (2026-03-24 22:30)

Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro, the committee chairperson, described this stage as similar to the preliminary investigation phase in a criminal complaint. During the hearing, the complainants and the defense are given the chance to present their respective documentary evidence and witnesses.

- [TIMELINE: Middle East conflict and its impact on global oil prices](#) (2026-03-24 16:32)

The beginning of Week 4 of the conflict in the Middle East has been marked by a roller coaster-like series of events with US President Donald Trump on March 22, threatening to “obliterate” Iran's power plants if the Tehran government failed to reopen the Strait of Hormuz-where a substantial portion of the world's supply of oil passes-in 48 hours. The following day, oil prices went down after Trump announced on Truth Social that he has ordered the postponement of military action against Iran, claiming the US and the Islamic republic had very good and productive conversations for a complete resolution of the conflict. Iran has since

denied negotiating with US, calling it fake news. Please refresh the following article for updates on the Middle East conflict and its impact on global prices of oil.

- [DSWD warns vs fake news on online applications for fuel aid](#) (2026-03-24 16:29)

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on Tuesday warned the public against falling for supposed online applications for fuel assistance from the agency.

- [Xavier University grad tops electronics engineers licensure exam](#) (2026-03-24 15:51)

A graduate of Xavier University was the top scorer in the electronics engineers licensure exam, while two test takers shared the top spot in the licensure exam for electronics technicians.

- [DSWD: Jeepney drivers to get P5k cash aid on March 25](#) (2026-03-24 15:40)

Public utility jeepney (PUJ) drivers in Metro Manila are next to receive the P5,000 cash relief from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to help them cope with rising prices of fuel products amid the Middle East crisis.

- [PH strengthens halal tourism to attract Muslim travelers, visitors](#) (2026-03-24 14:59)

The Philippines had made significant leaps to accommodate Muslim visitors and is now ready to accommodate the Halal tourism industry.

- [How Pinoys will benefit from the State of Energy Emergency](#) (2026-03-24 14:50)

What does the declaration mean to the Filipinos, and which tasks are assigned to government departments for implementation? The UPLIFT Committee will be led by the President, with key departments tasked to focus on overseeing the implementation of the emergency measures and coordination across sectors.

- [VP Sara Duterte to skip House hearing on impeachment complaints against her](#) (2026-03-24 14:32)

Vice President Sara Duterte will not attend the House Committee on Justice's hearing on Wednesday regarding the impeachment complaints against her.

- [PCSO: No winners of major lotto jackpot draws on March 24, 2026](#) (2026-03-24 14:04)

There were no winners of the major jackpot prizes drawn by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) on March 24, 2026.

- [DOT to aid Filipino tourism sector affected by Middle East conflict](#) (2026-03-24 14:01)

The Department of Tourism (DOT) stands ready to assist Filipinos in the tourism sector who would be affected by the effects of the Middle East conflict.

- [Worst case scenario for PH is if fuel supply 'runs dry' --DOE chief](#) (2026-03-24 11:54)

“The worst case is we run dry. This country runs dry,” Garin said. “Ang good news niyan (the good news) is we have about a month or a month and a half to prepare for this,” she added.

- [Marcos declares state of national energy emergency](#) (2026-03-24 11:25)

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Tuesday declared a state of national energy emergency and ordered the adoption of a Unified Package for Livelihoods, Industry, Food, and Transport (UPLIFT) for affected sectors.

- [DepEd earmarks record P25.6B for school feeding program, targets 4.6M learners](#) (2026-03-24 11:00)

The Department of Education (DepEd) is ramping up its fight against classroom hunger, allocating a record P25.6 billion for its School-Based Feeding Program (SBFP) in School Year 2026-2027 --more than double last year's budget, as it aims to reach 4.63 million learners nationwide.

- [TNVS drivers lose up to P700 daily due to surging fuel prices -- group](#) (2026-03-24 10:13)

Transport network vehicle service (TNVS) drivers are losing P500 to P700 a day due to the hefty fuel price hikes amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, a transport group said Tuesday.

- [Value autonomy, seize opportunities, SC Justice Singh tells women in judiciary](#) (2026-03-24 10:02)

“Let no one tell you what you can and cannot do.” This is the advice Supreme Court (SC) Associate Justice Maria Filomena Singh gave to women who are part of or aspiring to join the judiciary.

- [DENR reviewing memo on earth-balling, mangrove relocation for infra projects](#) (2026-03-24 09:32)

Amid concerns from environmental groups, the Department of Environment and Natural

Resources (DENR) is reviewing a memorandum that permits “earth-balling” and the relocation of mangroves to give way for infrastructure projects.

- [PCG: Don't travel on unsafe 'colorum' boats](#) (2026-03-24 09:06)

With the summer vacation approaching, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) on Tuesday reminded the public not to travel using colorum boats as these pose risks to passenger safety.

- [DENR to pilot marine spatial planning for mangrove conservation](#) (2026-03-24 08:58)

DENR to pilot marine spatial planning for mangrove conservation

- [MWSS: Angat Dam expected to remain at safe water level amid hotter weather](#) (2026-03-24 08:55)

The water level of Angat Dam is expected to remain at a safe level in the coming months as hotter temperatures are expected with the end of the Northeast Monsoon (Amihan), the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) said Tuesday.

- [SC Justice Singh urges gender equality laws in government appointments](#) (2026-03-24 08:49)

Supreme Court (SC) Associate Justice Maria Filomena Singh on Tuesday pushed for laws and ordinances that would take into consideration the proportionate appointment of males and females in government.

- [Ombudsman begins case inventory for improved efficiency](#) (2026-03-24 08:40)

The Office of the Ombudsman has launched a physical inventory of all its pending cases to ensure efficient case monitoring and disposition.

- [Gov't Plans to use P20-B Malampaya Fund for Middle East conflict response](#) (2026-03-24 08:34)

Gov't Plans to use P20-B Malampaya Fund for Middle East conflict response

- [Congress transmits bill granting Marcos emergency powers to Palace](#) (2026-03-24 08:20)

Congress on Tuesday transmitted to the Office of the President (OP) the enrolled bill which would grant President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. the powers to suspend or reduce the excise tax on petroleum products.

- [Vlogger Jack Argota files counter-affidavit on raps over fake Marcos med cert](#) (2026-03-24 08:17)

Vlogger Jack Argota on Tuesday personally filed his counter-affidavit with the Department of Justice (DOJ) over the complaint against him for allegedly spreading false medical information concerning President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

- [EXPLAINER: What is an effusive eruption?](#) (2026-03-24 08:15)

EXPLAINER: What is an effusive eruption?

- [VP Sara Duterte's attendance at impeachment still uncertain](#) (2026-03-24 05:24)

The House committee on justice said Tuesday that it has not received any feelers from the camp of Vice President Sara Duterte regarding her possible attendance in tomorrow's impeachment hearing.

- [Senators say Philippines already in crisis due to Middle East conflict](#) (2026-03-24 04:52)

Several senators on Tuesday expressed belief that the Philippines is already in a crisis as it continues to suffer from the effects of the heightened tensions in the Middle East.

- [RORO, airport terminal fees to be slashed in April --DOTr](#) (2026-03-24 04:41)

The Department of Transportation announced on Tuesday a reduction in transport fees for airports and roll-on/roll-off (RORO) ships in response to the ongoing oil crisis.

- [Supreme Court to hold summer sessions in Manila amid rising fuel prices](#) (2026-03-24 04:17)

The Supreme Court (SC) said Tuesday it would hold its summer sessions, including oral arguments, in Manila instead of Baguio City in April due to rising fuel prices amid tensions in the Middle East.

- [PH Navy: 49 Chinese vessels spotted in WPS last week](#) (2026-03-24 04:08)

A total of 49 Chinese vessels were monitored in some features of the West Philippine Sea (WPS) in the past week, the Philippine Navy said on Tuesday.

- [SC justice Maria Filomena Singh opens up about battle with cancer](#) (2026-03-24 03:52)

Supreme Court Associate Justice Maria Filomena Singh on Tuesday opened up about her battle with cancer, saying it was a reminder to treasure each day and to do what she can, while she can.

- [Sandiganbayan allows Alcantara's testimony in flood control malversation case](#) (2026-03-24 03:20)

The Sandiganbayan has allowed the testimony of state witness former Department of Public Works and Highways District Engineer Henry Alcantara in the government's malversation case vs. ex-Ako Bicol party-list Representative Zaldy Co and 15 others involving an alleged P289-million flood control project in Naujan, Oriental Mindoro.

- [Marcos: Bus operators get P10K fuel subsidy per bus unit](#) (2026-03-24 03:10)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Tuesday announced that the government is providing bus operators P10,000 fuel subsidy per bus unit to help them cope with the rising cost of fuel due to the Middle East conflict.

- [DepEd stands by three-term school calendar amid criticism](#) (2026-03-24 01:51)

The Department of Education (DepEd) defended Tuesday its planned shift to a three-term school calendar starting School Year 2026-2027, noting that the reform aims to ensure more continuous learning and reduce classroom disruptions.

- [Cash aid payout for TNVS drivers starts in Metro Manila](#) (2026-03-24 00:28)

The distribution of cash assistance to transport network vehicle service drivers affected by the rising fuel prices began in Metro Manila on Tuesday, the Department of Social Welfare and Development said.

## Source: PhilStar Global

- [Meralco: Reports of 3-month brownouts not true](#) (2026-03-31 05:08)

Manila Electric Co. debunked circulating claims about supposed prolonged power outages, warning the public against the spread of false information online.

- [Price Watch: Diesel up P12 per liter as oil firms impose new hikes](#) (2026-03-30 23:00)

Diesel prices rise by over P12 per liter as oil firms implement new hikes.

- [11,100 cops to secure Calabarzon, Mimaropa](#) (2026-03-30 16:00)

Around 11,100 police personnel and force multipliers have been deployed to ensure the safety of travelers and motorists this Holy Week across the Calabarzon and Mimaropa regions.

- [P9.5 million shabu seized in Lucena, Zamboanga stings](#) (2026-03-30 16:00)

Police operatives seized P6.1 million worth of shabu in Lucena City on Sunday and another P3.4 million worth in Zamboanga City yesterday, authorities said.

- [PNP probes lapses in Maguindanao ambush](#) (2026-03-30 16:00)

The Philippine National Police is investigating possible administrative lapses on the part of the Maguindanao del Sur provincial PNP chief after Saturday night's ambush in Shariff Aguak that left five policemen dead and three others wounded.

- [DOJ workers' data sent to PAGCOR](#) (2026-03-30 16:00)

Enforcing the gambling ban on state officials and employees, the Department of Justice will submit the data of DOJ personnel to the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

- [LTFRB: P651 million released for fuel subsidy](#) (2026-03-30 16:00)

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board has released over P651 million in fuel subsidies to public utility vehicle drivers affected by the energy crisis.

- [Point-to-point carpooling in MetroManila eyed](#) (2026-03-30 16:00)

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority yesterday proposed a point-to-point and time-restricted carpooling after the Lenten break.

- [44 airports on Holy Week alert](#) (2026-03-30 16:00)

Forty-four airports operated by the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines are on heightened alert as passenger traffic is expected to surge during Holy Week.

- [Police corporal, companion killed in Lanao del Sur ambush](#) (2026-03-30 10:36)

Gunmen killed a police corporal and his male civilian companion in an ambush in Barangay Paglamatan, Saguiaran, Lanao del Sur, before dawn on Saturday, March 28.

- [Special probe group formed for ambush of BARMM cops](#) (2026-03-30 10:28)

Police in the Bangsamoro region have organized a special group to probe the fatal ambush of five patrolmen in an attack on Saturday night, March 28, in Barangay Mother Poblacion, Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao del Sur.

- [WATCH: Inside Metro Manila Subway's Camp Aguinaldo station](#) (2026-03-30 07:31)

Philstar.com was among those given access to the site, where excavation and structural works are progressing.

- [Fuel supply issues shut more than 300 gas stations](#) (2026-03-30 07:11)

Fuel supply disruptions force hundreds of gas stations to close nationwide.

- [New CAVITEX link seen to cut Taguig-Parañaque travel to 15 minutes](#) (2026-03-30 04:26)

A new CAVITEX segment is expected to cut travel time between Taguig and Parañaque to just 15 minutes.

- [500 Bilibid inmates transferred to Palawan's Iwahig facility](#) (2026-03-30 03:25)

The Bureau of Corrections has transferred 500 inmates to a Palawan penal facility.

- [Fishing boats have sat idle since fuel price spikes](#) (2026-03-30 02:56)

Small fisherfolk have halted operations as diesel prices surge, with groups warning of rising production costs.

- [Price Watch: Oil, fuel monitor for Mar. 30](#) (2026-03-29 23:45)

Pump prices differ sharply across Metro Manila as oil volatility continues.

- [Free trike rides in Caloocan set](#) (2026-03-29 16:00)

Free tricycle rides in Caloocan City will start on April 6 amid the impact of soaring fuel prices on commuters and the transport sector.

- [San Juan flagship programs cited](#) (2026-03-29 16:00)

San Juan Mayor Francis Zamora highlighted his administration's flagship housing, health care and education programs during his State of the City Address on Friday.

- [Stronger mental health programs sought](#) (2026-03-29 16:00)

Prompted by an alarming surge in suicide cases in Metro Manila, Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian is calling for the immediate and intensified rollout of comprehensive mental health programs to protect vulnerable Filipinos.

- [40 Celsius heat index seen](#) (2026-03-29 16:00)

Four areas in the country are expected to experience heat indices of 40 degrees Celsius and above, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

- [Boy, 8, hurt in grenade attack near airbase](#) (2026-03-29 16:00)

An eight-year-old boy was wounded and a taxi was damaged when a disgruntled laborer and his uncle fired a shotgun and lobbed a grenade near Lumbia Airbase here on Saturday evening.

- [CHED to build P159.8 million Zamboanga dormitory](#) (2026-03-29 16:00)

The Commission on Higher Education will build a P159.8-million, six-story dormitory to provide students in Zamboanga accommodation while they complete their studies, the CHED said.

- [Pag-asa Island breaks ground for first Catholic church](#) (2026-03-29 16:00)

A Catholic chapel will open on Pag-asa Island in the West Philippine Sea (WPS), with Puerto Princesa Bishop Socrates Mesiona leading the groundbreaking ceremony over the weekend.

- [President Marcos declares local holidays](#) (2026-03-29 16:00)

President Marcos has declared special non-working days in five municipalities and one province to allow residents to fully participate in the celebration of their founding anniversaries in April.

- [5 cops killed, 3 wounded in Maguindanao Sur ambush](#) (2026-03-29 16:00)

Five policemen were killed while three others were wounded in an ambush in Barangay Mother Poblacion on Saturday night, the Philippine National Police said.

- [NNIC sees 1.35 million Holy Week travelers](#) (2026-03-29 16:00)

Over 1.35 million passengers are expected at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport during Holy Week, according to the New NAIA Infra Corp.

- [3 shabu dealers linked to Dawlah terror group remnants arrested](#) (2026-03-29 09:20)

Agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency arrested three more shabu peddlers, who were remitting earnings to remnants of the now-defunct Dawlah Islamiya terror group, in an entrapment operation in Barangay Poblacion, Datu Paglas, Maguindanao del Sur, on Friday, March 27.

- [P11.7M unregistered cooking oil seized in Benguet capital](#) (2026-03-29 07:21)

Authorities seized about P11.7 million worth of unregistered cooking oil and apprehended four men during a raid in Puguis, La Trinidad, Benguet, on Thursday, March 26.

- [Nationwide communications support activated for Holy Week](#) (2026-03-29 07:00)

The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) has mobilized nationwide public assistance operations to ensure reliable and uninterrupted communications during the Holy Week observance.

- [Aetas benefit from multi-phase outreach program by reservists, PAF](#) (2026-03-29 04:00)

Nearly 300 Aeta-Indigenous Peoples (IPs) received more than what they wished for during the multi-phase outreach program organized recently by Association of the Reservists and Reservist Administrators of the Philippines Inc.

- [5 cops killed, 3 wounded in Maguindanao del Sur ambush](#) (2026-03-29 03:34)

Five policemen were killed, while three others were wounded in an ambush in Barangay Mother Poblacion in Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao del Sur on Saturday night, March 28.

- [PhilHealth paid P15.8 billion for pneumonia last year](#) (2026-03-28 16:00)

The Philippine Health Insurance Corp. has paid P15.8 billion for pneumonia, the top medical condition it reimbursed in 2025, the PhilHealth said.

- [UP releases study on robotic assisted stroke rehabilitation](#) (2026-03-28 16:00)

Researchers achieved an 86-percent response accuracy rate for a hand orthosis for stroke rehabilitation, using surface electromyography signals, a study released by University of the Philippines Diliman Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs showed.

- [Quezon City cop sacked over illegal discharge of firearm](#) (2026-03-28 16:00)

A policeman was relieved from his post after he illegally discharged his firearm in Barangay Payatas A on March 16, the Quezon City Police District said yesterday.

- [Pasig court orders inspection of KOJC sites](#) (2026-03-28 16:00)

To verify accuracy and dismiss ambiguity in testimonies, some properties of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in Pasig, Quezon and Davao cities will be inspected by a Pasig court as part of the trial against KOJC founder Apollo Quiboloy and five others.

- [More passengers expected at PITX](#) (2026-03-28 16:00)

With many people opting to travel by bus to save fuel, the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange said more passengers might use PITX this Holy Week.

- [DILG urges consumers to use Kadiwa stores](#) (2026-03-28 16:00)

As people continue to look for ways to deal with soaring prices of fuel and basic commodities, the Department of the Interior and Local Government urged consumers to purchase goods from Kadiwa ng Pangulo outlets nationwide.

- [Philippines, US troops to construct school building in Palawan](#) (2026-03-28 16:00)

Filipino and American soldiers are working together for the construction of a two-classroom building in El Nido, Palawan, as part of this year's Balikatan Exercise.

- [2,000 cops to secure Lent, summer vacation in Central Luzon](#) (2026-03-28 16:00)

Up to 2,000 police officers will be deployed across Central Luzon starting today, to secure travelers and motorists who will spend the summer and Holy Week in the provinces.

- [2 community workers' conviction for terror financing affirmed](#) (2026-03-28 16:00)

A trial court in Tacloban, Leyte has affirmed its earlier ruling finding community journalist Frenchie Mae Cumpio and church worker Mariel Domequil guilty of terror financing.

- [2 die as river sweeps SUV away](#) (2026-03-28 16:00)

Two photojournalists died while four others were rescued after their sport utility vehicle was swept away by the current in a river in this town on Friday.

- [Soccksargen residents get aid to ease effects of rising fuel costs](#) (2026-03-28 09:48)

Local government units and private firms are now distributing cash grants and extending “food-for-work” assistance to marginalized workers in parts of Region 12 as a remedy to lack of income caused by the spiraling prices of petroleum products that are sold in their towns and cities.

- [Cotabato province earned P1.1-billion revenue surplus in 2025](#) (2026-03-28 09:21)

The provincial government of Cotabato has generated a P1.1 billion revenue surplus in 2025 and officials are expecting bigger tax collections this year via extensive initiatives supported by the Muslim, Christian and non-Moro indigenous communities.

- [PNP probes cop moonlighting as Chinese fugitive’ s escort](#) (2026-03-27 16:00)

A policeman is in hot water for allegedly moonlighting as a security escort for a Chinese arrested in Makati on Wednesday for telecom fraud abroad.

- [President Marcos opens NAIAX](#) (2026-03-27 16:00)

President Marcos led the opening yesterday of the westbound off-ramp of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Expressway (NAIAX) along Andrews Avenue leading to NAIA Terminal 3 in Pasay City.

- [MMDA eyes carpooling to reduce fuel use](#) (2026-03-27 16:00)

To help people cope with rising costs and reduce the consumption of fuel, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority has proposed a carpooling and shuttle service scheme to the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board.

- [PDP marks Duterte’ s birthday with 81 cakes](#) (2026-03-27 16:00)

Members of the Partido Demokratiko Pilipino (PDP) based in this city will celebrate today the 81st birthday of former president Rodrigo Duterte.

- [Baguio City named ‘Resilience Hub’](#) (2026-03-27 16:00)

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) has named Baguio City as a “Resilience Hub.”

- [Lava, pyroclastic flows detected at Mayon Volcano](#) (2026-03-27 16:00)

State volcanologists yesterday detected a collapse of lava deposits on the summit crater of Mayon Volcano in Albay, which generated incandescent lava flows and pyroclastic density

currents.

- [P47.44 million smuggled food products seized in Subic](#) (2026-03-27 16:00)

Smuggled frozen and processed food products worth P47.44 million have been seized at the port of Subic, according to the Bureau of Customs.

- [‘Farmers, fisherfolk can buy fuel in portable containers’](#) (2026-03-27 16:00)

Amid surging fuel prices and to prevent hoarding, the Department of Energy (DOE) has allowed farmers and fisherfolk to use portable containers to purchase petroleum products.

- [House bill seeks to broaden economic crisis response amid oil price surge](#) (2026-03-27 13:26)

A measure has been filed in Congress Friday, March 27, aiming to establish a more comprehensive and permanent system for faster, more proactive economic crisis response.

- [Cannabis greenhouse raided in Benguet](#) (2026-03-27 10:14)

Authorities overran a suspected marijuana greenhouse in Tublay, Benguet, on Thursday, March 26.

- [Cops seize P12.8-M worth smuggled cigarettes in Lanao del Sur](#) (2026-03-27 09:58)

Policemen seized P12.8 million worth of cigarettes from Indonesia in an anti-smuggling operation in the seaside town of Malabang, Lanao del Sur, late Wednesday, March 25.

- [Gunmen behind P3.2-million heist in Cotabato City arrested](#) (2026-03-27 09:43)

Policemen promptly arrested three robbers who stole P3.2 million worth of gold jewelry and cash at gunpoint from a Moro family in a daring heist in Barangay Bagua 2, Cotabato City, on Thursday afternoon, March 26.

- [Moro villagers surrender 17 more combat weapons to Army](#) (2026-03-27 09:13)

Residents of Mamasapano town in Maguindanao del Sur surrendered assault rifles, B40 rocket launchers, and mortars on Thursday, March 26, as part of a disarmament program led by the Army and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation, and Unity in the province.

- [Tagle to preside over Fulton Sheen beatification](#) (2026-03-26 16:00)

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, the Vatican’s pro-prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization, will represent Pope Leo XIV and preside over the beatification mass for US Bishop Fulton Sheen in September.

- [No foul play in Pasig teen death](#) (2026-03-26 16:00)

The Pasig City police has ruled out foul play in the death of a 15-year-old Grade 9 student, whose body was found in a private compound after she went missing for nearly a week.

- [Missing Chinese national found dead](#) (2026-03-26 16:00)

A Chinese national earlier reported missing was found dead in Datu Piang, Maguindanao del Sur on Wednesday.

- [P6.6 million expired food items seized in Central Luzon](#) (2026-03-26 16:00)

Expired food products worth P6.6 million have been seized from a Chinese businessman and a barangay kagawad in separate police operations in Central Luzon.

- [Marcos inspects post-harvest facilities in Isabela](#) (2026-03-26 16:00)

President Marcos yesterday visited the province of Isabela to oversee ongoing efforts aimed at assisting farmers and enhancing access to health services.

- [Tagbilaran residents get free rides](#) (2026-03-26 16:00)

The city government of Tagbilaran in Bohol is offering free rides to cushion the impact of high fuel prices on the riding public.

- [‘Energy woes may affect BARMM poll preparations’](#) (2026-03-26 16:00)

The energy problem brought by the war in the Middle East may affect preparations for the conduct of the first parliamentary elections in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, according to the Commission on Elections.

- [40 degrees Celsius heat index seen in 4 areas](#) (2026-03-26 16:00)

Four areas in the country are expected to experience heat indices of 40 degrees Celsius and above, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

- [DOH: Hospitals ready for heat-related illnesses](#) (2026-03-26 16:00)

Hospitals are prepared to attend to patients suffering from heat-related illnesses, especially heat stroke, the Department of Health said yesterday.

- [UP Diliman chancellor gets another term](#) (2026-03-26 16:00)

University of the Philippines Diliman chancellor Carlo Vistan II will serve for three more years after the Board of Regents voted to continue his leadership.

- [Cops seize P6.8 million worth of shabu in Lanao operation](#) (2026-03-26 10:41)

Policemen seized P6.8 million worth of shabu from three dealers, one of them a woman, entrapped in Lumbatan town in Lanao del Sur on Tuesday afternoon, March 24.

- [Missing Chinese national found buried in Maguindanao](#) (2026-03-26 10:19)

Policemen and barangay officials exhumed on Wednesday, March 25, from a shallow grave in Barangay Masigay in Datu Piang, Maguindanao del Sur a male Chinese national who was reported missing two days before.

- [Free ride routes on March 26 amid transport strikes](#) (2026-03-26 02:59)

The Department of Transportation (DOTr) on Thursday deployed free rides amid nationwide transport strikes due to soaring fuel prices driven by the United States-Israel's war on Iran.

- [BARMM execs upbeat amid election reset law](#) (2026-03-26 01:00)

Key officials in the Bangsamoro region expressed support and optimism following the signing of Republic Act No. 12317 by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., which resets the historic parliamentary elections here to September 2026.

- [LGUs suspend local gatherings to conserve fuel, energy](#) (2026-03-25 16:00)

Several local government units have canceled activities lined up for the celebration of local festivals and milestones, in compliance with national energy conservation measures.

- [Palace deploys 290 'doctors to the barrios'](#) (2026-03-25 16:00)

To ensure accessible health care services for Filipinos, President Marcos has directed the Department of Health to send more physicians to remote areas.

- [493,000 families eyed as new 4Ps beneficiaries](#) (2026-03-25 16:00)

Up to 493,000 poor families may qualify as new beneficiaries of the government's Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program or 4Ps following a validation and verification process this month, according to the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

- [PAGASA monitoring development of El Niño](#) (2026-03-25 16:00)

The country may experience El Niño beginning in the third quarter of the year, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

- [Marcos resets BARMM polls](#) (2026-03-25 16:00)

President Marcos has signed into law a measure rescheduling the first parliamentary election in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao to the second Monday of September this year.

- [617 Pinoys repatriated from Middle East](#) (2026-03-25 16:00)

Around 617 Filipinos have been repatriated as the Middle East conflict continues, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

- [174 held in e-sabong raid in Tondo](#) (2026-03-25 16:00)

Up to 174 people were rounded up after police raided an illegal online cockfighting operation in Tondo, Manila on Tuesday night.

- [25,818 balikbayan boxes released](#) (2026-03-25 16:00)

Up to 25,818 balikbayan boxes abandoned by cargo handlers have been delivered to the families of overseas Filipino workers.

- [P44 billion for Metro Manila subway project OK'](#) d (2026-03-25 16:00)

About P44.17 billion has been released by the government to avoid project delays for the Metro Manila Subway Project phase 1 and North-South Commuter Railway (NSCR) System.

- [HPG chief quits amid sex raps](#) (2026-03-25 16:00)

Brig. Gen. Jessie Tamayao resigned yesterday as Highway Patrol Group (HPG) director post after a policewoman accused him of sexual harassment.

- [Security guard, brother hurt in South Cotabato ambush](#) (2026-03-25 10:49)

A security guard and his brother were seriously wounded in an ambush in a remote area of Polomolok town, South Cotabato, on Tuesday night, March 24.

- [BARMM officials want import of fuel from Brunei, Malaysia](#) (2026-03-25 09:45)

Bangsamoro regional officials are seeking Malacañang's permission for their constituent traders to import petroleum products from Brunei and Malaysia, which are much cheaper than those purchased by big companies from the Middle East and sold across the country.

- [PAGASA raises El Niño Watch, sees possible onset by July](#) (2026-03-25 09:28)

El Niño Watch is raised, with forecasts pointing to a possible return of dry conditions by midyear.

- [Humid, hotter weather to prevail as dry season starts](#) (2026-03-24 16:00)

Humid weather is starting to be felt nationwide as the dry season begins, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said yesterday.

- [Bicol workers to receive pay hike this year – DOLE](#) (2026-03-24 16:00)

Workers in the private sector in Bicol will receive this year an increase in their monthly pay, which will be given in two tranches, according to the Department of Labor and Employment.

- [Land grabbing complaint filed vs Harry Roque](#) (2026-03-24 16:00)

A group of farmers from Mariveles, Bataan filed a complaint of land grabbing against former presidential spokesman Harry Roque and several others in connection with the transfer of ownership of parcels of land covered by the agrarian reform law.

- [5 La Union LGUs provide fuel subsidy to farmers, fisherfolk](#) (2026-03-24 16:00)

The municipal governments of Balaoan, Bangar, Caba, Santol and Sudipen in this province have provided fuel subsidy to farmers, fisherfolk and tricycle drivers and operators to help them cope with the high cost of petroleum products.

- [Missing Grade 9 student found dead in Pasig](#) (2026-03-24 16:00)

A 15-year-old Grade 9 student who has been missing for nearly a week was found dead at a private compound in Barangay Santolan, Pasig on Monday.

- [EDSA rehab on track – DPWH](#) (2026-03-24 16:00)

The first phase of the EDSA rehabilitation is on track for completion by May, the Department of Public Works and Highways said yesterday.

- [Makati shifts to renewable energy](#) (2026-03-24 16:00)

Amid the global oil crisis, facilities of the Makati city government will operate using renewable energy sources.

- [P4.56 billion assorted illegal drugs torched in Cavite](#) (2026-03-24 16:00)

Assorted types of illegal drugs valued at more than P4.56 billion were destroyed in Trece Martires, Cavite yesterday morning.

- [BOC intercepts P1 billion illegal vapes in Navotas](#) (2026-03-24 16:00)

Illegal e-cigarettes and vape products valued at more than P1 billion have been confiscated in Navotas City.

- [Isko ex-aide's gunman nabbed](#) (2026-03-24 16:00)

Authorities arrested on Monday the gunman in the killing of retired police officer George Capistrano in Tondo, Manila.

- [P6.8 million worth of shabu seized in 2 Mindanao anti-narcotics stings](#) (2026-03-24 10:57)

Agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency and policemen seized up to P6.8 million worth of shabu in separate operations in Maguindanao del Sur and Sulu provinces on Monday, March 23, laid with the help of Muslim clerics and local executives.

- [BARMM execs launch 2026-2028 governance framework](#) (2026-03-24 10:46)

Officials of the Bangsamoro autonomous regional government together launched on Monday, March 23, the “Mas Matatag na Bansamoro Agenda” as a framework for their 2026-2028 governance thrusts, parallel with the Mindanao peace process.

- [Coast Guard vessel BRP Cape Engaño catches fire in Palawan port](#) (2026-03-24 07:27)

The Philippine Coast Guard said that the BRP Cape Engaño (MRRV-4411) was hit by a fire early Monday morning while moored at the International Cruise Ship Port in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.

- [Zambales residents back charter changes for Magsaysay-named university, reject renaming](#) (2026-03-24 01:25)

Following the withdrawal of a bill seeking to rename the President Ramon Magsaysay State University (PRMSU) and enact certain amendments to its charter, Zambales residents now said they favor charter revisions but without the proposed name change.

## Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer

- [Hatiran: Cardona, Rizal’ s quiet procession that opens Holy Week](#) (2026-03-31 14:00)

MANILA, Philippines — Holy Week began on Palm Sunday, March 29, with a silent yet deeply moving display of devotion in Cardona, Rizal, as residents carried religious images depicting the Passion and death of Jesus Christ through the streets. Delicately kept in homes throughout the year, the images are brought out and paraded one by

- [Fuel hikes push car owners to buses, boost PITX ridership](#) (2026-03-31 13:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Rising fuel prices have prompted some car owners to shift to public transportation, contributing to an increase in passenger volume at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX), an official said Tuesday. According to PITX spokesperson Jason Salvador, the uptick in passengers this Holy Week may be linked to motorists opting not to

- [DOTr awaits release order for P1-billion service contracting program](#) (2026-03-31 13:33)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Transportation (DOTr) is waiting for the Department of Budget and Management’ s (DBM) special allotment release order (SARO) for P1 billion to fund the government’ s service contracting program. In a press briefing in Camp Crame on Tuesday, DOTr Secretary Giovanni Lopez noted that their department had requested for the SARO

- [Palace to critics: Wake up, flood control probe still ongoing](#) (2026-03-31 13:16)

MANILA, Philippines — “Hoy, gising (Hey, wake up)!” This was the response of Palace press officer Claire Castro to critics claiming the administration’ s probe on anomalous flood control projects did not come to fruition. According to Castro, the government has not forgotten the investigation and is still pursuing individuals involved in the flood control scandal,

- [Palace on Imee Marcos’ failure to guide her brother: ‘Who misbehaved?’](#) (2026-03-31 13:11)

MANILA, Philippines — The Holy Week may be a time for reflection and forgiveness, but not for the long-estranged siblings – President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Senator Imee Marcos. Malacañang hit back at the president’s sister for allegedly dragging their father’s name into their falling out over political and personal issues. In a briefing on Tuesday,

- [Leviste unfazed by ‘DDS’ tag: Only DDS want final report from ICI](#) (2026-03-31 12:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Batangas Rep. Leandro Legarda Leviste is unbothered by any tags or accusations that he is among the supporters of former President Rodrigo Duterte, as Duterte-aligned lawmakers were the only ones asking for the Independent Commission for Infrastructure (ICI) reports. Leviste on Tuesday was asked if he was not afraid of being associated to

- [PCG on full alert, deploys 17,000 personnel for Holy Week 2026 — DOTr](#) (2026-03-31 12:53)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Coast Guard is now on full alert and has deployed around 17,000 personnel for security at transport hubs and along sea travel routes for the Holy Week exodus, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) said on Tuesday. “Our Coast Guard is ready to help and assist our countrymen,” DOTr Secretary Giovanni

- [DPWH pauses road work projects to give way to Holy Week exodus](#) (2026-03-31 12:31)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) ordered all its offices to pause construction projects across the country to give way for travel during the Holy Week exodus. “Our instruction to all district engineers and regional offices is that there should be no ongoing projects. No one should build. No one

- [INQToday: Volume of passengers builds up in Cubao bus stations, Naia on Holy Tuesday](#) (2026-03-31 12:23)

Volume of passengers builds up in Cubao bus stations on Holy Tuesday As early as 8 a.m. on Holy Tuesday (March 31), passengers have started flocking to bus terminals in Cubao, Quezon City opting to travel early to their provinces ahead of the expected Holy Week travel rush. NAIA passenger volume on Holy Tuesday slightly

- [DOTr to expand road clearing ops for Holy Week 2026](#) (2026-03-31 12:21)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Transportation (DOTr) will be expanding its road clearing operations starting on Wednesday ahead of the influx of travelers for the Holy Week. While authorities usually cleared the country’s expressways and the Maharlika Highway, in a press briefing in Camp Crame on Tuesday, DOTr Secretary Giovanni Lopez said the initiative

- [Palace: Gov’t employees to be on half-day, work-from-home setup Holy Wed](#) (2026-03-31 11:53)

MANILA, Philippines — Government employees will be on a half-day work-from-home arrangement on Holy Wednesday, Palace Press Officer Claire Castro announced on Tuesday.

“On April 1, all government employees will work from home from 8:00 AM to 12:00 noon. From 12:01 PM to 5:00 PM, there will be no work,” Castro told reporters. Work arrangements for

- [2 drug suspects held, P867,000 worth of shabu seized in Lucena City](#) (2026-03-31 11:46)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon — Police seized suspected shabu worth an estimated P867,000 from two alleged drug pushers in separate buy-bust operations here on Monday. Col. Romulo Albacea, Quezon police chief, said in a report Tuesday that operatives of the Provincial Drug Enforcement Unit (PDEU) arrested a suspect identified only as “Opaw,” 28, at around 7:50

- [Faith, creativity meet in Holy Week art retreat in Calapan](#) (2026-03-31 11:45)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Faith took on color, texture, and form as artists and participants gathered for a reflective “Holy Week Art Retreat” on Holy Monday (March 30), transforming a quiet space into what organizers described as a “sacred encounter” through art. The retreat, dubbed “Articulating Prayer Experience through Art,” was held at the

- [Faith thrives in Philippines as social tensions persist, data show](#) (2026-03-31 11:43)

MANILA, Philippines — As Lent calls Filipinos to prayer, sacrifice and reflection, new global data suggest the country’s deepest divides may lie not in belief itself, but in how it is lived alongside others. Drawing on data from the Pew Research Center, Dr. Rogelio Alicor Panao, an associate professor at the University of the Philippines

- [3 dead in Nueva Ecija irrigation canal drowning](#) (2026-03-31 11:38)

GUIMBA, Nueva Ecija — Three people died after reportedly attempting to swim in an irrigation canal in Barangay Naglabrahan on Monday afternoon. The victims were identified as cousins Ruben Benavidez, 31, and Elmer Benavidez, 47, both residents of the village, and Jomar Gobrin, 29, a native of Matnog, Sorsogon City. The incident was reported around

- [Group seeks conversion of faithful to ‘sustainable practices’](#) (2026-03-31 11:30)

TACLOBAN CITY — As the country observes Holy Week, the nongovernmental organization BAN Toxics is urging the Filipino faithful to adopt sustainable and environmentally responsible practices, citing rising energy costs, water scarcity, and the intensifying climate crisis. In a statement released on March 29, the group highlighted the impact of extreme heat, noting that last

- [BARMM chief creates oil crisis task force](#) (2026-03-31 11:22)

COTABATO CITY – Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) interim Chief Minister Abdulraof Macacua has formed the inter-agency Bangsamoro Oil Crisis Impact Task Force (BOCITF) to monitor the impact of the oil crisis in communities throughout the region. Macacua said the effort seeks to hedge against profiteering and opportunistic traders as well as address the socioeconomic impact of

- [1 dead, 5 injured in four-vehicle crash in Tacloban City](#) (2026-03-31 11:12)

TACLOBAN CITY — A 61-year-old man died while five others were injured in a four-vehicle collision along Maharlika Highway in Barangay 93, Bagacay, Tacloban City, on Monday. Police identified the fatality only as “Terry”, of Jaro, Leyte, who was driving a Skygo motorcycle. He was declared dead on arrival at the Eastern Visayas Medical Center

- [Process to sainthood begins for Bishop Guerrero](#) (2026-03-31 11:05)

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga — The Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan has launched its diocesan inquiry for the beatification cause of Bishop Cesar Maria Guerrero, who pioneered dioceses, established seminaries, and promoted Marian devotions. The ceremony at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Dagupan City on March 27 followed approval from the Dicastery for

- [Makabayan lawmakers urge decisive action on rising fuel prices](#) (2026-03-31 10:59)

MANILA, Philippines — Lawmakers from the Makabayan bloc on Tuesday urged the House of Representatives to ensure that upcoming joint hearings on the oil crisis result in substantive measures rather than stopgap or “publicity-driven” actions. In a statement, ACT Teachers party-list Rep. Antonio Tinio, Gabriela party-list Rep. Sarah Elago, and Kabataan party-list Rep. Renee

- [‘Stranded’ helper gets job hours after online plea](#) (2026-03-31 10:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Job offers came flooding in for a household helper who had been stranded in a Quezon City bus terminal after her ordeal went online. Several social media users, whether in Facebook comments and private messages to this reporter, have expressed their willingness to hire Carmen Pepito Dela Cruz, 53, after her failed job

- [Mt. Banahaw fire affects grassland areas in Quezon – DENR](#) (2026-03-31 10:50)

LUCENA CITY — A brush fire that broke out atop Mt. Banahaw in Quezon province on Sunday, March 29, burned approximately 1,000 square meters of grassland, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) reported. In a report submitted Monday to DENR Calabarzon director Nilo Tamoria, park superintendent Josephine Barrion said the fire affected areas

- [Cardinal David’ s new book shows Jesus’ ‘humanity and compassion’](#) (2026-03-31 10:32)

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga — “Get to know Jesus as a human being.” This was how Cardinal Pablo Virgilio S. David opened the Pampanga-leg launch of his book Yeshua (Son of Man) here recently. David, a native of Betis, Guagua, cautioned the audience about the challenge of this approach, noting that Yeshua—Jesus in Hebrew—has

- [Marcos to observe Holy Week in Ilocos Norte](#) (2026-03-31 10:32)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will spend Holy Week in Ilocos Norte but will continue to monitor and issue directives to government agencies responding to the Middle East conflict. In a brief media interview in Nueva Ecija on Tuesday, Marcos said he plans to observe Lent in his home province before returning to the city.

- [Marcos on opening of CLLEX in Nueva Ecija: It will be toll-free until Dec](#) (2026-03-31 10:30)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday announced that the newly opened San Juan Interchange of the Central Luzon Link Expressway (CLLEX) in Aliaga, Nueva Ecija will be toll-free until December 2026. This expressway is expected to cut travel time between Tarlac and Cabanatuan to just 20 minutes. In a brief media statement during

- [Drivers urged to stay disciplined, avoid road rage this Holy Week](#) (2026-03-31 10:14)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Tuesday encouraged all drivers and motorists to exercise discipline and avoid road rage as they hit the roads this Holy Week. LTFRB chairperson Atty. Vigor Mendoza III emphasized the importance of drivers keeping their cool, noting past road rage incidents

- [Iloilo City to distribute additional fuel aid to PUJ drivers](#) (2026-03-31 10:13)

ILOILO CITY— The Iloilo City government will continue distributing fuel subsidy coupons to public utility jeepney (PUJ) drivers on April 9 as part of efforts to ease the impact of rising fuel prices on the transport sector. The city announced on Tuesday, March 31, that a total of 1,600 PUJ drivers and operators qualified for

- [LOOK: Thousands of travelers show up at Naia; most got tickets in advance](#) (2026-03-31 10:06)

MANILA, Philippines — Thousands of passengers have showed up at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) in Pasay City for this year's Holy Week, according to the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA). In an interview with the Inquirer, MIAA General Manager Eric Jose Ines said that the arrival and departure of travelers have been going

- [Kidapawan villagers line up for P20 per kilo rice](#) (2026-03-31 09:58)

KIDAPAWAN CITY — Villagers flocked to the National Food Authority (NFA)–Cotabato warehouse early Monday morning to avail themselves of rice priced at P20 per kilogram. To accommodate demand, NFA-Cotabato increased the purchase limit per individual from 10 kilos to 30 kilos, giving better access to residents coming from far-flung barangays. Despite the adjustments, some villagers

- [Over 600 cops deployed across Zambales for Holy Week](#) (2026-03-31 09:57)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales — More than 600 police officers have been deployed across the province as part of heightened security measures for the observance of Holy Week, the provincial police office said Monday. According to the Zambales Police Provincial Office (PPO),

personnel were deployed to various municipalities starting Palm Sunday, with security boosted in churches

- [No price spike yet in Bicol food markets amid fuel crisis — DA](#) (2026-03-31 09:31)

LEGAZPI CITY — Prices of basic food items in the Bicol region have remained stable despite the ongoing petroleum products crisis. Lovella Guarin, Department of Agriculture regional information officer, told the Inquirer in a private message that retail prices across major public markets have so far shown no unusual spikes. “We have not yet observed

- [Donsol cancels Butanding Festival amid oil price surge](#) (2026-03-31 09:22)

LEGAZPI CITY — The local government of Donsol in Sorsogon province has canceled this year’s Butanding Festival, originally set from April 24 to 30, citing the impact of rising oil prices. Desiree Abitria, municipal tourism officer, said the decision was reached during an emergency meeting with the town’s tourism committee. “We unanimously agreed that everyone

- [Biodiesel project expanded across Bacolod villages](#) (2026-03-31 09:09)

BACOLOD CITY—Deputy House Speaker and Bacolod Rep. Alfredo Abelardo Benitez announced on Monday the expansion of a biodiesel project to more barangays in Bacolod City, aiming to cushion the impact of rising fuel costs while creating livelihood opportunities. Biodiesel, a renewable alternative to fossil fuels, is produced from vegetable oils, animal fats, used cooking oil,

- [3 former communist rebels surrender in Masbate](#) (2026-03-31 08:57)

LEGAZPI CITY — Three alleged members of a communist group in Masbate voluntarily surrendered to the authorities in the province on Sunday in the town of Baleno, police reported on Monday. Police Brigadier General Erosito Miranda, chief of the Bicol police, said the surrender resulted from coordinated efforts among units under the Masbate Police Provincial

- [LOOK: Volume of passengers builds up in Cubao bus stations on Holy Tuesday](#) (2026-03-31 08:54)

MANILA, Philippines — As early as 8 a.m. on Holy Tuesday (March 31), passengers have started flocking to bus terminals in Cubao, Quezon City opting to travel early to their provinces ahead of the expected Holy Week travel rush. Here are some images.

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of March 31, 2026](#) (2026-03-31 08:53)

MANILA, Philippines – Local fuel prices are set to end the month with no reprieve in sight, as motorists face another round of increases this Tuesday, March 31, driven by rising global oil costs. Oil firms on Monday announced that they would implement price increases for diesel, reaching P12.50 to P12.90 a liter while gasoline

- [Manhunt on for gunmen in killing of police corporal in Lanao del Sur](#) (2026-03-31 08:23)

MANILA, Philippines — The police are now on the hunt for the gunmen behind the killing of a police corporal and his companion in Lanao del Sur. “Hot pursuit operations are ongoing and we are confident that those responsible will be caught. We will not stop until we hold them accountable,” Philippine National Police (PNP)

- [Irrigation project enables 3rd cropping in Iloilo town](#) (2026-03-31 07:24)

ILOILO CITY — For the first time, 517 farmer-members of the Agbato Calinog Irrigators Association Inc. in the municipality of Calinog in Iloilo embarked on a third cropping, or double dry season cropping. This comes following the successful delivery of irrigation waters from the Jalaur River Multipurpose Project Stage II (JRMP II). Steve Cordero, officer-in-charge for

- [Heat index in Cotabato City may hit 41°C; 70 areas on alert](#) (2026-03-31 07:10)

MANILA, Philippines — The heat index in Cotabato City is expected to hit 41 degrees Celsius on Tuesday, March 31, placing it under the “extreme caution” category, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration. PAGASA classifies heat index levels between 33°C and 41°C as “extreme caution,” where heat cramps and heat exhaustion

- [Cloudy weather expected over PH on Tuesday, March 31](#) (2026-03-31 07:09)

MANILA, Philippines — Partly cloudy to cloudy weather is expected over the whole country on Tuesday, March 31, the state weather bureau said. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) reported that Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies. There is a chance of thunderstorms in

- [Carpooling eyed in Metro under strict guidelines](#) (2026-03-31 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) will soon release special permits to individuals or companies seeking to enroll in the government’s carpooling program, as a way to provide alternative transportation to commuters. At a briefing on Monday, officials of the LTFRB, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) and Land Transportation Office

- [Lawyers’ group: 80% of travelers won’t benefit from airport fee cuts](#) (2026-03-31 05:45)

MANILA, Philippines — A group of lawyers has criticized the rollout of airport fee discounts scheduled in April, saying around 80 percent of travelers cannot benefit from the measure since it does not cover Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia), which is now under a private operator. The Department of Transportation recently announced the reduction of

- [Marcos: New Cavite segment toll-free this April](#) (2026-03-31 05:15)

MANILA, Philippines — The newly opened Manila-Cavite Expressway (Cavite) C-5 Link Segment 3B will be free for use by motorists until the end of April to help those traveling during the Holy Week, according to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. The President on Monday led the opening of

the six-lane, 2-kilometer connector road, which is expected

- [DOJ, Pagcor sign MOA barring all department personnel from casinos](#) (2026-03-31 05:05)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) on Monday entered into a memorandum of agreement (MOA) to include all DOJ officials and employees to the list of persons banned from casinos. Pagcor chair and CEO Alejandro Tengco said the MOA was the first to be signed

- [8 bus firms face probe for illegal fare increases](#) (2026-03-31 05:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTRFB) on Monday reminded bus companies not to take advantage of passengers headed home to their provinces during the Holy Week break, as it received a report about bus firms that had raised their fares illegally. Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez also issued a similar reminder,

- [Woman stranded at QC bus terminal after failed job hunt](#) (2026-03-31 04:50)

MANILA, Philippines — A 53-year-old woman has been waiting patiently since the weekend at the Victory Bus Liner terminal in Quezon City, not for a bus ride but for a job offer. “I am just here to look for a job as a house helper,” Carmen Pepito dela Cruz told the Inquirer on Monday. She

- [Social media ban pushed anew for kids 16 and below](#) (2026-03-31 04:45)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian on Monday renewed his call for a social media ban on individuals aged 16 and below after the Indonesian government blocked children below 16 years old from high-risk platforms. In a press statement, Gatchalian cited the results of the 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment, which found that for

- [Local terrorist group eyed in Maguindanao ambush](#) (2026-03-31 04:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) is investigating the possible involvement of a local terrorist group in the deadly ambush in Maguindanao del Sur that killed five police officers and wounded three others last Saturday night. PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Randulf Tuaño said in a press briefing at Camp Crame on Monday that

- [In Zamboanga City, island folk finally get safe water](#) (2026-03-31 04:35)

ZAMBOANGA CITY, Philippines — For years, residents of Barangay Tumulutab Island began their mornings lining up with empty containers, waiting for water deliveries by boat from the city’s mainland. At P50 to P70 per five-gallon container, clean water was a daily financial burden for families in the island barangay. That routine has begun to change.

- [Repatriated OFW lands job at Bulacan fair](#) (2026-03-31 04:30)

CITY OF MALOLOS, BULACAN, Philippines — One of Bulacan’s eight repatriated overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) from the Middle East has already secured employment through a job

fair organized by the Bulacan provincial government, just three days after returning home. Provincial Public Employment Service Office (Peso) head Engr. Egbert Robles said the OFW, from San Jose

- [Mayon Volcano continues to spew lava fountains – Phivolcs](#) (2026-03-31 00:37)

MANILA, Philippines — Mayon Volcano continued to produce lava fountains on Tuesday evening, this time reaching 250-meters above its crater, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said. According to Phivolcs in an advisory, lava fountaining in Mayon was recorded at exactly 07:42 p.m. “These events produced 250 m-tall incandescent fountains and ash plumes

- [Fuel shortage cuts local passenger ferries by 10% – DOTr](#) (2026-03-31 00:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez confirmed that fewer inter-province ships have been sailing across the country due to fuel supply problems caused by the ongoing war in the Middle East. Lopez told reporters in Parañaque City on Monday that he ordered the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) to deploy ships to ferry stranded passengers,

- [NGO warns vs coal expansion amid energy crisis](#) (2026-03-30 23:58)

MANILA, Philippines — A non-governmental organization on Monday called on the government to prioritize renewable energy over boosting coal-fired power generation, as such measures could only undermine the country’s long-term energy transition. Climate Conflict Action Asia (CCAA) issued the call after President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. declared a state of national energy emergency and ordered the

- [PCSO: No jackpot winners in March 30 lotto draws](#) (2026-03-30 22:59)

MANILA, Philippines — No bettor won the jackpot prizes for Grand Lotto 6/55 and Megalotto 6/45 in Monday’s (March 30) Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) draws. Grand Lotto 6/55 produced the combination 27-34-31-54-23-03 for a jackpot of P45 million, with no winner. Megalotto 6/45 drew 03-27-24-07-43-13 for a P15 million jackpot, also with no winner,

- [DOTr urges Holy Week travelers to report illegal fare hikes](#) (2026-03-30 22:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Department of Transportation (DOTr) Secretary Giovanni Lopez on Monday urged Filipinos, especially those traveling back to their provinces for the Holy Week, to report to authorities bus companies that raised their fares despite the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. indefinitely suspending such hikes. Lopez said personnel of the Land Transportation Franchising

- [De Lima files resolutions seeking to probe surge in diesel prices](#) (2026-03-30 22:04)

MANILA, Philippines — Mamamayang Liberal party-list Rep. Leila de Lima has filed measures seeking to probe the surge in diesel prices in the country, as well as assess and address its impact on public transportation. In filing House Resolution (HR) No. 914, De Lima stressed the

need to determine why the country has emerged as

- [Driver in ‘gas and run’ case now in police custody](#) (2026-03-30 20:58)

MANILA, Philippines — The driver who fled from a gas station without paying for fuel worth P5,000 is now in police custody. Quezon City Police District (QCPD) spokesperson Maj. Jennifer Gannaban on Monday night confirmed to the Inquirer in a text message that the suspect was taken into the custody of the La Loma Police

- [SSS, GSIS urged to immediately release Easter bonus for pensioners](#) (2026-03-30 20:48)

MANILA, Philippines — SSS-GSIS Pansyonado party-list Rep. Rolando Macasaet on Monday called for the immediate release of an “Easter Emergency Bonus” to help pensioners of the Social Security System (SSS) and Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) cope with rising prices. Macasaet noted that pensioners remain among the most vulnerable sectors during the crisis. READ: SSS

- [Manila Water advises customers to schedule septic tank desludging this summer](#) (2026-03-30 20:45)

As the summer months begin, Manila Water calls on its customers to take proactive steps to maintain their septic tanks to safeguard household comfort, public safety, and community health. With higher temperatures and increased water consumption typical of the summer months, septic systems experience greater stress, making desludging a critical precaution to prevent overflows and

- [Lawyers to SC: Resolve petition vs hike in airport fees](#) (2026-03-30 20:38)

MANILA, Philippines – An urgent motion was filed by a group of lawyers on Thursday asking the Supreme Court (SC) to resolve their pending application for a restraining order against increased airport fees which was filed last year. The lawyers, led by Atty. Joel R. Butuyan, Antonio G.M. La Viña, Soledad Deriquito Mawis, Roger R.

- [Angara challenges Class of 2026 to maintain resilience beyond graduation](#) (2026-03-30 20:32)

MAKATI CITY, Philippines — Education Secretary Sonny Angara on Monday challenged graduates nationwide to maintain their spirit of resilience as they transition out of the basic education system, as nearly 48,000 public schools hold their end-of-school-year (EOSY) ceremonies. In his message for the graduation and moving-up ceremonies, Secretary Angara reminded the graduating batch that their

- [AI drone project to detect banana disease in Davao Region farms](#) (2026-03-30 20:19)

DAVAO CITY – The Department of Agriculture in Davao Region (DA-11) signed a memorandum of understanding Monday with Japanese firm E-Supportlink Co., Ltd. to launch an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered drone pilot project for banana plant counting and early disease

detection. The banana industry is a major contributor to the Philippine agricultural economy, particularly in Mindanao. However,

- [Meralco: No scheduled 3-month long brownouts](#) (2026-03-30 19:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The Manila Electric Company (Meralco) on Monday denied claims circulating online about a supposed three-month power outage, explicitly tagging the posts as fake. READ: Meralco to review fuel costs as Middle East war pushing up power rates Meralco issued the clarification through a “fake news alert” posted on its official social media

- [PhilHealth enforces ‘No SPA, No Payment’ for self-paying members](#) (2026-03-30 19:22)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) will implement the “No SPA, No Payment” policy for self-paying members beginning April 1 as part of digitalization and service efficiency efforts. In a news release on Monday, the state insurer said the digital system aims to ensure that contributions are accurately recorded and credited without

- [Sara Duterte impeachment: SALNs used to convict Corona — Zamora](#) (2026-03-30 19:21)

MANILA, Philippines — House justice committee vice chair Ysabel Maria Zamora on Monday said the scrutiny of Vice President Sara Duterte’s statements of liabilities and net worth (SALNs) has a precedent: the impeachment case of Chief Justice Renato Corona, who was convicted. “The non-disclosure of certain assets or even just one asset in the SALNs

- [No practical effect: SC dismisses Harry Roque’s petition](#) (2026-03-30 19:17)

MANILA, Philippines – The Supreme Court (SC) has dismissed the petition of former presidential spokesperson Harry Roque to stop the House of Representatives’ Quad Committee (Quadcomm) from arresting him and requiring him to attend hearings and submit documents related to the Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGOs). In a decision made public Monday, the SC, through

- [LTO summons driver, vehicle owner involved in Rizal road rage](#) (2026-03-30 18:27)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Office (LTO) on Monday said it summoned a motor vehicle driver who allegedly brandished a firearm during a road rage incident in Taytay, Rizal. The LTO said it also summoned the registered owner of the vehicle, a Nissan Navara, along with the driver, and ordered both to appear before

- [PCSO to deploy landing craft vessel to boost patient mobility in Batanes](#) (2026-03-30 17:25)

BASCO, Batanes — In line with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s directive to make healthcare accessible for everyone, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) has announced its plan to provide a landing craft vessel (LCV) for Batanes to improve patient transport across the province’s island municipalities, with deployment scheduled later this year. PCSO General Manager Melquiades

- [Legarda stresses peacebuilding as lifelong mission at PAMANA MOA signing](#) (2026-03-30 17:14)

Sen. Loren Legarda stressed her lifelong mission of peacebuilding, recalling her decades of work mediating in conflict areas, negotiating the release of captives, and championing programs that transform peace agreements into development dividends for communities long deprived of basic services. She delivered this message as Guest of Honor and Speaker at the signing of the

- [PNP vows stricter monitoring of prices of basic goods during Holy Week](#) (2026-03-30 17:08)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) will be more strict on monitoring the prices of basic goods during this year’s observance of Holy Week in anticipation of an influx of travelers and tourists. In a statement on Monday, PNP Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said the law enforcement agency was coordinating with

- [BFP to deploy 40,000 firefighters for Holy Week 2026 – DILG](#) (2026-03-30 17:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) will be deploying around 40,000 firefighters as part of safety measures during this year’s observance of the Holy Week, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said on Monday. In a statement, the DILG, which supervises the BFP, noted that the fire bureau will

- [Legarda asserts women’s central role in water governance](#) (2026-03-30 16:59)

Sen. Loren Legarda urged stronger enforcement of environmental and water laws, stressing that women’s leadership and grassroots innovation are central to securing water, building climate resilience, and promoting inclusive development. Speaking at the Water and Women Forum PH 2026 held on March 23 in Quezon City, in celebration of World Water Day and National Women’s

- [QC police tracks down owner of vehicle in ‘gas and run’ case](#) (2026-03-30 16:53)

MANILA, Philippines — The Quezon City Police District (QCPD) has identified the owner and confirmed the plate number of the vehicle whose driver recently fled a gas station without settling his fuel bill of over P5,000. “Authorities immediately coordinated with the Land Transportation Office and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, resulting in a clearer image

- [Bam Aquino pushes bill to allow gov’t to cap gasoline, diesel prices](#) (2026-03-30 16:49)

MANILA, Philippines — As oil prices continue to rise, Senator Bam Aquino has filed a bill seeking to classify gasoline, diesel, and other petroleum products as basic necessities, placing them under government price controls. In filing Senate Bill No. 2011, Aquino explained that the proposed measure intends to address a gap in Republic Act No.

- [PITX: 39 extra trips to Bicol region added due to high demand](#) (2026-03-30 16:40)

Passengers board a bus bound for Catanduanes at the PITX on Monday afternoon. (INQUIRER.net / Keith Clores) MANILA, Philippines — Thirty-nine additional trips to the Bicol region have been added and scheduled at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) on Monday afternoon. In a message to reporters, PITX Senior Corporate Affairs Officer Kolyn Calbasa said

- [Thousands of TNVS drivers excluded by operators from aid list – DSWD](#) (2026-03-30 16:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Some transport network vehicle service (TNVS) drivers were not able to receive P5,000 cash aid from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) because their companies excluded them from the list of beneficiaries, according to Secretary Rex Gatchalian. In a press conference on Monday, Gatchalian said they are currently in the

- [PNP tightens Maguindanao del Sur security after ambush kills 5 cops](#) (2026-03-30 15:42)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) has tightened security measures in Maguindanao del Sur following an ambush in Shariff Aguak town, which killed five cops and injured three more during patrol operations over the weekend. “The internal protocols for field operations are now under strict review to prevent similar tactical lapses. Additional rapid

- [Number of Holy Week travelers likely to peak on Wednesday – PITX spox](#) (2026-03-30 15:20)

MANILA, Philippines – The number of people traveling to their provinces for the Holy Week will likely peak on Wednesday, Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) spokesperson Jason Salvador said. Salvador shared this projection on Monday afternoon in an interview with the media. “Historically speaking, our peak is Wednesday. That is the last working day of

- [Highway Patrol Group deploys 755 cops for Holy Week 2026 security](#) (2026-03-30 15:16)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group (PNP-HPG) has deployed 755 personnel as part of security measures for this year’s observance of Holy Week. In an interview with reporters at Camp Crame on Monday morning, HPG spokesperson Lt. Nadame Malang said the 755 personnel were deployed in 92 teams roving across the

- [Carpooling program eyed in Metro Manila to counter fuel price surge](#) (2026-03-30 14:56)

MANILA, Philippines—The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) is set to release a memorandum circular next week for the proposed carpooling initiative in Metro Manila amid rising fuel prices. In a press briefing on Monday, officials from the MMDA, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), and the Land Transportation Office (LTO) presented the proposed guidelines

- [Another illegal mining operation dismantled in South Cotabato](#) (2026-03-30 14:49)

KORONADAL CITY – Authorities dismantled another illegal “banlas,” or sluice mining operation, in the mountains of Tampakan, South Cotabato, as part of an intensified crackdown

against illegal mining in the area. Tampakan Mayor Leonard Escobillo said Monday that the local government, together with police forces, raided a banlas site in Sitio Kampo Kilot, Barangay Pulabato,

- [Maguindanao del Sur village head, driver hurt in another ambush](#) (2026-03-30 14:31)

COTABATO CITY – Another ambush struck Maguindanao del Sur on Monday morning, with the target narrowly escaping death. Capt. Steffi Salanguit, spokesperson for the Police Regional Office–Bangsamoro Autonomous Region (PRO-BAR), said Hadji Mansor Mangelen, village chairperson of Barangay Damalusay, Paglat, Maguindanao del Sur, was slightly injured in the 8:30 a.m. ambush in Barangay Malangit, Pandag

- [Lanao Sur officer slain hours before Maguindanao Sur ambush of 5 cops](#) (2026-03-30 14:20)

COTABATO CITY– Before the ambush in Maguindanao del Sur on March 28 that killed five policemen, a police corporal was killed in a separate ambush in Saguiaran, Lanao del Sur, police in the Bangsamoro Region said Monday. READ: PNP eyes retaliatory attack in terror group’s Maguindanao ambush of cops Capt. Steffi Salanguit, spokesperson for the

- [Traffic delays some Bicol trips from PITX](#) (2026-03-30 14:16)

MANILA, Philippines – Some passengers at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) reported delays in their scheduled trips to the Bicol region on Monday. In a text message to the Inquirer, PITX Senior Corporate Affairs Officer Kolyn Calbasa said the delays of the buses going to Bicol is caused by “usual traffic.” The Inquirer surveyed

- [PNP beefs up deployment to 59,000 cops for Holy Week 2026](#) (2026-03-30 14:12)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) has deployed 59,416 law enforcers for security measures during this year’s observance of Holy Week, an increase from the 55,000 personnel it previously said it would deploy. In a press briefing at Camp Crame on Monday, PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Randulf Tuaño said the police force deployed

- [2 lawyers filing impeachment complaint vs. Comelec chief, commissioners](#) (2026-03-30 13:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Two lawyers are set to file an impeachment complaint against Commission on Elections (Comelec) Chairman George Erwin Garcia and six commissioners over alleged institutional misconduct in the May 2022 and 2025 elections. Eldrige Marvin Acheron, founding partner of Acheron & Attorneys and founder of the Acheron Public Interest and Legal Association, and Sikini

- [Fisherman reported missing in Zambales returns home safely](#) (2026-03-30 13:41)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales — A fisherman reported missing in Cabangan town in this province was later found safe, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Zambales confirmed on Monday (March

30). According to PCG reports, 59-year-old Condrado del Rosario left for a fishing trip on March 28 and was expected to return the following day, March 29,

- [Tagbilaran City launches ‘Libreng Sakay’ program for commuters](#) (2026-03-30 13:38)

TAGBILARAN CITY — The city government has launched its “Libreng Sakay” program, providing free transportation to help commuters cope with rising costs and ongoing transport challenges. Six buses have been deployed across various routes, offering free rides to residents from Monday to Saturday. The service operates during peak hours: 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and

- [Fuel hoarding, profiteering cases rise to 6 after Albay buy-bust ops](#) (2026-03-30 13:31)

MANILA, Philippines – The number of fuel hoarding and profiteering cases has risen to six after police operatives entrapped a man in Ligao City last week for allegedly possessing fuel worth P2 million, the Philippine National Police said Monday. The suspect was arrested on Thursday and allegedly found with storage containers holding about 1,200 liters

- [450 Iloilo City cops deployed for Holy Week, summer](#) (2026-03-30 13:18)

ILOILO CITY — As Holy Week begins, the Iloilo City Police Office (ICPO) has activated extensive security measures, deploying 450 personnel to ensure the safety of residents and visitors throughout the city. The deployment is part of the Philippine National Police’s (PNP) nationwide “Ligtas SUMVAC 2026,” a security operation running from March 29 to May

- [Pilgrims find healing at Calapan’s Benedictine abbey](#) (2026-03-30 13:08)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — In the quiet hills of Barangay Salong here, where the wind moves gently through trees and prayer seems to linger in the air, the Our Lady Mother of Divine Providence Abbey has become more than a monastery. For many, especially during Holy Week, it is a refuge — a place

- [PNP seizes P2-billion smuggled cigarettes in Q1, crackdown continues](#) (2026-03-30 12:39)

MANILA, Philippines – The Philippine National Police (PNP) confiscated over P2 billion worth of smuggled cigarettes nationwide in the first quarter of 2026, with efforts ongoing to identify those behind the illegal tobacco trade. There were 3,153 anti-smuggling cigarette operations, conducted from January 1 to March 29, 2026, led to the arrest of 1,187 individuals.

- [PCG rescuers save boy who fell overboard in Zambales](#) (2026-03-30 12:21)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales — A three-year-old boy who accidentally fell from a boat about five meters off Baracca Pier in Subic town on Sunday was successfully rescued. According to a report from the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Zambales, the boy’s 61-year-old father was engaged in recreational fishing aboard the FBCA Ariman Express with his two

- [Gatchalian revives call for social media ban for 16-year-olds and under](#) (2026-03-30 11:58)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian on Monday renewed his call to ban social media for minors 16 years old and under, following Indonesia's move to block children from high-risk platforms. In a press release, Gatchalian cited results from the 2022 Program for International Student Assessment. This study found that every additional hour 15-year-old Filipino students

- [Mindoro lawyers bring legal aid, healing programs to women, kids](#) (2026-03-30 11:57)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Members of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) Oriental Mindoro Chapter conducted a series of legal aid and community outreach activities in observance of National Women's Month, reaching vulnerable sectors across the province. On Saturday afternoon, March 29, at Bahay Kanlungan, a shelter for abused women and children, volunteer

- [Fire guts construction establishment, 9 houses in Calapan City](#) (2026-03-30 11:45)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Two days before the end of Fire Prevention Month, a fire of undetermined origin gutted the warehouse, office, and canteen of a construction company in Barangay Lumangbayan, along with at least nine nearby houses, early morning on Sunday. Dennis Escosora, head of the Calapan City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of March 30, 2026](#) (2026-03-30 11:42)

MANILA, Philippines – Local fuel prices are once again under close watch as the Philippines braces for potential increases at the end of the month, though motorists may catch a brief respite. Based on the first four trading sessions this week, diesel prices are projected to rise by P11 to P12 per liter, while gasoline

- [After failed job hunts, 53-year-old helper 'stranded' at QC terminal](#) (2026-03-30 11:40)

MANILA, Philippines – Early travelers gathered at a bus terminal in Quezon City on Monday, heading to their provinces as early as possible to avoid the Holy Week rush. Among them was Carmen Pepito Dela-Cruz, 53, who has been staying at the Victory Liner Terminal Cubao since the weekend. But unlike most passengers, she has

- [Army officer killed, 2 soldiers hurt, NPA rebel caught in Mindoro clash](#) (2026-03-30 11:31)

LUCENA CITY — A junior Army officer was killed, two soldiers were wounded, and an alleged New People's Army (NPA) rebel was captured during an encounter in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, on Sunday. In a report sent to the Inquirer Monday morning, the Army's 2nd Infantry Division, based at Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal, said

- [PNP probes local police chief over possible lapses in Maguindanao ambush](#) (2026-03-30 11:26)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) is investigating whether the Maguindanao del Sur police chief had any lapses in connection with the ambush in Shariff

Aguak town that killed five police officers and wounded three others. In a press briefing in Camp Crame on Monday, PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Randulf Tuaño noted that

- [8 bus firms to face sanctions over illegal fare hikes](#) (2026-03-30 11:22)

MANILA, Philippines — Eight bus companies are facing possible sanctions after they were found to have illegally implemented a fare increase amid rising fuel prices, authorities said Monday. The Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) reported that the bus firms, all operating routes to the Bicol Region, imposed unauthorized fare hikes over the weekend. PITX Senior

- [Juvenile grass owl set free in Apayao during Earth Hour](#) (2026-03-30 11:16)

TUGUEGARAO CITY — In a symbolic celebration of Earth Hour last week, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources–CENRO Calanasan released a juvenile Philippine Grass Owl (*Tyto longimembris amaurotata*) back into its natural habitat on Saturday, March 28, at 8 p.m. Dubbed the “Earth Owl” conservation action, the release coincided with the global Earth Hour

- [Gas station closures drop to 365 as supply improves, says PNP](#) (2026-03-30 11:07)

MANILA, Philippines — The number of gas stations that have closed due to supply constraints has dropped to 365, according to the Philippine National Police’s (PNP) monitoring as of Monday, March 30. READ: Fuel shortage forces 425 gas stations to close temporarily – PNP Data presented by the PNP to the media in a briefing

- [New clash reported in Occidental Mindoro after March 24 encounter](#) (2026-03-30 11:02)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Government forces clashed anew with suspected communist rebels in Sitio Salapay on Sunday afternoon, just days after a similar encounter in another village in the same town, authorities said. In a report, the Occidental Mindoro Police Provincial Office said the latest firefight broke out at 2:20 p.m. in Barangay Monteclaro

- [Holy Week is an opportunity to visit family, most PITX passengers say](#) (2026-03-30 10:56)

MANILA, Philippines – Visiting families are among the motivators of those traveling via buses at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) for the Holy Week. With many going to their provinces as early as Holy Monday, the Inquirer spoke to a couple of individuals awaiting to board their respective buses. Among them was Nilay, who

- [PNP eyes retaliatory attack in terror group’s Maguindanao ambush of cops](#) (2026-03-30 10:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The ambush that killed five police officers and wounded three more in Maguindanao del Sur over the weekend may have been a retaliation from a local terrorist group (LTG), the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Monday. In a press briefing in Camp Crame, PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Randulf Tuaño detailed that

- [P651M of P2.5B subsidy to drivers, operators given – LTFRB](#) (2026-03-30 10:53)

MANILA, Philippines — Over P651 million of the P2.5 billion fuel subsidy has already been disbursed to public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers and operators nationwide, according to the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB). In a press release on Monday, the LTFRB said chairperson Atty. Vigor Mendoza II has instructed all regional directors to ensure

- [New voter registrations in Negros Island Region reach 172,680](#) (2026-03-30 10:52)

BACOLOD CITY—New voter registrants in the Negros Island Region (NIR) have reached 172,680 as of March 28, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) NIR reported on Sunday. The figure reflects 7,313 new applications processed across Negros Occidental, Negros Oriental, and Siquijor from March 23 to 28, the Comelec said. Negros Occidental remains the largest contributor, accounting

- [Biodiesel project offers Bacolod fishers relief from rising fuel costs](#) (2026-03-30 10:44)

BACOLOD CITY— Deputy House Speaker and Bacolod Rep. Alfredo Abelardo “Albee” Benitez launched a pioneering biodiesel project to support local fisherfolk at the Community Center of Las Palmas Subdivision in Barangay Taculing, Bacolod City, on Monday. “As fuel prices continue to rise, we need practical solutions that can help ease costs at the community level,”

- [Tacloban gas station halts operations due to fuel shortage](#) (2026-03-30 10:35)

TACLOBAN CITY — A gasoline station in this city ceased operations on Sunday, after reportedly running out of fuel supply. The station, located in one of the city’s busiest areas, did not indicate when it would resume operations. “Our fuel supply has temporarily run out. We apologize for the inconvenience and appreciate your understanding,” the

- [Fire erupts atop Mount Banahaw; probe underway](#) (2026-03-30 10:25)

LUCENA CITY – A fire of still undetermined origin broke out atop Mount Banahaw in Quezon province late Sunday afternoon. “We do not yet have verified information because we only learned about it through social media last night,” said Magtanggol Barrion, a forest ranger of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in an

- [New Cavitex C5 Link-Segment 3B to be toll-free in April, says Marcos](#) (2026-03-30 10:05)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday announced that the newly opened Cavitex C5 Link-Segment 3B will be toll-free for the entire month of April. The two-kilometer connector road is expected to reduce travel time from Taguig City to Parañaque City to just 15 minutes from 1.5 hours. It is projected to serve around

- [P6.1-M ‘shabu’ seized, 2 ‘high-value’ targets nabbed in Lucena City](#) (2026-03-30 10:04)

LUCENA CITY — Anti-narcotics operatives seized over P6.1 million worth of suspected shabu (crystal meth) as well as arrested two alleged high-value targets in a buy-bust operation in this capital city of Quezon province on Sunday afternoon. Lt. Col. Ryan Hernandez, Lucena City

police chief, identified the suspects in a spot report by their aliases

- [PITX logs over 51,000 passengers on Holy Monday morning](#) (2026-03-30 09:54)

MANILA, Philippines — On Holy Monday morning, a total of 51,030 individuals were recorded at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX). The figure was logged as of 9 a.m., according to PITX Senior Corporate Affairs Officer Kolyn Calbasa. Some passengers were seen carrying luggage as they prepared to return to their provinces for the Holy Week. However,

- [New direct ferry links Pola and Batangas, cuts travel time](#) (2026-03-30 09:41)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — A new direct sea route linking the town of Pola and Batangas City has begun operations, with additional trips set for early April to meet rising travel demand ahead of the summer season. The ferry service, operated by Island Water, launched its initial trip on March 28, departing Batangas City

- [DOTr warns bus firms: illegal fare hikes may lead to suspension](#) (2026-03-30 09:04)

MANILA, Philippines — A show cause order and the possible suspension of licenses may be imposed on bus companies that hiked fares despite the suspension of the increase, Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez warned on Monday. This came after reports that some bus companies at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) implemented fare increases. READ: Marcos orders

- [Currimao, Ilocos Norte suspends fest activities, cites energy emergency](#) (2026-03-30 08:25)

CURRIMAO, Ilocos Norte — The municipal government of Currimao in Ilocos Norte has announced the suspension of some activities of the annual Dinaklisan Festival, traditionally held on the last week of April. This move is in compliance with the national government's directive under Executive Order No. 110 declaring a state of national energy emergency. In a

- [Hot, humid weather to prevail on Monday, March 30](#) (2026-03-30 07:27)

MANILA, Philippines — Hot and humid conditions with chances of isolated rain showers or thunderstorms are expected to prevail over the country on Monday, March 30, according to the state weather bureau. In its morning weather forecast, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said the ridge of the high-pressure area (HPA) currently

- [Pool cave in Dinagat Islands temporary closed to visitors](#) (2026-03-30 07:00)

BUTUAN CITY — The local government of Libjo in Dinagat Islands has ordered the temporary closure of the Miracle Pool Cave in Barangay Plaridel, citing conservation and site management needs. The closure begins on Friday and will stay in effect until further notice, according to the Libjo tourism office. “The temporary closure aims to conserve the

- [1M barrels of diesel expected this week, good for 5 days](#) (2026-03-30 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The first batch of the more than 1 million barrels of diesel procured by the government is expected to arrive this week and would be enough to cover domestic demand for five days, according to Executive Secretary Ralph Recto. “[T]he oil diplomacy ably conducted by energy officials led by Secretary Sharon Garin

- [SSS considers relief plans for employers, members](#) (2026-03-30 05:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The Social Security System (SSS) is considering a moratorium on loan payments for its members, along with a condonation program for employers, as part of its relief measures amid the country’s economic challenges. According to SSS President Robert Joseph de Claro, the measures being considered aim to provide immediate relief to members

- [Rights group seeks probe of antiterror law abuses](#) (2026-03-30 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Amnesty International Philippines has urged the government to conduct a “prompt, independent, impartial and transparent” investigation of alleged abuses in the implementation of the Anti-Terrorism Act after women and child rights activist Ma. Salome “Sally” Crisostomo-Ujano was cleared of rebellion charges. The rights group also called for a halt to any form

- [PH celebrates 32 years of internet connectivity](#) (2026-03-30 05:25)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) on Sunday vowed to further expand free internet access across the Philippines as it marked the 32nd year of its first connection to the internet on March 29, 1994. “Under the leadership of the DICT, efforts continue to expand free internet access to more

- [Explain corruption charges, lawmakers urge VP Sara Duterte](#) (2026-03-30 05:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Deputy Speaker Paolo Ortega on Sunday warned Vice President Sara Duterte that her trust rating may decline further if she continues to refuse to address the corruption allegations against her. Ortega made the prediction after a Pulse Asia survey result, which showed that over half—or 51.5 percent—of those who distrusted her pointed

- [Ex-lawmaker undeterred by criminal conviction, online attacks](#) (2026-03-30 05:05)

MANILA, Philippines — While she may be keeping a lower public profile these days, former ACT Teachers Rep. France Castro still has her Facebook account set to private to spare her children from all the harassment and abuse directed at her on social media. “My children can see that … so until now, my Facebook

- [Pasig-Marikina river project rolls out new tech to boost flood control](#) (2026-03-30 05:00)

MANILA, Philippines — Amid the still unresolved scandal over the government’s flood control projects, a project by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH)—the agency in the center of that controversy—is introducing new technology to bolster the flood defense of Metro Manila. The department’s Pasig-Marikina River Channel Improvement Project (PMRCIP), which

had been ongoing

- [P1.2B in Dole aid out after Holy Week](#) (2026-03-30 04:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Labor and Employment (Dole) will roll out P1.2 billion after the Holy Week as assistance to “most vulnerable” workers, particularly those from the transport sector, affected by the fuel crisis. The agency’s spokesperson and Assistant Secretary Lennard Serrano said Dole is studying proposals to place it under the department’s

- [DPWH opens more bypass roads](#) (2026-03-30 04:50)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has ordered the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to open more bypass roads in the country to help reduce gasoline consumption amid the oil price hikes. In a statement on Friday, DPWH Secretary Vince Dizon said aside from saving on gasoline, opening bypass roads would also

- [BARMM execs condemn ambush that killed 5 cops](#) (2026-03-30 04:45)

COTABATO CITY, BARMM, Philippines — Authorities in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) condemned the deadly ambush in Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao del Sur, that left five police officers dead and three others critically injured last Saturday night. Capt. Steffi Salanguit, spokesperson for the Police Regional Office BARMM, identified the slain officers as Patrolmen

- [‘Palaspas’ costs rise amid fuel crisis](#) (2026-03-30 04:40)

LUCENA CITY, QUEZON, Philippines — As church bells tolled for Palm Sunday and devotees raised woven palm fronds in blessing rites across the country, this year’s quiet ritual of buying “palaspas” came at a higher cost. Filipino Catholics marked the start of Holy Week yesterday with the traditional blessing of palms, commemorating Jesus Christ’s triumphant

- [Subsidized rice program benefits 5,000 in Leyte town](#) (2026-03-30 04:35)

TACLOBAN CITY, LEYTE, Philippines — At least 5,000 residents in Palo town, Leyte, benefited from the expanded rollout of the government’s “Benteng Bigas Meron Na” program last Friday, as part of ongoing efforts to mitigate the impact of rising food prices. The distribution, spearheaded by the regional office of the Department of Agriculture (DA) in

- [DA eyes Subic Freeport for biosecurity facility](#) (2026-03-30 04:30)

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) is exploring the establishment of a Bio-Safe examination facility inside this freeport, to bolster the country’s defenses against agricultural smuggling and prevent the spread of animal diseases. In a statement last Friday, the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) said officials from the DA-Inspectorate and Enforcement

- [No jackpot winners in Ultra, Super Lotto draws on March 29](#) (2026-03-29 21:57)

MANILA, Philippines—No bettor won the jackpot prize for Ultra Lotto 6/58 and SuperLotto 6/49 draws on Sunday, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. The Ultra Lotto 6/58 draw had the combination 45-49-34-52-09-28 with a jackpot prize of ₱75 million, The SuperLotto 6/49 drew came out with the 15-09-33-18-22-06 combination which had a jackpot of

- [Iloilo malls adjust operating hours amid energy conservation drive](#) (2026-03-29 21:53)

ILOILO CITY — Major shopping malls across Iloilo are implementing shorter and adjusted operating hours beginning Monday, March 30, aligning with the national government’s intensified energy conservation campaign. Mall operators including Festive Walk Iloilo, SM City Iloilo, Robinsons Iloilo and Jaro, Gaisano Capital branches, and Vista Mall Iloilo announced revised schedules that generally reduce weekday

- [CDO supporters mark ex-president Duterte’s birth anniversary](#) (2026-03-29 21:46)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Festivities, food and entertainment marked the 81st birth anniversary celebration here of detained former president Rodrigo Duterte as close to a thousand supporters gathered on Saturday night. Amid chants and cheers, Duterte’s supporters listened to Talaandig musician Rodelio “Waway” Saway and other local performers until 10 p.m. at the Kiosko Kagawasan in

- [Palm Sunday Mass in Valencia, Bukidnon highlights faith amid crisis](#) (2026-03-29 21:24)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — Catholics here gathered on Palm Sunday for a Holy Mass to commemorate Jesus Christ’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem, signaling the start of Holy Week. Rev. Fr. Jojo Sumastre of St. Bernadette Parish in Barangay Batangan, Valencia City, celebrated Mass at a chapel inside a private subdivision, which included a reenactment of

- [Loan relief for PUV, TNVS operators pushed](#) (2026-03-29 19:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Senior Citizens party-list Rep. Rodolfo “Ompong” Ordanes on Sunday called on President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to direct the government to extend payment reliefs on loans incurred by public utility vehicle (PUV) and transportation network vehicle service (TNVS) operators from April to June. Ordanes made the appeal as transport operators grappled with

- [Mayon Volcano update: Effusive eruption on its 83rd day](#) (2026-03-29 19:08)

MANILA, Philippines — Mayon Volcano produced ash clouds on Sunday and has reached its 83rd day of effusive eruption, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said. READ: Mayon Volcano emits lava fountain The Phivolcs, in an advisory, said minor strombolian activities were recorded in Mayon Volcano at exactly 12:30 a.m. and 6:46 a.m.,

- [500 prisoners moved from Bilibid to new Iwahig facility](#) (2026-03-29 18:43)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) on Sunday reported the transfer of 500 persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) from New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa City to the newly

constructed dormitory at Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF) in Puerto Princesa, Palawan. BuCor Director General Gregorio Catapang Jr. said the 500 PDLs arrived at

- [House panel hearing on Sara Duterte impeach case seen until end of May](#) (2026-03-29 18:31)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives hearing on the impeachment case of Vice President Sara Duterte may wrap up by the end of May, said the lower chamber's committee on justice vice chair San Juan City Rep. Ysabel Zamora on Sunday. Zamora made the pronouncement as the House committee on justice continued to hold

- [Solon sees further decline in Sara Duterte's trust rating](#) (2026-03-29 18:21)

MANILA, Philippines — Deputy Speaker Paolo Ortega V on Sunday warned Vice President Sara Duterte that her trust rating may decline further if she continues to refuse to address the corruption allegations against her. Ortega made the prediction after citing Pulse Asia survey results which showed that over half—or 51.5 percent—of those who distrusted her

- [Medialdea hospitalized, to undergo 'medical procedure' – Sen. Bong Go](#) (2026-03-29 16:47)

MANILA, Philippines — Senator Christopher “Bong” Go on Saturday said Salvador Medialdea, former President Rodrigo Duterte's executive secretary, was hospitalized and is set to undergo a medical procedure. Go bared Medialdea's condition in a Facebook statement, after asking the public to pray for him. “Nananawagan si Senator Bong Go sa mga kababayan natin na sama-sama

- [3 nabbed as PDEA dismantles Subic drug den](#) (2026-03-29 15:54)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales — Authorities dismantled a makeshift drug den in Barangay Calapacuan in Subic, Zambales on Saturday and seized suspected methamphetamine hydrochloride (shabu) valued at about P136,000. The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) in Region 3 reported that a buy-bust operation was conducted at around 5:40 p.m. in the area led to the arrest

- [Asean AIPA preparatory meetings to be conducted online – Speaker Dy](#) (2026-03-29 15:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Speaker Faustino Dy III on Sunday announced that the country will be scaling down Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) meetings by shifting all preparatory meetings to virtual platforms. Dy, in a statement, said in-person activities for the AIPA meetings will only be limited to the General Assembly in

- [Dutertes' backers launch Isda Bohol, celebrate ex-president's 81st birthday](#) (2026-03-29 14:08)

TAGBILARAN CITY — Supporters of former President Rodrigo Duterte gathered in large numbers at Plaza Rizal in this city on Saturday, March 28, for the formal launch of the Inday

Sara Duterte Alliance (Isda)–Bohol. The occasion coincided with the former president’ s 81st birthday. The gathering opened with a motorcade at around 4 p.m., followed by

- [Lawmaker urges gov’ t to build coastal petroleum storage facilities](#) (2026-03-29 13:53)

MANILA, Philippines—The government should establish petroleum storage facilities so that the country can have buffer stocks in times of crisis, a lawmaker said on Sunday. In a statement, House Minority Leader Marcelino “Nonoy” Libanan called on the state-owned Philippine National Oil Co. (PNOC) to invest in coastal petroleum storage facilities. He believes this situation will

- [Intensified mental health programs pushed amid rising suicide cases](#) (2026-03-29 13:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Senator Sherwin Gatchalian on Sunday called on the government to intensify mental health programs amid a rise in cases of suicide in Metro Manila. Gatchalian made the appeal after the National Capital Region Police Office recorded 111 cases of suicide from January 1 to March 23, 2026. READ: Suicide cases in NCR

- [9,000 cops deployed for Lent in Central Luzon](#) (2026-03-29 13:33)

MABALACAT CITY, Pampanga — Around 9,000 police officers have been deployed across Central Luzon for public safety during the observance of Holy Week, the Police Regional Office 3 (PRO3) said on Sunday, March 29. In a statement, PRO3 said its personnel will be augmented by about 1,000 officers from other police units and more than

- [DICT vows wider free internet as Ph marks 32nd connectivity anniversary](#) (2026-03-29 12:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) has pledged to expand free internet access across the country. The pronouncement comes on Sunday as the Philippines marks its 32nd anniversary of its first connection to the internet. According to the DICT, this year’ s celebration reaffirms the agency’ s mission “where no Filipino is

- [SSS eyes loan relief, condonation amid economic challenges](#) (2026-03-29 12:31)

MANILA, Philippines — The Social Security System (SSS) said it is eyeing a loan moratorium for its members, along with a condonation program for employers, as part of its relief measures amid the country’ s economic challenges. According to SSS President Robert Joseph de Claro, the measures under consideration aim to provide immediate relief to members

- [Robbery at Catbalogan terminal turns deadly; 1 suspect killed, another hurt](#) (2026-03-29 11:48)

TACLOBAN CITY — A robbery at a transport terminal in Catbalogan City escalated into a deadly shootout on Saturday evening, March 28, leaving one suspect dead, another wounded, and a third still at large, police said. In a report, the Police Regional Office 8 based in Palo, said the

incident occurred at 7:35 p.m. at

- [Manhunt on for killers of 5 cops in Maguindanao del Sur ambush](#) (2026-03-29 10:41)

MANILA, Philippines — A manhunt was ordered on Sunday following an ambush in Maguindanao del Sur that left five police officers dead and three others seriously injured. The victims from the 2nd Provincial Mobile Force Company were returning from patrol operations on March 28 when unidentified assailants attacked them in Shariff Aguak town. Police and

- [LTFRB orders inspection of buses, PUVs ahead of Holy Week exodus](#) (2026-03-29 10:25)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Sunday directed all its regional offices to hold roadworthiness inspections of buses and public utility vehicles (PUVs) ahead of the influx of travelers during Holy Week. READ: LTFRB: Over 1,200 passenger buses granted special permits for Holy Week According to the LTFRB chair

- [Rising fuel costs lift ‘palaspas’ prices this Palm Sunday](#) (2026-03-29 10:02)

LUCENA CITY — Vendors of “palaspas” (woven palm fronds) raised prices this year, passing on higher production and transport costs fueled by continuing oil price hikes amid the war in Middle East. “All prices have gone up, so we were also forced to increase the price of palaspas,” said Maria Sembrano, 65, who has been

- [Iloilo City forms crisis council amid fuel crisis](#) (2026-03-29 09:46)

ILOILO CITY — The city government has created a Crisis Management Council to safeguard the supply of essential goods and stabilize public services. The formation of the panel comes as the country grapples with rising fuel prices and energy shortage linked to the Middle East war. Mayor Raisa S. Treñas signed Executive Order No. 035,

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of March 29, 2026 \(Sunday\)](#) (2026-03-29 09:10)

MANILA, Philippines — Fuel prices across the country are expected to rise again at the end of March. A source told Inquirer that the per-liter-price of diesel could go up by P11 to 12. There might be a P3 per-liter hike in gasoline or no change for the moment. Oil companies schedule price adjustments on

- [Ang Paglilibing: The solemn cast of Good Friday processions](#) (2026-03-29 08:00)

MANILA, Philippines — As the sun sets on Good Friday, thousands — sometimes millions — of Filipinos join a solemn candlelight procession called Sto. Entierro, which depicts Christ’s final journey from the cross to his tomb. The procession, a central component of Holy Week, or Semana Santa, in the Philippines, is held after the liturgical

- [Sugar mills urged to increase trucking allowance for farmers](#) (2026-03-29 07:24)

BACOLOD CITY — An official of the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) on Wednesday called on sugar mills to increase the trucking allowance for sugar farmers amid rising fuel prices. In a

statement, board member David Andrew Sanson, the planters representative, said he issued an appeal through a letter sent to sugar mills nationwide. “We respectfully request

- [Marcos urges unity, selfless service among Filipinos this Holy Week](#) (2026-03-29 06:00)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. called on Filipinos to embrace unity and help one another during the observance of Holy Week as countries around the world face crises due to the ongoing war in the Middle East. “May this Holy Week strengthen our resolve to become a nation guided by faith, united in

- [14-year-old qualifies as candidate for US state governor](#) (2026-03-29 05:42)

STOWE, Vermont — Looking back, gubernatorial candidate Dean Roy says his political ambitions started in the eighth grade. And by that he means, last year. After working as a legislative page at the Vermont Statehouse, the 14-year-old freshman at Stowe High School now has his sights set on the corner office. In November, he’ ll be

- [Passenger surge still seen despite conflict in Middle East](#) (2026-03-29 05:41)

MANILA, Philippines — There may still be a surge of travelers at the country’ s main gateway, Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia), over the Holy Week period, despite the expected upward pressure on airline tickets due to the war in the Middle East. This is according to private operator New Naia Infra Corp. (NNIC), which projects

- [Noted Baguio citizen, Inquirer lensman die in river tragedy](#) (2026-03-29 05:40)

BAGUIO CITY, Philippines — The smiling faces of grade school children would be the last images captured by a group of Baguio photographers before a fatal off-road accident claimed two lives on Friday afternoon. Rodolfo “Ompong” Tan, a prominent Baguio lensman, 2022 Outstanding Citizen of Baguio awardee and community pillar, died from severe head injuries

- [A quiet sanctuary of prayer, hope grows in Mindoro](#) (2026-03-29 05:39)

VICTORIA, ORIENTAL MINDORO, Philippines — What began as a simple farmhouse meant for family rest has quietly grown into a sanctuary of prayer, healing and renewal in the heart of Mindoro. Nestled in the rural village of Canaan in the town of Victoria, the Ilang Sanctuary of Prayer stands today not as a commercial retreat

- [Pag-asa Island soon to have its first Catholic church](#) (2026-03-29 05:39)

MANILA, Philippines — Work will soon begin for the construction of a Catholic church on Pag-asa (Thitu) Island for its permanent residents, as the government continues to reinforce Filipino presence in the West Philippine Sea. “The primary objective is to fulfill and nurture the spiritual needs of our local residents,” Rear Adm. Jay Tarruela of

- [Court to inspect Quiboloy sect’ s properties in Davao, NCR](#) (2026-03-29 05:38)

MANILA, Philippines — A Pasig City court has ordered the inspection of six properties, including two in the National Capital Region (NCR), belonging to the Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KOJC), the sect founded by televangelist and alleged sex offender Apollo Quiboloy. In a nine-page order on Friday in connection with the pastor's human trafficking case,

- [Duterte spends 2nd consecutive birthday in ICC detention](#) (2026-03-29 05:37)

MANILA, Philippines — Former President Rodrigo Duterte marked his 81st birthday in detention at The Hague, the Netherlands, on Saturday as the International Criminal Court (ICC) continued to deliberate on his case for alleged crimes against humanity over his deadly “war on drugs”. The ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I is set to rule not later than

- [House execs assert power to impeach](#) (2026-03-29 05:36)

MANILA, Philippines — While they respect the Supreme Court as the “final arbiter of constitutional and legal questions,” Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro reiterated that the power to initiate an impeachment complaint and decide whether it should proceed to a Senate trial rests on the House of Representatives alone. “This is a responsibility we do not

- [Seminars, book forums, shows to mark National Literature Month](#) (2026-03-29 05:35)

MANILA, Philippines — Hot on the heels of the Philippine Book Festival, which drew throngs of readers—and which gives the lie to the oft-repeated statement that Filipinos don't read—is April as National Literature Month, as proclaimed by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA). Literature is one of the seven major arts which

- [Lopez Inc. family feud explodes into leadership battle](#) (2026-03-29 05:34)

MANILA, Philippines — A leadership battle has erupted within the Lopez family after a court blocked efforts to remove Federico “Piki” Lopez as president of Lopez Inc., the group's holding firm. In a writ of preliminary injunction dated March 26, a Mandaluyong City court barred the enforcement of the board resolutions passed on Feb. 27

- [DOE, DTI urged to consider price cap on LPG](#) (2026-03-29 05:33)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian on Saturday urged the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to impose a price cap on liquified petroleum gas (LPG) as its price may increase amid the ongoing crisis in the Middle East. Gatchalian noted the impending price increase of LPG and warned

- [Dole readies P1.2-B fund to help workers during crisis](#) (2026-03-29 05:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Labor and Employment (Dole) has prepared P1.2 billion in standby funds to help workers who may lose income or jobs as a result of the ongoing energy crisis. The labor department said the fund will be used to “further intensify” its support programs as the government deals with a

- [Gov' t urged: Ask Iran to let PH-bound oil tankers pass](#) (2026-03-29 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Senator Sherwin Gatchalian on Saturday said there should be no disruption in oil supply for the country and called on the Marcos administration to open “high-level” talks with Iran to ensure the safe transit of Philippine-bound oil tankers through the Strait of Hormuz, as the tension in the Middle East continues. The

- [Biliran province cancels annual festival amid fuel crisis](#) (2026-03-29 00:03)

TACLOBAN CITY, LEYTE, Philippines — The provincial government of Biliran has cancelled its annual Hudyaka Festival for May 2026, citing the ongoing fuel crisis and global uncertainties affecting oil prices. Governor Rogelio Espina, in announcing the decision, said funds originally intended for the province-wide cultural celebration will instead be redirected to address the more urgent

- [Calaca City in Batangas scraps two festivals due to energy emergency](#) (2026-03-28 23:59)

LUCENA CITY, QUEZON, Philippines — The mayor of Calaca City in Batangas province has canceled two major festivals in support of the declared state of national energy emergency. “The City of Calaca stands in solidarity with the national government in implementing responsive and coordinated measures to address the risks posed by disruptions in the global

- [5 cops killed in Maguindanao del Sur ambush](#) (2026-03-28 23:47)

COTABATO CITY, BARMM, Philippines — Five police officers were killed while three others were injured in an ambush along Barangay Mother Poblacion of Shariff Aguak town, Maguindanao del Sur province, at around 9 p.m. on Saturday, March 28. Captain Steffi Salanguit, spokesperson for the Police Regional Office Bangsamoro Autonomous Region (Probar), confirmed that the five

- [Agoo town in La Union converts fiesta spending into fuel subsidy](#) (2026-03-28 23:21)

CALASIAO, PANGASINAN, Philippines — The town of Agoo, in La Union province scaled down its celebration of the “21st Agoo Dinengdeng Festival and Patronal Town Fiesta” in May amid the current energy crisis. With it, the local government reallocated the budget to fuel subsidy for affected sectors like tricycle drivers and operators, fisherfolk and farmers.

- [Loreto town in Agusan del Sur rolls out fuel subsidy for trike drivers](#) (2026-03-28 22:48)

SAN FRANCISCO, AGUSAN DEL SUR, Philippines — Tricycle drivers in the remote town of Loreto in Agusan del Sur received a fuel subsidy equivalent to seven liters per week for one month, as local officials moved to cushion the impact of rising oil prices on public transport operators. The assistance, considered the first of its kind

- [Crowds rush to NFA-Bukidnon for cheap-priced rice](#) (2026-03-28 22:31)

MARAMAG, BUKIDNON, Philippines — Crowds have been flocking to the National Food Authority (NFA) warehouse here, with some residents lining up overnight and even sleeping

along the streets to secure access to subsidized rice under the government's "Benteng Bigas, Meron Na" program. A video posted by a local police officer showed people arriving as early

- [Lotto 6/42 bettor wins P10M in March 28 draw](#) (2026-03-28 22:17)

MANILA, Philippines — A lone bettor won the jackpot prize in the Lotto 6/42 draw on Saturday, March 28, 2026. Meanwhile, no one got the numbers right for the Grand Lotto 6/55. According to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, the winning combination for Lotto 6/42 was 11-23-09-05-01-03, yielding a jackpot of P10 million. One ticket

- [DOE summons 8 Bohol gas stations over alleged overpricing](#) (2026-03-28 21:39)

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol — The Department of Energy (DOE) has issued show-cause orders to eight gasoline stations in Bohol province following complaints of unusually high fuel prices, Governor Erico Aristotle Aumentado confirmed. The development was disclosed after a meeting among leaders of local and national agencies led by Aumentado, where they tackled the rising cost

- [Warring Moro clans in Maguindanao del Sur surrender weapons to Army](#) (2026-03-28 21:24)

COTABATO CITY – Seventeen high-powered firearms were turned over to the military by Moro families in Maguindanao del Sur locked in clan wars, the Army said. The firearms were presented to Brig Gen. Edgar Catu, commander of the Army's 601st Infantry Brigade in Mamasapano, Maguindanao del Sur on Friday. Catu said the surrender has reduced

- [QC police intensifies probe into viral 'gas and run' incident](#) (2026-03-28 19:59)

MANILA, Philippines — The Quezon City Police District (QCPD) on Saturday said that it is stepping up its investigation into a viral "gas-and-run" incident involving a motorist who fled without paying for a full tank of diesel in Quezon City. The QCPD reported that the incident, now being treated as an estafa case, took place

- [Orchid hybrid named after late Speaker Jose De Venecia Jr.](#) (2026-03-28 19:51)

DAGUPAN CITY, Pangasinan — An orchid hybrid has been named after the late House Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., adding a floral tribute to the legacy of one of the country's most prominent political figures. The hybrid, Dendrobium Jose de Venecia Jr., is a cross between Dendrobium discolor and Dendrobium Neo's Gift. It was officially

- [BARMM vows to protect gains as Mindanao marks 12th year of peace deal](#) (2026-03-28 19:44)

COTABATO CITY – Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) interim Chief Minister Abdulraof Macacua vowed to protect the gains of the Bangsamoro struggle as Mindanao marks the 12th anniversary of a landmark peace deal between the government and

erstwhile separatist group Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). “We will protect the gains of our struggle

- [Ridon: Anti-impeach petition to further fuel distrust in Sara Duterte](#) (2026-03-28 19:36)

MANILA, Philippines – House Committee on Public Accounts chairperson and Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry L. Ridon on Saturday said Vice President Sara Z. Duterte is facing deepening public distrust driven by her continued evasion of serious corruption allegations and her reliance on legal efforts to halt the impeachment proceedings against her. Ridon cited a

- [Iloilo City joins Earth Hour 2026, pushes energy-saving measures](#) (2026-03-28 18:31)

ILOILO CITY — Iloilo City is calling on residents to take part in this year’s Earth Hour by switching off lights and unplugging non-essential devices for one hour tonight, March 28, from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. In an advisory, the City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) said the initiative is part of the

- [Abuyog, Leyte farmers’ group seeks urgent gov’t aid amid oil price hikes](#) (2026-03-28 18:26)

TACLOBAN CITY — A farmers-irrigators group in Abuyog, Leyte is calling on Pres. Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to expand government assistance beyond the transport sector and likewise give urgent attention to those in the agriculture sector as fuel prices continue to surge amid the ongoing oil crisis. Rodrigo Alumbro, president of the Canmarating, Odiongan, Pagsang-on,

- [Pandi, Bulacan execs pool salaries to aid transpo workers](#) (2026-03-28 18:19)

PANDI, Bulacan—The mayor and nine councilors of this municipality pooled their monthly salary for March and April and raised more than P1.5 million which was used to purchase 10-kilo packs of rice for distribution to 4,000 transportation sector workers. The intended recipients are tricycle, jeepney and transport network vehicle service (TNVS) drivers whose incomes are being

- [Cops seize P690,000 cigarettes in Nueva Ecija](#) (2026-03-28 17:34)

CAMP GEN. MARIANO N. LLANERA, Cabanatuan City — Police seized 30 master cases of undocumented cigarettes worth about P690,000 and arrested three individuals during an “Oplan Sita” operation in Barangay Calumbitin, Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija early Saturday morning. Police Col. Richie Claravall, director of the Nueva Ecija Police Provincial Office (NEPPO), said operatives from the Cuyapo

- [Speaker Dy scales down AIPA hosting amid global tensions](#) (2026-03-28 17:26)

MANILA, Philippines – Speaker Faustino G. Dy III on Saturday announced that Philippines’ hosting of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) meetings this year will be scaled down by limiting in-person activities to the General Assembly in October and the Interface Meeting in November, while shifting all preparatory meetings to virtual platforms. Dy said the

move

- [Sara Duterte camp called out for ‘mixed signals’ in impeach proceedings](#) (2026-03-28 17:16)

MANILA, Philippines — More House of Representatives leaders on Saturday rebutted Vice President Sara Duterte’s camp for what they described as mixed signals over the ongoing impeachment proceedings. The criticism comes as lawyers, headed by Israelito Torreon, filed a petition before the Supreme Court (SC) seeking to restrain the House of Representatives from proceeding

- [New Tagbilaran bishop’s episcopal ordination, installation set on May 26](#) (2026-03-28 15:57)

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol — Fr. Gerardo “Jingboy” Saco formally announced that his episcopal ordination and installation as bishop of this city will be held on May 26, 2026, at the St. Joseph the Worker Cathedral-Shrine here. In a message to the clergy and faithful, Saco expressed profound humility as he accepted the responsibility of leading

- [Ilocos fishers’ fuel expense almost doubles amid oil crisis – Pamalakaya](#) (2026-03-28 15:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Small-scale fishers in the Ilocos region are now spending an average of P2,040 on fuel for every voyage, a sharp increase driven by soaring oil prices, a regional fisherfolk group said. In a report, the Ilocos chapter of Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) said this reflects a 77.1 percent

- [Group seeks release of journalist in terrorism financing case](#) (2026-03-28 15:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has renewed its call for President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to secure the release of community journalist Frenchie Mae Cumpio who was convicted of financing terrorism. RSF made the appeal after the Tacloban Regional Trial Court Branch 45 affirmed its ruling in convicting Cumpio for financing terrorism and as

- [Col. Mikee Romero leads major livelihood program for Aeta families](#) (2026-03-28 15:04)

CAPAS, Tarlac— Nearly 300 Aeta families now have community farm plots, a permanent marketplace, and free medical and dental services following the turnover of a multi-phase livelihood and humanitarian program at Colonel Ernesto Ravina Air Base (CERAB). “This is about dignity and opportunity—giving our Aeta brothers and sisters the tools to stand on their own

- [Legarda to file Bayanihan 3 bill for coordinated oil crisis response](#) (2026-03-28 14:52)

MANILA, Philippines – Senator Loren Legarda will file the Bayanihan Power to the People Act, or Bayanihan 3 Law, to establish a decisive government framework in addressing the impacts of the global oil crisis on Filipino households and the national economy. Legarda stressed that

Executive Order 110 declared a national energy emergency and outlined measures

- [BOC nets over P205 M from negotiated sale of 2 seized luxury cars](#) (2026-03-28 14:48)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BOC) has collected over P205 million from the negotiated sale of two seized luxury vehicles. The BOC on Thursday conducted the negotiated sale for two forfeited Bugatti Chiron units, which were seized in February 2024 over lack of importation documents. Elite Garage Corporation both acquired the blue Bugatti

- [Rep. Zamora sees enough votes, solid impeachment case vs Sara Duterte](#) (2026-03-28 14:44)

MANILA, Philippines – San Juan City Rep. Ysabel Maria Zamora on Saturday said there are enough votes and a solid case to move forward with the impeachment of Vice President Sara Z. Duterte despite political concerns. “I believe we have the numbers,” Zamora, vice chair of the House Committee on Justice, said during the Saturday

- [Emergency powers mean little without a roadmap–labor coalition](#) (2026-03-28 14:34)

MANILA, Philippines — Labor groups and progressive organizations criticized President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s declaration of a state of national energy emergency, saying the move lacks a clear plan, does not address the drivers of rising fuel prices, and could lead to the misuse of expanded executive powers. Their statements came days after Malacañang issued Executive

- [DOE, DTI urged to consider price cap on LPG](#) (2026-03-28 14:22)

MANILA, Philippines — Senator Sherwin Gatchalian on Saturday urged the Department of Energy (DoE) and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to consider imposing a price cap on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) amid the ongoing crisis in the Middle East. Gatchalian noted the impending price increase of LPG, and how it may affect many

- [DepEd: Palarong Pambansa to proceed despite energy emergency](#) (2026-03-28 14:20)

PROSPERIDAD, Agusan del Sur — Amid circulating rumors and false claims of its cancellation, Agusan del Sur Gov. Santiago Cane, Jr. welcomed the Department of Education’s (DepEd) confirmation that the Palarong Pambansa 2026 will proceed as scheduled despite the recent declaration of a State of Energy Emergency by President Marcos, Jr. The governor’s statement followed

- [Pagadian City forms task force to regulate prices amid global oil crisis](#) (2026-03-28 14:06)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur — Pagadian City Mayor Samuel Co has signed Executive Order No. 6, Series of 2026, creating the Price Regulatory Task Force of Pagadian City, a body mandated to monitor and enforce fair pricing of basic goods and petroleum products in the city. The task force is tasked with conducting regular

- [Fisherfolk skip fishing, join strike over rising fuel prices](#) (2026-03-28 13:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Some fisherfolk from Manila Bay and Laguna de Bay skipped their usual trips out to sea on Friday, choosing instead to join a nationwide transport strike as surging fuel prices continue to hit their livelihoods. The action, organized alongside transport groups protesting rising oil costs, shows how the impact has extended beyond

- [Over 1,000 prisoners released to ease crowding, facilitate reintegration](#) (2026-03-28 13:49)

MANILA, Philippines—The Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) has released a total of 1,239 persons deprived of liberty (PDLs), most of whom have finished serving their prison term, from national penitentiaries in the past month. According to the latest data issued by BuCor on Saturday, 501 PDLs were released as a result of the expiration of their

- [Zambales town named top tourist destination in Central Luzon](#) (2026-03-28 13:30)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales — Known for its quiet coves and island-hopping destinations, this coastal town has earned regional recognition after being named Top Tourist Destination – Municipality at the Tourism Recognition for Enterprises and Stakeholders (TRES) Awards of the Department of Tourism–Central Luzon. San Antonio Mayor Arvin Antipolo, who received the award on Friday (March

- [Dole sets aside P1.2B aid as energy crisis threatens jobs](#) (2026-03-28 13:21)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Labor and Employment (Dole) has prepared P1.2 billion in standby funds to help workers who may lose income or jobs as a result of the ongoing energy crisis. The labor department said the fund will be used to “further intensify” its support programs as the government deals with a

- [De Lima files bill strengthening anti-rape law](#) (2026-03-28 13:15)

MANILA, Philippines — House of Representatives Senior Deputy Minority Leader Leila De Lima has filed a measure seeking to strengthen protections for women and children against rape and sexual violence. House Bill No. 8716, filed on March 23, proposes expanding the definition of rape to emphasize the absence of consent, recognizing grooming as a form

- [Fuel price spike ripples through local businesses in Zambales](#) (2026-03-28 12:34)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales — Rising fuel prices are rippling far beyond transport costs, placing increasing pressure on small businesses in this province that are now struggling to stay afloat. For one canteen owner, Joseph Angelo Mora, 35, the ongoing surge has meant making difficult choices— balancing affordability for customers with the reality of higher operating

- [Marcos’ message for Earth Hour 2026: Conserve energy, limit fuel usage](#) (2026-03-28 12:30)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has encouraged all Filipinos to join Earth Hour this year, emphasizing the need for energy preservation and limiting fuel consumption

amid the crisis due to tensions in the Middle East. This year's World Wide Fund for Nature's Earth Hour is scheduled from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. local

- [Mount Maculot closed for rehabilitation, tourism planning](#) (2026-03-28 11:27)

LUCENA CITY — The municipal government of Cuenca, Batangas has temporarily closed Mount Maculot, a popular hiking destination, as it rolls out new tourism and environmental management measures. In an advisory, the local government said hiking activities on the 3,107-foot mountain will remain prohibited “for the foreseeable future” to support efforts toward responsible and sustainable

- [PNP: March 26-27 transport strike 'generally peaceful'](#) (2026-03-28 11:09)

MANILA, Philippines — The two-day transport strike held on March 26-27 was “generally peaceful,” with the Philippine National Police (PNP) recording over 1,900 participants joining the protest. The PNP released the statement on Saturday following the transport strike launched by the No to Oil Price Hike Coalition to protest against the oil price hike amid tensions

- [Filipinos still happy, but with fewer highs](#) (2026-03-28 11:08)

MANILA, Philippines — In the latest Social Weather Stations survey, Filipinos continued to describe their lives in positive terms. But within those responses, fewer placed themselves at the highest end of the happiness scale, with more clustering in the middle. The nationwide survey, conducted Nov. 24-30, 2025, found that 33% of adult Filipinos said they

- [7,500 inmates eyed for transfer in 2026 to decongest Bilibid](#) (2026-03-28 10:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The government plans to transfer around 7,500 persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) this year as part of efforts to ease chronic overcrowding at the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) and move toward its planned closure by 2028. The push comes as 500 inmates were moved on Friday from Bilibid to the Iwahig Prison

- [Farmers decry delayed aid amid soaring fuel costs](#) (2026-03-28 10:25)

MANILA, Philippines — A farmers' group has warned that delays in government cash aid are worsening the burden on food producers as fuel prices rise and production costs climb nationwide. In a statement, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) on Thursday urged the government to immediately release cash assistance for farmers and fisherfolk, saying conditions have

- [BOC fast-tracks fuel imports, tightens checks amid price hikes](#) (2026-03-28 10:14)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BOC) has implemented measures to expedite the processing of fuel imports in the country, as well as daily monitoring and fuel marking, to ensure a steady fuel supply amid oil price hikes due to tensions in the Middle East. BOC Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno, through Memorandum No. 36-2026 dated

- [LTFRB: Over 1,200 passenger buses granted special permits for Holy Week](#) (2026-03-28 09:20)

MANILA, Philippines — A total of 1,297 passenger buses across the country were granted special permits to operate during Holy Week, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) said on Saturday. According to LTFRB chairperson Vigor Mendoza II, the agency granted these buses special permits to ensure that there are enough passenger buses, as

- [Bulacan town to hit 41°C heat index; 66 areas under extreme caution](#) (2026-03-28 08:11)

MANILA, Philippines — San Ildefonso town in Bulacan is forecast to experience the highest heat index on Saturday, while 66 other areas are also placed under the extreme caution level, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa). In its latest heat index bulletin, Pagasa said that San Ildefonso may experience a

- [Easterlies bringing warm, humid weather in most of PH on Sunday](#) (2026-03-28 07:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Warm and humid weather will prevail in most parts of the country on Saturday due to easterlies, but chances of localized thunderstorms and isolated rainshowers are not ruled out, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said. In its 5 a.m. weather forecast, weather specialist Loredin de la Cruz-Galicia said

- [Easterlies bringing warm, humid weather in most of PH on Saturday](#) (2026-03-28 07:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Warm and humid weather will prevail in most parts of the country on Saturday due to easterlies, but chances of localized thunderstorms and isolated rainshowers are not ruled out, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said. In its 5 a.m. weather forecast, weather specialist Loredin de la Cruz-Galicia said

- [Raps filed over fuel hoarding, profiteering](#) (2026-03-28 05:48)

MANILA, Philippines — After the national emergency President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. declared on Wednesday, the Philippine National Police has begun filing criminal cases for hoarding and profiteering amid the expected oil supply crisis driven by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. The PNP released data at a press briefing in Camp Crame, showing at

- [Lawyers seek to stop impeachment hearings vs Sara Duterte](#) (2026-03-28 05:42)

MANILA, Philippines — A group of lawyers led by Israelito Torreon asked the Supreme Court on Friday to declare as unconstitutional the impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte at the House of Representatives. In a 186-page petition, Torreon and lawyers Victor Rodriguez, Martin Delgra III, Jimmy Bondoc, Raul Lambino, Luna Acosta-Manlitoc and four others

- [Malls reducing store hours to help save energy](#) (2026-03-28 05:36)

MANILA, Philippines — Major shopping malls are reducing their business hours starting next Monday as their way of contributing to power conservation efforts following President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.' s declaration of a national energy emergency on March 24. Beginning March 30, weekday store hours at SM Supermalls will be from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., while

- [Boosted Malampaya supply welcomed amid oil crisis](#) (2026-03-28 05:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The promise of additional natural gas from new Malampaya wells could help shield the Philippines from the volatility of the global oil market, as currently seen in the Middle East crisis, analysts said on Friday. Juan Paolo Colet, managing director at investment bank China Bank Capital Corp., said the development of a

- [Marcos: Crude oil supply good till end of June](#) (2026-03-28 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday assured the nation that the government had secured a sufficient supply of crude oil until the end of June, plus up to 45 days' worth of various other fuel products. The president said the Philippines, a petroleum importer, has been exploring alternative fuel sources from other

- [Cordillera securing rice stocks amid oil crisis](#) (2026-03-28 05:06)

BAGUIO CITY—As conflict rages in the Middle East, highland communities in the Cordillera have been urged to prioritize food security, officials said during the Cordillera Regional Development Council' s first quarterly session on Thursday—coinciding with the 26th day of hostilities involving US, Israeli and Iranian forces. The crisis has disrupted shipping routes through the Strait of

- [Eastern Visayas farmers, fishers get fuel access boost](#) (2026-03-28 05:04)

TACLOBAN CITY — Small-scale farmers and municipal fisherfolk in Eastern Visayas can now purchase diesel and gasoline using portable containers, such as jerry cans or drums, provided the fuel is used for legitimate livelihood activities. The move comes under a joint initiative by the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Energy (DOE). The

- [In Zambales, youth lead parish preparations for Palm Sunday](#) (2026-03-28 05:02)

SAN ANTONIO, ZAMBALES — In a quiet corner of the Holy Child Parish here, the next generation of churchgoers is busy at work. On Friday, local youth took the lead in cleaning and preparing palm leaves, a key tradition for the upcoming Palm Sunday celebrations. For parish priest Fr. Alexis Santiago, the involvement

- [Manila to pay for free jeepney rides](#) (2026-03-28 04:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The city of Manila will subsidize the operations of jeepney drivers, giving them around P3,000 each per day for providing free rides to commuters in the city, Mayor

Francisco “Isko” Domagoso announced Friday. According to Domagoso, more than 1,400 jeepney drivers are expected to participate in the program, which is part

- [Mayon Volcano emits lava fountain](#) (2026-03-28 04:31)

MANILA, Philippines — State volcanologists observed lava fountaining at Mayon Volcano on Friday night. The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said the lava fountaining occurred at 8:23 p.m. and 8:40 p.m. “These events produced ash clouds that rose 400 meters before drifting west-southwest,” Phivolcs said. “Effusive eruption at Mayon Volcano continues for the

- [2 photojournalists die as SUV swept away by swollen Benguet river](#) (2026-03-27 22:41)

BAGUIO CITY — Two photojournalists died after the sport utility vehicle (SUV) they were riding was swept away by the swollen Agno River while attempting to cross in Itogon, Benguet, on Friday afternoon, March 27, authorities said. The Police Regional Office–Cordillera (PRO-CAR) said the incident occurred around 1:20 p.m. in Sitio Tabu, Barangay Dalupirip, when

- [No jackpot winner in March 27 PCSO Ultra Lotto, MegaLotto draws](#) (2026-03-27 22:02)

MANILA, Philippines — No jackpot winner was recorded in the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office’s major lotto draws on Friday, March 27, 2026, with both Ultra Lotto 6/58 and MegaLotto 6/45 going without a winning ticket. According to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, the winning combination for Ultra Lotto 6/58 was 12-57-16-01-42-51 for a jackpot prize

- [Pasig court allows ocular inspections of KJC properties](#) (2026-03-27 22:01)

MANILA, Philippines — The Pasig City Regional Trial Court (RTC) on Friday granted a motion to conduct ocular inspections of Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KJC) properties associated with televangelist Apollo Quiboloy. The inspections aim to “verify facts that are not easily captured by photographs or testimonial evidence alone,” the court said. READ: FBI renews call

- [Bulacan LGUs rush to submit list of tricycle drivers for cash aid](#) (2026-03-27 21:58)

BULAKAN, Bulacan — Local governments in Bulacan province raced to meet the Friday deadline to submit a list of qualified tricycle drivers eligible for the P5,000 Cash Relief Assistance (CRA) from the national government. Marievic Morelos, Bulacan municipal social welfare and development officer, said the regional office of the Department of Social Welfare and Development

- [Student pantry donors ‘give back’ to drivers for ‘school service’](#) (2026-03-27 21:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Not charity, but solidarity. College students who dropped by their local community pantry in Maginhawa Street in Quezon City on Friday live up to this mutual aid adage as they brought groceries for public utility vehicle drivers who are reeling from huge drop in take home pay after weeks of big-time oil

- [Piston, Bayan say Marcos' emergency powers 'useless' amid oil price hike](#) (2026-03-27 21:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) and transport group Piston have criticized the emergency powers given to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. amid his declaration of national energy emergency, saying that the powers are useless as many drivers and operators continue to suffer from the oil price hike. Bayan secretary general Mong Palatino and Piston

- [Missing passenger of SUV swept away by river found dead in Benguet](#) (2026-03-27 21:06)

BAGUIO CITY — A passenger who went missing after a sport utility vehicle (SUV) was swept away by the Agno River in Itogon, Benguet on Friday afternoon, March 27, was later found dead, authorities said. The Police Regional Office–Cordillera (PRO-CAR) said the incident happened at around 1:20 p.m. in Sitio Tabu, Barangay Dalupirip, when the

- [House measure preparing country for future crises filed](#) (2026-03-27 20:53)

MANILA, Philippines — A measure that seeks to prepare the country for future crises, like the current fuel price hikes brought by the Middle East conflict, has been filed by Negros Occidental Rep. Javi Benitez. In a statement on Friday, Benitez said that he has filed the proposed Resilient Economy and Stabilization for Crisis and Urgent

- [March 26-27 transport strike a 'success,' says Piston](#) (2026-03-27 20:44)

MANILA, Philippines — The two-day transport strike held on March 26-27 has been declared successful following the participation of drivers and operators of several modes of transportations, and the support it gathered from different sectoral organizations, transport group Piston said on Friday. Piston president Mody Floranda said that the transport strike paralyzed some routes across

- [Cendaña says Sara Duterte just afraid to see evidence against her](#) (2026-03-27 20:27)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte is just afraid to face evidence related to the impeachment complaints against her after some of her allies asked the Supreme Court (SC) to stop the proceedings, Akbayan party-list Rep. Percival Cendaña said on Friday. Cendaña in a tweet said that only corrupt public officials would prefer not to

- [Tacloban court affirms Cumpio conviction, stands by witness testimonies](#) (2026-03-27 20:22)

MANILA, Philippines — A local court of Tacloban City affirmed its ruling convicting community journalist Frenchie Mae Cumpio and church worker Marielle Domequil of financing terrorism as it stood by the testimonies of the prosecution's key witnesses that the two accused "knowingly provided" funds and supplies to a group tagged as a terror organization. This

- [Manila Water Foundation pushes community oral health, hygiene](#) (2026-03-27 20:12)

MANILA, Philippines — Manila Water Foundation (MWF), the social development arm of Manila Water Company, recently marked World Oral Health Day with a multi-site celebration throughout March that brought together partners, educators, and students to promote lifelong oral hygiene practices, reinforcing this year’s global theme, “A Happy Mouth is a Happy Life.” The main event

- [1 missing, 5 injured as SUV swept away by river in Benguet](#) (2026-03-27 19:41)

BAGUIO CITY, Philippines — One person has been reported missing while five others were injured after a sport utility vehicle (SUV) was swept away by Agno River in Sitio Tabu, Barangay Dalupirip, Itogon, Benguet, on Friday afternoon, March 27, authorities said. The Itogon Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO) reported that the incident

- [7 manufacturers to hike product prices by April 1 – supermarkets group](#) (2026-03-27 19:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Seven manufacturers that reach the national scale are set to increase the prices of some of their products starting April 1, due to the continuous oil price hike amid ongoing Middle East tensions, according to a supermarkets group. In an interview with the INQUIRER on Friday, Philippine Amalgamated Supermarkets Association Inc. president

- [Luistro: We respect SC, but power to impeach rests on House alone](#) (2026-03-27 18:06)

MANILA, Philippines — While they respect the Supreme Court (SC) as the “final arbiter of constitutional and legal questions,” Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro reiterated that the power to initiate an impeachment complaint and decide whether it would prosper rests on the House of Representatives alone. Luistro, in a statement on Friday, hours after lawyers supportive of

- [PNP seizes P25-M counterfeit bags, nabs 6 individuals in Manila](#) (2026-03-27 17:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Alleged counterfeit bags worth P25 million were confiscated in Manila, leading to the arrest of six individuals, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Friday. In a statement, the PNP detailed that the bust was carried out at a condominium complex in Barangay 292, Binondo on Thursday night. READ: CIDG’s Bulacan, Valenzuela

- [Cop nabbed over links to illegal drug trade in Camarines Sur](#) (2026-03-27 17:47)

MANILA, Philippines — An active-duty police patrolman in Camarines Sur was arrested for his alleged involvement in illegal drug activities, the Philippine National Police Integrity Monitoring and Enforcement Group (PNP IMEG) said on Friday. The officer was caught in Sitio Tagongtong, Barangay Agdangan, Baaon on the night of March 20 through the implementation of two

- [PNP nabs 3 for illegally selling fuel in Davao del Sur](#) (2026-03-27 17:42)

MANILA, Philippines — Three individuals were arrested in Davao del Sur for allegedly illegally selling fuel, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Friday. In a press briefing in Camp Crame, PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Randulf Tuaño detailed that the suspects were entrapped in Tagabuli, Santa Cruz, but he did not immediately say when. Operatives

- [Leviste: PH headed for debt crisis unless gov' t cuts wasteful spending](#) (2026-03-27 17:39)

MANILA, Philippines — Batangas 1st District Rep. Leandro Legarda Leviste warned that the Philippines is heading towards a debt crisis worse than the current oil crisis if the government does not end wasteful spending and make serious budget cuts. “This year, the Philippines will lose an estimated ₱300 billion from higher oil prices, but our

- [Over 1,400 SHS, ALS graduates hired in Bagong Pilipinas Serbisyo Fair](#) (2026-03-27 17:18)

MANILA, Philippines — The nationwide Bagong Pilipinas Serbisyo Fair (BPSF) rollout has resulted in the immediate hiring of at least 1,488 graduating Senior High School (SHS) and Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners, delivering on a mandate from President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to bridge the gap between graduation and employment. The joint initiative by the

- [House lawmakers slam SC petition on Sara Duterte impeachment](#) (2026-03-27 17:16)

MANILA, Philippines — House lawmakers on Friday slammed a petition filed before the Supreme Court (SC) questioning the actions of the lower chamber’ s panel during the proceedings for the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte. On Friday, pro-Duterte lawyer Israelito Torreon accused the House Committee on Justice of “procedural overreach” in their conduct of

- [Solons slam petition filed on SC vs Sara Duterte impeachment](#) (2026-03-27 17:16)

MANILA, Philippines — House lawmakers on Friday slammed a petition filed before the Supreme Court (SC) questioning the actions of the lower chamber’ s panel during the proceedings for the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte. On Friday, pro-Duterte lawyer Israelito Torreon accused the House Committee on Justice of “procedural overreach” in their conduct of

- [Palace: No energy lockdown expected at the moment](#) (2026-03-27 16:58)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang said on Friday that no energy lockdown is expected at the moment, following Iran’ s denial of any dialogue or negotiations with the United States to end the war. According to Palace Press Officer Claire Castro, the government is preparing for possible worst-case scenarios if tensions persist. READ: Marcos: PH has enough

- [Man nabbed for illegal refilling of LPG cylinders in Nueva Ecija](#) (2026-03-27 16:53)

MANILA, Philippines — A man in Nueva Ecija was arrested for allegedly illegally refilling liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Friday. The suspect was tracked down by operatives to Barangay Pacac, Guimba town on Wednesday, according to PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Randulf Tuaño in a press briefing. “They were

- [Jeepney driver halts trips over fuel hike: ‘It’ s like pandemic again’](#) (2026-03-27 16:52)

MANILA, Philippines – A jeepney driver has likened the current state of his livelihood to what it went through during the COVID-19 pandemic, as he has stopped plying his routes once again – this time due to the rising cost of fuel. Reggie Manlapig, a 46-year-old jeepney driver from Calumpit, Bulacan, and a member of

- [Marcos called on DSWD to remove tarpaulin bearing his photo in an event](#) (2026-03-27 16:46)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has called out the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and ordered the removal of a tarpaulin bearing his photo at a cash aid distribution site, according to Palace Press Officer Claire Castro. Castro said this move is in line with Marcos’ commitment to the “anti-epal” provision of

- [NCRPO: No untoward incidents on Day 2 of transport strike](#) (2026-03-27 16:41)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) on Friday said the second day of the transport strike went without any untoward incident. “The negotiations went well, and chances were given to the rallyists so they could air their grievances,” NCRPO spokesperson Maj. Hazel Asilo told reporters in a phone interview. She noted

- [Lanao del Sur cops recover P12.8-M in smuggled cigarettes](#) (2026-03-27 16:40)

COTABATO CITY – Police seized a haul of unattended boxes containing imported cigarettes along the coastline of Malabang town, Lanao del Sur, on Thursday. Colonel Caesar Cabuhat, Lanao del Sur police director, said operatives from the provincial mobile force company and Malabang municipal police office were conducting shoreline patrol at 1:30 a.m. along Barangay Bunkhouse when they

- [Ateneo allots ‘digital days’ for classes amid oil price surge](#) (2026-03-27 16:28)

MANILA, Philippines — The Ateneo de Manila University will shift to scheduled online classes from April 6 to May 16, allotting one to two “digital days” per week as part of its contingency measures in bracing for the current energy crisis. The Office of the Vice President for Higher Education issued a memorandum on March

- [BOC: P47.4M smuggled agri-products blocked at Subic port](#) (2026-03-27 16:24)

MANILA, Philippines — Over P47.4 million worth of smuggled frozen and processed food products were blocked at the Port of Subic in Ilongapo City, Zambales, according to the Bureau of Customs (BOC) on Friday. In a statement on Friday, the BOC said the shipments were declared to be carrying “assorted shabu-shabu balls.” However, a physical

- [P2M worth of petroleum products seized in Ligao City entrapment](#) (2026-03-27 16:06)

LEGAZPI CITY — A businessman was arrested in Ligao City after allegedly selling fuel to an undercover police operative, authorities said. The suspect was apprehended on Thursday during an entrapment operation conducted by the Ligao City Police and the Albay Police

Provincial Office, in coordination with the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) and the

- [Pool cave in Dinagat temporary closed to visitors](#) (2026-03-27 15:51)

BUTUAN CITY – The local government of Libjo in Dinagat Islands has ordered the temporary closure of the Miracle Pool Cave in Barangay Plaridel, citing conservation and site management needs. The closure begins on Friday and will stay in effect until further notice, according to the Libjo tourism office. “The temporary closure aims to conserve the

- [Solons say justice panel like a prosecutor, can summon more evidence](#) (2026-03-27 15:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Just like a prosecutor in the country’s criminal procedure, the House of Representatives’ committee on justice can summon additional evidence that could make the case against Vice President Sara Duterte stronger—or also dispute allegations against her—two lawmakers said on Friday. In separate interviews, committee chairperson and Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro and Manila

- [5 Eastern Samar gas stations shut amid fuel shortage](#) (2026-03-27 15:32)

TACLOBAN CITY — At least five gasoline stations in Eastern Samar have halted operations amid the ongoing fuel supply crisis, as the Philippine National Police in Eastern Visayas stepped up its monitoring of fuel price compliance among retailers. Lt. Col. Analiza Armeza, spokesperson for Police Regional Office-8 (PRO-8), said three of the closures were directly

- [PNP orders probe into cop allegedly moonlighting for Chinese fugitive](#) (2026-03-27 15:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. ordered the agency to investigate a police master sergeant who allegedly served as a private security personnel for a Chinese fugitive caught in Makati City. “The Southern Police District (SPD) will be asking the immediate supervisor to explain,” PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen.

- [Mixed trend in Iloilo City fish prices; premium seafood remains costly](#) (2026-03-27 15:13)

ILOILO CITY — Prices of key fishery products in Iloilo City showed a mixed trend during the fourth week of March, with staple fish remaining relatively affordable while high-value seafood such as shrimp and crabs continued to command steep prices, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in Western Visayas reported. In its March

- [VP Sara Duterte to Leyte school grads: Stay away from illegal drugs](#) (2026-03-27 15:11)

TACLOBAN CITY — Vice President Sara Duterte attended the graduation ceremony of Kananga National High School in Kananga, Leyte, on Friday, serving as the event’s guest speaker. Duterte was warmly welcomed by education officials, including Leyte Schools Division Superintendent Mariza Magan, along with school administrators. In her address, the Vice President commended the 300 graduates

- [Lawyers to SC: Restrain House ‘fishing expedition’ vs Sara Duterte](#) (2026-03-27 15:04)

MANILA, Philippines — A petition has been filed before the Supreme Court questioning the unconstitutional acts by the House Committee on Justice and restraining it from proceeding with the impeachment case against Vice President Sara Duterte. “When constitutional boundaries are crossed, someone must go to Court,” Atty. Israelito Torreon said in a press conference Friday.

- [Malls shorten operating hours amid national energy emergency](#) (2026-03-27 14:41)

MANILA, Philippines — Several mall operators announced that they will shorten their hours of operation in response to the government’s declaration of a national energy emergency. Among them are SM Supermalls, Robinsons Malls and Ayala Malls. The move comes as authorities push for energy conservation measures amid uncertainties in fuel supply linked to tensions in

- [4 nabbed in Zamboanga del Sur anti-illegal mining raid](#) (2026-03-27 14:37)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur — Four individuals were arrested early Thursday during an anti-illegal mining operation under Oplan Kalikasan in Barangay Dulop, Dumingag town in this province. Around 1:30 a.m., operatives from the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group–Regional Special Operations Team IX (CIDG RSOT IX), in coordination with the Dumingag Municipal Police Station and

- [Manila LGU to shoulder jeepney drivers’ earnings to offer free rides](#) (2026-03-27 14:36)

MANILA, Philippines — The Manila local government unit (LGU) will subsidize jeepney drivers, giving them around P3,000 each per day in exchange for providing free rides for commuters in the metro’s capital, Mayor Francisco “Isko Moreno” Domagoso announced Friday. According to Domagoso, more than 1,400 jeepney drivers are expected to participate in the program, which

- [Onion traders in spotlight as Senate probe opens in Nueva Ecija](#) (2026-03-27 14:29)

SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ, Nueva Ecija — The Senate committee on agriculture, food, and agrarian reform on Thursday vowed to expose alleged unscrupulous traders manipulating onion prices, as farmers raised concerns during a hearing held at the Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) here. The inquiry, presided over by Sen. Francis Pangilinan, gathered municipal agriculture officers and

- [Over 53,000 cops, 2,900 vehicles deployed for Day 2 of transport strike](#) (2026-03-27 14:22)

MANILA, Philippines — A total of 53,789 personnel and 2,907 vehicles have been deployed by the Philippine National Police (PNP) for the second day of the transport strike across the country on Friday, March 28. “The PNP’s deployment continues on the second day,” the agency’s spokesperson, Brig. Gen. Randulf Tuaño, said in a press briefing

- [Cagayan grandpa set to graduate senior high at 77, eyes college next](#) (2026-03-27 14:15)

TUGUEGARAO CITY — While most people his age are slowing down, 77-year-old Mario Resurreccion starts his days like any other senior high school student—reviewing lessons, doing chores, and preparing for class. In Barangay Sampaguita in Solana, Cagayan, “Lolo Mario,” as he is fondly called, has become an unlikely inspiration after a video showing his daily

- [Marcos tells PNPA graduates: Be the reason Filipinos feel safe](#) (2026-03-27 14:09)

CAVITE, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday challenged the new graduates of the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) to be the reason Filipinos feel safe, stressing how “fragile” peace and order are. In his keynote address at the 47th Commencement Exercises for the “SILANG PAGLAOM” Class of 2026 at the PNPA campus in

- [LOOK: Groups march to Mendiola on transport strike’ s Day 2](#) (2026-03-27 13:53)

MANILA, Philippines — Several transport and sectoral groups on Friday marched towards Mendiola in Manila to register their calls for the government to abolish the Oil Deregulation Law and remove the excise tax and value added tax on fuel products. READ: Transport strikes, protests to continue until demands met — Piston This is part of

- [PNP seeks tighter coordination with fuel stations over ‘gas-and-run’ cases](#) (2026-03-27 13:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) will intensify its coordination with fuel stations after some reports of motorists filling up and driving off to evade payment. READ: Driver flees after getting full tank of gas worth P5,000 in Quezon City In a press briefing in Camp Crame on Friday, PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Randulf

- [Chua: Impeachment not far from crisis as wars caused by unfit leaders](#) (2026-03-27 13:23)

MANILA, Philippines — The impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte should not be treated as an issue far from the oil crisis because the wars that triggered it are caused by leaders whose fitness to serve is being questioned, Manila Rep. Joel Chua said. Chua, in an online interview on Friday, said it is

- [P12.9M marijuana, P1.3M illegal logs seized in Cagayan Valley](#) (2026-03-27 13:23)

TUGUEGARAO CITY — Authorities seized at least P12.9 million worth of marijuana and P1.3 million in illegal logs, while arresting 169 individuals during the Simultaneous Anti-Criminality Law Enforcement Operations (SACLEO) conducted across Cagayan Valley from March 19 to 25, police said Friday. Police Brig. Gen. Antonio Marallag Jr., Cagayan Valley regional police director, said authorities

- [Gov’ t agencies to formalize carpooling guidelines amid fuel price surge](#) (2026-03-27 13:22)

MANILA, Philippines — Government transport agencies are set to craft formal guidelines for carpooling and company shuttle services as rising fuel prices continue to strain commuters in Metro Manila. Aside from the government's free rides, recommending alternative modes of transport such as biking, and the implementation of the work-from-home scheme, one of the most common

- [Driver flees after getting full tank of gas worth P5,000 in Quezon City](#) (2026-03-27 12:43)

MANILA, Philippines — The driver of a Toyota Innova got a full tank of fuel worth around P5,000 at a gas station in Quezon City but drove off to evade payment, the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) said on Friday. The incident took place at a gas station along Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (Edsa)

- [INQToday: Marcos: PH has enough crude oil supply until June 30](#) (2026-03-27 12:41)

Marcos: PH has enough crude oil supply until June 30 President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday said the country has sufficient crude oil supply until June 30, 2026. “We already have a supply of crude oil, a sufficient supply of crude oil until June 30. But we are still looking for supply, we are still

- [Firms facing fuel hoarding, profiteering cases now at 5, says PNP](#) (2026-03-27 12:29)

MANILA, Philippines — The number of fuel hoarding and profiteering cases is now at five as of Friday morning, March 27, according to the Philippine National Police's (PNP) monitoring. Data shared by the PNP in a press briefing in Camp Crame showed the following cases were recorded in these areas: Hoarding Profiteering READ: PNP warns

- [Marcos: Repeal of oil deregulation law not off table](#) (2026-03-27 12:11)

CAVITE, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday said “nothing is being discounted” in relation to proposals to repeal the oil deregulation law and remove value-added tax on fuel imports, but the government's focus right now is immediate solutions on the impacts of rising fuel prices caused by Middle East conflict. These remarks came

- [Fuel shortage forces 425 gas stations to close temporarily – PNP](#) (2026-03-27 12:03)

MANILA, Philippines — Four hundred and twenty-five of the country's 14,485 gas stations have temporarily closed due to supply constraints as of Friday morning, March 27, according to the Philippine National Police's (PNP) monitoring. Data shared by the PNP in a press briefing in Camp Crame showed the gas station closures in the following regions:

- [‘Everything’s unconstitutional’: Chua says Duterte team ‘hallucinating’](#) (2026-03-27 12:00)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte's legal team appears to be “hallucinating” when they presented their issues with the impeachment proceedings as the House of Representatives' committee on justice is following every rule stated, Manila Rep. Joel

Chua said on Friday. Chua in a statement said that Duterte camp's claims of the impeachment proceedings being

- [BOC luxury car auction fails as no bidders register](#) (2026-03-27 11:19)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs' (BOC) public auction of 11 seized luxury cars set on Friday did not push through as there were no interested bidders who registered for the event. This was announced by the BOC-Port of Manila on Friday as it scheduled the public auction through sealed bidding on the same

- [15,000 lanterns to light Pampanga lake in Guinness bid](#) (2026-03-27 11:14)

MEXICO, Pampanga — Pampanga, through Central Country Estate Inc. (CCEI) here, will vie for the Guinness World Record (GWR) for the "largest display of water lanterns" in the world during the Lumina Water Lantern and Music Festival on May 10, organizers announced on Thursday. "It's a modern tribute to tradition," said Maricar Pangilinan, CCEI communications

- [Green groups cite Canada trash fiasco in opposing Cuna's DENR appointment](#) (2026-03-27 11:04)

MANILA, Philippines — Environmental groups are questioning the appointment of Juan Miguel Cuna as acting secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), citing his past involvement in the Canada trash shipment fiasco and urging greater accountability as he takes the agency's top post. In a joint statement, five environmental and public interest

- [PNP: No untoward incident during March 26 transport strike](#) (2026-03-27 11:02)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) reported no untoward incidents during the first day of the transport strike on Thursday, March 26. In a statement on Friday, as the strike entered its second day, PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said of the protest action, "There were some minor disruptions, but this

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of March 27, 2026](#) (2026-03-27 09:43)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. may decide by April 12 or 13 whether to suspend or reduce the excise tax on petroleum products, a move aimed at easing the impact of rising oil prices driven by the Middle East crisis, the Department of Finance (DOF) said Thursday. Business groups have welcomed the new

- [Marcos: PH has enough crude oil supply until June 30](#) (2026-03-27 09:07)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday said the country has sufficient crude oil supply until June 30, 2026. "We already have a supply of crude oil, a sufficient supply of crude oil until June 30. But we are still looking for supply, we are still supporting our commuters," Marcos said in a

- [DSWD to release P240-M fuel subsidy for 48,000 Negros tricycle drivers](#) (2026-03-27 08:48)

BACOLOD CITY — The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) will begin distributing P240 million in fuel subsidies to around 48,000 tricycle drivers across 22 local government units on Negros Island starting April 8. Under the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS) program, each qualified driver will receive P5,000 to help ease the

- [Earth Hour turns 20, pushing action beyond the switch](#) (2026-03-27 08:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Every year, millions of people around the world pause for 60 minutes of collective action for the planet through World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)' s Earth Hour. More than a symbolic “lights off” campaign, Earth Hour has evolved into what organizers describe as a “moment of unity,” bringing people together to confront

- [Gov' t adds more routes for free rides on Day 2 of transport strike](#) (2026-03-27 08:14)

MANILA, Philippines — The government has added more routes for its free ride initiative across key areas in Metro Manila on Friday for the second day of a nationwide transport strike of several transport groups. READ: TNVS sector makes rare participation in transport strike In an advisory, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) said that commuters

- [Pagasa: Hot, humid Friday with isolated rains likely](#) (2026-03-27 07:34)

MANILA, Philippines — Warm and humid conditions will continue across the country over the next several days due to the prevailing easterlies, the state weather bureau said Friday. According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), the easterlies will continue to affect the country in the next five days. The easterlies, or

- [Price council pushes P50 per kilo cap on imported rice](#) (2026-03-27 05:52)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC) has adopted the Department of Agriculture' s (DA) proposal to impose a price ceiling of P50 per kilogram on imported rice, endorsing the measure to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. for approval. In a statement on Thursday, the NPCC said the proposed cap will cover imported rice with

- [PhilHealth launches online records check for members](#) (2026-03-27 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth) launched on Thursday the PhilHealth Check Utility (PCU), an online tool that members can use to verify their records and eliminate false claims. The PCU was launched with the support of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), which, according to PhilHealth President and CEO Edwin Mercado, “reflects

- [BJMP buys P46-M fresh food for inmates](#) (2026-03-27 05:48)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) reported on Thursday that the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) has procured P46.1 million worth of fresh, locally grown produce directly from farmers to provide healthier meals

for prisoners nationwide. The initiative is part of the Enhanced Partnership Against Hunger and

- [TNVS sector makes rare participation in transport strike](#) (2026-03-27 05:42)

MANILA, Philippines — The transport strike triggered by rising oil prices and growing discontent over the government's response saw the rare participation of a relatively young sector: TNVS or transport network vehicle service drivers. Around 150 TNVS vehicles formed a convoy and made their presence felt by honking their horns in solidarity with their counterparts in

- [Fare hike suspension, fuel subsidies lauded](#) (2026-03-27 05:38)

MANILA, Philippines — A group promoting the interest of commuters welcomed the suspension of the planned fare increase for jeepneys, buses, airport taxis and ride-booking services, as well as the release of fuel subsidies for drivers, saying both measures had helped ease the burden on the riding public. The Coalition of Filipino Commuters (CFC-PasaHero) said

- [PNP: No foul play in teen's death](#) (2026-03-27 05:31)

MANILA, Philippines — The police have ruled out foul play in the death of 15-year-old Isabelle Sophia Tablate, a Grade 9 student whose body was found on a lot in Pasig City, days after her father reported her missing. “There was no sign that she was killed or subjected to any form of violence,” Capt.

- [DOF: Price cuts due to fuel tax law felt by mid-April](#) (2026-03-27 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The administration could suspend or reduce the excise on fuel as early as April 12, with the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) set to make this recommendation to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. next week, a Department of Finance (DOF) official said. Finance Undersecretary Karlo Fermin Adriano on Thursday told a newly formed

- [Locals take lead in saving turtles in Zambales](#) (2026-03-27 05:04)

SAN ANTONIO, ZAMBALES—Along the shores of Masinloc-Oyon Bay, a protected landscape and seascape, hope persists for one of the ocean's most vulnerable creatures—the “pawikan” or marine turtles. A 7,000-hectare sanctuary of sandy beaches, mangroves and coastal waters, the bay is the first and only marine protected area in Central Luzon established under Republic Act No.

- [Ex-communist rebels top amnesty seekers](#) (2026-03-27 05:02)

KORONADAL CITY—Former communist rebels turned in the largest number of applications for amnesty, official records show. At the close of filing on March 13, the National Amnesty Commission (NAC) counted a total of 13,633 applicants who used to belong to the ranks of the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front-New People's Army

- [2 suspects in 'illegal investment scheme' arrested in Laoag](#) (2026-03-27 00:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Two suspects allegedly involved in an “illegal investment scheme” were arrested in an entrapment operation in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) reported Thursday. According to the NBI, its Laoag District Office, in coordination with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Laoag Extension Office, conducted the operation in

- [March 26: No jackpot winners in SuperLotto, Lotto 6/42](#) (2026-03-26 22:03)

MANILA, Philippines — No bettor won the jackpots for SuperLotto 6/49 and Lotto 6/42 in Thursday’s draw, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. March 26, 2026, fell on a Thursday, when those two major games are scheduled for draws. PCSO said the winning combination for SuperLotto 6/49 was 46-04-19-25-33-02, but no ticket matched all

- [Jeepney driver thankful as passenger pays P200, takes no change](#) (2026-03-26 21:50)

MANILA, Philippines — A jeepney driver was touched when a passenger paid a P200 fare and walked away without taking the change. Caught on CCTV inside the jeepney, a masked passenger, who appears to be male, was seen alighting the vehicle at Commonwealth Ave. corner Pearl Drive in Fairview, Quezon City, after paying his fare.

- [Community pantries return for PUV drivers amid oil crisis](#) (2026-03-26 21:43)

MANILA, Philippines — As the nationwide transport strike paralyzed key routes on Thursday, March 26, public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers continue to bear the brunt of rising fuel prices. With an approved fare hike still stuck in the pipeline, drivers are bearing the brunt of a global oil crisis—one that has found a local answer

- [Clark Water marks World Water Day by empowering next generation](#) (2026-03-26 21:27)

MANILA, Philippines — Clark Water, a Non-East Zone operating unit of Manila Water Company, celebrated World Water Day this year through the Katubig Youth Caravan. The annual two-day flagship youth engagement program highlights the importance of water sustainability while empowering young leaders to become responsible stewards of this vital resource. Now on its second year,

- [Ombudsman Remulla cites ‘problem’ with AMLC amid flood mess probe](#) (2026-03-26 21:00)

MANILA, Philippines — Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla on Thursday said his agency is having a “problem” with the Anti Money Laundering Council (AMLC) related to their investigation into the multibillion flood control corruption scandal. Remulla made this remark a day after AMLC Executive Director Matthew David announced his resignation. David, who requested a transfer to

- [Taguig police seize drugs, firearm, grenade; 4 in custody](#) (2026-03-26 20:46)

MANILA, Philippines — Taguig City police arrested a suspected robbery group member and three others during an early morning anti-criminality operation in Barangay Pembo on Tuesday, seizing illegal drugs, a firearm, and a grenade. The operation took place around 3 a.m. Tuesday along Tanaquin Street in Barangay Pembo, involving a coordinated effort by local police

- [Angara pushes stronger farm-to-school links during Batangas school visit](#) (2026-03-26 20:38)

LIPA CITY, Batangas — Education Secretary Sonny Angara on Thursday underscored the role of agriculture in improving student nutrition and strengthening local communities as he met with farmer cooperatives during a visit in Batangas. Angara joined farmers, school officials, and education stakeholders in a dialogue aimed at strengthening the connection between schools and local agriculture

- [Castro defends Garin: She works so hard, now looks sleepless](#) (2026-03-26 20:35)

MANILA, Philippines — It is wrong to judge and label the Department of Energy (DOE) as slackers just because they do not report to office regularly, as the agency has been in the thick of finding solutions to the high price of fuel, Palace press officer and Undersecretary Claire Castro said on Thursday. During the Malacañang

- [31 arrested in ‘anti-drug crackdown’ in Laguna](#) (2026-03-26 20:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Thirty-one individuals were arrested in San Pedro, Laguna, following the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI)’ s anti-drug crackdown operation on Wednesday. According to the NBI, 28 of those apprehended tested positive for illegal drug use. READ: NBI confiscates P23M worth of narcotics in Davao City During the enforcement of the warrants in Barangays

- [Security guard nabbed for illegal gun discharge in front of Cubao mall](#) (2026-03-26 20:23)

MANILA, Philippines — A security guard, 28, was arrested for allegedly illegally firing his gun in his front of a mall in Cubao, Quezon City, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Thursday. “At around 5:45 a.m. [on March 24], a gunshot rang out at the mall entrance, causing alarm among civilians present in the

- [National 911 center logs over 3,300 VAWC calls from Jan. to Feb.](#) (2026-03-26 20:17)

[Trigger warning: Mentions of domestic violence] MANILA, Philippines — The Emergency 911 National Office recorded a total of 3,392 calls related to violence against women and their children (VAWC) from January 2025 to February 2026. In a statement on Thursday, the Emergency 911 National Office said 2,533 of the calls logged during the said period

- [Marcos, Dy push farm productivity with new Isabela agri projects](#) (2026-03-26 20:17)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. and Speaker Faustino “Bojie” Dy III on Thursday led the inspection and inauguration of key agricultural facilities

here, marking a ₱168.3-million investment aimed at boosting farm productivity, cutting post-harvest losses, and raising farmers' incomes. Joining them were Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. and Isabela Governor Rodolfo

- [Albee Benitez to push for automated national policy for crises](#) (2026-03-26 20:11)

MANILA, Philippines — The huge fuel price increases due to the Middle East conflict has exposed the country's need for an automated policy during crises, so that national and local government units would no longer scramble for solutions, House of Representatives Deputy Speaker Albee Benitez said. Benitez, in an interview on the sidelines of the

- [Man with explicit photos of classmates nabbed, 3 rescued by local gov't](#) (2026-03-26 19:59)

MANILA, Philippines — A man was arrested for allegedly possessing materials showing him engaging in sexual activities with some classmates when they were still minors, the Philippine National Police Women and Children Protection Center (PNP WCPC) said on Thursday. An undercover agent discovered the explicit materials on the suspect's phone, leading to his arrest in

- [Man caught trying to sexually exploit 3 victims online for pay](#) (2026-03-26 19:35)

MANILA, Philippines — A 36-year-old man was arrested in Davao City for allegedly offering to sexually exploit three male individuals online, according to the Philippine National Police Women and Children Protection Center (PNP WCPC) on Thursday. The suspect was caught on March 19, after being tracked down by operatives online, WCPC Chief Brig. Gen. Maria

- [Dy says admin's post-harvest facility helps food security push](#) (2026-03-26 19:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The current administration's several post-harvest facilities — including those inaugurated in Isabela province — will be a great help in pushing for food security, House of Representatives Speaker Faustino “Bojie” Dy III said on Thursday. Dy in a statement said that the government's push for agricultural productivity is evident in the projects, as

- [Woman nabbed for selling 8-year-old boy's explicit photos to foreigner](#) (2026-03-26 19:17)

MANILA, Philippines — A 31-year-old woman was arrested for allegedly selling explicit photos of her partner's eight-year-old boy to an Australian man, the Philippine National Police Women and Children Protection Center (PNP WCPC) said on Thursday. Operatives had tracked her down through her conversations with the foreigner on the latter's phone and she was entrapped

- [Gov't urged to classify internet as '5th utility' as costs decline](#) (2026-03-26 19:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Advocacy group CitizenWatch Philippines has reiterated its call for the government to classify internet access as the country's “fifth” utility, alongside electricity, water, gas, and transportation, as its costs continue to decline. The group's co-convenor, Atty.

Kit Belmonte noted that internet access should be included in the top list of essential utilities

- [Rising fuel costs hit infra, but rail projects on track — contractors](#) (2026-03-26 18:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Rising fuel prices driven by the conflict in the Middle East are affecting construction costs for Philippine infrastructure projects, but contractors say progress on major railway projects remains largely on schedule. Ricky Salenga, construction manager for tunneling works at Sumitomo Mitsui Construction, which handles Contract Package 103 covering the Anonas and Camp

- [TNVS drivers join transport strike, say income reduced by as high as 70%](#) (2026-03-26 18:46)

MANILA, Philippines — Around 150 transport network vehicle service (TNVS) drivers passed through Aurora boulevard on Thursday afternoon while sounding their horns and revving their engines in protest of the rising fuel prices, which have reduced their income by as much as 70 percent. The parade was part of a two-day nationwide transport strike organized

- [Gatchalian sees unscrupulous oil traders raking in windfall profits](#) (2026-03-26 18:17)

MANILA, Philippines – Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian sees unscrupulous traders reaping windfall profits from skyrocketing oil prices in the country driven by the crisis in the Middle East. READ: PNP files profiteering, hoarding charges vs gas station, driver At Thursday’ s hearing of the Senate Proactive Response and Oversight for Timely and Effective Crisis Strategy (Protect) committee,

- [Jeepney driver faints while lining up for cash aid; in stable condition](#) (2026-03-26 18:11)

MANILA, Philippines — A jeepney driver fainted during the rollout of the government’ s cash financial assistance for public utility vehicle drivers but is now in stable condition, the Quezon City Government said on Thursday. The driver was taken by the city disaster risk reduction and management office to the Quezon City General Hospital for assessment

- [Marcos announces Camago-3 gas drilling, testing operations](#) (2026-03-26 18:04)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday announced the drilling and testing operations at Camago-3, capable of producing up to 60 million standard cubic feet of gas per day. In a video statement, Marcos said Camago-3 is the second major milestone under the USD893-million Malampaya Phase 4 campaign. READ: Marcos signs law granting him

- [Gatchalian tells DOE to power up, ‘don’ t sleep’ as energy crisis looms](#) (2026-03-26 17:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Department of Energy (DOE) officials should take energy drinks and refrain from sleeping as they try to find alternative suppliers of oil and ultimately avoid an energy crisis for the country, Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian said on Thursday. During the Senate’ s ad hoc committee hearing on addressing the effects of the Middle East tensions,

- [Man nabbed for alleged illegal sale of fuel in Masbate](#) (2026-03-26 17:51)

MANILA, Philippines — A man was arrested for allegedly illegally selling fuel in Masbate, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Thursday. The suspect was entrapped in an operation in Barangay Tan-awan, Placer on Tuesday, according to the PNP in a statement. “Confiscated from the suspect were five liters of gasoline used in the buy-bust;

- [Sara Duterte, lawyers ‘not consistent’ with their positions – law expert](#) (2026-03-26 17:47)

MANILA, Philippines – Vice President Sara Duterte and her legal camp appeared to be “not consistent” with their positions on the House justice committee giving them the opportunity to be heard in the impeachment proceedings and refusing to attend for being a “mini trial,” a constitutional law expert said on Thursday. Paolo Tamase, associate dean

- [CDO transport workers stay on sidelines amid nationwide strike](#) (2026-03-26 17:39)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY — Transport workers here chose not to participate in a nationwide strike demanding urgent actions on issues tied to the Middle East crisis that continue to squeeze them with reduced daily incomes. Officials said this could have been due to the paltry turnout during Monday’ s citywide strike called by a federation

- [Marcos inspects Isabela palay warehouse, onion cold storage facility](#) (2026-03-26 17:14)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday inspected Ambatali Warehouse with multi-purpose drying pavement and the Ramon Onion Cold Storage Facility in the Municipality of Ramon, Isabela. The project was expected to strengthen the agricultural sector and provide a more efficient post-harvest system, the Presidential Communications Office (PCO) said in a press release.

- [Speaker Dy welcomes BARMM poll reset, backs stronger regional transition](#) (2026-03-26 17:13)

MANILA, Philippines – Speaker Faustino “Bojie” G. Dy III on Wednesday welcomed the signing into law by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. of the measure resetting the first regular elections in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), calling it a crucial step toward a more stable and credible democratic transition in the region.

- [SC upholds ex-Agusan del Norte mayor’ s malversation conviction](#) (2026-03-26 17:11)

MANILA, Philippines — The Supreme Court has affirmed the malversation conviction of former mayor Teresita Soliva of the municipality of Remedios T. Romualdez, Agusan del Norte for failing to liquidate cash advances for confidential funds and other expenses amounting to more than half a million pesos. In a 26-page decision in August last year but

- [Calapan clergy renew vows after Vatican raises vicariate to diocese](#) (2026-03-26 17:10)

- [Ortega: House productive even with impeachment duty](#) (2026-03-26 17:02)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives is expected to top its performance in the 19th Congress regarding productivity even as it is duty-bound to tackle the impeachment complaints, Deputy Speaker Paolo Ortega V said on Thursday. Ortega, in a statement, said that having the House committee on justice tackle the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara

- [PH always sincere in its dealings, Malacañang says](#) (2026-03-26 16:26)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines has always been sincere in its dealings and negotiations with the international community, Palace press officer and Undersecretary Claire Castro said on Thursday. Castro said this in a press briefing, after being asked to react to the Chinese embassy's recent statements on the possible resumption of oil exploration talks between Manila

- [Transport strike in Bacolod lasts only a few hours](#) (2026-03-26 16:21)

BACOLOD CITY—A transportation strike that failed to cripple public transportation here ended before noon on Thursday. There were about 500 drivers and operators who gathered at five rally centers to demand government action against rising fuel prices brought on by unrest in the Middle East, said Eric Bendoy, secretary-general of the United Negros Drivers and

- [Transport strikes, protests to continue until demands met – Piston](#) (2026-03-26 16:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Drivers and operators of public utility vehicles will not stop holding transport strikes and protests until the government heeds their calls amid the rising cost of fuel products, transport group Piston president Mody Floranda said on Thursday. Floranda reiterated this statement as the No to Oil Price Hike Coalition, which comprises drivers

- [Marcos inspects agri, health projects in Isabela](#) (2026-03-26 16:01)

RAMON, Isabela—President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday pledged to put up more livelihood projects as he inspected various farm facilities and a new road in far-flung Ambatali village here and in Santiago City and Cabatuan town in Isabela province. Marcos said the projects would improve food supply and increase farmers' earnings. Worth P168.3 million, the

- [Senators peel off the issue of conflicting data on onion production](#) (2026-03-26 15:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Senators during an agriculture panel hearing on Thursday questioned the government's conflicting data on national onion production. This comes as the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported a production surplus, while the Department of Agriculture (DA) reported a deficit. During the hearing, the PSA said the Philippines produced 308,661 metric tons (mt) in

- [Balisacan appears lukewarm over proposed tax on super rich](#) (2026-03-26 15:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan appears to be lukewarm over proposals to tax the rich, as a measure to curb the possible losses generated by the country due to the possible tax suspension, as it may create more harm than good. During a Malacañang press briefing on Thursday, Palace press officer and Undersecretary Claire

- [Transport group seeks P10,000 monthly aid for PUV drivers](#) (2026-03-26 15:11)

MANILA, Philippines — Transport group Manibela on Thursday called on the government to provide P10,000 in monthly cash assistance, instead of the one-time payout of P5,000, for public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers. According to Manibela chairperson Mar Valbuena, the P5,000 cash assistance is not enough for the drivers, noting the rising cost of fuel. “It’ s only

- [Marcos may order fuel excise tax cut, suspension by April 12 or 13](#) (2026-03-26 14:30)

MANILA, Philippines— President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. may order the suspension or reduction of excise taxes on petroleum products by April 12 or 13, an official of the Department of Finance (DOF) told senators on Thursday. DOF is part of the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) tasked to make recommendations to the president to either suspend

- [Agencies should hasten response to oil crisis – Bam Aquino](#) (2026-03-26 14:21)

MANILA, Philippines — Cabinet members should respond to the ongoing oil crisis immediately with the national state of energy emergency declared, Sen. Bam Aquino said on Thursday.

“Please move as fast as the price of diesel and gasoline and gasoline is going up. Move as fast as that. If the price of diesel and gasoline

- [Marcos’ Partido Federal gains strength in House – South Cotabato gov](#) (2026-03-26 14:16)

KORONADAL CITY, South Cotabato – The Partido Federal ng Pilipinas (PFP) has been gaining strength in the House of Representatives, trailing behind the dominant Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD), its president, South Cotabato Gov. Reynaldo Tamayo Jr., said.

“Actually, the number is increasing regularly. We are the super majority in the local government, with the governors

- [PNP to bolster community ties to address rising cases of suicide](#) (2026-03-26 14:03)

[Warning: Mention of suicide] MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) chief, Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. on Thursday said the agency will be strengthening its relationships with communities in a bid to address the rising cases of suicide. “As law enforcers, the PNP also wants the public to feel that they can rely on

- [House gives free rides for those commuting from SJDM, Welcome Rotonda](#) (2026-03-26 13:45)

MANILA, Philippines — Commuters moving from the City of San Jose del Monte in Bulacan to Welcome Rotonda in Quezon City can enjoy free rides after the House of Representatives launched trips as part of their transport relief initiative amid rising fuel costs. In a statement on

Thursday, the House said that it launched a

- [Rice trader gives free gas to over 300 South Cotabato trike drivers](#) (2026-03-26 13:41)

KORONADAL CITY, South Cotabato – May you live long and your tribe increase. A young businesswoman received such wishes for her kindness after she gave out free gasoline for hundreds of tricycle and habal-habal drivers in the towns of Surallah and T’boli amid the skyrocketing fuel prices due to the Middle East war. READ: Marcos OKs

- [Calapan City heat index hits 41°C; ‘extreme caution’ advised](#) (2026-03-26 13:19)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Residents of this city are warned of mounting health risks as the heat index soared to a sweltering 41 degrees Celsius on Thursday morning, prompting local disaster officials to raise an “extreme caution” advisory. Data from the Calapan City Public Market monitoring station recorded the peak value at 11 a.m,

- [Coding without limits: IT grad thrives despite disability](#) (2026-03-26 13:17)

MANILA, Philippines — In the fast-paced world of front-end development, skill is often measured by how quickly one can type, fix errors, or run clean code. For Ayevin Hao, a 27-year-old BS Information Technology graduate of the University of the East (UE), that work happens differently. Every line of code, every command, is done with

- [55 green sea turtle hatchlings released in Catanduanes](#) (2026-03-26 13:07)

LEGAZPI CITY, Albay— Fifty-five green sea turtle hatchlings were released into the sea on March 20 at Taelan Cove in Talisoy village, Virac town, in the island province of Catanduanes. The activity was led by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) in Catanduanes, headed by officer-in-charge Lawyer Vivian D. Escoto, in coordination with

- [Police rule out foul play in death of missing Pasig teen](#) (2026-03-26 12:58)

MANILA, Philippines — Police have ruled out foul play in the death of 15-year-old Grade 9 student Isabelle Sophia Tablate, whose body was found in vacant a lot in Pasig City after she had been missing for five days. “There was no sign that she was killed or subjected to violence,” Capt. Rodolfo Rabago, team

- [Leviste to Marcos: Cut Asean budget, funnel savings to fuel price relief](#) (2026-03-26 12:48)

MANILA, Philippines — Batangas Rep. Leandro Legarda Leviste has urged the Office of the President (OP) to review and eventually trim its P22.9 billion budget for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit this year. Leviste is asking President Marcos to allocate the savings that will result in the budget decrease to measures that will

- [BARMM grants P7,500 fuel subsidy to transport sector](#) (2026-03-26 12:34)

COTABATO CITY — The Ministry of Transportation and Communication in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (MOTC-BARMM) has rolled out fuel subsidies for the

transport sector as the petition for a provisional fare increase for public transport vehicles in the region remains up in the air. Through the MOTC-BARMM Pantawid Pasada Program (PPP), each franchise

- [When mangrove planting goes wrong](#) (2026-03-26 12:13)

MANILA, Philippines — Along a stretch of coastline, volunteers waded into shallow water, pressing mangrove seedlings into the mud — one by one, row after row. It is a familiar scene across the Philippines, often repeated after storms, during company-led drives, and in community activities promoted as climate action. The intention is clear: to protect

- [Oil traders quiet on May supply – local oil firms](#) (2026-03-26 11:56)

MANILA, Philippines — Fuel companies on Thursday admitted that no oil traders have committed to supplying stocks for May. The Philippine Institute of Petroleum (PIP) and the Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association (IPPCA) made the revelation during the Senate Proactive Response and Oversight for Timely and Effective Crisis Strategy (Protect) committee hearing. “So many of

- [Lawyer of 18 ‘ex-Marines’ back at NBI over De Lima, Villanueva cases](#) (2026-03-26 11:48)

MANILA, Philippines — Atty. Levito Baligod, counsel for the 18 alleged former Marines, returned to the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on Thursday to comply with the subpoena issued to him. This time, the subpoena was in connection with the cyber complaints recently filed by Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima and 2025 Ramon Magsaysay

- [Man arrested for siphoning diesel from truck in Tacloban](#) (2026-03-26 11:44)

TACLOBAN CITY — Police have arrested a man who allegedly siphoned diesel from the parked truck of a business establishment here. The theft was reported at a business along Rizal Avenue in Barangay 37, where around 70 liters of diesel fuel valued at P8,050 were siphoned from a company vehicle owned by Lucky Hardware and

- [Manibela leader seeks commuters’ understanding over calls for fare hike](#) (2026-03-26 11:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Transport group Manibela chairperson Mar Valbuena on Thursday appealed for commuters’ understanding and sympathy as they call for a fare increase in view of the rising cost of fuel due to the conflict in the Middle East. Valbuena criticized the suspension of the fare hike on several public utility vehicles, such as

- [Cebu prov’ l govt cuts terminal fees for PUVs](#) (2026-03-26 11:13)

CEBU CITY — The Cebu provincial government has ordered a temporary reduction in terminal fees for public utility vehicles (PUVs) using Capitol-operated bus terminals, aiming to cushion the impact of rising fuel prices on transport operators and commuters. The three-month

measure, which took effect on March 25 and will run until June 24 this year,

- [Residents brave long queue for cheap rice in Kidapawan City](#) (2026-03-26 11:02)

KIDAPAWAN CITY, Cotabato- Hundreds of residents here braved a long queue on Thursday to avail of the government's cheap rice. The people trooped to the National Food Authority (NFA) warehouse to get priority numbers starting at 4 a.m. But within an hour, the line of would-be beneficiaries had grown to about half a kilometer. Those

- [NCRPO deploys over 8,900 cops, 190 vehicles for transport strike](#) (2026-03-26 10:54)

MANILA, Philippines — Over 8,900 police officers and 190 police vehicles have been deployed in Metro Manila for security during the two-day transport strike launched on Thursday, March 26, according to the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO). A breakdown of the agency's deployment as of 10 a.m. showed they had sent out the following

- [Transport groups: Scrap, not just suspend, fuel taxes amid price hikes](#) (2026-03-26 10:54)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. should have abolished the excise tax and value added tax (VAT) on fuel products, instead of suspending or reducing their taxes, amid the rising cost of fuel caused by tension in the Middle East, transport group Piston said on Thursday. Piston president Mody Floranda said this as the

- [DA plans 5 mega hatcheries to boost aquaculture, ease pressure on seas](#) (2026-03-26 10:49)

GUINOBATAN, Albay — Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the government will strengthen aquaculture and build five mega hatcheries in the country to help achieve food security and allow overfished seas to recover. Laurel said the planned hatcheries will be established in the provinces of Camarines Sur, Sorsogon, Quezon, Zamboanga Sibugay, and Pangasinan. “The

- [Ombudsman to comply with House order for Sara Duterte SALN](#) (2026-03-26 10:42)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the Ombudsman on Thursday said they will comply with the order of a House panel to release the certified true copy of Vice President Sara Duterte's Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth (SALN). Assistant Ombudsman Mico Clavano noted that SALNs of certain public officials are public documents that

- [Superkit series tees off May 16 in Clark](#) (2026-03-26 10:42)

MANILA, Philippines — The Superkit Series will tee off on May 16 to 17 at the Mimosa Golf and Country Club in Clark, Pampanga, marking a three-month nationwide tour organized by the Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines. The opening leg will be played across Mimosa's Mountain and Acacia courses, setting the stage for a

- [Bacolod jeepney drivers, operators join nat'l transport protest](#) (2026-03-26 10:36)

BACOLOD CITY- Drivers and operators of traditional jeepneys and other transport groups have stopped plying their routes here on Thursday as part of a nationwide protest to demand government action over rising fuel prices brought on by the Middle East unrest. Leading the strike in Bacolod are the United Negros Drivers and Operators Center-Pagkakaisa ng

- [Campaign launched for toxics-free, zero-waste hospitals](#) (2026-03-26 10:21)

TACLOBAN CITY — The Eastern Visayas Medical Center (EVMC), based here, launched on Wednesday a campaign for toxics-free and zero-waste hospitals aimed at reducing plastic use and improving healthcare waste management. The campaign was highlighted by the rollout of the “Nurse Susie” roadshow at the medical center’s Outpatient Department. The initiative forms part of the

- [Senate ad hoc panel holds consultation on impact of Middle East war](#) (2026-03-26 10:07)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate ad hoc committee resumed its hearing on Thursday to hear inputs on the socioeconomic effects of the Middle East war on Filipinos. The Proactive Response and Oversight for Timely and Effective Crisis Strategy (Protect) committee, created under Senate Resolution No. 45, aims to formulate a national comprehensive contingency framework. This

- [LOOK: Mall hours adjusted for Holy Week observance](#) (2026-03-26 09:55)

MANILA, Philippines — Major mall operators have announced adjusted operating schedules ahead of the observance of Holy Week, with closures set for Maundy Thursday on April 2 and Good Friday on April 3. Open on Maundy Thursday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.: Open on Good Friday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.: Closed

- [Bicol’s damaged Maharlika Highway section now open for Holy Week rush](#) (2026-03-26 09:54)

LEGAZPI CITY, Albay — Motorists traveling from Metro Manila and bound for Bicol, Visayas, and Mindanao (and vice versa) for the Holy Week observance can now use previously damaged portions of the Maharlika Highway. This is after the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) completed emergency repairs ahead of the peak travel period. READ:

- [LIBRENG SAKAY rolled out in Metro Manila as transport strikes continue](#) (2026-03-26 09:45)

MANILA, Philippines – The government has rolled out “libreng sakay” (free rides) across key routes in Metro Manila as a nationwide transport strike disrupts public commuting on March 26 and 27. In an advisory, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) said the “libreng sakay” program will run from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursday and

- [DepEd to Western Visayas schools: No fees for end-of-school-year rites](#) (2026-03-26 09:29)

ILOILO CITY — The Department of Education (DepEd) in Western Visayas has reiterated that no fees should be collected from students, parents, or teachers for end-of-school-year (EOSY) activities, including graduation and moving-up ceremonies. The directive was contained in

Regional Memorandum No. 274, series of 2026, signed by Cristito A. Eco, regional director of the Department

- [Taal Volcano logs slight rise in sulfur emissions; seismic activity low](#) (2026-03-26 09:14)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon — Taal Volcano recorded a slight increase in sulfur dioxide emissions, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) reported on Thursday. In its morning bulletin, Phivolcs said the volcano emitted 1,625 metric tons of sulfur dioxide from its main crater over the past 24 hours, a level still classified as “weak.”

- [Nartatez vows crackdown on e-sabong after Manila coliseum bust](#) (2026-03-26 09:11)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. intends to crack down on online cockfighting after police shut down an alleged e-sabong operation at a coliseum in Manila yesterday. The raid in Vitas Coliseum in Tondo resulted in the arrest of 136 bettors and 28 operators. “Illegal e-sabong is a

- [On-site classes in Albay suspended due to transport strike](#) (2026-03-26 09:10)

LEGAZPI CITY, Albay—In-person classes in Albay province were suspended on Thursday and Friday in anticipation of the nationwide transport strike. In an advisory, Acting Governor Farida Co said the public and private schools will implement alternative learning modality at all levels. She also advised the local government units to provide free rides for stranded commuters

- [Central Luzon deputy police chief named new head of Highway Patrol Group](#) (2026-03-26 09:07)

MANILA, Philippines — Police Regional Office Central Luzon (PRO 3) Deputy Director for Administration Brig. Gen. Rommel Batangan has been designated the new acting director of the Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group (PNP HPG). This came through the order of PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. dated March 25 and issued by the

- [CHR hails PH removal from UN list of grave rights violations](#) (2026-03-26 08:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) welcomed the Philippines’ removal from the United Nations (UN) list of grave child rights violations related to armed conflict, calling it a milestone in efforts to protect children in areas affected by fighting. The CHR said the delisting highlights “sustained national efforts to strengthen the implementation

- [Pagasa warns of soaring heat index across PH on March 26 \(Thursday\)](#) (2026-03-26 08:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Scorching heat is expected across the country, with the heat index reaching up to 41°C, while Metro Manila may experience 37°C to 38°C on Thursday, the state weather bureau warned. Heat index is how hot it actually feels to the human body when relative humidity is combined with the air temperature. Temperatures

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of Thursday, March 26, 2026](#) (2026-03-26 08:10)

The Department of Energy describes the global oil market this week as “calm” compared to last week. Despite this pronouncement, local fuel prices are still going up, it’s just that the numbers are about half of the increases experienced by motorists last week. Here are the prevailing oil prices in Metro Manila and other parts

- [Mt. Province cancels Lang-ay Festival due to nat’ l energy emergency](#) (2026-03-26 07:27)

BAGUIO CITY — The provincial government of Mountain Province on Wednesday announced the cancellation of all activities for the annual Lang-ay Festival in support of the national energy emergency, officials said. In a social media post, the local government announced the cancellation “in compliance with Executive Order 17-2026,” adding that the move supports the National Energy

- [Corruption issues hound Marcos, Duterte in Pulse Asia poll](#) (2026-03-26 05:52)

Corruption remained the primary factor influencing the public’s trust or distrust of President Marcos while Vice President Sara Duterte enjoyed the trust of most survey respondents because of her supposed ability to govern despite her alleged involvement in corrupt activities, according to the latest survey by Pulse Asia. The First Quarter 2026 Ulat ng Bayan

- [Police official accused of harassment quits post](#) (2026-03-26 05:50)

The acting Highway Patrol Group (HPG) chief of the Philippine National Police has voluntarily resigned from his post after a subordinate accused him of sexual harassment. Brig. Gen. Jessie Tamayao, however, denied the allegation in a statement on Wednesday, calling it part of a personal vendetta against him. “I have always conducted myself with the

- [SC: DSWD certificate needed in adoption of ‘surrendered’ kids](#) (2026-03-26 05:48)

Abandoned children who are surrendered to a person with whom they have no existing ties cannot be legally adopted without a certification from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). This was the recent ruling of the Supreme Court’s Third Division when it junked a petition for certiorari in connection with an adoption case

- [AMLC seeks forfeiture of assets tied to flood control scam](#) (2026-03-26 05:44)

The Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) has filed three petitions for civil forfeiture against assets allegedly linked to the flood control corruption scandal, following six months of investigations and freeze orders. In a statement, the council said the petitions cover assets of individuals and entities earlier placed under freeze orders issued by the Court of Appeals.

- [Cops bust ‘e-sabong’ in Manila; 174 arrested](#) (2026-03-26 05:42)

The police have busted a group behind an electronic cockfighting ( “e-sabong” ) operation conducting around 500 cockfights daily in a Manila coliseum, resulting in the arrest of 174 people, mostly bettors. Col. John Guiagui, the head of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in the National Capital Region (CIDG – NCR), told reporters that they raided

- [Police note mounting suicides in PH capital](#) (2026-03-26 05:38)

Suicide cases in Metro Manila have more than tripled in the first quarter, a situation that should make families more aware of the factors that drive youths to self-harm, including the negative effects of online gaming, the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) said on Wednesday. The cases surged to 111 between January and March

- [House panel asks for Sara's SALNs, files on her threat to kill Marcos](#) (2026-03-26 05:36)

The House committee on justice opened a new stage on Wednesday in the impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte by asking two agencies—the Office of the Ombudsman and the National Bureau of Investigation—to produce documents pertaining to her declared wealth and the death threat she issued in 2024 against President Marcos, first lady Liza

- [P20 billion emergency fund set to secure fuel supply](#) (2026-03-26 05:32)

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. has directed the release of billions in additional funds in response to the deepening global oil crisis caused by the Middle East conflict, a day after he signed an executive order declaring a national energy emergency. The P20-billion emergency fund, sourced from the Malampaya Gas Fund under the Special Account

- [Marcos gets special power to cut or suspend fuel tax](#) (2026-03-26 05:30)

President Marcos on Wednesday signed Republic Act No. 12316, a law authorizing him to suspend or reduce excise on petroleum products, as the country continued to reel from oil price spikes caused by the Middle East conflict. The measure was certified as urgent by the President on March 12, as an oil crisis loomed following

- [LGUs roll out fuel subsidy in provinces](#) (2026-03-26 05:06)

The streets of Kidapawan City in Cotabato province were almost emptied of passenger tricycles on Wednesday morning after their usual rounds of ferrying private and government workers to their respective offices. There was no transport strike. But many of them gathered at the city gymnasium and queued to beat the deadline to submit filled-out forms

- [Pangasinan, Ecija farmers face dearth of onion buyers](#) (2026-03-26 05:04)

CALASIAO, PANGASINAN—It is a bumper harvest season for onion farmers in Pangasinan and Nueva Ecija provinces. With the help of concerned agencies, growers were able to control armyworms, locally known as “harabas,” which are moth larvae that feed on onion leaves at night and cause severe production losses. As a result, this year's harvest is

- [Mountain Province tourism bracing for impact of rising fuel prices](#) (2026-03-26 05:02)

BAGUIO CITY—Tourism in Mountain Province is taking a hit from the fuel shocks due to the conflict in the Middle East, which entered its 25th day on Wednesday. Gov. Bonifacio Lacwasan

on Wednesday canceled the province's annual Lang-ay Festival scheduled on April 6 to comply with President Marcos' declaration of a state of national emergency

- [LGUs, national government commit to diversity, inclusion](#) (2026-03-26 04:30)

As the global workforce continues to evolve, existing cultural factors and government policies demonstrate the growing role of businesses in fostering environments where employees feel seen, valued, and treated fairly. But beyond fairness, inclusive work environments empower individuals to fully realize and maximize their talents and capabilities. Companies that embed diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)

- [Mangyans show promise of solar-powered future in Mindoro](#) (2026-03-26 04:25)

CITY OF CALAPAN—In remote communities across Mindoro, Indigenous Mangyan families are already experiencing what a renewable energy future could look like—powered by small, decentralized solar systems that bring light to homes and electricity to community facilities long beyond the reach of the grid. Their experience is now at the heart of a broader conversation, as

- [LIST: LGUs, schools shifting to online classes on March 26](#) (2026-03-26 00:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Several local government units (LGUs) and educational institutions have switched to online classes on Thursday, March 26 due to a nationwide transport strike. The following LGUs have announced adopting the measure: Calabarzon Laguna – all levels, public and private; modular or online learning on March 26 Bicol Region Albay READ: Groups back 2-day

- [PNP to public: Observe water activity safety guidelines](#) (2026-03-26 00:13)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Wednesday enjoined the public to take extra precautions when swimming or holding activities in pools and bodies of water. “Swim only in designated areas, check for lifeguards, wear life vests when needed, and avoid risky behavior such as diving in shallow water or swimming alone,” PNP

- [Mountain Province calls off Lang-ay festival amid energy emergency](#) (2026-03-25 23:07)

BAGUIO CITY — Citing the need to conserve energy amid a national energy emergency, Mountain Province has called off major activities for this year's Lang-ay Festival. Governor Bonifacio C. Lacwasan Jr., through Executive Order No. 17, directed all provincial offices and local government units to suspend festival events and adopt strict energy-saving measures. The move

- [Guiuan, E. Samar converts evacuation facility into drug rehab center](#) (2026-03-25 22:48)

TACLOBAN CITY — The municipality of Guiuan in Eastern Samar has opened its own community-based drug rehabilitation center, after converting a former evacuation facility. Located in Barangay Cogon, the facility can accommodate up to 350 individuals and is expected to serve as a key intervention center for drug surrenderers in the town, Mayor Annaliza

Gonzales-Kwan

- [2 drugs suspects fall in Rizal; shabu, gun seized](#) (2026-03-25 22:41)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon – Anti-illegal drug operatives arrested two suspects and seized around P510,000 worth of shabu and an unlicensed firearm in a buy-bust operation in Cainta, Rizal, on Tuesday. The Police Region 4A police in a report on Wednesday said the operatives collared the suspected pushers identified only by their aliases as “Marco” and

- [Protest greets Davao Light takeover of Nordeco assets in Tagum City](#) (2026-03-25 22:25)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur– Hundreds of members of the National Confederation of Electric Cooperatives’ Member-Consumer-Owners staged a prayer rally in Tagum City on Wednesday to show support for the Northern Davao Electric Cooperative (Nordeco) even as the Davao Light and Power Co. (DLPC) took control of its key assets. The march comes on the

- [2 Cavite drug suspects busted, P3.4M shabu seized](#) (2026-03-25 22:17)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon – Authorities seized an estimated P3. 4 million worth of shabu (crystal meth) and arrested two alleged big-time illegal drugs traffickers in a buy-bust operation Wednesday afternoon in Imus City, Cavite. The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) -vRegion 4A said in a spot report that their agents and Cavite Maritime Police operatives

- [Lone player bags MegaLotto 6/45 jackpot in March 25 draw](#) (2026-03-25 22:10)

MANILA, Philippines – A lone player bettor won the MegaLotto 6/45 jackpot in Wednesday’ s draw, while no one won the top prize in the Grand Lotto 6/55 draw, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. The winning MegaLotto 6/45 combination with a jackpot prize of P15 million is 17-24-15-29-10-05. The Grand Lotto 6/55 combinatio was

- [DepEd Iloilo: New academic calendar favorable to teachers](#) (2026-03-25 21:53)

ILOILO CITY — The Department of Education (DepEd) Schools Division of Iloilo has welcomed the adoption of a new academic calendar, saying it is favorable to teachers. Leonil Salvilla, DepEd Iloilo spokesperson, said the updated calendar benefit teachers as shorter grading cycles and built-in breaks may help reduce workload and allow time for rest. President

- [Iloilo orders stricter energy, fuel-saving measures amid rising costs](#) (2026-03-25 21:49)

ILOILO CITY – The Iloilo provincial government has rolled out enhanced energy and fuel conservation measures across multiple sectors following continued increases in fuel prices and global energy uncertainties. Gov. Arthur Defensor Jr. signed Executive Order No. 34-A, series of 2026 on March 25, directing households, businesses, industries, and transport groups to adopt stricter energy-saving

- [Cops arrest 3, seize P6.8M in meth in Lanao del Sur](#) (2026-03-25 21:45)

COTABATO CITY – Three suspected peddlers of illegal drugs were arrested on Wednesday and a kilo of suspected meth recovered from them in a buy-bust operation in Lumbatan town, Lanao del Sur. Col. Caesar Cabuhat, Lanao del Sur police director, said the operation was carried out after undercover agents confirmed the drug trade taking place

- [Sugar board exec urges hike in farmers' trucking allowance amid crisis](#) (2026-03-25 21:23)

BACOLOD CITY — Sugar Regulatory Board Member David Andrew Sanson on Wednesday, March 25, said he is appealing to all sugar mills nationwide to increase the allowance they give sugar farmers for delivering cane to the milling plants, in light of the rising fuel costs. Sanson, planters representative on the Sugar Board, in his letter

- [Manila Water Wawa–Calawis supply system bolsters East Zone, Rizal](#) (2026-03-25 21:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Manila Water continues to expand its supply network in the East Zone, pushing service into upland and hard-to-reach communities in Metro Manila and Rizal Province as part of its long-term water security program. A key component of this effort is the Wawa–Calawis Water Supply System, which is designed to diversify sources and

- [Pope appoints Fr. Saco as 8th bishop of Tagbilaran — CBCP](#) (2026-03-25 20:09)

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol — Pope Leo XIV has appointed Rev. Fr. Gerardo Fortich Saco Jr. as the eighth bishop of the Diocese of Tagbilaran, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) announced. CBCP said the Vatican made the announcement Wednesday at noon in Rome (7 p.m. in the Philippines), naming Saco—who has served as

- [Vatican elevates Calapan to diocese; Cuevas named first bishop](#) (2026-03-25 19:53)

CITY OF CALAPAN, Oriental Mindoro – The Vatican has elevated the Apostolic Vicariate of Calapan into a full-fledged diocese, appointing Moises Cuevas as its first bishop, according to the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) News. The announcement was made Wednesday at noon local time in Rome (7 p.m. in the Philippines), following approval

- [PNP ramps up road safety measures ahead of Holy Week travel surge](#) (2026-03-25 19:49)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) will be intensifying its deployment for road safety measures in anticipation of an influx of travelers for the 2026 observance of Holy Week and the vacation season. In a statement on Wednesday, the PNP said its Highway Patrol Group (HPG) will be deploying 714 personnel and 92

- [Madriaga seeks protection, fearing Teves wants him dead — Diokno](#) (2026-03-25 19:29)

MANILA, Philippines — The request for protective custody for Ramil Madriaga, former aide to Vice President Sara Duterte, arises from his fear that former Negros Oriental Rep. Arnolfo Teves Jr. may want him dead, Akbayan Rep. Chel Diokno said Wednesday. Speaking at the House Committee on Justice hearing on Duterte's impeachment complaints, Diokno reiterated his

motion

- [DSWD issues warning vs text scams posing as cash aid rollout](#) (2026-03-25 19:20)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) issued a warning to the public to take caution against text scams posing as the agency delivering the P5,000 cash aid for public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers. “Because of the continuous payout of cash relief assistance by the DSWD, scammers are everywhere again,” the

- [Vistan retains UP Diliman chancellor post](#) (2026-03-25 19:19)

MANILA, Philippines — Edgardo Carlo Vistan II has been reappointed as chancellor of the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman, receiving a fresh three-year term. The state university announced Wednesday that Vistan will continue as chancellor of its Diliman campus following the 1407th meeting of the UP Board of Regents. Vistan competed against geology professor

- [Manila Cathedral installs image of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#) (2026-03-25 19:10)

MANILA, Philippines—The pilgrim image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, considered as one of the most influential Marian apparitions, is set to be permanently installed at the Manila Cathedral, with its expected arrival from Mexico scheduled on June 13. In a briefing on Wednesday, Kidapawan Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo, who serves as spiritual director of the

- [Over 22,900 TNVS drivers get P5,000 cash aid — DSWD](#) (2026-03-25 19:03)

MANILA, Philippines — Over 22,900 transport network vehicle service (TNVS) drivers so far have received the P5,000 cash financial assistance from the government, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) said on Wednesday. In a social media post, the DSWD gave the following breakdown of TNVS drivers who received the aid in Metro Manila

- [Marcos signs law granting him powers to suspend fuel excise tax](#) (2026-03-25 18:56)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday signed into law a bill authorizing him to suspend or reduce excise taxes on petroleum products, as the country continues to feel the impact of rising oil prices caused by the conflict in the Middle East. Republic Act No. 12316 states that the sitting president, upon the

- [Luistro stands by ‘mini trial’ term for Sara Duterte impeach hearings](#) (2026-03-25 18:41)

MANILA, Philippines — “No regrets.” This was the response of Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro when pressed if she regretted using the term “mini trial” to refer to the “hearing proper” of impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte. Duterte’s camp zeroed in on her “mini trial” remarks as a reason not to attend the proceedings,

- [INQToday: Duterte impeachment: House panel subpoenas threat probe record, SALNs](#) (2026-03-25 18:19)

Here's a quick roundup of today's top stories: House panel subpoenas VP Sara SALNs, threat probe record The House of Representatives' committee on justice has issued a subpoena for records of the investigation into Vice President Sara Duterte's threats against ranking officials and her Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth (SALN) from 2007. At

- [House panel asks PSA to verify OVP, DepEd secret fund beneficiaries](#) (2026-03-25 18:08)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) has been asked to verify its reports on the lack of records for some individuals who allegedly received confidential funds (CF) from the Office of the Vice President (OVP) and the Department of Education. During Wednesday's House Committee on Justice hearing, Mamamayang Liberal party-list Rep. Leila de Lima

- [Senate panel: Cost-cutting measures can save gov't at least P160B](#) (2026-03-25 18:03)

MANILA, Philippines — The government could save at least P160 billion from this year's budget if it implements cost-cutting measures in the face of rising prices of fuel and basic commodities caused by tensions in the Middle East. These potential savings were identified by the Senate Proactive Response and Oversight for Timely and Effective Crisis Strategy (Protect) committee during its hearing on Tuesday, according to

- [Gatchalian urges gov't-to-gov't approach in securing oil supply](#) (2026-03-25 18:03)

MANILA, Philippines – Senator Sherwin Gatchalian on Wednesday urged the Department of Energy (DOE) to pursue government-to-government deals to secure a sufficient oil supply after it reported that the country has less than two months of fuel stocks. The DOE said the Philippines has only 53 days of gasoline supply remaining and 46 days of

- [CICC: Telcos agree to block Roblox if mum on risks in 15 days](#) (2026-03-25 17:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The Cybercrime Investigation and Coordinating Center (CICC) on Wednesday said local telecommunication companies have agreed to block the game Roblox if its owners fail to address the risks it poses to children. The CICC secured the telcos' commitment after meeting with them and the National Telecommunications Commission in Quezon City last Tuesday,

- [Counsel: Sara Duterte ready to answer impeachment raps in 'proper forum'](#) (2026-03-25 17:44)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte is ready to answer the impeachment complaints against her in a “proper forum,” according to her legal team. This follows Duterte's absence from the House Committee on Justice's impeachment hearing on Wednesday, March 25. “The Vice President is ready to respond, and the defense team is ready to

- [Laguna gov suspends face-to-face classes due to transport strike](#) (2026-03-25 17:44)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon — Laguna Gov. Sol Aragon has suspended in-person classes in all public and private schools across the province on Thursday, March 26, due to a nationwide transport strike. “Modular or online learning will be implemented in the meantime due to the nationwide transport strike,” Aragon said in a Facebook post Wednesday afternoon.

- [Marcos to DOE: Secure more fuel sources while PH has 45-day supply](#) (2026-03-25 17:36)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said on Wednesday that he has ordered the Department of Energy (DOE) to secure additional fuel sources, even though the country currently has up to 45 days’ worth of supply. In an address in Malacañang Palace, Marcos backed Energy Secretary Sharon Garin’ s earlier assurance that the Philippines’ fuel supply

- [MMDA to roll out free ride single dispatch system during strike](#) (2026-03-25 16:51)

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) on Wednesday said it will implement a “single dispatch system” for its vehicles deployed for free rides and rescue to avoid competition with other public utility vehicles, as transport groups will stage transport strikes on March 26-27. The MMDA said that it coordinated with local government

- [Iloilo transport groups to join nationwide strike on Thursday](#) (2026-03-25 16:50)

ILOILO CITY— Public transport drivers and operators in Iloilo City are set to take part in a nationwide transport strike on Thursday, joining calls against rising fuel costs and transport-related policies. Elmer Foro, lead convenor of the No to Public Utility Vehicle (PUV) Phaseout Coalition–Panay, told local media that passenger jeepneys in the city will suspend

- [De Lima bars Marcoleta from ‘resurrecting’ settled impeachment matters](#) (2026-03-25 16:46)

MANILA, Philippines — Mamamayang Liberal party-list Rep. Leila De Lima on Wednesday barred Sagip Rep. Paolo Marcoleta from raising “settled” matters during Vice President Sara Duterte’ s impeachment hearing. House Committee on Justice Chairperson Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro approved De Lima’ s motion to prevent Marcoleta from revisiting “double standard” accusations, which De Lima said had

- [DBM: Marcos orders release of over P60B for infrastructure projects](#) (2026-03-25 16:36)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has ordered the release of over P60 billion for the payment of completed and ongoing infrastructure projects and timely implementation of the Metro Manila Subway Project (MMSP) Phase I and the North-South Commuter Railway (NSCR) System, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said. In separate press releases on

- [Labor leader slams Marcos order: UPLIFT is just facelift for gov’ t](#) (2026-03-25 16:17)

MANILA, Philippines — Labor leader Luke Espiritu criticized the UPLIFT (Unified Package for Livelihoods, Industry, Food, and Transport) framework and committee addressing the Middle

East conflict, calling it a mere “facelift” that fails to tackle the real problems of Filipinos. Espiritu made the remark a day after President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. signed Executive Order (EO)

- [DepEd, DOLE expand Bagong Pilipinas Serbisyo Fair nationwide](#) (2026-03-25 16:16)

QUEZON CITY — The Department of Education (DepEd) and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) are expanding the Bagong Pilipinas Serbisyo Fair (BPSF) to at least two schools in every region nationwide to help senior high school and Alternative Learning System (ALS) graduates transition more easily from school to work. The initiative is part

- [Marcos: No reason to panic after national energy emergency declaration](#) (2026-03-25 16:14)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday said that the declaration of a state of national energy emergency is not meant to cause public panic over the effects of the Middle East crisis but rather serves as a “precautionary tool” for whatever may come next. He made the announcement through Executive Order No. 110,

- [PNP on alert for protests marking Duterte’s 81st birthday on March 28](#) (2026-03-25 15:58)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) is on alert for possible protest actions marking the upcoming 81st birthday of former President Rodrigo Duterte on Saturday, March 28. “I have directed our chiefs of police to assess and prepare the deployment of police officers in key areas where rallies could take place. I also tasked

- [Jeepney drivers stage transport strike in Iligan City](#) (2026-03-25 15:31)

ILIGAN CITY – More than 600 jeepney drivers began a three-day transport strike here on Wednesday to demand a P5 fare adjustment due to the skyrocketing fuel costs. The drivers belong to the transport group Boses at Samahan ng mga Jeepney Drivers and Operators Association (Busina). Jessie Sumaylo, Busina president, told the Inquirer that jeepney

- [Marcos receives, set to sign final fuel excise tax suspension bill](#) (2026-03-25 15:20)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday said he had already received the final version of a bill seeking to suspend the collection of excise taxes on fuel products. He will sign it into law “by end of day,” he said in his address at Malacañang. The final version of a bill was transmitted back to

- [PNP logs 415 gas station closures amid oil supply crisis](#) (2026-03-25 15:14)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) recorded 415 gas station closures nationwide as of Wednesday morning, March 25, amid the oil supply crisis caused by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. In a statement, the PNP said the highest number of closures were in the Cordillera Administrative Region (78 stations), followed by

- [3 dead in puffer fish poisoning in Masbate](#) (2026-03-25 15:12)

LEGAZPI CITY — Three people died on Saturday after eating puffer fish, locally known as “butete,” in Cawayan town in Masbate province. The fatalities were identified as Benito A. Jumao-as, Rosebell P. Jumao-as, and Joanna Tapar, all residents of Purok 3, Maihao village. Wheng Bricia-Briones, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Bicol information officer, said

- [Lawyers press SC to act on petition vs Naia fee hikes](#) (2026-03-25 15:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Petitioners and groups representing consumers and commuters have urged the Supreme Court to act on the temporary restraining order (TRO) they sought nearly a year ago against a concession deal that triggered the “unconstitutional” increase of terminal fees and other charges at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia). Petitioners Rico Domingo, former Philippine

- [Bicol police seize P4.08-million illegal drugs, arrest suspect](#) (2026-03-25 14:52)

LEGAZPI CITY – Authorities seized suspected shabu with an estimated street value of P4.08 million and arrested a drug suspect during a buy-bust operation in Daet, Camarines Sur, on Tuesday, an official said. In a report on Wednesday, Brig. Gen. Erosito Miranda, director of the Police Regional Office (PRO) 5 (Bicol), identified the suspect as “Roland,”

- [Suicide cases in NCR more than double in first 3 months of 2026 — NCRPO](#) (2026-03-25 14:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Suicide cases in Metro Manila more than doubled in the first three months of 2026, the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) said. In a statement on Wednesday, the NCRPO said it recorded 111 cases from January 1 to March 23, 2026, compared to the 33 cases recorded during the same period

- [Sara Duterte impeachment: House issues subpoena vs Michael Poa](#) (2026-03-25 14:38)

MANILA, Philippines — The House Committee on Justice has issued a subpoena for lawyer Michael Poa, as lawmakers believe he is key to determining how confidential funds (CF) under Vice President Sara Duterte’s office were spent. At the start of Wednesday’s hearing, ACT Teachers party-list Rep. Antonio Tinio moved to issue a subpoena ad testificandum

- [Groups back 2-day transport strike: This is everyone’s fight](#) (2026-03-25 14:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Sectoral groups will join transport groups in a nationwide transport strike set on March 26 to 27 amid the oil price hike, emphasizing that it is not just the fight of the transport sector but of everyone. Labor, vendors, women, and environment advocates made this statement on Wednesday as transport groups composed

- [Senators hit gov’t slow action, late admission of crisis](#) (2026-03-25 13:54)

[Updated March 25, 2026, 3:50 p.m.] MANILA, Philippines—While they welcomed the declaration of a state of national energy emergency, two senators lamented this long “overdue” admission of the government that there is a crisis as well as its “extremely” slow actions to address the effects of the Middle East conflict. “I welcome the President’s declaration of a state of

- [Legarda backs energy emergency declaration, urges urgent gov’t action](#) (2026-03-25 13:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Loren Legarda on Wednesday welcomed President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s declaration of a state of national energy emergency, calling it a long-overdue acknowledgment of the country’s worsening energy situation. In a statement dated March 25, 2026, Legarda said the President’s move reflects what the public has been experiencing in recent weeks, describing

- [Sara Duterte impeachment: House subpoenas Ramil Madriaga, his affidavit](#) (2026-03-25 13:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The House Committee on Justice has issued a subpoena for Ramil Madriaga and his sworn affidavit against Vice President Sara Duterte, deeming them vital to the impeachment proceedings. At Wednesday’s hearing, Mamamayang Liberal Party-list Rep. Leila de Lima moved to issue a subpoena duces tecum for Madriaga’s affidavit, in which he asked the

- [Sara Duterte camp skips House hearing over Luistro’s ‘mini trial’ remark](#) (2026-03-25 13:43)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte’s camp on Wednesday said they snubbed the House Committee on Justice hearing over its chairman’s use of the term “mini trial.” In a letter to Committee Chairperson and Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro, Duterte’s counsel said the panel was overstepping constitutional boundaries by calling a “mini-trial” a procedure meant

- [2 nabbed for alleged sale of ‘stolen’ racing pigeons worth P2.15M](#) (2026-03-25 13:36)

MANILA, Philippines — Two men were arrested for allegedly selling stolen racing pigeons worth P2.15 million in Batangas, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group National Capital Region (CIDG NCR) said on Wednesday. The suspects were tracked down by operatives in Taal town last Thursday afternoon, CIDG NCR Chief Col. John Guiagui told reporters at Camp

- [Fuel hikes hit Zambales fishers in West Philippine Sea](#) (2026-03-25 13:25)

MANILA, Philippines — A fresh spike in fuel prices is forcing small-scale fishers in Zambales to stretch their time at sea, even as risks mount in the contested waters of the West Philippine Sea (WPS). In a statement on March 25, the fisherfolk group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalalakaya) said rising fuel

- [Dy backs Marcos, vows swift House action on energy emergency](#) (2026-03-25 13:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Speaker Faustino “Bojie” Dy III said on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, the House of Representatives is prepared to move with urgency to deliver concrete relief measures following President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s declaration of a state of national energy emergency. “The House will move with the same urgency, through targeted interventions, close oversight,

- [HPG acting director accused of sexual abuse resigns, denies charges](#) (2026-03-25 13:17)

[Trigger warning: Mentions of sexual abuse] MANILA, Philippines — Acting Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group (PNP HPG) Director Brig. Gen. Jessie Tamayao has resigned from his post after a subordinate filed an administrative case against him for allegedly sexually harassing her. “I have always conducted myself with the utmost professionalism and respect for my

- [Duterte impeachment: House panel subpoenas threat probe record, SALNs](#) (2026-03-25 12:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives’ committee on justice has issued a subpoena for records of the investigation into Vice President Sara Duterte’s threats against ranking officials and her Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth (SALN) from 2007. At the start of the committee’s formal hearing on the impeachment complaints against Duterte, Manila Rep.

- [Alleged 24-hour e-sabong op busted Tondo coliseum; over 170 nabbed](#) (2026-03-25 12:43)

MANILA, Philippines — An alleged online cockfighting (e-sabong) operation was busted by the police at a coliseum in Manila, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group National Capital Region (CIDG NCR) said on Wednesday. In an interview in Camp Crame, CIDG NCR Chief Col. John Guiagui told reporters that they had received information about the alleged

- [Marcos OKs P20-B emergency fund to secure fuel amid global oil crisis](#) (2026-03-25 12:43)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has directed the release of a P20 billion emergency fund to secure the country’s fuel supply amid the global oil crisis, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said on Wednesday. The funds will be released through a Special Allotment Release Order and a Notice of Cash Allocation to

- [INQToday: Sara Duterte absent as House panel starts formal impeach hearings](#) (2026-03-25 12:30)

Here’s a quick roundup of today’s top stories: House panel starts formal impeach hearings; Sara Duterte absent The hearing of the House committee on justice started its formal impeachment hearing even without the presence of Vice President Sara Duterte, who skipped the proceeding. During the hearing on Wednesday, the committee allocated a seat for the

- [Group calls for tougher action vs illegal gambling in Pangasinan](#) (2026-03-25 12:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Advocates in Pangasinan are calling for a “determined and consistent campaign” backed by local government units (LGUs) to curb illegal gambling in the province. The Fight Against Illegal and Rigged Games said current police efforts, including a series of arrests, are insufficient without stronger government support, warning that illegal gambling continues to

- [Luistro to critics: House tackling crises even amid impeachment](#) (2026-03-25 11:45)

MANILA, Philippines — Despite being tasked to hear the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte, the House of Representatives is doing its job to address pressing issues like the oil crisis brought by the Middle East conflict, Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro said. Luistro, chairperson of the House committee on justice, said in her opening speech

- [Sara Duterte on formal impeachment hearing: Another ‘fishing expedition’](#) (2026-03-25 11:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday tagged as yet another “fishing expedition” the House of Representatives’ hearing on the impeachment complaints against her. In a statement, she also said that the invitation for her to attend the House Committee on Justice hearing was allegedly framed to create a media narrative that there will

- [PNP touts internal cleansing, recruitment reforms vs ‘ninja cops’](#) (2026-03-25 11:25)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Wednesday touted its internal cleansing and recruitment reforms against “ninja cops,” or police officers who take a portion of illegal drugs seized in operations to resell them. “The Philippine National Police reaffirms its commitment that ninja cops have no place in our organization,” PNP chief Gen.

- [Kanlaon logs 16 ash emission events in 2 days](#) (2026-03-25 11:23)

BACOLOD CITY – Kanlaon Volcano on Monday and Tuesday continued to spew ash, but it is not an indication that its alert level will be raised, a Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) official said. Twelve ash emissions were recorded on Monday and four on Tuesday. The volcano remains at alert level 2. READ:

- [BOC: Over 15,000 abandoned balikbayan boxes set to be delivered](#) (2026-03-25 11:00)

MANILA, Philippines — There are over 15,000 remaining abandoned balikbayan boxes that are set to be delivered to their rightful owners as the Bureau of Customs (BOC) finished the shipment for all boxes from the Ports of Manila and Davao. The BOC made this statement as the agency and the Department of Finance (DOF) led

- [House panel starts formal impeach hearings; Sara Duterte absent](#) (2026-03-25 10:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The hearing of the House committee on justice started its formal impeachment hearing even without the presence of Vice President Sara Duterte, who skipped

the proceeding. During the hearing on Wednesday, the committee allocated a seat for the vice president, beside Mamamayang Liberal party-list Rep. Leila de Lima. However, it was left vacant

- [Corruption is top issue in gauging Marcos, Duterte’ s records – survey](#) (2026-03-25 10:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Corruption is the common reason why Filipinos either trust or doubt President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Vice President Sara Duterte. This information came out in survey of Pulse Asia Research in the first quarter of 2026. According to the agency’ s Ulat ng Bayan released on Wednesday, 28.6 percent of respondents cited Marcos’ efforts

- [WATCH: House justice panel starts formal hearings on VP Sara Duterte impeachment complaints](#) (2026-03-25 10:13)

The House committee on justice starts hearing on impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte. READ: LIVE UPDATES: Sara Duterte impeachment hearing | March 25, 2026 READ: What to expect: VP Sara Duterte’ s impeachment proceedings

- [Filipino scientists map genome to save endangered Visayan spotted deer](#) (2026-03-25 10:12)

MANILA, Philippines — Scientists from the University of the Philippines and Silliman University have assembled a draft genome for the endemic Visayan spotted deer, a milestone they said could strengthen efforts to protect the endangered species. The Visayan spotted deer, or *Rusa alfredi*, is one of three endemic species in the genus *Rusa*, native to

- [PNP tightens security at energy facilities after emergency order](#) (2026-03-25 10:03)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) will tighten security at energy facilities following President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’ s declaration of a national energy emergency triggered by escalating tensions in the Middle East. “We in the Philippine National Police will focus on securing critical energy facilities and maintaining peace and order,” PNP chief Jose Melencio

- [Highway Patrol Group official faces termination for alleged sexual abuse](#) (2026-03-25 09:01)

[Trigger warning: Mentions of sexual abuse] MANILA, Philippines — A Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group (PNP HPG) official is facing dismissal for allegedly sexually abusing one of his personnel, the National Police Commission (Napolcom) said on Wednesday. The victim lodged an administrative case against the HPG official before Napolcom’ s Inspection, Monitoring and Investigation Service

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of March 25, 2026](#) (2026-03-25 08:11)

Fuel prices continue to soar this week amid the war in the Middle East. The expected price increase on Tuesday was an additional P6.47 for gasoline, and P11.88 for diesel— mild when compared to the massive price surge in the week of March 17 to 23, wherein an additional

P16.60 was added to every liter

- [Samar Provincial Hospital opens free dialysis center](#) (2026-03-25 07:18)

TACLOBAN CITY — The Samar Provincial Hospital in Catbalogan City inaugurated a new dialysis center on Monday, offering a full range of free, hospital-based services for patients with kidney disease, officials announced. The facility provides comprehensive dialysis care, including hemodialysis sessions, physician consultations, laboratory testing and essential medications such as erythropoietin injections, iron sucrose administration, intravenous

- [Pagasa warns of hot weather on March 25, Wednesday](#) (2026-03-25 07:10)

MANILA, Philippines — The state weather bureau on Wednesday warned of increasing heat index levels, urging the public to take precautions against prolonged exposure to extreme heat. This comes two days after the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) announced the start of the dry season as the northeast monsoon ended. Heat index,

- [Marcos declares national energy emergency](#) (2026-03-25 05:55)

President Marcos has declared a state of national energy emergency to address issues caused by the conflict in the Middle East. This was announced through Executive Order No. 110 sent to reporters on Tuesday evening. “A state of national energy emergency is hereby declared in light of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East and

- [President oversees rollout of fuel subsidies](#) (2026-03-25 05:50)

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. vowed to streamline the distribution of fuel subsidies for drivers and operators, as he oversaw the rollout of a P10,000 fuel subsidy at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) on Tuesday. A total of 27 bus operators from the terminal received fuel assistance, which will benefit 1,096 bus units. “I’ m

- [Gov’ t allots P20B to buy 2 million barrels of diesel](#) (2026-03-25 05:45)

The Philippine government is allotting P20 billion to purchase up to 2 million barrels of diesel meant to bolster the local stockpile as the Middle East war continues to disrupt global trade flows. In a briefing on Tuesday, Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said the Philippine National Oil Co. (PNOC) will focus on the acquisition, with

- [Gov’ t slashes airport, Ro-ro terminal fees effective April](#) (2026-03-25 05:35)

The Department of Transportation (DOTr) announced on Tuesday that some airport fees, particularly the Passenger Service Charge (PSC) and takeoff and landing fees, would be discounted beginning on April 1 as part of government efforts to ease the burden on passengers and the aviation industry because of the spiraling prices of oil products. The discount

- [COA clears UP-PGH nurse of financial liability in 2021 fire](#) (2026-03-25 05:30)

The Commission on Audit (COA) has cleared the head nurse of the University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital (UP-PGH) of financial liability over the loss of P60.2 million worth of hospital equipment and medical instruments in a fire in 2021, saying there was no negligence on her part. In a decision dated April 29, 2025,

- [Luistro: No-show in impeach hearings risks VP' s defense](#) (2026-03-25 05:10)

The chair of the House justice committee on Tuesday cautioned Vice President Sara Duterte against skipping the hearings on the two impeachment complaints filed against her, saying this will hurt her defense of the case. The committee opens its hearing proper on Wednesday to evaluate evidence in the two complaints, after these had been deemed

- [DENR warns of 'water bankruptcy,' to tap filtration, desalination](#) (2026-03-25 05:00)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) plans to deploy filtration and desalination systems across several “water-stressed” provinces as it warned the country faces “water bankruptcy.” The agency’ s Water Resources Management Office (WRMO) said it will soon activate high-performance filtration and desalination systems in 59 barangays in Masbate, Cebu, Bohol, Palawan and other areas

- [DENR to install filtration, desalination in areas with no clean water](#) (2026-03-25 05:00)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) plans to deploy filtration and desalination systems across several “water-stressed” provinces. The agency’ s Water Resources Management Office (WRMO) said it will soon activate high-performance filtration and desalination systems in 59 barangays in Masbate, Cebu, Bohol, Palawan and other areas where access to clean water has become critical.

- [Makati earns ERC recognition as first LGU to champion renewable energy](#) (2026-03-25 04:50)

Makati City Mayor Nancy Binay proudly announced that the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) has recognized Makati as the first local government unit (LGU) in the Philippines to champion 100-percent renewable energy utilization under the Retail Competition and Open Access and the Retail Aggregation Program. ERC Chair and CEO Francis Saturnino Juan presented the certificate of

- [Baguio hotels told to upgrade, build own wastewater plants](#) (2026-03-25 04:45)

BAGUIO CITY—Days before the Holy Week break, hotels and other accommodation facilities in the summer capital have been directed to construct or upgrade their own wastewater treatment systems following a national regulator’ s order to disconnect them from Baguio’ s aging sewage treatment plant (STP). Because the 2016 Baguio Environment Code classifies the STP as a domestic

- [In Cagayan de Oro, local fares synced with pump prices](#) (2026-03-25 04:40)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY— Seeking to provide relief to the local public transport sector battered by soaring fuel costs, this city has rolled out an updated, tiered fare matrix for “motorela” (motorcycle-driven passenger cabs) that dynamically adjusts based on prevailing pump prices. Endorsed by City Mayor Rolando Uy, the city council approved the amendment to

- [Iloilo City starts fuel subsidy rollout for tricycle drivers](#) (2026-03-25 04:35)

ILOILO CITY—The city government is distributing fuel subsidy coupons to tricycle drivers on March 25 and March 26 as part of efforts to cushion the impact of rising petroleum prices driven by tensions in the Middle East. In an advisory released Tuesday, Mayor Raisa Treñas said the rollout will be conducted in batches, with assigned

- [Fuel tax, BARMM poll reset bills sent to Palace](#) (2026-03-25 04:30)

The bills seeking to suspend or reduce excise on fuel and to reset the parliamentary elections in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) were transmitted to the Office of the President on Tuesday. In a message to reporters, Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III confirmed the transmittal. Senate Bill No. 1982 and House

- [Impeachment hearing to go on with or without Sara Duterte, says solon](#) (2026-03-24 23:43)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives’ committee on justice will conduct its hearing on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte whether or not she shows up, Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro said late Tuesday night. In a statement, Luistro, the committee chairperson, said they received information that Duterte will not show up to the

- [VP Sara Duterte skipping first impeachment hearing](#) (2026-03-24 23:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte will not attend the first hearing on the impeachment complaints against her before the House of Representatives scheduled on March 25, Wednesday, her camp announced on Tuesday. Her legal team’s spokesperson, Atty. Michael Poa confirmed this to the INQUIRER in a Viber message—just a day before the scheduled

- [Drug suspect busted in Lucena City; P459,000 shabu seized](#) (2026-03-24 22:47)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon – Police seized more than P459,000 worth of shabu (crystal meth) from an alleged drug pusher in a buy-bust operation in this capital city on Monday, March 23. Lt. Colonel Ryan Hernandez, Lucena City police chief, reported on Tuesday that anti-illegal drugs operatives arrested a drug suspect identified only as “Reynante,” 40,

- [2 drugs suspects busted, P3.4 M shabu seized in Maguindanao del Sur](#) (2026-03-24 22:41)

COTABATO CITY – The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) on Tuesday said it agents, backed by the police and military arrested on Monday two drug suspects and seized and estimated P3.4 million worth of shabu in Maguindanao del Sur. The joint anti-illegal drug

operation was conducted Monday afternoon in Barangay Kauran, Ampatuan, Maguindanao del Sur.

- [Olongapo City adopts 4-day workweek, Fridays set as work-from-home](#) (2026-03-24 22:33)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales – Olongapo City announced on Tuesday that it adopted a four-day workweek and other conservation measures amid increasing cost of fuel. In an executive order, Mayor Rolen Paulino Jr. said that all city government workers shall report onsite to their respective offices from Monday to Thursday from 8 a.m to 5 p.m

- [Marcos cites futility of spending all foreign reserves to defend peso](#) (2026-03-24 22:04)

MANILA, Philippines — The government will not use all its foreign reserves to defend the Philippine peso, which recently dipped to P60 per US dollar, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. said on Tuesday. In an exclusive interview with Bloomberg News, Marcos said: “I think it would be even futile to try to spend all our

- [March 24 lotto results: No jackpot winners in 3 games](#) (2026-03-24 21:58)

MANILA, Philippines — No jackpot winners were recorded in the major Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) lotto draws on Tuesday, March 24, 2026. PCSO said the Ultra Lotto 6/58 draw produced the combination 16-20-12-18-48-50 for a jackpot of ₱75 million, with no winner. READ: Two new millionaires emerge from PCSO lotto draw In the SuperLotto

- [LTFRB warns vs overcharging, stressing no fare hike imposed yet](#) (2026-03-24 21:53)

TACLOBAN CITY — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) in Eastern Visayas has reiterated that no fare increase has been authorized in the region despite the recent spike in fuel prices, warning drivers and operators against overcharging passengers. Veronica Reposar, LTFRB regional information officer, said their office has not approved any fare hike

- [Family says Surigao del Sur gov stable after accident](#) (2026-03-24 21:36)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur – Governor Johnny T. Pimentel of Surigao del Sur is in stable condition after being involved in a vehicular accident on Friday, March 20. The incident occurred in the afternoon, raising concerns about his well-being, though no specific details regarding his injuries have been disclosed. A press statement from the

- [Northern Samar solon seeks relief vs high power costs in off-grid areas](#) (2026-03-24 21:01)

TACLOBAN CITY — Northern Samar Rep. Edwin Ongchuan filed a House resolution that seeks a review of existing power pricing mechanisms in off-grid communities, noting how consumers in remote areas are suffering from high electricity rates. Under House Resolution No.883, Ongchuan and party-list Rep. Eulogio Rodriguez are urging concerned government agencies to explore options to ease

- [Kanlaon Volcano emits ash anew](#) (2026-03-24 20:47)

MANILA, Philippines – Kanlaon Volcano in Negros Island emitted ash once again on Tuesday, the Philippine Institute of Seismology and Volcanology (Phivolcs) said. According to Phivolcs in an advisory, the ash emission event occurred at two separate times the same day, specifically at 12: 33 p.m. and 5:59 p.m. EMBED: “These events generated grayish plumes

- [Women’ s health and wellness center launched at Rizal Medical Center](#) (2026-03-24 20:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Rizal Medical Center in Pasig City has launched a wellness center offering free advanced medical services for Filipino women, ranging from diagnostics to maternal and reproductive care. As the country celebrates Women’ s Month this March, the ISHA Women’ s Health and Wellness Center was launched Tuesday at Rizal Medical Center, led by Health

- [Farmers group tells Palace: Include us in crisis committee](#) (2026-03-24 20:13)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon — A farmers’ group on Tuesday urged Malacañang to include peasants and fisherfolk in the proposed “crisis committee” being formed to address possible food and fuel shortages amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. “With the government moving to create a crisis committee to secure food and fuel supply amid global

- [PITX: Bus shortage possible during Holy Week rush amid fuel price hike](#) (2026-03-24 20:03)

MANILA, Philippines — The Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) said Tuesday that a bus shortage is possible during the Holy Week travel rush, as some operators have already begun to reduce trips amid fuel price hikes caused by ongoing tensions in the Middle East. PITX spokesperson Jason Salvador said in an ambush interview that currently,

- [Manila Water, DepEd Antipolo, Rizal formalize partnership](#) (2026-03-24 19:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Manila Water Company formalized its partnership with the Department of Education Division of Antipolo City and the Department of Education Division of Rizal through the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement to expand the Salin – Lakbayan Para sa mga Guro Program. The ceremony, held in observance of World Water Day, was

- [Shorter mall hours seen to save energy amid Middle East crisis](#) (2026-03-24 19:35)

MANILA, Philippines — Shortening the operating hours of malls and other commercial establishments by two to three hours may be necessary to save energy as supply remains uncertain due to the Middle East conflict, Davao Oriental Rep. Cheeno Almario said. Almario said Tuesday that he filed House Resolution (HR) No. 893, urging the Department of Trade

- [Marcos declares state of national energy emergency](#) (2026-03-24 19:25)

[Updated March 24, 2026, 7:48 p.m.] MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has declared a state of national energy emergency to address issues caused by the conflict in the Middle East. This was declared through Executive Order 110 sent to reporters on Tuesday

evening. “A state of national energy emergency is hereby declared in light

- [Solon calls for better walkways, bike lanes amid fuel price hikes](#) (2026-03-24 19:18)

MANILA, Philippines — The government has to provide a safe way for commuters to do “active transport” — a better network of walkways and bike lanes for pedestrian and bikers — as this will be key amid the oil crisis over the Middle East, Parañaque Rep. Brian Raymund Yamsuan said on Tuesday. Yamsuan in a statement

- [AboitizPower allocates P37.4M for environmental projects in Bataan towns](#) (2026-03-24 19:11)

ORANI, Bataan — Power giant AboitizPower is investing P37.4 million for environmental projects in the towns of Orani and Morong in this province. The initiatives include the adoption of 12 additional hectares under the Orani Mangrove Experimental Forest, on top of the 20 hectares previously adopted by the company. During the signing of a memorandum

- [Zamora: NCR mayors asked to submit unfinished projects list to DPWH](#) (2026-03-24 19:07)

MANILA, Philippines — Metro Manila mayors have been tasked to submit to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) a list of unfinished projects in their cities to be prioritized for completion, San Juan City Mayor Francis Zamora said Tuesday. Zamora said DPWH Secretary Vince Dizon issued the directive during the Metro Manila Council

- [PH now experiencing socio-economic crisis, says NSC](#) (2026-03-24 19:04)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Security Council (NSC) on Tuesday declared that the country is now facing a socio-economic crisis due to the effects of the escalating military conflict in West Asia, commonly known as the Middle East. READ: Amid Middle East war, senators tell cabinet members: We are ‘in crisis’ NSC deputy director Nestor

- [Gatchalian projects P406B support fund in worst-case Middle East crisis](#) (2026-03-24 18:53)

MANILA, Philippines – Should the Middle East crisis reach a worst-case scenario, Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian said the Philippines may need P406 billion in intervention funds to support vulnerable sectors. His office ran simulations of scenarios on the potential effects of escalating tensions in the Middle East on the country. “Worst-case scenario… there will be a

- [‘Live with purpose’ : Women justices share wisdom on life outside courts](#) (2026-03-24 18:53)

MANILA, Philippines — Four “Ladies of Justice” gathered in the Supreme Court (SC)’ s session hall in Manila on Tuesday, March 24, to speak before their fellow women in celebration of Women’ s Month. They talked not only about what they experienced and upheld in the High Court — laws, the Constitution, evidence, and the like. Instead,

- [Isabela PUV operators, drivers decry lack of aid, delayed fuel subsidies](#) (2026-03-24 18:32)

CAUAYAN CITY, Isabela — The third wave of fuel price increases has forced public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers and operators to either cut trips or temporarily stop operations, transport groups in Isabela said. Jaime Labiano Jr., president of the Ilagan-Cauayan Camp-Pi Operators and Drivers Association, said the situation has left many operators with no choice

- [Bataan tricycle drivers seek 50% fare hike amid rising fuel costs](#) (2026-03-24 18:28)

ORANI, Bataan — More than 2,000 tricycle drivers in Orani and nearby towns have asked the Sangguniang Bayan (municipal council) to approve a 50 percent increase in regular fares amid rising fuel prices. Marvin Dela Cruz, chair of the municipal council committee on transportation, said during a public hearing Monday (March 23) that presidents of

- [INQToday: Senate sends bills on excise tax suspension to Palace](#) (2026-03-24 18:00)

Here's a quick roundup of today's top stories: Senate sends bills on excise tax suspension to Palace The bills suspending or reducing excise tax on fuel and resetting the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) elections were transmitted to the Office of the President on Tuesday. In a message to reporters, Senate President Vicente

- [Murder raps filed vs 3 suspects in neighborhood brawl in Iloilo City](#) (2026-03-24 17:58)

ILOILO CITY — The Iloilo City Police Office (ICPO) formally filed multiple murder charges on Tuesday afternoon (March 24) against three suspects involved in a bloody neighborhood brawl that claimed the lives of four individuals in La Paz district last week. Through the Iloilo City Police Station 2 (ICPS2), three counts of murder were filed

- [Acidre: Docs dispel Tiangco claim of ICI seeking cases vs Romualdez](#) (2026-03-24 17:54)

MANILA, Philippines — Tingog party-list Rep. Jude Acidre has again accused Navotas Rep. Toby Tiangco of misleading the public when he claimed that charges were recommended against former Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, noting that documents say otherwise. In a statement on Tuesday, Acidre said that the documents handed over by the Independent Commission for Infrastructure (ICI) to

- [MMDA exempts trucks carrying fuel, essential goods from coding, ban](#) (2026-03-24 17:43)

MANILA, Philippines — Trucks and other vehicles transporting fuel and essential goods will be exempted from the truck ban and number coding scheme amid the ongoing tension in the Middle East, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) said on Tuesday. According to the MMDA, the resolution for this policy was approved by the agency and

- [Marcos: Plane groundings 'distinct possibility' due to jet fuel shortage](#) (2026-03-24 17:36)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said on Tuesday that grounding planes is a “distinct possibility” due to a jet fuel shortage triggered by the war in the Middle East. “Several countries have already told our airlines they cannot fuel their aircraft, so they have to

carry fuel there and back,” he said in an

- [LTO warns public against colorum vehicles ahead of Holy Week](#) (2026-03-24 17:33)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Office (LTO) is intensifying operations against unregistered or “colorum” vehicles ahead of the Holy Week travel surge, warning commuters against riding them due to safety risks. Jerome Rodriguez of the Traffic and Safety Management Department of LTO said pre-Holy Week terminal inspections and random roadside checks are being conducted

- [Napocor: Power outages in Quezon town not due to fuel shortage](#) (2026-03-24 17:04)

LUCENA CITY — The National Power Corporation (Napocor) clarified on Tuesday that the reported power interruptions in the island town of Jomalig in Quezon province were not caused by a fuel shortage. READ: Another Quezon town cuts power use due to limited fuel supply “For the record, the situation referenced in the article does not

- [Ombudsman conducts physical inventory of pending cases](#) (2026-03-24 16:59)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the Ombudsman is currently conducting a physical inventory of all pending cases filed in this government body. This was announced in a public advisory signed by Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla, released on Tuesday. “The Office of the Ombudsman is currently conducting a comprehensive physical inventory of all pending cases across

- [DepEd invests record P25.6B to feed 4.6M learners](#) (2026-03-24 16:59)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Education is preparing to implement its largest School-Based Feeding Program (SBFP) to date, backed by a PhP25.6 billion allocation for School Year 2026–2027. The expansion signals a shift from short-term intervention to sustained support. From 120 feeding days last year, the program will now cover 200 days, reaching an

- [Alleged gunman in killing of ex-cop in Manila arrested](#) (2026-03-24 16:57)

MANILA, Philippines — The alleged gunman in the killing of retired police officer George Capistrano was arrested early Tuesday morning, Manila Mayor Francisco “Isko” Moreno Domagoso said. In his “Talk to the People” livestream on Tuesday afternoon, Domagoso identified the gunman as Albert Magdaraog and noted that police operatives had tracked him down to a

- [COA clears PGH head nurse over P60M equipment loss in 2021 fire](#) (2026-03-24 16:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Audit (COA) found no fault with the head nurse at the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) regarding the loss of hospital equipment and medical instruments worth P60 million in a 2021 fire. In a seven-page decision dated April 29, 2025, but released to the public only this week, the COA

- [A working mom's reminder: You need not be a perfect parent, just be a happy one](#) (2026-03-24 16:34)

Amid busy schedules and the constant pressure to do everything right, one working mother from Baras, Rizal, offers a simple, powerful reminder to fellow moms: children don't need perfect parents; they need happy ones. In a now-viral TikTok video, Christine Fullante Parocha shared a heartwarming glimpse of her life, showing her dancing with her two

- [Pangasinan town bans community gatherings to conserve energy](#) (2026-03-24 16:25)

MALASIQUI, Pangasinan – Community gatherings are suspended in Lingayen as one of the efforts to conserve energy. READ: DILG advises LGUs to cut energy use by 10 to 20% In a memorandum issued on Tuesday, Lingayen Mayor Josefina Castañeda said gatherings include founding anniversaries, patronal fiestas, basketball tournaments, and similar events. “This directive aims to ensure

- [Senate sends bills on excise tax suspension, BARMM polls reset to Palace](#) (2026-03-24 16:22)

MANILA, Philippines – The bills suspending or reducing excise tax on fuel and resetting the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) elections were transmitted to the Office of the President on Tuesday. In a message to reporters, Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III confirmed the transmission. READ: Dy signs final bill suspending fuel excise

- [DOE: Month and a half left to seek supply before PH 'runs dry' of fuel](#) (2026-03-24 16:01)

MANILA, Philippines — The country may run out of fuel supply after two months if oil companies and the government fail to secure backup suppliers in the next month and a half, the Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary Sharon Garin said on Tuesday. Garin made the revelation when asked by the Senate Proactive Response and

- [Number coding scheme suspended on April 1-3 — MMDA](#) (2026-03-24 16:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The number coding scheme will be suspended from April 1 to 3, 2026, in observance of Holy Week, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) said Thursday. MMDA General Manager Nicolas Torre announced this during a press conference following the Metro Manila Council meeting. READ: MMDA gives personnel 30-minute breaks to prevent heat

- [JV Ejercito pushes for an inter-agency task force amid Middle East war](#) (2026-03-24 15:53)

MANILA, Philippines — Deputy Majority Floor Leader Sen. JV Ejercito urged the government to create an inter-agency task force to prepare for the potential economic and energy impact of the escalating conflict in the Middle East. “Let's not wait for the crisis to worsen; we should already be preparing. We should be proactive and prepare

- [Murder suspect, cohort die in shootout with cops in Maguindanao](#) (2026-03-24 15:47)

MANILA, Philippines — A murder suspect and his cohort were killed in a shootout with police officers in Maguindanao del Norte, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Tuesday. In a statement, the PNP said the incident happened when policemen were serving an arrest warrant against the suspect, whom it did not name but only

- [Jack Argota files counter-affidavit at DOJ over cyber libel](#) (2026-03-24 15:27)

MANILA, Philippines — Vlogger Jack Argota on Tuesday appeared before the Department of Justice (DOJ) to submit his response to cyber libel and unlawful publication complaints filed by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) against him. The complaints stem from Argota's alleged dissemination of fake medical records of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. READ: NBI sues

- [Dy signs final bill suspending fuel excise tax, sends it back to Senate](#) (2026-03-24 15:21)

MANILA, Philippines — The final version of a bill seeking to suspend the collection of excise taxes on fuel products was transmitted back to the Senate after it was signed by House of Representatives Speaker Faustino “Bojie” Dy III, his office said Tuesday. In a statement, the Office of the Speaker confirmed that Dy instructed the chamber

- [PNP chief orders measures to protect cops from heat during summer season](#) (2026-03-24 15:19)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. ordered the agency's units to implement measures to protect personnel from intense heat amid the 2026 hot and dry season. READ: Warmer days ahead as dry season begins, ‘amihan’ ends – Pagasa “Officers on duty should be protected from health problems common

- [QCPD warns public: Secure your belongings on Holy Week, summer vacation](#) (2026-03-24 15:02)

MANILA, Philippines — With the Holy Week and summer vacations nearing, the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) warned of a possible rise in crimes such as theft and snatching during the summer holiday season. Police Col. Julius Sagandoy, chief district directorial staff of QCPD, in a forum in Quezon City, announced Tuesday that police presence

- [DBM: P230-billion funds available to address effects of ongoing crisis](#) (2026-03-24 14:56)

MANILA, Philippines — The government has identified a total of P230 billion in appropriations, including P20 billion from the Malampaya fund, to respond to the impact of the ongoing crisis in the Middle East. According to Acting Budget Secretary Rolando Toledo, the executive has initially consolidated a total of P210 billion—continuing appropriations of about P10 billion

- [Motor taxi driver stabbed dead in Taguig; PNP wants stronger TNVS ties](#) (2026-03-24 14:49)

MANILA, Philippines — A motorcycle taxi driver was stabbed to death in Taguig City, according to the Philippine National Police (PNP), prompting the law enforcement agency's chief to consider stronger partnerships with transport network vehicle services (TNVS) for security. In a statement on Tuesday, the PNP said the victim was seen on security footage calling

- [QCPD to deploy up to 2,000 cops for Holy Week](#) (2026-03-24 14:49)

MANILA, Philippines – The Quezon City Police District (QCPD) will deploy up to 2,000 personnel ahead of Holy Week, from March 29 to April 5, to secure major transport hubs and ensure commuter safety. PCOL Julius Sagandoy, chief of the QCPD's district directorial staff, announced Tuesday that 1,700 to 2,000 personnel will be deployed, supported

- [Luistro: No pressure from House leaders, Duterte camp on impeach hearing](#) (2026-03-24 14:47)

MANILA, Philippines — Neither the House of Representatives leadership nor Vice President Sara Duterte's side has exerted pressure on the committee on justice regarding how the impeachment proceedings should move forward, Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro said on Tuesday. Luistro was asked in an online interview whether there were external pressures to steer the committee towards a particular

- [DDB chief bats for stronger support for drug users: Anger not a solution](#) (2026-03-24 14:27)

TRECE MARTIRES CITY, Cavite — Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) Chairperson Oscar Valenzuela on Tuesday said the government must provide stronger support mechanisms for people who use drugs. In a press briefing ahead of a ceremony in this city to burn P4.56-billion worth of confiscated illegal drugs, Valenzuela said authorities' efforts to reduce the supply of

- [Iloilo City rolls out fuel subsidy for tricycle drivers](#) (2026-03-24 14:06)

ILOILO CITY — The city government has started distributing fuel subsidy coupons to tricycle drivers and operators to help cushion the impact of rising petroleum prices driven by tensions in the Middle East. Mayor Raisa Treñas said the Fuel Subsidy Coupon (FSC) program will initially cover members of various Tricycle Operators and Drivers Associations (TODA)

- [Zambales earns multiple nominations in regional tourism awards](#) (2026-03-24 13:36)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales — The province of Zambales and several of its municipalities have been named finalists in multiple categories of the Tourism Recognition for Enterprises and Stakeholders (TRES) Awards of the Department of Tourism – Region III, according to the regional tourism office. The province secured nominations in key destination categories, with Zambales shortlisted

- [DOTr begins rollout of fuel subsidies for PUV drivers, operators](#) (2026-03-24 13:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Transportation (DOTr) on Tuesday, March 24, began distributing fuel subsidies to public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers and operators amid rising fuel

costs fueled by tensions in the Middle East. Transport Secretary Giovanni Lopez said the subsidy will complement cash assistance from the Department of Social Welfare and Development under

- [Sara Duterte impeachment: No delays, no steps skipped — Luistro](#) (2026-03-24 12:57)

MANILA, Philippines — While agreeing that proceedings on Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment must not be delayed, Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro maintained that no steps can be skipped, as this would violate due process provisions. In an online interview on Tuesday, Luistro was asked about Navotas Rep. Toby Tiangco's recent statements on his House Resolution No.

- [Defense waives cross-exam of Alcantara in Co malversation case](#) (2026-03-24 12:49)

MANILA, Philippines — Defense lawyers declined to question a former district engineer of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) who was presented as a witness in the malversation case of former Ako Bicol Party-list Rep. Zaldy Co before the Sandiganbayan on Tuesday. Henry Alcantara, former district engineer of the DPWH First District Engineering

- [Luistro: Skipping hearing hurts Sara Duterte's bid to junk impeach raps](#) (2026-03-24 12:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Should Vice President Sara Duterte skip the impeachment hearings at the House of Representatives, she runs the risk of losing her chance to convince lawmakers that the complaints against her have no probable cause, according to Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro. Luistro, chairperson of the House committee on justice, said in an online interview

- [Missing teen girl found dead in Pasig City](#) (2026-03-24 12:09)

MANILA, Philippines — A teenage girl who had been missing for five days was found dead “hanging from a tree” in a private compound in Pasig City, the local police said on Tuesday. Authorities found the body in Barangay Santolan on Monday afternoon. “Initial investigation at the scene found a decomposing female body, fitting the

- [INQToday: Diesel prices seen hitting P130-P140/liter](#) (2026-03-24 12:00)

Here's a quick roundup of today's top stories: Diesel prices seen hitting P130-P140/liter The Philippines was hit by yet another “significant jump” in fuel prices this week, with diesel prices soaring to nearly P150 a liter, Energy chief Sharon Garin said Tuesday. Garin said, however, that the increases were not as sharp as in the

- [Airport fee discounts to start April 1 – DOTr](#) (2026-03-24 11:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Airport fees, such as the terminal and navigation charges, will be discounted starting April 1, 2026, in view of the series of oil price hikes, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) announced on Tuesday. According to Transport Secretary Giovanni Lopez, the discounts will be applied to airports operated by the Civil Aviation Authority

- [PNP offers aid to Marcos crisis panel amid Middle East tension](#) (2026-03-24 11:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) said it is ready to provide services to the crisis committee formed by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to prepare for possible fuel and food shortages driven by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. “The serious challenge we are facing as a result of the Middle East

- [Marcos anti-drug ‘campaign’ more effective than Duterte’s, says Remulla](#) (2026-03-24 11:48)

TRECE MARTIRES CITY, Cavite — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s anti-drug “campaign” is more effective than the drug war waged by President Rodrigo Duterte, Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla maintained on Tuesday. “It is a campaign against illegal drugs. The president’s directive is that. We should follow the law. We should not game the

- [Dagupan heat index hits 40°C as dry season begins](#) (2026-03-24 11:47)

DAGUPAN CITY — This city is beginning to swelter as the dry season sets in, with the heat index expected to reach 40 degrees Celsius again on Tuesday. This marks the second consecutive day that the heat index has reached a high level, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa). The

- [Legarda fumes over ‘busy’ Garin’s absence in Senate crisis hearing](#) (2026-03-24 11:45)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Loren Legarda fumed over Energy Secretary Sharon Garin’s absence in the Senate ad hoc committee’s first hearing on how the government would respond to the impact of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. Her absence in the hearing of the ad hoc committee called Proactive Response and Oversight for Timely and Effective

- [Fisherman missing off Zambales; search underway](#) (2026-03-24 11:31)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales – A 35-year-old fisherman went missing while fishing about 12 nautical miles (22 kilometers) off the capital town of Iba, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Zambales confirmed on Tuesday. Based on reports, the fisherman, identified as Benigno Asis from the town of Palauig, left on Sunday, March 22, aboard the motor banca

- [Amid Middle East war, senators tell cabinet members: We are ‘in crisis’](#) (2026-03-24 11:21)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines is “in crisis” due to the impact of the escalating conflict in the Middle East, senators told cabinet secretaries on Tuesday. Sens. Bam Aquino, JV Ejercito, Kiko Pangilinan and Loren Legarda gave this description in relation to the impact of the Middle East war on the country. The senators gave their

- [Another Quezon town cuts power use due to limited fuel supply](#) (2026-03-24 11:20)

LUCENA CITY — Another island town in Quezon province has been forced to reduce electricity use due to a limited fuel supply amid the continuing oil crisis linked to tensions in the Middle East. On Monday, the local government of Jomalig announced a temporary power interruption schedule from March 24 to 29. READ: LGUs told:

- [PDEA destroys P4.56B worth of illegal drugs in Cavite](#) (2026-03-24 11:20)

TRECE MARTIRES CITY, Cavite — The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) on Tuesday destroyed P4.563 billion worth of confiscated illegal drugs through incineration at a waste management plant here. The drugs were burned to mitigate the risk of them being recycled, and after the resolution of the cases in which they were used as evidence,

- [BOC intercepts P1B worth of illegal vape products in Navotas City](#) (2026-03-24 10:57)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BOC) has seized what it described as one of the largest hauls of illegal vape products this year, valued at P1 billion, in Navotas City, reaffirming its commitment to curb the entry of unregistered products that may pose health risks. According to the BOC, authorities

- [PPA pushes P1 RoRo terminal fee for Class 3, 4 vehicles — DOTr](#) (2026-03-24 10:56)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) has recommended a P1 roll-on/roll-off (RoRo) terminal fee for Class 3 and 4 vehicles transporting agricultural products amid the rising cost of fuel, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) said on Tuesday. According to Transport Secretary Giovanni Lopez, the maritime sector and PPA-operated ports agreed to provide discounts

- [Ad hoc Senate panel grills Cabinet execs on Middle East crisis impact](#) (2026-03-24 10:36)

MANILA, Philippines — Several Cabinet officials on Tuesday faced the first Senate ad hoc committee hearing to address the impact of the Middle East crisis to the country. The Senate Proactive Response and Oversight for Timely and Effective Crisis Strategy (Protect) committee was established to both mitigate the effects of the tensions in the said

- [DepEd defends shift to 3-term school calendar but teachers have doubts](#) (2026-03-24 10:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Amid concerns over the implementation of a three-year school calendar, the Department of Education (DepEd) maintained that this shift is a “strategic move to improve the use of instructional time and address recurring classroom disruptions.” DepEd clarified on Tuesday that the planned transition, set to begin in School Year 2026-2027, aims to

- [Why purple cloth covers crosses, church images on Passiontide](#) (2026-03-24 09:59)

MANILA, Philippines — If you entered a church for Mass on Sunday, March 22, you may have noticed the cross and other sacred images already veiled or covered in purple cloth. The tradition, which started in the ninth century, marks the beginning of Passiontide, or the last two

weeks of the season of Lent. As

- [Marcos: Let's simplify fuel subsidies rollout, consider 'digital payment'](#) (2026-03-24 09:17)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. wants to streamline the distribution of fuel subsidies for drivers and operators. He expressed his view as he oversaw the rollout of P10,000 fuel cash aid to each driver and operator at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) on Tuesday. A total of 27 bus operators, who operate 1,096

- [Fair weather forecast on Tuesday as dry season begins](#) (2026-03-24 07:27)

MANILA, Philippines — Generally fair weather will prevail over most parts of the country on Tuesday, as the northeast monsoon or amihan ends and the warm and dry season begins, the state weather bureau said. Despite this transition, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said that some areas in Northern Luzon may

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of March 24, 2026](#) (2026-03-24 07:01)

MANILA, Philippines — “Calm” returned to the global oil market despite the continuing Middle East crisis, Energy Secretary Sharon Garin announced yesterday. The expected price hike starting today would be an additional P6.47 for gasoline, and P11.88 for diesel—mild when compared to the massive price surge in the week of March 17 to 23, wherein

- [Crisis body formed to act on fuel, food shortages](#) (2026-03-24 05:55)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang is finalizing the formation of a “crisis committee” to ensure the country’s supply of food and petroleum products, amid the Iran war, which broke out on Feb. 28 and is now past its third week. Meanwhile, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. continues to await the enrolled bill authorizing him to cut or

- [Manhunt on for killers of Negros broadcaster](#) (2026-03-24 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Following the fatal shooting of radio announcer Julito “Jaz” Calo, the Philippine National Police on Monday pledged a thorough investigation of the crime, and stronger protection for media workers. Calo, the 49-year-old host of the local radio program “Waswasanay sa Quinto Distrito” on 88.3 DNN News FM, was standing outside his house

- [Latest fuel price hikes seen easing](#) (2026-03-24 05:45)

MANILA, Philippines — Another round of fuel price hikes is expected on Tuesday, but these are only about half the increases a week earlier, according to the Department of Energy (DOE), which cited a relative calm in the global oil market. Also on Monday, Malacañang announced a new round of cash aid for public utility

- [Palace: Presence of 2 mayors at aid distribution justified](#) (2026-03-24 05:42)

MANILA, Philippines — Palace press officer Claire Castro on Monday justified the presence of two Metro Manila mayors during a recent cash distribution event for public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers despite the government's anti- "epal" policy. On March 17, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. presided over the rollout of the government's cash assistance program for PUV drivers

- [Trillanes sues anew 18 'ex-Marines' for cyberlibel](#) (2026-03-24 05:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV on Monday filed cyberlibel complaints at the Department of Justice (DOJ) against the 18 alleged former Marines who had accused him of receiving \$2 million from former Ako Bicol Rep. Elizaldy Co, supposedly to facilitate the entry into the country of International Criminal Court (ICC) investigators and

- [DepEd: Tri-semester to help students learn better](#) (2026-03-24 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Education (DepEd) on Monday said the adoption of a trimestral school calendar would help address the long-standing inefficiencies affecting the country's education system. The shift from four grading periods to a three-term academic calendar for public schools, it stressed in a statement, would help students learn better "by redesigning

- [Dropping out, burnout among PH working students' top concerns](#) (2026-03-24 05:00)

MANILA, Philippines — Nearly half of working students in the Philippines have seriously considered quitting school because of work or personal pressures, according to a new survey by Mapua Malayan Digital College (MMDC). In the first edition of its State of the Working Student report, the MMDC found that 45.2 percent of respondents had considered

- [Pagasa announces start of 'warm and dry season'](#) (2026-03-24 04:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The public should expect temperatures to rise in the coming days with the northeast monsoon or "amihan" officially over, according to the state weather bureau.

"The northeast monsoon has officially ended, marking the transition to the warm and dry season," the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said in a

- [ICI turns over to DOJ documents, records on probe](#) (2026-03-24 04:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The Independent Commission for Infrastructure (ICI) on Monday turned over to the Department of Justice (DOJ) the documents and records related to its investigation of anomalous government infrastructure projects after its earlier announcement that it would cease operations on March 31. ICI members, led by their chair, Andres Reyes Jr., went to

- [Transport strikes disrupt travel in regions amid protests](#) (2026-03-24 04:45)

DAGUPAN CITY, PANGASINAN, Philippines — Transport protests opposing rising fuel prices and calling for government aid and fare adjustments disrupted operations in parts of Luzon and the

Visayas on Monday, while some areas reported normal transport activity. In Pangasinan, somedivers joined the strike despite no official transport holiday declaration from Auto ProPangasinan. At

- [Gov' t, MILF urged to renew peace pact commitment](#) (2026-03-24 04:40)

GENERAL SANTOS CITY, Philippines — The independent Third Party Monitoring Team (TPMT) on Monday urged the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to recommit to the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB), as the “overall Bangsamoro peace process is at a very sensitive juncture as a result of continuing delays and obstacles.” The

- [Marcos OKs release of P145B for Mindanao highway project](#) (2026-03-24 04:35)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has directed the release of P145.56 billion for the Central Mindanao High Standard Highway Construction Project, aimed at cutting travel time nearly in half and boosting economic growth across the region, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said. The highway will improve connectivity between Cagayan de Oro

- [DA probes ‘ghost’ farm-to-market roads in Albay, Camarines Sur](#) (2026-03-24 04:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Two suspected “ghost” farm-to-market road (FMR) projects in Albay and Camarines Sur provinces, prompted the Department of Agriculture (DA) to launch a nationwide investigation after identifying irregularities in recent infrastructure initiatives. “The department is now conducting a deeper investigation, including a review of project documents, funding releases and coordination with concerned agencies,

- [BIR hits 100.43% of January–February 2026 goal](#) (2026-03-24 00:28)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) reported a strong start to 2026 based on its preliminary collection performance, with net collections of P530.055 billion from January 1 to February 28, 2026. This not only surpassed the Bureau’ s internal collection goal of P527.775 billion by P2.280 billion, or 0.43 percent, net of tax

## Source: The Manila Times

- [Comelec chief refutes impeachment complaint, denies election irregularities](#) (2026-03-31 04:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Commission on Elections (Comelec) Chairman George Erwin Garcia on Tuesday dismissed the impeachment complaint filed against him, saying the erroneous allegations had been previously addressed. The complaint before the House of Representatives by lawyers Adrige Marvin Aceron and Sikini Labastilla is based on the Comelec's alleged use of a different source code in the automated counting machines (ACM), the presence of an unauthorized intermediary server, a single private IP address, and the systematic and selective

implementation of campaign finance laws."These issues or accusations are not new and have been clarified repeatedly by the Comelec in a manner understandable to the public," Garcia said, stressing that the Commission would again respond for the benefit of the Filipino nation. In a statement, Comelec maintained that the software used in the May 12, 2025 National and Local Elections (NLE) underwent proper review and certification. It said version 3.5.0 of the ACM source code was scrutinized during the Local Source Code Review and later certified by an independent international testing body. The poll body also rejected claims of an "intermediary server," clarifying that the facility referred to as "Data Center 3" is not a server but a location housing five independent transparency servers operated by political parties, citizens' arms, and media organizations. These servers, Comelec said, received election results directly from precinct-level machines. On the issue of modems sharing a single private IP address during the 2022 elections, Comelec said the configuration complied with technical standards and had no impact on the accuracy or integrity of transmitted results. "There is no legal requirement mandating unique IP addresses for each device," it pointed out. The Commission also denied allegations of bias in enforcing campaign finance laws, stressing that its decisions were grounded in existing laws and jurisprudence, as well as the ruling of the Supreme Court (SC).

- [Marcos orders talks with Iran on passage of PH-bound oil tankers through Strait of Hormuz](#) (2026-03-31 04:14)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has directed the Department of Affairs (DFA) to start negotiations with Iran to allow the safe passage of Philippine-bound oil tankers through the Strait of Hormuz, Malacañang announced on Tuesday. This is to ensure the steady delivery of oil to the country amid the hostilities in the Middle East. "According to DFA Secretary Tess Lazaro, we have good relations with Iran," Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro said in Filipino in a Palace briefing. "That has already been ordered by the president. She will be meeting with the Ambassador of Iran, most probably by tomorrow or next week." Iran has closed down access to the Strait of Hormuz, where one-fifth of the world's oil supply passes, following attacks initiated by the United States and Iran ultimately shutting down access of tankers to and from oil-exporting Gulf states. Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian urged Marcos to "open high-level talks" with the Iranian government and remove its blockade of tankers bound for the Philippines, predominantly reliant of oil importation. Such "strategic coordination," the lawmaker noted, would ensure that the rising costs of goods, especially petroleum products, would not further burden many Filipinos.

- [CSC releases new policy for competency-based recruitment in govt](#) (2026-03-31 03:57)

MANILA, Philippines — The Civil Service Commission (CSC) issued a resolution to support government agencies in transitioning from traditional, process-driven personnel management to a modern, competency-based human resource system aimed at improving public service delivery. CSC Chairman Marilyn Barua-Yap said Resolution 2600005 would pave the way for comprehensive guidelines for implementing Competency-Based Human Resource Management Systems (CBHRMS). She said the new policy would serve as a reference for agencies "to move

beyond paper-based, compliance-focused human resource (HR) practices and adopt an outcome-oriented framework anchored on clearly defined competencies for recruitment, performance management, rewards and recognition, and employee development.” Government agencies are expected to identify core, leadership, and technical/functional competencies to ensure that the most qualified candidates are selected for government positions, Barua-Yap said. “The reform ultimately aims to institutionalize competency-based HR systems across the bureaucracy,” the top CSC official added. The CSC said the new policy would be applied to constitutional offices, national government agencies, local government units, government-owned and controlled corporations with original charters, and state universities and colleges. She said the new guidelines were anchored on CSC competency frameworks issued in 2012 and 2015 and support agencies’ progression under the Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management (PRIME-HRM). Establishing a CBHRMS is a core requirement for agencies seeking to attain Maturity Level 3 under PRIME-HRM, where HR systems are expected to be fully integrated and strategically aligned with organizational goals, the CSC chief stressed. The commission reiterated that institutionalizing competency-based HRM would enhance employee productivity, job satisfaction, service quality, and overall organizational performance.

- [Marcos to spend Holy Week in home province, urges renewal of commitment to faith](#) (2026-03-31 03:47)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday said he would spend Holy Week in his hometown, Ilocos Norte as he encouraged the public to renew their commitment to faith in his message. "For the Holy Week, I will spend a few days in Ilocos Norte. And I will be back in Manila by the weekend," Marcos told reporters in Nueva Ecija. Last year, Marcos, First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos, and their sons, Joseph Simon and William Vincent spent Maundy Thursday at Suba Beach in Ilocos Norte. In his Holy Week message, Marcos encouraged the public to renew their commitment to the faith, "inspired by selfless service" during the sacred season. "May this Holy Week strengthen our resolve to become a nation guided by faith, united in purpose, and inspired by selfless service," he said.

- [Marcos opens new expressway in Nueva Ecija, announces free toll until Dec](#) (2026-03-31 02:54)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday led the opening of the Central Luzon Link Expressway (CLLEX) Contract Package 4 Aliaga–Cabanatuan Section, a four-lane segment expected to enhance connectivity across Central Luzon. Speaking to reporters, Marcos said the new CLLEX segment would not only cut travel time from Tarlac to Cabanatuan City but also help reduce transportation cost of commodities, particularly rice as Nueva Ecija produces the highest volume of rice in the country. The President also announced that the new expressway segment would be toll-free until December 2026.

- [‘Gas-and-run’ suspect surrenders after viral incident](#) (2026-03-31 02:28)

MANILA, Philippines — The driver in the viral gas-and-run incident over the weekend has surrendered, police said Tuesday. Alias "Jefferson," 27, of San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan, appeared at the La Loma Police Station accompanied by family members, Quezon City Police Director Brig. Gen. Randy Glenn Silvio said. The surrender came after a thorough police investigation that included a review of CCTV (closed-circuit television) footage and coordination with concerned agencies that enabled the identification of the vehicle and the person involved in the incident which happened few days ago at a gas station along Balintawak, EDSA. Reports said that Jefferson bought a full tank worth of diesel at P5, 196 but sped off after. Investigation revealed that after learning that the incident had gone viral, the suspect stopped traveling and avoided social media, unaware that authorities were searching for him. He remained in his residence in Bulacan, where the vehicle involved was also kept. Police said it would pursue the filing of estafa before the City Prosecutor's Office against the suspect who apologized to the gas station management, expressing remorse but blaming high gasoline costs and low earnings for his offense.

- [Pagasa: Another sunny day for PH, heat index in Metro Manila may hit 37°C](#) (2026-03-30 23:41)

MANILA, Philippines — The entire archipelago would continue to experience generally fair weather, and Metro Manila's temperature would hit 37 degrees Celsius, falling under the extreme caution category, the state-run weather agency said on Tuesday. Weather specialist Veronica Torres of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said it has not monitored any low-pressure area (LPA) forming inside or outside the country's area of responsibility. Instead, Torres said the ridge or extension of the high-pressure area (HPA) has been stretching over northern Luzon. Meanwhile, the national weather bureau said Metro Manila and the rest of the country would also experience partly cloudy to overcast skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms due to the localized thunderstorms. The highest heat index of the day would be in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, at 41°C, falling under the extreme caution category. Heat cramps and heat exhaustion would be possible, and continued exposure to the sun could lead to heat stroke. Pagasa said HPA usually brings sunny, warm weather with minimal chances of rain. The heat index, or the 'feels like' temperature, measures "how hot it actually feels to the human body by combining air temperature and relative humidity."

- [Pag-IBIG to maintain 3% socialized housing rate](#) (2026-03-30 16:07)

IN a bid to keep homeownership affordable, the Pag-IBIG Fund announced on Monday that it would maintain its 3-percent annual interest rate for qualified socialized housing loans under the expanded Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino (4PH) program. Housing Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling, who chairs Pag-IBIG's board of trustees, said in a statement that the move was in support to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s directive to keep decent and affordable housing within reach of Filipino workers, especially those from the low-and-moderate income sectors seeking to own their homes. "In keeping with the directive of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.,

Pag-IBIG Fund shall maintain the 3-percent interest rate for qualified socialized housing loans under the Expanded 4PH so that more Filipino workers can continue to pursue homeownership even during a time of global uncertainty,” Aliling said. “By keeping monthly amortizations low, we are helping more working families secure a home of their own while supporting sustained housing production and the jobs it generates, in step with broader national efforts to keep the economy stable,” he added. Pag-IBIG CEO Marilene Acosta, meanwhile, said the move also reflects the agency’s strong fiscal standing and its continuing commitment to carry out the president’s housing agenda in a way that keeps homeownership within reach of working Filipino families. “We continue to heed the direction of President Marcos in helping uplift the lives of Filipino workers by keeping homeownership affordable for those who need it most,” Acosta said. She added: “Our strong fiscal standing allows Pag-IBIG Fund to keep the subsidized 3-percent rate in place so more working Filipinos can continue pursuing homeownership under the Expanded 4PH.” Under the program, first-time homebuyers, particularly those earning less than P47,856 per month in the National Capital Region (NCR) and less than P34,686 outside NCR, may qualify for the subsidized 3-percent rate for the first five years of the loan term. Pag-IBIG said all overseas Filipino workers, regardless of income, may also qualify. Moreover, it said that under Pag-IBIG Fund’s Early Bird Promo, the first 30,000 qualified borrowers may enjoy the same 3-percent rate for the first 10 years of their housing loan, allowing them to save more and benefit from affordable and predictable monthly amortizations for a longer period. Acosta said the loan may be used to purchase socialized house-and-lot and condominium units priced at up to P950,000 and P1.8 million, respectively. It also provides up to P100,000 in additional financing for home improvements, such as utility connections and home fixtures, and carries a 100-percent loan-to-value ratio, meaning no cash equity is required. At these terms, Acosta explained that monthly amortization is about P4,005 for a house-and-lot unit worth up to P950,000 and about P7,589 for a condominium unit worth up to P1.8 million, amounts that are lower than the cost of monthly rent. In addition, she said that eligible borrowers may further benefit from additional subsidy provided by the national government, which may bring down the annual interest rate to as low as 1 percent and make monthly payments even lower. The agency said that beyond keeping loan rates low, Pag-IBIG is also making it easier and less costly for members to look for a home through regional housing fairs that bring together quality housing units available for sale, partner developers, and Pag-IBIG Fund financing support in one venue. Pag-IBIG has launched its series of regional housing fairs through the Central Luzon Housing Fair earlier this year while similar fairs would take place in South Luzon, the Visayas, Mindanao, and Metro Manila in the coming weeks, Acosta said. The Central Luzon fair gathered over 40 developers, financing institutions, and government agencies in one venue and provided on-site assistance for loan applications, she said. “Through these regional housing fairs, we are making it easier and less costly for members to find a home by bringing quality housing units available for sale, partner developers, and Pag-IBIG Fund financing together in one place,” Acosta said.

- [Cavitex-C5 segment to cut travel time](#) (2026-03-30 16:07)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday led the opening of the Manila-Cavite Toll Expressway-C5 Southlink Segment, a two-kilometer stretch connecting the cities of Parañaque and Taguig that will cut travel time between them from 1.5 hours to just 15 minutes. “And about 36,000 vehicles will pass through here, so, this is a big deal,” Marcos said in Filipino following the inspection. “It’s no small feat to reduce your commute from an hour and a half to 15 minutes. That’s a huge savings,” the president said, adding that the shorter drive would also enable motorists to save on gas. Marcos was accompanied by Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Secretary Vince Dizon and Department of Transportation (DOTr) Acting Secretary Giovanni Lopez, other government officials, and representatives of Metro Pacific Tollways Corp. (MPTC). A P3.3-billion deal between Cavitex Infrastructure Corp. and DM Consunji Inc., the six-lane expressway is the last to be completed of the 7.7-kilometer infrastructure divided into four segments — Segments 3A-1 (C5 to Merville), 3A-2 (Merville to E. Rodriguez) and 2 (Cavitex to Sucat Interchange) opened in July 2019, August 2022 and June 2024, respectively. From March 30 to April 30, the toll for Segment 3B will be waived to accommodate those traveling for the Holy Week and to lower travelers’ expenses while on the road, the president said. Dizon said motorists and commuters can expect to save more on fuel, following the opening of the Cavitex-C5 Expressway Segment 3B. “What used to be a frustrating, stop-and-go journey from Taguig to Parañaque — often stretching up to two hours in heavy traffic — can now be done in just 15 minutes. That’s not just a small improvement — that’s a massive upgrade to everyday life for around 36,000 motorists and commuters who take this route daily,” added Dizon. The DPWH chief said the opening comes at a crucial time when fuel prices are in their all-time high, biting into people’s budgets. “The directive from the president — along with Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista — was clear: accelerate the opening of as many new roads as possible in the lead-up to Holy Week. With fuel prices remaining high, the government aims to ease the burden on everyday Filipinos by improving road infrastructure,” he said. Dizon said the impact of the new expressway segment goes beyond just shorter trips because it will help decongest major roads south of Metro Manila, cut fuel consumption significantly, reduce daily commuter stress and improve mobility for business and logistics. “For thousands of Filipinos, this isn’t just another road opening — it’s a real, everyday win. Fewer hours wasted. Less money spent. More time for what actually matters,” Dizon said. Apart from improving transportation efficiency and reducing costs, Segment 3B is also expected to enhance access for motorists from the South, such as Cavite, to metropolitan areas, thereby boosting economic development in Southern Metro Manila and Cavite by providing better access to industrial, commercial, and residential areas. More mobility efforts are set to be inaugurated, including the opening of the Central Luzon Link Expressway, connecting Tarlac City to Cabanatuan City on Tuesday, March 31.

- [Holy Tuesday emphasizes Christ's call against hypocrisy](#) (2026-03-30 16:06)

HOLY Tuesday highlights the contrast between hypocritical leadership and genuine faith. According to Matthew 23:13-36, the day marks the moment Jesus condemned the hypocrisy of the Pharisees by delivering seven severe warnings against their corrupt

leadership. This reminds believers of Jesus' unwavering commitment to His mission — even in the face of betrayal. In his homily, Fr. Rolly Dela Cruz of the Manila Cathedral echoed the Gospel, which says that hypocrisy persists even among members of the Church, challenging them to reflect on their spiritual lives, especially during Holy Week. “Let us not be comfortable with being physically inside, and yet we are distant from the Lord,” he said. Dela Cruz said this reality challenges believers to go beyond mere participation in religious activities and instead cultivate sincerity in their faith, especially as Christians commemorate the passion and death of Jesus Christ. “This holy week, most of us are engaging with spiritual exercises. Going to church, attending a procession, and the Stations of the Cross. But sometimes, we are criticized because of our actions, saying ‘we are churchgoers but have a bad attitude’ ; that is our challenge,” he told the faithful in Filipino. He said that as Filipinos commemorate the Holy Week, the observation serves as a crucial time for self-examination, calling on the faithful to confront inconsistencies between their actions and beliefs.

- [Graft complaint filed vs Bersamin, Olaivar](#) (2026-03-30 16:05)

CONCERNED citizens filed a graft complaint at the Office of the Ombudsman on Monday against former undersecretary Adrian Bersamin of the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office and former Education undersecretary Trygve Olaivar in connection with what the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) said appeared to be a “commitment-insertion-kickback” scheme. The complainants — which included David San Juan, initiator of the Kilusang Bayan Kontra Kurakot, and Bayan Chairman Teodoro Casiño — cited, among others, budget deliberations of the Senate and affidavits of former Public Works undersecretary Roberto Bernardo. The complainants accused Bersamin and Olaivar of “corrupt practices” prohibited by the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, grave misconduct and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service, and “violation of standards of personal conduct in the discharge and execution of official duties” . The complainants said they watched a video posted late last year by Zaldy Co, a former chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, who in November 2025 alleged that there had been an order from President Marcos to insert P100 billion in the 2025 General Appropriations Act. The Palace said Co's accusations were baseless. Bersamin resigned in the same month. Co resigned in September 2025 as a member of the House of Representatives after he was embroiled in a massive flood control bribery scandal. Co denied wrongdoing however, and said he was resigning because of “the real, direct, grave and imminent threat to the lives of my family members and me, and the evident denial of my right to due process of law.” Olaivar, who resigned in November 2025, also denied Bernardo's allegations. Based on the complaint, Bernardo had alleged in an affidavit that Olaivar in 2024 called him for a meeting to discuss unprogrammed appropriations. Bernardo said that in the meeting, Olaivar asked him to submit a list of projects. According to the affidavit, Bernardo later submitted a list to Olaivar. “Usec. Olaivar told me that the commitment is 15 percent” , he said.

- [PNP boosts police visibility in transport hubs](#) (2026-03-30 16:04)

POLICE presence in key transportation hubs in Metro Manila and tourism hotspots across the country has been intensified as more travelers trooped to bus terminals and sea ports for the Holy Week, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Monday. PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said in a statement the increased police presence is part of the heightened alert status which took effect on March 29. Around 2.4 million travelers are expected at sea ports across the country, while airport authorities see around 1.3 million passengers at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) for the entire Holy Week break. Nartatez said that while security is tight, the goal is to keep the flow of people moving. “Travelers can expect tight but efficient security screening. Our kababayan can also expect Police Assistance Desks (PADs) for quick and reliable response to all the requests for assistance of the travelers,” he said. The PNP is also bracing for the heavy volume of private vehicles on expressways and national highways. Nartatez reminded the public that safety starts with individual responsibility, and urged motorists to double-check their vehicles before heading out for a long drive. The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP), meanwhile, expects a 7 to 10 percent increase in passenger traffic this Holy Week, projecting 550,000 travelers across its operated airports compared to 505,511 passengers during the same period in 2025. The agency has directed all area and airport managers to implement heightened operational readiness, including increased personnel deployment, stricter security protocols, and continuous passenger monitoring to ensure safe and efficient airport operations nationwide. Help desks will be set up at major airports to assist passengers to ensure a seamless travel experience. “We want to assure the public that all CAAP-operated airports are fully prepared to handle the surge in passenger volume, with measures in place to ensure safe, smooth, and convenient travel for all,” said CAAP Director General Raul del Rosario. He said airports will be on heightened alert from March 28 until April 5. It reminded the traveling public to arrive at the airport at least two to three hours before their scheduled departure, check real-time flight updates with airlines, and see to it that all travel documents are prepared in advance. The aviation regulator operates 42 airports. Four major gateways — NAIA, Mactan-Cebu, Clark, and Subic — are managed by separate authorities, though CAAP still maintains regulatory and air traffic oversight.

- [Over P651 million in fuel subsidy released – LTFRB \(2026-03-30 16:03\)](#)

THE Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has released more than P651 million in fuel subsidies to public transport operators and drivers nationwide, saying the distribution is progressing as planned. In a statement on March 30, LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II said the agency coordinated with regional offices and other government agencies to speed up the validation and payout process while ensuring a smooth rollout. Mendoza acknowledged minor challenges encountered during the initial distribution in Metro Manila, but said these have since been addressed and used to improve subsequent payouts in the provinces. “We encountered several minor challenges, especially in Metro Manila, but these became lessons that helped improve the distribution in other areas,” he said. “The goal remains: a fast and efficient release of the fuel subsidy.” The subsidy program was implemented following the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to mitigate the impact of

rising global oil prices amid tensions in the Middle East. The Department of Transportation earlier allocated P2.4 billion for the program, with the LTFRB tasked to facilitate its rollout even before fuel price pressures significantly affect the domestic market. Data from the LTFRB showed that as of March 17, P651,185,000 had been distributed. Metro Manila received the largest share at P181.278 million, followed by Calabarzon with P98.215 million and Central Luzon with P73.416 million. The fuel subsidy covers drivers and operators of traditional and modern jeepneys; UV Express units; buses, including point-to-point services; transport network vehicle service (TNVS) partners; taxis; tricycles; and delivery services. Mendoza said the agency would continue to fast-track the remaining distribution while exploring additional forms of assistance for the transport sector. “The task is not yet done. There is still much to be done, but we assure the public that the government is working together to deliver this assistance as quickly as possible,” he said. The LTFRB earlier also urged the operators of public utility vehicle terminals to reduce rental fees by at least 50 percent, while toll discounts for public transport units have likewise been implemented.

- [PAL returns to Saipan after nine years](#) (2026-03-30 16:02)

FLAG carrier Philippine Airlines has returned to Saipan after nearly nine years, restoring a direct air link between Manila and the CNMI and signaling renewed confidence in the market. The relaunch comes as the airline pushes ahead despite the declaration of an energy emergency in the Philippines and the recent suspension of its Cebu-Guam route, with officials stressing that the Manila-Saipan service remains a priority. At a ribbon-cutting ceremony held Monday, March 30, at the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport, PAL executives and CNMI leaders underscored both the symbolic and economic importance of the route’s return. PAL Express Vice President for Ground Operations Matthew Tamaray said the airline is banking on the expansion of the CNMI’s Economic Vitality and Security Travel Authorization Program (EVS-TAP) to drive growth, particularly among Filipino travelers. “We had an engaging discussion with our partners here on Saipan about extending CNMI Economic Vitality and Security Travel Authorization Program for Filipinos,” Tamaray said, noting that travelers from the Philippines are increasingly opting for destinations with visa-free or streamlined entry. “Filipino travelers are expanding their reach... to Asean, Taiwan, Korea, and Japan, where visa processing is streamlined.” He described the restored service as more than a commercial move. “This isn’t just a new entry in our flight schedule; it is a restoration of a vital lifeline between our two nations,” Tamaray said, adding that PAL aims to “make the wide Pacific feel a little smaller and our nations a little closer” while supporting tourism, cargo movement, and access to health care in Manila. CNMI Gov. David Apatang welcomed the airline’s return, calling it crucial to the CNMI’s economic recovery. “Philippine Airlines has been here before, and we want to welcome Philippine Airlines back to the Commonwealth,” Apatang said. “We need your help... to help with our economy here also in the Commonwealth.” CNMI delegate Kimberlyn King-Hinds linked the route to broader efforts to ease federal constraints on air service. “In a nutshell, more planes landing means more customers,” she said. “That is the work that we’re doing in Washington, D.C., to be able to remove some of these structural

barriers... that is limiting our ability to expand markets.” She added that the connection goes beyond tourism. “The Philippines is not just customers. It represents connecting families, people who call the CNMI home, who also call the Philippines home.” Commonwealth Ports Authority Executive Director Esther Ada said the restored flights open new opportunities for the islands. “Today marks more than the return of an airline. It represents new opportunities for the CNMI,” Ada said. “The restored service brings greater access to the Philippines and stronger connections to the world, making it easier for families to reunite, cultures to stay connected, and communities to grow stronger.” Philippine Consulate General in Agaña consul Joaquin Ricardo Aragon placed the development in a broader diplomatic context. “Philippine Airlines had been here before... but now, it’s back,” Aragon said, noting that 2026 marks the airline’s 85th anniversary and the 80th anniversary of Philippines-US diplomatic relations. “We are living in somewhat challenging times now... and this is something to look forward to. It’s not all doom and gloom.” He said the direct service would especially benefit the Filipino community in the CNMI. “They now have a direct flight to get back home — and to come back also.” Passengers on the inaugural flight cited convenience as a key advantage. Raniel Santos, a teacher, said the route eliminates stopovers. “No need to stop over at Guam anymore... it’s a lot faster, a lot more convenient... it’s a big blessing.” Norlyn Cabrera said the direct connection makes travel “easier, and the flight is shorter,” while Sildrey Veloria noted he can now visit family “more quickly than stop over to Korea or Guam.” For Jershwin Angeles of the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association, the timing allowed his team to train in the Philippines. “We took this opportunity... to travel to the Philippines,” he said, adding that about 40 players will spend 10 days in training camp. PAL’s inaugural PR2571 flight from Manila was greeted with a traditional water cannon salute, marking the airline’s official return to Saipan after years of absence. Despite external pressures, PAL Regional Head for Japan, Korea and Oceania Bryan Sansolis said the airline is proceeding with the route launch, even as energy constraints in the Philippines have forced adjustments elsewhere in its network. “We’re really keen on supporting the Saipan route... it will not affect the new routes,” Sansolis said during a Zoom call with media members prior to Monday’s flight. The airline will operate twice weekly — Monday and Thursday — using an Airbus A321-CEO configured with 12 business class and 187 economy seats.

- [National security expert urges fact-based discourse amid economic pressures](#) (2026-03-30 16:01)

AMID rising prices and public frustration, a national security expert and civic leader urged a measured, fact-based discourse, cautioning against sweeping claims that could mislead the public. In an interview with The Manila Times, Jose Antonio Goitia acknowledged that Filipinos are feeling the strain of higher fuel costs and inflation but stressed that complex problems require nuanced understanding. “People are under pressure, and it becomes easier to accept extreme conclusions. But governance must still be judged on facts, not feelings,” he said. Goitia noted that rising fuel prices follow a global trend driven by supply disruptions and geopolitical tensions beyond any single country’s control. “We cannot control global prices. What we can

control is how we respond,” he said, citing mitigation measures such as fuel subsidies and targeted assistance for transport workers, farmers and fisherfolk. While acknowledging concerns about the adequacy of these measures, Goitia cautioned against claims that no action has been taken. He also stressed that corruption, though critical, should not be used to explain all economic challenges. “Inflation is driven by multiple factors; reducing every issue to one cause stops us from understanding the real problem,” he said. Goitia emphasized the need for constructive criticism focused on solutions rather than blame. “It is easy to say everything is wrong. It is harder to say what should be done next,” he said. Under the administration of Ferdinand Marcos Jr., he said the government has taken a “measured” approach, balancing targeted support with fiscal discipline amid global challenges. “A country moves forward not when it shouts the loudest, but when it understands the clearest,” Goitia said.

- [Graft complaint filed vs Bersamin, Olaivar](#) (2026-03-30 16:00)

MANILA, Philippines—Concerned citizens filed a graft complaint at the Office of the Ombudsman on Monday against former undersecretary Adrian Bersamin of the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office and former Education undersecretary Trygve Olaivar in connection with what the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) said appeared to be a “commitment-insertion-kickback” scheme. The complainants—which included David San Juan, initiator of the Kilusang Bayan Kontra Kurakot, and Bayan Chairman Teodoro Casiño—cited, among others, budget deliberations of the Senate and affidavits of former Public Works undersecretary Roberto Bernardo. They accused Bersamin and Olaivar of “corrupt practices” prohibited by the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, grave misconduct and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service, and “violation of standards of personal conduct in the discharge and execution of official duties.” The complainants said they watched a video posted late last year by Zaldy Co, a former chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, who in November 2025 alleged that there was an order from President Marcos to insert P100 billion in the 2025 General Appropriations Act. The Palace said Co’s accusations were baseless. Bersamin resigned in the same month. Co resigned in September 2025 as a member of the House of Representatives after he was embroiled in a massive flood control bribery scandal. Co denied wrongdoing however, and said he was resigning because of “the real, direct, grave and imminent threat to the lives of my family members and me, and the evident denial of my right to due process of law.” Olaivar, who resigned in November 2025, also denied Bernardo’s allegations. Based on the complaint, Bernardo alleged in an affidavit that Olaivar in 2024 called him for a meeting to discuss unprogrammed appropriations. Bernardo said that in the meeting, Olaivar asked him to submit a list of projects. According to the affidavit, Bernardo later submitted a list to Olaivar. “Usec. Olaivar told me that the commitment is 15 percent,” he said.

- [Petron secures 2.5M barrels of Russian crude oil](#) (2026-03-30 16:00)

THE Philippines’ sole oil refinery has secured nearly 2.5 million barrels of Russian crude out of “extreme necessity,” a stock exchange filing revealed Monday, as the country seeks to

replenish fast-dwindling fuel reserves. The Philippines has seen the price of fuel hit historic highs since the US-Israeli war with Iran forced the partial closure of the Strait of Hormuz, with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. most recently saying stocks could last until June 30. Agence France-Presse (AFP) reported last week that a tanker filled with Russian crude oil had arrived at the harbor servicing refinery operator Petron Corp., a purchase unthinkable before longtime treaty ally the United States eased sanctions tied to Moscow's war in Ukraine. In a report to the Philippine stock exchange released Monday, Petron said it had agreed to purchase Russian crude after seeing at least 4 million barrels in shipments canceled since the start of the Middle East war. "The purchases were undertaken strictly out of extreme necessity as an extraordinary emergency measure in response to unprecedented geopolitical and supply-chain disruptions and only after exhausting all commercially and operationally viable alternatives," the report reads. "A refinery shutdown for failure to secure crude would lead to serious nationwide fuel shortages and sharp price spikes," said the company, whose refinery accounts for about 30 percent of the country's fuel needs. Since the war began, the cost of diesel and gasoline has skyrocketed, driving protests by groups representing the country's jeepney drivers and others. Prices were set to tick up again on Tuesday. The United States earlier this month eased some restrictions on sales of Russian crude, allowing countries to purchase oil that was already at sea until April 11. The Philippines' Department of Energy last week announced the arrival of 142,000 barrels of government-procured diesel, part of its target of "up to 2 million barrels of additional supply for the country." Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said that shipment had come from Japan. Petron on Monday said that it may continue to purchase Russian oil to augment the national fuel supply if the war in the Middle East persists. "We would like to disclose that if the current crisis persists and alternative crude sources remain unavailable or insufficient, we may again be compelled to consider purchases of Russian crude oil to augment the national fuel and directly mitigate the inimical consequences resulting from the absence of a stable and reliable source of crude," Petron said. "Any initiative taken by the corporation shall be made in close coordination with the Philippine government and would be guided by the overriding objective of ensuring energy security for the country," it added. Petron emphasized, however, that the procurement of Russian crude oil is not part of its business-as-usual strategy, and that the purchase was made strictly as an extreme necessity due to the war in the Middle East.

- [CFO eyes training course on marriage migrants](#) (2026-03-30 16:00)

THE Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) has proposed the integration of marriage migrants and cross-border families in an academic training course that deals with the impacts of international migration. The CFO said it made the recommendation to highlight the government's push for a deeper understanding of global migration. The proposal was made on Wednesday during the curriculum review for the 2026 Professional Course on Global Migration (PCGM), organized by the University of the Philippines-Cifal. The commission said that to craft effective diaspora programs, the CFO requires its key personnel to have a mastery of modern migration governance, which is why its participation in the PCGM "is vital." The CFO said that its

push to include marriage migrants in the curriculum is aligned with its "frontline role in the Philippine government's campaign against human trafficking." It noted that under Secretary Dante Ang II, the CFO "is undergoing a strategic pivot toward active diaspora engagement for national development." The commission "is shifting from viewing migration merely through the lens of labor to viewing overseas Filipinos as vital partners in nation-building, philanthropy, and economic investment," it added. "Cross-border marriages and mail-order spouse schemes have historically been exploited by traffickers to bypass traditional labor regulations," the CFO said in a statement on Monday. "Because marriage migrants fall under the CFO's direct jurisdiction, the commission acts as a critical safety net," it added. Through mandatory guidance and counseling services, the CFO screens and prepares spouses of foreign nationals, equipping them with legal knowledge to prevent domestic violence, exploitation and modern-day slavery. Now on its eighth run, the PCGM will take place from August to November 2026 for mid- to senior-level migration practitioners. The course links migration governance to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration.

- [SC drops Harry Roque's petition against House panel](#) (2026-03-30 16:00)

THE Supreme Court has dismissed the petition of former presidential spokesman Harry Roque seeking to prevent the House of Representatives' quad committee (quadcomm) from arresting him or compelling him to attend hearings and submit documents in connection with its investigation into Philippine offshore gaming operators (POGOs). In a decision penned by Associate Justice Samuel Gaerlan, the court en banc ruled that Roque's petition for certiorari and prohibition had become moot after the quadcomm lifted the contempt order against him and the 19th Congress adjourned on June 11, 2025. The quadcomm, convened in 2024, is a composite panel made up of the Committees on Dangerous Drugs; Public Order and Safety; Human Rights; and Public Accounts that investigated alleged illegal activities linked to POGOs. Roque was invited to appear as a resource person at the committee's first hearing. He did not attend, citing a scheduling mix-up. He appeared at the second hearing, where he was questioned about his alleged ties to POGOs and was directed to bring specific documents to the next session. Roque defied the order, and filed instead a motion to quash the quadcomm subpoena. He argued that producing the documents would violate his rights to privacy and protection against self-incrimination. The quadcomm denied his motion and issued an order requiring him to explain why he should not be held in contempt. Roque cited medical reasons for failing to attend subsequent hearings. The committee issued a subpoena compelling his appearance and a detention order, instructing the House sergeant-at-arms to arrest him if necessary. Roque raised the matter to the Supreme Court, and also sought the writ of amparo, claiming that the committee's orders threatened his rights to life, liberty, and security. On Oct. 1, 2024, the court denied his request for amparo, ruling that the remedy is reserved for cases involving extralegal killings, enforced disappearances, or similar threats — none of which applied to a congressional contempt case. The panel lifted the contempt order on June 9, 2025, and submitted its final committee report, which included a proposed bill banning POGOs, the

following day. The 19th Congress adjourned on June 11, 2025. In dismissing Roque's petition, the high court emphasized that a case becomes moot when a ruling can no longer provide practical relief. A legislative inquiry ends either upon submission of the committee's final report or adjournment of Congress, at which point any existing contempt order becomes ineffective. With the contempt order lifted, the final report submitted, and Congress adjourned, the Court ruled it could no longer grant Roque any effective relief.

- [Provincial buses allowed on EDSA during Holy Week](#) (2026-03-30 16:00)

THE Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will temporarily allow provincial buses to use EDSA during Holy Week as part of traffic measures for the expected surge of passengers leaving Metro Manila. The agency said the arrangement will run from 9 p.m. on Wednesday, April 1, until 6 a.m. on Monday, April 6. Buses coming from North Luzon may pass through EDSA up to their terminals in Cubao, Quezon City. Buses from South Luzon will only be allowed up to the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITx) and Pasay City. The MMDA said the temporary setup was intended to help buses complete trips more efficiently during the Holy Week exodus. The agency has already suspended the number coding scheme and assigned personnel in key roads and transport hubs in the metropolis to manage the higher traffic volume.

- [Carpooling rules tweaked to avoid competing with PUVs](#) (2026-03-30 16:00)

THE Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) said on Monday the proposed carpooling program will be restricted so it will not take passengers away from franchised public utility vehicles. Speaking at a press briefing at MMDA's head office in Pasig City, MMDA Chairman Don Artes said the government was shaping the rules to ensure carpooling remains a limited, point-to-point arrangement and does not operate like regular public transport. Artes said the proposed setup would ban roadside pickup and drop-off, and only allow fixed pickup and drop-off points. He said the government also wants to limit carpooling vehicles to two trips a day — one in the morning and one in the afternoon or evening — so they would not function like jeepneys, buses or UV Express units. "Again, it should not function like our regular transport services because we also do not want it to take passengers away from the legitimate operators with franchises that are operating, such as jeepneys, buses, and our UV Express," Artes said. The program would be open to the public, including individual car owners, as well as companies that want to set up shuttle services for their workers. He said even nearby offices in the same building or area may later be allowed to share shuttle arrangements. He said the fare structure would also be regulated so participants would not overcharge commuters. Transport authorities can set parameters to keep contributions close to regular transport costs while still allowing drivers to recover fuel, maintenance and possible parking expenses. Artes urged participants not to abuse the system by treating it as a profit-driven business. He said routes would have to be declared in the application and reflected in the special permit to be issued by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB). Artes said the government was considering issuing QR codes that would indicate the restrictions attached to each

approved carpool unit. Artes said the LFRB was expected to issue the guidelines after Holy Week, with the government aiming to launch the program as early as the following week.

- [Bam Aquino wants petroleum products under government price control](#) (2026-03-30 15:19)

MANILA, Philippines -- Sen. Bam Aquino filed Senate Bill (SB) 2011 to classify gasoline, diesel, and other petroleum products as basic necessities, placing them under the government's price control function. In a statement on Monday, the senator said the measure aims to address the "worsening oil crisis burdening many Filipino families." "Across the country, workers, small business owners, farmers, and ordinary households are struggling to make ends meet," Aquino said. The bill seeks to "address a gap" in Republic Act 7581 or the Price Act by including petroleum products among the basic necessities that may be subjected to a price ceiling during periods of national emergency. "Currently, only liquefied petroleum gas and kerosene are considered basic necessities, while gasoline, diesel, and other petroleum products are not covered by price control mechanisms," Aquino said. "The Philippines is in the midst of a fuel price crisis, and Filipino families are feeling the strain. Rising diesel and gasoline prices have pushed up transportation costs, food prices, and the cost of basic goods," he said. The bill also extends the allowable period for price control on these products from 15 days to thirty 30 days, ensuring that government interventions remain effective amid sustained price increases. "This proposal complements broader efforts to deliver targeted assistance, support workers and small businesses, and ensure the continuity of essential services during this period of uncertainty," Aquino added.

- [Win Gatchalian wants to limit Filipino youth's social media use](#) (2026-03-30 13:58)

MANILA, Philippines -- Sen. Win Gatchalian sought to limit Filipino youth's access to digital platforms, for their protection, following Indonesia's enforcement of a social media ban for minors under 16. "Let us not wait for the problem to worsen before we act," Gatchalian said in a statement in Filipino. He cited the results of the 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment which found that every one-hour increase in 15-year old Filipino learners' use of digital devices for leisure resulted in a four-point decrease in math scores. In 2024, Australia became the first country in the world to ban minors under 16 on social media. The ban took full effect in December 2025. The senator on Monday said that Indonesia is the first country in Southeast Asia to enforce a social media ban for minors. Under its regulation, minors below 16 will be prohibited from creating accounts on platforms deemed 'high-risk', including Instagram, Tiktok, Facebook, YouTube, X, and Roblox, among others. The Cybercrime Investigation and Coordinating Center earlier urged telecommunication firms to prepare for a possible nationwide Roblox block to protect children from online exploitation and harmful content. Gatchalian also cited a Los Angeles jury finding YouTube and Meta liable for childhood social media addiction. Sen. Risa Hontiveros earlier filed Reso 357 directing the Senate Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality to conduct an investigation on Roblox and other online gaming platforms. Hontiveros wants to establish a mandatory age verification protocols and child safety standards to prevent online sexual abuse

and exploitation of children, grooming, violent radicalization and other emerging digital threats consistent with international best practices and child safety laws.

- [PCUP, PhilFIDA partner to engage Metro Manila urban poor in ‘abaca’ production](#) (2026-03-30 13:45)

MANILA, Philippines – The Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor (PCUP) has partnered with the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority (PhilFIDA) to expand livelihood opportunities for urban poor communities. PCUP Commissioner Reynaldo Galupo described his recent meeting with PhilFIDA Executive Director Arnold Atienza at the agency’s central office in Quezon City as productive, noting that both sides explored joint programs aimed at benefiting urban poor groups, particularly those in remote areas of Metro Manila. In a message to The Manila Times on Monday via Viber, Galupo said discussions focused on how the two agencies could collaborate on livelihood initiatives linked to fiber production. The PCUP official emphasized the importance of creating more income opportunities for the urban poor, especially through inter-agency partnerships. “Partnerships like this with PhilFIDA can help reach more families and equip them with practical, hands-on skills,” he said. Atienza welcomed the proposal and highlighted several of PhilFIDA’s ongoing programs, including training on fibers such as abaca, cotton, silk, pineapple, and coconut. He also cited current initiatives such as abaca discussions (talakayan) and bag-making projects being conducted in provinces like Catanduanes. PhilFIDA likewise expressed openness to involving PCUP in its training programs, which could allow selected beneficiaries from urban poor communities to participate. Both agencies agreed to move forward with drafting and signing a memorandum of agreement to formalize the partnership. According to Galupo, the collaboration is also expected to involve coordination with local government units to support the program’s rollout on the ground.

- [83,000 passengers avail of Manila’s free jeepney rides on first day](#) (2026-03-30 13:06)

MANILA, Philippines — Around 83,000 passengers benefited from the free jeepney rides launched by the Manila City government on its first day of operations. In a statement released Monday, the city government reported that a total of 82,958 passengers were served by 1,027 participating jeepneys under the initiative. Manila Mayor Isko Moreno earlier said the program aims to ease the impact of rising fuel costs on commuters. Under the scheme, the city government will rent more than 1,000 active jeepneys, with drivers earning about P3,000 per day. The initiative will run for five days, starting Monday, March 30 and 31, before pausing for Holy Week. It will resume from Monday to Wednesday the following week, with a possible extension depending on available funds. Holy Week. It will then resume on Monday to Wednesday of the following week, with a possible extension depending on available funds.

- [Roads in Manila to be closed for Good Friday procession](#) (2026-03-30 12:35)

MANILA, Philippines—The Manila Police District (MPD) on Monday said roads will be closed on Good Friday for the procession of the Nazarene. In a Facebook post, the MPD said a rerouting scheme will be implemented as roads will be closed starting at 7 p.m. on April 2. The

3.8-kilometer route of the procession will begin and end at Plaza Miranda and will pass through several key streets, including Villalobos, Carlos Palanca, Quezon Boulevard, Arlegui, Legarda, Hidalgo, and Bilibid Viejo, before returning to Quiapo Church. Among the major roads affected are northbound and southbound lanes of Quezon Boulevard from A. Mendoza/Fugoso to Quezon Bridge, parts of España Boulevard, C.M. Recto Avenue service roads, Legarda Street, and several streets in Quiapo and San Miguel districts. Other roads to be closed include Arlegui, San Rafael, Gonzalo Puyat, Paterno, Evangelista, and Carriedo. The MPD urged motorists to take alternate routes during the procession. Vehicles from A. Mendoza heading to Quezon Boulevard should turn right to Fugoso Street and then left to Tomas Mapua Street. Those coming from Quezon City using España Boulevard may turn right to P. Campa or use Nicanor Reyes (Morayta) to access C.M. Recto Avenue. Meanwhile, vehicles from P. Burgos Avenue heading to Quezon Bridge should take Jones or McArthur bridges. Those from Ayala Bridge bound for Carlos Palanca Street may proceed to P. Casal or take San Marcelino Street to UN Avenue. Motorists from Sta. Mesa heading to Legarda should divert to C.M. Recto Avenue.

- [Lawyers to file impeachment complaint vs Comelec chief, 6 commissioners](#) (2026-03-30 10:27)

MANILA, Philippines — A group of lawyers on Monday said they will file an impeachment complaint before the House of Representatives against Commission on Elections (Comelec) Chairman George Erwin Garcia and six commissioners, citing alleged violations of election laws and betrayal of public trust. Eldrige Marvin Aceron, founding partner of Aceron & Attorneys and head of the Aceron Public Interest and Legal Association, and Sikini Labastilla of Project Damaskus Lawyers said the complaint accused Comelec officials of culpable violation of Republic Act 8436 or the Automated Election System Law, as well as other high crimes. The complaint stemmed from what the lawyers described as a “pattern of institutional misconduct” during the 2022 and 2025 elections. Aceron said one of the key allegations involved the Comelec’s use of software version 3.5.0 in around 110,000 automated counting machines during the May 12, 2025 elections, which he claimed was not the same version subjected to the legally required source code review. Garcia had earlier acknowledged the use of the software version. The complaint also questioned the alleged use of an “unauthorized intermediary server,” referred to as “Data Center 3,” through which election results were reportedly transmitted before reaching accredited transparency servers. The complainants said this setup led to delays in the release of results to watchdog groups, including the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting and the National Citizens’ Movement for Free Elections. Garcia was also accused of concealing the use of a single private IP address for thousands of vote-counting machine modems. The complainants said transmission logs that could have verified early vote data were no longer available after they were not preserved. They also pointed to a Supreme Court ruling in August 2024 that found the Comelec en banc liable for “official inaction” in relation to its own procedures. The fourth charge accused the poll body of selectively enforcing campaign finance laws, allegedly favoring candidates allied with the administration despite findings of non-compliance by its own Political Finance and Affairs

Department. Aeron said the timing of the filing was influenced by the approaching end of the terms of two commissioners in 2027 and the need to establish accountability ahead of the 2028 national elections. “Garcia will supervise the 2028 elections with the same undisclosed transmission architecture, the same pattern of evidence concealment, and the same selective enforcement record that are the subject of this complaint. That cannot happen without a formal legal record demanding accountability,” he said. Garcia however dismissed the complaint, saying it is about old issues that the poll body had repeatedly answered. “The credibility of the 2022 and 2025 elections was confirmed by random manual audit, revision of ballots, by citizens’ arms and international observers,” Garcia said. The complainants said the case would be transmitted to members of the House of Representatives and made available to the public and media. They added that they are seeking endorsement from at least one lawmaker, as required under the Constitution for impeachment complaints to proceed.

- [DOTr warns bus firms: Unauthorized fare hikes could lead to franchise suspension](#) (2026-03-30 05:52)

MANILA, Philippines—The Department of Transportation on Monday warned bus companies that raised fares that they could face show cause orders and possible license suspension. Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez said authorities were verifying reports that some operators at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) implemented fare increases without government approval. “We will be able to take action by issuing citations to bus operators and public transport vehicles that have increased fares without authorization,” Lopez said in an interview. He stressed that any fare adjustment without clearance from the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board could lead to the revocation or suspension of a company’s franchise. The warning followed an earlier directive by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. suspending a planned fare hike for public utility vehicles that was supposed to take effect on March 19.

- [P651M in fuel aid released to transport sector — LTFRB](#) (2026-03-30 05:16)

MANILA, Philippines—The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) said that it has released more than P651 million in fuel subsidies to public transport operators and drivers nationwide. In a statement issued Monday, March 30, LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II said the agency coordinated with regional offices and other government agencies to speed up the validation and payout process. Mendoza said minor problems were encountered during the initial distribution in Metro Manila, but these have since been addressed to improve subsequent payouts in the provinces. “We encountered several minor challenges, especially in Metro Manila, but these became lessons that helped improve the distribution in other areas,” he said. “The goal remains: a fast and efficient release of the fuel subsidy.” The subsidy program was implemented following the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to mitigate the impact of rising global oil prices amid tensions in the Middle East. The Department of Transportation allocated P2.4 billion for the program, with the LTFRB tasked to facilitate its rollout. Data from the LTFRB showed that as of March 17, P651,185,000 had been distributed.

Metro Manila received the largest share at P181.278 million, followed by Calabarzon with P98.215 million and Central Luzon, P73.416 million. The fuel subsidy covers drivers and operators of traditional and modern jeepneys, UV Express units, buses including point-to-point services, transport network vehicle service (TNVS) partners, taxis, tricycles, and delivery services. Mendoza said the agency would continue to fast-track the remaining distribution while exploring additional forms of assistance for the transport sector. "The task is not yet done. There is still much to be done, but we assure the public that the government is working together to deliver this assistance as quickly as possible," he said.

- [Trump says Russia can deliver oil to Cuba](#) (2026-03-30 04:06)

HAVANA, Cuba — US President Donald Trump said Sunday that Moscow could send oil to Cuba despite Washington's de facto fuel blockade, as a Russian tanker was expected to deliver some much-needed crude to the crisis-hit island. While the shipment would give the country some relief, Trump renewed his threats against the communist government, predicting that it would fail "within a short period of time." The Anatoly Kolodkin, which is carrying 730,000 barrels of crude, was off northeast Cuba on Sunday evening and is expected to dock in the western port of Matanzas by Tuesday, according to shipping tracker MarineTraffic. It would be the first shipment of oil to the island since January, bringing some temporary relief to the country of 9.6 million people that has endured a deepening energy and economic crisis. "If a country wants to send some oil into Cuba right now, I have no problem with that, whether it's Russia or not," Trump told reporters as he flew back to Washington from his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida. "Cuba's finished, they have a bad regime, they have very bad and corrupt leadership, and whether or not they get a boat of oil it's not going to matter," Trump said. "I'd prefer letting it in, whether it's Russia or anybody else, because the people need heat and cooling and all of the other things that you need," he added. Cuba lost its main regional ally and oil supplier in January when US forces captured Venezuela's socialist leader Nicolas Maduro. Trump subsequently threatened to impose tariffs on any country sending oil to Cuba and has mused about "taking" the island. "Within a short period of time, it's going to fail, and we will be there to help it out," he said Sunday. "We'll be there to help our great Cuban Americans out who were thrown out of Cuba, in many cases, their family members were mutilated and killed by (Fidel) Castro...Cuba's going to be next." Daily outages After Washington launched the oil blockade, President Miguel Diaz-Canel imposed emergency measures to conserve fuel, including strict rationing of gasoline. He warned this month that "any external aggressor will encounter an unbreakable resistance." Fuel prices have soared, public transport has dwindled and some airlines have suspended flights to Cuba, hitting the country's fragile economy. Cubans have endured regular outages as its aging power plants struggle to meet demand, with seven nationwide blackouts since 2024, including two this month, sparking rare protests. A humanitarian aid convoy brought more than 50 tonnes of medicine, food, solar panels and other goods to Cuba by air and sea in recent days. The Anatoly Kolodkin, which is under US sanctions, left the Russian port of Primorsk on March 8. It was escorted by a Russian navy ship across the English Channel, but the two vessels parted ways when the tanker entered the Atlantic Ocean, according to the

British Royal Navy. The New York Times, citing an unnamed US official briefed on the matter, said the US Coast Guard was allowing the tanker to reach Cuba. The US Coast Guard did not reply to an AFP request for comment. Another ship that was reportedly carrying Russian diesel to Cuba, the Hong Kong-flagged Sea Horse, rerouted to Venezuela this week. Diesel an 'urgent need' Once the Anatoly Kolodkin's crude arrives in Cuba, it would take about 15-20 days to process the oil and another 5-10 days to deliver its refined products, according to Jorge Pinon, an expert on Cuba's energy sector at the University of Texas at Austin. "The urgent need today in Cuba is diesel," the former oil executive said. The Russian shipment could be converted into 250,000 barrels of diesel, enough to cover the country's demand for around 12.5 days, Pinon said. Pinon said the government would have to decide whether to use the fuel for backup power generators or for buses, tractors and trains needed to keep the economy going for two weeks. "If you are Diaz-Canel or somebody making the decision, you go, 'OK, where where do I go with that diesel?'" he said. "Do I want to generate more electricity so there are less apagones (blackouts)? Or do I want to put it in the transportation sector?"

- [Marcos leads opening of Cavite-C5 segment](#) (2026-03-30 02:19)

MANILA, Philippines—President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday led the opening of the Manila-Cavite Toll Expressway-C5 Southlink Segment, a two-kilometer stretch connecting the cities of Parañaque and Taguig. The President said the thoroughfare is expected to cut travel time from one and a half hours to just 15 minutes. "About 36,000 vehicles will pass through here. So, this is a big deal because it will decongest, reduce traffic on small roads," Marcos said in Filipino following the inspection. "And that's a huge thing because of the big savings in commuter time. Second, because of the turmoil in the Middle East, it's a huge savings in gasoline, in crude oil, in fuel," he added. Marcos announced that this segment of the expressway would be toll-free for the whole month of April.

- [City govt does not prepare fuel aid list, Sotto clarifies](#) (2026-03-30 02:11)

MANILA, Philippines — Pasig City Mayor Vico Sotto said Monday the city government only assists national agencies in the distribution of fuel-related aid and does not decide who gets included in the list of beneficiaries. During the city's flag-raising ceremony, Sotto thanked members of the Tricycle Operators and Drivers Association and other riders for their cooperation and patience as the city works with agencies handling the aid process. He said the list for tricycle groups was being prepared with the help of the Tricycle Operation and Regulatory Office, adding that the order of submission and processing would also affect who gets accommodated first. For other subsectors such as delivery riders, TNVS drivers and jeepney operators and drivers associations, Sotto said the city government does not maintain a working list, making the process more difficult. He said the local government has been trying to coordinate with the proper agencies, including the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, the Department of Transportation and the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Sotto added that aid under the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations was being extended to people affected by rising oil prices, noting that riders and drivers were

among the first sectors hit and were therefore first to receive subsidy from the national government.

- [Midnight train from Georgia: A view of America from the tracks as airports struggle in the shutdown](#) (2026-03-30 00:51)

ABOARD THE CRESCENT — There's something melodic about watching the sun rise over a rural stillness broken only by the rhythms of steel wheels on tracks. Or so we tell ourselves. In this case, being aboard a train at all owed more to politics than poetry. Congress and Donald Trump were mired in their latest budget stalemate, one rooted in the Republican president's immigration crackdown and the tactics of federal forces he has sent to U.S. cities. But this impasse has upended a foundational constant of American life today: easy air travel. In Atlanta, my hometown airport, cheerfully marketed as the world's busiest, had descended into organized chaos. Unpaid federal employees called out from work, leaving a diminished security staff to screen travelers frustrated by hours-long waits in line. I wanted to get to Washington for the NCAA basketball tournament. So I eliminated the risk of a missed flight and booked the train overnight and into game day across a 650-mile route. In this fraught moment in U.S. politics, I slowed down and thought about things we take for granted. Who ever ponders the conveniences of that 20th-century innovation, the airplane, that makes 21st-century hustle possible? We book and board. An unconscious, first-world flex of modernity. It's even rarer to grapple with the inconvenience. My decision had taken me further back, to the 19th century and another defining innovation: the long-distance train. A 14½-hour weekend train ride is time aplenty to appreciate how completely politics, economics, social strife and fights over identity and belonging have always affected the order of our lives, including how, when and where we move around in these United States. But Amtrak's Crescent also allowed me to see the expanse of our collective experience. I traversed the urban, suburban and rural breadth of East Coast America. I learned how other travelers came aboard. And in that, I found the portrait of people, past and present, who refuse to be as paralyzed as some of their elected leaders. Convenience on the railways There is little glamour late night in a crowded Amtrak station. Children are up past bedtime and tended by frazzled parents. Older adults struggle with luggage and stairs. Airports are not red-carpet affairs either, of course. But there is a certain cache to Delta's Atlanta-Washington flights. They typically take about two hours gate to gate. They often are slotted at a midpoint gate of the concourse nearest the main terminal. That is almost certainly a nod to members of Congress who use it — but who have lost some airline perks during this extended partial shutdown. In normal circumstances I can get from my front porch to Capitol Hill or downtown in as little as 4½ hours. Security lines these days could at least double my overall air travel time. The train is still longer, and time is money, we are taught. But certainty has value, too, even if it means an 11:29 p.m. departure. And at the Amtrak station, there were no standstill lines, no Transportation Security Administration agents, no ICE agents as stand-ins. Passengers who arrived mere minutes before departure made it on board and found seats quickly — assigned in boarding order, not predetermined zones that yield jammed aisles. There's no in-seat service or satellite TV. But even coach seats, the lowest Amtrak tier, are as

spacious as airline first-class – and there is Wi-Fi, so it's not the 19th century or even 20th century after all. On board, I heard one crew member joke, "I'm no TSA agent." The pathways of history

As a boy in rural Alabama, I counted train cars and wondered where they were headed. I've since read diary entries and letters from my grandmother and her sisters recounting World War II-era weekend trips to Atlanta. The South's largest city has a historical hook, too. Originally named "Terminus," Atlanta developed in the antebellum era as a critical intersection of north-south and east-west rail routes. That is what drew Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman for one of the Civil War's seminal campaigns that helped defeat the Confederacy. A century after the Civil War, Delta chose Atlanta for its headquarters rather than Birmingham, Alabama, which was the larger city as of the 1960 census. The company's decision was tied up in tax breaks for the airline, named for its crop duster origins in the Mississippi Delta region. According to some interpretations, Delta's decision was made easier because of the more overt racism of Alabama's and Birmingham's leaders as they defended Jim Crow — a code that, among other acts, allowed states to segregate the passenger trains that predated Amtrak. On this night, I heard many languages and accents, notable given the role that immigrant labor played in building the U.S. rail system and especially striking now with immigration — legal and illegal — at the forefront in Washington, my destination. I saw faces that reflected U.S. pluralism, a different mix from what my grandmother and aunts would have seen a lifetime ago. The array of voices celebrated the freedom and ease of rail travel. So did Agatha Grimes and her friends after they boarded in Greensboro, North Carolina, as part of a long weekend trip to celebrate her 62nd birthday. "I got stuck in the Atlanta airport last week," Grimes said, as her group laughed together in the dining car. "It's just nuts." Beretta Nunnally, a self-described "train veteran" who organized their trip, said, "There's no worry about parking. No checking bags. You come to the station, you get where you going, and you come home." An era for planes, trains and automobiles. Still, that is not as easy in the United States as it once was. Just as politics, economics and subsidies helped grow U.S. railroads, those factors diminished the network as auto manufacturers, oil companies, roadbuilders and, finally, airline manufacturers and airlines commanded favor from politicians and attention from consumers. Riding hours across rural areas, I noticed the junkyards where kudzu and chain-link fencing framed rows of rusted automobiles. I saw the farmland and equipment that helps feed cities and the rest of the nation. I awoke to see the night lights of office towers in Charlotte, North Carolina, and its NFL stadium. I saw vibrant county seats — and I thought of countless other towns like them that are not thriving as they sit disconnected from passenger rail and far from the Eisenhower-era interstate system that we crossed multiple times on our way. In each setting, voters — conservatives, liberals, the extremes and between — have chosen their representatives, senators and a president who now set the nation's course. When I arrived in Washington, I paused to enjoy Union Station's grand hall and its Beaux Arts appeal, and I lamented how much splendor has been lost because so many striking U.S. terminals have been razed. I stepped outside and looked up at the Capitol dome. While I had slept, the Senate managed a bipartisan deal to fund all of the Department of Homeland Security except immigration enforcement. As I continued northward, House Republican leaders rejected it. The stalemate continued. I was a weary traveler but renewed citizen. I had a game to get to. And the train rolled on.

- [Egypt's early closing order jolts Cairo's night life as war-driven oil costs soar](#)  
(2026-03-30 00:48)

CAIRO — The Egyptian government is seeking ways to conserve oil-powered electricity during the U.S.-Israel war with Iran, enacting at least one policy that threatens Cairo's identity as a city that never sleeps. The government imposed new nationwide closing times Saturday for stores, restaurants and cafes, ordering them to shut early and interfering with their ability to operate during critical hours. "It's ruinous," said Youssef Salah, a cafe owner in Cairo. "It deprives us from our peak time." The decision is one of a series of measures the government has taken in recent weeks to mitigate the fallout of the U.S. and Israeli war against Iran, which has shaken the Middle East and the global economy. Though Egypt is not a party to the widening conflict, the most populous Arab country is one of the most impacted by the war's far-reaching repercussions, including higher oil prices and disrupted shipping routes. "We must protect people's livelihoods" The early closures will have dire repercussions on hundreds of thousands of small businesses found on almost every street, alley and lane across the country. Some of them — including many eateries, juice shops and cafés — usually operate nonstop. Salah, the café owner in Cairo's middle-class neighborhood of Sayeda Zeinab, said he was forced to cut his 35-member workforce by 40%. The 46-year-old father of three used to keep his venue open 24 hours a day, with peak hours starting in the evening till the first hours of the new day. The late-night shifts are now abolished, he said. "It's painful," Salah said as he closed his shop doors at 9 p.m. (19:00 GMT) on Saturday. Yet two days into the decision, some Egyptians danced around the government order. Some cafes closed their front doors as patrons inside went about smoking shisha or playing chess, dominos or cards. Others took to social media to criticize the early closures. "The Butterfly effect," Mahmoud Elmamlouk, editor of Cairo24, one of the biggest news outlets in Egypt, wrote on social media after cafe shops shuttered their doors Saturday evening. "The closure of Strait of Hormuz has deprived us from smoking shisha in Talbia," he wrote, referencing a working-class neighborhood in greater Cairo. Ayman Harbi, who works at a store in Downtown Cairo, called on the government to extend the opening hours at least till midnight, saying that closing at 9 p.m. is "extremely difficult" for business like his. "Our work in the summer usually starts after 8 p.m. (18:00 GMT)," he said. "Forcing me to close at 9 p.m. (19:00 GMT) makes the workday pointless." Magdy al-Deeb, a business owner, urged the government to reverse the decision to preserve jobs, especially for cafes and small businesses. "Where will all those people (workers) go," he asked of those who could lose their jobs. Smoking a shisha — the tobacco burning water pipe — in a Cairo café, he said society " must protect people's livelihoods." The decision to close businesses early has also changed to the lifestyle for Egyptians accustomed to being able to buy virtually anything at any time, especially in big cities like Cairo and Alexandria. A nighttime tour across Cairo Saturday and Sunday revealed the city's usually vibrant streets turned eerily quiet. "Exceptional" measures Shops, restaurants, malls and cafes across the country have been ordered to close at 9 p.m. (19:00 GMT) for a month. The measures -- described by the government as "exceptional" — include dimming streetlights and roadside advertising. The government's district offices in the New Administrative Capital, east of Cairo, were also ordered to close by 6 p.m. (16:00 GMT).

Civil servants were also asked to return working from home for one day a week in April. The government exempted tourist-attraction areas from its energy-saving measures, given that tourism is a major source of foreign currency for the cash-strapped country. The exempt areas include the Red Sea tourist resorts of Hurghada, Sharm el-Sheikh, Marsa Alam, as well as the antiquities-rich southern cities of Aswan and Luxor. Prime Minister Mustafa Madbouly said the measures aim to curtail oil consumption. "The alternative would be to resort again to further price increases," he warned. The government already hiked prices for fuel and cooking gas earlier this month as global energy prices soared with the virtual closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial chokepoint for about a fifth of global oil supply. Repercussions are particularly painful for Egypt. Global energy prices have skyrocketed since the start of the war on Feb. 28, when the U.S. and Israel launched massive airstrikes on Iran, which retaliated with attacks on oil and gas infrastructure across the Persian Gulf and by squeezing traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. The increases hit Egypt hard given that its population of over 108 million people consumes \$20 billion of oil products annually, including fuel used to operate power plants. The country imports 28% of its gasoline and 45% of its diesel and Madbouly said the nation's oil bill had more than doubled from January to \$2.5 billion.

- [Israeli police prevent Catholic leaders from celebrating Palm Sunday Mass at Jerusalem church](#) (2026-03-30 00:44)

TEL AVIV, Israel — Israeli police prevented Catholic leaders from entering the Church of the Holy Sepulchre to celebrate a private Mass on the Christian holiday of Palm Sunday for the first time in centuries, setting off a wave of criticism from the United States and others. Jerusalem's major holy sites, including the church, are closed because of the ongoing Iran war, as the city has come under frequent fire from Iranian missiles. Early Monday morning, Israel's police said it had approved a "limited prayer framework" for the church, in consultation with the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. On Sunday, the Patriarchate had called the police decision to bar entry "a manifestly unreasonable and grossly disproportionate measure." It prevented two of the church's top religious leaders, including the Latin Patriarch, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, and the Custos of the Holy Land, from celebrating Palm Sunday at the place where Christians believe Jesus was crucified. Palm Sunday commemorates Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem and launches the Holy Week commemorations for Christians which culminates in Easter. Israeli police said they had notified church authorities on Saturday that no Mass could take place on Palm Sunday because of safety considerations, the lack of access for emergency vehicles in narrow alleys of the Old City and lack of adequate shelter. In the Monday statement, police said the new framework would aim to "enable freedom of worship." It highlighted that restrictions at holy sites without standard protected spaces — like the cavernous church deep in a maze of tiny alleyways — are meant to "safeguard worshippers" from Iranian attacks. Earlier this month, shrapnel from the interception of an Iranian missile fell on a rooftop just steps from the church. However, the Latin Patriarchate said the Church of the Holy Sepulchre had been hosting Masses that aren't open to the public since the Iran war began on Feb. 28, and it was unclear why Sunday's Mass and access by the two priests was any different. "It's a very, very sacred day

for Christians and in our opinion there was no justification for such a decision or such an action," said Farid Jubran, the spokesperson for the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Jubran said that the church had requested permission from police for a few religious leaders to enter the church for a private celebration on Sunday — not one that was open to the public. The Patriarchate said that the decision impeded freedom of worship and the status quo in Jerusalem. The traditional Palm Sunday procession normally sees tens of thousands of Christians from around the world walk from the Mount of Olives down the narrow, hilly streets toward the Old City, waving palm fronds and singing. The Patriarchate canceled the traditional processional last week because of safety concerns, and has held Masses limited to fewer than 50 worshippers in compliance with the Israeli military's guidelines for civilians. Pizzaballa instead celebrated Mass in the nearby St. Savior's Monastery, a soaring marble church which is located next to an underground music school that the Israeli military has deemed a safe shelter space. Later on Sunday, Pizzaballa held a prayer for peace at the Dominus Flevit Shrine on the Mount of Olives, but kept his homily concentrated on Jesus and didn't mention the morning's incident. Pope Leo XIV, at the end of Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square, prayed for all Christians in the Middle East who he said were living through an "atrocious" conflict. He said that "in many cases, they cannot live fully the rites of these holy days," though he didn't elaborate. The Vatican spokesman didn't immediately respond when asked to comment on the Jerusalem incident.

US, France and Italy criticize decision

The closure sparked a wave of criticism that Israeli authorities had gone too far in restricting worship, including from Israel's top ally, the United States. U.S. Ambassador Mike Huckabee, a devout evangelical Christian, said that the incident was "an unfortunate overreach." He said in a statement that the proposed prayer with Pizzaballa and the others was well below the 50-person limit for gatherings. "For the Patriarch to be barred from entry to the Church on Palm Sunday for a private ceremony is difficult to understand or justify," he wrote. French President Emmanuel Macron condemned the incident, which he said had added to the "concerning increase in violations of the status of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem." In a post on X, Macron wrote: "The free exercise of worship in Jerusalem must be guaranteed for all religions." Italian authorities across the political spectrum condemned the move to restrict Pizzaballa, an Italian cardinal considered a leading papal contender in the 2025 conclave, to access the church. The Italian government formally protested the incident to Israeli authorities and summoned Israel's ambassador to Rome for clarification. Premier Giorgia Meloni said that the police action "constitutes an offense not only against believers but against every community that recognizes religious freedom." Meloni's conservative government tried to keep a balanced position with Israel during the war in Gaza, supporting Israel's right to defense but condemning the toll on Palestinians. The Italian leader has also said that Italy won't participate in the Iran war, while affirming that the Islamic Republic can't be allowed to possess nuclear weapons. Israel working to allow partial access

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said there was no "malicious intent" and that the cardinal was prevented from accessing the church because of safety concerns, but that Israel would try to partially open the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the coming days. "Given the holiness of the week leading up to Easter for the world's Christians, Israel's security arms are putting together a plan to enable church leaders to worship at the holy site in the coming days," Netanyahu wrote on X. In an

interview with Italian Catholic broadcaster TG2000, Pizzaballa said there was difference of opinions with Israeli authorities over accessing the church, but that the dispute remained polite. "We want to use this situation to try to clarify better what will be done in the coming days, respecting the security of all naturally but also in respect of the right to prayer," he said. The Western Wall, the holiest site where Jews can pray, is also mostly closed because of safety issues, but authorities are letting up to 50 people at a time pray in an enclosed area adjacent to the plaza. Smaller churches, synagogues, and mosques are open in Jerusalem's Old City if they are located within a certain distance of a bomb shelter deemed acceptable by Israel's military and, if gatherings are kept under 50 people. The same limitations apply to most of Israel, where schools have also been closed since the beginning of the Iran war and workplaces can function only where a shelter can be reached in the short time available after an alert.

- [Strikes knock out power in Tehran, Iran says US plotting ground invasion](#) (2026-03-30 00:40)

TEHRAN, Iran — Airstrikes knocked out electricity to parts of Tehran and its surroundings on Sunday as a top Iranian official accused the United States of plotting a ground invasion despite publicly pushing for a negotiated deal. Pakistan said meanwhile that it was ready to broker and host "meaningful talks" between Washington and Tehran to bring an end to the month-old US-Israeli war against Iran. The Israeli parliament was set to vote overnight on a 2026 budget that provides for a massive rise in military spending, increasing the defense budget by more than \$10 billion to over \$45 billion. In addition to fighting the war against Iran with its US ally since February 28, Israel is also battling in southern Lebanon against Iran-backed Hezbollah. Iran's energy ministry reported power outages in the capital, its surrounding region and Alborz province "following attacks on electricity industry facilities" and said the authorities were working to "resolve the problem." US President Donald Trump has previously threatened to strike Iranian power stations if Tehran does not negotiate a peace deal, before repeatedly extending a deadline to do so. Iranian parliamentary speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf warned on Sunday after a US warship with another 3,500 military personnel arrived in the Middle East that any US ground invasion of the country would be repelled. "The enemy publicly sends messages of negotiation and dialogue while secretly planning a ground attack," Ghalibaf said in a statement carried by the official IRNA news agency. "Our men are waiting for the arrival of the American soldiers on the ground to set them on fire and punish their regional allies once and for all," he added. The war has escalated into a regional conflagration as Iran has retaliated with attacks on Gulf states and shut down the critical Strait of Hormuz oil shipping lane, sending energy markets into a tailspin and threatening the world economy. Ghalibaf called for unity among Iranians, saying the war was "at its most critical stage." 'Uncertain future' Weeks of unrelenting strikes have taken a heavy toll on ordinary people in the country. "I miss a peaceful night's sleep," an artist in Tehran told AFP, saying night-time strikes were "so intense it felt like all of Tehran was shaking." Farzaneh, a 62-year-old woman in Iran's western city of Ahvaz contacted by AFP from Paris, said: "People wake up each day worried about an uncertain future." A university in Iran's central city of Isfahan said it was hit by airstrikes on Sunday for the

second time since the war erupted. In Tehran, the Qatari news channel Al Arabiya said an Israeli missile hit the building housing its office. On the diplomatic front, Pakistan, acting as a go-between for Washington and Tehran, hosted foreign ministers from Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Egypt in Islamabad for talks on the crisis. Trump has repeatedly spoken of diplomatic contacts with Iran, although these claims have been denied by Tehran. Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said the visiting diplomats had discussed how to "bring an early and permanent end to the war" and there was a growing consensus behind Islamabad hosting peace talks. He said Iran and the United States had expressed "confidence in Pakistan to facilitate the talks" and that he had spoken to his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi as well as UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and other foreign ministers who also backed the idea. Despite making diplomatic overtures including proposing a 15-point plan to end the war, the United States has also been sending more military assets into the region. The USS Tripoli, an amphibious assault ship carrying around 3,500 Marines and sailors, arrived in the Middle East on Friday. According to The Washington Post, the Pentagon was preparing plans for weeks of ground operations -- potentially including raids on sites near the Strait of Hormuz -- though Trump has yet to approve any deployment. Iran says it has closed the Strait of Hormuz, which previously accounted for a quarter of the world's seaborne oil trade and a fifth of liquefied natural gas shipments, to vessels from hostile nations. Aluminium plants targeted On another front, Israeli attacks have continued in Lebanon, which was drawn into the war when Hezbollah fired rockets at Israel on March 2. The Lebanese health ministry said on Sunday that the death toll from Israeli strikes had surpassed 1,200. Hundreds of mourners attended the funeral near Beirut on Sunday of three journalists killed by the Israeli military in southern Lebanon on Saturday. In the Gulf, Iranian forces said they had fired a volley of missiles and drones at plants belonging to two of the world's largest aluminium producers in Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, targeting what they described as industries linked to the US military. Emirates Global Aluminium said an Iranian attack wounded six and caused significant damage to its plant, while Bahraini state media said two Aluminium Bahrain employees were injured. In Kuwait, the defence ministry said 10 service members were injured in an attack on a military camp and 14 ballistic missiles and 12 hostile drones were detected in Kuwaiti airspace in the past 24 hours. In Israel, thick black smoke could be seen rising from an industrial complex in the Negev desert in images released by the Israel Fire and Rescue Authority. The military said the impact may have been caused by missile shrapnel.

- [Russian tanker heads to Cuba despite US oil blockade](#) (2026-03-30 00:37)

HAVANA, Cuba — A Russian oil tanker under US sanctions is due to arrive in Cuba by Tuesday despite a de facto American fuel blockade of the energy-starved island, according to shipping data. The Anatoly Kolodkin, which is carrying 730,000 barrels of crude, was off the eastern tip of Cuba on Sunday, according to shipping tracker MarineTraffic. The tanker, traveling at 12 knots, is now scheduled to arrive at the western port of Matanzas on Tuesday. It was previously forecast to arrive Monday. It would be the first shipment of oil to the island since January, bringing some temporary relief to a country of 9.6 million people that has endured a deepening energy and

economic crisis. Communist-ruled Cuba lost its main regional ally and oil supplier in January when US forces captured Venezuela's socialist leader Nicolas Maduro. US President Donald Trump subsequently threatened to impose tariffs on any country sending oil to Cuba and has mused about "taking" the island. He renewed his threats on Friday, saying "Cuba is next" at an investment forum in Miami. Jorge Pinon, an expert on Cuba's energy sector at the University of Texas at Austin, said he was surprised the United States did not try to intercept the Russian tanker before it approached Cuba. "I think now the chances that the United States will try to stop her have basically disappeared," Pinon told AFP. Once the boat enters Cuban waters, he said, it "is almost impossible for the US government to stop it." The New York Times, citing an unnamed US official briefed on the matter, said the US Coast Guard was allowing the tanker to reach Cuba. The US Coast Guard did not reply to an AFP request for comment. Daily outages After Washington launched the oil blockade, President Miguel Diaz-Canel imposed emergency measures to conserve fuel, including strict rationing of gasoline. He warned this month that "any external aggressor will encounter an unbreakable resistance." Fuel prices have soared, public transport has dwindled and some airlines have suspended flights to Cuba, hitting the country's fragile economy. Cubans have endured regular outages as its aging power plants struggle to meet demand, with seven nationwide blackouts since 2024, including two this month and sparking rare protests. A humanitarian aid convoy brought more than 50 tonnes of medicine, food, solar panels and other goods to Cuba by air and sea in the past week, with two sailboats bringing the last shipments from Mexico on Saturday. The Anatoly Kolodkin, which is under US sanctions, left the Russian port of Primorsk on March 8. It was escorted by a Russian navy ship across the English Channel, but the two vessels parted ways when the tanker entered the Atlantic, according to the British Royal Navy. Another ship that was reportedly carrying Russian diesel to Cuba, the Hong Kong-flagged Sea Horse, arrived in Venezuela instead earlier this week. Diesel an 'urgent need' Once the Anatoly Kolodkin's crude arrives in Cuba, it would take about 15-20 days to process the oil and another 5-10 days to deliver its refined products, Pinon said. "The urgent need today in Cuba is diesel," the former oil executive said. The Russian shipment could be converted into 250,000 barrels of diesel, enough to cover the country's demand for around 12.5 days, according to Pinon. Pinon said the government would have to decide whether to use the fuel for backup power generators or for the buses, tractors and trains needed to keep the economy going for two weeks. "If you are Diaz-Canel or somebody making the decision, you go, 'OK, where where do I go with that diesel?'" he said. "Do I want to generate more electricity so there are less apagones (blackouts)? Or do I want to put it in the transportation sector?"

- [UN force in southern Lebanon says peacekeeper killed](#) (2026-03-30 00:34)

BEIRUT, Lebanon — The UN force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) said one of their peacekeepers was killed after a projectile hit one of their positions late Sunday. "A peacekeeper was tragically killed last night when a projectile exploded in a UNIFIL position near Adchit Al Qusayr," said Monday's statement. "Another was critically injured." The UNIFIL statement said they did not know the origin of the projectile but had launched an investigation to find out. "No one should ever lose

their life serving the cause of peace," it added. State media NNA reported earlier that the position hit belonged to the Indonesian battalion serving with UNIFIL. The town of Adchit al Qusayr lies near Lebanon's southern border with Israel, where Israeli forces have been battling Hezbollah fighters for nearly a month. The war in the Middle East spread to Lebanon in early March after Iran-backed Hezbollah fired rockets at Israel. Their attack came after the assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei on the first day of the US-Israeli offensive. Israel has retaliated with wide-ranging airstrikes on Lebanon and Israeli forces are now advancing into numerous towns in southern Lebanon. Israeli officials say they intend to set up a security zone extending 30 kilometers from the Israeli border to protect those living in northern Israel. UNIFIL has reported that its positions have been hit more than once since the start of the latest fighting. On March 7, three Ghanaian soldiers were wounded by gunfire in a border town in southern Lebanon.

- [Israel approves 2026 budget with increased defence spending](#) (2026-03-30 00:30)

Jerusalem — Israel's parliament approved the 2026 budget early Monday, providing for a significant increase in military spending as the country remains engaged in wars on multiple fronts. Lawmakers passed the budget with 62 votes in favour and 55 against. The vote averted an automatic government collapse and snap election that would have followed failure to pass the budget by March's end, under Israeli law. The proposed total expenditure budget for 2026 amounts to approximately 850 billion Israeli shekels (NIS) or \$270 billion. "As part of the updated budget, and in light of Operation 'Roaring Lion', more than NIS 30 billion (about \$10 billion) has been added to the ministry of defence budget, bringing it to over NIS 142 billion," the parliament said in a statement, using the name Israel has given to the war with Iran. Israel's defence spending has steadily increased since the war in Gaza broke out following Hamas's attack on Israel on October 7, 2023. In addition to fighting the new war against Iran with its ally the United States since February 28, Israel is also battling Iran-backed Islamist movement Hezbollah in southern Lebanon. Ahead of the vote, lawmakers debated the budget proposals late on Sunday. Far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich called it a "historic turning point" for Israel. "We have the capacity to reshape the Middle East. This budget positions the nation to win," Smotrich said. "We are passing this budget under a right-wing government committed to fulfilling its term and achieving its missions in security, the economy and judicial reform." This term will be remembered as a historic turning point for the State of Israel, redefining both our security approach and our economy," Smotrich added. He also praised Israel's macroeconomic performance as "astonishing" despite the war. 'Greatest theft' Main opposition leader Yair Lapid described it as "the greatest theft in the state's history". "Six billion shekels are coalition funds that this government is allocating to itself -- to corruption and draft evasion," Lapid said. "The Israeli public is not foolish. It understands that this budget is a windfall for the corrupt and for those who evade responsibility -- celebrating at our expense," he added. Earlier this week, Lapid had lashed out at the government over its handling of the war in Iran, specifically criticising delays in legislation that would allow ultra-Orthodox Jews, who are largely exempt from military service, to be conscripted. The law aligns with the demands of a broad majority of

Israelis, who are increasingly opposed to the ultra-Orthodox exemptions. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who relies on his ultra-Orthodox party allies to maintain power, has delayed the legislation's adoption. The surge in defence spending in the budget will lead to a three-percent cut across all other ministries, which was also strongly criticised by Lapid. But Netanyahu's government, dependent on the support of its ultra-Orthodox and settler allies for its survival, has approved a significant increase in funds earmarked exclusively for them. Ultra-Orthodox parties will receive more than \$750 million in additional funds for private schools they control. Despite the sweeping cuts imposed on all civilian budgets, funding for settlements has remained unchanged, according to a report by the anti-settlement group Peace Now. The Peace Now report denounced the measure as "daylight robbery of public funds" for the benefit of a small group within the government's base. On December 4, the government approved spending more than \$875 million over five years to develop settlements in the occupied West Bank, which are illegal under international law.

- [PH, China reopen oil exploration talks](#) (2026-03-29 16:10)

(UPDATE) THE Philippines and China have made "initial exchanges" on potential oil and gas exploration in the South China Sea, nearly four years since previous talks were terminated in 2022. The subject was raised at the just-concluded Bilateral Consultative Mechanism (BCM) on South China Sea meeting in Fujian, China, on March 28. In a statement late Saturday, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said both sides took note of the progress made in other possible areas of cooperation to "increase confidence in the maritime domain," including communication between their coast guards and ocean meteorology. The two sides had "frank and thorough exchange of views" on the situation in the South China Sea, where Manila "firmly reiterated" its position and raised concerns over China's actions that have "disrupted lawful activities and posed risks at sea," the DFA said. "The Philippines emphasized the need for diplomacy and communication for managing differences at sea, and upholding international law, particularly the 1982 Unclos (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea) and the 2016 South China Sea Arbitral Award," it said. The BCM was held back-to-back with the 24th Foreign Ministry Consultations (FMC), and both were led by Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Leo Herrera-Lim and Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong. At the FMC, Manila said it would handle all bilateral issues in line with the Philippine national interest, "while advancing mutually beneficial cooperation, especially in the economic and people-to-people areas." The two sides brought up the need to stabilize access to energy and fertilizers, as well as potential cooperation in green and renewable energy, trade and agriculture, against the backdrop of current global developments, including the Middle East crisis. The DFA said it was agreed that the reconvening of appropriate bilateral mechanisms was a necessary step in reopening negotiations. ing the tourist traffic between the two countries through visa-free arrangements, enhanced connectivity, and prospective new direct air routes. Manila emphasized that it would play a "responsible and professional role" as chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) this year, especially on managing regional talks, upholding Asean centrality, and reinforcing a rules-based order. The DFA said the

Philippines and China would convene a bilateral foreign ministers' meeting "within the year" following these latest talks. A geopolitical analyst on Sunday said renewed discussions between the Philippines and China on possible joint oil and gas exploration in the South China Sea come at a critical time, as global supply uncertainties mount due to tensions in the Middle East. In an interview with *The Manila Times*, Herman Tiu Laurel, president of the Manila-based think tank Asian Century Philippines Strategic Studies Institute (ACPSSI), said the reopening of talks was "very late in the day," driven by what he described as a potentially severe oil and gas supply crisis linked to the conflict pitting the United States and Israel against Iran. Tiu Laurel said China was concerned about the Philippines' consistency in previous agreements, citing what he described as policy reversals and "flip-flopping" since initial engagements in 2013. He also pointed to the Philippines' termination in 2022 of a joint exploration agreement reached in 2018 between Xi Jinping and Rodrigo Duterte. According to Tiu Laurel, former Foreign Affairs secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. announced the unilateral termination of the agreement during the transition from the Duterte administration to that of Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Tiu Laurel said Duterte had opposed the move and warned that abandoning the agreement could lead to tensions. He added that the current administration should provide assurances of "sincerity" if it intends to pursue joint development with China. He also questioned whether Manila's renewed engagement would be sustained, noting uncertainties over how external geopolitical pressures, particularly from the US, might influence policy direction.

- [Worries about global economic pain deepen](#) (2026-03-29 16:09)

US and Israeli attacks on Iran have driven up prices, darkened the outlook for the world economy, sent global stock markets reeling, and forced developing countries to ration fuel and subsidize energy costs to protect their poorest. Ongoing strikes and counterstrikes on Persian Gulf refineries, pipelines, gas fields and tanker terminals threaten to prolong the global economic pain for months, even years. "A week ago or certainly two weeks ago, I would have said: If the war stopped that day, the long-term implications would be pretty small," said Christopher Knittel, an energy economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "But what we're seeing is infrastructure actually being destroyed, which means the ramifications of this war are going to be long-lived." Iran has hit Qatar's Ras Laffan natural gas terminal, which produces 20 percent of the world's liquefied natural gas. The March 18 strike wiped out 17 percent of Qatar's LNG export capacity and repairs will take up to five years, state-owned QatarEnergy said. The war caused an oil shock from the get-go. Iran responded to US and Israeli attacks on Feb. 28 by effectively closing off the Strait of Hormuz, a transit point for a fifth of the world's oil, by threatening tankers trying to pass through. Gulf oil exporters like Kuwait and Iraq cut production because there was nowhere for their oil to go without access to the strait. The loss of 20 million barrels of oil a day delivered what the International Energy Agency calls the "largest supply disruption in the history of the global oil market." The price for a barrel of Brent crude oil climbed 3.4 percent on Friday to settle at \$105.32. That was up from roughly \$70 just before the war began. Benchmark US crude rose 5.5 percent to settle at \$99.64 per

barrel. “Historically, oil price shocks like this have led to global recessions,” Knittel said. The war also has dredged up a bad economic memory from the oil shocks of the 1970s: stagflation. “You’re raising the risk of higher inflation and lower growth,” said the Harvard Kennedy School’s Carmen Reinhart, a former World Bank chief economist. Gita Gopinath, former chief economist at the International Monetary Fund, recently wrote that global economic growth, expected before the war to register 3.3 percent this year, would be 0.3 to 0.4 percentage points lower if oil prices averaged \$85 a barrel in 2026. Fertilizer shortages and price hikes hurt farmers. The Persian Gulf accounts for a big share of exports of two key fertilizers, a third of urea and a quarter of ammonia. Producers in the region enjoy an advantage: easy access to low-cost natural gas, the primary feedstock for nitrogen fertilizers. Up to 40 percent of world exports of nitrogen fertilizer pass through the Strait of Hormuz. Now that the passage is blocked, urea prices are up 50 percent since the war and ammonia 20 percent. Big agricultural producer Brazil is especially vulnerable because it gets 85 percent of its fertilizer from imports, Alpine Macro commodity strategist Kelly Xu wrote in a commentary. Egypt, a big fertilizer producer itself, needs natural gas to make the stuff and production falters when it can’t get enough. Eventually, higher fertilizer prices are likely to make food more expensive and less abundant as farmers skimp on it and get lower yields. The squeeze on food supplies will land hardest on families in poorer countries. The war also has disrupted world supplies of helium, a byproduct of natural gas and a key input in chipmaking, rockets and medical imaging. Qatar makes helium at the Ros Laffan facility and supplies a third of the world’s helium. Rationing gas and limiting the air conditioning “No country will be immune to the effects of this crisis if it continues to go in this direction,” International Energy Agency head Fatih Birol said on March 23. Poorer countries will be hit hardest and face the biggest energy shortages “because they will be outbid when competing for the remaining oil and natural gas,” said Lutz Kilian, director of the Center for Energy and the Economy at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. Asia is especially exposed: More than 80 percent of the oil and LNG that passes through the Strait of Hormuz is headed there. In the Philippines, government offices are now open just four days a week and bureaucrats must limit the use of air conditioning to nothing cooler than 75 F (24 C). In Thailand, public workers have been told to take the stairs instead of elevators. India is the world’s second-biggest importer of liquefied petroleum gas, which is used in cooking. The Indian government is giving households priority over businesses as it allocates its limited supply and absorbing most of the price increases to keep costs low for poor families. But LPG shortages have forced some eateries to shorten hours, close temporarily or drop dishes like curries and deep-fried snacks requiring a lot of energy. South Korea, dependent on energy imports, is restricting the use of cars by public employees and has reinstated fuel price caps that had been dropped in the 1990s.

- [DOLE releases P1.2B standby fund for vulnerable workers](#) (2026-03-29 16:08)

THE Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) is ramping up its response to the national energy emergency, setting aside P1.2 billion in standby funds to protect the country’s most vulnerable workers from the effects of the Middle East crisis. Labor Secretary Bienvenido

Laguesma said over the weekend that the move aligns with the government's rollout of the Unified Package for Livelihoods, Industry, Food, and Transport (Uplift) under Executive Order 110, designed to cushion the economic shocks of global energy disruptions on the domestic economy. At the core of the DOLE's push were the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged Workers (Tupad) emergency employment program and the DOLE Integrated Livelihood Program (DILP). Tupad offers emergency employment, giving affected workers community jobs for 10 to 30 days. Beneficiaries would receive the daily minimum wage prevailing in their region. The DILP is the department's flagship program that provides vulnerable and marginalized workers access to resources, such as working capital in the form of raw materials, equipment, tools and jigs. Laguesma said Tupad and DILP "are being mobilized to support workers at risk of displacement as the energy crisis ripples across industries." In the first quarter of 2026, emergency employment through Tupad and livelihood assistance through DILP benefited 110,106 workers, with total disbursements reaching P753.69 million. To support Uplift, the department is working closely with agencies such as the Department of Transportation, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of the Interior and Local Government, and local government units. Initial efforts will focus on transport workers to help maintain mobility and economic activity, with plans to extend assistance to sectors like agriculture and fisheries, Laguesma said. Repatriated overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) were also being attended to. In coordination with the Department of Migrant Workers and Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, the labor department is lining up job matching, skills training through Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, and livelihood assistance for displaced OFWs. A major highlight is the upcoming "Bayanihan para sa Balikbayang Manggagawa," a one-stop reintegration platform for returning workers and their families. On the jobs front, DOLE has staged 144 job fairs nationwide since January, Laguesma said. Meanwhile, Sen. Francis Pangilinan over the weekend said the proposed P10-billion financial package for affected agricultural sectors would only benefit four million farmers and 400,000 fishermen. Pangilinan said there are over 10 million farmers and 2.5 million fishermen affected by the mounting economic pressures from the Middle East war. He said the one-time P2,325 cash aid to concerned farmworkers and fisherfolk would come from the Presidential Assistance to Farmers and Fisherfolk under the 2026 budget. About 15,000 fishermen would receive fuel assistance from the P150-million 2025 continuing appropriation, with P75 million each allotted to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and the Department of Agriculture (DA). Pangilinan called for more government support for the agriculture and fishery sectors reeling from surging oil prices, which drive up the cost of fuel, transportation, and fertilizer costs. Pangilinan said other sources could be tapped, such as the DA's P1 billion Quick Response Fund (QRF). Other concerned agencies can tap certain items under their 2026 allocations to support local food producers, he said. These include the P3.11-billion budget of the Agricultural Credit Policy Council, the P2.4-billion budget for high-value crops under the DA, the P6.5-billion budget of the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp., and the DA's QRF.

- [Manufacturers to defer price hikes until April 16](#) (2026-03-29 16:07)

MANUFACTURERS have pledged not to raise the prices of basic necessities and prime commodities until April 16, the DTI said in a statement on Saturday. “This assurance follows the DTI’s meeting with major manufacturers and retailers to hold off on price increases until April 16, 2026, ensuring stability for Filipino consumers amid the ongoing Middle East tensions,” the DTI said. Trade Secretary Cristina Roque had a virtual meeting with the manufacturers on March 28. Among them were Milk Corporation, Chattrade Enterprises, Commonwealth Foods Inc., Century Pacific Food Inc. (CPFI), Ecosential Foods Corp., Sevilla Candle Factory Inc., Lorenzana Food Corp., Monde Nissin, Nestle Philippines, Procter & Gamble Philippines Inc., San Miguel Foods, Slord Development Corp., Unilever Philippines Inc., Universal Canning Inc., Universal Robina Corp., Virginia Food Inc., Wellmade Manufacturing Corp., and a representative from the Canned Sardines Association of the Philippines (CSAP). Retailers who agreed not to raise prices include Robinsons Retail Holdings, Inc., SM Markets (SM Supermarket, SM Hypermarket, Savemore), Metro Retail Stores Group Inc., and the Philippine Amalgamated Supermarkets Association. Complying with Executive Order 110, the DTI will intensify its nationwide monitoring to ensure the commitments are reflected at the retail level. It said it maintains jurisdiction over “726 variants of essential products in which 196 stock keeping units include a suggested retail price (SRP), including canned sardines, canned meat, coffee, processed milk, instant noodles, condiments, laundry soap, toilet soap, candles, salt, battery, bottled water, and bread.” On Friday, the department announced that the supply and prices of basic necessities and prime commodities remained stable. The DTI also clarified that the automatic nationwide price freeze is not in effect, despite President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s declaration of a state of national energy emergency. Under the Price Act (Republic Act 7581), prices are automatically frozen only under specific conditions, such as a state of calamity or similar emergency declarations. Enacted into law in 1992, the Price Act ensures fair pricing and availability of basic necessities and prime commodities, especially during times of calamities and emergencies. Violators face a fine of from P5,000 to P2 million. Last week, the trade chief met with 21 manufacturers of canned sardines, bread, bottled water, instant noodles, coffee, canned meat, toilet soap and candles, and agreed not to increase the prices for 30 days. Chynna Grace Ong and the Philippine News Agency Among them were Mega, Ligo, Unipak, Lucky 7, Fresca, Golden Town, Morjon, Wilkins, Nature’s Spring, Pinoy Tasty and Pandesal, Safeguard, Tide, Green Cross, Datu Puti, Lorins, and others. On Sunday, Executive Secretary Ralph Recto commended businesses that deferred price increases for their show of solidarity with consumers. “We commend businesses that have deferred price increases as an act of solidarity with the public, commendably placing patriotism before profits,” Recto said. He said the move aligns with government interventions to stabilize the country’s fuel supply and cushion the public from price shocks. The government has secured oil from both traditional and alternative sources, and received commitments from industry players like Petron and Seaoil to stabilize supply lines. The Department of Energy has also facilitated the procurement of 1.04 million barrels of diesel, with initial shipments expected this week. Fuel subsidies have also been distributed to transport operators, farmers and fisherfolk. Energy conservation measures are being enforced in government offices, including reduced fuel use for non-essential vehicles and monitoring of electricity consumption, Recto said.

- [Holy Monday: Time to reflect on faith](#) (2026-03-29 16:06)

HOLY Monday is a day often overlooked during Holy Week. It comes right after Palm Sunday, when Jesus Christ was welcomed in Jerusalem, but what does it signify? The Gospel of Mark 11:11–12 revealed that after spending the evening in Bethany, Jesus and his disciples set out for Jerusalem early Monday. Jesus then encountered a fig tree and cursed it for its fruitlessness. Some interpreted the act as God's judgment on the lack of genuine faith by believers. After arriving in Jerusalem, he found commerce and corruption in the temple, where there should have been worship and reverence. In a fit of rage, he overturned the tables, condemning the practice. "My house will be called a house of prayer, but you are making it a den of robbers," he said. For Filipino Catholics, Holy Monday serves as a reminder to examine one's faith and actions. Fr. Cyrain Cabuenas of Borongan, Eastern Samar, said in his homily that the day calls on the faithful to reflect on how people respond to truth, particularly in the face of adversity. "The Passion of Christ is not only about His suffering; it is also about how people respond to truth. Jesus stood for what was right, yet He was rejected. Those in authority chose to protect themselves instead of doing what was just, and the crowd allowed itself to be influenced, choosing noise over truth. This is what makes Holy Week uncomfortable, because it asks a question we cannot avoid: where do we stand when truth is at risk?" Cabuenas said. He said the message of Holy Week remains relevant in the Philippine context, where issues such as corruption, political conflict, and rising living costs continue to burden many Filipinos. "We see it when power is used for personal gain, when truth is ignored, and when the innocent suffer while justice seems slow or absent," he said. Cabuenas cautioned the faithful against reducing Holy Week to rituals, such as attending Mass or joining processions, without allowing it to inspire real change. "If nothing changes — if corruption continues, injustice remains, and the poor are still forgotten — then something essential is missing. Holy Week is not meant to be just an annual routine; it is meant to change us," he said. He asked Filipinos to live out their faith in honesty, integrity and compassion, even in small, everyday choices, stressing that meaningful change begins within individuals. In his Holy Week message to the nation, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. called on Filipinos to unite for the shared goal of building a country grounded in faith and selfless service to others. The president urged every citizen to "take a moment for a brief pause, rest, and reflection." "From His triumphant entry into Jerusalem, to the suffering of the Cross at Calvary, and finally to the glory of His Resurrection, we witness a love so powerful that it embraces human suffering and conquers even death," he said. The immeasurable love of Jesus Christ, he said, reflects a love that embraces human suffering and triumphs over death. "The Passion of Christ reminds us that true greatness is not found in power, but in sacrifice; not in privilege, but in service; and not in comfort, but in the courage to carry the burdens of others," he said. He called on the faithful to renew their commitment to loving and serving one another, especially in times of hardship, and to remain steadfast in faith despite life's trials. "For in every act of compassion, every hand extended to those in need, and every sacrifice made for the good of others, we keep alive the spirit of His message," the president said. Malacañang has declared April 2, Maundy Thursday, and April 3, Good Friday, as regular holidays. Black Saturday, April 4, was declared a special non-working holiday. Leyte 1st

District Rep. Ferdinand Martin Romualdez on Sunday said Holy Week “is a time for prayer and reflection. This is a time for remembering the great love of God — a love that saved us, gave hope, and continues to guide us back to Him.” “Amid the conflicts and problems we face, may this day serve as an invitation for us to pause, reflect, and repent,” he said. “This is a time to examine our hearts, our shortcomings, and the times when we fell short in loving. In the quiet of prayer, may we find the strength to carry on, the courage to forgive, and the heart ready to love again — especially in times when this is most difficult to do.”

- [Customs fast-tracks fuel shipments](#) (2026-03-29 16:05)

THE Bureau of Customs (BOC) is stepping on the gas to keep the country’s fuel lifeline flowing, rolling out aggressive measures to fast-track petroleum imports while maintaining round-the-clock monitoring across all ports. Customs Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno issued Office of the Commissioner Memorandum 36-2006 over the weekend, directing all ports to give fuel shipments top priority. The order mandates faster unloading, streamlined customs clearance, zero tolerance for delays, tighter interagency coordination, and continuous oversight — ensuring critical fuel cargo moves from ship to shore without a hitch. “Ensuring the timely release of petroleum products is critical to keep the country moving. That is why we are making sure petroleum shipments are processed without delay and closely monitored at all times. Our goal is simple — to keep supply steady and ensure that no disruption reaches our industries or our communities,” Nepomuceno said. Nepomuceno gave assurances that safeguards are in place to ensure that every drop of fuel entering the country is properly taxed. He said the Fuel Marking Program ensures petroleum products are authenticated at the depot level, quality and tax compliance are verified, and any irregular shipment is immediately flagged. At sea, the bureau’s vessel tracking system keeps tankers under constant watch even before they reach Philippine waters. This allows authorities to monitor routes, anticipate arrivals, and conduct immediate inspections — closing gaps from offshore transit to final discharge. According to Nepomuceno, the bureau is also working with the Department of Energy (DOE) for real-time monitoring of fuel shipments and depot inventories across the country. Nepomuceno pointed out that petroleum imports generate roughly P200 billion annually in revenues, making them a critical pillar of government collections. Efficient processing and tight regulation are not just operational priorities but also economic imperatives. In San Fernando, La Union, the BOC cleared the arrival of 9.4 million liters of diesel for PNOC at Seoail Bangar Terminal, the largest oil import hub in Region I. The shipment, part of the Department of Energy’s Strategic Fuel Reserve program, was processed and discharged at speed following tight coordination and pre-clearance checks, reinforcing fuel stability across Luzon. Meanwhile, in Limay, Bataan, customs teams prioritized the handling of major crude oil delivered by the Sara Sky. The vessel, loaded with over 100,000 barrels of ESPO Blend crude from Russia, was swiftly cleared and unloaded at the Petron Bataan Refinery, ensuring immediate integration into the country’s fuel supply chain. Nepomuceno commended the two ports for their timely action. “I commend the Port of San Fernando, La Union, and the Port of Limay for their quick and efficient handling of these priority fuel shipments from Russia and Japan. Their swift action and coordination

ensured that essential petroleum products were released without delay.”

- [SSS eyes loan payment moratorium, penalty condonation](#) (2026-03-29 16:04)

THE Social Security System (SSS) is studying loan payment moratorium for its members and condonation program for employers to ease the burden of surging fuel prices. SSS President and CEO Robert Joseph de Claro said the measures aim to provide immediate relief to SSS members and employers struggling with financial difficulties in the wake of the unabated increase in fuel costs due to the war in the Middle East. “This would ensure they can continue to access vital benefits without an added burden,” de Claro said in a statement. He said the agency is also assessing options for extending contribution payment deadlines for employers and individual paying members, providing greater flexibility amid the current situation. “We recognize the hardships many Filipinos are enduring as we remain committed to protecting the welfare of our over 40 million members,” de Claro said. “We are expediting internal reviews and consultations with stakeholders to roll out these support initiatives as swiftly as possible, while safeguarding the long-term sustainability of the SSS fund,” he added. Mandated to provide social protection to private sector workers, self-employed individuals and overseas Filipino workers, the SSS said it is also actively pursuing digital initiatives to simplify administrative and implementation processes to reduce compliance burden and ensure the timely delivery of relief measures and services. The SSS assured the public that updates on these programs will be announced through official channels once finalized. Members and employers were encouraged to visit [www.sss.gov.ph](http://www.sss.gov.ph) or its official social media channels for the latest information on its programs.

- [Medialdea stable after fainting at Duterte birthday solidarity walk](#) (2026-03-29 16:03)

FORMER executive secretary Salvador Medialdea was reported to be in stable condition after he fainted during a solidarity walk held for former president Rodrigo Duterte’s 81st birthday on Saturday, March 28. Medialdea, 74, was delivering a speech at Rizal Park along San Pedro Street in Davao City when he suddenly stopped, appeared to lose his balance, and struggled to continue, prompting concern from the crowd. Emergency responders from Davao City Central 911 immediately assisted him. He was taken off the stage in a wheelchair and transported by ambulance to Davao Doctors Hospital. Organizers said Medialdea, who has a heart ailment, became emotional during his remarks. He was initially brought to the hospital for a routine checkup. A medical procedure for Medialdea was scheduled for Sunday, March 29, with attending physicians reporting that he remained in stable condition. Medialdea, a close ally of Duterte, served as executive secretary during the former president’s administration and had accompanied him during his arrest and initial appearance before the International Criminal Court in March 2025. The solidarity walk drew several supporters and followed a route from Roxas Avenue through C.M. Recto Street to San Pedro Street in Davao.

- [Tulfo pushes work from home, ride-sharing](#) (2026-03-29 16:02)

SEN. Erwin Tulfo raised the need to bring back the work-from-home (WFH) setup for the private and government sectors amid the continuous rise in fuel prices triggered by the Middle East war. He said that his proposal was implemented during the pandemic and was proven effective. “If a worker’s physical presence or activity is not required at the workplace, why not just have them report online?” Tulfo asked. “For instance, those in office roles like planning, research, admin, customer service, and other similar jobs can work from home,” he said on Sunday. Even medical consultations and checkups were done online by doctors during the pandemic, he added. “Why not do it again now?” “And if physical presence is required, such as in manufacturing, hotels, restaurants, or hospitals, colleagues can carpool in one vehicle and split the gas costs,” Tulfo said in a statement. The senator also suggested that officemates could book through ride-hailing apps and share the fare. “I’ve noticed that the number of stranded passengers on the streets seems to be increasing these days because fewer PUVs (public utility vehicles) are operating due to the high cost of fuel,” he said. “With these steps that we have tried before, workers will be able to save,” Tulfo said. Sen. Joel Villanueva earlier sought the expansion of WFH arrangements to reduce fuel consumption and shield Filipinos from the effects of rising oil prices. He urged the government and the private sector to adopt other flexible work schemes to address possible fare hike. Villanueva, author of Republic Act 11165 or the Work-From-Home law, said the measure provides a ready policy framework that can be maximized to lessen commuting at a time when global oil prices are climbing due to geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. Signed into law in 2018, the law institutionalized work-from-home arrangements in the private sector, allowing employees to perform their duties from alternative workplaces using telecommunications and digital technology. He said that aside from work from home schemes, both the government and the private sector could also adopt other alternative work arrangements that reduce commuting demand, such as hybrid work setups, compressed workweeks, staggered working hours, and flexible schedules. “These alternative work arrangements can help decongest our roads, lower fuel consumption, and allow workers to save on transportation costs,” Villanueva said in a statement.

- ['Unbundling hospital charges a step backward'](#) (2026-03-29 16:01)

A health reform advocate criticized the proposal of the Department of Health (DoH) to unbundle hospital charges, calling it “a step backward.” The proposal comes after the DOH reacted to the Private Hospitals Association of the Philippines Inc. (PHAPI) floating the idea of implementing a five percent increase in hospital fees as costs of fuel and basic commodities increase. DoH Spokesman Albert Domingo called for a breakdown of hospital charges to provide greater transparency. He said unbundling costs like room rates, electricity, fuel, and staff salaries would allow the public to understand how healthcare prices are affected by the rising oil prices. “It’s time to ‘unbundle’ or ‘break down’ the charges of hospitals and health facilities. Don’t just say ‘room rate’ —how much is charged for electricity? For gasoline/diesel? For nurses’ salaries?” Domingo said. Dr. Tony Leachon told The Manila Times on Sunday the DoH’s proposal would erode the integration, equity, and universality that the

Universal Health Care (UHC) Law and the Sin Tax Law were meant to achieve. “The Sin Tax Law and the Universal Health Care Law were never meant to stand alone. They were conceived as twin pillars of reform—one raising resources from harmful consumption, the other ensuring those resources translate into accessible, equitable health services. To unbundle them is not innovation; it is a betrayal of their essence,” he said. Aside from the fragmentation, Leachon argued that bundling hospital charges ensures solidarity, where wealthier individuals contribute more while the poorer population benefits. He said unbundling risks creates inequality by removing this balance. Healthcare should not be treated as a commodity to be broken into pieces, but as a fundamental right that must be guaranteed for all Filipinos, he said. “Unbundling is not progress—it is a step backward,” Leachon said. He called on policymakers to resist the proposal and instead focus on strengthening the integration of the Sin Tax and UHC laws.

- [Palace touts public-private ‘synergy’ in boosting energy security](#) (2026-03-29 16:01)

MALACAÑANG on Sunday gave assurances the country’s energy security is steadily stabilizing despite the global oil crisis triggered by the war in the Middle East. In a statement, Executive Secretary Ralph Recto said the “synergy of public-private efforts,” spearheaded by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., is now “bearing fruits that guarantee energy security” as the government addresses the effects “of a crisis not of its own making.” Recto cited, among others, the commitment of oil firms to provide a steady supply of oil and petroleum products despite the volatility in the international market. One such company is Petron Corp., which sourced its supply from both traditional and alternative sources. Last week, its procurement of more than 700,000 barrels of Russian crude oil was delivered. “Meanwhile, the oil diplomacy ably conducted by energy officials led by (Department of Energy) Secretary Sharon Garin has resulted in the firm order of 1.04 million barrels of diesel, with the first batch arriving this week. From Indonesia also comes the ironclad guarantee of a steady supply of coal. The news that new wells of Malampaya will go on stream by the last quarter of this year further boosts our energy security,” he said. “Believing that these gains will be sustained, we fully back the efforts of Petron, Seaoil, other oil companies, the DOE (Department of Energy), and PNOC (Philippine National Oil Company) to keep the supply lines flowing so the economy is powered up, the country running, and our lives minimally disrupted,” Recto said. He pointed to the recently signed Republic Act 12316 which grants the president the authority to suspend or reduce excise taxes on fuel as another mitigating measure to cushion the impact of skyrocketing pump prices. These initiatives, however, “will all be for naught” if not felt by the people, Recto said. Government assistance, such as fuel subsidies and discounted rides and toll fees, has been rolled out to ease the burden of vulnerable sectors. Around 250,000 public transport drivers — bus, jeepney, tricycle, and transport network vehicle service (TNVS) — have benefited from the financial aid. Farmers and fisherfolk will also receive assistance to prevent fuel costs from driving up food prices. The government’s vehicle fleet, except those used for public safety and health services, “has been put on a strict gas diet,” Recto said.

- [Caloocan extends free legal aid to 29 women PDLs](#) (2026-03-29 16:01)

TWENTY-NINE women who are currently detained at the custodial facility of the Caloocan Police became the beneficiaries of the free legal services from the city's legal department, Mayor Dave Gonzalo Malapitan said on Sunday. Malapitan told The Manila Times via Viber that the initiative was part of the local government's activities to mark International Women's Month. He said the city government provided legal advice and assistance to the women PDLs in connection with the criminal cases filed against them in various trial courts in the city. The city chief executive said the project, led by the city's Legal Department and Social Welfare and Development Office, is a regular undertaking to make services more accessible even to the most vulnerable sectors of the community. Also, the mayor said that his administration remains committed to upholding justice and the rule of law, adding that, "the rights of people, especially those under preventive custody, must be given the highest level of respect." He further said the local government is maximizing its resources to address crime incidents, which have been declining since early last year due to enhanced police visibility and law enforcers' prompt response to emergencies.

- [LTFRB steps up safety checks ahead of Holy Week exodus](#) (2026-03-29 10:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has begun intensified inspections of buses and public utility vehicles (PUVs) nationwide in preparation for the Holy Week travel surge. On Sunday, LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II ordered all regional directors to implement a nationwide roadworthiness inspection protocol. According to Mendoza, coordination with local government units (LGUs) and law enforcement agencies is critical to maximize road safety enforcement. "This is a yearly exodus, and we expect more people and vehicles on the road traveling to the provinces for religious activities, vacations, and other purposes," Mendoza said. "Our goal is to ensure the safety of commuters and other road users by verifying the roadworthiness of buses and PUVs, as well as the physical and mental readiness of drivers." He also emphasized the need for terminal operators to comply with regulations that safeguard passenger safety and comfort. The LTFRB has already intensified inspections of PUV terminals following complaints about dilapidated facilities. Hundreds of terminal owners and operators have been issued show-cause orders or notices of violation, and some facilities have been temporarily closed for serious safety breaches. "Aside from the safety of PUVs on the road, we also have to make sure passengers are comfortable and treated well inside the terminals," Mendoza said. "There must be no excuses—violators should be called out and required to explain why they should not be penalized." Millions of Filipinos are expected to travel to the provinces during the Holy Week break. Police forces have begun mobilization, and the LTFRB is coordinating closely to ensure the safety and comfort of all passengers.

- [NTC activates communications support program for Holy Week](#) (2026-03-29 08:54)

MANILA, Philippines — A nationwide public assistance operation program has been launched to ensure reliable and uninterrupted communications during the observance of Holy Week, the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) said on Sunday. The NTC said all its regional

offices (ROs) were instructed to collaborate with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, Civic Action Groups as well as Amateur Radio Groups. The ROs must also closely coordinate with local government units through their Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Offices to strengthen on-the-ground communication support and emergency response, according to the commission, a regulatory agency attached to the Department of Information and Communications Technology. To ensure the seamless operation of the communication support teams and further enhance readiness, the NTC said it would facilitate the swift issuance of temporary permits and licenses. It cited its importance especially as millions of Filipinos are expected to travel nationwide. “Telecommunications and broadcast entities are likewise enjoined to actively assist in the timely and accurate dissemination of public advisories,” the agency said. The NTC, which has the mandate to supervise, control and adjudicate all telecommunications services, among others, throughout the country, reaffirmed its commitment to public safety, consumer welfare, and dependable communications services throughout Holy Week.

- [P10B aid not enough — Pangilinan](#) (2026-03-29 06:27)

Erratum: When this story was first published it said that the aid was for 400 fishermen, it should be 400,000 fishermen. We apologize for this mistake. MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Francis Pangilinan over the weekend said the proposed P10 billion financial aid is not enough since it would only benefit four million farmers and 400,000 fishermen. The senator said over 10 million farmers and 2.5 million fishermen were affected by the mounting economic pressures caused by the Middle East war. He said the one-time ₱2,325 cash aid to concerned farm workers and fisherfolks would come from the Presidential Assistance to Farmers and Fisherfolk under the 2026 budget. About 15,000 fishermen would receive fuel assistance from the ₱150 million 2025 continuing appropriation, with ₱75 million each allotted to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and the Department of Agriculture (DA). He sought additional government support for the agriculture and fishery sectors reeling from the global oil price surge, which drive up the cost of transportation and fertilizers. The senator said the situation affects small-scale farmers and fishermen who are among the most vulnerable sectors in the country. Pangilinan raised the possibility of tapping other sources of funds, such as the DA’s quick response fund. He expressed willingness to pass measures to make these funds readily available.

- [Philippines, China start oil exploration talks](#) (2026-03-29 03:14)

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippines and China have made “initial exchanges” on a potential oil and gas exploration in the South China Sea, nearly four years since previous talks were terminated in 2022. The subject was raised at the just concluded Bilateral Consultative Mechanism (BCM) on South China Sea meeting in Fujian, China, on March 28. In a statement late Saturday, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said both sides took note of the progress made in other possible areas of cooperation to “increase confidence in the maritime domain,” including coast guard-to-coast guard communication and ocean meteorology. The two sides had “frank and thorough exchange of views” on the situation in the South China

Sea, where Manila “firmly reiterated” its position and raised concerns over China’s actions that have “disrupted lawful activities and posed risks at sea.” “The Philippines emphasized the need for diplomacy and communication for managing differences at sea, and upholding international law, particularly the 1982 UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea) and the 2016 South China Sea Arbitral Award,” the DFA said. The BCM was held back-to-back with the 24th Foreign Ministry Consultations (FMC), both led by Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Leo Herrera-Lim and Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong. At the FMC, Manila said it would handle all bilateral issues in line with the Philippine national interest, “while advancing mutually beneficial cooperation especially in the economic and people-to-people areas.” Both sides discussed the need to stabilize access to energy and fertilizers, as well as potential cooperation in green and renewable energy, trade, and agriculture, against the backdrop of current global developments, including the Middle East crisis. The DFA said both states identified reconvening of appropriate bilateral mechanisms as a necessary step. Also highlighted was improving two-way tourism, through visa-free arrangements, enhanced connectivity, and prospective new direct air routes. Meanwhile, Manila emphasized that it would play a “responsible and professional role” as chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations this year, especially on managing regional talks, upholding Asean centrality, and reinforcing a rules-based order. The DFA said the Philippines and China would convene a bilateral foreign ministers’ meeting “within the year,” following these latest talks.

- [Manhunt on for killers of five policemen](#) (2026-03-29 02:55)

COTABATO CITY – Police and military forces are tracking down gunmen who ambushed and killed five police officers and injured three others, including a police captain, on Saturday night in Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao del Sur. Police also condemned the attack against police officers who were returning to their barracks after peacekeeping operations in Shariff Aguak town. The victims were members of the 2nd Provincial Mobile Force Company of Maguindanao del Sur Police Provincial Office. “This deliberate and cowardly act against law enforcement officers will not be tolerated,” Brig. Gen. Jaysen de Guzman, BARMM police regional director, said in a statement Sunday. De Guzman said the Maguindanao del Sur police have launched intensified manhunt operations and are pursuing all leads to identify and arrest the perpetrators. “We assure the public that all necessary measures are being undertaken to bring those responsible to justice and hold them fully accountable,” he said. Capt. Guiseppe Tamayo, Maguindanao del Sur police provincial spokesman, said the police officers were en route to Camp Akilan, the provincial police headquarters, when they were ambushed by a group of gunmen in Barangay Poblacion Mother, Shariff Aguak, around 9:10 p.m. The five police officers were pronounced dead on arrival at the Bangsamoro Regional Medical Center in Datu Hoffer, Maguindanao del Sur. Three others remain in critical condition. Tamayo withheld their identities pending official information to their respective families. The Army’s 601st Infantry Battalion is joining the police manhunt in Shariff Aguak and nearby towns

- [Manila Water announces service disruption in parts of Metro Manila, Rizal](#) (2026-03-29 02:21)

MANILA, Philippines—The Manila Water Company (Manila Water) said some areas in Metro Manila and Rizal will have service interruptions due to maintenance and service improvement activities. From 9 p.m. on March 30 to 4 a.m. on March 31, portions of Barangay Mauway, Addition Hills, and Plainview in Mandaluyong City will experience service interruption due to the installation of a PVC valve along NCMH corner Road 10. On March 31, from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. on April 1, residents in Barangay Santolan, Pasig City will be affected by a temporary water interruption due to a zero pressure test along Evangelista Avenue up to the corner of Gabriel Street. During the same period, portions of Barangay Calzada in Taguig City, particularly along Lontoc and Virata streets, will experience service disruption due to step testing activities. Meanwhile, in Rizal province, parts of Barangay Manggahan in Rodriguez will have water interruption from 10 p.m. on April 6 to 4 a.m. on April 7 due to leak repair works along Millex Road. Also in Rizal, portions of Barangay San Roque in Antipolo City will be affected during the same period due to line meter replacement along Marigman Road. Manila Water advised affected residents to store enough water ahead of the scheduled activities and to flush their taps for a few minutes once water service resumes until it runs clear. The company added that customers may contact its hotline 1627 or its official social media pages for updates and concerns.

- [Some areas in Metro Manila, Cavite, Bulacan to have power interruptions due to maintenance works](#) (2026-03-29 01:52)

MANILA, Philippines—Several areas in Metro Manila, Cavite and Bulacan provinces will have power interruptions from March 30 to April 1 due to maintenance and upgrading works, Meralco said Sunday. On March 30, portions of Alapan–Bucandala Road and Alapan II-B Road in Barangay Alapan II-B, Imus City, Cavite will have no electricity from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. because of the relocation of facilities for a government road project. Also on March 30, parts of Fidela Soriano Street and areas in Barangay Hulong Duhat, Malabon City will experience power interruption from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. due to replacement of facilities. In Bulacan, portions of several barangay in Paombong and Hagonoy, including Binakod, Masukol, San Jose, San Roque, Sta. Cruz, Pugad, and Tibaguin, will be without power from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. because of pole replacement works. In Makati City, parts of San Miguel Village in Barangay Poblacion, particularly along F. Zobel and nearby streets, will have no power from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. due to the installation of facilities. On March 31, portions of Eulogio Amang Rodriguez Avenue and nearby streets in Barangay Manggahan, Santolan, and Dela Paz in Pasig City will have outages between 12:01 a.m. and 12:30 a.m. and again from 4:30 a.m. to 5 a.m. due to line reconductoring and facility replacement. Also in Pasig, parts of Ortigas Avenue and nearby areas in Barangay Ugong will be without power from 11 p.m. on March 31 to 12 a.m. on April 1 due to line reconstruction works. In Muntinlupa City, portions of Montillano Street, M. L. Quezon Avenue, and surrounding residential areas in Barangay Alabang and Cupang will have power interruption from 11 p.m. on March 31 to 4 a.m. on April 1 due to line reconductoring and

relocation of facilities along the Philippine National Railways (PNR) tracks. In Manila, particularly in Tondo, parts of Tuazon and Morga streets and nearby areas will be without electricity from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on March 31 due to line reconstruction works. Also on March 31, portions of Upl-i-Palulum Road and nearby areas in Alfonso, Cavite will have power interruption from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the installation of primary line facilities.

- [Iran-backed Houthis enter the month-old war and could further threaten global shipping](#) (2026-03-29 00:48)

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iranian-backed Houthi rebels entered the month-old war in the Middle East on Saturday, claiming two missile launches at Israel. About 2,500 U.S. Marines arrived in the region. And Pakistan's government said that regional powers plan to meet Sunday to discuss how to end the fighting. The war has threatened global supplies of oil and natural gas, sparked fertilizer shortages and disrupted air travel. Iran's grip on the strategic Strait of Hormuz has shaken markets and prices. The United States and Israel continue to strike Iran, whose retaliatory attacks have targeted Israel and neighboring Gulf Arab states. More than 3,000 people have been killed. The Houthis' entry could further hurt global shipping if they again target vessels in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait off the Red Sea, through which about 12% of the world's trade typically passes. There could be limited relief after Iran on Friday agreed to allow humanitarian aid and agricultural shipments through the Strait of Hormuz following a United Nations request. U.S. President Donald Trump, meanwhile, has given Iran until April 6 to reopen the strait. Witnesses in Tehran reported heavy strikes late Saturday. Israel's military earlier said that it targeted Iran's naval weapons production facilities, and said that it would finish attacking essential weapons production sites within "a few days." Iran fired missiles toward Israel, while air defenses early Sunday intercepted missiles and drones across Gulf countries. The U.S. said that it has struck more than 11,000 Iranian targets in the war. And Ukraine's president visited Gulf nations as his country offers defense help with drones. Houthi involvement sparks concerns Houthi Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree said on the rebels' Al-Masirah satellite television station that they launched missiles toward "sensitive Israeli military sites" in the south. If the Houthis increase attacks on commercial shipping, as they have in the past, it would further push up oil prices and destabilize "all of maritime security," said Ahmed Nagi, a senior Yemen analyst at the International Crisis Group. "The impact would not be limited to the energy market." The Bab el-Mandeb, at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, is crucial for vessels heading to the Suez Canal through the Red Sea. Saudi Arabia has been sending millions of barrels of crude oil a day through it because the Strait of Hormuz is effectively closed. Houthi rebels attacked more than 100 merchant vessels with missiles and drones, sinking two vessels, between November 2023 and January 2025, saying that it was acting in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza during the Israel-Hamas war. The Houthis' latest involvement would complicate the deployment of the USS Gerald R. Ford, the aircraft carrier that arrived in Croatia on Saturday for maintenance. Sending it to the Red Sea could draw attacks similar to those on the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower in 2024 and the USS Harry S. Truman in 2025. The Houthis have held Yemen's capital, Sanaa, since 2014. Saudi Arabia launched a war against the Houthis on behalf of Yemen's exiled

government in 2015, and they now have an uneasy ceasefire. Diplomacy attempts as U.S. beefs up troop numbersPakistan said that Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Egypt will send top diplomats to Islamabad for talks aimed at ending the war, arriving Sunday for a two-day visit. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that he and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian held "extensive discussions" on regional hostilities. But Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told his Turkish counterpart by phone that Tehran was skeptical about recent diplomatic efforts. Iranian state-run media said that Araghchi accused the United States of making "unreasonable demands" and exhibiting "contradictory actions." Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar later spoke with Araghchi and urged "an end to all attacks and hostilities." Trump envoy Steve Witkoff has said that Washington delivered a 15-point "action list" to Iran for a possible ceasefire, with a proposal to restrict Iran's nuclear program — the issue at the heart of tensions with the U.S. and Israel — and reopen the Strait of Hormuz. Tehran rejected it and presented a five-point proposal that included reparations and recognition of its sovereignty over the waterway. Meanwhile, U.S. ships with around 2,500 Marines trained in amphibious landings have arrived, adding to the largest American force in the region in more than two decades. And at least 1,000 paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division, trained to land in hostile territory to secure key positions and airfields, have been ordered to the Middle East. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said that Washington "can achieve all of our objectives without ground troops." U.S. troops wounded at Saudi base More than two dozen U.S. troops have been wounded in Iranian attacks on Saudi Arabia's Prince Sultan Air Base in the past week, according to two people briefed on the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to comment publicly. Iran fired six ballistic missiles and 29 drones at the base Friday, injuring at least 15 troops, five of them seriously, they said. The base, about 96 kilometers (60 miles) from the Saudi capital Riyadh, was attacked twice earlier in the week, including a strike that wounded 14 U.S. troops, according to the people briefed on the matter. More than 300 U.S. service members have been wounded in the war. At least 13 have been reported killed. Death toll climbs Iranian authorities say more than 1,900 people have been killed in the Islamic Republic, while 19 have been reported dead in Israel. In Lebanon, where Israel has started an invasion in the south while targeting the Hezbollah militant group, officials said that more than 1,100 people in the country have been killed since the start of the war. In Iraq, where Iranian-supported militia groups have entered the conflict, 80 members of the security forces have died. In Gulf states, 20 people have been killed. Four have been killed in the occupied West Bank.

- [Oil spill deals economic blow to fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico](#) (2026-03-29 00:40)

VERACRUZ, Mexico — Every year, fish markets in the seaside Mexican city of Veracruz flood with a crush of customers in the lead up to Holy Week. This year, they were virtually empty. That's because a huge oil spill off the Gulf of Mexico has spread more than 373 miles (600 kilometers) across the ocean and seeped into seven nature reserves. Mexicans who have worked in Veracruz's booming fishing industry for years say they've been dealt a blow at one of the busiest times of the year. Markets usually jammed with customers were desolate on Friday,

with some vendors loudly promoting their products in a desperate attempt to attract customers. Fishing has declined off the coasts of the seaside states of Veracruz, Tabasco and Tamaulipas since the spill. "This is our livelihood," said a worried Miguel López Rojas, owner of one of the fish stalls in the popular market. Authorities in the country said that the spill originated from a vessel anchored off the coast of the port city of Coatzacoalcos in Veracruz state and two "natural seepages." The government estimates that about 430 tons of hydrocarbons have been collected along the coasts of the three Mexican states, but have ruled out severe environmental damage from the spill. Despite that, reports and images have been circulated by local media of dead turtles, eels and fish washing up on Mexican beaches and floating near shorelines. López Rojas said that the oil spill hasn't only caused a dramatic drop in fish supplies, but also a decline in purchases, as consumers are avoiding the product. Amid public concern, federal health authorities have denied any reports of illnesses linked to consuming fish or seafood because of possible contamination. But concern nonetheless has circulated across the country. Susana Gutiérrez, a 67-year-old seamstress, said from a market in Mexico City that "you have to be careful with the pollution because we still don't know what this spill could lead to." As federal and state authorities intensify efforts to contain the spill and clean up beaches, fishermen have also struggled to make ends meet as they have been forced to almost completely halt fishing to prevent boat engines and nets from being contaminated with oil, effectively losing their main source of income. "This year has been very disastrous for us, because in all my years of life we had never experienced something of this magnitude," said Norma González Pérez, a fisherwoman from the town of Salinas in southwestern Veracruz. Veracruz is one of Mexico's main fish producers. In 2024, the eastern state generated about 2.76% of the country's fish, oyster and seafood production, according to official figures. Fish are an essential component to many of the state's traditional plates. Authorities haven't yet provided an estimate of how many fishermen have been affected by the spill, but activists say it could be several hundred. González Pérez said things have become so bad for some fishermen that they have had to resort to bank loans. Holy Week, once a festive season for them marked by an abundance because of an annual fish migration in the Gulf of Mexico, now feels a lot more grim, she said. "This year there will be no celebration or anything," González Pérez said. "This year we will basically have nothing."

- [Sailboats carrying aid reach Cuba after going missing](#) (2026-03-29 00:34)

HAVANA, Cuba — Two sailboats carrying humanitarian aid to crisis-hit Cuba reached Havana on Saturday after disappearing during a longer-than-expected journey from Mexico that triggered a search-and-rescue operation. The crew of nine -- who included American, French and German citizens and a four-year-old boy -- appeared in good health and spirits, smiling and giving thumbs-up as they moored in the capital under clear skies. The vessels delivered the final shipments of Our America Convoy, an international humanitarian effort that has brought aid to support Cuba as a US oil blockade deepens the island's energy and economic crisis. "We are very sorry to make people worried about us. We were never in any real danger," Adnaan Stumo, a 33-year-old American and coordinator of the sailing convoy, told reporters. "It was not a very

difficult journey. It's just a circuitous journey," Stumo said. The boy, he said, "is a strong, young sailor." "We're so happy to bring a crew from so many different countries that are demonstrating solidarity and support for the Cuban people in the face of this criminal blockade," Stumo said. The ships were greeted by scores of Cubans, including government officials, chanting "long live the revolution!" and "down with imperialism!" "They scared us a little because we kept wondering, 'when will they get here?'" Gerardo Hernandez, a former Cuban spy who served time in US prison, told the crowd. 'Not worried at all' The Friend Ship and Tiger Moth, which set sail from southeast Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula on March 20, had been expected to arrive in Cuba on Tuesday or Wednesday. But the Mexican Navy announced a search-and-rescue mission Thursday after losing communication with them, raising concerns about their fate. After a tense wait, organizers of the convoy reported early Saturday that the Mexican Navy had finally located the boats and that the crews were safe. The Navy said one of its aircraft had spotted the sailboats 80 nautical miles northwest of Havana. It then deployed a ship to support them. Stumo said the crews agreed to take a longer route north after facing strong winds from the east. Contact was lost with the Mexican Navy because the boat's small satellite link "was on the fritz." They reestablished contact with the Mexican Navy plane. "We were not worried at all," Stumo said, noting that arriving on schedule is never a sure thing on sailboats. "We are very thankful that the Mexican Navy came out and looked for us last night." The sailboats brought medicine, food, hygiene products and other supplies. 'Cuba is next' The first shipments from the convoy arrived by plane from Europe and the United States last week. A fishing boat that was converted into an aid vessel, which had also left Mexico last week, arrived in Cuba on Tuesday. It had been escorted by a Mexican Navy ship part of the way. In total, the convoy brought more than 50 tonnes of medical supplies, food, water and solar panels to Cuba, with hospitals among the recipients. Cuban exiles in Miami and other critics have slammed the convoy as benefiting the communist government more than ordinary people. US President Donald Trump imposed a de facto oil blockade on Cuba in January after US forces seized Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro, whose government had been Cuba's principal source of fuel. Trump has also threatened tariffs on countries that ship oil to Cuba, whose aging electricity system has been hit by regular blackouts, including two nationwide outages last week. He renewed his threats on Havana on Friday, even as the US-Israeli war against Iran entered its second month, saying "Cuba is next."

- [Iran Guards threaten to hit US universities in Mideast](#) (2026-03-29 00:30)

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's Revolutionary Guard on Sunday threatened to target US universities in the Middle East after saying US-Israeli strikes had destroyed two Iranian universities. "If the US government wants its universities in the region to be free from retaliation... it must condemn the bombing of the universities in an official statement by 12 noon on Monday, March 30, Tehran time," said the statement published by Iranian media. The statement added: "We advise all employees, professors, and students of American universities in the region and residents of their surrounding areas" stay a kilometre away from campuses. Several US universities have campuses scattered throughout the Gulf region, such as Texas A&M University in Qatar and

New York University in the United Arab Emirates.Strikes overnight Friday to Saturday hit Tehran, including the university of science and technology in the northeast of the capital, damag

- [Lebanon kids struggle to keep up studies as war slams school doors shut](#) (2026-03-29 00:26)

BEIRUT, Lebanon — In a classroom turned shelter for displaced families, teenager Ahmad Melhem follows a recorded lesson on a tablet as the war between Hezbollah and Israel interrupts education for hundreds of thousands of students in Lebanon."I don't want to regret not finishing my studies despite the difficult circumstances," said Melhem, whose family was displaced from Beirut's southern suburbs, the site of repeated Israeli bombardment."We took a risk and went back to get schoolbooks," he told AFP."We're trying with everything we have to continue our education so we can achieve our goals," said the 17-year-old, who hopes to study engineering after finishing high school.Crisis-hit Lebanon was pulled into the Middle East war on March 2 when militant group Hezbollah fired rockets towards Israel to avenge the US-Israeli killing of Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.Israel has responded with large-scale strikes on Lebanon and a ground offensive in the country's south, killing more than 1,100 people -- including 122 children -- and displacing more than one million people, according to authorities.The United Nations children's agency UNICEF says the war has left almost half a million students out of school in Lebanon, after more than 350 public schools were turned into shelters and many in areas under Israeli bombardment were closed.Melhem's family and others are sharing a classroom divided up by plastic curtains at a school in a central Beirut district, the room scattered with thin mattresses and blankets, a table and small stove serving as a shared kitchen. 'Digital divide' In the corner, Melhem has set up his books and a computer screen, but there is no internet in the room.An NGO has provided internet access in the schoolyard, crowded with children playing and families socialising, but Melhem says he cannot concentrate because of the noise, so he watches the recorded classes later.His private school resumed distance learning two weeks after the war began, after cancelling subjects and shortening lessons."In-person (class) is better and more engaging," he said. "I miss group work and the science projects we used to do."According to a 2023 World Bank report, each day of public school closures costs the Lebanese economy three million dollars.In the courtyard, Melhem's mother helps her other son, aged eight, to follow his online classes."If I leave him alone, his mind wanders and he can't keep up with the lesson," says Salameh, 41."The war has destroyed everything," she added."Education is the only thing left for my children."UNICEF's head of education in Lebanon, Atif Rafique, expressed particular concern about the future of students who are preparing to enter university while the war continues.He warned of the dangers of children dropping out of school, especially "girls and adolescent young women" who face additional risks, including early marriage. 'Not even pens' In Dekwaneh, north of Beirut, at a vocational institute that is now a shelter, Aya Zahran said she spends her day "preparing food and working to make the place livable"."We have only one phone that my siblings and I share," said Zahran, 17, who is also displaced from Beirut's southern suburbs.But "the link the school sent us (for online classes) doesn't work", she said.Rafique said hundreds of public schools lack

the resources for distance learning, and noted a "big digital divide" when it comes to internet access, with teachers also affected. UNICEF has helped launch an online platform with recorded lessons, and a hotline allowing students to access materials through a phone call, without needing internet access. He said children in south Lebanon have been disproportionately affected by education interruptions since the last round of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah broke out in October 2023. Just a week before the latest war began, UNICEF reopened 30 schools in the south that had been damaged in the previous conflict, he said. At the vocational institute's entrance, an education ministry employee was registering children to assess what educational services they need. "The situation here is very difficult... there's no internet here, and not even pens," said Nasima Ismail, who has been displaced from the northeast Bekaa region, as she signed up her children. "My children are top students. I don't want them to miss out on their education, as happened to us when we were kids," said Ismail, recalling Lebanon's devastating 1975-1990 civil war. "I want them to complete their education, even if we are left with nothing," she said. "I wish them days better than ours."

- [Clear, sunny skies expected over next 5 days in PH \(2026-03-28 23:43\)](#)

MANILA, Philippines – The entire archipelago could expect clear and sunny skies at least over the next five days due to the easterlies – warm, humid winds that pass through the Pacific Ocean – the state-run weather bureau said on Sunday. Weather specialist Veronica Torres of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said, however, that localized thunderstorms would be experienced especially from late afternoon or at night. She said that Pagasa has not monitored any weather disturbance forming in or outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility in the coming days. Still, the national weather agency has said that zero to one tropical cyclone could occur this month. In particular, the easterlies would bring partly cloudy to overcast skies, isolated rain showers or thunderstorms over Metro Manila and the rest of the country within the next 24 hours, she added. As temperatures rise, particularly from late morning until mid-afternoon, Pagasa advised the public to limit outdoor activity, especially when the sun's heat is at its peak, wear light-colored clothing, use sun protection like umbrellas and hats, and stay hydrated.

- [Gatchalian Highlights Camago-3 Development Amid Malampaya Decline \(2026-03-28 16:48\)](#)

SEN. Sherwin Gatchalian said on Saturday that ongoing drilling activities at the Camago-3 gas well are a potential boost to the country's energy security amid rising global fuel prices. "While it may take time before this translates into actual supply and lower prices, it represents a much-needed light at the end of the tunnel," Gatchalian said. The Camago-3 well is part of the Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power Project, a critical energy asset that supplies a significant portion of Luzon's electricity requirements. The project has long been central to the Philippines' efforts to reduce dependence on imported fuel and stabilize power generation costs. Energy analysts say new drilling activities are crucial as existing reserves in the Malampaya field continue to decline, raising concerns over future supply shortages and

potential spikes in electricity prices. Gatchalian emphasized that the Camago-3 development highlights the urgent need for sustained exploration and increased investment in the country's energy sector." This underscores the importance of ensuring sufficient supply and improving affordability through continued investment in our energy sector," the senator said. The Philippines is heavily reliant on imported oil and coal, making it vulnerable to global price fluctuations and external shocks. Recent increases in fuel costs have contributed to inflationary pressures, affecting transportation fares, food prices and electricity rates nationwide. Gatchalian has been among lawmakers pushing for a diversified energy mix that includes natural gas, renewable energy and other indigenous sources to enhance long-term energy resilience. The Department of Energy has yet to release a definitive timeline on when output from Camago-3 could begin contributing to the national grid, as testing and validation activities remain ongoing.

- [Missiles, drones rain on Gulf states, Israel](#) (2026-03-28 16:15)

TEHRAN — Gulf countries and Israel came under missile fire and Israeli forces struck Iran on Saturday, as the war raged into its second month. In a sign that the conflict may be expanding further, Israel's military said air defenses responded to a missile launched from Yemen — the first since the start of the war on Feb. 28, and after threats from Iran's Houthi allies to launch attacks. The war began when the United States and Israel launched airstrikes across Iran, killing supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and more than a thousand civilians, sending shockwaves across the globe. A month later, the conflict showed no sign of ending, with Israel announcing fresh strikes on Tehran, where an AFP journalist saw 10 intense blasts and a plume of black smoke. Emirati authorities said debris from a successful missile interception started fires at an Abu Dhabi industrial zone, injuring five Indian nationals. Saudi Arabia said it had intercepted a missile and several drones, and Bahrain said a blaze caused by the "Iranian aggression" had been brought under control. In Israel, repeated air raid sirens sent people to shelters, including in Tel Aviv, where one man was killed, and two others were wounded, and in the country's north, where media reported a simultaneous attack from Iran and its Lebanese ally Hezbollah. An Iranian missile and drone attack on the Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia wounded at least 12 American soldiers, two of them seriously, according to The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal, citing unidentified officials. US President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff said Friday he believes Iran would hold talks with Washington "this week, we're certainly hopeful for it." Hormuz Strait closed to 'enemies' One major issue has been the near-closure of the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz, which has sent markets into turmoil and pushed oil prices to levels not seen since the start of the war in Ukraine. Iran's Revolutionary Guards said Friday they had turned back three ships trying to transit the Strait of Hormuz, adding the route was closed to vessels traveling to and from ports linked to its "enemies." "This morning, following the lies of the corrupt US president claiming that the Strait of Hormuz was open, three container ships of different nationalities... were turned back after a warning from the IRGC Navy," the Guards said on their Sepah News website. "The movement of any vessel 'to and from' ports of origin belonging to allies and supporters of the

Zionist-American enemies, to any destination and through any corridor, is prohibited," it added. The move raises fresh doubt about which vessels are able to transit the strategic waterway, which is a conduit for a fifth of world oil and gas supplies in normal times, as well as other vital products. A total of 34 ships have been approved by Iran to transit the strait recently, using a route around Larak Island just off the country's coast, according to analysts at leading shipping journal Lloyd's List — which dubs the system the "Tehran toll booth." Most were Greek- and Chinese-owned, as well as other Indian-, Pakistani- and Syrian-owned vessels, the journal said. Energy market intelligence firm Kpler said it identified two container ships belonging to Chinese firm Cosco that had attempted to cross the strait on Friday but had turned around. The developments "suggest the situation remains highly unstable," Kpler data analyst Rebecca Gerdes said in a statement. Thailand, meanwhile, said it has reached an agreement with Iran. "An agreement has been reached to allow Thai oil tankers to transit safely through the Strait of Hormuz," Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said at a press conference, adding the development would alleviate concerns over fuel imports. "With this agreement in place, there is greater confidence that disruptions like those seen in early March will not recur," he added. More than 80 percent of the crude oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) that passes through the Strait of Hormuz heads to Asia, according to the US Energy Information Administration. Much of Southeast Asia is bearing the brunt of fuel supply difficulties, and long lines at gasoline stations in Thailand have become increasingly frequent. In Manila, Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian called on the government to initiate negotiations with Tehran. "In light of the ongoing surge in the price of petroleum products, which has already caused significant disruptions on the domestic front, I strongly urge the executive department to engage in high-level discussions with Iran to secure safe passage of Philippine-bound oil vessels through the Strait of Hormuz and ensure they are recognized as neutral entities," Gatchalian said. "Dangerous to the world" Trump reiterated his disappointment with NATO allies over their refusal to help secure the Strait of Hormuz, after US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said he had won G7 support to oppose Iran's attempts to impose a toll on the key sea lane for Gulf oil and gas exports. "It's unacceptable, it's dangerous to the world, and it's important that the world have a plan to confront it," said Rubio, who joined a meeting of G7 foreign ministers in France. The G7 ministers expressed the "absolute necessity to permanently restore safe and toll-free freedom of navigation" in the waterway and called for "an immediate cessation of attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure." Rubio declared that Washington expects its military campaign to prove victorious within weeks. "When we are done with them here in the next couple of weeks, they will be weaker than they've been in recent history," he told reporters. Iran had sent "messages" to the American side but had not formally responded to the 15-point plan, Rubio said. While Trump has extended his deadline for Tehran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz or face attacks on energy assets to April 6, Iranian media reported strikes on Friday on three Iranian nuclear facilities and two steel plants, with officials saying there was no radioactive release. Israel confirmed it had struck the Khondab heavy water complex and a uranium processing plant in Ardakan, while the UN nuclear watchdog said Iran had informed it of another strike on the Bushehr nuclear power plant. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi threatened retaliation "for Israeli crimes" in a post on X, saying the attacks contradicted

Trump's "extended deadline for diplomacy." Israel's military reported at least five rounds of Iranian missile fire within just over five hours, and a statement early Saturday said Israeli forces were "striking Iranian terror regime targets across Tehran." "Fingers on the trigger" Trump, swinging between threats of obliteration and optimistic talk of dealmaking, has insisted the Islamic Republic wants to "make a deal." Iran's Revolutionary Guards warned they would strike industrial sites across the region, having earlier issued similar warnings for US military bases and hotels hosting American troops. Iranian strikes have shattered the Gulf's reputation for stability, hitting Dubai's airport, Bahrain's capital, and energy facilities across the region during the course of the war. Yemen's Houthi rebels, which did not immediately comment on the missile fire reported by Israel, had warned on Friday they would join the war if US-Israeli attacks on ally Iran continued or if more countries joined the conflict. The Houthis have in the past attacked shipping in the Red Sea in response to regional conflicts, but had so far not intervened in the latest war. "We affirm that our fingers are on the trigger for direct military intervention," the group said in a statement. Tehran also called for an end to US and Israeli attacks on aligned regional groups — a reference to Hezbollah, among others, Tasnim reported. Lebanon was drawn into the war after Hezbollah fired rockets at Israel on March 2. Israel renewed strikes on Beirut's southern suburbs Friday, saying it was targeting Hezbollah infrastructure. The UN refugee agency warned Lebanon faced a deepening humanitarian crisis, risking catastrophe, with over a million people displaced. AFP TV footage showed smoke rising from the Beirut suburbs, a Hezbollah stronghold largely emptied after previous Israeli evacuation warnings and heavy strikes. Red Sea threat Trump said Thursday that Iran had allowed 10 oil tankers to pass through the Strait of Hormuz as a "present" to show it was serious about negotiations to end the war. But a senior analyst at Lloyd's List, Bridget Diakun, said, "We don't see that. Unless he's talking about the ships that are in the shadow fleet... I have no idea what he's talking about." The US and Iran have been exchanging proposals this week to end the conflict via intermediary Pakistan, but no direct talks have been confirmed. Some analysts believe the discussions are doomed to fail, or could be a smokescreen for Trump as he prepares a ground offensive to reopen the strait by force or seize Iranian oil assets. Thousands of US paratroopers and extra Marines are heading to the region.

- [Japan approves subway, Mindanao highway loans](#) (2026-03-28 16:14)

JAPAN and the Philippines signed on Friday fresh loans for the Metro Manila Subway and Cagayan de Oro-Malaybalay Highway projects. In a ceremony in Pasay City, Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro and Japanese Ambassador to the Philippines Endo Kazuya exchanged notes on the release of P85.45 billion for the two infrastructure projects. The fourth tranche loan for Phase 1 of the Metro Manila Subway Project (MMSP 1) amounts to 220 billion Japanese yen or about P84.81 billion, while the Central Mindanao Highway program amounts to 1.672 billion Japanese yen or about P644 million. The MMSP 1 covers the construction of a 27.5 km subway line from Valenzuela to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3, traversing Bicutan. The phase involves the installation of a 33.1-km electromechanical system; physical integration with the North-South Commuter Railway (NSCR) System, particularly the

Food Terminal Inc. (FTI) to Bicutan segment; construction of a depot and 17 stations; and the procurement of 30 train sets. Once completed, the subway is expected to significantly ease traffic congestion in Metro Manila and cut travel times across the capital region. “Supporting the Philippines’ development is not only vital for the country itself but also for the stability and prosperity of the wider region,” Endo said. “Japan remains firmly committed to continuing its cooperation. While our security cooperation is growing rapidly, development cooperation remains the cornerstone of Japan-Philippines relationship.” Lazaro thanked Japan for its continued support for infrastructure development in the country, saying the two projects — both key programs under the Build Better More of the Marcos administration — signal the government’ s push to “make progress felt by our people.” “Growth must be both efficient and inclusive. We must ease congestion and improve integration where economic activity is concentrated and strengthen connectivity in areas where potential is still being unlocked,” she said. The second loan, meanwhile, covers the financing of engineering services for the highway section connecting Cagayan de Oro and Malaybalay to reduce travel time from 6.5 hours to 3.5 hours. The Central Mindanao High Standard Highway project, to be implemented from 2026 to 2034, will construct about 64.7 km of road with four lanes, traversing Tagoloan and Cagayan de Oro in Misamis Oriental, as well as Manolo Fortich, Sumilao, Impasugong, and Malaybalay in Bukidnon. Strengthening relations It will also cover the construction of 47 bridges, including nine special long-span bridges, each with main spans exceeding 100 meters. Lazaro emphasized that the agreements reflect the enduring partnership between Manila and Tokyo. “These projects build on the strong foundation of our existing cooperation with Japan and reflect our shared commitment to ensuring that progress in connectivity is both efficient and inclusive,” she said. Japan remains one of the Philippines’ top development partners, particularly in infrastructure financing through JICA, with ongoing support for railways, roads and disaster resilience projects across the country.

- [Carpio returns to Pag-asa Island after 14 years](#) (2026-03-28 16:13)

RETIRED Associate Justice Antonio Carpio returned to Pag-asa Island on Saturday for the first time since 2012, when the Philippines was preparing its arbitration case against China over competing claims in the West Philippine Sea. Carpio traveled to Pag-asa Island to attend the groundbreaking ceremony for what will be the first Roman Catholic Church on the island, a project aimed at supporting both civilian residents and government personnel stationed in the area. “Many things have changed here. It looks better now,” said Carpio, who is widely regarded as one of the “key architects” of the Philippines’ legal strategy against China’ s claims in the South China Sea. He was instrumental in advising the government to bring the dispute to an Unclos (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea) arbitral tribunal, and was part of the official Philippine delegation to the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague. Also present at the ceremony were Philippine Coast Guard spokesman for the West Philippine Sea Rear Admiral Jay Tarriela, Bishop Socrates Mesiona and Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff Executive Director Teodoro Matta. Mesiona presided over a Mass attended by residents of the island and led the groundbreaking rites for the church. The project

carries significance beyond its religious function, Tarriela said, describing it as a symbol of the community's enduring presence in the West Philippine Sea. "The primary objective of constructing this Roman Catholic Church on Pagasa Island is to fulfill and nurture the spiritual needs of our local residents, providing a sacred space where faith can flourish amid the threatening Chinese presence in the West Philippine Sea," Tarriela said. "Far more than a mere physical structure or architectural edifice, this church stands as a powerful symbol of hope, resilience and unity," he added. Tarriela said the initiative sends a clear message about the importance of the island to the country. "This endeavor underscores a profound truth: that Pagasa Island is unequivocally worth fighting for and defending. It sends a clear and enduring message that this island is not just a strategic outpost, but a living, breathing community deserving the protection from our government," he said.

- [Economists urge long-term solutions as peso weakens](#) (2026-03-28 16:12)

THE government should focus on long-term solutions such as diversifying energy sources and attracting more money from abroad, as the peso's recent slide drives up fuel and food costs for consumers, an economist said Saturday. Union Bank of the Philippines Chief Economist Ruben Carlo Asuncion told The Manila Times that the peso's recent depreciation was largely driven by "external shocks," particularly higher oil prices and a stronger US dollar amid the war in the Middle East, rather than domestic weakness. The economist said that a weaker peso "makes it more costly for the government to cushion fuel and food prices, as it amplifies imported inflation, even as remittances and exports provide some offset." "Policy should remain calibrated — allowing the exchange rate to act as a shock absorber while the BSP (Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas) smooths excessive volatility and fiscal support is kept targeted and temporary," Asuncion told The Times. "Over the medium term, energy diversification and stronger external inflows matter more than defending any specific peso level," he added. Robert Dan Roces, chief economist at Security Bank Corp., agreed that the peso was weakening mainly on global forces — strong dollar, higher oil, and risk aversion — "not a breakdown in local fundamentals." But he said that "it does make cushioning more costly: fuel imports, subsidies, and debt servicing all rise in peso terms." "The goal now is to smooth volatility, not defend a level — measured FX intervention, clear signaling, and tight policy coordination," Roces told The Times. "Ultimately, stability comes from fundamentals: keeping inflation anchored, fiscal discipline intact, and investor confidence steady," he added. Meanwhile, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. Chief Economist Michael Ricafort told The Times that the central bank's main focus remained on price stability, saying that smoothening exchange rate volatility was key to maintaining stable inflation. Since the Philippines is a net importer, he said, the government has also relied on non-monetary measures to cushion the impact of higher prices. Ricafort said that previous administrations used targeted subsidies as a way to reduce pass-through of higher prices and mitigate the inflationary effects while managing limited financial resources to prevent wider budget deficits and prevent incurring additional debt. "Consistency on stance on fuel taxes across different administrations and economic teams reflects fiscal discipline and prudence, based on calculated cost-benefit

analysis. Larger foregone government revenues amid limited financial resources and budget deficit would also benefit more the higher income brackets than the poor,” Ricafort said. “That is why targeted subsidies have been given to the hard-hit and most vulnerable sectors, such as the poorest of the poor, such as for the transport sector/PUV drivers, fisherfolk, and agricultural sectors, to also reduce or temper the need to pass higher prices of fuel to the general public,” he added. Economist Victor Andres Manhit, founder and chief executive officer of Stratbase, said consumers should take priority over farmers as the government responds to inflation worsened by global conflict, rising fuel costs, and higher food prices. “Are we here to protect the farmers? (Or) Are we here to protect the Filipino consumers?” Manhit said. He argued that farmers would still have buyers for their produce, while the more immediate problem facing the broader public is the high cost of living. Manhit said the inflation outlook for the rest of the year remains uncertain, with global tensions continuing to strain economies and drive up the cost of fuel, power and basic goods. He said the Philippines, unlike some countries, does not subsidize power or gasoline, leaving consumers more exposed to price shocks during crises. Manhit said inflation for Filipinos is largely driven by food, particularly rice and chicken, and argued that the government should revisit the value-added tax (VAT) and review tariffs on imported rice and corn to help ease the cost of living. He said lower tariffs on rice and corn could also help bring down the prices of poultry and meat, as corn is a key input in food production. Fuel prices in the country have surged past P100 per liter as the Philippines scrambles to look for alternative sources of oil and gas. Despite the spike in fuel costs, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. maintained that the overall situation remained under control and urged the public to refrain from panic buying or hoarding. On Friday, the president said the country has enough crude oil to last until June 30. This came after Malacañang confirmed that a shipment of more than 700,000 barrels of crude oil from Russia arrived recently. The shipment was reportedly bound for the refinery of Petron Corp. in Bataan, where it will be processed into petroleum products such as diesel and gasoline. The latest delivery signals renewed efforts by the government to import oil from Russia after a pause that began in 2022, following global market disruptions due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Speaking at the sidelines of the opening of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Expressway Phase II, Marcos said the Philippines has secured sufficient crude oil imports for the coming months to support domestic supply. “Because of that, we now have a supply of crude oil that is sufficient until June 30,” the president said. Marcos said the government would continue to look for additional suppliers to ensure long-term energy security. The president earlier said the country was looking to countries like Russia, Japan, China and South Korea. Marcos also recently issued Executive Order 110, declaring a state of national emergency, which will be in effect for one year unless sooner lifted or extended, the president said. He also signed a measure allowing the suspension of excise taxes on fuel, although its implementation will depend on global oil price trends and recommendations from the economic cluster. Excise taxes may be suspended if global crude oil prices exceed \$80 per barrel for at least one month. CATHERINE VALENTE, JAMES DANIEL DANIO

- [Catholics mark Palm Sunday, begin Holy Week observance](#) (2026-03-28 16:11)

FILIPINO Catholics will once again flock to the churches nationwide, waving their palm leaves to commemorate Palm Sunday on March 29, marking the beginning of Holy Week. Palm Sunday honors Jesus Christ's entrance into Jerusalem before his crucifixion and resurrection. As Jesus entered the city on a donkey, people gathered and laid palm branches and their cloaks across His path. The observation dates back to the late 4th century in Jerusalem, where early devotees reenacted Jesus' entry into the city. The palm leaves symbolized victory in the ancient world. The day also marks the beginning of Holy Week and the last week of the Lenten season, one of the most significant events for Filipino Catholics. In his homily on Saturday, Fr. Jade Licuanan of Quiapo Church said this time is an opportunity to pause, reflect and prioritize spiritual activities during this sacred time. Licuanan emphasized the significance of Holy Week as a period for silence and prayer, encouraging individuals to shift their focus from leisure plans to meaningful faith-based practices. "Now, it's Holy Week. What are you talking about with your friends? Neighbors? Or cousins? Relatives? What are you planning to do during Holy Week? Huh? Where are you going to the beach?" Licuanan said in Filipino, highlighting the tendency of some to prioritize outings and vacations over spiritual observance. Licuanan reminded churchgoers that Holy Week is a time to commemorate the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He encouraged families and friends to engage in activities such as "visita iglesia" or visiting multiple churches, attending Good Friday services, participating in the Stations of the Cross, and celebrating the Easter Vigil Mass. "If that is the topic of your conversation among your peers, congratulations. You have chosen a good friend group," he said. Licuanan implored those who have already planned their vacations to "think again," urging them to schedule such activities after the Holy Week observances. He urged the faithful to plan for personal growth and a deeper faith during Holy Week, rather than treating it as a holiday. Licuanan highlighted the Blessed Virgin Mary as a model and guide during Holy Week and beyond. Drawing from the Gospel of John 11:45-56, he noted that those who came to Mary ultimately came to believe in Jesus. He encouraged the faithful to make Mary a part of their lives, families, and even their plans. "Make the Blessed Mother a part of your barkada. Make the Blessed Mother a part of your family. Make the Blessed Mother a part of your planning," he urged.

- [House Justice panel to study SC petition vs impeachment hearings](#) (2026-03-28 16:10)

The House Justice Committee said that it has taken note of the petition filed before the Supreme Court by the lawyers allied with Vice President Sara Duterte seeking to stop the ongoing impeachment hearings. The group, led by lawyer Israelito Torreon, filed a petition for certiorari and prohibition at the Supreme Court on Friday, saying that the panel "overstepped its constitutional gatekeeping role by allowing defective complaints against Duterte to proceed and conducting subpoena-driven evidentiary proceedings that resemble a trial." In a statement on Saturday, panel chairman and Batangas City Rep. Gerville Luistro said they have not yet received or reviewed the actual petition filed by the camp of Torreon. "As with any legal pleading involving the institution, we will study it carefully once it is formally served, and we will respond through the proper legal processes," Luistro said. She emphasized, however, that the Constitution is "equally clear in vesting upon the House of Representatives the sole power to

initiate impeachment cases,” a responsibility she said that they do not take lightly and are “duty bound to carry out faithfully.” “The ongoing proceedings in the House Committee on Justice are part of this constitutional process. They are designed to determine whether probable cause exists — not to determine guilt, and not to conduct a trial. That function belongs to the Senate,” Luistro said. She further reiterated that the hearings that are being undertaken are “anchored on due process, consistent with the Constitution, the Rules on Impeachment, and relevant jurisprudence.” “The proceedings are open, orderly, and provide all parties the opportunity to be heard,” Luistro said. Some members, meanwhile, described the move as a “diversionary tactic” designed to deflect from the proceedings. Committee Vice Chairman and Manila Rep. Joel Chua said that the issues raised by Torreon’s camp are “mere hallucinations.” “We followed the due process guidelines the Supreme Court meticulously laid out in its two decisions on the previous articles,” Chua said. Bicol Saro Party-list Rep. Terry Ridon, meanwhile, said that the petition “will not stop the resolve of the House Committee on Justice to exact accountability for the serious allegations against [Vice President Duterte].” “The subpoena of documents relevant to the grounds for impeachment is well within the authority of the House Committee on Justice under the 1987 Constitution and the House Rules on Impeachment, both of which expressly allow the conduct of hearings in aid of impeachment proceedings,” Ridon said. Ridon added that neither the Constitution nor the Rules of Impeachment require that all evidence be attached to the complaint at the time of the filing. “This includes the issuance of subpoenas covering the Vice President’s statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALNs), as well as tax, corporate, and banking records relating to the Duterte-Carpio couple and their business interests,” Ridon said. He reiterated that their hearing is not a fishing expedition, stressing that the subpoenas will be complied with and that Duterte will be made accountable. Meanwhile, Mamamayang Liberal Party-list Rep. Leila de Lima said that Duterte is “showing signs of desperation” in trying to evade accountability. “May pa-’ bloodbath, bloodbath’ pang sinasabi noon. Sa simpleng committee hearing nga ay takot na takot ngayon (She was warning of a bloodbath in the past, but she is scared of attending a simple committee hearing),” de Lima said.

- [Filipinas urged to take leadership positions](#) (2026-03-28 16:09)

WOMEN entrepreneurs were urged to take up space and venture into leadership positions during the Go Negosyo Women’s Summit held in Parañaque City on Saturday. The summit highlighted the increasing number of women-owned businesses, particularly in the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) sector, and underscored the need to empower more women to lead. As the Philippines chairs this year’s Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), Nora Terrado, senior adviser for Women, Association of Southeast Asian Nations-Business Advisory Council, encouraged women to take more leadership positions that are crucial in nation-building. “We need to prove to the world that we are women leaders. The role of the Philippines during this chairship, especially for women, is to lead in Asean,” she said during the panel discussion. Trade and Industry Secretary Cristina Roque said women are not just participants in the economy but key drivers of it. “Let’s not discount what a woman can do.

Because for a woman, once you push them to the wall, or once you get into a crisis, all of a sudden, all these miracles happen. A lot of big businesses have been built from small businesses, and a lot of communities have been helped because of women-led businesses. And because it's true, women are strong, smart and resourceful. We're not just a part of the economy. We are the ones in charge of it," said Roque. In 2025, Roque said women own about 66 percent of MSMEs in the country and account for 62 percent of new business registrations. She said these numbers show the courage, resilience and determination of women to uplift their communities. Roque urged women entrepreneurs that, amid the crisis where prices of goods are increasing, there are opportunities they can take advantage of to grow. "In every crisis, not everyone loses; a lot of people also win in crisis, so let's look for those opportunities," she said. Meanwhile, broadcast journalist and United Nations Women's National Goodwill Ambassador Karen Davila explained why women make effective leaders, noting their responsiveness in crises. She stressed the importance of empowering women at the grassroots level, pointing out that they are often the most affected by poverty. "Many women who are at the grassroots level get left behind. As we say in UN Women, 'poverty is the face of the she.' So we have to pay attention to the women in the grassroots level," she explained. To address this, she encouraged women to support and uplift each other. "In times of crisis like this. What can we do? I always give this challenge to women: Are you mentoring other women? Are you helping another woman?" she said. During the event, Go Negosyo also awarded the 2026 Inspiring Filipina Entrepreneurs Awards to Filipina entrepreneurs for their contributions to economic development and job creation in their own communities.

- [DOH raises Code White Alert during Holy Week](#) (2026-03-28 16:08)

THE Department of Health (DOH) announced Friday it will raise a Code White Alert for Holy Week. Under the Code White Alert, effective March 30 to April 6, health emergency teams, medical supplies and emergency rooms in DOH hospitals will be on standby 24/7 to respond to health-related emergencies. The alert covers the DOH Central Office, regional Centers for Health Development and hospitals to ensure readiness to respond to medical needs during the Holy Week period. DOH spokesman Albert Domingo urged the public to take precautionary measures as they travel to provinces to observe Holy Week traditions. "Even as DOH is ready to rescue this Holy Week, health and safety begins with you," Domingo told The Manila Times. He advised the public to stay hydrated and avoid direct sunlight as the summer heat intensifies. "Stay hydrated as the heat is on: Drink seven to eight glasses of clean and plain water a day [except for patients under medical supervision]. Wear loose and light-colored clothing following the norms required by the places to visit. Avoid direct sunlight from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Keep vehicles well maintained; rest well, and do not drink and drive. Choose dry and sour food for packed lunches, avoiding those that spoil easily," he added. He reminded the public to call the nationwide emergency hotline, 911, in the event of medical emergencies.

- [New Bill Seeks 40-Year Sentence and Stricter Penalties for Sexual Violence](#) (2026-03-28 16:07)

HOUSE of Representatives Senior Deputy Minority Leader and Mamamayang Liberal Party-list Rep. Leila de Lima has filed a measure to strengthen the protection of women and children against rape and sexual violence. De Lima filed House Bill 8716 on March 23 to expand the definition of rape by emphasizing the absence of consent, recognizing grooming as a form of predatory conduct that may lead to sexual abuse and imposing harsher penalties when the crime is committed by persons in positions of authority or trust. Under the measure, violators will be penalized with 40 years of imprisonment without parole. By strengthening definitions, penalties and accountability mechanisms, she said, the proposed measure seeks to reinforce the State's commitment to protecting individuals from sexual violence and exploitation, and to upholding their fundamental rights to dignity, safety and justice. De Lima, in a news release on Saturday, noted that incidents of violence and abuse across genders and sexual orientations remain significantly underreported due to fear, stigma and barriers to accessing justice. This highlights the need to strengthen legal safeguards and enforcement mechanisms against these human rights violations. Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority recorded 11,479 cases of rape involving girls below 16 years old in 2023, yet no cases were filed under Republic Act 11648 during the same period. Meanwhile, according to the United Nations Children's Fund, 2 million children in the Philippines were subjected to online sexual abuse and exploitation in 2021 alone." With these alarming figures, we aim to implement stronger procedural safeguards against sexual exploitation, including mandatory reporting obligations, the prohibition of amicable settlements and affidavits of desistance in rape cases, and better protections for the privacy and identity of victims," the former chairman of the Commission on Human Rights said." At a time when cases of rape and sexual abuse on digital platforms remain rampant, and when some government officials and persons in positions of authority or trust tolerate vulgarity and harassment, we urgently need a stronger law to ensure greater accountability."

- [Benitez Files P50-Billion RESCUE Act for Economic Crisis Response](#) (2026-03-28 16:06)

BACOLOD CITY — Negros Occidental 3rd District Rep. Javier Miguel Benitez filed a bill electronically on Friday that aims to create a system for a faster, more proactive economic crisis response. Under his proposed Resilient Economy and Stabilization for Crisis and Urgent Emergencies (Rescue) Act, the government would release at least P50 billion once a state of emergency is declared. Benitez said the bill would push for a broader and more institutionalized economic response system that builds on the framework of the Bayanihan Economic Resilience Bill, which would provide the government with the tools to address large-scale economic disruptions. In a statement released on Saturday, Benitez said transport workers, fishermen, overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in conflict-prone areas, and micro, small and medium enterprises are among those most at risk from the ongoing crisis. He noted that effects are expected to ripple across sectors in a systemic way, affecting communities and the broader economy. "We are not buying a fire truck if the house is currently burning, but that is what we are doing," Benitez said. "During Covid[-19], we wrote two emergency laws and spent P646 billion while the crisis was already on top of us. Now, with diesel costing P130 per liter, fishermen cannot go out in the sea and 2 million OFWs are in the conflict zone." His bill was

filed amid the war in the Middle East that is affecting the Strait of Hormuz, with oil prices nearing \$115 a barrel and local diesel prices expected to reach around P140 to P150 per liter by next week. Under the bill, a Bayanihan Economic Stabilization Fund with a target of P50 billion will be created. It would be mobilized once a state of national emergency is declared, with assistance deployed within 72 hours. Besides the fund, a standing council called the National Economic Resilience Council would be created to coordinate response efforts, while an Economic Early Warning System would be set up to monitor risks and enable timely intervention. “We should create the Rescue Act before the next crisis,” Benitez said. “A permanent fund of P50 billion, a standing council, early warning system, and once an emergency is declared, the help should be received within 72 hours.” The proposed measure also strengthens emergency protections, including direct cash transfers, fuel and wage subsidies and mandatory grace periods on loans, rent, utilities and insurance during declared national emergencies. It also includes provisions to boost supply chain resilience, energy security and strategic reserves. Benitez said his bill aims to ensure stronger preparedness and faster response mechanisms, addressing gaps in current emergency frameworks and strengthening the country’s overall economic resilience. At the Senate, Sen. Loren Legarda pushed for the Bayanihan Power to the People Act, or Bayanihan 3 Law, which seeks to establish a comprehensive and coordinated government response to the ongoing global oil crisis. The senator warned against overreliance on price controls, describing them as temporary solutions that fail to address structural issues. “The nation risks repeatedly choosing between high prices or high subsidies — both of which are unsustainable,” she said. The proposed Bayanihan 3 Law seeks to grant the executive branch expanded but time-bound powers to respond decisively to the crisis. Its key features include the possible temporary exemption of value-added tax on basic goods and essential services to ease inflationary pressure; acceleration of renewable energy development, alternative transport systems and energy efficiency programs; emergency measures such as increased taxes on luxury and sin goods, and the proposed imposition of a wealth tax; and economic stabilization mechanisms to cushion the inflationary effects of rising fuel costs. The bill also aims to reduce the country’s vulnerability to global oil price volatility by promoting domestically sourced and sustainable energy systems.

- [1,297 special bus permits OKd for Holy Week rush](#) (2026-03-28 16:04)

THE Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has granted special permits to 1,297 passenger buses nationwide to accommodate the expected surge of travelers during the upcoming Holy Week break. In a statement issued on Saturday, LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II said the additional buses are meant to address the anticipated influx of commuters heading to the provinces, noting that Holy Week travel remains a significant annual movement for Filipino families. “The increase in the number of passengers at this time of the year is normal because this is an annual religious activity that is really important for the Filipino people,” Mendoza said. He added that higher fuel prices may further encourage more people to use public transportation instead of private vehicles. The LTFRB said it would closely monitor passenger volume in terminals and deploy additional units if necessary to respond to real-time

demand. Mendoza also directed bus operators to ensure the roadworthiness of their units before deployment. Regional directors have been ordered to conduct inspections in terminals covering buses and other public utility vehicles (PUVs) as part of broader safety preparations. Likewise, the agency is coordinating with local government units and law enforcement agencies to strengthen road safety enforcement and provide travel assistance. “Our goal is to ensure the safety of commuters and other road users by ensuring the roadworthiness of buses and other PUVs, as well as the physical and mental readiness of drivers,” Mendoza said. Apart from road safety, the LTFRB reiterated the need for terminal operators to comply with regulations on passenger safety and comfort. The agency noted that it had intensified inspections in recent weeks following complaints about poor terminal conditions. Several terminal operators have already been issued show-cause orders and notices of violation, and some facilities were shut down for serious breaches of safety standards. “Aside from the safety of PUVs on the road, we also have to make sure that all passengers are comfortable and treated well inside the terminals,” Mendoza said, warning that violators would be held accountable. Millions of Filipinos are expected to travel to the provinces for the Holy Week, prompting heightened preparations by transport and security agencies.

- [Several Pasay roads closed for running event](#) (2026-03-28 16:02)

SEVERAL roads in Pasay City will be closed early Sunday for the Rexona 10 Miler Run 2026, according to the Pasay Traffic and Parking Management Office. The traffic office said the closures will take effect from 1:30 a.m. to 7 a.m. today, March 29, to ensure the safety of participants and the smooth conduct of the event. Affected roads include SM Mall of Asia Block 16, Seaside Avenue, Diokno Avenue with a zipper lane at the impounding area, Buendia Extension, Macapagal Avenue up to the PNB U-turn with a zipper lane, Jalandoni Street northbound and Sotto Street with a zipper lane at the PICC side. Also covered by the road closure are Roxas Boulevard southbound from Quirino Avenue up to the boundary of Parañaque City, Bukanig Street with a zipper lane and Atang dela Rama with a zipper lane at the PICC side. Motorists were advised to plan their trips and take alternate routes to avoid inconvenience, the traffic office said.

- [Sara, Kitty Duterte Send Emotional 81st Birthday Messages to Father in The Hague](#) (2026-03-28 16:01)

THE daughters of former president Rodrigo Duterte released greetings to their father as he celebrates his 81st birthday on March 28 in incarceration. For a year now, Duterte has been in the custody of the International Criminal Court at Scheveningen Prison in The Hague for alleged crimes against humanity in relation to his war on drugs. In a video message on Saturday, Vice President Sara Duterte thanked the parallel support groups, volunteers and the “millions of Filipinos” in the Philippines and abroad who organized celebrations to honor him. “Your loyalty to him is a testament to a leadership that truly prioritized the safety and dignity of every Filipino family,” Sara said. She said the defense of his rights as a Filipino is a defense of

national sovereignty, urging everyone to be vigilant against the weaponization of the law and the unconstitutional intrusion of foreign bodies that seek to bypass Filipino courts. “Our justice system must remain independent, serving only the mandate of the Filipino people and never the interests of foreign powers,” Sara said. Meanwhile, in a post on her official Instagram account, Veronica Duterte said she will be “forever 12” years old whenever she is with her father, whom she described as her “mirror.” “I am right in front of you, like a mirror resembling in your character, bravery, grit, volition — but not even half your heart. I am just fine being in your shadow because I know no one can replace your heart,” Veronica, also known as Kitty, said. Kitty said she now understands that loving him to the point of truly knowing him revealed that he is a “difficult person, but it’s either I love you or I don’t. I sacrifice for you or I don’t. I choose you or I don’t. I fight with you or I don’t. It’s always all or nothing.” “Only now have I understood, now that I’m turning 22 and have put you first, through it all and above all,” Kitty said. She said the greatest gift she could give to her father is to be “strong like you and strong for you.” The former president’s party, Partido Demokratiko Pilipino, also greeted its chairman, saying members are “deeply grateful” for his visionary leadership and the unwavering courage he showed in serving the Filipino people. “Your legacy of ‘Tapang at Malasakit’ (Strength and Compassion) continues to inspire us as we work together toward a better future for the nation,” the party said. Lawyer Paolo Panelo said fighting before the Supreme Court for his writ of habeas corpus case is “one of the greatest honors” of his life. “Not only because it is a landmark case that only a few lawyers will ever experience in their lifetimes, but more so because I am fighting for what is right for someone I care about and admire,” said Panelo, son of Duterte’s former presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo.

- [Filipino Catholics mark Palm Sunday, opening Holy Week observance](#) (2026-03-28 15:15)

MANILA, Philippines—Filipino Catholics will once again flock to the churches nationwide, waving their palm leaves to commemorate Palm Sunday on March 29, marking the beginning of Holy Week. Palm Sunday honors Jesus Christ’s entrance into Jerusalem prior to his resurrection. As Jesus entered the city on a donkey, people gathered and laid palm branches and their cloaks across Jesus’ path. The observation dates back to the late 4th century in Jerusalem, where early devotees reenacted Jesus’s entry into the city, said Britannica. In earlier times, the palm leaves symbolized victory in the ancient world. The day also marks the beginning of the Holy Week and the last week of the Lenten season, one of the most significant events for Filipino Catholics. Fr. Jade Licunan of Quiapo Church said this time of the Holy Week is an opportunity to pause, reflect, and prioritize spiritual activities during this sacred time. In his homily on Saturday, Licunan emphasized the significance of Holy Week as a period for silence and prayer, encouraging individuals to shift their focus from leisure plans to meaningful faith-based practices.

- ['Policy should remain calibrated,' says economist amid weak peso](#) (2026-03-28 14:59)

MANILA, Philippines- The government should focus on long-term solutions, such as diversifying energy sources and attracting more foreign investment, as the Philippine peso's recent slide drives up fuel and food costs for consumers, an economist said on Saturday. Union Bank of the Philippines chief economist Ruben Carlo Asuncion told The Manila Times that the peso's recent depreciation has been largely driven by "external shocks," particularly higher oil prices and a stronger US dollar amid the war in the Middle East, rather than by domestic weakness. He noted that a weaker peso "makes it more costly for the government to cushion fuel and food prices, as it amplifies imported inflation, even as remittances and exports provide some offset." "Policy should remain calibrated—allowing the exchange rate to act as a shock absorber while the BSP smooths excessive volatility and fiscal support is kept targeted and temporary," Asuncion said. "Over the medium term, energy diversification and stronger external inflows matter more than defending any specific peso level," he added.

- [ABS-CBN not party to Lopez family dispute](#) (2026-03-28 14:37)

Amid recent news reports of an internal dispute involving the Lopez family, multimedia giant ABS-CBN said it is not a party to the issue. The statement from the network's board of directors came after reports surfaced that Federico "Piki" Lopez had sued his cousins, led by ABS-CBN chairman emeritus Eugenio Lopez III, over his removal from Lopez Inc., the group's private holding firm. The board said claims of "unresolved audit findings" are unfounded, stressing that no such audit findings exist. Directors also dismissed allegations that the proposed capital infusion could be used for "payouts for certain executives," calling the claim "equally baseless" and emphasizing that no payouts have been made or planned. "Since losing its franchise in 2020, the company has faced challenges unlike any in its history. ABS-CBN has not stopped fighting to ensure its continued existence. It has not stopped serving," the board said. "The last thing it needs is for its people to be misrepresented in a dispute it is not involved in," it added.

- [Former budget secretary named as Asian liberals head](#) (2026-03-28 14:11)

Former budget secretary Florencio "Butch" Abad has been elected as the new chairman of the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats (CALD), the Liberal Party of the Philippines (LP) announced on Saturday. Abad previously served as CALD chairman from 1999 to 2000. "The question is no longer whether democracy will expand. The question is whether democracy will survive," Abad said in his acceptance speech. He cited growing threats to democracy worldwide, including the rise of elected authoritarianism, the erosion of institutions, the spread of disinformation, deepening inequality, and the weakening of democratic norms. Despite these challenges, Abad expressed optimism about the "rise of a new generation of citizens," noting their active role in demanding accountability, challenging corruption, and reshaping political landscapes. "They are not passive citizens—they are agents of democratic disruption and renewal," he said of young people. "In 2000, we believed democracy was the future. In 2026, we must fight to ensure it still is," Abad added. He also outlined six priorities for Asian liberal democrats: restoring integrity in public finance and governance; rebuilding and protecting

democratic institutions; defending truth in the age of artificial intelligence; preventing the abuse of technology; making democracy deliver tangible results for people; and investing in the next generation of democratic leaders. Abad previously served as LP president from 1999 to 2004. He also served as Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management under then president Benigno Aquino III.

- [Marcos urges Filipinos to join Earth Hour, conserve energy](#) (2026-03-28 13:55)

MANILA, Philippines- President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Saturday called on Filipinos to take part in Earth Hour this year, stressing the need for energy preservation and limiting fuel consumption amid the ongoing global energy crisis. This year's World Wide Fund for Nature's Earth Hour is scheduled from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. local time. In a video message, the President said this year's observance, themed "Switch on Habits for Earth," is especially relevant as the country faces rising fuel costs and global uncertainties. "This year's event provides a timely and relevant opportunity for us to reflect, not only on the issue of climate change and environmental preservation, but also on the need to conserve energy and to limit fuel consumption amid the current global crisis," Marcos said. "The simple act of turning off our lights for one hour goes a long way. So, I invite every Filipino to participate in this cause and be inspired by the theme, Switch on Habits for Earth. May the true meaning of Earth Hour be part of our lives starting tonight," he added.

- [More bypass roads to be opened to help ease oil price hike effects](#) (2026-03-28 11:00)

MANILA, Philippines – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. has ordered the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to open more bypass roads in the country to help reduce gasoline consumption amid the oil price hikes. In a statement on Friday, DPWH Secretary Vince Dizon said aside from saving on gasoline, opening bypass roads would also speed up the delivery of services. He added that the newly opened Lipa-Padre Garcia Bypass Road will serve as an alternative route to the Manila-Batangas Road and Lipa-Rosario Road to ease the traffic flow in Lipa City. "The President has repeatedly told us: speed up the delivery of services to our countrymen. Let's speed up all construction, because we need to open new roads to avoid traffic," Dizon said during the opening of the bypass road in Batangas. "The bypass roads we opened – they are a huge relief, a huge reduction in traffic, a huge reduction in fuel consumption." Meanwhile, the President has also ordered to expedite the construction of farm-to-market roads (FMR) in the country, Dizon said during the inspection of the FMR project in Barangay New Casay, Braulio E. Dujali, Davao del Norte on Friday with Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. He said once the remaining 1.9 km. section of the FMR is completed, the journey of transporting their produce from New Casay to Dujali is expected to be shortened by 15 minutes from 30 minutes. "With only 800 meters (of the farm-to-market road), the cost of crude oil will be reduced by half. When we finish this, our farmers, all the way to Tagum, will benefit," he said. "The President said that all the missing (parts) must be passed on because the assistance is really big." Dizon also noted that they would address the lack of riprap and drainage systems in the area to prevent flooding and protect the farms and livelihoods of

residents.

- [Marcos orders removal of cash aid tarpaulin with his photo](#) (2026-03-28 07:42)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has ordered the removal of a tarpaulin bearing his photo at a cash aid distribution site, Malacañang said. Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said the directive was in line with Marcos' commitment to the "anti-epal" provision of the 2026 General Appropriations Act (GAA). Castro said the president himself called out the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) over the issue. "When President Marcos Jr. saw a tarpaulin that had his picture on it, he ordered that his image be removed. So now it's no longer there—he addressed it, he called out the DSWD," Castro said during a press briefing on Friday. Castro issued the statement after Bayan president Renato Reyes questioned whether Marcos was exempt from the "anti-epal" provision, citing a tarpaulin that read: "Serbisyo at Tulong mula kay Pangulong Bongbong Marcos (Service and assistance from President Bongbong Marcos)." The 2026 GAA specifically prohibits public officials, candidates, politicians, political parties or their representatives from taking part in or influencing the distribution of cash assistance for political mileage or to further their own interests. Castro said while the president was not exempted from this provision, the public should also know his projects for their welfare.

- [House justice panel 'to study' SC petition filed by Duterte allies to stop impeachment hearings](#) (2026-03-28 07:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives' Committee on Justice said that it has "taken note" of the petition filed before the Supreme Court to stop its impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte. The group, led by Israelito Torreon, filed a petition for certiorari and prohibition at the Supreme Court on Friday, saying that the panel "overstepped its constitutional gatekeeping role by allowing defective complaints against Duterte to proceed and conducting subpoena-driven evidentiary proceedings that resemble a trial." In a statement on Saturday, Panel chairman and Batangas City Rep. Gerville Luistro said that they have not yet received or reviewed the actual petition filed by the camp of Torreon. "As with any legal pleading involving the institution, we will study it carefully once it is formally served, and we will respond through the proper legal processes," Luistro said. She, however stressed that the Constitution was "equally clear in vesting upon the House of Representatives the sole power to initiate impeachment cases," a responsibility that they do not take lightly and is "duty bound to carry out faithfully." "The ongoing proceedings in the House Committee on Justice are part of this constitutional process. They are designed to determine whether probable cause exists—not to determine guilt, and not to conduct a trial. That function belongs to the Senate," Luistro said. She further reiterated that the hearings that were being undertaken was "anchored on due process, consistent with the Constitution, the Rules on Impeachment, and relevant jurisprudence." "The proceedings are open, orderly, and provide all parties the opportunity to be heard," Luistro said. Some members, meanwhile, described the move as a "diversionary tactic" designed to deflect from the proceedings. In a statement, Committee vice chairman and Manila

Rep. Joel Chua said that the issues raised by Torreon's camp were "mere hallucinations". "We followed the due process guidelines the Supreme Court meticulously laid out in its two decisions on the previous Articles." Chua said. Bicol Saro Partylist Rep. Terry Ridon, meanwhile said that the petition "will not stop the resolve of the House Committee on Justice to exact accountability for the serious allegations against [Vice President Duterte],"

- [Metro LGUs to join Earth Hour observance, call on residents to switch off non-essential lights](#) (2026-03-28 07:27)

MANILA, Philippines — Several Metro Manila local government units will join the observance of Earth Hour on Saturday, calling on residents to switch off non-essential lights and take part in the global campaign for environmental protection. The main Earth Hour Philippines event, organized with WWF-Philippines, will be held at Arcovia City in Pasig, with doors opening at 4:30 p.m., while the symbolic switch-off of non-essential lights is set at exactly 8:30 p.m. Pasig City called on residents to take part in the observance either by joining the ceremonial switch-off at Arcovia City or by turning off non-essential lights from their homes, offices or public spaces. The WWF-Philippines said the Arcovia City event would also feature performances from local music artists like Lola Amour, Clara Benin and The Riddleys ahead of the symbolic lights-off. In its advisory, the Pasig city government said even small actions could create a wider impact when done collectively, as it encouraged residents to spread the campaign among their families, friends and neighbors. Pasay City will also take part in the annual lights-off movement, with Mayor Emi Calixto-Rubiano urging the public to become more conscious of their role in protecting the environment. "Today, we join the rest of the world in honoring and caring for our ultimate provider of what we have today, Mother Earth," Calixto-Rubiano said. She said Pasay was moving toward its goal of becoming a smart and sustainable eco-city, adding that the city wanted to be at the forefront of efforts to protect the planet. "Together, let us be eco-conscious advocates and take part in this year's Earth Hour," she said. WWF-Philippines said Earth Hour began in Sydney in 2007, when people switched off their lights for one hour to show support for the planet, and has since grown into a global movement joined by millions each year. The group said the annual observance may not solve the climate crisis on its own, but it serves as a reminder that many people around the world still care and are willing to take part in collective action for the environment. Other Metro Manila city governments also issued similar calls for participation as local officials encouraged communities across the capital region to observe the one-hour switch-off.

- [De Lima wants tougher protection for women, children vs. rape, abuse](#) (2026-03-28 06:33)

MANILA, Philippines – House of Representatives Senior Deputy Minority Leader, Mamamayang Liberal Party-list Rep. Leila De Lima, has filed a measure to strengthen the protection of women and children against rape and sexual violence. De Lima filed House Bill 8716 on March 23 to expand the definition of rape to emphasize the absence of consent; recognize grooming as a form of predatory conduct that may lead to sexual abuse; and impose harsher penalties when the crime is committed by persons in positions of authority or trust. Under the measure,

violators will be penalized with 40 years of imprisonment without parole. By strengthening definitions, penalties, and accountability mechanisms, she said, the proposed measure seeks to reinforce the State's commitment to protect individuals from sexual violence and exploitation and to uphold their fundamental rights to dignity, safety, and justice. De Lima, in a news release on Saturday, noted that incidents of violence and abuse across genders and sexual orientations remain significantly underreported due to fear, stigma, and barriers to accessing justice, highlighting the need to strengthen legal safeguards and enforcement mechanisms against these human rights violations. Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority recorded 11,479 cases of rape involving girls below 16 years old in 2023, yet no case was filed under RA 11648 during the same period. Meanwhile, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), two million children in the Philippines were subjected to online sexual abuse and exploitation in 2021 alone. "With these alarming figures, we aim to implement stronger procedural safeguards against sexual exploitation, including mandatory reporting obligations, the prohibition of amicable settlements and affidavits of desistance in rape cases, and better protections for the privacy and identity of victims," the former chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights said. "At a time when cases of rape and sexual abuse on digital platforms remain rampant, and when some government officials and persons in positions of authority or trust tolerate vulgarity and harassment, we urgently need a stronger law to ensure greater accountability."

- [LTFRB approves 1,297 special bus permits ahead of Holy Week travel surge](#) (2026-03-28 05:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has granted special permits to 1,297 passenger buses nationwide to accommodate the expected surge of travelers during the upcoming Holy Week break. In a statement issued Saturday, LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II said the additional buses were meant to address the anticipated influx of commuters heading to the provinces, noting that Holy Week travel remains a significant annual movement for Filipino families. "The increase in the number of passengers at this time of the year is normal because this is an annual religious activity that is really important for the Filipino people," Mendoza said. He added that higher fuel prices may further drive more people to opt for public transportation instead of using private vehicles. The LTFRB said it would closely monitor passenger volume in bus terminals and deploy additional units if necessary to respond to real-time demand. Mendoza also directed bus operators to ensure the roadworthiness of their units before deployment. Regional directors have been ordered to carry out inspections in terminals covering buses and other public utility vehicles (PUVs), as part of broader safety preparations. The agency is likewise coordinating with local government units and law enforcement agencies to strengthen road safety enforcement and provide assistance to travelers. "Our goal is to ensure the safety of commuters and other road users by ensuring the roadworthiness of buses and other PUVs, as well as the physical and mental readiness of drivers," Mendoza said. Apart from road safety, the LTFRB reiterated the need for terminal operators to comply with regulations on passenger safety and comfort. The agency noted that it had intensified inspections in recent weeks following complaints about poor terminal

conditions. Several terminal operators have been issued show cause orders and notices of violation, while some facilities were shut down for serious breaches of safety standards. “Aside from the safety of PUVs on the road, we also have to make sure that all passengers are comfortable and treated well inside the terminals,” Mendoza said, warning that violators would be held accountable. Millions of Filipinos are expected to travel to the provinces during the Holy Week period, prompting heightened preparations across transport and security agencies.

- [Emergency crisis response system bill filed at House](#) (2026-03-28 04:56)

MANILA, Philippines — Negros Occidental 3rd District Rep. Javier Miguel Benitez will file a bill that will create a system for a faster, more proactive economic crisis response, including a fund worth at least P50 billion to be released once a state of emergency is declared. The "Resilient Economy and Stabilization for Crisis and Urgent Emergencies (RESCUE) Act" seeks for a broader and more institutionalized economic response system that builds on the framework of the Bayanihan Economic Resilience Bill, which will provide government with the tools to address large-scale economic disruptions. In a statement on Saturday, Benitez said that transport workers, fisherfolk, overseas Filipino workers in conflict-prone areas, and micro, small, and medium enterprises were among those most at risk from the ongoing crisis, with its effects expected to ripple across sectors in a systemic way, affecting communities and the broader economy. “We are not buying a fire truck if the house is currently burning, but that is what we are doing. During Covid, we wrote two emergency laws and spent P646 billion while the crisis was already on top of us. Now, with diesel costing P130 per liter, fishermen cannot go out in the sea and two million OFWs are in the conflict zone,” Benitez said. The bill was filed as the war in the Middle East has affected operations along the Strait of Hormuz, with Iran blocking the passage of vessels allied with US and Israel, causing oil prices to jack up close to \$115 a barrel. Under the bill, a "Bayanihan Economic Stabilization Fund" with a target of P50 billion will be created, which would be mobilized once a state of national emergency is declared, with assistance deployed within 72 hours. Aside from the fund, a National Economic Resilience Council will also be created to coordinate response efforts, while an Economic Early Warning System will be set up to monitor risks and enable timely intervention.

- [Pasay roads closed for running event](#) (2026-03-28 04:43)

MANILA, Philippines — Several roads in Pasay City will be closed early Sunday for a running event, according to the Pasay Traffic and Parking Management Office. The traffic office said the closures would be enforced from 1:30 a.m. to 7 a.m. to ensure the safety of participants and the smooth conduct of the Rexona 10 Miler Run 2026. Affected roads include SM MOA Block 16, Seaside Avenue, Diokno Avenue with zipper lane at the impounding area, Buendia Extension, Macapagal Avenue up to the PNB U-turn with zipper lane, Jalandoni Street northbound, and Sotto Street with zipper lane at the PICC side. Also covered by the road closure are Roxas Boulevard southbound from Quirino Avenue up to the boundary of Parañaque City, Bukanig Street with zipper lane, and Atang dela Rama with zipper lane at the PICC side. Motorists were

advised to plan their trips ahead and take alternate routes to avoid inconvenience, the traffic office said.

- [Sara, Kitty greet dad on 81st birthday](#) (2026-03-28 02:39)

MANILA, Philippines -- The daughters of former president Rodrigo Duterte greeted him as he celebrated his 81st birthday today, March 28. Duterte has been detained for a year at the International Criminal Court's Scheveningen Prison at The Hague for crimes against humanity in relation to his war on drugs. In a video message on Saturday, Vice President Sara Duterte thanked the parallel support groups, volunteers and the "millions of Filipinos" in the Philippines and abroad who have organized celebrations to honor him. "Your loyalty to him is a testament to a leadership that truly prioritized the safety and dignity of every Filipino family," Sara said. She also said that the defense of his rights as a Filipino was also a defense of the national sovereignty, urging everyone to be vigilant against the weaponization of the law and the unconstitutional intrusion of foreign bodies that sought to bypass Filipino courts. "Our justice system must remain independent, serving only the mandate of the Filipino people and never the interests of foreign powers," Sara said. Meanwhile, in a post on her official Instagram account, Veronica Duterte said that she would be "forever 12" years old whenever she would be with her father, whom she described as her "mirror." "I am right in front of you, like a mirror resembling in your character, bravery, grit, volition—but not even half your heart. I am just fine being in your shadow because I know no one can replace your heart," Veronica, also known as Kitty, said. Kitty also said that she now understood that loving him to the point of truly knowing him revealed that he is a "difficult person, but it's either I love you or I don't. I sacrifice for you or I don't. I choose you or I don't. I fight with you or I don't. It's always all or nothing." "Only now have I understood, now that I'm turning 22 and have put you first, through it all and above all," Kitty said. She said that her greatest gift that she could give to her father was to be "strong like you and strong for you." VIDEO FROM OVP COMMUNICATIONS

- [PH, Japan seal new loan agreements for subway, Mindanao highway projects](#) (2026-03-28 02:16)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines and Japan formalized fresh financing agreements for two major infrastructure projects aimed at improving urban mobility in Metro Manila and regional connectivity in Mindanao, reinforcing bilateral cooperation under the government's infrastructure drive. Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa P. Lazaro and Japanese Ambassador Endo Kazuya signed and exchanged diplomatic notes at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) covering the fourth tranche loan for the Metro Manila Subway Project (MMSP) Phase 1 and the engineering services loan for the Central Mindanao High Standard Highway Project. Officials from the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Finance (DOF), Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev), and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) attended the ceremony on Friday. Major subway funding secured The largest component of the agreements is a ¥220 billion (approximately ₱84.81 billion or \$1.48 billion) loan for the fourth tranche of the Metro

Manila Subway Project Phase 1, one of the flagship infrastructure programs of the Marcos administration. The MMSPP involves the construction of a 27.5-kilometer underground railway system connecting Valenzuela City to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 in Bicutan.

- [DOH to raise Code White Alert for Holy Week](#) (2026-03-28 02:13)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Health (DOH) is set to raise a Code White Alert for Holy Week. In a statement late Friday, the agency said the alert would be in effect from March 30 to April 6, 2026, as part of the agency's preparedness and response measures. Under the Code White Alert, health emergency teams, medical supplies, and emergency rooms in DOH hospitals are on standby 24/7 to respond to road crash incidents, injuries, and other health-related emergencies in the coming week.

- [NCCA, PhilPost launches new stamps for Holy Week](#) (2026-03-27 19:36)

MANILA, Philippines—The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the Philippine Postal Corporation (PhilPost) on Friday launched a new set of commemorative stamps for Holy Week. The stamps feature the Stations of the Cross, with a total of 14 stamps—each representing one station. Speaking at the NCCA's inaugural lenten cultural recollection, NCCA Chairman and Executive Director Eric Zerrudo said the stamps serve as a visual reminder of how faith has long been embedded in Filipino culture. “These stamps will serve as proof and as a visual reminder of our faith and culture,” he said. The stamps will be made available to the public next week, in time for the Holy Week observation.

- [Women are excellent peacemakers'](#) (2026-03-27 19:15)

MANILA, Philippines- The Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (Opapru) concluded its Gender and Development (GAD) lecture and forum series, highlighting the significant contributions of women in the Philippine peace process. The fourth series, which is among the major activities of this year's National Women's Month celebrations, featured a diverse panel of women peacebuilders, which included Iona Jalijali, Country Representative of Center for Humanitarian Dialogue; Nur-Ainee Tan Lim, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Social Services and Development; Elisa Lapiña, Opapru Director for Local Conflict Transformation-Field Implementation Support Unit Mindanao; and Veronica “Ka Inca” Tabara, GPH-Kapatiran Joint Enforcement and Monitoring Committee. In her opening remarks, Opapru Executive Director for Peace Sustainability Susana Guadalupe Marcaida lauded the panelists for being some of the best and most inspiring examples of how Filipino Women are playing key peacebuilding leadership roles across all sectors of society. “Together, these four women represent a single story of what meaningful participation actually looks like, diverse in context, grounded in experience, and unified in purpose,” she said. Marcaida said that these women are not just colleagues, but fellow advocates she had worked alongside over the years, especially during the peace process's most challenging and uncertain moments. “This forum is part of our 2026 National Women's Month celebration. But more than a celebration, it is a commitment to carry forward the lessons

of our peace journey," Marcaida said. "To move from recognition to action, from policy to practice, and from participation to genuine leadership," she added.

- [DSWD eyes second round of cash aid to drivers](#) (2026-03-27 16:17)

THE Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on Friday said it is considering another round of financial aid to transport workers if fuel prices continue to surge. In a press conference in Manila, DSWD Secretary Rexlon Gatchalian said the P5,000 being distributed to transport groups under its Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations program is only the first phase of the government's program to ease the burden of rising fuel costs on drivers. "This is not going to be limited to one round, it's going to be multiple rounds. In fact, that's why I'm circling around to see the issues on the ground," he said. After Holy Week, there will be a special payout schedule for transport workers who were not included in the first round, "and then we'll immediately move on to the second round," Gatchalian said. Transport groups went on a two-day nationwide strike to drive home the point that the cash subsidy from the government is not enough to cover their needs. One organization, Manibela, prodded the government to provide P10,000 in monthly cash assistance, instead of the one-time payout of P5,000. Gatchalian said the agency will continue to assist vulnerable sectors for as long as the crisis continues. Gatchalian also announced that on April 8, the agency will begin distributing financial aid outside Metro Manila. He said high-density areas, such as Regions 3 (Central Luzon) and 4A (Calabarzon), would be prioritized. Gatchalian stressed that physical appearance is a requirement in claiming financial assistance. Digitalizing the distribution of the financial assistance is also being considered, he said. Manila Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso, meanwhile, announced Friday that the city government will compensate public utility jeepney drivers to ease the effects of the rising fuel costs. During a Facebook Live broadcast, Moreno said the city government would rent 1,442 jeepneys and pay their drivers. "For drivers, there is a stable income; there is a fuel allowance, guaranteed by the city. At the end of the day, the driver is paid," he said in Filipino. The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) reported no violent incidents during the transport strike. MMDA General Manager Nicholas Torre III said the grievances of the protesters were valid and were being relayed to concerned government agencies through the MMDA's Emergency Operations Center. He said the MMDA deliberately avoided deploying free rides for commuters during the strike "because we do not want to take away the very small earnings of those who did not join those movements." Instead, the agency adjusted its deployments depending on where there were passenger build-ups, particularly in areas where commuters waiting by the roadside could be exposed to danger. The No to Oil Price Hike Coalition, which led the broader protest, demanded the nationalization of the oil industry and the removal of taxes on fuel products. The group accused the government of making the public bear the burden of higher oil costs instead of addressing the profits of large oil companies. The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Friday said the strike was "generally peaceful," despite reports of stranded commuters and scattered disruptions in Metro Manila. PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said the situation on the ground remained manageable on the first day of the protest action. "I

commend our commanders and personnel for properly responding to the situation on the ground by ensuring that the right of the people to air their grievances is respected and making sure that those affected are properly assisted. This is a good job that must be sustained,” said Nartatez in a statement. Police presence was sustained in hot spots as commuters adjusted to limited transport options. “Police visibility helps deter incidents. When the police are present, everyone becomes more disciplined,” Nartatez said.

- [Marcos: Asean leaders summit pushing through](#) (2026-03-27 16:16)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday said the Philippines’ hosting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Leaders’ Summit in May would push through despite the war in the Middle East. In a media interview following the graduation rites of the Philippine National Police Academy in Silang, Cavite, Marcos said the region’s leaders would focus discussions on oil supply, food security and the welfare of migrant workers. “We have consulted with our counterparts in the 10 other member states. And the question that I asked them is very simple: Would you prefer — because everybody is busy with the oil crisis going on, because of the war in the Middle East — would you like to postpone the Asean Summit? The consensus that we came to is that it is precisely now that we must coordinate our efforts,” he said. “So, that is what we are going to do. We will continue [the] Asean Summit,” he said. The president said the 48th Asean Leaders’ Summit and Related Summits will be “very bare bones,” focusing only on urgent and essential issues. “What we really need at this time is for us leaders to talk to know what do we do in the future, what do we do for the rest of the year, what do we do, how can we help each other, and what is the Asean position regarding all of these shocks that are coming our way,” he said. Marcos said the 49th Asean Summit and Related Summits in November would “tentatively” proceed as scheduled. “Tentatively, the Leaders’ Summit in November will push through since it’s also important because other world leaders will be coming here from Europe, China, Korea and Japan. All of these matters need to be discussed,” he said. Marcos said that by September or October, he would again ask other world leaders if the Leaders’ meeting would proceed. As part of its chairmanship of Asean in 2026, the Philippines is hosting 650 ministerial and senior official meetings. On Tuesday, Batangas Rep. Leandro Leviste urged the Office of the President to reduce its P22.9-billion budget for this year’s Asean summit. Leviste filed House Bill 911, which seeks to cut the projected expenses and reallocate the funds to measures aimed at easing the impact of fuel price hikes. In 2017, when the Philippines last hosted the Asean Summits and related meetings, it allocated P16.747 billion, of which only 51 percent or P8.572 billion was disbursed. Marcos declared on Tuesday a state of national energy emergency, citing risks to the country’s domestic fuel supply created by the war. The import-dependent country has seen the price of fuel hit historic highs since the US-Israeli war with Iran forced the partial closure of the Strait of Hormuz. The war has also affected millions of guest workers from Asean states who are living in countries caught in the crossfire. It was not immediately clear if other pressing priorities, including the civil war raging in Myanmar or a long-gestating code of conduct between the bloc and China over the South China Sea, would be completely off the table for discussion.

- [Smaller fuel prices increases seen](#) (2026-03-27 16:15)

DIESEL and gasoline prices will continue to increase next week, but the spike won't be a sharp as in previous weeks, a source in the local oil industry source said on Friday. The per-liter price of diesel is expected to go up by P11 to P12, the source said. The price of gasoline could either stay steady, or increase by around P3. The estimates are based on the four-day trading of Mean of Platts, Singapore, the pricing index for refined goods in Southeast Asia. It will be the 11th straight week that diesel and gasoline prices will increase. The source attributed the relatively smaller increase in fuel prices to signs that the conflict may be de-escalating, resulting in a drop in crude oil price benchmarks, the source said. On Friday, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said is open to proposals to repeal the Oil Deregulation Law and remove the value-added tax (VAT) on fuel, as part of the government's efforts to cushion the impact of the war in the Middle East on the people. But right now, the government is focused on delivering "immediate" solutions to the energy problems, Marcos said. "As I said before, nothing is being discounted, meaning we are discussing everything that can be done so that we can do something to help alleviate the impact of the war in the Middle East," Marcos said during a media interview in Silang, Cavite. The Oil Deregulation Law liberalized the downstream oil industry in 1998, allowing oil companies to set pump prices based on global market conditions rather than government control. Fuel products are subject to a 12-percent VAT, on top of excise taxes, which adds to their overall retail price. The president said making amendments to the law would require extensive discussion and could not be implemented immediately. On Tuesday, Senate President Vicente Sotto III filed Senate Bill 1984 that seeks to repeal the 28-year-old Republic Act (RA) 8479, or the Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Act. Sotto said now is the perfect time to give back to the state the authority to manage fuel prices. "Now that our petroleum prices are directly impacted by the geopolitical tension in the Middle East, transparency, scrutiny and uniformity in pricing are needed more than ever," Sotto said. Earlier, House lawmakers from the Makabayan bloc pointed out that RA 8479 was flawed because it did not promote competitiveness but instead "consolidated corporate power, enabled coordinated price increases and left the public defenseless." Sen. Bam Aquino, meanwhile, wants the VAT on fuel products suspended or reduced to provide relief to Filipinos grappling with soaring pump prices. Aquino said on Friday lawmakers are now considering a follow-up measure that would grant the president authority to adjust VAT rates on oil products. "We are studying a measure that goes beyond the excise tax, giving the President powers to suspend or lower VAT on fuel. This could have a bigger impact on prices," Aquino said. During a hearing of the Senate's Proactive Response and Oversight for Timely and Effective Crisis Strategy Committee on Thursday, representatives from oil companies expressed support for the proposal, noting that removing the 12-percent VAT would translate more directly into lower pump prices. Tanya Samillano, representing small oil players, said eliminating VAT simplifies price adjustments. "If VAT is removed, it's no longer part of the cost. That makes it easier for us to immediately implement reduced prices," Samillano said. Aquino urged the Department of Finance to help quantify the potential savings for consumers, emphasizing the need for data-driven policy decisions. He said the Senate is prepared to act swiftly on the proposal if endorsed by economic

managers. Aquino also highlighted his role as co-author and co-sponsor of Republic Act 12316, which grants the president emergency powers to suspend or reduce excise taxes on petroleum products. If fully implemented, the law is expected to:— Reduce gasoline prices by up to P10 per liter.— Lower diesel prices by around P6 per liter.— Cut liquefied petroleum gas prices by P3 per kilogram.— Slash kerosene prices by about P5 per liter. Another senator, Sherwin Gatchalian, raised concerns over potentially excessive profits of oil companies as global fuel prices surge. In a chance interview, Gatchalian criticized the pricing mechanism used by oil firms, particularly the “replacement cost” method, which bases pump prices on current market rates rather than the actual, often lower, cost at which existing inventory was purchased. “These are old inventories. They should be priced using a first-in, first-out basis,” he said. “But because the industry is deregulated, the Department of Energy cannot see how much these companies actually paid for their supply.” Gatchalian said the absence of transparency in procurement costs makes it difficult for regulators to determine whether oil firms are guilty of profiteering. “If we knew how much they bought it for and how much they sold it for, we could easily determine their margins,” he said. This opacity has fueled speculation, including claims raised by Sen. Rodante Marcoleta, that oil companies could be earning as much as P3 billion daily. Gatchalian acknowledged that the estimate was plausible, though unverified. “I haven’t computed it myself, but it’s not far-fetched to say profits are already very large,” he said. He said the Philippine Competition Commission has been directed to monitor the industry for signs of anticompetitive behavior and profiteering. “There are multiple mechanisms. We can check for anticompetitive conduct or intentional profiteering. Monitoring is critical because it’s hard to believe there are no excess profits in this situation,” he said. On the possibility of joint oil and gas exploration with China in the West Philippine Sea, Gatchalian said both sides must demonstrate sincerity while respecting Philippine sovereignty. With fuel prices still climbing, he underscored the need for decisive government action — both in regulating industry practices and securing a stable supply.

- [Philippines, France sign visiting forces agreement](#) (2026-03-27 16:13)

(UPDATE) THE Philippines and France signed a Status of Visiting Forces Agreement (Sovfa) on Friday, expanding defense ties and allowing easier deployment of troops between the two countries. Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. and French Minister for the Armed Forces Catherine Vautrin formalized the pact following a bilateral meeting in Paris, where Teodoro is attending a series of engagements, including the Paris Defense and Strategy Forum. The Sovfa sets the legal guidelines for visiting forces, facilitating joint exercises, training and other military cooperation activities. “We were able to reach this stage in record time because of the fact that our two countries have had years of trust and confidence in working and dealing with one another,” Teodoro said in a speech during the signing, a recording of which was provided to the media in Manila by the Department of National Defense. France becomes the latest country to have a visiting forces arrangement with the Philippines, which is expanding its network of defense partnerships under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. The Philippines has a long-standing Visiting Forces Agreement with the United States, and signed a similar pact with Australia in

2012. More recently, Manila concluded a Reciprocal Access Agreement with Japan, allowing its troops to participate in the upcoming Balikatan exercises alongside Filipino and American forces. It will be the first time Japanese combat personnel will be deployed to the Philippines since World War II. Teodoro has also overseen visiting forces agreements with Canada and New Zealand, while negotiations for a similar pact with the United Kingdom are expected to begin soon. In his remarks, Teodoro said the agreement with France reflects a shared commitment to strengthening defense capabilities and upholding international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Even before the deal was finalized, France had joined the Philippine Navy in joint drills in the West Philippine Sea. French naval vessels are also expected to participate in this year's Balikatan, which began as the Philippines' largest joint annual military exercise with the US. France has been among the countries supporting the Philippines amid tensions with China in the South China Sea. In a keynote speech in Paris, Teodoro emphasized the need for deeper cross-regional cooperation in security and defense, citing growing challenges that require coordinated responses among like-minded nations.

- [Lawyers petition SC to halt Duterte impeachment](#) (2026-03-27 16:12)

A GROUP of lawyers allied with Vice President Sara Duterte on Friday petitioned the Supreme Court to stop ongoing impeachment proceedings against her in the House of Representatives. The group argued that the process undertaken by the House Committee on Justice violates constitutional limits. In a 186-page petition for certiorari and prohibition, which includes a prayer for a temporary restraining order and a writ of preliminary injunction, the petitioners sought to stop the House from proceeding with the third and fourth impeachment complaints. They argued the complaints should have been dismissed outright for insufficiency in form and substance. The petition was filed by lawyers Israelito Torreon, Vic Rodriguez, Resci Angelli Rizada-Nolasco, Martin Delgra III, Wendel Avisado, James Patrick Bondoc, Raul Lambino, Luna Maria Acosta-Manlitoc, Jesus Hinlo Jr. and Richard Mata. Named as respondents were the House Committee on Justice, chaired by Rep. Gerville Luistro, and the House of Representatives, represented by Speaker Martin Romualdez. During a press briefing, Torreon said the legal challenge was not meant to shield the vice president from accountability but to ensure the impeachment process remains within constitutional bounds. "Impeachment is a grave constitutional process. It is not a political free-for-all," he said. He added that the case raises fundamental questions about whether the House justice panel may allow preliminary complaints to proceed by relaxing rules and relying on subpoenas to substantiate allegations. The petitioners argued that the committee gravely abused its discretion when it allowed the third and fourth complaints to move forward despite what they described as clear defects. They said the complaints were "repackaged" and duplicative of earlier filings, noting that one had been publicly described as an "improved version" of a previous complaint. According to Torreon, the same lawmaker who endorsed an earlier complaint also endorsed a subsequent one, suggesting what he called a "rolling and tactical filing process" that undermines the constitutional threshold required for impeachment. The lawyers further accused the committee of applying a double standard, pointing out that earlier impeachment

complaints against President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. had been dismissed for lack of sufficient evidence, while those against Duterte were allowed to proceed despite similar deficiencies. Central to the petition is the claim that the House justice panel overstepped its “gatekeeping” role by conducting subpoena-driven proceedings before determining whether the complaints were sufficient in form and substance. The petitioners said this effectively transformed a preliminary review into a full-blown evidentiary inquiry. THEY QUESTIONED THE ISSUANCE OF SUBPOENAS COVERING DUTERTE’ S STATEMENTS OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND NET WORTH DATING BACK TO 2007, AS WELL AS DOCUMENTS FROM THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION AND RECORDS INVOLVING CORPORATIONS NOT MENTIONED IN THE COMPLAINTS.” This shows that the committee is not proving a specific discrepancy; it was broadly searching for one,” Torreon said, describing the proceedings as a “fishing expedition” not sanctioned by the Constitution or House rules. The petition also argued that due process is compromised when complaints are allowed to survive initial scrutiny and are later bolstered by externally gathered evidence, instead of requiring complainants to establish a clear and direct link between alleged offenses and the respondent at the outset. The legal move comes as the House Committee on Justice continues to seek financial records and summon witnesses regarding allegations that Duterte misused confidential and intelligence funds, amassed wealth disproportionate to her income and engaged in actions against senior government officials. She has repeatedly denied the accusations. Earlier, the committee set aside the first impeachment complaint for violating the one-year ban rule, while the second complaint was withdrawn by its complainant. The filing of the petition adds a new layer of uncertainty to the impeachment process as the House moves closer to deciding whether to elevate the complaints to the plenary. A vote of at least one-third of all House members, or 106 lawmakers, is required to transmit articles of impeachment to the Senate for trial.

- [PH, Chinese ships avoid collision in WPS \(2026-03-27 16:12\)](#)

A PHILIPPINE Navy ship on patrol near Pag-asa Island in the West Philippine Sea narrowly avoided a collision with a Chinese missile frigate on March 25. In a statement on Thursday night, the Armed Forces of the Philippines’ (AFP) Western Command said the BRP Benguet encountered the People’ s Liberation Army Navy missile frigate, with bow/pennant number 532 while on routine patrol. The frigate “executed an unsafe and unprofessional maneuver by closing in and passing at a dangerously close distance,” the AFP said. It said such maneuvers are provocative and constitute a clear violation of the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea. “Despite this, the measured and decisive actions of the Benguet effectively prevented escalation while ensuring the safety of all personnel on board,” it added. Speaking at the just-concluded forum organized by the Stratbase Institute and the Japanese Embassy in Manila marking 70 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries, AFP chief Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. said the Philippines would remain anchored in international law despite China’ s growing assertiveness in the disputed waters. “In the face of the People’ s Republic of China’ s increasing assertiveness in the West Philippine Sea and the broader South China Sea, the Philippines remains firmly anchored in international law,

diplomacy and transparency,” Brawner said, describing Manila’s approach as “principled restraint, coupled with resolve.” He stressed that the country would continue to assert its maritime rights through peaceful and lawful means, citing the 2016 ruling under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which invalidated Beijing’s sweeping claims in the South China Sea. Brawner also pointed to expanding defense cooperation with allies, including the “SQUAD” grouping and the upcoming Balikatan Exercises, which are set to include Japanese participation for the first time, as a sign of Manila’s firm resolve. For his part, Stratbase president Victor Andres Manhit said defending Philippine sovereignty requires a broader, multi-sectoral approach beyond government, calling for “strategic clarity” and deeper coordination with democratic partners. “Because the next seventy years will not be defined by history — but by how we act today,” Manhit said. “In a region where the stakes continue to rise, the Philippines and Japan have both the opportunity and the responsibility to work together to strengthen economic resilience, enhance security cooperation and uphold the principles that keep our region stable and open.” Meanwhile, Philippine Coast Guard commandant Adm. Ronnie Gil Gavan described tensions in the West Philippine Sea as a “daily reality” for frontline personnel, framing maritime security as a fundamental right. “Security at sea is a human right,” Gavan said, noting that coast guard personnel routinely protect Filipino fishers and respond to vessels in distress. He added that Philippine authorities have repeatedly documented incidents of Chinese vessels attempting to block or harass Filipino personnel, calling the West Philippine Sea the “most immediate test” of Manila’s partnerships with like-minded countries. Gavan emphasized the importance of cooperation with allies such as Japan in maintaining a sustained presence at sea and ensuring that Philippine forces remain “professional, yet unyielding.” Former Supreme Court justice Antonio Carpio said enforcement of the 2016 arbitral award does not depend on a single global authority but on the continued presence of allied navies in contested waters. “Every time the US and its allies sail in the West Philippine Sea... that is enforcement,” Carpio said, adding that such operations reinforce the area as part of the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone under the ruling. He also urged the government to pursue additional legal remedies, including new arbitral cases over overlapping extended continental shelf claims, to further strengthen the landmark decision and build broader international support.

- [Marcos Urges New PNPA Graduates to Shun Corruption, Protect Human Rights](#)  
(2026-03-27 16:11)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday urged the new graduates of the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) to have zero tolerance for corruption and human rights abuses. “While the nation’s trust in the police force has climbed in these last years, there is still room for improvement,” Marcos said in his speech during the 47th Commencement Exercises for the “Silang Paglaom” Class of 2026 in Silang, Cavite, noting lingering public doubts toward the police. He added that corruption and human rights violations have no place in the police service, warning that misconduct erodes the very foundation of public safety. “Our security is weakened when the hands sworn to protect are tainted. So we must change this,” he

added. The president said he has ordered the Philippine National Police (PNP) to ensure a visible and disciplined presence in communities, alongside efforts to strengthen internal accountability. He reiterated that the PNP, together with the National Police Commission, must enforce a strict zero-tolerance policy against corruption and human rights abuses. Marcos directed the PNP and the Department of the Interior and Local Government to conduct prompt and objective investigations into erring officers. “Throughout the PNP ranks, we have conducted thousands of investigations on erring personnel, resulting in disciplinary actions,” Marcos said. “We can improve public trust through enhanced police visibility and transparency in these investigations,” he added. The president highlighted the government’s push for moral and spiritual formation within the police force, citing nationwide moral recovery sessions to reinforce ethical standards among officers. Marcos urged the graduates to transform the police force into “one that is deeply trusted by our citizens.” “Help to cleanse your ranks so that wrongdoings of a few will not destroy the reputation that you have worked so hard to achieve. Become problem solvers by fairly enforcing the law,” Marcos said. “Be law enforcers who will bring closure and justice to our people, especially those who have been oppressed,” he added. The president urged the graduates to never forget their duty to the republic. “Always keep in mind that your oath is tied to the republic and the Filipino people alone. Leave all other interests at the door,” he said. This year’s top police cadet among 326 graduates is Van Marie Editha Gundaya Cagasan, 24, a native of Baybay City, Leyte. The PNPA Class of 2026, whose name “Sinanay Na Alagad Ng Kapayapaan Na Maglilingkod Sa Pilipinong Mamamayan” (Trained Servant of Peace Who Will Serve the Filipino People) marks a new batch of officers expected to uphold law, order, and public service under the administration’s vision of a “Bagong Pilipinas” (New Philippines).

- [Groups bemoan unsolved labor killings](#) (2026-03-27 16:10)

A TOTAL of 105 cases of trade union killings in the country since 2016 remain unsolved, the Federation of Free Workers (FFW) said Thursday. The statement, made in partnership with the Danish Trade Union Development Agency, was published in the 2025 State of Freedom of Association in the Philippines Report. “Documented violations continue at an alarming rate, averaging at least one case per week in 2025. These include killings, harassment, illegal arrests, and intimidation — often linked to state security frameworks and, increasingly, to private sector actors,” it read. The 2025 report said the Inter-Agency Committee on Freedom of Association under Executive Order 23 “failed to deliver concrete results, including the prosecution of perpetrators in high-profile cases.” It also cited the “continued funding of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict.” “Trade union density (4 percent) and collective bargaining coverage remain critically low. Despite a large labor force (60 percent), only a small proportion of workers are unionized or covered by collective agreements (1 percent),” the report stated. It noted that “protection for labor rights defenders remains inconsistent as institutional responses remain inadequate.” The previous 2024 report cited a “culture of impunity” regarding red-tagging, abduction, and enforced disappearances. “We lauded President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. when he signed Executive Order No. 97 last year. It was a

welcome signal that the government recognized freedom of association, not as a gift from the state but as an inherent right of every worker that must be protected, not feared. But an executive order cannot do the walking if the government will not move its feet,” said FFW National President Sonny Matula. “The sad truth is this: there is still no visible progress in the 105 documented cases of killing of workers. Rights on paper are good. Justice in practice is better. Workers need both,” he added. National Federation of Sugar Workers spokesman Mario Tapi-on lamented that the government continues red-tagging when workers only want a living wage. “Our movement was born out of the need to defend the right of our sugar workers to just compensation because they are now receiving lower than what is right according to the law,” Tapi-on said. “We are calling for a living wage but the government’s response is red-tagging and linking our efforts to terrorism. We only want respect for our rights and protection as we fight for justice.” Lucy Francisco of the Kilusan ng Manggagawang Kababaihan said women workers’ rights deserve more attention. “It is unfortunate that the rights of women workers, such as reproductive and care rights, remain overlooked by employers and policymakers. Sometimes it is even used to discriminate against women,” Francisco added. “As part of the workforce who contribute to the development of our economy, these needs should be acknowledged and supported. Women’s rights are workers’ rights and human rights that we need to defend as well.”

- [Proactive governance sought amid oil crisis](#) (2026-03-27 16:09)

DAVAO CITY — Sen. Bong Go called on government officials to be proactive and responsive as the nation grapples with the effects of the oil crisis. “What is happening to us today is difficult. We are affected — everything has a domino effect,” Go said before officers and members of the Vice Mayors League of the Philippines (VMLP) Caraga Region chapter at the Apo View Hotel as part of the activities for Araw ng Dabaw, the city’s annual founding celebration. He emphasized the need for constant readiness among public officials, urging them to act swiftly when needed. “If a special session needs to be called, I am ready to work. For me, we should be ready to be called 24/7 because we are affected by the oil crisis,” he added. Go expressed gratitude to constituents in the Caraga region, acknowledging their role in his political success. “I would not be the No. 1 senator in the 2025 election if it weren’t for you. I am grateful with all my heart,” he said. Reaffirming his commitment to public service, the senator described himself as a “neighbor” willing to help at any time. “I’m just here, your neighbor who will continue to serve as much as I can,” he added. During the gathering, Go recognized key regional officials of the VMLP Caraga chapter, including Chairman Allan Bernal, Vice Chairman Jesusimo Ronquillo, Secretary-General Jovitte Calo, Treasurer Melchie Tuscano, Auditor Ryan Fel Napuli and Public Relations Officer Jonathan Edillor. Also present was VMLP National President and Quezon Vice Mayor Maynard Bumanglag. Go introduced his son, Davao Oriental Vice Mayor Christian Lawrence Go, to attendees. As chair of the Senate committees on sports and youth, Go highlighted the importance of investing in young Filipinos, stressing that leadership should extend beyond legislative duties and focus on compassion and grassroots service. “Let us not limit ourselves as legislators. Our job is constituency, legislation and representation,” he said.

- [Madriaga claims seen as ‘comical’](#) (2026-03-27 16:08)

THE legal counsels for Vice President Sara Duterte and former representative Arnolfo Teves Jr. dismissed claims by alleged bagman Ramil Madriaga that Teves wanted him dead inside prison, calling the allegations “comical” and “poppycok.” During House impeachment hearings Wednesday, Akbayan Party-list Rep. Jose Manuel Diokno raised a motion to place Madriaga under the House’ s protective custody, claiming he was “being dragged to a cell that was built by Teves.” In a statement, Salvador Paolo Panelo Jr., Duterte’ s counsel for the perjury case she filed against Madriaga, said Madriaga’ s counsel, Raymund Palad, previously claimed the vice president visited Madriaga to persuade him not to testify. “That story was quickly debunked by (Interior) Secretary Jonvic Remulla, who confirmed that VP Sara visited Teves, not Madriaga. Since his lie was exposed, Madriaga has conveniently shifted his narrative to insinuate that VP Sara, through Teves, is behind the alleged threat to his life,” Panelo said. Panelo stressed that the falsehood is “on brand” for someone who has lied about his association with the vice president and his own background. “The House Justice Committee’ s blind acceptance of this ridiculous and unsubstantiated narrative from a ‘polluted source’ only confirms the committee’ s willingness to entertain fabrications in pursuit of a politically motivated agenda,” Panelo added. In a separate statement, Teves’ counsel, Ferdinand Topacio, said the move was expected from Diokno. “I suggest he stick to what he does best: represent non-clients in non-cases using non sequitur. Because all he spews out is nonsense,” Topacio added. Duterte has denied knowing Madriaga, which led to the filing of perjury charges against him earlier this month. In an earlier interview with The Manila Times, Panelo said they want Madriaga to remain alive, as he 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. He further stated that if Madriaga’ s testimony had not been used in the impeachment trial, Duterte would not have filed perjury charges against the self-confessed security consultant. “But because this is used to deceive the public and subvert the will of the people, then he should be made liable,” Panelo said.

- [Ujano's acquittal lauded](#) (2026-03-27 16:07)

THE Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (Pahra) on Friday welcomed the release of women’ s and children’ s rights advocate Sally Ujano after the Court of Appeals (CA) acquitted her of rebellion charges. “This is a victory for every advocate who refused to stay silent. It proves that while the wheels of justice may grind slowly, they can still crush the walls of impunity when we stand together. Nanay Sally’ s freedom is a win for the movement, but it is also a reminder that many others remain behind bars due to trumped-up charges,” Pahra Secretary-General Edgar Cabalitan said in a statement. Pahra said it has been at the forefront of the campaign for her release, even elevating her case to international platforms and the United Nations. “We welcomed Nanay Sally home not just as a survivor, but as a symbol of hope.... Her vindication fuels our resolve to continue the fight for all political prisoners who are still waiting for their day of justice,” Cabalitan said. The human rights group said the victory should serve as

a precedent for the dismissal of other cases against activists and community leaders. “The alliance maintains that the ‘weaponization of the law’ must end to truly protect the democratic space in the country,” Pahra said. Earlier Friday, a Facebook page calling for Ujano’s release first confirmed the news through a family statement. “Today, goodness and love have triumphed because we can once again be with Mama, also known as Nanay Sally Ujano. The Court of Appeals has ruled in our favor in the resolution they issued, acquitting Nanay Sally of the accusations against her. This is wonderful news and a great victory for all of us — especially for the youth and women’s sector, particularly as we conclude Women’s Month,” Ujano’s children said in Filipino on Friday. “We, as siblings along with our entire family, are grateful to everyone who stood with us so that we could overcome this struggle for the truth,” they added. Ujano was detained at the Correctional Institute for Women in Mandaluyong City after she was originally convicted of rebellion by the Taguig Regional Trial Court Branch 266. The conviction was linked to an alleged ambush of two military personnel in Quezon province in 2005. She was arrested Nov. 14, 2021, and was released Thursday.

- [Marcos opens new NAIA expressway](#) (2026-03-27 16:05)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday inaugurated the new NAIA Expressway (NAIAX) westbound off-ramp, a 320-meter road designed to improve access to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 3 and ease congestion along Andrews Avenue in Pasay City. Speaking to reporters, the president said the new exit was expected to reduce travel time for motorists by at most 30 minutes. “It is short but will have a big impact because this is where traffic builds up. This will help avoid traffic,” Marcos said after the opening of the new NAIAX exit ramp. Marcos said the project was part of the government’s broader efforts to improve mobility, especially in preparation for the upcoming Holy Week. He cited several initiatives, including the opening of additional connector roads linking Cavitex to C-5 and routes leading to Cabanatuan, aimed at providing further relief to travelers. “This is just one part of what we are doing, especially in preparation for Holy Week,” the president said. “We continue to open and improve our roads to make travel easier across the country,” he added. Marcos was joined during the inspection by Acting Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon, San Miguel Corp. (SMC) Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Ramon Ang, Acting Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez, Toll Regulatory Board Executive Director Jose Arturo Tugade, and Pasay City Mayor Imelda Calixto-Rubiano. In a chance interview after the president’s visit, Ang said the project costs about P1 billion. SMC is the Concessionaire and Operator of the project, which was completed in December 2025 and opened to the public on March 27, 2026. According to government data, the project is expected to reduce travel time by 15 to 25 minutes for motorists coming from the South Luzon Expressway, Skyway Stage 3, and Lawton Avenue, particularly during peak hours. Marcos previously ordered concerned government agencies to develop infrastructure that improves connectivity and decongests traffic in Metro Manila. Upon the president’s orders, the NAIAX Westbound Off-Ramp to NAIA Terminal 3 Project was constructed to complement NAIA’s modernization under the Public-Private Partnership program, providing new airport access for smooth, predictable travel. In addition, road widening

was carried out along Circulo del Mundo Rotonda, leading to NAIA Terminal 3. Traffic congestion and inefficient inter-terminal transfers at the NAIA cause subpar arrival and departure experiences from Manila, aggravated by unpredictable travel time for travelers transferring between NAIA terminals. As part of efforts to further enhance NAIA, the project aims to improve connectivity among NAIA's three terminals, with a projected 30 to 40-percent reduction in vehicle volume at the Andrews Avenue-Newport intersection by separating airport-bound traffic from local roads, providing immediate relief to commuters and residents of Newport City and Villamor.

- [Duterte defense rebuffs prosecution request](#) (2026-03-27 16:04)

THE legal counsel for former president Rodrigo Duterte has rejected a confidential request by the prosecution before the International Criminal Court (ICC), calling it an insinuation of professional misconduct. In a public filing dated March 26, 2026, defense counsel Nicholas Kaufman responded to a confidential prosecution request submitted March 5, disputing suggestions that the defense may have violated Article 8 of the Code of Professional Conduct. "Since spring is in the air and Counsel is feeling remarkably benevolent, he will not take offence at the unnecessary nature of the Request and its implied suggestion ... that he might be violating Article 8," Kaufman wrote, dismissing the prosecution's concerns. The filing, submitted to Pre-Trial Chamber I presided over by Judge Iulia Antoanella Motoc, addressed several redacted issues, including conditions and restrictions involving the defense team and Duterte. Kaufman also took aim at what he described as the prosecution's "unabated passion for scrutinizing the media coverage" of the case, advising its senior trial lawyer to "not believe everything he reads in the papers" — unless it concerns Duterte's innocence. Central to the prosecution's request was what the defense described as a "peculiar" inquiry into the roles of certain individuals whose identities remain redacted and their possible access to confidential information. In response, Kaufman issued formal assurances to the chamber, stating these individuals have neither received nor will receive official disclosures related to the case, have no access to nonpublic filings, and are not permitted to participate in privileged communications or meetings with Duterte at the ICC detention facility. He maintained that the prosecution's request carried an "implied suggestion" of misconduct, which the defense firmly rejected. Duterte faces charges before the ICC over alleged crimes linked to his administration's anti-drug campaign. He is currently in custody at the court's detention center in The Hague pending further proceedings.

- [MMDA seeks temporary private shuttle scheme](#) (2026-03-27 16:04)

THE Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) is seeking a temporary scheme that would allow privately owned vehicles without franchises to operate as company shuttle services under special permits, as rising fuel prices continue to strain commuters and employers in Metro Manila. In a publicly shared letter on Friday, MMDA Chairman Don Artes proposed carpooling or a company-based shuttle service scheme as an immediate intervention to ease commuters' burden, cut fuel consumption, and maximize existing transport resources. The

proposal came amid continuing global developments that have affected energy supply, raised petroleum prices, increased transportation costs, and reduced mobility options for workers in Metro Manila. Artes asked the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board to allow the temporary use of privately owned vehicles, even without existing franchises, to operate as shuttle services through the issuance of special permits. He also proposed a faster, simpler process for securing permits through streamlined measures and minimal requirements to expedite the deployment of shuttle services. Under the proposal, operations would be limited to employee transport, nonprofit in nature, and fully compliant with LTFRB rules and regulations. The MMDA said the initiative aims to provide an immediate and practical option for commuters affected by higher fuel prices, encourage ride-sharing, reduce the number of private vehicles on the road, support companies in maintaining workforce mobility, and help ease traffic congestion while improving fuel efficiency in Metro Manila. On March 30, the MMDA and LTFRB will meet with the Department of Transportation, Land Transportation Office, and Highway Patrol Group to discuss the proposed carpooling guidelines.

- [Court resets hearing vs vlogger, starlet](#) (2026-03-27 16:03)

THE battle over explicit online content that could reach children continued Friday as sexy star Salome Salvi appeared at the Makati City Prosecutor's Office, while vlogger Brian Babilonia skipped his second consecutive hearing, prompting the preliminary investigation to be reset for April 16. Salvi attended the second preliminary investigation hearing over alleged violations of Article 201 of the Revised Penal Code, in relation to the Anti-Cybercrime Act. Babilonia, who also goes by the name Tio Bri, was absent for the second consecutive hearing, according to the Kapisanan ng Social Media Broadcasters ng Pilipinas Inc. (KSMBPI). The complaints stemmed from content posted on public social media platforms that the group said were "easily accessible to children." KSMBPI said it had issued a cease-and-desist notice through its legal counsel, Mark Tolentino, in November 2025, but was allegedly ignored, prompting the filing of cases earlier this month. KSMBPI chairman Michael Raymond Aragon said the camp of Salvi had sought dialogue before the formal complaints were filed. However, both sides ultimately agreed to let the legal process proceed. He added that the organization is preparing to file additional complaints against other entities it accused of posting similar adult content online. "We are set to file similar cases against Cinepop and T-Bone corporations once our evidence and witnesses are complete," Aragon said, reiterating the group's call for stricter compliance to prevent minors from accessing explicit materials online.

- [MMDA turns over PH's first electric ferry vessel](#) (2026-03-27 16:02)

THE Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) on Thursday formally marked the turnover of M/B Dalaray, billed as the country's first electric ferry, several months after it was launched in November 2025. During the ceremonial closing of the Development, Prototyping, and Pilot Deployment of the Electric Passenger Ferry Project on Thursday, officials presented the pilot run results of the vessel, which served 3,258 passengers through February. The project also helped avoid about 16,000 kilograms of carbon dioxide emissions and saved about 6,237

liters of fuel, with officials presenting the figures as part of the ferry's operational gains. Passenger surveys also highlighted the boat's safety, sustainability as an electric ferry, cleanliness, and quiet operation as among its notable features. MMDA Chairman Don Artes said the electric ferry marked an important step toward sustainable and innovative transport solutions for the country's waterways. Artes said M/B Dalaray demonstrates that technology can be used to create a cleaner, more efficient, and environmentally responsible public transportation system. He also announced plans to build two more electric boats and to seek technical assistance from agencies involved in the project, including the Department of Science and Technology, Department of Energy, and Maritime Industry Authority. Artes said the plan would complement the upcoming fully electric Love Bus, which will offer free rides in selected areas in Pasig. MMDA Deputy Chairman Frisco San Juan Jr. also shared his experience riding the ferry, saying it was enjoyable because "it is very quiet and it is easy to hear the guides whenever there are tour groups." San Juan said the push for electric ferry boats is timely given the ongoing tensions in the oil-rich Middle East. He said this proved that the transition to electrification and cleaner transport options was a "pressing and immediate priority" for the future of urban mobility. MMDA General Manager Nicolas Torre III, meanwhile, shared observations from his inspection ride on board Dalaray on Wednesday, including the need to improve the communications system at stations of the MMDA Pasig River Ferry Service.

- [DMW closes recruiter, visa firms in Manila](#) (2026-03-27 16:01)

THE Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) on Friday said it shuttered a recruitment agency and a visa consultancy firm in Ermita, Manila. In a statement posted on its Facebook page, the DMW closed Creative Artist Placement Service Inc., along with its tie-up, Schengen Visa Caps, for allegedly recruiting Filipino workers illegally to central European countries, particularly Poland, Hungary, and Czechia. Undersecretary Bernard Olalia, who led the operation, said the firms offered various jobs in Europe, such as factory workers, farmers, housekeepers, cleaners, and drivers, with a monthly salary of P80,000. However, the DMW said, applicants were asked to pay an overcharged placement fee of between P120,000 and P150,000. "Despite such payments, they were not deployed even after waiting for more than one year," the DMW said. As a result, the closure of the recruitment agency and its visa firm affiliate will include their staff members in the "List of Persons with Derogatory Record," and bar them from participating in the government's overseas recruitment program. They will also be charged with illegal recruitment. Creative Artist Placement Service Inc.'s license will be cancelled for recruitment violations. The firms' closures raised the total number of establishments the DMW closed to seven, and more are being targeted this year to protect overseas Filipino workers from illegal recruiters.

- [PH has enough crude to last until June 30](#) (2026-03-27 16:00)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday said the country has enough crude oil to last until June 30. The president's assurance came after Malacañang confirmed that a shipment of more than 700,000 barrels of crude oil from Russia arrived recently. The shipment was reportedly

bound for the refinery of Petron Corp. in Bataan, where it will be processed into petroleum products such as diesel and gasoline. The latest delivery signals renewed efforts by the government to import oil from Russia after a pause that began in 2022, following global market disruptions due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The global price of oil has spiked after the United States and Israel launched air attacks against Iran at the close of February. Tehran has retaliated with air assaults that targeted Israel and other Gulf countries considered as US allies. Iran also closed the Strait of Hormuz, the waterway through which a fifth of the world's oil shipment passes. Speaking at the sidelines of the opening of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Expressway Phase II, Marcos said the Philippines has secured sufficient crude oil imports for the coming months to support domestic supply. "Because of that, we now have a supply of crude oil that is sufficient until June 30," he said. The president said that importing crude for local refining was more cost-efficient than bringing in already refined petroleum products. "There is a difference in pricing when we import crude oil compared to importing already refined fuel like diesel. Importing refined fuel is more expensive," he said. Despite the arrival of oil from Russia, Marcos said the government will continue to look for additional suppliers to ensure long-term energy security. On Wednesday, he said he has ordered the Department of Energy to search for more fuel sources, even though the country has stockpiled up to 45 days' worth of crude. "And my instruction to them is: do not stop. Continue looking for additional supply because we do not know how long this situation will last," Marcos said. "And when we say we have — now we are talking about around 45 days on average, more or less. But we do not know how long this will last, or how long the supply is going to be diminished from the Middle East through the Strait of Hormuz," he said. Marcos said the country was searching out to countries like Russia, Japan, China and South Korea. The president also recently issued Executive Order 110, declaring a state of national emergency, which will be in effect for one year unless sooner lifted or extended, the president said. He also signed a measure allowing the suspension of excise taxes on fuel, although its implementation will depend on global oil price trends and recommendations from the economic cluster. Excise taxes may be suspended if global crude oil prices exceed \$80 per barrel for at least one month.

- [Duterte urges Filipinos to "be prepared" for "difficult" food situation \(2026-03-27 15:48\)](#)

MANILA, Philippines - Vice President Sara Duterte has urged Filipinos to be prepared until the end of 2026 as the food situation in the country to become "more difficult" due to the threat of El Nino and rains until the end of the year as well as the ongoing price increases due to the War in the Middle East. She also said that the Office of the Vice President will practice "cost cutting measures" and cancelling their events to ensure that funds will be directed towards their public assistance programs. In a video statement on Friday, Duterte said that the "continuous rise in the prices of goods is a heavy blow to our aspiration of having a peaceful and prosperous life for every Filipino family," "What we are going through is not normal; it is the result of crises outside our country, including the war in the Middle East, which directly affects the price of food, oil, and other basic necessities," Duterte said. She said that the OVP will continue to implement programs that are focused on helping people to save money, such as the

PagbaBAGo Campaign, the OVP Free Bus Ride program, Mag Negosyo ta 'Day livelihood program, and the RIICE or the Relief for Indigents and Individuals in Crises and Emergencies program. Duterte also revealed that two events of the OVP to be held in June - the Pasidungog and the Kasarilayaan - will be cancelled for this year. "These are two large gatherings—one for the LGBTQ community and the other for the year-four accomplishment report of my term. Instead, the funds originally intended for these activities will be added to the budget of the RIICE project," Duterte said. She called on Filipinos to "prioritize sufficient food for our families, medical treatment for the sick, and the education of our children," "The most effective defense against crisis is preparedness. Let us begin planning our steps through the end of 2026, including preparing for possible job losses, the continued rise in food prices, and risk reduction measures against the effects of extreme heat and flooding on our livelihoods," Duterte said.

- [No winner in Ultra lotto 6/58, Mega lotto 6/45 draws for March 27](#) (2026-03-27 15:36)

MANILA, Philippines — There were no winners in the Ultra lotto 6/58 and Mega lotto 6/45 draws on Friday night, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said. The winning combination for Ultra lotto 6/58 was 12-57-16-01-42-51 which had a jackpot prize of P75,000,000.00. There was also no winner for the Mega lotto 6/45 draw, which drew a winning combination of 19-38-36-31-27-02 for a jackpot prize of P15,000,000.00.

- [349 Pinoys return home from Middle East](#) (2026-03-27 14:59)

The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) late on Friday said that 349 Filipinos from the United Arab Emirates returned to the country. Both agencies said that the Filipinos were returned through a government-chartered flight TVR7737. According to OWWA, 222 were overseas Filipino workers, 78 were dependents (along with 11 infants), and the other 49 were stranded Filipinos that were "rescued by the government". In total, 2,910 OFWs from the Middle East returned to the country, with 2,120 of them coming through the five government-chartered flights.

- [Palace: No 'energy lockdown' seen for now](#) (2026-03-27 14:31)

MANILA, Philippines- The government does not see the need to implement an "energy lockdown" for now, Malacañang said Friday. Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said the government was looking for sources to ensure a continuous supply of oil for the country. "Right now, the President is really preparing for this, the administration is preparing for this, so we don't want to end up in the worst-case scenario," Castro said during a press conference. "So, that's why now, with the cooperation of all government agencies, especially DOE (Department of Energy) and DFA (Department of Foreign Affairs), we are really looking for sources so that the supply of petroleum will not stop and will continue for our countrymen," she added.

- [Palace welcomes WFH plan of private firms to save energy](#) (2026-03-27 14:10)

MANILA, Philippines- Malacañang on Friday welcomed suggestions from business groups to adopt a work-from-home (WFH) setup to reduce fuel consumption and ease the impact of rising

oil prices. Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said Malacañang viewed the proposal as “helpful” but would leave the decision to private companies. “If that will be the proposal of private business companies, that will be a big help,” Castro said during a press conference. “Of course, the President will not dictate on private companies,” she added.

- [House Justice Panel describe petition by Duterte allies as "diversionary tactic"](#) (2026-03-27 13:31)

MANILA, Philippines - Some members of the House Justice Committee said that the petition filed by the lawyers allied with Vice President Sara Duterte that stops the ongoing impeachment hearings described the move as a "diversionary tactic" designed to deflect from the proceedings. The group, led by Israelito Torreon, filed a petition for certiorari and prohibition at the Supreme Court, saying that the panel "overstepped its constitutional gatekeeping role by allowing defective complaints against Duterte to proceed and conducting subpoena-driven evidentiary proceedings that resemble a trial." In a statement, Bico Saro Partylist Rep. Terry Ridon said that the petition "will not stop the resolve of the House Committee on Justice to exact accountability for the serious allegations against her, including the misuse of confidential funds, the issuance of death threats against the President and other public officials, and unexplained wealth and related violations," "The subpoena of documents relevant to the grounds for impeachment is well within the authority of the House Committee on Justice under the 1987 Constitution and the House Rules on Impeachment, both of which expressly allow the conduct of hearings in aid of impeachment proceedings," Ridon said. Meanwhile, Mamamayang Liberal Partylist Rep. Leila de Lima said that Duterte is "showing signs of desperation" in trying to evade accountability. "May pa-"bloodbath, bloodbath" pang sinasabi noon. Sa simpleng committee hearing nga ay takot na takot ngayon (She is saying a bloodbath, but she is scared of attending a simple committee hearing)," de Lima said.

- [Palace: Govt studying proposed fuel price freeze](#) (2026-03-27 13:17)

MANILA, Philippines- The government is studying a proposed price freeze on petroleum products, Malacañang said Friday, as the Philippines faces four consecutive weeks of steep increases in pump prices. Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said authorities are weighing both consumer welfare and the viability of the oil industry. “This will be balanced based on what is appropriate so that not only one sector is affected,” Castro said during a press briefing. “There should be balance for the oil industry and for the public. We are not saying that a price freeze will not be implemented, but it is currently under study,” she added. Castro said declaring an energy emergency is crucial to addressing disruptions in global oil supply, which affect both the availability and pricing of fuel products in the country. She emphasized that the government remains proactive while ensuring all interventions comply with existing laws. “The government can perform its duties without violating the law. We can unlock the funds we need to use in accordance with the law,” she said. Castro added that the government, through the Department of Energy (DOE), has lined up measures to ensure a stable electricity supply. “We have issued department guidelines to allow the use of cheaper fuel and to

generate more power from sources such as coal and renewable energy. The Energy Regulatory Commission has also suspended the electricity market to enable increased use of coal, renewable energy, and even power generated from Malampaya gas field,” Castro said, quoting the DOE. “We are also assisting renewable energy developers in completing their projects ahead of schedule,” she added. For island communities, Castro said the government is planning to secure cheaper, lower-grade diesel for the National Power Corporation to help prevent blackouts. She also urged solar energy firms to fulfill their commitments to help stabilize the country’s power supply. In a related development, Ferdinand Marcos Jr. announced on Thursday the successful drilling and testing of the Camago-3 well, which is producing up to 60 million standard cubic feet of gas per day. This development is expected to extend the lifespan of the Malampaya gas field, providing additional, more stable, and potentially cheaper power for Filipino consumers.

- [Defense rejects prosecution request in Duterte ICC Case](#) (2026-03-27 09:17)

MANILA, Philippines — The legal team for former president Rodrigo Duterte has dismissed a prosecution request as 'unnecessary,' pushing back against what it described as implied insinuations of professional misconduct. In a public filing dated March 26, 2026, the defense responded to a confidential prosecution request submitted on March 5, rejecting suggestions that counsel might be violating Article 8 of the Code of Professional Conduct. “Since spring is in the air and Counsel is feeling remarkably benevolent, he will not take offence at the unnecessary nature of the Request and its implied suggestion (or rather insinuation) that he might be violating Article 8 of the Professional Conduct,” lead defense counsel Nicholas Kaufman said in the filing. The response addressed five specific points that remain redacted in the public version, relating to restrictions or conditions imposed on the defense team and Duterte himself. Kaufman also criticized the prosecution for what he called an “unabated passion for scrutinizing the media coverage of this case,” advising the Senior Trial Lawyer to “abide by the adage ‘not to believe everything he reads in the papers’ – unless, of course, it relates to Mr Duterte’s innocence.” The filing was submitted to Pre-Trial Chamber I, presided over by Judge Iulia Antoanella Motoc. Duterte faces charges at the International Criminal Court over alleged crimes committed during his presidency’s anti-drug campaign. He was taken into ICC custody and is currently held at the court’s detention center in The Hague.

- [PNP Chief orders crackdown on LPG hoarders, profiteers](#) (2026-03-27 09:06)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Friday vowed to crack down on liquefied petroleum gas retailers who were hoarding and manipulating prices during the oil price crisis. Gen. Jose Melencio C. Nartatez, Jr., PNP chief, said the move aimed to protect the public from artificial price increases during a period of tight supply. “I have directed our local police to heighten monitoring of retailers to prevent hoarding and price manipulation of LPG amid the present energy challenges that we are facing,” he said in a statement. The move is in line with the directive of President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. and Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla to ensure an adequate supply of petroleum products amid energy challenges caused

by conflict in the Middle East. He said proper coordination was now being done with the local government units and other agencies concerned to come up with measures against hoarding and profiteering. The Department of Energy (DOE) said it was closely monitoring the supply of LPG, which may only last up to 24 days, including incoming deliveries. Based on the DOE's March 20 inventory and daily average utilization, the Philippines still has a sufficient petroleum products supply such as gasoline and diesel. However, LPG has the lowest supply. For March, LPG prices in Metro Manila have now spiked from P825 to over P1,000 per regular tank, according to the DOE. Nartatez assured the public that the police would not hesitate to go after retailers who would take advantage of the situation. "This is not the time to panic and this should never be the time to take advantage of any of our kababayan. While the national government is exhausting all measures to help, we in the PNP will also make sure that consumers are always protected," said Nartatez.

- [DSWD eyes second round of financial aid for drivers](#) (2026-03-27 08:16)

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on March 27, 2026 says it is considering another round of financial assistance if fuel price hikes continue. Video By Allen Limos

- [SC petitioned to halt Duterte impeachment proceedings](#) (2026-03-27 07:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Lawyers allied with Vice President Sara Duterte have filed a petition for certiorari and prohibition with a prayer for a writ of preliminary injunction before the Supreme Court on Friday, seeking to stop the ongoing impeachment proceedings against her at the House of Representatives. The petition challenges the actions of the House Committee on Justice. During a press briefing, lawyer Israelito Torreon said the petition did not seek to shield the Vice President from accountability but aimed to ensure the impeachment process remained constitutional. "Impeachment is a grave constitutional process. It is not a political free-for-all," he said. The petitioners argued that the House committee overstepped its constitutional gatekeeping role by allowing defective complaints against Duterte to proceed and conducting subpoena-driven evidentiary proceedings that resemble a trial. The petition highlights six main points of concern: - The committee allegedly applied a double standard, dismissing earlier impeachment complaints for insufficient evidence while allowing similar deficiencies in the Duterte-Carpio complaints. - The third and fourth complaints were characterized as repackaged, conclusory, and duplicative, undermining the intended threshold review. - Subpoenas for documents, affidavits, and other evidence were issued before establishing the sufficiency of the complaints, effectively turning preliminary review into a "fishing expedition." - The petition contends that due process is compromised when complaints are allowed to survive first and then expanded through external evidence. - Threshold review, the lawyers argued, could not be bypassed or converted into a full evidentiary process. - The complaint process, they said, should require clear linking of alleged offenses to the respondent, rather than relying on hearsay, vague allegations, or institutional controversies. Torreon stressed that the petition was a constitutional limits case, not a question

of guilt or innocence. “We are asking the court to decide whether the House Committee on Justice may keep preliminary complaints alive by relaxing rules and using subpoenas to substantiate claims,” he said. The filing comes as the committee continues to request financial records, statements of assets, and other documents tied to Duterte, while summoning witnesses related to alleged misuse of confidential and intelligence funds. The impeachment complaints accuse Duterte of misusing government funds, accumulating wealth beyond her income, and plotting against senior officials—allegations she has repeatedly denied. The legal challenge raises fresh questions over procedural boundaries as the House moves closer to potentially endorsing the complaints to the full chamber, where at least 106 lawmakers must vote in favor for the case to proceed to the Senate.

- [Court resets hearing vs starlet, vlogger to April over 'adult' content access to children](#) (2026-03-27 04:51)

MANILA, Philippines — The battle over explicit online content that could reach children continued Friday as sexy star Salome Salvi appeared at the Makati City Prosecutor’s Office while vlogger Brian Babilonia skipped his second consecutive hearing, prompting the preliminary investigation to be reset to April 16. Salvi personally attended the second preliminary investigation hearing for alleged violations of Article 201 of the Revised Penal Code in relation to the Anti-Cybercrime Act. Babilonia, who also goes by the name Tio Bri, was absent for the second consecutive hearing, according to the Kapisanan ng Social Media Broadcasters ng Pilipinas Inc. (KSMBPI). The complaints stemmed from content posted on public social media platforms that the group said were “easily accessible to children.” KSMBPI said it had issued cease-and-desist notices through its legal counsel, Mark Tolentino, in November 2025, but these were allegedly ignored, prompting the filing of cases earlier this month. KSMBPI Chairman Michael Raymond Aragon said the camp of Salvi had sought a dialogue prior to the filing of charges. However, both sides ultimately agreed to let the legal process proceed. He added that the organization was preparing to file additional complaints against other entities it accused of posting similar adult content online. “We are set to file similar cases against Cinepop and T-Bone corporations once our evidence and witnesses are complete,” Aragon said, reiterating the group’s call for stricter compliance to prevent minors from accessing explicit materials online.

- [Marcos open to repealing oil deregulation law](#) (2026-03-27 04:28)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is not discounting the proposal to repeal the Oil Deregulation Law to allow the government to regulate oil prices and intervene in securing oil supply. However, Marcos said the government was focused on delivering “immediate” solutions to the energy problems at the moment. “Nothing is being discounted, meaning everything that can be done so that we can do something to help mitigate the impact of the war in the Middle East is being discussed,” Marcos said during a media interview in Silang, Cavite. “But what we are focus now is immediate, you know we will have to amend the oil deregulation, that’s a long discussion. I don’t know when will it come out,” he added.

- [Villar Group malls adjust operating hours starting March 30](#) (2026-03-27 04:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Shopping malls under the Villar Group will adjust its operating hours starting March 30, 2026, following the government's declaration of a national energy emergency. In separate advisories, Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc. said that operating hours for its Vista Malls would be modified, with all branches set to operate from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. from Monday to Friday and 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. The same adjusted schedule will likewise be implemented across its Starmalls network. Both operators advised mallgoers to check the official social media pages of their preferred branches for any branch-specific updates or changes. The adjustment comes as businesses respond to measures aimed at managing electricity consumption amid tightening power supply conditions. Mall operators, among the country's largest energy users, are expected to recalibrate operating hours to help ease demand on the grid. Further details on how long the adjusted schedules will remain in place have yet to be disclosed.

- [Marcos: Asean meet to push through in May](#) (2026-03-27 04:09)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday said the Philippines' hosting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Leaders' Summit in May would push through despite the ongoing war in the Middle East. In a media interview in Silang, Cavite, Marcos said that Southeast Asian leaders would focus discussions on oil supply, food security, and the welfare of migrants workers. "We have consulted with our counterparts in the 10 other member states. The question that I asked them is very simple, because of the war in the Middle East, would you like to postpone the Asean Summit? The consensus that we came to is that it is precisely now that we must coordinate our efforts," Marcos said. The President described the summit as "bare-bones," focusing only on urgent and essential issues. "What we really need at this time is for us, leaders to talk to know what do we do in the future, what do we do for the rest of the year, what do we do, how can we help each other, and what is the Asean position regarding all of these shocks that are coming our way," he added.

- [DSWD eyes second round of financial aid for public transport drivers](#) (2026-03-27 03:57)

MANILA, Philippines—The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on Friday said it was considering another round of financial aid if fuel price increases continue. In a press conference in Manila, DSWD Secretary Rex Gatchalian said the P5,000 in cash assistance currently being distributed to different transport groups under its Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS) program was only the first phase of the government's initiative to ease the burden of rising fuel costs on Filipino drivers. "This is not going to be limited to one round, it's going to be multiple rounds. In fact, that's why I'm circling around to see the issues on the ground, because right after Holy Week, there will be a special payout schedule for those who were not included in the first round, so that they can also be given, and then we'll immediately move on to the second round already," he said.

- [Fuel price increase eases further next week amid US-Iran talks on de-escalating war in Middle East](#) (2026-03-27 03:55)

MANILA, Philippines — Diesel and gasoline prices will increase again next week although at a slower pace as discussions between the US and Iran are ongoing to de-escalate the war in the Middle East, a local industry source said on Friday. The source said that diesel prices were expected to go up by around P11.00 to P12.00 per liter while gasoline will either have no adjustments or increase by around P3 per liter. These estimates are based on the 4-day trading of Mean of Platts, Singapore, the pricing basis of refined goods in Southeast Asia. This will also be the 11th straight week that diesel and gasoline prices have increased. "For this week, the relatively lower increase on diesel and slight easing of the increase of gasoline prices, are driven by de-escalation signals in the Middle East conflict, resulting to a drop in crude oil price benchmarks," the source said. "Gasoline prices, which closely track crude and regional supply risks, softened as fears of prolonged supply outages are somewhat reduced. Diesel however, often moves differently and more sharply due to distillate supply tightness," the source added. Local oil companies raised gasoline and diesel prices last week by around P8-P12 per liter and around P15-18 per liter respectively.

- [Duterte, Teves counsels dismiss alleged threat of bagman](#) (2026-03-27 03:35)

MANILA, Philippines — The counsels for both Vice President Sara Duterte and former representative Arnolfo Teves dismissed the claim of alleged bagman Ramil Madriaga that Teves wanted him dead inside prison, calling it "comical" and a "popycock." During the impeachment hearing at the House of Representatives on Wednesday, Akbayan Partylist Rep. Jose Manuel Diokno raised a motion to put Madriaga under protective custody of the House as he was "being dragged to a cell that was built by Teves." In a statement, Salvador Paolo Panelo Jr., the counsel of Duterte to the perjury case she filed against Madriaga, said that his counsel, Raymund Palad, previously claimed that Madriaga was visited by the Vice President to persuade him not to testify. "That story was quickly debunked by [Interior] Secretary Jonvic Remulla, who confirmed that VP Sara visited Teves, not Madriaga. Since his lie was exposed, Madriaga has conveniently shifted his narrative to insinuate that VP Sara, through Teves, is behind the alleged threat to his life," Panelo said. He stressed that this falsehood was entirely "on brand" for someone who has lied through his teeth about his supposed association with the vice president and his own background. "The House Justice Committee's blind acceptance of this ridiculous and unsubstantiated narrative from a 'polluted source' only confirms the Committee's willingness to entertain fabrications in pursuit of a politically motivated agenda," Panelo added. In a separate statement, Teves's counsel, Ferdinand Topacio, said that it was already expected coming from Diokno. "I suggest he stick to what he does best: represent non-clients in non-cases using non sequitur. Because all he spews out is nonsense," Topacio added.

- [Marcos opens new NAIAX expressway to ease traffic](#) (2026-03-27 03:27)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday opened the new NAIA Expressway (NAIAX) westbound off-ramp, a 320-meter road designed to improve access to

Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 3 and ease congestion along Andrews Avenue in Pasay City. The President said the new exit was expected to reduce travel time for motorists by as much as 30 minutes. "It is short but will have a big impact because this is where traffic builds up. This will help avoid traffic," Marcos said after the opening of the new NAIAX exit ramp. Marcos was joined during the inspection by San Miguel Corp. President and Chief Executive Officer Ramon Ang and Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon. NAIAX is operated and maintained by Skyway Operations and Maintenance Corp. under SMC Infrastructure, a subsidiary of San Miguel Corp., which holds the 25-year concession to operate the expressway.

- [Philippines, France sign visiting forces agreement to boost military cooperation](#) (2026-03-27 03:17)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines and France signed a Status of Visiting Forces Agreement (SOVFA) on Friday, expanding defense ties and allowing easier deployment of troops between the two countries. Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. and French Minister for the Armed Forces Catherine Vautrin formalized the agreement following a bilateral meeting in Paris, where Teodoro is attending a series of engagements, including the Paris Defense and Strategy Forum. The SOVFA sets the legal framework for the presence of visiting forces, facilitating joint exercises, training, and other military cooperation activities. "We were able to reach this stage in record time because of the fact that our two countries have had years of trust and confidence in working and dealing with one another," Teodoro said in a speech during the signing, a recording of which was provided to media in Manila by the Department of National Defense. France becomes the latest country to enter into a visiting forces arrangement with the Philippines, as Manila expands its network of defense partnerships under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.. The Philippines maintains a long-standing Visiting Forces Agreement with the United States and signed a similar pact with Australia in 2012. More recently, Manila concluded a Reciprocal Access Agreement with Japan, whose troops are set to participate in the upcoming Balikatan exercises alongside Filipino and American forces—marking the first deployment of Japanese combat personnel to the Philippines since World War II. Teodoro has also overseen visiting forces agreements with Canada and New Zealand, while negotiations for a similar pact with the United Kingdom are expected to begin soon. In his remarks, Teodoro said the agreement with France reflected a shared commitment to strengthening defense capabilities and upholding international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Even before the deal was finalized, France had joined the Philippine Navy in joint drills in the West Philippine Sea. French naval vessels are also expected to participate in Balikatan 2026, the Philippines' largest annual military exercise with the United States. France has been among the countries supporting the Philippines amid tensions with China in the South China Sea, where Manila asserts its maritime entitlements. In a keynote speech in Paris, Teodoro emphasized the need for deeper cross-regional cooperation in security and defense, citing growing challenges that require coordinated responses among like-minded nations.

- [Marcos: PH has enough crude oil until June 2026](#) (2026-03-27 02:58)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday announced that the country has sufficient crude oil supply to last until June 30, 2026. At the sidelines of the opening of the NAIA Expressway Phase II, Marcos said he and San Miguel Corp. Chairman Ramon Ang have discussed the importation of fuel to support domestic supply. "In terms of crude oil supply, because they are importing crude oil to be refined here in the Philippines, the price is different... It is more expensive when you import refined oil, which is diesel. And he (Ang) said, we already have a supply of crude oil, sufficient supply to last until June 30," he said.

- [PH Navy vessel avoids collision with Chinese warship in WPS \(2026-03-27 02:50\)](#)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Navy ship BRP Benguet (LS-507) avoided a potential collision after a dangerous maneuver by a Chinese missile frigate while it was conducting a routine operation near Pag-asa Island in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) on March 25, according to the Armed Forces of the Philippines in a statement late Thursday. The AFP Western Command (Wescom) said the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) missile frigate has the bow/pennant number 532. "While conducting lawful operations, BRP Benguet encountered the PLAN vessel, which executed an unsafe and unprofessional maneuver by closing in and passing at a dangerously close distance," it said. Wescom said such dangerous maneuvers are provocative and constitute a clear violation of the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea. "Despite this, the measured and decisive actions of LS-507 effectively prevented escalation while ensuring the safety of all personnel on board," it added. Likewise, Wescom called on the PLAN to adhere to established international rules and norms to prevent incidents at sea. It also added that it will continue to perform its lawful maritime operations with professionalism and resolve in exercising the country's sovereignty, sovereign rights, and jurisdiction in the WPS.

- [SSS assures OFWs in Middle East of uninterrupted digital access \(2026-03-27 00:53\)](#)

MANILA, Philippines — The Social Security System (SSS) has assured its members in the Middle East that they can continue to access benefits and services through its digital platforms despite the escalating regional conflicts. In a statement on Thursday, SSS President Robert Joseph de Claro highlighted the reliability of the My.SSS Portal, which allows overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) to file benefit claims and loan applications without interruption, provided they meet qualifying conditions. Among the available services is the unemployment benefit for OFWs who have been involuntarily separated from their jobs, subject to certification by the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW). "Even in these challenging times, our digital infrastructure ensures seamless service delivery," De Claro said. "Members in the Middle East need not worry; they can manage their accounts safely from anywhere with internet access." The state pension fund chief also noted that pensioners residing in the region can now comply with the Annual Confirmation of Pensioners (ACOP) using the recently launched facial authentication feature on the SSS website ([www.sss.gov.ph](http://www.sss.gov.ph)). "A standout innovation is the ACOP Facial Authentication with Liveness Check, enabling secure identity verification from smartphones anywhere," De Claro explained. He added that the tool was designed to reduce fraud risks and eliminate the need for

travel amid the current security situation in the Middle East. "These tools were purpose-built to empower OFWs, allowing transactions 'whenever, wherever' even in crisis zones," he said. Data from the SSS showed that as of December 2025, there are 1,476,645 covered OFWs, with 540,018 listed as active paying members. "We remain committed to supporting our OFWs through innovation and resilience, no matter the circumstances," De Claro added.

- [Trump says Iran allowed passage of 10 oil tankers as a 'present'](#) (2026-03-26 19:48)

WASHINGTON — Iran allowed 10 oil tankers to pass through the strategic Strait of Hormuz as a "present" to show it was serious about negotiations to end the war, US President Donald Trump said Thursday. Trump was referring to cryptic comments he made two days earlier about a "gift" from Tehran that involved the flow of oil and gas through the waterway, a key chokepoint for the global energy trade. Iranian forces have effectively slowed shipping through the strait to a trickle during the Middle East war, which began nearly four weeks ago. "They said 'to show you the fact that we're real and solid and we're there, we're going to let you have eight boats of oil,'" Trump told reporters in his first cabinet meeting since the conflict started. The tankers were believed to be Pakistani-flagged, Trump said, adding that he had seen news reports that they had passed the strait. "And, I said, 'well, I guess we're dealing with the right people'. And actually, they then apologized for something they said, and they said, 'We're going to send two more boats.'" Before giving his account to reporters, Trump first checked with his Middle East negotiator Steve Witkoff at the cabinet table, saying: "Steve, can I reveal the present?" The US president did not provide any further details. Data from marine intelligence firm Kpler shows that six laden oil tankers and five loaded gas carriers have transited the Gulf since Monday, but there was no independent confirmation these were the ones cited by Trump. Of these vessels, three oil tankers and two gas carriers are currently subject to US sanctions related to Iran. Based on tracking signals, two of the six oil tankers appear to be heading toward China, while one is bound for Thailand. Among the gas carriers, one is en route to Singapore, and another has already arrived in India. For the remaining six vessels, their destinations cannot be determined from the available data.

- [No winner in Super lotto 6/49, Lotto 6/42 draws for March 26](#) (2026-03-26 16:26)

MANILA, Philippines — There were no winners in the Super lotto 6/49 and Lotto 6/42 draws on Thursday night, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said. The winning combination for Super lotto 6/49 was 46-04-19-25-33-02 which had a jackpot prize of P144,085,930.99. There was also no winner for the Lotto 6/42 draw, which drew a winning combination of 29-15-03-18-23-30 for a jackpot prize of P10,000,000.00.

- [Diversification, grid upgrade key to solving energy crisis](#) (2026-03-26 16:17)

AGAINST the backdrop of a newly declared national energy emergency, The Manila Times Energy Forum 2026 convened on Thursday, bringing together representatives from the Department of Energy (DOE), the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) and Meralco PowerGen Corp. (MGen) for the morning session. Representatives from the National Power Corp.

(Napocor), National Transmission Corp. and Aboitiz Power joined the afternoon session. With the theme “Addressing current energy challenges, building a secure and sustainable energy future,” the forum evolved into a “war room” of ideas as the country grappled with the escalating fallout from the Middle East conflict. Moderated by TMT columnist Ben Kritz, the panel reached a sobering consensus: the Philippines’ “umbilical cord” to Middle East energy supplies is no longer a manageable risk but a national security vulnerability. Participants emphasized that long-term resilience lies in developing indigenous energy sources and strengthening the grid infrastructure. They also underscored the need to move beyond temporary fuel subsidies toward localized energy solutions as well as environmental protection protocols. Napocor Chief Executive Officer Jericho Jonas Nograles warned local government units that he has the cooperation of the military to protect critical watersheds and that one of Napocor’s goals is for barangay to be able to “sustain themselves via solar and wind,” effectively insulating them from tremors in the global market. With diesel prices breaching the P100-per-liter mark and the peso weakening past 60 against the United States dollar, discussions shifted from long-term planning to immediate resilience. The focus expanded from fossil fuels to renewable energy and low-emission alternatives such as liquefied natural gas (LNG). The timing of the forum was critical. Just 48 hours earlier, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. signed Executive Order (EO) 110, placing the country under a state of national energy emergency for one year. MGen President and Chief Executive Officer Emmanuel Rubio, and Aboitiz Renewables President and Chief Executive Officer David Mikel Aboitiz outlined how the private sector is accelerating off-grid power solutions, including large-scale solar farms. The original roster of speakers, which included DOE Undersecretary Felix William Fuentebella and ERC Chairman Francis Saturnino Juan, was changed at the last minute after they were called to attend a Senate hearing on EO 110. They were replaced by DOE Director Michael Sinocruz and ERC Executive Director Nancy Aurora Fajardo. Sinocruz discussed the administration’s push toward renewable energy while maintaining output from diesel and coal-fired power plants to stabilize prices, as global LNG and oil shipments face disruptions at the Strait of Hormuz. He also spoke of a diversified sourcing of energy which includes the potential adoption of small modular reactors. During the morning fireside chat, Kritz raised the issue of balancing solar energy generation and distribution. Rubio said MGen’s Battery Energy Storage Systems help address the “duck curve” by storing excess solar power and releasing it when demand rises. Meanwhile, National Transmission Corp. President Fortunato Leynes emphasized that “there is no transition without transmission,” stressing the need to accelerate grid expansion and improve infrastructure to support renewable energy integration. Aboitiz also pointed out that grid constraints, permitting delays and land acquisition issues rather than design, funding or construction, remain the primary bottlenecks in scaling up renewable energy projects. Transforming challenges In her opening remarks, The Manila Times CEO Anna Marie Ang-Thompson said that the news organization documents developments in the energy sector in real time. “We see the volatility of power costs, the strain on our aging grids and the rising public demand for sustainability. We are here today to do more than just report on these realities. We are here because we recognize that, as leaders, we hold the collective power to transform these challenges into a definitive turning point for our country,” she said. Times

President and COO Blanca Mercado cited EO 110, signed on Tuesday, that authorizes the unified package for livelihoods, industries, food and transportation — with Malacañang declaring that energy security is a national priority.

- [Ombudsman to turn over VP Sara's SALN](#) (2026-03-26 16:16)

THE Office of the Ombudsman on Thursday said it will comply with the subpoena issued by the House Committee on Justice for statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALNs) of Vice President Sara Duterte. The committee is conducting hearings to determine whether there is probable cause to impeach her, after it found two impeachment complaints sufficient in form and substance. “Here in the Office of the Ombudsman, any person can request, the public, the general public can request for a copy of SALNs that are with the Ombudsman: the president’s, the vice president’s, those of the heads constitutional commissions and local government unit officials,” Assistant Ombudsman Mico Clavano said. “So, even a simple request would do... And so much more if it is a subpoena. We will comply,” Clavano said. The committee voted on Wednesday to issue a subpoena to the Office of the Ombudsman for Duterte’s SALNs from 2022 to 2025, 2007 to 2013 and 2016 to 2022. The Ombudsman, which is the repository for the SALNs of certain officials including the vice president’s, could provide the SALNs from when she was Davao City mayor and vice mayor. Clavano said they would endorse the subpoena to the Ombudsman’s Mindanao office. Under Republic Act 6713, or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, public officials and employees have the duty to “submit declarations under oath of... their assets, liabilities, net worth, and financial and business interests including those of their spouses and of unmarried children under” the age of 18 who live in their households. The law requires the documents to be filed within 30 days after assuming office; on or before every April 30 after that; and within 30 days after separating from the service. Meanwhile, the political party of the vice president’s father, former president Rodrigo Duterte, said they are “alarmed and bothered” by what they described as the “weaponization” of the impeachment process by the House panel. The statement from the Partido Demokratiko Pilipino comes after the defense team of the vice president said on Wednesday that they are questioning the proceedings of the committee, saying that only the Senate has the “sole power” to try impeachment cases.

- [Beijing says it's open to oil exploration talks](#) (2026-03-26 16:15)

THE Chinese Embassy in Manila said Beijing remains open for oil and gas exploration talks with Manila as long as the Philippines shows its sincerity for such discussions. The embassy was asked to comment on the remarks of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., in a Bloomberg interview, that he is open to resuming discussions with China on a joint oil and gas project in a disputed area of the South China Sea. It noted that China and the Philippines in the past “have conducted in-depth discussions on joint oil and gas development in disputed waters in the South China Sea and have made positive progress.” Chinese President Xi Jinping and President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. during the latter’s state visit to Beijing on Jan. 5, 2023, issued a joint statement on the agreement “to resume discussions on oil and gas development at an early

date.” “As long as the Philippine side demonstrates sincerity, China’s door to dialogue and cooperation will remain open,” the embassy said in a statement on Thursday. “Setting aside differences and pursuing joint development is the right path to uphold peace and stability in the South China Sea and deliver benefits to countries in the region and their peoples,” it added. The Palace on Thursday said the Philippines is not ruling out the possibility of engaging in a joint exploration with China to develop oil and gas resources in the West Philippine Sea (WPS). Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro issued the statement in reaction to Beijing’s pronouncement that it is willing to strike a deal with Manila if it would show “sincerity.” The Philippines and China have been long embroiled in a territorial dispute over the WPS. “The Philippines has never been insincere. In all occasions, the Philippines has always been sincere in talking, in negotiating, especially under the leadership of President Marcos. He doesn’t have a secret deal. If the negotiation can lead to anything that will be good for the Philippines, the president will not object to that,” Castro said in Filipino. “Right now, there is no joint exploration with China, but that doesn’t mean there won’t be [any in the future]. So, the Philippines is also open to that,” she added. The United States and Israeli war against Iran, which triggered oil prices to skyrocket in the international market, could provide an impetus for the Philippines and China to finally reach a deal. “That’s something we are exploring. Everything that might be of help we are certainly pursuing,” Marcos said. But the Philippines claims exclusive rights over the natural maritime resources in the contested waterway which China refuses to recognize. Given the current geopolitical situation, Marcos raised the possibility of a “reset” in the two countries’ strained relations. “There’s going to be a very, very serious restructuring,” he said. Constitutional challenge Joint exploration faces constitutional challenges, however. In 2023, then-senator Francis Tolentino urged the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to carefully study the government’s plan to have another round of gas exploration talks with China. Tolentino said the DFA should take into consideration what the Constitution provides when it comes to the Philippines’ rights in its exclusive economic zone. He said the DFA should consider the 2016 Hague arbitral ruling and the recent Supreme Court decision which invalidated the 2005 Tripartite Agreement for Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking (JMSU) before entering into another partnership with China. Voting 12-2-1, the Supreme Court on Jan. 10, 2023, invalidated the tripartite agreement between China National Offshore Oil Corp., Vietnam Oil and Gas Corp., and Philippine National Oil Co. involving an area in the South China Sea covering 142,886 square kilometers. The court ruled that the JMSU is unconstitutional for allowing wholly owned foreign corporations to participate in the exploration of the country’s natural resources without observing the safeguards provided in Section 2, Article 12 of the 1987 Constitution. In 2023, then-Senate minority leader Aquilino Pimentel III also raised the need for transparency from both Philippine and Chinese governments if the proposed negotiations for joint oil and gas explorations in WPS pushed through. Pimentel, in a statement, said the purpose of transparency “is for us to know if the agreement is compliant with our Constitution.” Transparency “is crucial for these talks to prosper, most especially when it involves our rights over some parts” of WPS, he added. Tolentino also said that since the matter involves foreign policy and national security, it is only proper that the Senate must be involved in any future exploratory talks with China. He

noted that the 2016 Arbitral Ruling invalidated China's "nine-dash line" claim, the basis of Beijing's expansion in the South China Sea and the WPS.

- [Camago-3 well successfully drilled, tested – Marcos](#) (2026-03-26 16:14)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday announced that the Camago-3 well has been successfully drilled and tested, producing up to 60 million standard cubic feet of gas per day. "Today, I am proud to announce another step forward in our mission to secure affordable, reliable energy for every Filipino," Marcos said in a video message. "It is the second major milestone under our \$893-million Malampaya Phase 4 campaign, and it is significantly larger than our first," he added. The president said Camago-3 holds an estimated 2.5 times more recoverable gas than the Malampaya East-1 discovery. "Together, these two wells are projected to extend the life of the Malampaya gas field by an estimated six years," Marcos said. "We are targeting first gas delivery by the fourth quarter of 2026," he added. "This is energy we control. Energy that shields the Filipino people from rising fuel costs beyond our shores," the president said. Prime Energy, operator of Service Contract 38 (SC 38), on Thursday said that it is on track to deliver first gas from the Malampaya Phase 4 (MP4) development by the fourth quarter of 2026. The Camago-3 well flowed at rates of up to 60 million standard cubic feet of gas per day, confirming a substantial addition to Malampaya's remaining gas resources and reinforcing the role of indigenous natural gas in supporting the Philippines' long-term energy security. "The successful completion of Camago-3 demonstrates the strength of the Filipino workforce and the close collaboration between government and industry," Prime Energy said. The Malampaya consortium, led by Prime Energy in collaboration with joint venture partners UC38 LLC, Prime Oil & Gas Inc. and PNO Exploration Corp., continues to advance activities under MP4 on schedule. For the first time since 2000, new subsea pipelines are being installed to tie additional resources into the Malampaya platform, restoring large-scale offshore construction capability and reinforcing the Philippines' long-term energy resilience. "Delivering results of this scale in less than three years since the renewal of SC 38 is an amazing achievement and reflects what 'Top Quartile' performance looks like in the international Oil and Gas industry. This progress keeps us firmly on track to deliver first MP4 gas in the fourth quarter of 2026 and opens new opportunities to expand the country's domestic gas resources," the company said. Prime Energy, a wholly owned subsidiary of Prime Infra, thanked the president and the Department of Energy for supporting new investments to sustain the country's indigenous natural gas supply. Utilizing indigenous gas provides a vital shield against price volatility driven by global events. Malampaya's fuel cost equivalent is approximately P4.80 per kilowatt-hour (kWh), compared with roughly P10.30/kWh for imported liquefied natural gas. "The results at Camago-3 further strengthen our confidence in Malampaya's remaining resource potential," Prime Energy said. "Together with the Malampaya East-1 gas discovery, this will deliver continued value of indigenous natural gas in ensuring a stable and reliable power supply for Filipino consumers."

- [Labor group seeks P5,000 wage subsidy](#) (2026-03-26 16:13)

ORGANIZED labor called on President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to include the over 5 million minimum wage earners in the government's cash-support program to ease the impact of the rising costs fueled by the Middle East conflict. The Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) on Thursday pressed the government to roll out a P5,000 subsidy for private sector employees, who it said are also suffering from rising fuel costs. It said that with Congress still failing to pass the long-delayed P200 legislated wage hike, urgent relief should be provided to minimum wage earners, similar to what the government is providing to the transportation sector. "It cannot be that everything is increasing — except for wages. If there's a fuel subsidy, there should be a wage subsidy. We cannot abandon five million workers," TUCP said. It said that for more than three decades, minimum wage earners have been left behind by the regional wage-setting system established in 1989. It criticized the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) for failing to hold consultations with labor groups and raised concern over the formation of the Palace's Uplift (Urban Program for Livelihood Finance and Training) Committee without adequate worker representation. "For over thirty years, fair wages have not been given to the workers. Now, in the midst of a crisis, they are being neglected again. Not once were we consulted by DOLE, and the Uplift Committee was formed without a genuine voice from the ranks of the workers," TUCP said. It made the call during the Senate Protect (Proactive Response and Oversight for Timely and Effective Crisis Strategy) Committee hearing, as the Department of Budget and Management confirmed P230 billion in available crisis funds. "The P5,000 subsidy costs just P25 billion — loose change compared to the P230 billion [for other sectors]. It can be done if there's a political will," TUCP said. It called on Malacañang to certify the P200 legislated wage hike as urgent to fast-track its passage. TUCP also called on the government to remove the excise taxes on petroleum products, implement price control on basic commodities, including diesel and gasoline, impose a moratorium on loan payments and lower interest from SSS, GSIS and Pag-IBIG.

- [Manibela urges govt to scrap fuel taxes](#) (2026-03-26 16:12)

TRANSPORT group Manibela on Thursday called on the government to remove the excise tax and value-added tax on fuel, a day after a driver died during a payout in Quezon City. Manibela Chairman Mar Valbuena said drivers were being squeezed by rising oil prices and delayed relief, prompting the group to press for the immediate removal of fuel taxes on the first day of the nationwide transport strike. Valbuena said the government should not wait any longer to lift the excise tax on fuel and the VAT, which further increased the burden on drivers. He said President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. should prioritize the suspension of the excise tax, the removal of VAT on fuel and oversight of oil prices so oil companies would not take advantage of the increase in petroleum prices. He said drivers were left with grievances over the fuel aid distribution and the suspension of the fare increase. Valbuena said drivers were asked to submit multiple documents before the payout, including copies of their OR/CR (Official Receipt and Certificate of Registration), franchise papers and other requirements, but many still did not receive assistance. He said some lists were also misplaced, claiming that names submitted in Pasig City ended up in Caloocan City, while drivers along their Nagtahan route did not receive any fuel

subsidy. Valbuena said transport groups submitted lists four times, but none of their members on that route received aid. “The giving of aid should be orderly, now that someone has died. Some felt dizzy, some were not given anything. What we received was not aid, but only inconvenience — we lined up the whole day, did not drive, and in the end there was nothing to receive,” he said. A Manibela member also appealed to the government to act on the drivers’ concerns after the driver died during Wednesday’s payout in Quezon City. “Please think carefully about how you will solve our situation, because every member of Manibela is already suffering. We do not want what happened yesterday to happen again. Someone already died, but still got nothing,” the member said. Valbuena said the group’s protest was also driven by the continued increase in fuel prices, which he said had entered its fourth week. He said the transport sector was being affected by the continued rise in diesel prices and by what he described as the government’s lack of control over pump prices. Valbuena also said the problem was not the war in the Middle East itself, but businessmen who, he claimed, were taking advantage of the situation by raising petroleum prices. He said removing fuel taxes would help drivers and other sectors directly affected by rising oil prices, including farmers, fishers and workers. Valbuena questioned the allocation of government funds, saying only P2.5 billion of the P21-billion subsidy package would go to drivers and others directly hit by the oil price increase. He said some groups of 60 to 100 drivers had only four, five or eight members who were able to receive aid. Valbuena said around 80 percent joined the strike, particularly in Metro Manila and nearby provinces. He said at least 30,000 jeepneys in Metro Manila joined the strike and that the figure in the National Capital Region could reach at least 100,000 if transportation network vehicle services, motorcycle taxis and UV Express units were included. Valbuena said the government was not prepared for the strike despite earlier statements from the group that the protest would begin on Wednesday and last for three days.

- [NPCC backs P50/kg price cap for imported rice](#) (2026-03-26 16:11)

THE National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC) has endorsed to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. the proposal of the Department of Agriculture (DA) for a P50-per-kilogram (kg) price ceiling on imported rice for 30 days. In a statement on Thursday, the NPCC said it has adopted the DA’s proposal for the imposition of a price cap on 5 percent broken rice. The council said the measure seeks to curb unreasonable price increases and prevent market abuse. The price cap is anchored on Republic Act 7581, or the Price Act, which protects consumers by stabilizing the prices of basic necessities and prime commodities. It said the proposal is consistent with efforts in response to the president’s declaration of a State of National Energy Emergency. Earlier this month, there were reports of imported rice being sold for as high as P60/kg in some parts in the country. Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has said the increase was partly due to the war in the Middle East, which has pushed up fuel prices and freight charges. Tiu Laurel said a P60/kg price on imported rice was not reasonable, noting that 5 percent broken imported rice should only retail within a P48 to P50/kg range. The DA continues to expand its P20/kg rice program. It is also selling rice at P45/kg and P48/kg through Food Terminal Inc. and Planters Products Inc. This initiative has started in Metro Manila and will soon be implemented in major

cities nationwide.

- [Go to DBM: Use idle funds for key youth programs](#) (2026-03-26 16:10)

SEN. Bong Go urged the National Youth Commission (NYC), and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) to utilize funds already allocated by Congress, warning against leaving budgets idle while critical youth programs remain unimplemented. Go, who chairs the Senate Committee on Youth, raised the issue during the Senate hearing on March 17, citing delays in the rollout of initiatives, particularly those addressing mental health and bullying among the youth. He noted that some programs have been pending for years despite the availability of funding. In response, NYC Chairman Jeff Ortega said limitations during budget deliberations affected the use of additional allocations. Ortega explained that guidance from their agency head restricted spending beyond the commission's regular budget. He said certain requested funds were earmarked for specific purposes that have yet to be implemented. "We only asked for the budget that was given to us for the NYC Extension Office that we are still not using," he said. Ortega said he was open to redirecting funds toward more urgent programs, subject to coordination with the Senate and DBM. Go said funds approved by Congress must be put to use, especially when intended for youth development programs. He raised concerns that unutilized funds could be diverted elsewhere without clear public benefit. The DBM acknowledged the concern and said upcoming budget preparations could help support such initiatives.

- [Southeast Asia revisits nuclear power plans for AI data centers](#) (2026-03-26 16:09)

BANGKOK, Thailand — Nuclear power is getting a second look in Southeast Asia as countries prepare to meet surging energy demand as they vie for artificial intelligence-focused data centers. Several Southeast Asian nations are reviving mothballed nuclear plans and setting ambitious targets and nearly half of the region could, if they pursue those goals, have nuclear energy in the 2030s. Even countries without current plans have signaled their interest. Southeast Asia has never produced a single watt of nuclear energy, despite long-held atomic ambitions. But that may soon change as pressure mounts to reduce emissions that contribute to climate change, while meeting growing power needs. The Iran war is underscoring the vulnerability of Asia's energy supplies, raising the sense of urgency about finding alternatives to oil and gas in Southeast Asia, analysts say. The surge in crude oil prices caused by the escalating conflict has raised the motivation for countries to speed up their nuclear efforts, said Alvie Asuncion-Astronomo of the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute. Vietnam and Russia advanced a nuclear power deal this week as the region's energy security concerns worsened. In South Asia, Bangladesh is racing to power up its new nuclear power plant, also backed by Russia, to address the country's energy shortfalls. Southeast Asia will account for a quarter of growth in global energy demand by 2035, according to the International Energy Agency, or IEA. That partly is because of the more than 2,000 data centers in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines, according to the think tank Ember. Many more data centers are in the pipeline. That's most obvious in Malaysia, which aspires to be Southeast Asia's AI computing hub and has drawn investments and interest from tech giants like Microsoft, Google

and Nvidia. The revival of Southeast Asia's nuclear interest mirrors a global trend. Nearly 40 nations — including the United States, Japan, South Korea and China — have joined a global push to triple installed nuclear energy capacity by 2050. Southeast Asia will account for nearly a fourth of the 157 gigawatts expected from “newcomer nuclear nations” by mid-century, according to the industry-backed World Nuclear Association. “There is a more serious, new and growing momentum for the development of nuclear energy in Southeast Asia,” said King Lee, with the association. Southeast Asia revisits nuclear power. Five of the 11 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations — Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines — are chasing nuclear. Vietnam is building two nuclear plants, backed by the Russian state corporation Rosatom. These are “nationally significant, strategic projects,” according to Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh. Vietnam's revised atomic energy law took effect in January. Indonesia added nuclear to its new energy plan last year, aiming to build two small modular reactors by 2034. Officials there say Canada and Russia have issued formal cooperation proposals and others will soon follow. Thailand set a target last year of adding 600 megawatts of nuclear generating capacity by 2037. Nuclear is a “promising solution” to supplying enough affordable, clean electricity to meet rising demand, officials with Thailand's Electricity Generating Authority told a conference in Bangkok. No Southeast Asian nation has engaged with atomic energy more than the Philippines, which built a nuclear power plant in the 1970s that it never turned on. A new atomic energy regulatory authority launched last year will “usher in the integration of nuclear power,” according to Philippine officials. The country set a 2032 target and approved a roadmap for potential investors in February. “We are not anticipating that nuclear electricity will be cheap at the onset,” said Asuncion-Astronomo. But in the long term, she said it will improve the Philippines' energy reliability, security, independence and eventually costs. “The ongoing conflict in the Middle East definitely demonstrates how volatile fossil fuel costs are and the instability of the supply,” she said. “Nuclear is an alternative solution that can give us more self-reliance in terms of energy.” Southeast Asian nations without firm plans are also showing interest. Cambodia's latest national strategy signaled an openness to nuclear and Singapore outlined plans last year to study its own atomic potential. Even the tiny oil and gas sultanate of Brunei told the International Atomic Energy Agency, or IAEA, that it is “carefully exploring nuclear energy.” Data centers revive Malaysia's nuclear plans The AI-focused data centers contributing to Southeast Asia's growing energy demand are large windowless buildings filled with rows of computers. A standard AI data center consumes as much electricity as 100,000 households, the IEA says. Malaysia has more than 500 operational data centers. Another 300 or so are under construction and around 1,140 are planned, according to Ember. Malaysia revived its nuclear program last year and set a 2031 target for bringing atomic energy online. Nuclear power risks remain Global nuclear capacity will more than triple — to about 1,446 gigawatts — by 2050 if existing reactors continue operations and governments meet their stated targets, according to the World Nuclear Association. More than 400 nuclear reactors, in about 30 countries, generate around 380 gigawatts of energy, according to the IAEA's Power Reactor Information System. This makes up between 4.5 to 10 percent of the world's energy, the IEA and nuclear association estimate. Concerns over nuclear safety, waste and supply remain. Public resistance

flared after the cataclysmic 1986 Chernobyl and 2011 Fukushima nuclear meltdowns. But even Japan, which idled all its plants after that disaster, is restarting its nuclear plants. Bridget Woodman, with the research group Zero Carbon Analytics, said that as the world strays farther off track from its climate goals, nuclear can look deceptively more enticing than other less risky alternatives, like renewable energy. Southeast Asian countries “considering starting a nuclear industry from scratch” need to consider “the possibility of accidents,” she said.

- [Comelec adopts austerity measures amid national energy emergency \(2026-03-26 16:07\)](#)

THE Commission on Elections (Comelec) has implemented austerity measures relative to the president’s declaration of a state of national energy emergency to ease the impact of the war in the Middle East. The Commission en banc on Thursday adopted the recommendation of Chairman George Erwin Garcia to postpone or cancel non-essential travel and activities that entail significant budgetary expenditures. “This measure demonstrates sensitivity to the economic hardship and fuel price volatility currently affecting the Filipino people,” Garcia said in a memorandum. However, the en banc exempted from its directive activities related to the preparations for the Bangsamoro parliamentary election, the 2026 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections, and the 2028 national and local elections, the resolution of electoral controversies and other core functions and activities in compliance with rules and regulations. The recommendations adopted by the Commission en banc include, among others, the postponement of the Election Expo Convention and Conference, including the Asian Electoral Stakeholders Forum VII and the Philippine Election Expo scheduled on April 21-23, 2026. The commission postponed the National Goodwill Games scheduled for May 8-10, 2026 and the team building activities of all departments and offices. The Comelec will also adopt a work-from-home arrangement for main and field offices every Monday beginning April 6, 2026. Meanwhile, Malacañang on Thursday assured the public that essential government services would not be affected by the government’s energy conservation measures. Executive Secretary Ralph Recto said agencies delivering frontline services were not covered by the four-day onsite work being implemented to conserve energy. “The language of the president’s order is clear: Agencies that provide frontline services shall keep their services running at all times,” Recto said in a statement. He said that the “overriding rule” was that “essential, basic and vital services” must not be disrupted. These include agencies involved in the “direct delivery of health, public safety, and emergency response services.” “We do not cut ambulance service in the name of fuel economy. We do not restrict police response to crime in order to save on gas. Services like these are not subject to cost-cutting,” he added. “If fuel prices rise, we will put government vehicles on a gas diet so ambulances, fire trucks, and police patrol cars can continue operating,” he said. Under Memorandum Circular 114 issued by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on March 6, support and auxiliary offices, even in frontline agencies, are required to reduce their energy consumption by at least 20 percent. Recto said the conservation measures covered regional and administrative offices. “If you are a regional office of the Bureau of Fire Protection, you are covered by energy conservation protocols, but the fuel supply of fire trucks is exempt,” he said.

- [Senators sound alarm on possible onion price collapse](#) (2026-03-26 16:05)

SEN. Joseph Victor Ejercito on Thursday warned that rising production costs and declining farm-gate prices may push farmers into losses and put the country's food security at serious risk. "We cannot neglect our farmers," Ejercito said.

He cited the sharp drop in farm-gate prices of onions in Nueva Ecija and other producing provinces, even as production costs continue to rise. The Senate deputy majority leader raised this matter during a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform held in Nueva Ecija. Sen. Francis Pangilinan, the panel chairman, said the inquiry looked into the "systemic collapse" of onion farmgate prices in Occidental Mindoro and Nueva Ecija. Ejercito said that the situation is no longer a simple issue of supply and demand. "This is no longer just a matter of price fluctuations. This is a failure of the system. This is [government] negligence." Sen. Panfilo Lacson also questioned the country's onion importation policy, saying that continued importation during local harvest could harm farmers. The Senate president pro tempore cited data suggesting that the Philippines may already be beyond onion self-sufficiency. He presented the Philippine Onion Industry Road Map 2021-2025. "The Philippines reportedly needs to increase onion production from 229,539 metric tons to 279,270 metric tons in order to achieve self-sufficiency by 2025," said Lacson in Filipino. He said data from the Philippine Statistics Authority showed that the national onion harvest in 2024 had reached 264,000. "So, the question is, how much was harvested in 2025?" he asked. Lacson learned a harvest of 279,000 metric tons of onion is self-sufficient. "And we've even exceeded that. So why did we import so much — 94,000 metric tons in total in 2025? Our shortfall wasn't even close to 94,000 metric tons," he said. "Why are we importing? It's to kill our farmers, there's no other reason," Lacson said. Ejercito also raised concern over the continued influx of imported onions, even during peak harvest season, which he said undermines local producers. He questioned the government's importation strategy, warning that poorly timed imports worsen the situation. Ejercito said the issue "goes beyond market fluctuations and points to structural problems that must be immediately addressed." Lacson said that local farmers are being harmed by importers who deliberately time shipments to coincide with the local harvest, undercutting the prices of homegrown onions. Pangilinan, panel chairman, raised concerns over the continued importation of onion during the local harvest season. He noted that farmers are already struggling with rising fuel and logistics costs resulting from the Middle East war. He said onion import clearances remained valid during the local harvest period despite policies intended to prevent overlap with domestic production. "It is questionable, especially since the policy is very clear that imports should not overlap with the harvest season of our local farmers," Pangilinan said in Filipino. He noted that imported onions occupying cold storage facilities leave little room for local harvests, forcing farmers to sell their products at a lower cost. "When this happens, you cannot help but wonder whether our farmers are being deliberately denied access to cold storage while imported onions continue to enter the market and farmgate prices keep falling," Pangilinan said.

- [Tulfo welcomes dismissal of eligibility case](#) (2026-03-26 16:05)

THE Senate Electoral Tribunal has dismissed a quo warranto petition seeking the ouster of Sen. Erwin Tulfo, who called the dismissal a reaffirmation of earlier decisions clearing his eligibility. In a statement issued on Thursday, Tulfo expressed relief over the tribunal's March 25 decision. "I thank God that this case that was repeatedly thrown at me has been dismissed," he said. The tribunal, chaired by Justice Marvic Leonen, junked the petition on the grounds of "insufficiency in form" and failure to meet basic procedural requirements. Tulfo thanked the tribunal members for "for carefully reviewing and finally dismissing this case based on the pieces of evidence my lawyer submitted." The petition, filed by Berteni Cataluña Causing, questioned Tulfo's eligibility to hold public office, citing allegations that held United States citizenship and served in the US Army, a prior libel conviction allegedly involving moral turpitude, and purported violations related to political dynasties and academic qualifications. The ruling effectively ends the latest legal challenge against Tulfo, following earlier dismissals of similar cases by the Commission on Elections. He described the decision as a "direct and clear affirmation" of the previous rulings. The tribunal, which serves as the sole judge of electoral contests involving members of the Senate, has yet to release a full copy of its decision.

- [Kids, elderly more susceptible to heat stroke – DOH](#) (2026-03-26 16:04)

THE Department of Health (DOH) urged the public to take precautions against heat-related illnesses, particularly heat stroke, which poses a significant threat to children and the elderly. In a television interview on Thursday, Health Secretary Ted Herbosa said it is important to stay hydrated and avoid prolonged exposure to the sun, as the heat intensifies. Herbosa said the bodies of children and the elderly are less efficient at regulating temperature, making them more susceptible to heat exhaustion and heat stroke. While most heat-related illnesses, such as heat fatigue, can be managed with rest, hydration, and cooling techniques, severe cases of heat stroke require immediate medical attention. "The treatment of most heat-related illnesses does not require hospitalization. However, heat stroke, which can be fatal, needs to be treated urgently in hospitals," he said. Herbosa assured the public that public hospitals and emergency departments are equipped and ready to manage an increase in heat-related illnesses.

- [PNP aims to close more e-sabong hubs](#) (2026-03-26 16:04)

THE Philippine National Police (PNP) said Thursday that it intends to close more "e-sabong" hubs across the country following a major operation against illegal cockfighting in Tondo, Manila. PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. called for an intensified crackdown against illegal online cockfighting, noting the operation in a coliseum in Tondo was part of a sustained nationwide campaign targeting organized illegal gambling networks. "We are intensifying intelligence-driven operations nationwide. This crackdown will continue until these illegal gambling hubs are completely dismantled," Nartatez said in a statement. Authorities on Tuesday night raided an alleged 24-hour e-sabong operation at Vista Coliseum in Tondo, resulting in the arrest of more than 170 individuals. Nartatez said the operation exposed how

illegal betting activities continue to operate behind closed doors despite a nationwide ban. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. issued Executive Order 9 in December 2022, reaffirming the nationwide suspension of e-sabong operations and ordering stricter enforcement against illegal activities. “Illegal e-sabong is a breeding ground for crime. It leads to financial ruin for families and fuels petty crimes. This destroys the moral fiber of our community,” Nartatez said. “Apart from gambling, these hubs often involve unregulated crowds and tax evasion. It creates an environment where lawlessness thrives, affecting even those who are not playing,” he added. The PNP is currently conducting nationwide intelligence mapping to locate e-sabong networks attempting to hide behind physical coliseums or digital screens. Nartatez lauded the CIDG-National Capital Region and the Manila Police District for the successful operation and warned operators of illegal e-sabong operations to stop their activities.

- [CAAP unveils eco-friendly facility](#) (2026-03-26 16:04)

THE Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) broke ground on a P382.96 million, six-story executive building on Monday. Located within the CAAP Central Office complex on Old MIA Road in Pasay City, the modern facility was designed to serve as the agency’s executive hub and meet the rising demands of the aviation sector. The building will expand office capacity and improve inter-office coordination, fostering a more efficient and productive working environment for employees. “These initiatives reflect one clear direction: a CAAP that is safer, greener, and truly future-ready,” said CAAP Director General Raul del Rosario. The regulator also inaugurated a sewage treatment plant (STP) within the same compound. The facility utilizes integrated fixed-film activated sludge (IFAS) technology — the first of its kind in a Philippine government aviation facility — and is capable of treating up to 260 cubic meters of wastewater daily. The CAAP added that eight newly acquired Oshkosh aircraft rescue and firefighting units have been deployed to domestic airports under its jurisdiction. The units were distributed to airports in Laoag, Puerto Princesa, Butuan, Siargao, Busuanga, Bicol, General Santos and Tacloban.

- [Marcos urged to call special session after Holy Week](#) (2026-03-26 16:03)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. must call a special session of Congress after Holy Week to address the worsening impact of the Middle East war on Filipinos, two lawmakers from northern Metro Manila said on Thursday. Interviewed separately via Viber, Caloocan City 2nd District Rep. Edgar Erice and Navotas City Rep. Toby Tiangco highlighted the need for Congress to remain in session and “act decisively given the current situation.” “Especially now that the chief executive has declared a state of energy emergency,” they pointed out. Erice and Tiangco said they already filed measures to mitigate the impact of the crisis, including fuel subsidies for affected sectors, government austerity measures and suspension of the value-added tax (VAT) on petroleum products to ease the burden on consumers. “It would be unfair that Congress is on break while the Filipino people are suffering. This is not the time for recess — this is the time for action,” said Erice, a member of the House opposition. They noted that the crisis has gone beyond energy concerns and now affects inflation, transportation costs, food security,

government revenues, and the safety of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs). “In the long run, the families of OFWs in the country would be directly affected and that would be alarming,” Tiangco said. They called on the House to exercise its oversight powers over rising oil prices, citing alarming data. “It was indeed infuriating to find out that at the height of the crisis, there are opportunists and greedy people who take advantage for their own interests,” Erice said. He noted that based on the Asian diesel price tracker, the Philippines has already recorded a 97-percent surge in the prices of diesel, compared with other neighboring countries which only had a 30 percent to 40 percent rise. To ensure continuity of legislative work while conserving resources, Erice proposed a modified schedule like holding only two sessions weekly from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in order to save on electricity. Tiangco suggested austerity measures like doing away with food catering, especially during committee hearings. “Let’s try bringing our own food — coffee and bread is good enough. What’s important, our work must continue amid this crisis. Let us show good example to our fellowmen,” the former long-time Navotas mayor said.

- [‘DBP willing to waive penalties on loans’](#) (2026-03-26 16:02)

THE Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) announced Thursday that the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) is willing to temporarily waive or suspend penalties on overdue loans of transport service entities that acquired modern jeepneys under the government’s modernization program. LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II said the loans were obtained by transport cooperatives and small companies to finance the purchase of modern jeepneys under the Public Transport Modernization Program. Mendoza said many of these units are financed through DBP’s Program Assistance to Support Alternative Driving Approaches. He said the LTFRB wrote to DBP President and CEO Michael de Jesus requesting a temporary waiver or suspension of penalties on delayed payments, citing the financial strain caused by surging fuel prices. “The significant increase in petroleum costs has placed additional pressure on transport operators, affecting their ability to meet loan obligations,” Mendoza said. In its reply, DBP acknowledged that the Middle East situation has driven up global oil prices and weakened the peso, resulting in higher operating expenses for the transport sector. “DBP may consider granting a temporary suspension or waiver of penalties on a case-to-case basis, subject to approval of the appropriate authorities,” the bank said in its response. Mendoza welcomed the bank’s response, saying the measure would help operators stabilize their finances and sustain public transport services. “This will be a big help to operators struggling with rising operational costs,” he said, adding that the move reflects coordination among government agencies to support the transport sector.

- [PNP HPG names acting director](#) (2026-03-26 16:01)

POLICE Regional Office Central Luzon Deputy Director for Administration BGen. Rommel Batangan has been designated acting director of the Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group (PNP-HPG). On Wednesday, PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. released the order issued by the PNP Directorate for Personnel and Records Management. The appointment

follows the resignation of BGen. Jessie Tamayao, who stepped down Wednesday amid a subordinate's sexual harassment accusation. The victim filed an administrative complaint against Tamayao before the National Police Commission on Tuesday. Tamayao denied the accusations in a statement and clarified that his resignation was not an admission of guilt but a gesture of respect for due process.

- [Russian oil arrives, boosts buffer stock](#) (2026-03-26 16:00)

A SHIP carrying more than 700,000 barrels of Russian crude oil has arrived in the Philippines, a source with knowledge of the matter told Agence France-Presse (AFP) on Thursday, days after the country declared a national energy emergency over the Middle East war. The Sierra Leone-flagged Sara Sky, bearing high-quality crude from Russia's ESPO pipeline arrived on Monday, with documents showing the consignee as Petron Corp., operator of the Philippines' sole oil refinery, said the source, who asked to remain anonymous as they were not authorized to speak to press. Based on recent data from the Department of Energy and international energy monitoring agencies, the Philippines consumes about 450,000 to 487,000 barrels of oil per day. At this rate, the Russian delivery this week would add less than two days to the country's fuel inventory. The Philippines is heavily dependent on imported fuel, the cost of which has hit historic highs since the US-Israeli war with Iran forced the partial closure of the Strait of Hormuz. An AFP journalist on Thursday saw the Sara Sky at anchor in Limay port just outside Manila, where the Petron refinery is located. It is believed to be the first shipment of Russian oil to the Philippines in five years. Last week, Ramon Ang, CEO of Petron, told AFP the company was "in talks" to potentially purchase Russian oil. On Thursday, he declined to confirm the arrival of the shipment. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said Wednesday that the Philippines was casting a wide net in its search for fuel, with the country's dwindling stocks expected to last only another 45 days. "We have not only gone to our... traditional oil suppliers, we have tried to explore other sources that are not affected by the war that is ongoing in the Middle East," he said in a press briefing addressing the state of emergency. "Nothing is off the table. We are looking at everything, everything that we can do." The United States this month eased some restrictions on sales of Russian crude, allowing countries to purchase oil that was already at sea until April 11. Kpler analyst Muyu Xu told AFP around 120 million barrels of Russian oil may have been at sea at the time, adding much of it may have already been preordered by Chinese or Indian clients. On Thursday, the Philippines' Department of Energy activated a P20-billion emergency fund that Energy Secretary Sharon Garin called a "proactive step" to securing fuel supplies. Garin said earlier this week that the Philippines also planned to boost the output of its coal-fired power plants to keep electricity costs down as the war wreaks havoc with gas shipments. With the cost of LNG (liquefied natural gas) soaring, Garin said the country would "temporarily" be forced to lean even more heavily on the fossil fuel, the main contributor of climate-warming carbon dioxide emissions from human sources. She added that top coal supplier Indonesia had placed no restriction on the amount the Philippines could buy if it needs to increase imports.

- [JV Ejercito: Onion price collapse threatens farmers, food security](#) (2026-03-26 13:46)

MANILA, Philippines -- Sen. Joseph Victor Ejercito on Thursday warned that rising production costs and declining farm-gate prices may push farmers into losses and put the country's food security at serious risk. The senator said that while the country is in the midst of state of national energy emergency, the problems hounding the agricultural sector remain. Ejercito reiterated that farmers remain the backbone of the nation and must not be neglected. "We cannot neglect our farmers." He cited the sharp drop in farm-gate prices of onions in Nueva Ecija and other producing provinces, even as production costs continue to rise. The Senate deputy majority leader raised this matter during a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform held in Nueva Ecija. He said that the situation is no longer a simple issue of supply and demand. "This is no longer just a matter of price fluctuations. This is a failure of the system. This is [government] negligence." Ejercito also raised concern over the continued influx of imported onions, even during peak harvest season, which he said undermines local producers. He questioned the government's importation strategy, warning that poorly timed imports worsen the situation. Ejercito said the issue "goes beyond market fluctuations and points to structural problems that must be immediately addressed."

- [DSWD, DOTR to have special payout of fuel subsidies for PUV drivers not on master list](#) (2026-03-26 13:31)

MANILA, Philippines – The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Transportation (DOTr) would set a day for the special payout of fuel subsidies for transport workers who were excluded from the master list of beneficiaries, Malacañang announced on Thursday. Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro said this is to ensure compliance with the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to not leave anyone behind in the government's efforts to cushion the impact of the high prices of petroleum products particularly those from the transport sector. Castro noted that DOTr Secretary Giovanni Lopez and DSWD Secretary Rex Gatchalian have agreed to have a special payout for the P5,000 financial assistance which will come from the Cash Relief Assistance Program under the DSWD's Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS). "There may have been a double entry or lack of details in their names or they may not have been registered with the LTFRB (Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board). But by the order of the president, no one will be left behind," the official said in Filipino in a Palace briefing. Reports earlier surfaced that there were jeepney drivers in some areas around the country whose names were not on the list slated to receive the cash aid. Castro gave reassurance that this is now being remedied. "It's likely that there was a double listing. Let's say they were listed as a tricycle driver but they are also driving a motor taxi. So, all we really need is review the list of valid beneficiaries," she said. Overall, the government's cash aid targets 245,066 driver-beneficiaries and operators of 1,180,783 PUV units nationwide.

- [Lazaro urges countries to uphold international law](#) (2026-03-26 13:10)

MANILA, Philippines -- Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro called on all countries to uphold international law, particularly the respect for sovereignty amid the war in the Middle

East.Lazaro underscored the need for the "peaceful resolution of disputes, refraining from the threat or use of force, and cooperation within an established and robust multilateral system." The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said she renewed the Philippines' call for all parties to the ongoing conflict to "de-escalate and resolve their differences through diplomacy and dialogue."Lazaro said the Philippines is committed to enhancing its relations with Muslim partners in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, South Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Europe.She made the assurance on Thursday when she hosted a lunch reception for Muslim heads of diplomatic missions in the Philippines to celebrate Eid' I Fitr, which marked the end of the holy month of Ramadan. The DFA said Lazaro emphasized the "universal values of compassion, empathy, and unity that are shared by other faiths and cultures in the world."She said that Eid' I Fitr is a national holiday in the Philippines to give importance to the Muslim population, mostly in Mindanao and in the Bangsamoro region."The DFA said it "traditionally hosts the Eid' I Fitr reception to keep with its tradition of expressing solidarity and brotherhood with the Muslim members of the diplomatic corps and the larger Muslim community."

- [Lacson: Smuggling, unchecked importation, sloppy govt response 'killing' onion farmers](#) (2026-03-26 13:04)

MANILA, Philippines -- Sen. Panfilo Lacson said aside smuggling and unchecked onion imports, disjointed government data and sloppy government response further push farmers to the brink.The senator called out the Department of Agriculture (DA) and Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) for the apparent discrepancies in their data on onion production and consumption.This issue hinder the government from making the needed decisions to help onion farmers, said Lacson during a public hearing of the Senate committees on agriculture and local government on the systemic collapse of onion farm-gate prices."How can we arrive at effective decisions if your data is disjointed?" Lacson asked the representatives of the DA and PSA.The PSA said the Philippines produced 308,660 metric tons (MTs) in 2025. Lacson said this could mean a "surplus" of about 13,000 MTs of onion.Lacson noted that the Philippines imported 94,000 MTs in 2025. He said that the volume of onion imports that year could even be bigger -- potentially up to 150,000 MTs if smuggling and leakage are factored in.On the other hand, Lacson said DA's figures showed that onion production in 2025 amounted to 245,988 MTs from Regions 1 (Ilocos Region), 2 (Cagayan Valley), 3 (Central Luzon).Onion production in Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan) in 2025 showed a deficit of 22,035 MTs."It seems the communication gap between the DA and stakeholders is very wide. Are stakeholders being consulted by the DA? How often? Or if they are consulted, are the stakeholders being heard?" Lacson asked.

- [President announces successful drill, test of second Malampaya well](#) (2026-03-26 11:21)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday announced that the Camago-3 well has been successfully drilled and tested, producing up to 60 million standard cubic feet of gas per day."Today, I am proud to announce another step forward in our mission

to secure affordable, reliable energy for every Filipino," Marcos said in a video message. "It is the second major milestone under our \$893-million Malampaya Phase 4 campaign and it is significantly larger than our first," he added. The President said Camago-3 holds an estimated 2.5 times more recoverable gas than the Malampaya East-1 discovery. "Together, these two wells are projected to extend the life of the Malampaya gas field by an estimated six years," Marcos said. "We are targeting first gas delivery by the fourth quarter of 2026," he added.

- [Marcos mulls wealth tax as revenue measure for govt](#) (2026-03-26 10:19)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. would study the possibility of implementing a wealth tax as part of possible revenue measures of the government, Malacañang said Thursday. Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said the president was considering various policy options after economist Winnie Monsod criticized the administration's suspension of excise taxes on fuel, saying it benefits wealthier Filipinos more than the poor. "Just like what the President said, nothing is off the table so all suggestions are being considered," Castro said during a press conference. However, Castro cited the statement of Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DepDev) Secretary Arsenio Balisacan on the matter, saying that "imposing a wealth tax on the super wealthy is an economist's dream because wealth tends to compound." "A wealth tax slows wealth concentration over generations. Such concentration translates into political and economic power leading to market failures, slowing economic growth and further weakening inclusivity. Implementing or administering a wealth tax is never easy," Balisacan said, as relayed by Castro. "Most countries that have tried it such as Germany, France, and Sweden abandoned it because of its administrative complexity and the low revenue it generated. Moreover, a wealth tax may encourage capital flight especially when imposed during an economic crisis," he added.

- [Police Highway Patrol Group names Central Luzon deputy chief acting director](#) (2026-03-26 09:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) named an acting director for its Highway Patrol Group to replace his predecessor who resigned over allegations of sexual harassment. Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr., PNP chief, released the order issued by the PNP's Directorate for Personnel and Records Management on Wednesday for Brig. Gen. Rommel Batangan, Police Regional Office Central Luzon (PRO 3) deputy director for Administration, to succeed Brig. Gen. Jessie Tamayao who stepped down after a subordinate filed an administrative complaint before the National Police Commission (Napolcom) against him. Tamayao denied the accusations in a statement and clarified that his resignation was not an admission of guilt but a respect for due process.

- [Labor demands ₱5,000 monthly wage subsidy for 5M workers as prices soar](#) (2026-03-26 08:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Organized labor called on President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to include the over five million minimum wage earners in the government's cash-support program to ease the

impact of the rising costs fueled by the ongoing Middle East conflict. The Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) on Thursday pressed the government to immediately roll out a P5,000 subsidy for private sector employees, saying that they are also suffering from the effects of rising fuel costs. It pointed out that with Congress still failing to act on the long-delayed P200 legislated wage hike, urgent relief should also be provided to minimum wage earners, similar to what the government is providing to the transportation sector. “Hindi puwedeng lahat tumataas—maliban sa sahod. Kung may fuel subsidy, dapat may wage subsidy. Hindi puwedeng pabayaang ang limang milyong manggagawa” (It cannot be that everything is increasing—except for wages. If there's a fuel subsidy, there should be a wage subsidy. We cannot abandon five million workers),” TUCP stressed. The labor group lamented that for more than three decades, minimum wage earners have been left behind by the regional wage-setting system established in 1989. It also criticized the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) for failing to convene meaningful consultations with labor groups, and raised concern over the formation of the Palace's UPLIFT Committee without adequate worker representation.

- [PDP slams House "weaponization" of Impeach Probe](#) (2026-03-26 08:05)

MANILA, Philippines — The Partido Demokratiko Pilipino (PDP) said it was "alarmed" over the "weaponization" of the impeachment process by the House of Representatives Justice Committee against Vice President Sara Duterte. Duterte is the daughter of PDP's chairman-emeritus, former president Rodrigo Duterte, who is currently jailed at International Criminal Court at The Hague where he may stand trial for alleged crimes against humanity for his war against illegal drugs. In a press briefing in Quezon City on Thursday, PDP Deputy Spokesman Ferdinand Topacio said that the committee, led by Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro, was converting the summary proceedings into a "trial" for the Vice President. "Both Houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives, cannot formulate its rules that violate the constitution, particularly the due process clause, the right against self incrimination, and the right to remain silent," Topacio, a lawyer, said. Topacio even described the proceedings as a 'kangaroo court' and a "star chamber", meaning a court with no due process. Former PDP senatorial candidate Jimmy Bondoc agreed with Topacio, saying that the jurisdiction of the House committee to conduct a mini trial is "fatally flawed" and "defective," citing the concept of "in dubio pro reo" or "always rule for the accused." "Because it's in favor of the accused, always in favor of Sara who is now an accused, who is in jeopardy and we know they will file cases," Bondoc, a lawyer, said. On Wednesday, the defense team of Duterte said that it was questioning the proceedings of the committee, saying that the Senate has the "sole power" to try impeachment cases.

- [China seeks sincerity from PH in resuming oil exploration talks](#) (2026-03-26 07:24)

MANILA, Philippines — The Chinese Embassy in Manila said Beijing remained open for oil and gas exploration talks with Manila as long as the Philippines showed its sincerity for such discussion. The embassy was asked to comment on the remarks of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., in a Bloomberg interview, that he was open to resuming discussions with China on a joint oil

and gas project in a disputed area of the South China Sea. It noted that China and the Philippines in the past "have conducted in-depth discussions on joint oil and gas development in disputed waters in the South China Sea and have made positive progress." Chinese President Xi Jinping and President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. during the Philippine leader's state visit to Beijing on Jan. 5, 2023, issued a joint statement on the agreement "to resume discussions on oil and gas development at an early date." "As long as the Philippine side demonstrates sincerity, China's door to dialogue and cooperation will remain open," the embassy said in a statement on Thursday. "Setting aside differences and pursuing joint development is the right path to uphold peace and stability in the South China Sea and deliver benefits to countries in the region and their peoples," it added. In 2023, then senator Francis Tolentino urged the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to carefully study the government's plan to have another round of gas exploration talks with China. Tolentino said the DFA should take into consideration what the Constitution provides when it comes to the Philippines' rights in its exclusive economic zone. He said the DFA should consider the 2016 Hague Arbitral ruling and the recent Supreme Court decision which invalidated the 2005 Tripartite Agreement for Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking (JMSU) before entering into another partnership with China. But voting 12-2-1, the Supreme Court on Jan. 10, 2023 invalidated the tripartite agreement between China National Offshore Oil Corp., Vietnam Oil and Gas Corp., and Philippine National Oil Co. involving an area in the South China Sea covering 142,886 square kilometers. The court ruled that the JSMU was unconstitutional for allowing wholly-owned foreign corporations to participate in the exploration of the country's natural resources without observing the safeguards provided in Section 2, Article 12 of the 1987 Constitution.

- [DOH warns heat stroke more prevalent in kids and elderly](#) (2026-03-26 07:12)

MANILA, Philippines—The Department of Health (DOH) urged the public to take precautions against heat-related illnesses, particularly heat stroke, which poses a significant threat to vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly. In an interview with state-run media PTV on Thursday, Health Secretary Ted Herbosa said it was important to stay hydrated and avoid prolonged exposure to the sun, as the summer heat intensifies. "To our countrymen, especially the elders and children, they are the most at risk for heat-related illnesses. Drink plenty of water, avoid staying in hot places for too long, and if you feel unwell, seek medical attention immediately," he said in Filipino.

- [Ombudsman to comply with House panel subpoena order for Sara SALNs](#) (2026-03-26 06:20)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the Ombudsman will comply with a subpoena order issued by the House of Representatives on the Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN) of Vice President Sara Duterte. In a press conference on Thursday, Assistant Ombudsman Mico Clavano said that "even a simple request would do [...]. So much more if it is a subpoena. We will comply." The House justice committee, which is hearing Duterte's impeachment case to determine whether there is probable cause, decided on Wednesday to issue a subpoena to the

Ombudsman for the vice president's SALNs from 2022 to 2025, 2007 to 2013, 2016 to 2022. The office, which is the repository for the SALNs of some officials, including the vice president's, could provide the documents from when she was Davao City mayor and vice mayor. Clavano said that "we would have to direct or endorse the request or subpoena to the proper office that was the repository of those SALNs which is 'yung sa Mindanao office ho natin (our Mindanao office)."

- [Russian oil arrives as PH battles 'energy emergency'](#) (2026-03-26 05:09)

MANILA, Philippines — A ship carrying more than 700,000 barrels of Russian crude oil has arrived in the Philippines, a source with knowledge of the matter told AFP Thursday, days after the country declared a national energy emergency over the Middle East war. The Sierra Leone-flagged Sara Sky, bearing high-quality crude from Russia's ESPO pipeline arrived on Monday, with documents showing the consignee as Petron Corp, operator of the Philippines' sole oil refinery, said the source, who asked to remain anonymous as they were not authorized to speak to press. The Philippines is heavily dependent on imported fuel, the cost of which has hit historic highs since the US-Israeli war with Iran forced the partial closure of the Strait of Hormuz. An AFP journalist on Thursday saw the Sara Sky at anchor in Limay port just outside Manila, where the Petron refinery is located. It is believed to be the first shipment of Russian oil to the Philippines in five years. Last week, Ramon Ang, CEO of Petron, told AFP the company was "in talks" to potentially purchase Russian oil. On Thursday, he declined to confirm the arrival of the shipment. President Ferdinand Marcos said Wednesday that the Philippines was casting a wide net in its search for fuel, with the country's dwindling stocks expected to last only another 45 days. "We have not only gone to our...traditional oil suppliers, we have tried to explore other sources that are not affected by the war that is ongoing in the Middle East," he said in a press briefing addressing the state of emergency. "Nothing is off the table. We are looking at everything, everything that we can do." The United States this month eased some restrictions on sales of Russian crude, allowing countries to purchase oil that was already at sea until April 11. Kpler analyst Muyu Xu told AFP around 120 million barrels of Russian oil may have been at sea at the time, adding much of it may have already been pre-ordered by Chinese or Indian clients. On Thursday, the Philippines' Department of Energy activated a 20 billion-peso (\$332 million) emergency fund that energy secretary Sharon Garin called a "proactive step" to securing fuel supplies. Garin said earlier this week that the archipelago nation also planned to boost the output of its coal-fired power plants to keep electricity costs down as the war wreaks havoc with gas shipments. With the cost of LNG (liquefied natural gas) soaring, Garin said the country would "temporarily" be forced to lean even more heavily on the fossil fuel, the main contributor of climate-warming carbon dioxide emissions from human sources. She added that top coal supplier Indonesia had placed "no restriction" on the amount the Philippines could buy if it needs to increase imports.

- [Comelec adopts austerity measures; cancels non-essential travel](#) (2026-03-26 03:54)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Elections (Comelec) has implemented austerity measures in connection with the President's declaration of a state of national emergency to ease the impact of the war in the Middle East. The Commission en banc on Thursday adopted the recommendation of Chairman George Erwin Garcia to postpone or cancel non-essential travel and activities that entail significant budgetary expenditures. "This measure demonstrates sensitivity to the economic hardship and fuel price volatility currently affecting the Filipino people," Garcia said in a memorandum. However, the En Banc exempted from its directive activities related to the preparations for the Bangsamoro parliamentary election, the 2026 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections, and the 2028 national and local elections, the resolution of electoral controversies and other core functions and activities in compliance with rules and regulations. The recommendations adopted by the Commission en banc include, among others, the postponement of the Election Expo Convention and Conference, including the Asian Electoral Stakeholders Forum VII and the Philippine Election Expo scheduled on April 21-23, 2026. The commission postponed the National Goodwill Games scheduled for May 8-10, 2026 and the teambuilding activities of all departments and offices. The Comelec will also adopt a work-from-home arrangement for main and field offices every Monday beginning April 6, 2026.

- [30K delivery, motorcycle taxi riders queue for P5K fuel subsidy](#) (2026-03-26 03:47)

MANILA, Philippines—Thousands of motorcycle taxi and delivery riders on Thursday packed the Quezon Memorial Circle (QMC) in Quezon City where the city is handing out P5,000 in relief assistance amid rising fuel costs. Mayor Joy Belmonte told The Manila Times that she directed Elmo San Diego, the city's Department of Public Order and Safety chief; and QMC management to ensure the safety of the riders and orderliness during the event. The local government said the distribution will be made in alphabetical order. The riders should bring the original and a photocopy of their professional driver's license with three signatures. "On behalf of the city government, I am gratified by the quick response of the national government led by the Department of Social Welfare and Development and Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board for extending the much-needed assistance to these essential sectors," Belmonte said. The city government has also set up similar payouts for TNVS (transport network vehicle service) riders as well as jeepney and tricycle drivers.

- [Drivers are losing P1,500 a day, group says as transport strike starts](#) (2026-03-26 03:09)

MANILA, Philippines — Transport group Manibela on Thursday pushed back against complaints over its proposed fare increase, saying drivers are losing big because of soaring fuel prices. On the first day of the nationwide transport strike on Thursday, March 26, Manibela Chairman Mar Valbuena said each driver is losing about P1,500 in daily income. "You are affected only once or twice, but for us, each driver loses P1,500 in income every day," Valbuena said. He said that even if commuters take four rides a day, the added cost from the proposed increase would amount to about P10 to P12. "If you compare that with the P1, P2, or P3 fare increase that we are asking for, and let us say you ride four times a day, that is only P12, only P10, while for us

we lose thousands,” he said. Valbuena said commuters should also share the burden being carried by drivers as fuel prices continue to eat into their earnings. “I hope we share the responsibility. If you are saying this reduces your income, it affects us even more,” he said. He also took a swipe at the government’s free ride trucks, saying some passengers were no longer able to get to work. “There are no more passengers, they were no longer able to get to work. Will that (truck) fight a war? What do you think of the people? Trash?” he said in Filipino.

- [Barmm officials welcome Marcos' signing of law resetting election](#) (2026-03-26 03:02)

MANILA, Philippines—Key officials in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (Barmm) on Thursday expressed optimism following President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s signing of a law rescheduling the region’s first parliamentary elections to September 2026. Republic Act (RA) 12317, signed by the President on Wednesday, amends the Bangsamoro Organic Law, moving the historic vote from its original 2025 schedule to the second Monday of September this year. Maguindanao Rep. Esmael “Toto” Mangudadatu called the postponement a “blessing” that provides essential breathing room for the democratic process. “There is still time for candidates to prepare and for people, especially the youth who have just become eligible, to register before the September deadline,” Mangudadatu said. “We hope the elections will be peaceful and that all elected officials will remain committed to serving the people,” he added. Acting Senior Minister Abdullah Cusain assured the public that preparations were underway to ensure credible and orderly election. “The Office of the Chief Minister will ensure that the process will be credible, peaceful, transparent, and with integrity,” Cusain said. “Our preparations have been continuous. Even when the election was rescheduled, we maintained coordination with the Commission on Elections, especially at the regional level,” he added. The move also drew support from the United Bangsamoro Justice Party (UBJP), the political arm of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. UBJP spokesman Mohajirin Ali said the new date provided “renewed momentum” for a transition they have advocated for since last year. “This is something we have been pushing for since last year. We were ready when elections were initially set, even when they were moved to October,” Ali said. Barmm officials are hopeful that the rescheduled election will pave the way for stronger governance, inclusive leadership and lasting peace.

- [Govt urged to scrap fuel taxes as transport strike gets underway](#) (2026-03-26 02:55)

MANILA, Philippines — Transport group Manibela on Thursday called on the government to remove the excise tax and value-added tax on fuel, a day after a driver died during a payout in Quezon City. Manibela Chairman Mar Valbuena said drivers were being squeezed by rising oil prices and delayed relief, prompting the group to press for the immediate removal of fuel taxes on the first day of the nationwide transport strike. During the protest, Valbuena said the government should not wait any longer to lift the excise tax on fuel and should also remove the VAT, which further increased the burden on drivers. “We are appealing to the government to remove the excise taxes, although it has already been signed, but when will that become effective? Because what we know is that it will still take several weeks before it is removed, and

the Value Added Tax, where the base is even bigger, should also be removed,” Valbuena said in Filipino. He said the problem was aggravated by what he described as a disorderly aid distribution process, after a driver died during Wednesday’s payout in Quezon City. “The giving of aid should be orderly, not that someone has died. Some felt dizzy, some were not given anything. What we received was not aid, but only inconvenience — we lined up the whole day, did not drive, and in the end there was nothing to receive,” he said. A Manibela member also urged the government to find a solution quickly. “Please think carefully about how you will solve our situation, because every member of Manibela is already suffering. We do not want what happened yesterday to happen again. Someone already died, but still got nothing,” the member said. Valbuena said the transport strike has gone beyond the issue of unpaid aid and reflected wider frustration over the continued rise in fuel prices and the losses drivers absorb each day.

- [172 nabbed in Tondo online sabong bust - CIDG](#) (2026-03-25 18:23)

MANILA, Philippines - At least 172 individuals were arrested when elements of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit (CIDG) of the Philippine National Police (PNP) raided an illegal online cockfighting (e-sabong) operation in Vitas Coliseum in Tondo Manila on Tuesday (March 24) night. During the operation, bettors, management personnel, gaffers and bet takers were apprehended along with several pieces of evidence including 45 sets of computers, three tripod cameras, and cockfighting hens all strongly suggesting the existence of the illegal e-sabong operations. Of the 172, 132 were released to their families awaiting word from the CIDG’s legal department if they would also be included in the charges. Remaining suspects are currently detained and undergoing inquest proceedings at the Manila Police District. The suspects are set to face charges for violation of PD 1602 (Illegal Gambling) in relation to RA 10175 (Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012). E-sabong is prohibited in the Philippines primarily due to severe social ills such as rising gambling addiction, mounting debt, and unsolved criminal cases such as the controversial disappearance of cockfight enthusiasts linking fugitive gaming tycoon Charlie “Atong” Ang as the mastermind. The ban, initially ordered by former President Rodrigo Duterte in May 2022 and continued under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

- [Philippines says Strait of Hormuz must be reopened 'immediately'](#) (2026-03-25 17:32)

PARIS — National Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, whose country the Philippines has declared an energy emergency as a result of the Middle East war, said on Wednesday that the Strait of Hormuz must be reopened "immediately". Iran has virtually closed the vital strait since the US-Israeli strikes that started the war on February 28, causing global oil and gas prices to soar. On Tuesday, President Ferdinand Marcos declared a state of "national energy emergency," citing risks to the domestic fuel supply and energy stability created by the war in the Middle East. "It is of vital importance to us that the Strait of Hormuz be opened immediately and kept safe," Teodoro told AFP in an interview in Paris. "Not only for the seafarers, but also for Philippine consumers. The poor Filipinos who need to pay astronomical prices for electricity, fuel, and power. I think the effects are worldwide." French President Emmanuel Macron said last

week that France could help escort vessels in the strategic waterway, but ruled out doing so "in the current context". Teodoro said the conditions for reopening the Strait of Hormuz must be determined based on the expectations of economic stakeholders, particularly insurers. "What will the insurers require as a minimum to insure the vessels? And we proceed from that. Because without adequate vessel insurance, maritime insurance, nothing will move," he said. "So let's see their comfort zone. Let's see the comfort zone of the ship owners. And we work from there," he said, speaking on the sidelines of a security and defence forum in Paris. Around 30 countries, including France, Britain, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Japan, have said they are ready "to contribute to appropriate efforts to ensure safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz". This week, Britain and France will chair military talks involving those nations to form a coalition to reopen the strait, a UK defence official told AFP on Wednesday.

- [Lone bettor wins P15M in Mega lotto 6/45 draw for March 25](#) (2026-03-25 16:24)

MANILA, Philippines — A lone bettor won the ₱15,000,000.00 jackpot prize in the Mega lotto 6/45 draw on Wednesday, March 25, 2026, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office announced. The winning combination was 17-24-15-29-10-05. According to PCSO, the winning ticket was purchased at a lotto outlet in Capiz. Meanwhile, no bettor won the Grand lotto 6/55 jackpot worth ₱45,000,000.00. The winning combination for the 6/55 draw was 29-25-44-39-13-05.

- [House panel seeks Sara's SALNs, tax returns](#) (2026-03-25 16:15)

THE House Committee on Justice on Wednesday voted to subpoena the statements of assets, liabilities, and net worth (SALNs) of Vice President Sara Duterte and other documents as it began hearings to determine whether there is probable cause to impeach her. The committee said it would subpoena the Office of the Ombudsman for Duterte's SALNs from 2022-2025, 2007-2013, and 2016-2022. The committee also decided to issue a subpoena for records of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) investigation on her threat against President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Also on Wednesday, the committee, voting 29-1, ruled to issue a subpoena to Ramil Madriaga, Duterte's alleged bagman, to testify and to produce his affidavit dated Nov. 29, 2025, and any other evidence in his possession. The committee, voting 35-1, granted the motion of Akbayan Rep. Chel Diokno for Madriaga's protection. Diokno said his motion was for the committee to "make sure that there is additional security provided to Madriaga in his present place of detention." "Second, that both in the transport when he is required to come here to testify and while he is testifying [...] that adequate security be provided to him", Diokno said. Madriaga is detained over a kidnapping case. Bicol Saro Rep. Terry Ridon, a member of the committee, said in a press conference that they would have to coordinate with the court and with the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology because these have jurisdiction over Madriaga. In a press conference, panel chairman and Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro said they have directed the House Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms and its security office to coordinate with the BJMP to make sure that all measures in line with his protective custody will be observed when he attends the hearing. Also on Wednesday, the committee, voting 34-2, decided to issue a

subpoena for the income tax returns (ITRs) of Duterte and her spouse from 2007-2025. Ridon made the motion for a representative of the Bureau of Internal Revenue to bring the original or certified true copies of the yearly ITRs. The committee granted Ridon's motion to issue a subpoena to a representative from the Securities and Exchange Commission and for certified true copies of the general information sheet and audited financial statements of entities he enumerated. The committee also ordered the issuance of a subpoena to lawyer Michael Poa, a former undersecretary of the Department of Education (DepEd). The committee proceeded with the hearing even as it received information that Duterte would not join the proceedings. Luistro said at the start of the hearing that "regardless of the participation of the vice president and even in her absence, this committee will proceed." "We will do our duty with resolve, without hesitation, and without delay," she added. Luistro said the committee is committed to a fair and constitutional conduct of the proceedings. "Let us be reminded that this hearing... is intended for the determination of probable cause, not for the purpose of determining the guilt or innocence of the respondent," she said. "I reiterate that what is happening before the Justice committee is not a trial," she said. Luistro said the panel would welcome the vice president and her counsel at any stage of the proceedings. Four impeachment complaints were filed last month against Duterte. The committee set aside the first one, 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 filed was withdrawn by the 17 people who filed it. The third one was filed by priests and others who alleged, among others, that Duterte committed culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayed the public trust in connection with confidential funds allocated to the Office of the Vice President (OVP) for 2022 and 2023 and confidential funds allocated for 2023 to the DepEd which Duterte led as secretary before she resigned in 2024 from that post. This complaint also alleged that Duterte committed culpable violation of the Constitution, betrayed the public trust and committed high crimes "in contracting to murder or assassinate" President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., first lady Liza Araneta Marcos, and former speaker Martin Romualdez. The complaint cited a Nov. 23, 2024 briefing with the media in which she said, "[...] may kinausap na ako na tao. Sinabi ko sa kanya kapag pinatay ako, patayin mo si BBM, si Liza Araneta, at si Martin Romualdez (I have spoken to someone and told him if I am killed, kill Marcos, Liza Araneta and Martin Romualdez)." The fourth impeachment complaint was filed on Feb. 18, 2026 by lawyer Nathaniel Cabrera and alleged that Duterte "committed acts that constitute culpable violation of the Constitution, betrayal of public trust, and other high crimes, by publicly admitting the contracting of an assassin." On Wednesday, Duterte said she chose not to attend the first impeachment hearing to devote her time to serving Filipinos through providing assistance "to ease the financial burden of the families most in need." She also called on the committee to junk the impeachment complaints against her for "lack of evidence." In a statement, Duterte said that the invitation to attend the hearing was used to construct a media narrative of a "mini trial" based on her alleged refusal to answer and her failure to attend the hearing. "In this manner, the hearings are being used by the House of Representatives to conduct yet another third fishing expedition against me," Duterte said. Meanwhile, Duterte's lawyers said she is always ready to answer the allegations raised against her, provided it is in the proper forum — the Senate

Impeachment Court — noting that they are only questioning the jurisdiction of the House Justice Committee in holding what it described as a "mini-trial." In a press briefing on Wednesday, Shiela Sison of Fortun Narvasa and Salazar law office said that under the Constitution, only the Senate has the power to conduct the impeachment trial. "The same does not give the committee any power or jurisdiction to conduct any form of trial, whether a mini or full-blown one, much less try and receive evidence," Sison said. REINA TOLENTINO, RED MENDOZA

- [Marcos gets power to suspend fuel tax, but no immediate relief announced](#) (2026-03-25 16:15)

(UPDATE) PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday signed into law a bill granting him the power to suspend or reduce excise tax on fuel products. The president signed Republic Act (RA) 12316 as part of the government's efforts to cushion the impact of rising oil prices triggered by the war in the Middle East. Marcos, however, said he was still determining the right time to use the new authority "because there are conditions within the law that have to be satisfied." "What's difficult here is the constant changes in the prices of oil," Marcos said. "So, it's hard to plan. That's why we have been trying to find the optimum levels in terms of support, the suspension of some of the charges that the government exacts, especially from food products," he added. The measure authorizes the president to temporarily suspend fuel excise tax to help cushion the impact of global oil price hikes due to the war in the Middle East. On March 3, Marcos bared plans to ask for a special power to reduce excise tax on petroleum products should prices exceed \$80 per barrel. The price of Brent Crude was at \$98 a barrel, down from a high of \$119 since the US and Israel attacked Iran. The president signed on Tuesday an executive order declaring a state of national energy emergency as a response to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East that could affect the availability and stability of the country's energy supply. In the same briefing on Wednesday, Marcos said the declaration would "provide government with more options should the need arise." "Nothing is off the table. We are looking at everything, everything that we can do. And so whatever suggestion that has been brought to us, whatever idea that has, that we have come up with," the president said. "We are examining it very, very closely in great detail to see if it is going to be advantageous to our people," he added.

- [City, town governments to give out free rice](#) (2026-03-25 16:14)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday announced that local government units (LGUs) will provide free rice to their constituents through the Local Government Support Fund (LGSF) by April, as part of the government's efforts to help Filipinos cushion the impact of rising oil prices. In a press conference in Malacañang, Marcos said the LGUs would roll out the rice program under the expanded LGSF "within the next week or two." He said the funds would be released to local governments so they can provide assistance faster. Under the program, the president said that each LGU would provide at least 50 percent of the LGSF funds for the purchase and distribution of rice to their constituents. "They can use 100 percent of the fund

for the rice distribution but it is up to them. However, it is necessary that at least 50 percent of the funds they receive must be used to purchase and distribute rice,” he added. Under the expanded LGSF, the president earlier said that more than five million Filipino families will receive 60 kilos of rice annually or 10 kilos of rice for six months every year. Marcos said the LGSF would also fund health facility upgrades, disaster preparedness initiatives, and critical infrastructure projects, including farm-to-market roads, electrification, and water supply systems. “This will help lower the prices of goods and increase farmers’ incomes,” he said, adding that the rice aid would reduce household expenses while supporting local agriculture. The 2026 General Appropriations Act allocated the largest LGSF in the country’s history at P57.872 billion, an increase of P34.87 billion. It includes the Financial Assistance to LGUs amounting to P37.492 billion, the Growth Equity Fund totaling P11.3 billion, the Support to the Barangay Development Program amounting to P8.09 billion, and the Support and Assistance Fund to Participatory Budgeting totaling P1 billion.

- [P20B allotted to emergency fund to secure fuel supply](#) (2026-03-25 16:13)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has ordered the release an emergency fund of P20 billion to the Department of Energy (DOE) to secure the country’s fuel supply and shield Filipinos from the impact of the global oil crisis, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said Wednesday. In a statement, the DBM said the funding, sourced from the Malampaya Gas Fund under the Special Account in the General Fund, was released through a Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation to support the government’s Emergency Energy Security Program. The P20-billion intervention will fund the strategic procurement of fuel products — including diesel, gasoline, and liquefied petroleum gas — to boost the national fuel inventory, stabilize pump prices, and ensure uninterrupted operations across transport, logistics, agriculture, emergency response, and other critical sectors, the DBM said. The program will be implemented by the Philippine National Oil Company–Exploration Corp., which has already initiated procurement activities to immediately augment domestic supply. Acting Budget Secretary Rolando Toledo said the swift approval reflected the president’s clear directive to ensure that “no Filipino is left vulnerable to fuel disruptions.” “This is about protecting the daily life of every Filipino — from the jeepney driver and delivery rider, to our farmers, frontliners, and ordinary families. When there is a fuel problem, the entire economy is affected. We can’t wait,” Toledo said. “Under the president’s directive, we are moving with urgency to ensure that fuel remains available, prices are moderated, and essential services continue uninterrupted. This is government acting ahead of the crisis — not reacting after the damage is done,” he added. “This is not just funds. This is security — security in travel, in employment, and in the daily lives of Filipinos,” Toledo said. “Every peso we release here is meant to keep the economy moving, keep goods flowing, and keep services running. This is what fiscal discipline looks like — using public funds where they matter most, at the time they are needed most,” he added. As global uncertainties continue to affect energy markets, the Marcos administration is taking a firm and proactive stance — ensuring that the Philippines remains resilient, prepared, and protected, Toledo said. Enough for 45 days In an address Wednesday,

the president said the country has a sufficient supply of oil and petroleum products for at least 45 days, and that it would procure an additional 1 million barrels to add to its stockpile. “We have no problem with the oil supply,” he said in Filipino. “We can be sure that at least for 45 days we will be all right. I think that we can be fairly confident — we can be confident that after the 45 days, additional deliveries would have already arrived here in the Philippines. We will have already a flow of oil, not just one delivery, not just two deliveries but a flow of petroleum and petroleum-related products. Right now, because of the situation, we are asking for everything. We are asking for crude oil, also gasoline, diesel — diesel is of course the most important here in the Philippines. There’s also kerosene and then jet fuel to keep the planes flying,” he added. He added that 23 power projects will also come online in 60 days. Marcos said that while the government has no control over the price of oil in the international market, it will continue to provide assistance to citizens and affected sectors. This includes free rides, train discounts, reduction in terminal and aeronautical fees, cash assistance for drivers, and toll discounts. The chief executive also urged the public not to panic despite his earlier issuance of Executive Order 110 declaring a state of national energy emergency. The declaration, he reiterated, was merely to give the government “more options” to mitigate the effects of the soaring price of oil and petroleum products triggered by the war in the Middle East. Meanwhile, the country is also in talks with Washington to secure waivers and exemptions that will allow it to obtain oil from US-sanctioned countries, Ambassador Jose Manuel Romualdez said Wednesday. Asked if imports of oil from Venezuela and Iran were part of the discussions, Romualdez said “all options are being considered.” Asked what has been the response from the State Department, the ambassador said: “Work in progress.” Temporary measures The country has temporarily increased coal-fired generation due to energy supply pressures and allowed the temporary and limited use of cheaper but dirtier Euro II fuel to ensure supply. At least two Russian ESPO crude cargoes are heading to the Philippines this month, while a cargo of Abu Dhabi Murban crude is expected to arrive at its Bataan terminal on April 8, according to Kpler, a private data, analytics, and technology firm specializing in providing real-time, actionable intelligence on commodity and shipping markets. The shipment would be the country’s first imports of Russian crude oil in five years, following a 30-day waiver issued by the United States. Washington on Friday also issued a 30-day sanctions waiver for the purchase of Iranian oil already at sea. The waiver applies to oil loaded on any vessel on or before March 20 and discharged by April 19, including tankers under sanctions. Sen. Imee Marcos said the Philippines should secure oil importation from fellow members in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to lessen the impact of the oil crisis. She urged the government to engage more with regional and global partners following Malacanang’s declaration of a state of national energy emergency. “Who are we even talking to? Have we reached out to Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia, as well as China and India?” the senator, a critic of her brother’s administration, asked.

- [DPWH expedites road maintenance](#) (2026-03-25 16:12)

THE Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) said it has ramped up road maintenance works in preparation for the anticipated influx of travelers during Holy Week. Following President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s directive to prioritize road safety and commuter convenience, Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon on Wednesday said all DPWH regional and district engineering offices were ordered to ensure that all major thoroughfares are well-maintained and free from obstructions. Ongoing maintenance activities, Dizon said, include the repair of potholes and cracks, repainting of faded road markings, clearing of overgrown vegetation, and restoration of damaged or missing road signs. "Our teams are working round-the-clock shifts to ensure major thoroughfares are well-maintained and free from obstruction and potholes," Dizon said, adding that the DPWH would also provide emergency assistance to commuters before and after the observance of Holy Week. Dizon said one of the DPWH's priority projects was the road repairs on the Andaya Highway in Sipocot, Camarines Sur, which is one of the main arteries of the Maharlika Highway. "Remember, it's not only people from Bicol who pass through here — everyone does, including those going to Visayas and Mindanao. At least with our Holy Week timeline, we can provide this to our fellow citizens," he said. Dizon said that travel will now be continuous as the one-way system will no longer be implemented in preparation for the Holy Week rush. "We need to ensure that before Holy Week, the Maharlika Highway is fully passable — from Quezon, Bicol, Samar to Leyte. We make sure that our (DPWH) regional director will deliver and that all our ongoing projects will be completed quickly so that before Holy Week all these one-way sections will already be open," he added. The DPWH also opened the northbound lane of the Tuganay Bridge, a key infrastructure link between Carmen and Panabo City, serving as a primary artery for travelers from Davao City to Tagum and the northern regions. "This will be a great relief for the more than 30,000 motorists and commuters who pass through it every day, especially with Holy Week approaching," Dizon added. The P516 million bridge project, including the pedestrian structures and final island finishing, is expected to be completed by the end of May 2026, in line with the president's directive to accelerate completion of unfinished infrastructure projects nationwide and as part of the ongoing initiatives in the region to improve traffic flow and support local development. Dizon said the DPWH is working on the completion of a critical diversion road leading to Bauan Port in Batangas and speeding up the resolution of the right-of-way issue so that work can proceed on the stalled Casile-Tagaytay Bypass Road. "Our priority at the DPWH right now is bypass roads. We really want to finish these bypasses so we can decongest cities. Plus, you can create a lot of economic activity along the route, just like here in Cabuyao. This is a big deal — opening this will be a huge benefit," Dizon said following an inspection of the Casile-Tagaytay Road. He said the diversion road to the Port of Bauan will benefit the local economy in San Roque, Bauan, as it will improve transportation and shorten travel time in the area. "The economic benefit of this road is very significant, and it will even go beyond Bauan. Right now, all the trucks coming from the ports in Batangas that are heading to Bauan pass through the town center and the main road. So the people there will experience less traffic, and their daily lives will become easier once all these trucks pass through this route instead," Dizon said.

- [Lopez backs expansion of free rides program](#) (2026-03-25 16:11)

TRANSPORTATION Secretary Giovanni Lopez called on lawmakers to expand the government's Service Contracting Program (SCP) or Libreng Sakay (free rides) to widen its reach and cushion the impact of rising fuel prices on commuters and the transport sector. Lopez said allowing local government units (LGUs) to implement their own versions of the program would enable more public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers, operators and passengers to benefit from government support. "If we have Service Contracting or Libreng Sakay, we can mitigate the situation because we are addressing commuters while also sustaining the supply of transport by compensating operators and drivers," Lopez said. He added that empowering LGUs to roll out localized service contracting programs would complement national government efforts. "If we can empower them, they can implement their own Libreng Sakay," he said. Apart from the SCP, Lopez said the Department of Transportation (DOTr) is implementing other measures to ease the burden of high fuel costs. These include the Fuel Subsidy Program for PUV drivers and operators, as well as fare discounts in major rail lines. The DOTr has maintained a 50 percent fare discount for passengers of MRT-3 and LRT-2, while toll discounts are being extended to Class 1, 2, and 3 PUVs. Lopez also said the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines has reduced passenger service charges and navigation fees in airports it operates, benefiting both airlines and travelers. Meanwhile, the Philippine Ports Authority is implementing a "Piso Fees" scheme, lowering roll-on/roll-off terminal fees from P258 and P516 to P1 for Class 3 and 4 vehicles transporting agricultural goods. The transport chief said these measures are intended to provide immediate relief to both commuters and transport operators as fuel prices remain volatile.

- [It's go time: Historic Moon mission set for lift-off](#) (2026-03-25 16:10)

WASHINGTON, United States — More than half a century after the groundbreaking Apollo program's last crewed flight to the Moon, three men and one woman are preparing for a lunar journey set to turn a new page in American space exploration. The long-delayed NASA mission dubbed Artemis II is slated to lift off from Florida and venture to Earth's natural satellite as early as April 1. They won't land but are instead on a mission to fly by, much as Apollo 8 did in 1968. Americans Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover and Christina Koch — along with Canadian Jeremy Hansen — will carry out the approximately 10-day trip. The odyssey will mark a series of firsts: the first time a woman, a person of color, and a non-American will venture on a Moon mission. It's also the inaugural crewed flight of NASA's new lunar rocket, dubbed SLS. The mammoth orange-and-white rocket is designed to allow the United States to repeatedly return to the Moon in years to come, with the goal of establishing a permanent base that will offer a stepping stone for further exploration. "We're going back to the Moon because it's the next step in our journey to Mars," said Wiseman, the Artemis II commander, on a NASA podcast. Space Race 2.0? The Artemis program — named in honor of Apollo's goddess twin — aims to test technologies needed to one day send humans to Mars, a far more distant journey. That ambition presents an immense challenge — which is compounded by pressure to achieve it before China does. China is currently aiming to land humans on the Moon by 2030. Beijing is also targeting the

lunar South Pole, not least for its rich natural resource potential. The competition recalls the 1960s-era Space Race between the US and the Soviet Union — but Harvard professor Matthew Hersch said that rivalry was "unique" and "will not be repeated anytime soon." He told AFP the Chinese are "not really competing with anyone but themselves." Washington's lunar program investment is significantly lower now than during the Cold War era — but the technology has changed dramatically. "The computer technology that supports the Artemis 2 crew would be almost unimaginable to the Apollo 8 crew, which went to the Moon in a spacecraft with the electronics of a modern high-end toaster oven," Hersch said. And yet the Artemis 2 mission will not be without risks, even by NASA's own admission. The crew will board a spacecraft that has never once carried humans or traveled to the Moon, which is more than 384,000 kilometers (238,855 miles) from Earth — or roughly 1,000 times further away than the International Space Station. "We don't accept anything less than perfect, otherwise we're accepting greater risk," NASA's former chief astronaut Peggy Whitson told AFP. "That is an important process that everyone has to embrace in order for us to be really successful, because we have to live with that knowledge, because of our space flight history, that when accidents happen, people will die," she said. Minimizing risks and preventing disaster will involve the crew performing a series of checks and maneuvers while still in Earth's vicinity. If all goes well, they'll set forth for the Moon. Ambitious timeline The crew's objective will be to verify that both the rocket and the spacecraft are in working order, in the hopes of paving the way for a return and Moon landing in 2028 — the final year of President Donald Trump's term. That deadline has raised eyebrows among experts, in part because Washington is relying on the private sector's technological headway. The astronauts will require a second vehicle to descend to the moon's surface, a lunar lander that remains under development by rival space companies owned by billionaires Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos. The Artemis program has also been plagued by delays and massive cost overruns. Still, NASA hopes that Artemis 2 can succeed in recreating the rare moment of unity and hope that Apollo 8, when a crew flew by the Moon on Christmas Eve 1968, allowed for. In the shadow of a tumultuous year, approximately 1 billion people worldwide tuned in to their flickering television sets to follow the monumental journey of Frank Borman, Jim Lovell and Bill Anders. The astronauts — who immortalized the famous "Earthrise" photograph taken from lunar orbit — were credited with having "saved 1968." Nearly 60 years later, the country is once again mired in deep division and uncertainty, and the crew of Artemis 2 will soon have their chance to inspire.

- [PAL says it has stable jet fuel supply](#) (2026-03-25 16:09)

FLAG carrier Philippine Airlines (PAL) said Wednesday it has sufficient jet fuel supply to ensure uninterrupted domestic and international operations in the coming months. The announcement follows President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s warning that jet fuel shortage may ground planes. "The airline recognizes that global supply conditions remain dynamic. As part of prudent planning, PAL continues to work closely with fuel suppliers, industry partners, and government stakeholders to ensure stable and efficient operations over the longer term," PAL said in a statement. While PAL acknowledged that fuel prices have more than doubled, it is working with

government and industry partners to maintain stable and efficient operations amid dynamic global supply conditions. Meanwhile, Gokongwei-led Cebu Pacific (CEB) said it has secured fuel supply through the end of April and is already working on supply for May and beyond. "Things are working well for us at a time that we're very financially strong, coming from 2025, which was a record year," CEB said in a statement. CEB said 73 percent of its network is domestic, and 72 percent of its jet fleet consists of Airbus NEOs, which are new-generation, fuel-efficient.

- [Rise of self-harm cases alarming – DOH](#) (2026-03-25 16:08)

THE Department of Health (DOH) on Wednesday expressed alarm over the rise of self-harm cases in the Philippines. The statement comes after the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) reported 111 self-harm incidents from Jan. 1 to March 23, compared to 33 in the same period last year — a 236 percent increase. The NCRPO further noted that the majority of the incidents stemmed from emotional distress, relationship issues, personal loss and financial pressure. DOH spokesman Albert Domingo told The Manila Times that the National Center for Mental Health's (NCMH) crisis hotline is ready to serve Filipinos in need of immediate mental health consultation. "The DOH is concerned with the rise in cases of self-harm recorded by the PNP-NCRPO. We hope to remind our kababayan that we have a 24/7 NCMH Crisis Hotline ready to help with emotional distress and other urgent mental health conditions: 1553 or 1800-1888-1553; 09190571553 and 09178998727," Domingo said. The DOH reminded the public that they are not alone, saying, "We can walk this journey together." The NCRPO said it is intensifying efforts to improve early detection and response by deploying police units in coordination with village leaders and schools. "NCRPO is strengthening real-time and community-based interventions under the Enhanced Managing Police Operations framework," it said. ALLEN LIMOS

- [Senator backs lawmakers' pay cut to fund cash aid](#) (2026-03-25 16:07)

VOLUNTARY pay cuts among government officials may help augment funding for fuel subsidies and cash assistance amid the oil crisis, a senator said Wednesday. Sen. Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito said proposals to trim salaries and allowances could support aid for vulnerable sectors while setting an example in government austerity. "That's a noble offer; if salaries and allowances are trimmed, it would be a big help... salaries could even be donated to vulnerable sectors," Ejercito said during the Kapihan sa Senado forum. He said such measures could be done voluntarily, particularly if the Senate leadership adopts austerity steps. "It can be voluntary... but if leadership leads... allowances can be slashed... it would be significant since government should set the example," he added. Earlier, Tingog Party-list Rep. Jude Acidre expressed support for the proposal, noting that lawmakers have previously reduced compensation during crises. "I don't think that's going to be a problem, during crises... we do reduce our compensation," Acidre said in a television interview. He said the move could help fund fuel subsidies and cash aid as tensions in the Middle East continue to drive oil price pressures.

- [CHR cites gains in child rights protection](#) (2026-03-25 16:06)

THE Commission on Human Rights (CHR) hailed the Philippines' removal from a United Nations list of grave child rights violations, calling the development a milestone in the protection of children's rights. CHR Chairman Richard Palpal-latoc said the country's removal in late 2025 from the UN's list of situations with grave child rights violations related to armed conflict — after 22 years — was the result of sustained national efforts to strengthen the implementation of the Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Act, or Republic Act (RA) 11188. He said this was detailed in the commission's 2025 Annual Report on Children in Situations of Armed Conflict (CSAC), which cited key institutional mechanisms established by the government and civil society to safeguard children. Central to these efforts, according to the CHR chief, is the interagency committee on CSAC, which coordinates implementation among agencies under RA 11188. The CHR cited the Armed Forces of the Philippines for ensuring that children encountered in operations are treated as victims and rights-holders. "Meanwhile, the Department of Social Welfare and Development leads the care, custody, and referral of children, recognizing them as survivors in need of protection and rehabilitation, while the Department of Education has also issued guidelines promoting schools as 'zones of peace' and discouraging their use for military purposes," Palpal-latoc said. He said civil society organizations have also supported these efforts. These include the International Committee of the Red Cross, Plan International and Sulong Peace through programs on psychosocial support, education assistance and child protection advocacy, he added. The Philippines has likewise continued to comply with international standards, the commission said, noting its participation in the UN Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting on grave child rights violations. Despite the positive development, the CHR said protection gaps remain. Resource and operational constraints, limited access to specialized psychosocial and mental health services, and gaps in reintegration programs continue to affect protection outcomes, the CHR said. "Upholding children's rights is a shared responsibility among government, civil society and communities to ensure that every child can grow in a society where their dignity and well-being are promoted and protected," Palpal-latoc said.

- [PNP-HPG chief resigns, denies sex raps](#) (2026-03-25 16:05)

A TOP official of the Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group (PNP-HPG) stepped down from his post on Wednesday over sexual harassment allegations filed before the National Police Commission (Napolcom). "To ensure a completely impartial, fair and transparent investigation, I have decided to voluntarily step down from my position as Acting Director of the PNP Highway Patrol Group, effective immediately," Director BGen. Jessie Tamayao said in a statement, adding that he wants to state, in the clearest and most categorical terms, that he is innocent of these charges. "I firmly deny the allegations. I can only deduce this is a personal vendetta of which I am not aware. However, I recognize the gravity of such a complaint and the importance of maintaining the public's trust in our office," he added. Tamayao clarified that his decision to resign was not an admission of guilt but a demonstration of his commitment to due process and the reputation of the Philippine National Police. "In my 30 years of service, I have never been involved in, nor subjected to, any such allegation or complaint. I have risen through the

ranks through my own diligence, hard work and integrity. By stepping down, I aim to remove any perception of influence or conflict of interest while the proper authorities perform their duties,” he stressed. “I fully welcome a thorough investigation, and I am prepared to cooperate with the investigating body to clear my name. I am confident that the truth will prevail through the proper legal and administrative channels,” he added. In a statement, Napolcom did not detail the victim’s rank but said Tamayao was named in a five-page sworn statement submitted to the Napolcom Inspection, Monitoring and Investigation Service (IMIS) on Tuesday by a female HPG personnel. The female personnel is seeking Tamayao’s dismissal for alleged violations of Republic Act 7877 (Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995) and Republic Act 10173 (Data Privacy Act of 2012). The complainant said Tamayao allegedly invited her to engage in sexual activity while also reportedly touching her buttocks. She further claimed that the official’s statements and actions included intimidation and threats, such as reassignment to Mindanao if she refused his advances. The complainant also alleged that the official accessed her cellphone without consent, read her personal messages, and took photos of images and conversations from her gallery, Messenger, and Viber accounts. He allegedly threatened to use these against her if she reported the incident to former HPG director BGen. Hansel Marantan.

- [Catholics urged to pray for Middle East peace](#) (2026-03-25 16:05)

THE Catholic Church on Wednesday called on the Filipino faithful to pray for peace in the Middle East as the conflict continues. “Let’s pray for the end of the war in Iran. Let’s pray for peace,” said Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo, president of Caritas Philippines, during a press conference in Manila. Besides praying for an end to the war, Bagaforo also urged Filipinos to be “mindful of our countrymen abroad” who are directly affected by the hostilities. In response to the imminent danger to the country’s energy supply caused by ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday signed Executive Order 110, declaring a state of national energy emergency. Asked for comment on the government’s declaration of an energy crisis, Bagaforo said it is high time the administration recognized the need to declare the crisis. “It’s the call of the time to prevent the ‘uncontrolled increase in prices.’ I think the government has that responsibility of regulating many of the things, most especially those that concern the economic life of Filipinos,” he said. “Let’s help one another so that the executive order on the national emergency crisis can be fulfilled and bring good to all,” Bagaforo said.

- [National energy emergency gets backing](#) (2026-03-25 16:05)

SEN. Erwin Tulfo on Wednesday expressed support for President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s declaration of a national energy emergency amid tension in the Middle East. “I’m fully behind this decision, as it gives the president the flexibility to act swiftly to support the people during this crisis,” Tulfo said. As the chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Tulfo emphasized that empowering the executive branch will speed up decision-making and ensure timely delivery of essential services, especially during emergencies where delays could worsen conditions for affected communities. He said the declaration of a national energy emergency is a temporary measure designed to stabilize the energy sector. In line with this, he has also shown

support for proposals to suspend fuel excise taxes if global crude oil prices reach alarming levels, aiming to cushion the financial impact on consumers. Tulfo also called for an urgent recovery plan to assist overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) affected by the conflict in the Middle East. He urged the Department of Migrant Workers and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration to extend support not just to Filipinos in conflict zones, but also to those whose deployment has been put on hold. “Many of these Filipinos hail from the provinces. They have already invested money into processing their requirements in search of decent opportunities in the Middle East,” he said. To bridge this gap, Tulfo proposed utilizing the P2 billion *Agarang Kalinga at Saklolo para sa mga OFWs na Nangangailangan* Fund to deliver immediate financial and psychological support. Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian also supported the declaration of a national energy emergency, describing the move as necessary to mitigate the impact of the war in the Middle East. Gatchalian said the measure would enable the government to implement extraordinary interventions to cushion households and businesses from potential increases in fuel and electricity prices, amid volatility in global energy markets driven by geopolitical instability. “The president’s declaration of a state of national energy emergency is a necessary step that enables the government to take extraordinary measures to cushion the impact of the Middle East war on Filipino households and the broader economy,” he said in a statement. The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Wednesday said it supported the government in addressing the energy challenge and vowed to ensure the orderly implementation of regulations to maintain peace and security. “Police forces nationwide are on heightened readiness to secure key installations, critical infrastructure, and communities. The PNP will monitor and address any activities that may disrupt public order, assuring the public of its full capability to protect every Filipino,” PNP chief Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said in a statement.

- [Pagasa starts El Niño watch](#) (2026-03-25 16:04)

THE Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) began its El Niño watch on Wednesday, seeing a strong probability that the weather phenomenon could occur between July and August this year. Nathaniel Servando, Pagasa chief, said that with the termination of the La Niña event on March 9, ENSO-neutral conditions prevail and will most likely last until June or July 2026. El Niño is a warm phase of ENSO characterized by warmer-than-average sea surface temperatures in the Central and Eastern Equatorial Pacific. Thelma Cinco, Pagasa’s Weather Services head, said during a press briefing at the agency’s central office in Quezon City that the El Niño Watch was issued based on its ENSO Alert and Warning System, which indicated the phenomenon’s development with a probability of 55 percent or more within the next six months. “El Niño increases the likelihood of below-normal rainfall, which could bring negative impacts such as dry spells and droughts in some areas of the country,” Cinco said. Above-normal rainfall conditions, however, can also be experienced during the southwest monsoon, particularly over the western part of the archipelago, she pointed out.

- [Ex-NYC chief wants SK turned into environmental corps](#) (2026-03-25 16:03)

FORMER National Youth Commission (NYC) chairman Cesar Chavez has suggested a “sweeping institutional reform” that seeks the transformation of the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) into a nationwide Youth Environmental Corps (YEC). In a statement on Tuesday, Chavez said that the YEC is an alternative to calls to abolish the youth council, saying that “ecological security is the highest form of security.” He suggested that converting the SK into this body would “shift youth governance toward protecting the very foundation of national survival.” Chavez, who served as Youth Sector Representative during the 9th Congress from 1992 to 1995, first proposed this idea in 1994, through House Bill 12763. While serving as chairman of the NYC, he initiated the issuance of Executive Order 52 in 1998, which mandated environmental committees in all SK councils and allocated 10 percent of SK funds for environmental programs. Chavez said the YEC would operate under eight pillars, namely, protecting youth participation in governance, preparing young Filipinos for the green and blue economy, and strengthening community climate resilience through initiatives such as mangrove restoration, urban greening, and disaster preparedness. He also said the transformation to the environmental body “would also bridge education and action, promote health and active lifestyles, and support sustainable local economies while building a pipeline of future leaders in sustainability.” “By redirecting youth governance toward environmental action, the Philippines can preserve youth participation in governance while generating long-term benefits for the economy, sustainable development, and peace and security of the nation,” Chavez said. “For this reason, it should be transformed into a Youth Environmental Corps, redirecting its mandate toward concrete, measurable actions that secure the Philippines’ long-term survival and sustainability for future generations,” he added. Under Chavez’ s proposal, it would redirect the P23.1 billion budget for SK toward environmental programs that included community gardens, recycling systems, tree nurseries, disaster preparedness, and climate resilience projects. This proposal came as Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla raised the possibility of abolishing the SK, because of low attendance rates among its officials, with participation dropping from around 60 percent in the first year to as low as 30 percent in subsequent years. Chavez said that most of the youth council’ s activities are “often short-term or event-based, such as sports leagues, beauty pageants or celebrations, with limited long-term developmental impact.” He clarified that the reform keeps the SK, but “repurposes” the structure and funds while approving accountability. “Transforming SK into YEC operationalizes that idea by turning young people into active defenders of ecological security, not just future leaders but present-day guardians of the environment,” Chavez said. “By clearly defining the Youth Environmental Corps’ mandate around environmental programs, communities, barangay, local governments, and oversight bodies such as the Commission on Audit will have clear expectations of its functions — thereby improving transparency, monitoring, and overall accountability,” the former youth commission chief added.

- [Muntinlupa mayor urges calm over emergency](#) (2026-03-25 16:02)

MUNTINLUPA Mayor Ruffy Biazon on Wednesday urged the public to stay calm amid the declaration of a state of national energy emergency under Executive Order 110 signed by

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., saying the measure was a preparatory step and not a sign that the country was already in crisis. In a statement issued on March 25, Biazon said the order was issued in response to tensions in the Middle East that could affect global oil supply and drive up fuel prices. Biazon said the order directs various government agencies to work together to ensure the continued supply of fuel and essential goods, assist sectors that may be hit, such as transport and agriculture, and enforce energy-saving measures. He said the declaration means systems are already in place before a more serious situation befalls the county. James Daniel Danio The mayor also urged the public to use fuel and energy carefully and to conserve where possible. Biazon said the order also calls for measures to save energy. For this, the Muntinlupa City government said it conducted benchmarking with the Quezon City government to study the implementation of its E-Bus Program and its practices in modern public transportation. The city government said the discussions covered Quezon City's sustainable mobility initiatives, including the use of environmentally friendly vehicles and systems to improve vehicular traffic flow. It said the benchmarking activity seeks to adapt best practices that could help deliver more orderly, efficient and modern transportation services for Muntinlupeños.

- [172 suspects nabbed in online sabong bust – CIDG](#) (2026-03-25 16:02)

THE Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit (CIDG) of the Philippine National Police (PNP) arrested 172 people in a raid on an illegal operation of online cockfighting (e-sabong) at Vitas Coliseum in Tondo, Manila, on Tuesday, March 24. During the raid, authorities apprehended bettors, management personnel, gaffers and bet takers. They seized several pieces of evidence, including 45 sets of computers and three tripod cameras. Of the 172 suspects, 132 were released to their families, who were at the CIDG's legal department. The remaining suspects were being held for inquest proceedings at the Manila Police District. Detained suspects face charges for violation of PD 1602 (Illegal Gambling) in relation to RA 10175 (Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012). In the Philippines, e-sabong is prohibited, primarily due to severe social ills arising from gambling addiction, including indebtedness and criminality, such as the controversial disappearance of cockfight enthusiasts linking fugitive gaming tycoon Charlie "Atong" Ang as the mastermind. The ban, initially ordered by former president Rodrigo Duterte in May 2022, continued under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s administration. Col. John Guiagui, regional director of CIDG National Capital Region, said the online sabong operates non-stop, with each fight lasting two to three minutes. In contrast, an in-person or traditional cockfight lasts at least 30 minutes. "The online sabong operations last 24 hours a day, even without bettors physically present," Guiagui told reporters. Bettors place their bets through an online link called "Sabong VIP," ranging from P100 to P1,000. Despite overwhelming evidence, management denied their operations. However, CIDG operatives showed videos as proof. Each cockfight yields at least P300,000 in bets. "The very nature of the cockfight is already questionable. That's why we arrested the management staff because they may know about this," Guiagui said.

- [More drivers to receive cash aid](#) (2026-03-25 16:02)

THE Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) said it has provided P5,000 in cash relief to 22,937 transport network vehicle service (TNVS) drivers to mitigate the effect of rising fuel prices. The number represents 84.39 percent of the total TNVS beneficiaries identified by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB). The assistance is part of the government's efforts to cushion the impact of increasing petroleum prices on the transport sector. The DSWD said it will conduct a special payout for public utility vehicle drivers who were not included in the original list of beneficiaries. Assistant Secretary Irene Dumlao urged excluded drivers to coordinate with authorities to be included in the next payout. "We understand that some drivers were not included in the list, so we are asking them to submit their names and a copy of their valid driver's license to their transport regulatory units so these can be forwarded to the LTFRB," Dumlao said. She said the directive is in line with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s instruction to extend assistance to all drivers affected by rising fuel prices. "This is the directive of the president that all our drivers who are facing various challenges due to the continued increase in fuel prices must be assisted," Dumlao said. The DSWD also said it is coordinating with local government units and LTFRB regional offices to prepare for the rollout of regional payouts after Holy Week. Meanwhile, the agency is set to meet with transport network companies, including Grab Philippines, to explore ways to include more drivers, particularly those not reflected in the initial beneficiary list.

- [Bam Aquino seeks 'broader' state of national emergency](#) (2026-03-25 15:45)

MANILA, Philippines -- Sen. Bam Aquino on Wednesday sought a "broader" state of national emergency, and not just a state of national energy emergency to control the prices of goods amid the oil crisis brought by the Middle East war. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday declared a state of national energy emergency through Executive Order 110. The senator said that a state of national emergency would give the government "more teeth in controlling prices and addressing the crisis," rather than relying on the state of national energy emergency. Aside from the issue of price control, Aquino said it was also unclear under EO 110 if local government units can utilize their quick response fund to extend assistance to their constituents. Sen. Loren Legarda said the President's declaration of a state of national energy emergency was an "overdue recognition" that the country is already in a crisis. "By itself, a declaration of a state of national energy emergency will not protect Filipino families from rising fuel prices, higher food costs, heavier transport expenses, and the mounting burdens on our farmers and fisherfolk," Legarda said. "But with such recognition, our actions can finally proceed in their proper light," the senator said in a statement on Wednesday. Whether it involves the issue on oil supply or prices, the current economic situation directly affects the people -- which "cannot be addressed by business-as-usual approach" of the government, she added. "This declaration will only have real meaning if it becomes the basis for swift, coordinated, and compassionate action that delivers immediate relief to Filipino families and guides the nation through this crisis with clarity, resolve, and purpose," Legarda said. Aquino said he would seek clarification on the matter during the resumption of the Proactive Response and Oversight for Timely and Effective Crisis Strategy Committee hearing on Thursday to

determine whether the provision is included in the EO 110. Meanwhile, Aquino said the government should utilize its more than P200 billion in available funds to provide targeted aid to affected sectors and industries. Among these sectors are transport workers, micro, small, and medium enterprises, farmers, fisherfolk, teachers, and healthcare workers, among others. He also stressed the importance of protecting the country's public markets, hospitals, and schools, saying they are vital to Filipino families from the worst effects of the crisis.

- [Imee Marcos: PH should import oil from fellow Asean members](#) (2026-03-25 15:42)

MANILA, Philippines -- Sen. Imee Marcos said the Philippines should secure oil importation from fellow members in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to lessen the impact of the oil crisis in the country arising from the Middle East war. The senator on Wednesday proposed that the Philippines negotiate with Asean neighbors such as Malaysia, Brunei, Vietnam, and Thailand to supply the country's petroleum needs. Marcos said Myanmar has implemented fuel rationing, an odd-even scheme for private vehicles, and expanded work-from-home programs in both the public and private sectors. The senator said that Vietnam has reinstated its oil price stabilization fund during the crisis. Marcos also called on the administration to disclose the country's actual fuel supply situation amid the Palace's declaration of a state of national energy emergency. She warned that the country may be leaning too heavily on short-term relief instead of pursuing a clear energy strategy. "Can someone give us the real score on the country's energy supply? Have importers, refinery owners, and LPG suppliers been consulted. How much supply of the critical oil products is really left?" she asked. "Please, please stop trumpeting delusions of six percent growth when the ordinary Filipino can barely survive this energy shock," Marcos said in a statement.

- [Marcos urges public not to panic despite national energy emergency declaration](#) (2026-03-25 15:39)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday urged the public not to panic despite his earlier issuance of Executive Order No. 110, which declares a state of national energy emergency. He reiterated that the declaration is meant to give the government "more options" to mitigate the effects of soaring oil and petroleum prices triggered by the war in the Middle East. "The state of national energy emergency is not meant to cause panic among the public, but to give the government more options to address the crisis caused by tensions in the Middle East, should the need arise," he said in Filipino during a press conference in Malacañang. "This does not mean that we should panic. We are doing everything we can to assess and alleviate the situation. This is a precautionary tool so we will be ready for what's next," he added. EO No. 110 establishes the Unified Package for Livelihoods, Industry, Food, and Transport (UPLIFT), a coordinated whole-of-government response framework. It includes energy supply management measures to be implemented by the Department of Energy (DOE) and its attached agencies, as well as complementary measures to support consumers and affected sectors to be carried out by other concerned agencies. The President also warned against those who may attempt to take advantage of the situation, saying the government

would strictly enforce laws against hoarding, price gouging, and profiteering involving petroleum products and other commodities.

- [VP Lawyers question House proceedings, insists Sara ready to answer in Senate trial](#) (2026-03-25 14:40)

MANILA, Philippines - Counsels for Vice President Sara Duterte stressed that she is ready to answer the allegations against her, provided these are addressed in the proper forum—the Senate impeachment court—while maintaining that they are questioning the proceedings before the House Committee on Justice. The statements from lawyers Shiela Sison and Michael Wesley Poa came after the panel, led by Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro, issued several subpoenas for documents related to the impeachment complaints. In a press briefing on Wednesday, Sison said that under the Constitution, only the Senate has the authority to conduct an impeachment trial. “The Constitution does not grant the committee any power or jurisdiction to conduct any form of trial, whether a mini or full-blown one, much less to try a case and receive evidence,” Sison said. She added that while they do not intend to disrespect the committee, the panel has no authority to examine or cross-examine witnesses or to compel their appearance through subpoenas. This comes despite Luistro’s assertion that the hearings resemble a “preliminary investigation” in the criminal justice system. Meanwhile, Poa said he is “ready” to appear before the panel after receiving a subpoena. “I have no intention to evade. I don’t see any point in not appearing,” Poa said.

- [Pasay fire reaches second alarm](#) (2026-03-25 13:36)

MANILA, Philippines — A fire broke out along David Street in Village 23, F.B. Harrison, Pasay City, reaching the second alarm as of 4:23 p.m. on Wednesday, March 25. Firefighters were still battling the blaze as of posting, while authorities have yet to determine its cause. The Bureau of Fire Protection–National Capital Region (BFP-NCR) in Pasay urged the public to avoid the area and follow official advisories for their safety. The BFP also reminded residents to observe fire safety measures, including avoiding illegal electrical connections, not overloading outlets or extension cords, unplugging appliances when not in use, and regularly checking wiring and electrical equipment.

- [Luistro says House doesn't forget other responsibilities amid hearing on Duterte impeach complaints](#) (2026-03-25 13:18)

MANILA, Philippines - The House of Representatives “does not forget its other responsibilities” even as it proceeds with the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte. On Wednesday, the House Committee on Justice began hearings on the two impeachment complaints it had earlier deemed sufficient in form, substance, and grounds. The panel is conducting the proceedings to determine whether there is probable cause to impeach Duterte. “Even as we undertake this solemn constitutional duty, the House of Representatives does not forget its other responsibilities,” said Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro, the committee chairperson, at the start of the hearing. She added that “we do not lose sight of the

hardships faced by the powerless.” Luistro also cited the House’ s passage of a bill authorizing President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to suspend or reduce fuel excise taxes. “We also continue to work on measures that address inflation, food security, and social services,” she said.

- [Marcos on govt taking over oil industry: 'We don't want to get into that discussion'](#) (2026-03-25 13:08)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday said he does not want to discuss the possibility of a government takeover of the oil industry to control the soaring prices of fuel. “We don't want to get into that discussion,” Marcos told reporters, when asked whether the government plans to take over the oil industry following the declaration of state of national energy emergency. Trade Union Congress of the Philippines Rep. and House Deputy Speaker Raymond Democrito Mendoza earlier urged Marcos to consider declaring a state of national emergency to allow temporary government takeover of oil companies’ operations. Mendoza cited that under Section 14(e) of Republic Act 8479, the Department of Energy may temporarily take over or direct the operations of entities in the oil industry during emergencies.

- [Marcos enacts law resetting the first BARMM elections](#) (2026-03-25 12:23)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday signed into law a measure resetting the first parliamentary elections of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Republic Act (RA) 121317 moves the region’ s first regular election from March to the second Monday of September 2026, the fourth time the polls were reset. It also amends Section 13, Article XVI of Republic Act 11054, or the “Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.” “For the purpose of synchronizing the BARMM Parliamentary Elections with the national and local elections, the regular elections for the Bangsamoro Government shall be held on the second Monday of May 2031 and every three years thereafter,” part of RA 121317 read. “The Commission on Elections shall promulgate rules and regulations for the conduct of the elections, enforce, and administer them this Organic Law,” it added. The new law authorizes the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) to continue as the interim government of the BARMM while still in transition period “unless such interim members are replaced by the president or their tenure is shortened by their election to a different office.” The interim members of the BTA shall serve until their successors shall have been elected and qualified in an automated election. RA 121317 likewise mandates the use of the automated election system used in the May 12, 2025 national and local polls. This includes all machines, devices, equipment, and supplies used, as well as the service providers involved in their operation and maintenance. Marcos regarded the BARMM elections as crucial to the government’ s push to achieve lasting peace and development in the southern part of the country. “If that election fails, that will be a big failure in the peace process, that's why the BARMM elections need to be successful,” he said.

- [MMDA gears up for two-day transport strike](#) (2026-03-25 11:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) activated its Emergency Operations Center and pre-positioned rescue and free ride vehicles for the transport strike set on Thursday and Friday. Transport group MANIBELA on Wednesday also released the areas where they would hold their strikes for March 26. In a Viber message, the MMDA said the Emergency Operations Center had been activated at its Communications and Command Center as part of its preparations for the strike. The agency said rescue vehicles and "libreng sakay" (free ride) units were pre-positioned in coordination with Metro Manila local government units for commuters who may be affected. It added that a single dispatch system would be implemented so government vehicles would not compete with drivers who continue to operate and were not joining the strike. Under the setup, the MMDA said once an LGU has dispatched rescue or free ride vehicles to an area, the agency will no longer send another unit there. MANIBELA Chairman Mar Valbuena said he would be at Philcoa by 6 a.m. Valbuena said the strikes would be centered at: \* Philcoa\* Shell Gulod, Novaliches\* Monumento\* Puregold J.R. Gatchalian, Parañaque\* Starmall Alabang\* Nagtahan\* Shell Zapote, Las Piñas\* Pasig public market\* Marcos Highway, Sta. Lucia, Marikina\* Pedro Gil-Agoncillo\* Malaya-Tanay\* Balibago Highway, Sta. Rosa\* Olivarez Highway, Central Mall\* Tunasan Highway, RMT\* Iligan City Plaza, Lanao del Norte\* Bacolod Public Plaza\* Tacloban City\* Ormoc City\* Tagbak, Ungka Terminal, Christ the King, UP Flyover, and Iloilo City Provincial Capitol\* Dasmariñas, Cavite area. He added that the whole of Laguna would join the protest, although the list of strike centers has yet to be finalized. The two-day transport strike was announced by PISTON and MANIBELA, with PISTON saying the protest would draw participation from jeepney and bus operators, UV Express, TNVS drivers, motorcycle taxis and other transport sectors.

- [Fare hike suspension, fuel subsidies ease burden, says commuter group](#) (2026-03-25 11:29)

MANILA, Philippines — The Coalition of Filipino Commuters (CFC-PasaHero) on Wednesday said that recent measures of the government "eased" the burden of the riding public, amid continued rising fuel prices. In a statement, PasaHero said the suspension of the planned fare hike on public utility vehicles (PUVs) provided relief to commuters and stopped additional strain on daily expenses in transportation. "By suspending the initially announced fare hike, the government helped address one of the most immediate concerns of commuters—rising fares amid already increasing living costs," CFC-PasaHero lead convenor Ira Panganiban said in a statement. He pointed out that commuters usually felt the effects of the oil price hikes first, since the fare adjustments on PUVs affect their daily expenses.

- [Marcos signs law allowing him to suspend, reduce excise tax](#) (2026-03-25 11:17)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday signed into law a bill granting him the power to suspend or reduce excise tax on fuel products. The President signed Republic Act (RA) 12316 as part of the government's efforts to cushion the impact of the oil price surge triggered by the war in the Middle East.

- [Fire breaks out in Pasay area, reaches second alarm](#) (2026-03-25 09:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Fire broke out in Pasay City, reaching second alarm, on Wednesday. Firefighters were still battling the blaze along David Street in Village 23, F.B. Harrison of posting time, as authorities determine its cause. The Bureau of Fire Protection National Capital Region urged the public to avoid the area and follow safety advisories. The BFP warned against illegal power connections, overloading outlets or extension cords, leaving appliances plugged in when not in use, and failing to regularly check wiring and electrical equipment.

- [Marcos: LGUs to roll out free rice program by April](#) (2026-03-25 09:34)

MANILA, Philippines- President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday announced that local government units (LGUs) would provide free rice to their constituents through the Local Government Support Fund (LGSF) by April, as part of the government's efforts to help Filipinos cushion the impact of rising oil prices. In a press conference in Malacañang, Marcos said the LGUs would roll out the rice program under the expanded LGSF "within the next week or two." "So we used the LGSF, the Local Government Support Fund and it will be directly released to our local governments so that they themselves can provide assistance faster," Marcos said. Under the program, the President said that each LGU would provide at least 50 percent of the LGSF funds for the purchase and distribution of rice to their constituents. "They can use 100 percent of the fund for the rice distribution but it is up to them. But it is necessary that at least 50 percent of the funds they receive must be used to purchase and distribute rice," he added.

- [House panel seeks Duterte SALNs, NBI records on 'threat' vs Marcos](#) (2026-03-25 07:09)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives' Committee on Justice on Wednesday ruled to subpoena documents from the Office of the Ombudsman and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) in relation to its hearing on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte. The committee will ask the Ombudsman for Duterte's Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALNs) from 2022 to 2025, 2007 to 2013, 2016 to 2022. The committee also decided to issue a subpoena duces tecum on the documents of the NBI's investigation on the alleged assassination "threat" by Duterte against President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. The committee is conducting the hearing to determine whether there is probable cause to impeach Duterte. This comes after it found two complaints sufficient in: form, substance, and grounds. Duterte is charged with alleged culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayal of public trust for her alleged misuse of intelligence funds of the Office of the Vice President and the Department of Education. She has denied the accusations.

- [Marcos to sign bill suspending fuel excise tax](#) (2026-03-25 07:03)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday said he would sign into law a bill granting him the power to suspend or reduce excise tax on fuel products within the day. Speaking to reporters in Malacañang, Marcos said he was still determining the right time to use the power. "By the end of the day I will be signing that law already," Marcos said during a press conference.

- [Marcos: No fare hikes this Holy Week](#) (2026-03-25 06:47)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said ferry and bus operators have committed not to increase fares this Holy Week despite rising fuel prices triggered by the war in the Middle East. In an interview with Bloomberg on Tuesday, Marcos said the government was trying to ease the burden of increases in fuel prices on the riding public and the middle class during the Holy Week. “We’ ve gotten commitments from ferries that they will not raise their fares, we’ re doing the same thing with buses that they will not raise their fares and they do not limit or cut down the trips they will be taking,” the President said. “We’ re doing everything we can so the riding public, the general public, the people who are working, the middle class, they are the ones we are most concerned about, so it does not become a drag to their livelihoods,” he added.

- [House justice panel to subpoena Madriaga](#) (2026-03-25 05:51)

MANILA, Philippines—Voting 29-1, the House Committee on Justice on Wednesday ruled to subpoena Ramil Madriaga, the alleged bagman of Vice President Sara Duterte. He will be required to appear before the committee to testify and produce his affidavit dated Nov. 29, 2025 "and any other evidence in his possession." Voting 35-1, the committee granted the motion of Akbayan Rep. Chel Diokno to provide protection for Madriaga. Diokno said his motion was for the committee to "make sure that there is additional security provided to Madriaga in his present place of detention by the National Bureau of Investigation." Madriaga was detained over a kidnapping case. The committee on Wednesday started the hearing on the two impeachment complaints against Duterte to determine if there is probable cause to impeach her.

- [House justice panel to subpoena Sara's alleged bagman](#) (2026-03-25 05:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Voting 29-1, the House of Representatives' Committee on Justice on Wednesday ruled to subpoena the alleged bagman of Vice President Sara Duterte. Ramil Madriaga will be required to appear before the committee to testify and produce his affidavit dated Nov. 29, 2025 "and any other evidence in his possession." Voting 35-1, the committee granted the motion of Akbayan Rep. Chel Diokno to provide protection for Madriaga. Diokno said his motion was for the committee to "make sure that there is additional security provided to Madriaga in his present place of detention by the National Bureau of Investigation." Madriaga was detained over a kidnapping case. The committee on Wednesday started the hearing on the two icomplaints against Duterte to determine probable cause to impeach her.

- [Marikina mayor clarifies fuel subsidy payout reset in Marikina](#) (2026-03-25 04:39)

MANILA, Philippines — Mayor Maan Teodoro on Wednesday clarified that the rescheduling of Marikina’ s fuel subsidy payout for jeepney drivers was meant to ensure that no qualified beneficiary would be left out. Teodoro said the city decided to move the payout because it did not agree to a distribution in which only some jeepney drivers would receive assistance while others in Marikina were not even included in the list. She said the local government spoke with

jeepney operators and drivers associations, along with the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), to press for the inclusion of drivers who should be covered by the subsidy. Teodoro also lamented that some were focusing on politics and spreading fake news instead of helping during a time of crisis. “This is not a time for politics. This is a time for compassion, action, and standing with those who are in greater need,” Teodoro said. The rescheduled payout in Marikina will be held on March 28.

- [PH in exploratory talks with Russia for oil imports](#) (2026-03-25 04:36)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said the Philippines has begun exploratory talks with Russia, a non-traditional trading partner, regarding the possibility of fuel importation to boost the country’s stockpile. Marcos’ disclosure was made in an interview with Bloomberg News. “Russia is not a traditional supplier of crude oil to the Philippines or any energy supply, but we are exploring that as well,” he said. He added that the Philippines was likewise “still working” on getting China to commit to adding to its fuel supply. “Basically, we are trying anything, everything to secure supply because that’s the one thing that we can do about. The pricing is going to be a much more difficult challenge because everyone is a price taker when it comes to oil,” he said. Following the outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East, the president said the country would be looking for alternative sources of oil. Apart from Russia and China, the government is also looking at Asian partners like Thailand, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, and Brunei.

- [Up to Palace to decide on fate of Asean 2026 chairmanship, says Foreign Affairs chief](#) (2026-03-25 04:32)

MANILA, Philippines — It is up to Malacanang to decide whether to postpone the Philippines' hosting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) event, Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro said. Lazaro made the remark when asked during a media forum on Wednesday on the proposal to postpone the country's chairmanship of Asean this year amid the Middle East war's effect on the vulnerable sectors like the energy, farmers, fisherfolks, and transport. "There will be an appropriate time on what the Palace will say [on the matter]. You just wait for that [pronouncement]," Lazaro said at the Kapihan sa Manila Hotel media forum. "We cannot make that decision," Lazaro said, referring to a proposal to the Palace for its "serious study" and "possible reconsideration." "It is the turn of the Philippines to lead Asean, which requires the country to host 650 ministerial and senior official meetings. These will be held in Manila, Cebu, Bohol, Boracay, Laog, Iloilo, Tagaytay, and Clark in Pampanga. In a radio interview over the weekend, former Finance secretary Gary Teves said the government would save over P17 billion if it postpones hosting the Asean. The money could be used to offset the impact of the Middle East war on the economy. Senate President Vicente Sotto III on Monday said, "The times call for such a possible move. The Executive department might consider that." Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo Lacson said Teves' recommendation "merits at least serious study and possible reconsideration."

- [DPWH intensifies road maintenance ahead of Holy Week travel surge](#) (2026-03-25 04:11)

MANILA, Philippines — In preparation for the anticipated influx of travelers for the upcoming Holy Week, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has ramped up its routine road repair and maintenance activities following President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s directive to prioritize road safety and commuter convenience. Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon on Wednesday said all DPWH regional and district engineering offices were under strict instruction to ensure that all major thoroughfares are well-maintained, and free from obstructions and potholes, and to guarantee that appropriate warning, directional, and information signages are legibly and visibly installed. Ongoing maintenance activities, Dizon said, include the repair of road defects such as potholes and cracks, repainting of faded road markings, clearing of overgrown vegetation, and restoration of damaged or missing road signs. "Our teams are working round-the-clock shifts to ensure major thoroughfares are well-maintained, and free from obstruction and potholes," said Dizon, adding that the DPWH would also provide emergency assistance to commuters before and after the observance of the Holy Week. Dizon said that one of the DPWH's main focus was the road repairs on the Andaya Highway in Sipocot, Camarines Sur, one of the main arteries of the Maharlika Highway. "Remember, it's not only people from Bicol who pass through here—everyone does, including those going to Visayas and Mindanao. At least with our Holy Week timeline, we can provide this to our fellow citizens," the DPWH chief said. He assured that travel along the highways would now be continuous as the one-way system would no longer be implemented in preparation for the Holy Week rush. "We need to ensure that before Holy Week, the Maharlika Highway is fully passable—from Quezon, Bicol, Samar to Leyte. We make sure that our [DPWH] Regional Director will deliver and that all our ongoing projects will be completed quickly so that before Holy Week all these one-way sections will already be open," added Dizon. Dizon said the planned major rehabilitation of Maharlika Highway would start after the Holy Week.

- [Marcos orders P20B emergency fund to secure fuel supply](#) (2026-03-25 03:54)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has ordered the release of P20 billion emergency fund to the Department of Energy (DOE) to secure the country's fuel supply and shield Filipinos from the impact of the global oil crisis, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said Wednesday. In a statement, the DBM said the funding, sourced from the Malampaya Gas Fund under the Special Account in the General Fund, was released through a Special Allotment Release Order and Notice of Cash Allocation to support the government's Emergency Energy Security Program. The P20 billion intervention will fund the strategic procurement of fuel products—including diesel, gasoline, and liquefied petroleum gas—to boost national fuel inventory, stabilize pump prices, and ensure uninterrupted operations across transport, logistics, agriculture, emergency response, and other critical sectors, the DBM said. The program will be implemented by the Philippine National Oil Company–Exploration Corporation, which has already initiated procurement activities to immediately augment domestic supply. "This is about protecting the daily life of every Filipino—from the jeepney driver and delivery rider, to our farmers, frontliners, and ordinary families," Budget Secretary Rolando Toledo said. "Under the President's directive, we are moving with urgency to ensure

that fuel remains available, prices are moderated, and essential services continue uninterrupted. This is government acting ahead of the crisis—not reacting after the damage is done," he added. Speaker Faustino "Bojie" Dy III on Tuesday night said the House of Representatives was prepared to move with "the same urgency, through targeted interventions, close oversight, and real relief for our people." Dy said the President's move was a timely and necessary step to shield the country from the growing impact of the Middle East conflict on fuel supply, prices, and the broader economy. The Philippine National Police (PNP) vowed to ensure the orderly implementation of regulations to maintain peace and security and encouraged everyone to stay informed, remain cooperative, and practice responsible energy use. The Armed Forces of the Philippines said it recognized that the development has a bearing on its mandate to help ensure energy security, national stability, and the overall welfare of the Filipino people. Federation of Philippine Industries Chairman Elizabeth Lee said the government's decision to declare an energy emergency was timely and necessary, especially for manufacturers whose pressure was "multi-layered" — hitting energy, transport, imported input materials and production timelines. WITH REPORTS FROM IZEL ABANILLA, CHYNNA ONG, PNA

- [House panel holds impeach probe sans Sara](#) (2026-03-25 02:50)

(UPDATE) MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives' Committee on Justice on Wednesday proceeded with the hearing on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte even after she said that she would skip the hearing and urged lawmakers to junk the case against her. Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro, the committee chairman, said at the start of the hearing that "regardless of the participation of the Vice President and even in her absence, this committee will proceed. We will do our duty with resolve, without hesitation, and without delay." On Tuesday night, Luistro said the committee would proceed with the scheduled hearing despite the information it received. "We received information that the Vice President and her legal team will not be participating in tomorrow's (Wednesday) formal hearing," she said. "They are questioning the constitutionality of the proceedings, but the Committee on Justice is duty-bound to continue with its mandate under the Constitution," she said. Luistro maintained that the committee was committed to a fair and constitutional conduct of the proceedings. The committee is conducting the hearing to determine whether there is probable cause to impeach Duterte who is facing charges of culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayal of public trust over the alleged misuse of intelligence funds from the Office of the Vice President (OVP) and Department of Education where she served briefly as its secretary before resigning. The complaints were found to be sufficient in: form, substance, and grounds. In a statement earlier on Wednesday, Duterte said she preferred to devote her time to serving Filipinos by providing assistance "to ease the financial burden of the families most in need." She also called on the committee to junk the impeachment complaints against her for "lack of evidence." Duterte said that the invitation was used to construct a media narrative of a "mini trial" based on her alleged refusal to answer and her failure to attend the hearing. "In this manner, the hearings are being used by the House of Representatives to conduct yet another

third fishing expedition against me," Duterte said. She reiterated that the country's current problems were the "looming closure of businesses, the loss of jobs, and the hardship faced by every Filipino family due to the continuous rise in the prices of goods,". "Once again, politics is being prioritized over the welfare of millions of Filipinos who are struggling deeply due to the high cost of commodities," Duterte said. She reiterated that there was no rule that stated that a respondent in an impeachment complaint must personally attend the hearings. "I have already submitted my Answer ad Cautelam. At this point, the Committee has nothing left to do but dismiss the complaints due to a clear lack of evidence," Duterte said.

- [2 airline companies announce stable fuel supply](#) (2026-03-25 01:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Flag carrier Philippine Airlines (PAL) confirmed on Wednesday that it has stabilized its jet fuel inventory, ensuring uninterrupted service for all scheduled domestic and international operations in the coming months. The announcement comes despite President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s declaration of a state of national energy emergency, where he noted that grounding flights was a distinct possibility due to Middle East conflict-driven shortages. "The airline recognizes that global supply conditions remain dynamic. As part of prudent planning, PAL continues to work closely with fuel suppliers, industry partners, and government stakeholders to ensure stable and efficient operations over the longer term," PAL said in a statement. While PAL acknowledged that fuel prices have more than doubled, the airline said it was working closely with government and industry partners to maintain stable and efficient operations amid dynamic global supply conditions. Meanwhile, Gokongwei-led Cebu Pacific (CEB) said that it has secured fuel supply up until the end of April, and was working on supply for May and beyond. "Things are working well for us at a time that we're very financially strong, coming from 2025 which was a record year," CEB said in a statement. CEB said that 73 percent of its network is domestic, and 72 percent of its jet fleet is Airbus NEOs, which are the new generation, fuel efficient aircraft.

- [Coast Guard, BFAR boats sent to protect fishermen](#) (2026-03-25 00:47)

THE Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) deployed multiple vessels to Bajo de Masinloc following reports of continued harassment by Chinese vessels of Filipino fishermen, authorities said. In a statement Tuesday, the PCG said two of its vessels and five BFAR fishery patrol ships were dispatched after more than 20 Filipino fishing boats were harassed by China Coast Guard (CCG) units over the weekend. The joint deployment secured the fishing grounds and ensured the safety of Filipino fishermen operating in the area. Government personnel also distributed fuel subsidies, food packs, and ice to help sustain fishing operations and mitigate the impact of rising fuel costs. PCG Commandant Admiral Ronnie Gil Gavan ordered an aerial maritime domain awareness flight over the shoal to monitor the situation. The operation documented the presence of six CCG vessels, 20 Chinese Maritime Militia ships, and one warship from the People's Liberation Army Navy. During the patrol, the PCG recorded what it described as a first-of-its-kind incident: a CCG vessel broadcasting over radio its intent to conduct a "clearing operation" within a defined area. The

coordinates covered waters between 14°14' N to 15°05' N latitude and 118°10' E to 118°25' E longitude. The PCG said the deployment formed part of efforts to safeguard Philippine sovereignty and protect the livelihood of local fishermen in the West Philippine Sea. The agency also reiterated its commitment to enforcing international law and supporting the policy direction of the Philippine government in asserting the country's sovereign rights and maritime jurisdiction in contested waters. Military exercises

Meanwhile, Armed Forces of the Philippines chief Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. said Japan is expected to send combat troops to military exercises in the Philippines instead of the usual humanitarian assistance and disaster response trainers. Brawner linked the expected deployment to rising maritime tensions in the West Philippine Sea and the deepening defense ties between Manila and Tokyo. "As mentioned by the ambassador, for this year's Balikatan exercise, we are expecting Japan to send combat troops to join in the exercise instead of just the usual trainers of HADR, Humanitarian Assistance in Disaster," Brawner said. He said the Philippines-Japan relationship now goes beyond politics and touches on regional and global stability, as well as both countries' shared commitment to democracy, the rule of law, and a free and open Indo-Pacific. Brawner said the two countries' ties have evolved through periods of challenge and renewal and have, over the past two decades, and reached a decisive turning point as a forward-looking defense relationship. He said the transformation reflects not only stronger bilateral ties but also a shared understanding of an increasingly complex security environment. Brawner said the Philippines and Japan are being drawn closer by converging strategic interests in maritime security, regional stability, and the defense of a rules-based international order. He said those shared commitments are being tested by China's actions in contested waters. "In the face of the People's Republic of China's increasing assertiveness in the West Philippine Sea and the broader South China Sea as well as the East China Sea, the Philippines remains firmly anchored in international law, diplomacy and transparency," he said. He said the Philippines continues to uphold the 2016 arbitral award under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea while asserting its maritime rights through peaceful and lawful means. "This approach reflects a deliberate strategy, principled restraint coupled with resolve," Brawner said. He added that the Philippines has also committed itself to transparency and strategic communication so that developments at sea are clearly presented, facts are established, and the international community remains informed. "In doing so, we defend our rights while contributing to accountability and stability," he said. Brawner said Japan has consistently upheld the same principles, including respect for international law, freedom of navigation, and adherence to established norms. "As a like-minded partner, Japan reinforces a shared vision of a maritime domain governed by law, not by coercion," he said. He said both countries affirm that regional stability depends on open sea lanes, peaceful dispute management, and respect for the rights of all states. Brawner said defense cooperation between the Philippines and Japan has expanded through capacity-building efforts, maritime security assistance, and more advanced joint and trilateral exercises. He said the growing cooperation has included radar systems provided by Japan under its security assistance programs, as well as broader efforts to improve interoperability between the two militaries. Brawner also cited the Reciprocal Access Agreement as a landmark arrangement showing both countries' commitment to a more responsive and

coordinated security posture. Beyond conventional military cooperation, Brawner said the partnership is also responding to emerging threats, including what he described as illegal, coercive, aggressive and deceptive actions that undermine sovereignty without escalating into open conflict. He said sustained coordination, information sharing, and strategic communication are essential in exposing malign influence and reinforcing the rules-based order. In a separate interview, Brawner said there are efforts to damage the Philippines' relationship with Japan as the two countries deepen defense cooperation. "Yes, we are seeing these efforts to destroy the relationship," he said. He said it is important that the Philippines and Japan do not allow such efforts to disrupt ties that have now lasted for 70 years as independent democracies. "Eighty-one years ago in 1945, we found ourselves on opposite sides of the war," Brawner said. "This time, we find ourselves on the same side, on the same side of that effort to promote a rules-based international order," he added. Brawner said some countries are pushing their own interests in the region through coercion, which makes coalitions with like-minded partners such as Japan all the more important. He also said the Armed Forces of the Philippines is paying closer attention to cyber defense as global conflicts have shown how attacks on networks can come even before actual strikes.

- [Go urges oil crisis intervention](#) (2026-03-25 00:45)

SEN. Bong Go called for immediate economic interventions to shield Filipinos from the impact of rising global oil prices amid tensions in the Middle East. Go issued the appeal amid projections that pump prices could surge significantly due to global supply constraints and the Philippines' heavy reliance on imported oil. Industry estimates suggest gasoline prices — already hovering above P70 per liter — could rise by as much as P9 to P12 per liter, with diesel potentially increasing even more. The senator said the volatility highlights the country's vulnerability to external shocks, particularly as geopolitical crises affect key shipping routes and energy markets. Analysts note that sustained increases in fuel prices could intensify inflationary pressures, particularly in a country where transportation and logistics costs significantly influence retail prices. "This is really a domino effect," Go said, noting that rising oil prices would inevitably cascade across sectors, driving up transportation fares, food production costs and the prices of basic commodities. Go expressed willingness to support the suspension of excise taxes on fuel should global crude prices reach \$100 per barrel, a threshold he said could be breached if the war persists and supply remains tight. Meanwhile, transport groups have raised concerns over delays and gaps in the government's fuel subsidy programs. Some drivers report not receiving assistance due to pending documentation or exclusion from official beneficiary lists submitted to implementing agencies. Transport leaders said current subsidy amounts may be insufficient to offset sustained fuel price increases, especially for drivers dependent on daily earnings. Some drivers are still completing registration and data validation requirements before they can access subsidies, further delaying relief. Others cited bureaucratic hurdles that slow the disbursement process. Go urged agencies such as the Department of Energy, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Transportation to prioritize the most affected sectors, including public utility drivers and low-income

workers. “This is the Filipino people’s money. It should be returned to them during this time of crisis,” he said.

- [Hot, humid weather likely over Metro Manila, most parts of PH](#) (2026-03-24 21:47)

MANILA, Philippines – Another hot, humid weather would be experienced all throughout the day over Metro Manila and most parts of the archipelago due to the easterlies, the state-run weather bureau said on Wednesday. On one hand, cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms would be likely over Bicol Region, Quezon, Marinduque, Romblon, Oriental Mindoro, Northern Samar, and Eastern Samar also due to the effect of the same weather system, weather specialist Chenel Dominguez said. In its 5 a.m. briefing, the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said it has not monitored any weather disturbance forming inside or outside the country’s area of responsibility in the coming days. Pagasa urged the public to stay hydrated and limit outdoor activities, among others, as sultry or hotter temperatures would be possible during late morning until mid-afternoon. However, isolated downpours or thunderstorms would still be likely over the National Capital Region and the rest of the country especially during late afternoon or at night, it added.

- [Marcos: Jet fuel lack may ground planes](#) (2026-03-24 16:14)

(UPDATE) PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. warned of “a distinct possibility” of aircraft being grounded due to a looming shortage of jet fuel brought by the war in the Middle East. In an interview with Bloomberg, Marcos cited limitations in crude oil supply and slower jet fuel production as key concerns affecting airline operations. “With a scarcity, shall we say, the limitation now on crude supply, the refining of jet fuel takes a longer time. And so, we will have to depend on what is already readily available,” he said. Marcos also noted that some countries have imposed restrictions on refueling foreign aircraft, forcing airlines to carry sufficient fuel for return trips. The latest development, he said, is complicating international operations. “When our airlines fly out, several countries have said we cannot fuel your aircraft. So, you will have to carry the fuel there and back. And that’s around here. And the long haul is going to be a much more serious problem,” Marcos said. Asked whether the recent developments could lead to planes being grounded, Marcos said the country is hoping to avoid such a scenario but acknowledged the risk. “We’re hoping not, but it’s a possibility. It’s a distinct possibility,” he said. Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said Tuesday the Philippines still has an adequate fuel supply until the second weekend of May. Garin said the country has an average supply of about 45 days, based on discussions with fuel companies, noting that the estimated remaining domestic supply is 53.14 days for gasoline; 45.82 days for diesel; 97.93 days for kerosene; 38.62 days for jet fuel; 61.49 days for fuel oil; and 23.51 days for liquefied petroleum gas. Hostilities in the Middle East have triggered the closure of air spaces and travel hubs in the region including Dubai, Doha and Abu Dhabi, which have left tens of thousands of passengers stranded. As a result of rising costs, air travelers in the country will also face higher airfares starting next month. The Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) recently announced that flights booked from April

1-15, 2026, will see a significant airfare increase due to the lifting of the fuel surcharge to Level 8. This means an addition of up to P6,200 to ticket costs. Domestic surcharges will range from P253 to P787, while international rates will rise to P835.05 to P6,208.98, driven by high jet fuel prices. This 15-day cycle is meant to manage extreme fuel price volatility. Already, budget airline Cebu Pacific last Monday announced it would be scaling down its number of flights beginning April because of surging fuel crisis. Transport relief

Meanwhile, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) announced a package of transportation relief measures on Tuesday, highlighted by a 50-percent discount on train fares, reduced toll rates for public utility vehicles, and the nationwide rollout of a P2.5-billion fuel subsidy program. Starting March 23, all passengers of LRT-2 and MRT-3 are entitled to a 50-percent fare discount, according to documents presented during a March 24 joint press conference. Toll discounts took effect the same day for Class 1 public utility vehicles, including jeepneys and modernized jeepneys, as well as for Class 3 trucks with three or more axles and a height exceeding 7.5 feet. The discounts vary per expressway, with savings ranging from P1 to P66 for Class 1 vehicles and P8 to P197 for Class 3 vehicles. Beneficiaries must have RFID tags, be registered with the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, and hold a certificate of franchise. For vehicles transporting agricultural products, the government also implemented a “Piso Ro-Ro” terminal fee, reducing rates to P1 for Class 3 and Class 4 vehicles. At airports, reduced fees and charges will take effect on April 1. Passengers will save up to P200 per person on terminal fees, while airlines will save up to P5,000 per landing on landing fees. The fuel subsidy program, with an approved budget of P2.5 billion, targets 245,066 driver-beneficiaries and covers 1,180,783 public utility vehicle units operated by beneficiaries. Distribution began March 24 through fuel subsidy cards, bank transfers, e-wallet transfers, and cash or check payouts. The government will shoulder all convenience fees. Under the program, subsidy amounts vary by vehicle type. Public bus operators will receive P10,000 per unit and drivers P5,000 each. Modern public utility jeepney operators will receive P10,000 per unit and drivers P1,500 each. Traditional jeepney operators will receive P5,000 per unit and drivers P1,500 each. UV Express operators and drivers will receive P5,000 and P1,500, respectively. Taxi operators will receive P2,000 per unit and drivers P5,000 each. Tricycle drivers and delivery service beneficiaries are scheduled to receive their subsidies after Holy Week.

Alternative sources

The Philippines has sought help from at least five oil-producing nations to supply the country’s petroleum needs to offset the effect of high oil prices brought by the Middle East war, Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro told a Senate panel Tuesday. “We already wrote letters to certain selected countries that have been identified by the DOE (Department of Energy) concerning petroleum reserves and the possibility of obtaining our petroleum needs from them,” Lazaro told the Senate Proactive Response and Oversight for Timely and Effective Crisis Strategy Committee. The DFA chief, however, did not identify the countries. In earlier interview, Lazaro said the Philippines is considering importing oil from Russia following the temporary lifting of sanction by the United States on Russian crude oil in transit at sea. Garin, at the same hearing, said the Philippines is looking at India as alternative source for oil. “We’re working on that so that we’ll have a different source.” Lazaro said the Philippines, as chairman of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) this year, convened the Asean

foreign ministers meeting on March 4 and an emergency meeting on March 13. She said the March 13 meeting was “geared towards this issue of the petroleum needs of the whole of Asean.” Lazaro also noted that Asean’s energy ministers met in December 2025 and came up with the Asean Framework on Petroleum Security, which “modernizes the region’s petroleum security arrangements.” Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano on Tuesday welcomed the president’s directive to form a government crisis committee, saying it reinforces the Senate’s earlier push for a coordinated national response framework amid escalating war in the Middle East. Cayetano said the move aligns with the chamber’s adoption of Senate Resolution (SR) 343, which he introduced earlier this month, urging the Executive Branch to establish a National Contingency Framework to guide the country’s response to large-scale disruptions. The resolution highlighted the Philippines’ vulnerability to global shocks, particularly conflicts affecting oil supply chains involving regions such as the Middle East. Lawmakers warned that such disruptions could quickly drive up fuel prices, transportation costs, and overall inflation. WITH BERNADETTE TAMAYO AND JAVIER JOE ISMAEL

- [Back to black: Facing energy shock, Asia turns to coal](#) (2026-03-24 16:13)

ASIAN countries are ramping up use of polluting coal to tackle energy shortages and price spikes linked to the Iran war, but the crisis could have an environmental silver lining. While leaning on the fossil fuel will raise emissions in the near term, the energy crisis is demonstrating the risks of energy import dependence, and could push policymakers to embrace renewables faster, analysts said. “The ongoing Iran oil and gas crisis shows the importance of having domestic energy sources that are not exposed to the global commodity market, which coal is,” said Amy Kong, research analyst at Zero Carbon Analytics. “Countries like Vietnam who have rapidly increased their share of solar generation, have a stronger buffer against rising energy import prices,” Kong said. Much of Asia is heavily exposed to the energy crisis that has unfolded since the US-Israel attack on Iran began last month. More than 80 percent of the crude oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) that passes through the Strait of Hormuz heads to Asia, according to the US Energy Information Administration. Pakistan, India and Bangladesh are all major importers of LNG from Qatar, which said last week that its export capacity had been slashed by 17 percent because of Iranian attacks. It warned it would be forced to declare force majeure for up to five years on some long-term LNG contracts, signaling it may be unable to fulfill the agreements. Higher prices compounding the problem, most Asian countries do not have underground gas storage, according to the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, leaving them especially vulnerable to price spikes. As a result, many nations are bumping up use of coal, which can be sourced regionally or even domestically, to prevent power outages and protect citizens from severe price shocks. While it cannot be substituted directly in LNG plants, countries can run existing coal power plants at a higher capacity or bring idle units back online. The shift has come in wealthy and developing economies alike. In South Korea, a cap on how much power can be generated from coal has been lifted, while Thailand is preparing to resume operations at two coal power units decommissioned last year. In India, already highly dependent on coal for electricity generation, the fuel is now being

substituted for cooking gas. And in the Philippines, Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said authorities “plan to ramp up cheaper coal, (domestic) natural gas, and renewables.” The increase in demand has pushed coal prices higher and even sparked talk of a windfall tax in coal-producing Indonesia, which reversed a decision taken last year to reduce production. The shift is bad news for the environment in the short term. Coal is a top contributor to planet-warming greenhouse gases, and also a powerful air pollutant. Transition fuel The shift will “impose substantial environmental and public health costs,” said Dinita Setyawati, senior energy analyst for Asia at think tank Ember. Asia’s vulnerability is due in part to its heavy reliance on LNG, often promoted as a “transition fuel” — a less polluting option than coal that can “bridge the gap” as countries move towards renewable energy. Upfront costs for LNG plants can be lower than for renewables that may require grid upgrades. But renewables are now cheaper in the long run, and the current crisis is illustrating their benefits in terms of stable supply, said Putra Adhiguna, managing director at Energy Shift Institute, an energy finance think tank. “The story of gas as a stable transition fuel is highly in question,” he said. And while temporary increases in coal capacity are an attractive stopgap, the banking sector is reluctant to finance construction of new coal projects, concerned about stranded assets as nations are forced to phase down fossil fuels to meet their climate obligations. That could help refocus policymakers’ attention on the benefits of renewables, said Adhiguna. “I think we already see a bit of that coming from Southeast Asian countries,” he said. “There have been all these debates about how we can’t afford to spend the money (on renewables) upfront, but I think this security of supply issue is going to override that.”

- [Coast Guard, BFAR boats sent to protect fishermen](#) (2026-03-24 16:12)

(UPDATE) THE Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) deployed multiple vessels to Bajo de Masinloc following reports of continued harassment by Chinese vessels of Filipino fishermen, authorities said. In a statement Tuesday, the PCG said two of its vessels and five BFAR fishery patrol ships were dispatched after more than 20 Filipino fishing boats were harassed by China Coast Guard (CCG) units over the weekend. The joint deployment secured the fishing grounds and ensured the safety of Filipino fishermen operating in the area. Government personnel also distributed fuel subsidies, food packs, and ice to help sustain fishing operations and mitigate the impact of rising fuel costs. PCG Commandant Admiral Ronnie Gil Gavan ordered an aerial maritime domain awareness flight over the shoal to monitor the situation. The operation documented the presence of six CCG vessels, 20 Chinese Maritime Militia ships, and one warship from the People’s Liberation Army Navy. During the patrol, the PCG recorded what it described as a first-of-its-kind incident: a CCG vessel broadcasting over radio its intent to conduct a “clearing operation” within a defined area. The coordinates covered waters between 14°14’ N to 15°05’ N latitude and 118°10’ E to 118°25’ E longitude. The PCG said the deployment formed part of efforts to safeguard Philippine sovereignty and protect the livelihood of local fishermen in the West Philippine Sea. The agency also reiterated its commitment to enforcing international law and supporting the policy direction of the Philippine government in asserting the country’s sovereign rights

and maritime jurisdiction in contested waters. Military exercises Meanwhile, Armed Forces of the Philippines chief Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. said Japan is expected to send combat troops to military exercises in the Philippines instead of the usual humanitarian assistance and disaster response trainers. Brawner linked the expected deployment to rising maritime tensions in the West Philippine Sea and the deepening defense ties between Manila and Tokyo. “As mentioned by the ambassador, for this year’s Balikatan exercise, we are expecting Japan to send combat troops to join in the exercise instead of just the usual trainers of HADR, Humanitarian Assistance in Disaster,” Brawner said. He said the Philippines-Japan relationship now goes beyond politics and touches on regional and global stability, as well as both countries’ shared commitment to democracy, the rule of law, and a free and open Indo-Pacific. Brawner said the two countries’ ties have evolved through periods of challenge and renewal and have, over the past two decades, and reached a decisive turning point as a forward-looking defense relationship. He said the transformation reflects not only stronger bilateral ties but also a shared understanding of an increasingly complex security environment. Brawner said the Philippines and Japan are being drawn closer by converging strategic interests in maritime security, regional stability, and the defense of a rules-based international order. He said those shared commitments are being tested by China’s actions in contested waters. “In the face of the People’s Republic of China’s increasing assertiveness in the West Philippine Sea and the broader South China Sea as well as the East China Sea, the Philippines remains firmly anchored in international law, diplomacy and transparency,” he said. He said the Philippines continues to uphold the 2016 arbitral award under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea while asserting its maritime rights through peaceful and lawful means. “This approach reflects a deliberate strategy, principled restraint coupled with resolve,” Brawner said. He added that the Philippines has also committed itself to transparency and strategic communication so that developments at sea are clearly presented, facts are established, and the international community remains informed. “In doing so, we defend our rights while contributing to accountability and stability,” he said. Brawner said Japan has consistently upheld the same principles, including respect for international law, freedom of navigation, and adherence to established norms. “As a like-minded partner, Japan reinforces a shared vision of a maritime domain governed by law, not by coercion,” he said. He said both countries affirm that regional stability depends on open sea lanes, peaceful dispute management, and respect for the rights of all states. Brawner said defense cooperation between the Philippines and Japan has expanded through capacity-building efforts, maritime security assistance, and more advanced joint and trilateral exercises. He said the growing cooperation has included radar systems provided by Japan under its security assistance programs, as well as broader efforts to improve interoperability between the two militaries. Brawner also cited the Reciprocal Access Agreement as a landmark arrangement showing both countries’ commitment to a more responsive and coordinated security posture. Beyond conventional military cooperation, Brawner said the partnership is also responding to emerging threats, including what he described as illegal, coercive, aggressive and deceptive actions that undermine sovereignty without escalating into open conflict. He said sustained coordination, information sharing, and strategic communication are essential in exposing malign influence and reinforcing the rules-based order. In a separate

interview, Brawner said there are efforts to damage the Philippines' relationship with Japan as the two countries deepen defense cooperation. "Yes, we are seeing these efforts to destroy the relationship," he said. He said it is important that the Philippines and Japan do not allow such efforts to disrupt ties that have now lasted for 70 years as independent democracies. "Eighty-one years ago in 1945, we found ourselves on opposite sides of the war," Brawner said. "This time, we find ourselves on the same side, on the same side of that effort to promote a rules-based international order," he added. Brawner said some countries are pushing their own interests in the region through coercion, which makes coalitions with like-minded partners such as Japan all the more important. He also said the Armed Forces of the Philippines is paying closer attention to cyber defense as global conflicts have shown how attacks on networks can come even before actual strikes.

- [Filipino worker hurt in Israel missile attack](#) (2026-03-24 16:11)

(UPDATE) THE Philippine Embassy in Israel said a 30-year-old Filipino worker sustained a leg injury during a missile strike launched by Iran on the town of Arad on March 21. The unidentified Filipino was brought to Soroka Medical Center, where he received treatment. He was expected to be discharged Tuesday. The embassy's rapid reaction team visited him at the hospital March 22 to check on his condition and provide emergency assistance. The team also visited other Filipinos in Arad and Dimona whose apartments sustained minor damage to check on their well-being and distribute food packages, the embassy said. They are temporarily staying with fellow Filipinos, while some are being accommodated in a hotel near the Dead Sea. In a Facebook post, the embassy said it "continues to monitor the recovery of the injured Filipino and the well-being of affected kababayan (fellow Filipinos), and will provide psychosocial and mental health support services in the coming days." There are more than 30,300 Filipinos in Israel, most of whom are caregivers. The rest are hotel workers, agricultural students, and missionaries. The BBC reported that about 180 people were injured, some seriously, in Iranian missile strikes on two southern Israeli towns near a nuclear facility. Israel's health ministry said 116 people were injured in Arad and 64 in Dimona after ballistic missiles hit the towns Saturday evening. Iranian state TV earlier said the strikes were in response to an attack on Iran's Natanz nuclear facility Saturday. The embassy urged Filipinos to immediately enter a "mamad," or bomb shelter, as soon as they receive an emergency alert. "Remember that there is only 90 seconds, or less in Northern Israel, to go inside a mamad/shelter if the missile comes from Lebanon," the embassy said in Filipino. Meanwhile, the Philippine Embassy in Lebanon urged Filipinos living in the southern part of the country to move to Beirut or northern areas for safety after Israel bombed a bridge linking southern Lebanon to the rest of the country. The bombing of the Qasmiyeh bridge was reportedly part of Israel's campaign against the Lebanese armed group Hezbollah, which recently fired rockets into Israel to avenge the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei by a joint US-Israel attack on Iran. In an advisory Monday, the embassy said "movement may become difficult due to the ongoing targeting of infrastructure by the IDF (Israel Defense Forces)." "Ensure that your important documents (passport and iqama) are secure and easily accessible," the embassy posted on Facebook. There

are more than 14,100 Filipinos in Lebanon as of February 2026, the Department of Foreign Affairs said. "We strongly encourage all Filipinos to take advantage of the voluntary repatriation program, open since October 2023, while the opportunity is still available," it added. The embassy said Lebanon continues to be under Alert Level 3 status due to airstrikes and mass displacement across the country. It earlier advised Filipinos "to stay away from any Lebanese government infrastructures, avoid all demonstrations and large gatherings." "Everyone is highly encouraged to stay indoors. Monitor advisories and keep track of targeted areas," the embassy said. It earlier reminded Filipinos "to practice due diligence in following accredited news channels for updates on the current situation."

- [DepEd launches 'ambitious' school feeding program](#) (2026-03-24 16:10)

THE Department of Education (DepEd) is set to begin what it described as its "most ambitious" School-based Feeding Program (SBFP) after it was given a record P25.6 billion budget for school year 2026-2027. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Education Secretary Sonny Angara launched the program during a recent visit to the Jose Zurbito Sr. Elementary School in Masbate City. DepEd will bring the program closer to urban communities through a multiservice school engagement Wednesday at the Batasan Hills National High School in Quezon City. The event will feature a Bagong Pilipinas Serbisyo Fair for senior high school graduates, a Gulayan sa Paaralan visit, and a lecture for learners on energy conservation to promote responsible energy use. The funding for school-based feeding, which is double the P11.8 billion allocated in 2025, aims to provide a lifeline to a record 4.63 million learners starting this June. Angara underscored that the program is about more than nutrition; it is also about restoring the dignity and academic potential of every Filipino child. "We are fulfilling President Bongbong Marcos' directive to end the cycle of malnutrition in our schools by giving our learners the health to reach their goals," Angara said. Under school year 2026-2027, the SBFP will target the universal feeding of kindergarten to Grade 1 students, undernourished learners in Grades 2 to 6, pregnant adolescent learners, and vulnerable and marginalized learners beyond Grade 6. DepEd said teachers noted that the consistent meal program has already improved daily attendance and classroom engagement. The department also said the program has rapidly expanded — from serving 1.67 million students in 2023, to 2.11 million in 2024, and 3.39 million in 2025. In 2022, the initiative operated on P3.3 billion that covered only 30 feeding days for 3.48 million learners. The SBFP grew to P5.7 billion in 2023 to cover 120 feeding days, and P11.7 billion in 2024 to cover 175 feeding days. DepEd said that by extending the feeding to 200 days, the administration is embedding nutrition into the basic education framework, moving beyond short-term relief to guarantee long-term learning readiness.

- [Duterte impeachment hearings begin today, March 25](#) (2026-03-24 16:10)

THE House Committee on Justice will start the hearing proper on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte today, March 25. The committee will convene at 10 a.m. at the House of Representatives' People Center where it will lay down ground rules and resolve motions. "If the complainants are ready, we can actually proceed to presentation of evidence

and witnesses,” said Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro, the committee chairman. In the hearing proper, the committee will determine whether there is probable cause to impeach Duterte, based on two complaints that it found sufficient in form and substance. One complaint, filed by priests and others, alleged that Duterte committed a culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayed the public trust in connection with confidential funds allocated to the Office of the Vice President (OVP) for 2022 and 2023 and confidential funds allocated for 2023 to the Department of Education (DepEd) which Duterte led as secretary before she resigned in 2024 from that post. This complaint also alleged that Duterte committed culpable violation of the Constitution, betrayed the public trust and committed high crimes “in contracting to murder or assassinate” President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., first lady Liza Araneta-Marcos, and former speaker Martin Romualdez. The complaint cited a Nov. 23, 2024 briefing with the media in which she said, “[...] may kinausap na ako na tao. Sinabi ko sa kanya kapag pinatay ako, patayin mo si BBM, si Liza Araneta, at si Martin Romualdez. (I’ve spoken to someone. I told him if I am killed, kill BBM, Liza Araneta and Martin Romualdez).” Duterte has denied making an assassination threat to Marcos. The other impeachment complaint filed on Feb. 18, 2026, by lawyer Nathaniel Cabrera alleged that Duterte “committed acts that constitute culpable violation of the Constitution, betrayal of public trust, and other high crimes, by publicly admitting the contracting of an assassin.” The complaint also alleged that she “betrayed the public trust and committed acts of graft and corruption by grossly abusing discretionary authority over confidential funds appropriated to the” OVP and DepEd. Duterte had said the complaints should be dismissed since the charges “cannot withstand serious scrutiny.” She also said the complaints failed to show “any shred of proof” that a contract to kill ever existed. “Instead, complainants rely on exaggerated conclusions dressed up as fact,” she said.

- [Prosecution presents Alcantara as witness against Co](#) (2026-03-24 16:09)

THE prosecution team on Tuesday presented Henry Alcantara as a witness in the case against former lawmaker Elizaldy Co at the Sandiganbayan’s Sixth Division. The Office of the Ombudsman filed the case last November against Co and several others for alleged malversation of public funds through falsification of documents in connection with a road dike construction project in Oriental Mindoro. Defense lawyers objected to presenting the witness, but the court decided to allow it. The prosecution presented Alcantara, a state witness and former district engineer of the Bulacan 1st District Engineering Office, in connection with the allegation that Co had beneficial interest in Sunwest. The time relevant to the case was “sometime in March 2024 to June 2025.” The prosecution adopted Alcantara’s judicial affidavit as his direct testimony, and the defense lawyers did not conduct a cross-examination. Accused Gerald Pacanan, Gene Ryan Altea, Ruben Santos Jr., Juliet Calvo, Dennis Abagon, Dominic Serrano, Montrexis Tamayo, Lerma Cayco, and Felisardo Casuno were present. The court has denied their bail petitions, while Co and several others remain at large. On March 17, the prosecution team presented former Public Works undersecretary Roberto Bernardo as a witness.

- [Amid oil crunch, Asean fuel-sharing pact eyed](#) (2026-03-24 16:08)

SEN. Francis Escudero on Tuesday urged the Philippines to take a leading role in advancing a regional fuel-sharing mechanism as it chairs the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) this year, citing rising global oil volatility and supply chain risks. In a statement, Escudero said that Manila plays a critical role in speeding up the finalization of the Asean Petroleum Security Agreement (APSA). This proposed framework aims to promote mutual assistance among member states during times of fuel shortages. The APSA seeks to establish an emergency petroleum-sharing system triggered when a member country faces a supply deficit of at least 10 percent of its domestic requirements. Under the arrangement, neighboring states would provide fuel support to stabilize supply and prevent economic disruption. The senator emphasized that the mechanism is designed to strengthen Asean's collective resilience, particularly as geopolitical tensions, especially in the Middle East, continue to drive oil price increases and threaten global supply routes. "The current volatility highlights the urgency of regional action. We have to act as one Asean," Escudero said. Escudero noted that APSA is patterned after the system used by the International Energy Agency, which coordinates emergency oil-sharing among its member countries during supply crises. By adopting a similar structure, Asean would institutionalize cooperation in times of energy shocks, ensuring that member states can respond swiftly and collectively. "By accelerating APSA's completion, Asean can establish its own mechanism for emergency fuel supply," he said. Key role of energy-producing members The senator said that the success of the agreement would depend heavily on the participation of oil-producing countries within the bloc, including Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia and Malaysia. "These countries play a crucial role in anchoring the agreement," Escudero said. "By pooling resources, Asean can ensure that emergency supplies are not only pledged but delivered when needed." He added that beyond logistics, the initiative is also about reinforcing trust and reciprocity among member states. "Fuel-sharing is not only about barrels of oil. It is also about the assurance that no member state will be left behind," he said. Escudero said the APSA supports Asean's broader strategic pillars — peace and security, economic prosperity, and people empowerment — by promoting stability and cooperation across the region. The Philippines' chairmanship, he added, presents both a responsibility and an opportunity to drive the initiative forward. "This is our chance to lead Asean toward energy resilience," Escudero said. Fast-tracking APSA, he added, would be a concrete step toward shielding Asean economies from volatility, ensuring stability in fuel supply, and reinforcing the bloc's capacity to respond to future crises.

- [Philippines and Japan elevate strategic partnership to new heights](#) (2026-03-24 16:07)

THE Philippines and Japan have reached a "new height" of strategic partnership, Japanese Ambassador to the Philippines Endo Kazuya said Tuesday, citing security and economic ties. Speaking at the Forum on Strengthening Strategic Ties: 70 Years of Japan-Philippines Diplomatic Relations organized by the Stratbase Institute, Endo said that both countries face similar challenges to maritime order, making closer security cooperation a "natural necessity." "As economies with various complementarities, situated in proximity and

empowered by diligent peoples, our close economic ties are inevitable,” the ambassador said, adding that bilateral defense collaboration will continue to grow. Endo also announced that the Japanese Embassy has expanded its military representation, welcoming an additional military attaché this month, bringing the total to three — covering the air, general and ground self-defense forces. “I anticipate strengthened participation of the Japan Self-Defense Forces in upcoming exercises held in the Philippines, particularly in Balikatan,” he said. “By working together to safeguard peace and promote prosperity, we are expanding the possibilities for the future.” The ambassador’s remarks come amid 70 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries, commemorated in March as part of a celebration of “weaving the future together,” which symbolizes shared commitment to peace, prosperity and regional stability.

- [‘Trucks carrying fuel exempt from coding’](#) (2026-03-24 16:06)

(UPDATE) THE Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) said all fuel trucks, including LPG bullet carriers, and vehicles carrying basic commodities are now exempted from the number coding scheme. In a press briefing at the MMDA’s head office in Pasig City, MMDA General Manager Nicholas Torre III said the Metro Manila Council approved a resolution that took effect immediately on Tuesday, March 24. Torre also clarified that LPG bullet carriers are covered by the exemption because they are included among fuel tankers. “The MMC resolution has already been approved, so all of the fuel trucks are not included in number coding anymore... the same goes for our basic commodities,” he said. The resolution also covers exemptions from the truck ban for fuel trucks and cargo trucks carrying essential goods. MMDA Chairman Don Artes said the measure was approved following requests from the Department of Energy and the Department of Trade and Industry to help speed up the transport of petroleum products and essential goods. He said the move would help ensure the unimpeded movement of energy sources and ease the mobility of goods amid rising fuel prices. The MMDA said it is coordinating with the DTI, which will identify the essential goods that will qualify for the exemption. Torre said the move was approved in recognition of what he described as a situation that had gone beyond normal, with the directive meant to help ease conditions for the public. He also said LPG bullet carriers were already being treated as part of fuel tankers from the start of the policy discussions. Torre added that initial MMDA monitoring on EDSA from Monday to Wednesday last week showed only a 5- to 7-percent drop in vehicle volume, or around 20,000 to 30,000 vehicles a day, under the adjusted traffic measures. Torre said the agency would continue reviewing traffic data to determine why some motorists still experienced heavy congestion despite the reduced vehicle count.

- [Lawmaker reiterates push for bike lanes](#) (2026-03-24 16:05)

PARAÑAQUE 2nd District Rep. Brian Yamsuan has urged Congress to pass his measure institutionalizing active transport by creating pedestrian-friendly and safe “bike-able” pathways nationwide. Under his House Bill 7863, or the “Safe Pathways Network Act,” cities and municipalities, in coordination with national government agencies, are mandated to identify and develop walkable and bike-friendly lanes in their respective localities. In a

statement on Tuesday, Yamsuan said that many Filipinos preferred to commute, bike, or walk to save money amid disruptions in global oil prices, which he said will not be the last. “Our roads have been built mainly to favor cars, with sidewalks either too narrow or blocked, and bike lanes missing, disconnected, and unsafe,” Yamsuan, also vice chairman of the House Committee on Transportation, said. He added that his bill recognizes the fact that most trips are not made by private vehicles. “Millions of Filipinos commute and complete their journey on foot when they travel, while others prefer to use bikes. The problem is that our roads and sidewalks are not safe for them. This is what we want to change,” Yamsuan added. Under the measure, local government units (LGUs), in consultation with the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), shall identify and establish a temporary or permanent network of bicycle lanes. For national roads in Metro Manila, bike lanes shall be done by the DOTr in coordination with the DPWH and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA). The LGUs are also tasked with designating or constructing walkways, which may be shared with non-motorized vehicles or personal mobility devices, considering pedestrians’ safety. To complement these safe pathways, the bill also mandates LGUs to designate a network of temporary or permanent “slow streets” that will have limited access or speed limits for motorized vehicles on certain days or hours. The government will also mandate public places, government offices, schools, places of work, and commercial establishments like malls, banks and hospitals to provide adequate racks and other end-of-trip facilities for bicycles and other non-motorized vehicles. Yamsuan said that this is an “opportune time” to enact the Safe Pathways Act, considering that the current Public Works Secretary Vivencio Dizon has been pushing for safe and more inclusive public spaces for pedestrians and commuters. Aside from helping cushion the impact of oil price shocks, Yamsuan said that establishing a network of walkable and bike-friendly pathways will also help ease traffic congestion, promote healthy lifestyles, and benefit the environment by lessening air pollution and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from motorized vehicles. He also stressed that active transport is widely recognized as essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals under the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- [New parking rule in Morato-Timog area enforced soon](#) (2026-03-24 16:04)

(UPDATE) QUEZON CITY Mayor Joy Belmonte on Tuesday said that a regulated parking system will soon be implemented in the Tomas Morato-Timog area, pursuant to an ordinance. A dry run was rolled out on Monday for the proposed public parking regulations in the city’s commercial district. “The pilot forms part of the city’s push to better organize and manage public spaces in the Tomas Morato-Timog district — one of Quezon City’s busiest commercial and nightlife hubs,” the mayor said. The pilot will run until the passage of the proposed Public Pay Parking Ordinance, which will institutionalize a regulated parking system in the area, she added. According to the city government, the initiative builds on recent upgrades under the QC ReVibe program, which focuses on revitalizing key commercial areas through improved infrastructure, safer walkways, and more accessible public spaces. Completed improvements include rehabilitated roads and sidewalks, installation of tactile paving, upgraded street lighting,

and the clearing of obstructions to reduce safety risks and urban clutter, it said. The mayor said that the rollout is a crucial step toward making commercial districts more orderly and inclusive. "As we improve and beautify our commercial areas, we must also ensure that public spaces are used fairly and efficiently. This parking system is about creating order, improving access, and making our streets work better for everyone," Belmonte said. During the dry run, parking would remain free and available on a first-come, first-served basis. However, vehicles may only occupy designated slots for a maximum of three hours to allow more motorists to access limited parking. Drivers will receive a parking ticket upon arrival, indicating their time of entry, and are expected to vacate their slots within the three-hour limit. Vehicles that exceed the allowed duration will be issued a notice of violation in line with dry run guidelines, which must be settled at the TTMD main office.

- [Bill to fortify sexual harassment laws filed](#) (2026-03-24 16:03)

HOUSE Bill 8717, a measure aiming to strengthen the Safe Spaces Act, also known as the Bawal Bastos Law, was filed Monday at the House of Representatives by Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima. "This measure seeks to strengthen the Safe Spaces Act by expanding the definitions of prohibited acts, including the recognition of grooming as a form of predatory conduct, and by addressing gender-based online harassment committed through emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence," de Lima said in the bill's explanatory note. The bill defined "grooming" as "predatory conduct, act, or pattern of acts, of establishing a relationship of trust, or emotional connection with a child or someone who is believed to be a child, by a guardian, teacher, coach, counselor, spiritual adviser, caregiver, or any other person in the position of authority or trust with respect to the said child or someone believed to be a child, regardless of whether the conduct, act or pattern of acts are done in person or through electronic and other similar devices, for the purpose of perpetrating sexual abuse or exploitation." If enacted, the bill would amend the law to state that gender-based online sexual harassment includes acts that use "artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies." Under the bill, internet intermediaries must immediately block access to or remove the address, website or content violating the law within 24 hours of notice from a competent authority. Also under the bill, they must preserve within six months from the transaction date "all subscriber's or registration information and traffic data" in their control and possession. Extending the period for another six months or during case pendency is allowed under the bill. Content data shall be preserved for one year and, "upon notice by the competent authority," this period shall be extendible for another six months. De Lima said the bill "imposes stiffer penalties for gender-based sexual harassment in workplaces and educational or training institutions, where power imbalances may place victims in particularly vulnerable situations." Among the sections the bill seeks to add to the law is one enumerating penalties "for fomenting, promoting, or exhorting sexual harassment, misogynistic, transphobic, homophobic, and sexist slurs by public and government officials and employees." "By strengthening penalties, expanding protections, and reinforcing accountability mechanisms, this proposed measure seeks to ensure that the Safe Spaces Act continues to effectively safeguard dignity, equality, and safety in workplaces,

educational institutions, public spaces, and digital environments," said de Lima, a former chairman of the Commission on Human Rights.

- [Over 15K 'Valenzuelano' students get educational aid](#) (2026-03-24 16:02)

VALENZUELA Mayor Weslie Gatchalian said on Tuesday that the local government has begun distributing the educational assistance to graduating students in public schools, benefiting a total of 15,848 learners. Among the beneficiaries are 10,620 elementary completers and 5,228 Senior High School (SHS) Grade 12 graduates, each receiving a P1,500 grant. The provision of assistance for elementary graduates was based on an ordinance passed in 2016, which grants financial support to students who have completed their elementary education. Meanwhile, the assistance for senior high school graduates is covered by a 2023 measure that provides support to Grade 12 completers from all public schools in the city. The distribution was expected to be completed in five days, covering all public schools to ensure an organized and efficient rollout, the city government said. This schedule allows the city government to systematically reach each beneficiary while maintaining smooth coordination with school administrators. "Through this initiative, the city government recognizes the dedication and perseverance of Valenzuelano students who have completed key stages of their academic journey," Gatchalian said. "Beyond recognition, the assistance also serves as practical support for families as students prepare for their next steps, whether in higher education or future career paths," he added. The program reflects Valenzuela's continued investment in education as a cornerstone of community development, according to the local government. With sustained efforts, Valenzuela remains committed to creating opportunities for every learner and ensuring that progress in education is accessible, inclusive and meaningful for all, the mayor said.

- [US-Israeli war on Iran is 'breach of international law' — German president](#) (2026-03-24 13:52)

BERLIN — German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier spoke on Tuesday of a "deep rift" with traditional ally the United States and said the US-Israeli war on Iran was a "breach of international law". In unusually strong comments, the German head of state said that just as there was no going back from Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine, "there will be no going back to before January 20, 2025", when US President Donald Trump entered the White House for a second time. "The rift is too deep and the trust in American power politics has been lost, not only among our allies but... worldwide," he said at an event to mark the 75th anniversary of the German foreign ministry. Although Steinmeier's role is largely ceremonial, his words carry weight in Germany, which has not officially condemned the war against Iran. Steinmeier, a former foreign minister, said: "Our foreign policy does not become any more convincing simply because we do not call a breach of international law a breach of international law." He stressed that the US-Israel war on Iran was, "in my view, in breach of international law". "There is little doubt that, in any case, the justification of an imminent attack on the US does not hold water," he added. Germany's head of government, Chancellor Friedrich Merz, has harshly criticised Iran's leadership and backed several key US-Israeli war goals. But he has also

stated that, had Berlin been consulted in advance, it "would have advised against" the war. 'Den of thieves' Steinmeier called the military campaign "a politically disastrous mistake" and "a truly avoidable, unnecessary war". "Realism means we must be pragmatic in our dealings with this US administration and focus on our core interests," he said. "But realism also means we must not compromise our own principles." He added: "The US government has a different world view to ours, one that shows no regard for established rules, partnership or hard-won trust." "We cannot change that. We must deal with it. But this is my conviction: we have no reason to align ourselves with this world view." Volker Beck, president of the German-Israeli Society, labelled Steinmeier's comments on the war "grossly inappropriate" and said they displayed a "smug know-it-all attitude". "The mullah regime has been threatening and waging war against Israel's very existence for years," he claimed, accusing Steinmeier of turning a "blind eye to these dangers". Tuesday's comments were not the first time the German president has criticized the United States. In January, shortly after the US intervention in Venezuela, Steinmeier spoke of a "breakdown of values" in the United States and insisted the world must not be allowed to turn into a "den of thieves".

- [Duterte to skip House impeachment hearing](#) (2026-03-24 13:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte will not appear before the House of Representatives' justice committee on her first impeachment hearing on Wednesday, according to the spokesman of her defense team. "Yes, she will not attend," Michael Wesley Poa told The Manila Times in a phone interview on Tuesday night. The committee invited Duterte to answer the allegations raised against her. Justice Committee Chairman and Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro said Duterte's presence during the hearings was "significant" since it would be an opportunity for her to question the complaints and provide information that would help the committee decide on the case. Duterte is accused, among others, of allegedly violating the Constitution and betraying public trust over her alleged misuse of confidential funds under the Office of the Vice President and the Department of Education when she was its secretary. Duterte has repeatedly denied the allegations.

- [Marcos issues EO declaring National Energy Emergency](#) (2026-03-24 13:07)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Tuesday issued Executive Order No. 110, declaring a national energy emergency and authorizing a unified package covering livelihoods, industry, food, and transport. The issuance was prompted by hostilities in the Middle East, which have disrupted supply chains, driven volatility, and placed upward pressure on international oil prices—posing a threat to the country's energy security. "As a net importer of petroleum products, the Philippines remains highly dependent on external sources of fuel supply and is therefore vulnerable to disruptions in global oil production and transportation, which may affect the availability and timely delivery of petroleum products necessary to sustain domestic energy requirements," the order read. "The declaration of a state of national energy emergency will enable the government, through the Department of Energy (DOE) and other concerned agencies, to implement responsive and coordinated

measures under existing laws to address risks posed by disruptions in global energy supply and their impact on the domestic economy,” it added. To ensure the stability of domestic energy supply, the uninterrupted delivery of essential services, the continuity of economic activity, and the welfare of all citizens—particularly vulnerable sectors—and to mitigate the impact of the conflict in the Middle East, EO No. 110 establishes the Unified Package for Livelihoods, Industry, Food, and Transport (UPLIFT). The UPLIFT framework is described as a “coordinated, whole-of-government response,” consisting of energy supply management measures to be implemented by the DOE and its attached agencies, alongside complementary measures to support consumers and affected sectors led by other government bodies. The UPLIFT Committee will be chaired by the President, with the Executive Secretary and the secretaries of the Departments of Energy; Transportation; Social Welfare and Development; Agriculture; Finance; Economy, Planning, and Development; and Budget and Management as members. Among the committee’s primary tasks are to monitor and ensure the orderly movement, supply, distribution, and availability of fuel, food, medicines, agricultural products, and other essential goods, as well as to maintain the continuous operation of public transportation, public services, public utilities, healthcare facilities, and other critical infrastructure. Executive Order No. 110 takes effect immediately.

- [Marcos warns grounding of local aircraft 'a distinct possibility'](#) (2026-03-24 10:59)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. warned of “a distinct possibility” of aircraft being grounded due to an impending shortage of jet fuel brought by the war in the Middle East. In an interview with Bloomberg News released on Tuesday, Marcos lamented how “long haul is going to be a much more serious problem” in the near future, adding to the already very heavy burden of the Philippines grappling with the high prices of petroleum products and basic commodities. “Several countries have already told our airlines they cannot fuel their aircraft, so they have to carry fuel there and back, “ he said. “We’re hoping not, but it’s a distinct possibility,” he added. Hostilities in the Middle East have triggered the closure of airspaces and travel hubs in the region including Dubai, Doha and Abu Dhabi, which have left tens of thousands of passengers stranded. This also ultimately caused oil prices to spike in the global market. Apart from the threat of aircraft grounding, air travelers in the country will also be slapped with higher fares starting next month. The Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) recently announced that flights booked from April 1–15, 2026 will see a significant fare increase due to its lifting the fuel surcharge to Level 8. This means an additional of up to ₱6,200 to ticket costs. Domestic surcharges will range from ₱253 to ₱787, while international rates will rise to ₱835.05–₱6,208.98, driven by high jet fuel prices. This 15-day cycle is meant to manage extreme fuel price volatility.

- [2026 Balikatan biggest yet despite US war with Iran, says PH Armed Forces chief](#) (2026-03-24 10:34)

MANILA, Philippines — Despite the US’ ongoing war with Iran, this year’s Balikatan (shoulder-to-shoulder) exercises with the US military will be the biggest ever yet, the Armed

Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said. “No, no...,” AFP chief Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. told reporters in an interview on the sidelines of the Stratbase forum on the Japan-PH diplomatic relations. “We received the confirmation from Admiral (Samuel) Paparo himself. He said that this will still be the biggest Balikatan exercise despite the war going on in the Middle East. He said we will not be affected. Our planned activities will continue and the scale and scope are still the same,” Brawner said. Balikatan is the most important annual, large-scale joint military drill between the AFP and the US military which often included allies. In 2025, over 14,000 troops showcased high-level combat training, including the introduction of anti-ship missile systems (NMESIS) and coastal defense strategies. Scheduled this April in Luzon, the 40th iteration of the Baliktan will involve approximately 8,000 personnel, including the first-time participation of 1,000 Japanese troops - a first movement of Imperial military forces since World War II. “So aside from having more participants this year, we will see the participation of Japan which will expand the scope of our defensive operations because we not only have the United States and Australia in the preparation of our defense of the entire archipelago and our common areas as well,” Brawner said.

- [Airport fees slashed to ease fuel hike burden](#) (2026-03-24 08:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Aeronautical fees at airports, under the Civil Aviation authority of the Philippines (CAAP), will be reduced by as much as 50 percent to mitigate the impact of rising global fuel prices effective April 1, 2026. The aviation regulator said on Tuesday that this was intended to ease the burden on both passengers and the aviation industry amid escalating oil costs. CAAP said the modified rates would include landing and takeoff charges, with some fees dropping by as much as P5,000 per landing. Meanwhile, the Passenger Service Charge (PSC) for international travel at international airports will be reduced from P900 to P700. Similarly, domestic travel fees at these airports will drop from P350 to between P150 and P200. For Principal Class 1 airports, fees will be reduced from P300 to P150–P200, while Principal Class 2 airports will see a decrease from P200 to P100. Community airport charges will likewise be lowered from P100 to P50. While travelers pay Passenger Service Charges, aeronautical fees are shouldered by airlines. “We recognize the challenges brought by the ongoing regional tension and its impact on passengers and the aviation industry. CAAP is implementing reductions in passenger service charges and aeronautical fees to provide immediate relief and support, ensuring that air travel remains accessible during these difficult times.” said CAAP Director General Raul del Rosario. The CAAP reaffirms its commitment to implementing responsive measures that ease the public burden while supporting the aviation stability.

- [DOLE issues April holiday pay rules](#) (2026-03-24 08:06)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) has reminded all employers to strictly observe the proper pay rules for employees working during the declared holidays this April. Labor Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma on Tuesday issued Labor Advisory 5, Series of 2026, to remind employers on the observance of four declared regular holidays next month, which include the Catholics traditional observance of the Holy Week. The issuance,

Laguesma pointed out, guaranteed workers of their rightful wages for regular holidays on April 2 (Maundy Thursday), April 3 (Good Friday), and April 9 (Araw ng Kagitingan), and for the special (non-working) on April 4 (Black Saturday), pursuant to Proclamation 1006, Series of 2025. For regular holidays, the advisory states that employees who do not work are entitled to 100 percent of their daily wage, provided they report to work or are on approved leave of absence on the workday immediately preceding the regular holiday (Basic wage x 100 percent). When the day immediately preceding the regular holiday is a non-working day in the establishment or the employees' scheduled rest day, they shall be entitled to holiday pay if they worked or were on approved leave of absence with pay on the day immediately preceding the non-working day or rest day. Employees who render work during the regular holiday shall receive 200 percent of their daily wage for the first eight hours (basic wage x 200 percent). Should the employee perform work beyond eight hours, they shall be paid an additional 30 percent of the hourly rate for that day (Hourly rate of the basic wage x 200 percent x 130 percent x number of hours worked). If the regular holiday falls on the employee's rest day and work is rendered, the employee shall be paid an additional 30 percent of the 200 percent basic wage (Basic wage x 200 percent x 130 percent). Overtime work under the same conditions shall likewise be compensated with an additional 30 percent of the hourly rate on said day (Hourly rate of the basic wage x 200 percent x 130 percent x 130 percent x number of hours worked). For April 4 (Black Saturday), declared a special (non-working) day, the "no work, no pay" principle shall apply unless a favorable company policy, practice, or collective bargaining agreement (CBA) grants payment on a special day. If an employee reports for work during the special day, the employee is entitled to an additional 30 percent of their basic wage for the first eight hours (Basic wage x 130 percent). Overtime work shall be paid an additional 30 percent of the hourly rate on said day (Hourly rate of the basic wage x 130 percent x 130 percent x number of hours worked). Should the employee perform work on the special day that also falls on the employee's rest day, the employer shall pay an additional 50 percent of the basic wage for the first eight hours of work (Basic wage x 150 percent). Overtime work under the same condition shall likewise be compensated with an additional 30 percent of the hourly rate on that day (Hourly rate of the basic wage x 150 percent x 130 percent x number of hours worked). For clarifications, the public is advised to call the DOLE Hotline 1349, or coordinate with the DOLE Regional Office in their respective areas.

- [PH eyes five countries as alternative oil source](#) (2026-03-24 07:57)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines, through the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), has sought help from at least five oil-producing nations to supply the country's petroleum needs to offset the effect of high oil prices brought by the Middle East war. Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro revealed this during the organizational meeting of the Senate Proactive Response and Oversight for Timely and Effective Crisis Strategy Committee. "We've also been on the diplomatic cooperation. We've also been dealing with Department of Energy (DOE)," Lazaro said in briefing the Protect panel which was created to assess the government's readiness to address the oil crisis. "We already wrote letters to certain selected countries that have been

identified by the DOE concerning petroleum reserves and the possibility of obtaining our petroleum needs from them," Lazaro said. The DFA chief, however, did not identify the concerned countries where the Philippines wanted to import oil to replenish its stocks. In the interview, Lazaro said the Philippines was considering to import oil from Russia following the temporary lifting of sanctions by the United States on Russian crude oil in transit at sea. Energy Secretary Sharon Garin, at the same hearing, said the Philippines was looking at India as an alternative source for oil. "We're working on that so that we'll have a different source."

- [MMDA exempts fuel trucks, basic goods from coding amid fuel price hikes](#) (2026-03-24 07:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) said all fuel trucks, including LPG bullet carriers, and vehicles carrying basic commodities were now exempted from the number coding scheme. In a press briefing at the MMDA's head office in Pasig City, MMDA General Manager Nicholas Torre III said the Metro Manila Council approved a resolution that took effect on Tuesday. Torre also clarified that LPG bullet carriers were covered by the exemption because they were included among fuel tankers. "The MMC resolution has already been approved so all of the fuel trucks are not included in number coding anymore...the same goes for our basic commodities," Torre said. Torre said the move was approved in recognition of what he described as a situation that had gone beyond normal, with the directive meant to help ease conditions for the public. He also said LPG bullet carriers were already being treated as part of fuel tankers from the start of the policy discussions. He added that the initial MMDA monitoring on EDSA from Monday to Wednesday last week showed only a 5- to 7-percent drop in vehicle volume, or around 20,000 to 30,000 vehicles a day, under the adjusted traffic measures. Torre said the agency would continue reviewing traffic data to determine why some motorists still experienced heavy congestion despite the reduced vehicle count.

- [House panel hears Duterte impeachment complaints on Wednesday](#) (2026-03-24 06:51)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives Committee on Justice will start the hearing proper on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday. The committee will convene at 10 a.m. at the People Center where it will lay down ground rules and resolve motions. "If the complainants are ready, we can actually proceed to presentation of evidence and witnesses," said Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro, the committee chairman. The hearing proper, which will determine whether there is probable cause to impeach Duterte, comes after the two impeachment complaints filed against Duterte were found to be sufficient in form, substance and grounds. The third impeachment complaint filed by priests and others alleged, among others, that Duterte committed culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayed public trust in connection with confidential funds allocated to the Office of the Vice President (OVP) for 2022 and 2023 and confidential funds allocated in 2023 to the Department of Education (DepEd) when Duterte was appointed secretary before resigning in 2024. The third complaint also alleged that Duterte committed culpable violation of the

Constitution, betrayed public trust and committed high crimes "in contracting to murder or assassinate" President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., First Lady Liza Araneta Marcos, and former speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez. The complaint cited a Nov. 23, 2024 briefing with the media wherein she said, "[...] may kinausap na ako na tao. Sinabi ko sa kanya kapag pinatay ako, patayin mo si BBM, si Liza Araneta, at si Martin Romualdez." Duterte has denied making an assassination threat to Marcos. The fourth impeachment complaint was filed on Feb. 18, 2026 by lawyer Nathaniel Cabrera. This complaint alleged that Duterte "committed acts that constitute culpable violation of the Constitution, betrayal of public trust, and other high crimes, by publicly admitting the contracting of an assassin". The same complaint alleged that she "betrayed the public trust and committed acts of graft and corruption by grossly abusing discretionary authority over confidential funds appropriated to the" OVP and DepEd. Duterte countered that the complaints must be dismissed. As to the allegations that she committed plunder through malversation, malversation, graft and corruption, and technical malversation in relation to confidential funds of the OVP and DepEd, Duterte said these "cannot withstand serious scrutiny." It read, "Since these imputations do not rest on any established facts or final findings of a competent tribunal or court, they remain mere conclusions at best." Duterte also said the complaints failed to show "any shred of proof" that a contract to kill ever existed. "Instead, complainants rely on exaggerated conclusions dressed up as fact", it read. Duterte said the complaints did not allege the "ultimate facts necessary to sustain the charges." Cabrera rejected Duterte's response. Lawyer Amando Virgil Ligutan said the answer "conspicuously failed to specifically deny each and every material allegation in the" third complaint. Ligutan said there was an "obvious conflation of what is otherwise a clear and basic distinction between ultimate facts, on one hand, and evidentiary facts, on the other hand".

- [MMDA suspends number coding traffic scheme, deploys 2,500 personnel for Holy Week](#) (2026-03-24 06:15)

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will suspend number coding in Metro Manila from April 1 to April 6 and deploy around 2,500 personnel for the expected Holy Week exodus, MMDA General Manager Nicholas Torre III said on Tuesday. Torre said the suspension would run from Holy Wednesday until 6 a.m. on Easter Monday, after the Holy Week to help ease travel as more people leave and return to Metro Manila. He added that the MMDA would deploy personnel to traditional chokepoints and pilgrimage areas, including Visita Iglesia routes and destinations such as Grotto and Antipolo. The agency will also position 12 tow trucks to respond to any vehicle breakdowns, or incidents and help clear roads faster. Torre added that the agency would enforce a no-day-off and no-absent policy during the period. Torre also said provincial buses would be allowed on EDSA during the Holy Week travel period. He said buses coming from the south would be allowed up to the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX), while buses from the north would be allowed up to EDSA-Cubao. The MMDA said the temporary measures were part of its preparations for the annual surge in passenger and vehicle movement during Holy Week.

- [PH Embassy in Lebanon urges Filipinos in the southern part to move to Beirut](#) (2026-03-24 06:10)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Embassy in Lebanon urged Filipinos living in the southern part to move to Beirut or northern areas for safety after Israel bombed a bridge linking Lebanon's south to the rest of the country. The bombing of the Qasmiyeh bridge was reportedly part of Israel's campaign against the Lebanese armed group Hezbollah which recently fired rockets into Israel to avenge the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei by United States-Israel joint attack on Iran. In an advisory on Monday, the embassy said "movement may become difficult due to the ongoing targeting of infrastructure by the IDF (Israeli Defense Force)." "Ensure that your important documents (passport and iqama) are secure and easily accessible," the embassy posted on Facebook. There are over 14,100 Filipinos in Lebanon as of February 2026, the Department of Foreign Affairs said. "We strongly encourage all Filipinos to take advantage of the voluntary repatriation program, open since October 2023, while the opportunity is still available," it added. The embassy said Lebanon continues to be under Alert Level 3 status due to airstrikes and mass displacement across the country. It advised Filipinos "to stay away from any Lebanese government infrastructures, avoid all demonstrations and large gatherings." "Everyone is highly encouraged to stay indoors. Monitor advisories and keep track of targeted areas," the embassy said. It reminded Filipinos "to practice due diligence in following accredited news channels for updates on the current situation."

- [Philippines eyes 'temporary' coal push to counter energy turmoil](#) (2026-03-24 05:56)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines will try to boost the output of its coal-fired power plants to keep electricity costs down as the Middle East war wreaks havoc with gas shipments, its energy secretary said Tuesday. The archipelago nation of 116 million, which has some of the region's highest energy costs, relies on coal for about 60 percent of its electricity generation. Sharon Garin told reporters Tuesday that with the cost of LNG (liquefied natural gas) soaring, the country would "temporarily" be forced to lean even more heavily on the carbon-belching fossil fuel. While hoping to "maximize" the use of local coal, the Philippines was also keeping the option of upping its purchases of coal from top supplier Indonesia, the energy secretary said. "We talked to the generation companies, the coal-powered plants, to check how much they can increase their generation," Garin said, calling it a "temporary measure" that could start as early as April 1. "If we are successful in implementing this, at least we can decrease the electricity rate hikes because of the conflict in the Middle East," she said. Indonesia, meanwhile, had assured the Philippines it would place no limits on coal orders. "There's no restriction on our importation of coal from Indonesia as of today," Garin said, adding increased purchases may not be necessary. The Philippines -- regularly affected by electricity outages -- is heavily dependent on imported fuel to keep its power plants running. Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in January announced a "significant" discovery of natural gas made near the country's rapidly depleting Malampaya offshore natural gas field. It was hoped the discovery could extend the life of the field, which supplies about 40 percent of power to main island Luzon and was expected to run dry within a few years.

- [2,000 residents of Batangas town sign petition for Meralco service](#) (2026-03-24 05:23)

MANILA, Philippines — Around 2,000 residents in a town in Batangas signed a petition calling on its cooperative to allow Meralco to service their area. In a statement, residents of Laiya in San Juan cited reliability issues concerning the Batangas II Electric Cooperative (Batelec II), as frequent power outages are affecting their livelihoods, as the town is heavily reliant on tourism. A recent survey by Capstone Intel found that 93 percent of Batelec II consumers have been experiencing one to three hours of multiple power interruptions and that the community “endured prolonged and increasingly difficult conditions that have severely affected residents’ daily lives” and has compromised public safety. “The petition outlines five key issues, foremost of which is the frequent and prolonged power outages, many of them unplanned and without prior notice. These disruptions have hampered work, online classes and livelihoods, causing widespread inconvenience and financial loss,” the statement read. “Petitioners also cited unstable and unreliable power voltage, which has resulted in damage to household and business appliances such as refrigerators, electric fans, televisions and other essential equipment,” it added. The petition also cited that consumers lamented poor customer service and inadequate maintenance of facilities. It also questioned Batelec II’s capacity in meeting the area’s ongoing electricity demand, citing population growth and lack of clear measures in upgrading their infrastructure. “The petition is a community driven effort, underscoring the residents’ unified and urgent demand for reliable and improved electricity service,” the petition said. “We believe that Meralco’s entry into our barangay will provide reliable, stable and high quality electricity service — critical to sustained growth, safety and improved daily life in our community,” it added.

- [Prosecution presents key witness in flood control scam vs ex-lawmaker Zaldy Co in court](#) (2026-03-24 04:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The prosecution team on Tuesday presented Henry Alcantara as witness in the trial of a case against former congressman Zaldy Co pending before the Sandiganbayan. The Office of the Ombudsman filed the case last November 2025 against Co and other people for alleged malversation of public funds through falsification of documents. The case was in connection with a road dike construction project in Oriental Mindoro. The prosecution presented Alcantara, a state witness and a former district engineer of the Bulacan 1st District Engineering Office, in connection with the allegation that Co had beneficial interest in Sunwest, a company that he had allegedly founded. The prosecution adopted Alcantara's judicial affidavit as his direct testimony and defense lawyers did not conduct a cross examination. Accused Gerald Pacanan, Gene Ryan Altea, Ruben Santos Jr., Juliet Calvo, Dennis Abagon, Dominic Serrano, Montrexis Tamayo, Lerma Cayco, and Felisardo Casuno were present. The court has denied their bail petitions while Co and several others are at large.

- [Japan set to send combat troops to Philippine exercises — Brawner](#) (2026-03-24 02:58)

MANILA, Philippines — Japan is expected to send troops to military exercises in the Philippines instead of the usual humanitarian assistance and disaster response trainers, Armed Forces of

the Philippines chief General Romeo Brawner Jr. said on Tuesday. Speaking at the Peninsula Manila in Makati City, Brawner linked the expected deployment to rising maritime tensions in the West Philippine sea and the deepening defense ties between Manila and Tokyo. “And again, as mentioned by the Ambassador, for this year’s Balikatan exercise, we are expecting Japan to send combat troops to join in the exercise instead of just the usual trainers of HADR, Humanitarian Assistance in Disaster,” Brawner said. He said the Philippines and Japan are being drawn closer by converging strategic interests in maritime security, regional stability, and the defense of a rules-based international order. Brawner said those shared commitments were being tested by China’s actions in contested waters. “In the face of the People’s Republic of China’s increasing assertiveness in the West Philippine Sea and the broader South China Sea as well as the East China Sea, the Philippines remains firmly anchored in international law, diplomacy and transparency,” he said. He said the Philippines continued to uphold the 2016 arbitral award under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea while asserting its maritime rights through peaceful and lawful means. Brawner said Japan has consistently upheld the same principles, including respect for international law, freedom of navigation, and adherence to established norms. He said defense cooperation between the Philippines and Japan has expanded through capacity-building efforts, maritime security assistance, and more advanced joint and trilateral exercises.

- [Marcos leads govt rollout of expanded transport relief measures amid Mideast crisis](#)  
(2026-03-24 02:24)

(UPDATE) MANILA, Philippines – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Tuesday led the government’s rollout of relief measures meant to ease the impact of the fuel crisis caused by the ongoing war in the Middle East. Marcos announced the expansion of fuel subsidy distribution to more public utility vehicle (PUV) operators nationwide during the distribution of financial assistance to public utility vehicles at Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX). “We are now providing P10,000 subsidy for each bus unit. All types of payment methods can be used. We can do it through digital payment like GCash, the ATM, checks, or cash,” the president told business operators in English and Filipino. The Department of Transportation (DOTr) said 27 operators of the 1,096 bus units in the PITX received the subsidy. “Please help us so that our riding public will not be too hard hit by high fares. We all know what’s been happening, oil prices are volatile all over the world. This is the response of the government. And of course, we are always in need of assistance and the help and cooperation with the operators, with the drivers, the whole system. So, this is what we’re doing here now,” he said. Meanwhile, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) announced a 50-percent discount on train fares, reduced toll rates for public utility vehicles, and the nationwide rollout of a P2.5-billion fuel subsidy program respectively. All passengers of LRT-2 and MRT-3 are entitled to a 50-percent fare discount, which started on March 23, 2026, according to documents presented during a press conference this Tuesday. Toll discounts took effect the same day for Class 1 public utility vehicles, including jeepneys and modernized jeepneys, as well as for Class 3 trucks with three or more axles and a height

exceeding 7.5 feet. The discounts vary per expressway, with savings ranging from P1 to P66 for Class 1 vehicles and P8 to P197 for Class 3 vehicles. Beneficiaries must have RFID tags, be registered with the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, and hold a certificate of franchise. For vehicles transporting agricultural products, the government also implemented a “Piso Ro-Ro” terminal fee, reducing rates to P1 for Class 3 and Class 4 vehicles. At airports, reduced fees and charges will take effect on April 1. Passengers will save up to P200 per person on terminal fees, while airlines will save up to P5,000 per landing on landing fees. The fuel subsidy program, with an approved budget of P2.5 billion, targets 245,066 driver-beneficiaries and covers 1,180,783 public utility vehicle units operated by beneficiaries. Distribution began March 24 through fuel subsidy cards, bank transfers, e-wallet transfers, and cash or check payouts. The government will shoulder all convenience fees. Under the program, subsidy amounts vary by vehicle type. Public bus operators will receive P10,000 per unit and drivers P5,000 each. Modern public utility jeepney operators will receive P10,000 per unit and drivers P1,500 each. Traditional jeepney operators will receive P5,000 per unit and drivers P1,500 each. UV Express operators and drivers will receive P5,000 and P1,500 respectively. Taxi operators will receive P2,000 per unit and drivers P5,000 each. Tricycle drivers and delivery service beneficiaries are scheduled to receive their subsidies after Holy Week.

- [Quezon City to regulate parking system in commercial district soon](#) (2026-03-24 02:10)

MANILA, Philippines — Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte on Tuesday said that an ordinance would be passed to regulate a parking system along Tomas Morato-Timog area. Belmonte said a dry-run was rolled out on Monday for the proposed public parking regulations in the city’s commercial district. “The pilot forms part of the city’s push to better organize and manage public spaces in the Tomas Morato–Timog district—one of Quezon City’s busiest commercial and nightlife hubs,” the city chief executive said. It will run until the proposed Public Pay Parking Ordinance is passed. According to the city government, the initiative builds on recent upgrades under the QC ReVibe program, which focuses on revitalizing key commercial areas through improved infrastructure, safer walkways, and more accessible public spaces. Completed improvements include rehabilitated roads and sidewalks, installation of tactile paving, upgraded street lighting, and the clearing of obstructions to reduce safety risks and urban clutter, it said. The mayor said that the rollout was a crucial step toward making commercial districts more orderly and inclusive. “As we improve and beautify our commercial areas, we must also ensure that public spaces are used fairly and efficiently. This parking system is about creating order, improving access, and making our streets work better for everyone,” Belmonte said. During the dry run, parking will remain free and available on a first-come, first-served basis. However, vehicles may only occupy designated slots for a maximum of three hours to allow more motorists to access limited parking.

- [Filipino injured from missile attack on Arad town in Israel](#) (2026-03-24 01:55)

MANILA, Philippines — A male Filipino worker sustained a leg injury during a missile impact -- from Iran's attack -- in Arad town, was treated at the Sorokoa Medical Center and was expected

to be discharged on Tuesday, the Philippine Embassy in Israel said. The embassy's rapid reaction team visited the unidentified 30-year-old worker on March 22, 2026, a day after the attack, to check on his condition and provide emergency assistance. The team also visited other Filipinos in Arad and Dimona, whose apartments sustained minor damage, to check on their wellbeing and distribute food packages, the embassy said. They are temporarily staying with fellow Filipinos, while some are being accommodated in a hotel near the Dead Sea. The embassy on Facebook said it "continues to monitor the recovery of the injured Filipino and the wellbeing of affected kababayan, and will provide psychosocial and mental health support services in the coming days." The BBC reported that about 180 people were injured - some seriously - in Iranian missile strikes on two southern Israeli towns close to a nuclear facility. Israel's health ministry said 116 people were injured in Arad and another 64 in Dimona, after ballistic missiles hit the towns on Saturday evening. Iranian state TV said the strikes were in response to an attack on Iran's Natanz nuclear facility on Saturday.

- [PH deploys vessels to protect fishermen amid reported Chinese harassment in Bajo de Masinloc](#) (2026-03-24 00:59)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) deployed multiple vessels to Bajo de Masinloc following reports of continued harassment by Chinese vessels against Filipino fishermen, authorities said. In a statement issued Tuesday, the PCG said two of its vessels and five BFAR fishery patrol ships were dispatched after more than 20 Filipino fishing boats encountered harassment from China Coast Guard units over the weekend. The joint deployment secured the fishing grounds and ensured the safety of Filipino fishermen operating in the area. Government personnel also distributed fuel subsidies, food packs, and ice to help sustain fishing operations and mitigate the impact of rising fuel costs. PCG Commandant Admiral Ronnie Gil Gavan ordered an aerial maritime domain awareness flight over the shoal to monitor the situation. The operation documented the presence of six China Coast Guard vessels, 20 China Maritime Militia ships, and one warship from the People's Liberation Army Navy. During the patrol, the PCG recorded what it described as a first-of-its-kind incident: a China Coast Guard vessel broadcasting over radio its intent to conduct a "clearing operation" within a defined area. The coordinates covered waters between 14°14'N to 15°05'N latitude and 118°10'E to 118°25'E longitude. The PCG said the deployment formed part of ongoing efforts to safeguard Philippine sovereignty and protect the livelihood of local fishermen in the West Philippine Sea. The agency also reiterated its commitment to enforcing international law and supporting the policy direction of the Philippine government in asserting the country's sovereign rights and maritime jurisdiction in contested waters.