



PHILIPPINES SECURITY ANALYSIS REPORT

AI-Assisted Open Source Intelligence Assessment

Analysis Period: April 19, 2026 - April 26, 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.

Executive Summary

The Philippines experienced a dynamic security landscape from April 19 to April 26, 2026, marked by significant military exercises, escalating maritime tensions in the South China Sea, and ongoing internal security challenges. The annual Balikatan 2026 exercises, the largest to date with expanded international participation, underscored the Philippines' deepening alliances and enhanced deterrence capabilities, notably with the unveiling of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile. Concurrently, the opening of a new Coast Guard base on Thitu Island reaffirmed Philippine sovereignty amidst continued Chinese harassment in disputed waters. Internally, a deadly clash with suspected communist rebels, involving foreign nationals, highlighted persistent domestic insurgency threats. The nation also grappled with rising cybersecurity threats and the economic fallout from the Middle East conflict, prompting diplomatic engagement with Iran to secure energy supplies.

Key Security Developments

- **Military Activities and Exercises: Balikatan 2026 Commences with Expanded Scope**

The Philippines and the United States formally opened their annual joint Balikatan Exercise on April 20, 2026. This year's drills are the largest iteration yet, involving over 17,000 troops from the Philippines, the United States, Australia, Canada, France, Japan, and New Zealand. The exercises will encompass air and missile defense, maritime security, live-fire drills, and joint readiness operations across various locations in the Philippines, including northern Luzon facing the Taiwan Strait and areas off the South China Sea. The expanded participation and scope reflect an evolving security environment and a move towards multilateral interoperability.

- **Defense Acquisitions and Arms Deals: BrahMos Missile Unveiled at Balikatan**

During the opening of Balikatan 2026, the Philippines unveiled its BrahMos supersonic cruise missile, integrating it into a live joint maritime strike simulation alongside forces from the US, Japan, and other allied nations. This move signals a significant enhancement of the Philippines' coastal defense capabilities and a strategic shift towards a layered, multi-national deterrence network in the Indo-Pacific.

- **Military Activities and Exercises: Salaknib 2026 Phase I Concludes**

Phase I of Exercise Salaknib 2026, which began the week of April 7, 2026, at Fort Ramon Magsaysay in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, involved over 7,000 soldiers from the

Philippine Army, US Army, Japan Ground Self-Defense Force, and Australian Army. This marks the first time Japan and Australia participated as active participants and observers in Salaknib, further strengthening multilateral military cooperation.

- Maritime and Border Security: New Coast Guard Base on Thitu Island

In April 2026, the Philippines opened a major Coast Guard base on Thitu Island (Pag-asa Island) in the South China Sea. Philippine Transport Secretary Giovanni Lopez stated that this base serves as a "steadfast sentinel of our sovereignty" in a region where China has established military installations, including on nearby Subi Reef.

- Maritime and Border Security: Chinese Harassment Near Disputed Reefs

On the same day the Thitu Island base was unveiled, the Philippine Coast Guard accused Chinese forces of firing flares towards one of its patrol aircraft operating near the China-occupied Mischief and Subi reefs. The Philippine Coast Guard described this incident as "a clear and deliberate act of bullying," highlighting ongoing aggressive actions by China in the disputed waters.

- Security Incidents and Threats: Deadly Clash with Communist Rebels

On April 19, 2026, 19 suspected communist guerrillas from the New People's Army (NPA), including two Americans, were killed in a series of clashes with Philippine troops in the coastal town of Toboso in Negros Occidental province. The National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) warned Americans of Filipino descent against being "terror-groomed" by left-wing activist groups to support Filipino insurgents. Human rights groups have called for an independent investigation into the clashes, alleging civilian casualties.

- Diplomatic Relations: Philippines Engages Iran on Energy Security

On April 1, 2026, the Philippines initiated direct dialogue with Iran, with Department of Foreign Affairs Secretary Maria Theresa Lazaro and Energy Secretary Sharon Garin meeting Iranian Ambassador Yousef Esmailzadeh. The purpose was to secure assurances for the safe and toll-free passage of Philippine-bound oil ships through the Strait of Hormuz, following the Philippines' declaration of a national energy emergency due to the Middle East conflict.

- Cybersecurity: Rising Threats and Government Response

Cyber threats in the Philippines are escalating, with a notable shift towards human-centric manipulation by organized syndicates employing sophisticated social engineering tactics. Government systems are increasingly targeted by nation-state cybercriminals seeking sensitive information. In response, the Philippine National Police Anti-Cybercrime Group (PNP-ACG) arrested 332 individuals for various cybercrime violations in the first quarter of 2026, including online selling scams and fraudulent investment schemes. The government acknowledges these risks and is

implementing reforms and strengthening inter-agency coordination.

- **Defense Policy and Strategic Shifts: Focus on Border Management Modernization**

In preparation for its chairmanship of ASEAN in 2026, the Philippines is accelerating efforts to modernize its border management systems. This initiative, exemplified by the Civil Aviation and Immigration Security Services (CAISS) program, aims to position the country as a regional leader in secure, digitally-enabled mobility and enhance its overall security posture.

- **Diplomatic Relations: ASEAN Chairmanship and South China Sea Code of Conduct**

As the incoming Chair of ASEAN in 2026, the Philippines is prioritizing the conclusion of a legally binding Code of Conduct (COC) for the South China Sea. While China has urged dialogue, fundamental disagreements persist, particularly regarding the legally binding nature of the code. The Philippines aims to use its chairmanship to foster cooperation in less sensitive areas with China while maintaining its firm stance on maritime rights.

Geopolitical Impact and Regional Dynamics

The recent security developments in the Philippines have significant geopolitical ramifications, particularly concerning regional stability and its relationships with major powers. The Balikatan 2026 exercises, with their unprecedented scale and multilateral participation, send a strong signal to China regarding the Philippines' commitment to its alliances and its resolve to defend its maritime interests. The active involvement of Japan, including live-fire missile drills, marks a notable shift in regional defense cooperation, further integrating key US allies into the Indo-Pacific security architecture. This enhanced deterrence posture, coupled with the unveiling of the BrahMos missile, positions the Philippines as a more formidable frontline state, potentially altering the power dynamics in the South China Sea.

The ongoing tensions in the South China Sea, exemplified by the opening of the Thitu Island Coast Guard base and the reported Chinese harassment, continue to be a critical flashpoint. While the Philippines is strengthening its alliances with the US and its partners, it is also navigating a complex diplomatic path with China. As the Chair of ASEAN in 2026, Manila is attempting to balance its security concerns with the need for economic cooperation and regional stability. The push for a legally binding Code of Conduct in the South China Sea under its chairmanship reflects an effort to manage disputes through multilateral mechanisms, even as China resists such constraints.

The Philippines' declaration of a national energy emergency and its direct diplomatic engagement with Iran over the Strait of Hormuz highlight its vulnerability to broader

global conflicts, particularly the Middle East war. This demonstrates how external geopolitical events can directly impact the Philippines' domestic security and economic stability, forcing Manila to adopt a "survival diplomacy" approach to secure vital resources. This also underscores the interconnectedness of global security challenges and the need for diversified foreign policy engagements beyond traditional alliances.

Military and Defense Analysis

The Philippine military is undergoing a significant transformation, driven by a renewed focus on external defense and maritime security. The scale and complexity of Balikatan 2026, involving over 17,000 troops from seven nations, demonstrate a robust commitment to enhancing interoperability and collective defense capabilities. The inclusion of integrated air and missile defense, maritime security, and live-fire exercises, particularly in northern Luzon and the South China Sea, directly addresses potential threats in these strategic areas. The participation of Japan, including the firing of its Type 88 anti-ship missile, signifies a deepening of security partnerships beyond the traditional US alliance.

A pivotal development is the unveiling of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile during Balikatan 2026. This acquisition and its integration into joint maritime strike simulations represent a substantial leap in the Armed Forces of the Philippines' (AFP) anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) capabilities. The BrahMos, alongside allied missile systems, contributes to a layered deterrence network, making the Philippines a more credible deterrent against potential aggressors in its exclusive economic zone. This modernization effort is further supported by the ongoing Salaknib exercises, which enhance combined arms operations and multi-domain interoperability with key partners like the US, Japan, and Australia. Defense spending trends are likely to continue upwards to sustain these modernization programs and acquire more advanced systems, reflecting a strategic shift from internal security focus to a more balanced external defense posture.

Outlook and Forecast

Short-term trends (1-3 months): In the immediate future, maritime tensions in the South China Sea are expected to remain elevated, particularly around disputed features. The conclusion of Balikatan 2026 will likely be followed by a period of heightened rhetoric from China, which views these exercises as provocative. The Philippines will continue to assert its sovereign rights through patrols and diplomatic protests, potentially leading to further minor confrontations at sea. Internally,

counter-insurgency operations against the New People's Army will persist, with continued efforts to address the root causes of rebellion and prevent "terror-grooming." The economic impact of global energy prices will remain a significant concern, with the government exploring various measures to mitigate inflationary pressures.

Critical flashpoints and risk areas: The South China Sea, especially around the Spratly Islands (including Thitu Island, Mischief Reef, and Subi Reef) and Scarborough Shoal, remains the primary flashpoint. Any aggressive actions by China, such as ramming or water cannon incidents, could quickly escalate. The Strait of Hormuz also presents an indirect but critical risk, as disruptions there directly impact the Philippines' energy security and economic stability. Domestically, areas with active NPA presence, particularly in central and southern Philippines (e.g., Negros Occidental), will continue to be risk areas for armed clashes and human rights concerns.

Indicators to monitor: Key indicators to monitor include the frequency and intensity of maritime incidents in the South China Sea, particularly those involving Chinese and Philippine vessels. The progress of negotiations for a legally binding South China Sea Code of Conduct under the Philippines' ASEAN chairmanship will be crucial. Domestically, monitoring the effectiveness of counter-insurgency efforts and the government's response to human rights allegations will be important. Economically, global oil prices and the stability of the Philippine peso will indicate the ongoing impact of external geopolitical events. Furthermore, the pace of defense modernization and the acquisition of new capabilities, such as additional BrahMos missiles or other advanced systems, will signal the Philippines' long-term strategic direction.

Strategic recommendations: The Philippines should continue to strengthen its alliances and partnerships, particularly with the United States, Japan, Australia, and other like-minded nations, to enhance its collective defense and deterrence capabilities in the South China Sea. Diplomatic efforts to push for a legally binding Code of Conduct in the South China Sea should be sustained, utilizing its ASEAN chairmanship to build regional consensus. Internally, a comprehensive approach to counter-insurgency, combining military operations with socio-economic development and strict adherence to human rights, is essential. To mitigate economic vulnerabilities, the government should actively pursue energy diversification strategies and strengthen its cybersecurity infrastructure to protect critical national assets from evolving threats.

Structured Assessment

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Strait and a key location for enhanced defense posture.",
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energy security and economy, necessitating diplomatic engagement with Iran.",
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## ANNEX: COLLECTED ARTICLES BY SOURCE

### Source: GMA Network

- [Environmental group urges gov't to declare national climate emergency](#) (2026-04-26 02:07)

Environmental group Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ) has urged the government to declare a national climate emergency due to the effects of drought in the country.

- [Over 1.1 million jeepney drivers received P5k cash aid --DSWD](#) (2026-04-26 01:55)

More than 1.1 million jeepney drivers nationwide received the P5,000 cash relief assistance from the government as of Saturday amid the high prices of fuel in the country, the Department of Social Welfare and Development said.

- [More than 1,000 taxi drivers claim fuel subsidies](#) (2026-04-25 14:30)

More than 1,000 taxi drivers received fuel subsidy payouts on Saturday.

- [DA calls for additional P30B aid for farmers](#) (2026-04-25 10:29)

The Department of Agriculture on Saturday appealed to the national government for an additional P30 billion to provide fertilizers and subsidies to farmers amid high fuel costs.

- [NBI obtains lead regarding threats vs. Marcos, FL Liza, Romualdez](#) (2026-04-25 07:43)

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) said Saturday it is already following a lead regarding the alleged threats against President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr, First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos, and former Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez.

- [Sandiganbayan asked to issue precautionary hold departure order for Escudero, Ngu](#) (2026-04-25 06:01)

The Office of the Ombudsman has asked the Sandiganbayan on Saturday to issue a precautionary hold departure order against Senator Francis "Chiz" Escudero and businessman Maynard Ngu.

- [CA ordered freeze on Romualdez's assets, Ombudsman Remulla says](#) (2026-04-25 04:33)

The Court of Appeals has issued a freeze order on the assets of former Speaker and incumbent Leyte representative Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla said Saturday.

- [VP Sara lauds PH Army's 79th IB for 'success' in recent combat operation](#) (2026-04-25 03:59)

VP Sara lauds PH Army's 79th IB for success in 'recent combat operation'

- [ICC urged to reclassify Duterte defense response redacting names of 6 Filipino lawyers](#) (2026-04-25 02:33)

The Prosecution has filed a request to the International Criminal Court Pre-Trial Chamber I to reclassify a Defense response regarding the case of former President Rodrigo Duterte, after it redacted the names of six Filipino lawyers concerned in the filing.

- [LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East \(April 25, 2026\)](#) (2026-04-25 00:07)

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

- [China holds live-fire drills in waters near Luzon as US, Philippines stage war games](#) (2026-04-24 18:28)

BEIJING - China conducted military drills recently including live-fire exercises in waters east of the Philippines' Luzon Island, it said on Friday, as Manila and Washington host annual drills that extend towards disputed areas of the South China Sea.

- [Royina Garma to testify at ICC trial of Rodrigo Duterte, says Trillanes](#) (2026-04-24 16:46)

Former Police Colonel Royina Garma will testify as a witness at the trial of former President Rodrigo Duterte at the International Criminal Court (ICC).

- [Several taxi drivers not included in fuel subsidy lists](#) (2026-04-24 16:18)

Several taxi drivers seeking temporary relief from high fuel prices were not on the lists of recipients of the P5,000 subsidy.

- [Who are Rodrigo Duterte's alleged co-perpetrators and where are they now?](#) (2026-04-24 15:17)

Prosecutors at the International Criminal Court (ICC) have identified eight individuals as co-perpetrators of former President Rodrigo Duterte in the case involving the alleged abuses in his war on drugs.

- [No guarantee Zaldy Co is still in Czech Republic, says DOJ chief Vida](#) (2026-04-24 14:44)

It is "possible" that former Ako Bicol party-list Rep. Zaldy Co is no longer in the jurisdiction of the Czech Republic, Justice Secretary Frederick Vida told reporters in Prague. Asked what guarantee the Philippine side has that the Czech Republic would keep Co in their jurisdiction, Vida said, "There's no such guarantee. We need to respect their laws."

- [No winners of major lotto draws on Friday, April 24, 2026](#) (2026-04-24 14:09)

There were no winners of either of the major lotto jackpots offered on Friday, April 24, 2026, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) announced.

- [Rodrigo Duterte's legal team to appeal ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I's confirmation of charges](#) (2026-04-24 14:01)

Rodrigo Duterte's legal team is seeking to appeal the International Criminal Court Pre-Trial Chamber I's confirmation of charges against him in connection with the killings under his war on drugs when he was mayor of Davao City and when he was the president of the Philippines.

- [Justice chief Vida in Prague to discuss Zaldy Co's return to Philippines](#) (2026-04-24 13:39)

Justice Secretary Frederick Vida and Chief State Counsel Dennis Chan are in Prague to discuss with the Czech authorities Zaldy Co's return to the Philippines.

- [LIST: Notable Filipinos who sought asylum](#) (2026-04-24 11:34)

A number of Filipinos, some of whom connected in politics, chose to flee the Philippines and apply for asylum in another country due to supposed persecution or fear for their lives. Some of them were successful, but others were not.

- [Marcos vows increase in LGU funds if programs properly implemented](#) (2026-04-24 10:17)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Friday vowed to increase funding for local government units so they can expand and improve their programs.

- [NBI files trafficking complaint vs. Mike Defensor's wife, child, others](#) (2026-04-24 10:04)

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on Friday said it has filed a complaint against the wife and child of former congressman Mike Defensor, among others, for alleged involvement in human trafficking.

- [Harry Roque asks CA to issue TRO vs. cancellation of passport](#) (2026-04-24 09:45)

Former presidential spokesperson Harry Roque has asked the Court of Appeals (CA) to issue a temporary restraining order against the cancellation of his passport, his camp said Friday.

- [SC denies businessman's petition to dismiss case over shabu shipment from China](#) (2026-04-24 09:15)

The Supreme Court (SC) has denied a petition filed by businessman Chen Julong, also known as Richard Tan, to dismiss the case filed against him for the importation of a shipment of shabu from China in 2017.

- [Palace to Kaufman: Focus on Rodrigo Duterte, not on PH politics](#) (2026-04-24 08:56)

Nicholas Kaufman, the lawyer of former President Rodrigo Duterte, should focus on defending his client, not on Philippine politics, Palace Press Officer Undersecretary Claire Castro said on Friday.

- [Recto: Giving travel authority day before trip usually happens](#) (2026-04-24 08:37)

Executive Secretary Ralph Recto said Friday that there's nothing unusual with giving the travel authority a day before the trip of a government official.

- [US citizen among Negros clash deaths, says NTF-ELCAC](#) (2026-04-24 08:11)

A reported US citizen of Filipino descent was among those killed in what the military called an encounter in Toboso, Negros Occidental, the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) said Friday.

- [DepEd rolls out orientations to prepare for major SY 2026-2027 reforms](#) (2026-04-24 08:10)

Public school teachers and school heads across the country will undergo a series of orientations starting late April, as the Department of Education (DepEd) prepares for a set of major policy changes in School Year 2026-2027.

- [Freeze order issued vs. flood control scandal-linked legislator --AMLC](#) (2026-04-24 07:56)

The Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) has secured a freeze order on the assets of a legislator allegedly involved in the flood control corruption scandal.

- [EXPLAINER: How can Filipinos seek asylum in another country?](#) (2026-04-24 07:38)

Individuals who wish to escape persecution, violence, or conflict in their home country may seek asylum or protection elsewhere. But while seeking asylum is considered a fundamental human right, not all applicants are granted it. How does one apply for asylum and how can it be granted?

- [Filipino conjoined twins successfully separated after surgery in Saudi Arabia](#) (2026-04-24 07:34)

Filipino conjoined twins Klea Ann and Maurice Ann Misa have been successfully separated following a rare and high-risk surgery in Saudi Arabia, giving them a chance at living independent lives.

- [Bernardo: I delivered P250M commitment fee to Bong Revilla](#) (2026-04-24 07:18)

State witness and former Public Works and Highways undersecretary Roberto Bernardo on Friday testified that he personally delivered P250 million worth of commitment fee or portion of the payment for government projects to former senator Ramon Bong Revilla, Jr.

- [PNP intensifies monitoring vs 'gas-and-run'](#) (2026-04-24 06:52)

PNP intensifies monitoring vs 'gas-and-run'

- [Duterte co-perpetrators not part of ICC case, must be charged separately -- UP law prof](#) (2026-04-24 06:32)

Even though the alleged co-perpetrators of former President Rodrigo Duterte were repeatedly mentioned in connection to alleged killings during his time as mayor and president, an expert said Friday that they are not part of Duterte's case before the International Criminal Court (ICC) and must be charged separately.

- [Pag-IBIG, DepEd partner to prioritize teachers in housing Fairs nationwide](#) (2026-04-24 05:18)

Public school teachers and education personnel will be given priority access to affordable

housing under a new arrangement between the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Pag-IBIG Fund.

- [Zaldy Co's liberty was restrained, not technically arrested -- DOJ](#) (2026-04-24 05:10)

Former Ako Bicol Party-List Representative Zaldy Co was not technically arrested by Czech authorities, but his liberty was restrained for possible violation of Immigration regulations, Justice spokesperson Polo Martinez said Friday.

- [Ex-IBP chief: House has not committed any violation in Sara Duterte impeachment](#) (2026-04-24 04:54)

For former Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) president Domingo Cayosa, the House justice committee has not committed any violations during the impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte.

- [VP Sara's lawyer clarifies no declared cash on hand in SALN: It's under 'others'](#) (2026-04-24 04:16)

VP Sara's lawyer clarifies no declared cash on hand in SALN: It's under 'others'

- [State witness says he got P1 million token from contractors per project](#) (2026-04-24 04:10)

State witness and former Department of Public Works and Highways-National Capital Region Regional Director Gerard Opulencia admitted receiving P1 million as “pasasalamat” or token gift from contractors for every government project implemented during his time as district engineer of North Manila.

- [Romualdez asks Ombudsman to halt probe against him over 'prejudgment'](#) (2026-04-24 03:29)

Former Speaker and Leyte Representative Ferdinand Martin Romualdez has asked the Ombudsman to stop its investigation against him over alleged violation of due process, arguing that he was already prejudged in the matter.

- [Compliance officer convicted for failure to maintain records in Bangladesh Bank heist](#) (2026-04-24 02:58)

Compliance officer convicted for failure to maintain records in Bangladesh Bank heist

- [Marcos set for state visit to Japan in May](#) (2026-04-24 02:24)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. and First Lady Louise "Liza" Araneta-Marcos will undertake a state visit to Japan from May 26 to 29, 2026

- [Duterte ICC trial may begin between Oct. 2026 to Feb. 2027 --Conti](#) (2026-04-24 01:23)

Duterte ICC trial may begin between Oct. 2026 to Feb. 2027 --Conti

- [Can Zaldy Co be back in PH in 3 weeks? 'No way,' says Czech migration expert](#) (2026-04-24 01:17)

PRAGUE -- The possible return of former Ako Bicol Party-list representative Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co from the Czech Republic will depend on legal procedures and could face delays, especially if he seeks asylum, a Czech migration law expert said.

- [Sara's lead narrows, Leni's number increases in OCTA early presidential preference survey](#) (2026-04-23 23:56)

Sara's lead narrows, Leni's number increases in OCTA early presidential preference survey

- [De Lima: VP Sara's defense has no bearing unless made under oath](#) (2026-04-23 18:51)

Vice President Sara Duterte's defense against allegations has no bearing on the ongoing impeachment proceedings unless she makes these under oath, House Senior Deputy Minority Leader Leila de Lima of Mamamayang Liberal (ML) party-list said.

- [High-level team ready to coordinate with Czech Republic for Zaldy Co's return](#) (2026-04-23 18:21)

A high-level coordinating team is on its way to coordinate with Czech Republic officials for the return of former lawmaker Zaldy Co.

- [Cagayan de Oro housewife's P25 lotto bet wins P10M jackpot prize](#) (2026-04-23 17:28)

A 50-year-old housewife's persistence in placing lotto bets for over a decade finally bore fruit on April 7 after she won P10 million in the Lotto 6/42 draw of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO).

- [What happens next in Rodrigo Duterte's ICC case?](#) (2026-04-23 15:53)

The International Criminal Court (ICC) on Thursday confirmed the charges of crimes against

humanity against Rodrigo Duterte over the killings in his war on illegal drugs when he was Davao City mayor and later as President.

- [PAF unveils basing support system on Pag-asa Island for better operations](#) (2026-04-23 14:59)

The Philippine Air Force (PAF) on Thursday inaugurated the completed Basing Support System on Pag-asa Island in Palawan in a bid to boost its capability to sustain operations in the West Philippine Sea.

- [China vows to build up islands, teases new aircraft carrier in video](#) (2026-04-23 14:48)

China teased an aircraft carrier that could be its first using nuclear power, while vowing to further build up islands as it looks to boost maritime power and bolster territorial claims.

- [No jackpot winners in April 23, 2026 major lotto draws, PCSO says](#) (2026-04-23 14:30)

No one won the jackpot prizes in Thursday night's major lotto draws, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said.

- [Lawmakers: VP Sara's press statements can't dispute undeclared billions](#) (2026-04-23 14:26)

VP Sara Duterte's statements that she legally acquired her assets cannot deny government records that she had billions which she failed to declare in her SALN, House justice members said.

- [VP Duterte may be impeached over unexplained wealth, solons say](#) (2026-04-23 14:05)

Several members of the House justice committee on Thursday said they believe that there is probable cause to impeach Vice President Sara Duterte on allegations of unexplained wealth and violations in her Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth (SALN).

- [Victims' families celebrate ICC confirmation of charges against Duterte](#) (2026-04-23 11:48)

The families of the victims of those killed under former President Rodrigo Duterte's war on drugs celebrated the decision of the International Criminal Court to confirm the crimes against humanity charges against him and commit the former leader to trial.

- [Kaufman: Duterte's defense to prove state policy to kill is complete fiction at ICC Trial](#) (2026-04-23 11:18)



The lawyer of former President Rodrigo Duterte said the defense will prove during the trial before the International Criminal Court that the supposed state policy to kill suspects in his administration's war on drugs was "complete fiction."

- [Palace respects ICC's confirming raps vs. Rodrigo Duterte](#) (2026-04-23 10:53)

Malacañang on Thursday said it respects the decision of the International Criminal Court (ICC) confirming the charges of crimes against humanity against former President Rodrigo Duterte in connection with his campaign against illegal drugs.

- [Palace assures all systems go for ASEAN 2026 Summit](#) (2026-04-23 09:54)

Malacañang assured Thursday that the Philippines is ready to host the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) 2026 Summit in Cebu next month.

- [Who is Alyssa Alano, the UP student leader killed in Negros clash?](#) (2026-04-23 09:48)

Alyssa Alano was a student leader from the University of the Philippines Diliman who was among those killed in a military operation in Toboso, Negros Occidental on April 19, 2026.

- [VP Duterte's team questions presentation of bank transactions in House impeach hearing](#) (2026-04-23 09:32)

Vice President Sara Duterte's defense team on Thursday questioned the way her bank transactions were presented before the House justice committee, claiming that the figure appeared "bloated" because it was an aggregation of transactions spanning years.

- [ICC confirms charges against Rodrigo Duterte, commits ex-President to trial](#) (2026-04-23 08:55)

A year after his detention, the International Criminal Court (ICC) Pre-Trial Chamber I on Thursday confirmed all the charges against former President Rodrigo Duterte over his drug war and committed him for trial.

- [Teodoro to China: Prove Ayungin garbage claim before int'l tribunal](#) (2026-04-23 08:54)

Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. on Thursday challenged China to take its claims before an international legal body that the Philippines dumped garbage in Ayungin Shoal in the West Philippine Sea.

- [Comelec to require birth certificates for 2026 BSKE and future elections](#) (2026-04-23 08:54)

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) will now require the inclusion of birth certificates in the filing for candidacies for the 2026 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections (BSKE) as well as in succeeding elections, its chairperson said Thursday.

- [PH gov't confident on Zaldy Co's return -- Palace](#) (2026-04-23 08:11)

The Philippine government is confident that former lawmaker Zaldy Co would be brought back to the Philippines.

- [Bernardo's former aide says he delivered boxes, suitcases to Revilla, Estrada, several others](#) (2026-04-23 07:56)

The former assistant to ex-Public Works Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo claimed to have delivered multiple boxes, suitcases, and paper bags to several personalities linked to the flood control mess, but he was unable to disclose what was inside.

- [PH-US 'Pax Silica' hub not war-driven but for industrialization --Teodoro](#) (2026-04-23 07:08)

US-led 'Pax Silica' hub in PH not war-driven but for resilience, industrialization --Teodoro

- [Palace denies VP Sara trip approved at last minute](#) (2026-04-23 06:56)

Palace denies VP Sara trip approved at last minute

- [SWS: 50% of Filipinos said their lives worsened in last 12 months](#) (2026-04-23 06:50)

Fifty percent or half of Filipino adults believe their lives got worse in the last 12 months, while over a quarter or 26% feel things stayed the same, public opinion pollster Social Weather Stations (SWS) said Thursday.

- [LIST: Journalists, students reportedly killed, arrested in AFP operations](#) (2026-04-23 06:43)

LIST: Journalists, students reportedly killed, arrested in AFP operations

- [VP Sara Duterte: Every cent of my money came from legitimate source](#) (2026-04-23 05:38)

Vice President Sara Duterte on Thursday maintained that her service record is “clean,” saying that every cent of her money and assets came from a legitimate source and has necessary

documentation.

- [Antipolo court convicts 5 over kidnap-murder of businessman Jose Saribong](#) (2026-04-23 05:18)

A court in Antipolo City has sentenced five individuals to decades of imprisonment for the kidnapping and murder of businessman Jose Saribong in 2013, according to the Department of Justice (DOJ).

- [Sotto: Best for Bato to forgo salary, allowances](#) (2026-04-23 04:45)

Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III on Thursday advised Senator Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa to heed the call and voluntarily waive his salary and allowances “as soon as possible” amid his prolonged absence in the upper chamber.

- [Marcos to comply with SC order for comment on medical report petition](#) (2026-04-23 04:32)

Marcos to comply with SC order for comment on medical report petition

- [DICT upgrading eGov app servers to prevent downtime](#) (2026-04-23 04:20)

DICT upgrading eGov app servers to prevent downtime

- [Romualdez camp to question precautionary hold departure order](#) (2026-04-23 03:49)

Romualdez camp to question HDO in proper forum

- [Marcos declares special non-working days in Batangas, Palawan, Tarlac towns](#) (2026-04-23 03:40)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. has declared special non-working days in several towns in Batangas, Palawan, and Tarlac to celebrate local festivals in these provinces.

- [Kin of drug war victims hopeful ICC will confirm Duterte charges -- lawyer](#) (2026-04-23 03:22)

The families of drug war victims remain hopeful that the International Criminal Court (ICC) Pre-Trial Chamber I will confirm the charges of crimes against humanity against former President Rodrigo Duterte, a lawyers said Thursday.

- [Recto thanks Año, Galvez for government service](#) (2026-04-23 03:06)

Executive Secretary Ralph Recto on Thursday expressed gratitude to former secretaries Eduardo Año and Carlito Galvez Jr. for their long and distinguished service to the nation.

- [Sandiganbayan orders Bernardo to testify in Bong Revilla bail hearing on April 24, 2026](#) (2026-04-23 02:32)

The Sandiganbayan has ordered state witness and former Public Works Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo to testify before the bail hearing of former Senator Ramon Bong Revilla, Jr. and his five other co accused in the malversation case involving the alleged P92.8-million ghost flood control project in Pandi, Bulacan.

- [NTF-ELCAC pushes policy measures to continue addressing insurgency](#) (2026-04-23 01:47)

NTF-ELCAC pushes policy measures to continue addressing insurgency

- [MANIBELA pauses rallies but transport strike still on](#) (2026-04-23 01:03)

MANIBELA on Thursday said it has paused its protest activities but is continuing its transport strike,

- [VP Sara changes travel plans after 'last-minute' approval from OP](#) (2026-04-23 00:45)

VP Sara cancels travel plans after 'last-minute' approval from OP

- [LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East \(April 23, 2026\)](#) (2026-04-22 22:47)

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

- [LTFRB: P98M in fuel subsidies given to taxi operators, drivers so far](#) (2026-04-22 17:22)

More than P98 million in fuel subsidies were extended to taxi operators and drivers across the country so far as part of the government's efforts to assist the transport sector amid the high prices of fuel products, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) said on Wednesday.

- [UP student among those killed in Negros Occidental 'clash'](#) (2026-04-22 16:13)

A student leader from the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman was among the 19 killed in

an alleged encounter with the military in Toboso, Negros Occidental on Sunday, the UP Diliman University Student Council (USC) said.

- [Precautionary hold departure order issued against Martin Romualdez by Sandiganbayan](#) (2026-04-22 15:40)

The Sandiganbayan has barred the former Speaker, Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez, from leaving the country after it issued a precautionary hold departure order (PHDO) on Wednesday.

- [No winners of major lotto jackpot draws on April 22, 2026](#) (2026-04-22 14:37)

The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said there were no winners of the major lotto jackpot draws on Wednesday, April 22, 2026.

- [Robredo: Stop looking for 'savior' in PH politics](#) (2026-04-22 13:05)

After disclosing that she is no longer interested in seeking a national post, former Vice President and Naga City Mayor Leni Robredo urged the public to stop looking for a “savior” figure in politics.

- [AMLC confirms 18 Sara Duterte-linked transactions match Trillanes affidavit](#) (2026-04-22 12:53)

The Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) on Wednesday confirmed that at least 18 bank transactions linked to Vice President Sara Duterte and her family members, as cited in the affidavit of former senator Antonio Trillanes IV, match records of covered and suspicious transaction reports.

- [Palace allows VP Sara travel amid impeachment hearings](#) (2026-04-22 12:22)

The Office of the President granted Vice President Sara Duterte the authority to travel to five countries in the midst of ongoing impeachment proceedings against her.

- [BIR blocks opening of Sara Duterte, husband's tax returns](#) (2026-04-22 12:19)

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) on Wednesday blocked the House Committee on Justice from opening a box containing the income tax returns (ITRs) of Vice President Sara Duterte and her husband, Manases Carpio.

- [Who is Sammy Uy?](#) (2026-04-22 11:48)

Former senator Antonio Trillanes IV on Wednesday alleged that Vice President Sara Duterte and members of her family received millions of pesos from alleged drug lord Samuel “Sammy” Uy.

- [House subpoenas NBI over VP Sara Duterte threat probe](#) (2026-04-22 11:24)

President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. on Wednesday administered the oath of office to Mel Senen Sarmiento as Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity.

- [Raffy Tulfo flags continued proliferation of '5-5-5' scheme](#) (2026-04-22 11:14)

Senator Raffy Tulfo on Wednesday urged the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to implement stronger measures to address the longstanding problem of the “5-5-5” scheme, which is being used by some companies to prevent employees from getting regularized after six months.

- [SEC: Sara Duterte listed as stockholder, board member of Davao firm from 2022-2025](#) (2026-04-22 11:00)

Vice President Sara Duterte was listed as a stockholder and member of the board of directors of a Davao-based private company from 2022 to 2025 while serving in office, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) said Wednesday.

- [Mel Sarmiento takes oath as OPAPRU chief](#) (2026-04-22 10:55)

President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. on Wednesday administered the oath of office of Mel Senen Sarmiento as Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity.

- [Trillanes alleges VP Sara, Duterte family received P181M from alleged drug lord](#) (2026-04-22 10:55)

Former senator Antonio Trillanes IV on Wednesday alleged that Vice President Sara Duterte and the immediate members of her family received P181 million from an alleged drug lord.

- [San Ag grad tops April 2026 pharmacists licensure exam](#) (2026-04-22 10:33)

A graduate of the University of San Agustin achieved the highest score in the pharmacists licensure examination given earlier this month.

- [Romualdez camp seeks due process amid Ombudsman raps](#) (2026-04-22 10:30)

The camp of former Speaker and Leyte 1st District Rep. Martin Romualdez on Wednesday said it expects due process to be observed after a complaint was lodged against him for alleged plunder and money laundering, among others.

- [Sandiganbayan to court doctor: Check health of state witness in flood control mess](#) (2026-04-22 10:06)

The Sandiganbayan Third Division on Wednesday ordered the anti-graft court's resident doctor to verify the health condition of state witness and former Public Works Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo.

- [ICC chamber denies Rodrigo Duterte's appeal vs. jurisdiction ruling](#) (2026-04-22 09:38)

The International Criminal Court (ICC) Appeals Chamber on Wednesday denied the appeal filed by former President Rodrigo Duterte against an earlier ruling that dismissed his challenge to the court's jurisdiction.

- [LTFRB says P10 jeepney fare hike request 'unprecedented'](#) (2026-04-22 09:36)

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Wednesday described as “unprecedented” the petition seeking a P10 increase in jeepney fares amid high fuel prices.

- [VP Sara on Earth Day: Climate infra corruption a 'threat' to national security](#) (2026-04-22 08:56)

In observance of Earth Day, Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday said the supposed corruption in climate infrastructure projects is considered a “threat” to national security.

- [Supreme Court orders Marcos to comment on medical report petition](#) (2026-04-22 08:54)

The Supreme Court has directed President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. to submit his comment within 10 days regarding a petition that seeks the disclosure of his medical examination report.

- [LTFRB sees mismatch on drivers' lists submitted by TNCs, motorcycle taxis to DSWD](#) (2026-04-22 08:40)

Discrepancies were reportedly observed in the lists of drivers submitted by transport network companies (TNCs) and motorcycle taxi operators to the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

- [Romualdez's claim not an accusation vs Marcos -- ex-IBP president](#) (2026-04-22 08:22)

The former national president of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines said Wednesday that the statement of former Speaker and Leyte Representative Martin Romualdez indicating that the Executive branch bears command responsibility over the national budget, was not a direct accusation against President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr.

- [Gov't agencies sign SOP to implement POGO ban](#) (2026-04-22 05:57)

Several government agencies on Wednesday signed the interagency standard operating procedures (SOP) to implement the executive order banning Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGOs) in the country.

- [Sara Duterte belies sending 'prizes' through e-wallets](#) (2026-04-22 05:56)

Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday refuted social media posts alleging she and her family are giving away prizes through digital wallets and other platforms.

- [Bato forgoing salary may be a basis to junk ethics complaint --JV Ejercito](#) (2026-04-22 04:50)

Should he heed the call, Senator Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa voluntarily refraining from receiving his salary and allowances amid his prolonged absence in the Senate may be a ground for dismissing the ethics complaint filed against him, committee chairman Senator JV Ejercito said Wednesday.

- [CHR: 'Safer Cities' ops must comply with human rights standards, rule of law](#) (2026-04-22 04:26)

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) on Wednesday urged authorities to ensure the enforcement of the Safer Cities Initiative remains grounded in human rights standards and the rule of law.

- [UPCAT 2026 results: 18,350 pass admission test](#) (2026-04-22 04:00)

A total of 18,350 examinees passed the University of the Philippines College Admission Test (UPCAT) 2026, representing 12.44% of all test takers who sought admission in Academic Year 2026 to 2027.

- [Marcos, FL Liza attend Manaoag Marian celebration](#) (2026-04-22 03:53)



President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. and First Lady Louise "Liza" Araneta-Marcos attended the 100th canonical coronation of Our Lady of Manaoag on Wednesday.

- ['Smuggled' cigarettes worth P16M found in abandoned trucks in Lanao del Sur --PNP](#) (2026-04-22 03:46)

'Smuggled' cigarettes worth P16M found in abandoned trucks in Lanao del Sur --PNP

- [Nartatez orders audit amid alleged rent kickback scheme in Cordillera training unit](#) (2026-04-22 03:34)

Philippine National Police chief Police General Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. has ordered a review of the financial records of all regional training units across the country after an alleged rental kickback scheme was uncovered at a police training unit in the Cordillera Administrative Region.

- [Lacson: Romualdez given chances by Blue Ribbon panel to testify](#) (2026-04-22 03:33)

Former House Speaker and Leyte Representative Martin Romualdez was given at least two opportunities to testify under oath and refute claims against him, Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo “Ping” Lacson said Wednesday.

- [Impeachment proceedings revealed 'body of evidence' vs. VP Sara --Luistro](#) (2026-04-22 03:33)

Impeachment proceedings revealed 'body of evidence' vs. VP Sara --Luistro

- [7 PNPA cadets, 2 police officers face criminal raps over hazing incident](#) (2026-04-22 03:06)

Criminal charges have been filed against seven Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) cadets and two police officers in connection with a hazing incident in the institution, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said Wednesday.

- [P278M worth of shabu seized in QC, 2 Chinese suspects nabbed](#) (2026-04-22 03:01)

P278M worth of shabu seized in QC, 2 Chinese suspects nabbed

- [DA defers procurement for farm-to-market roads to May due to costing adjustments](#) (2026-04-22 02:52)

The Department of Agriculture (DA) is deferring the start of procurement activities for its

implementation of farm-to-market road (FMR) projects by May due to costing adjustments amid price pressures caused by the global oil crisis.

- [VP Sara's liabilities increased to P9M in 2024, SALN shows](#) (2026-04-22 02:24)

The liabilities of Vice President Sara Duterte and her husband, lawyer Manases Carpio, increased to P9.95 million in 2024 from P3.75 million in 2022 based on the Vice President's Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN.)

- [Some service contracting jeepneys not granting 20% fare discount --MANIBELA](#) (2026-04-22 02:06)

Some service contracting jeepneys not granting 20% fare discount

- [Marcos congratulates reelected Thai PM Anutin in phone call](#) (2026-04-21 16:36)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. congratulated Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul following the latter's reelection and expressed optimism for stronger cooperation between their countries especially in key sectors.

- [LTO revokes driver's license of female vlogger for reckless driving](#) (2026-04-21 15:33)

The Land Transportation Office (LTO) has revoked the driver's license of a female vlogger who went viral on social media earlier this year for driving a vehicle while holding a recording device.

- [Ex-Health undersecretary denies promoting P3.5B Dengvaxia vaccine use](#) (2026-04-21 14:18)

A former Health Undersecretary for Health Regulation on Tuesday denied promoting the use of anti-dengue Dengvaxia vaccine even if he had previously worked for an entity affiliated with its distributor.

- [PCSO: No winners of major lotto jackpot draws on April 21, 2026](#) (2026-04-21 14:09)

There were no winners of the major jackpot prizes drawn by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) on Tuesday, April 21, 2026.

- [Zaldy Co has no Portuguese passport, says source in Portugal Embassy in Prague](#) (2026-04-21 12:58)

PRAGUE - Former Ako Bicol party-list Rep. Zaldy Co has no Portuguese passport, a source in the

embassy of Portugal in this city told GMA News.

- [iAcademy grad tops April 2026 real estate brokers licensure exam](#) (2026-04-21 12:54)

A graduate of iAcademy Inc. achieved the highest score in the real estate licensure examination given earlier this month.

- [Erwin Ken Angcual Parchaso: PLE topnotcher from 'name withheld' to recognition](#) (2026-04-21 11:45)

The topnotcher of the March 2026 Physician Licensure Examination shared his journey during his oath-taking, weeks after he was initially listed as “name withheld” in the official results. In his speech at the SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia Complex, Pasay City, Erwin Ken Angcual Parchaso confirmed he was the unnamed topnotcher released by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).

- [Romualdez denies role in 2025 budget graft; tags Chiz Escudero, Zaldy Co](#) (2026-04-21 10:44)

Former Speaker and Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez on Tuesday denied any role in the corruption related to the 2025 national budget, stressing there is “no evidence that proves that he committed plunder, conspiracy to commit plunder, or any similar offense that the Ombudsman may be contemplating against me.”

- [Marcos appoints ex-Navy commander Bernabe as MARINA deputy administrator](#) (2026-04-21 10:27)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has appointed Loumer Bernabe as deputy administrator of the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA).

- [EXPLAINER: OPAPRU and the 2026 BARMM elections](#) (2026-04-21 10:04)

Established in 2021 under Executive Order (EO) 158, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (OPAPRU) - formerly known as the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) - is mandated to manage, direct, integrate, and supervise the implementation of the comprehensive peace process.

- [Leni Robredo 'sure' she won't join 2028 national elections](#) (2026-04-21 10:02)

Naga City Mayor Leni Robredo on Tuesday said she will not run in the 2028 national elections, as she plans to seek another term as the city's top local government executive.

- [DBM releases P17.27B to fast-track construction of 4,960 classrooms](#) (2026-04-21 10:01)

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) on Tuesday said it approved the release of P17.27 billion to the Department of Education (DepEd) to fast-track the construction of 4,960 classrooms nationwide.

- [More lawyers seek TRO vs. VP Sara impeachment](#) (2026-04-21 10:00)

More lawyers have filed a petition before the Supreme Court (SC) challenging the impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte at the House of Representatives.

- [Ombudsman seeks hold departure order vs. Martin Romualdez](#) (2026-04-21 09:47)

Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla has asked the Sandiganbayan to issue a precautionary hold departure order against former speaker Martin Romualdez, who is facing an investigation.

- [Justice Hernando: Removing unprogrammed appropriations would remove risks](#) (2026-04-21 09:39)

Supreme Court (SC) Associate Justice Ramon Hernando on Tuesday said he believes that removing unprogrammed appropriations (UAs) in the national budget would remove the risk for misuse and abuse.

- [Who is Mel Sarmiento?](#) (2026-04-21 09:35)

Former Interior secretary Mel Sarmiento has been appointed as the new Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation, and Unity, replacing retired military General Carlito Galvez Jr.

- [Ombudsman eyes subpoena for Zaldy Co over flood control mess](#) (2026-04-21 09:16)

Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla will subpoena former House appropriations panel chair Zaldy Co in the event that Co is arrested by Philippine authorities.

- [Marcos unfazed by approval ratings, vows to keep working -- Palace](#) (2026-04-21 09:01)

Malacañang on Tuesday said President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. will continue working regardless of his approval ratings.

- [JV Ejercito urges Bato to forego salary amid prolonged absence](#) (2026-04-21 08:59)

Senate Deputy Majority Leader and Ethics committee chair Sen. JV Ejercito on Tuesday called on Senator Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa to forgo his salary and allowances amid his continued absence in the Senate.

- [EXPLAINER: What is Balikatan Exercise?](#) (2026-04-21 08:54)

Balikatan Exercise is the largest annual military exercise between the Philippines and the United States to boost defense cooperation and improve joint operational readiness between the two countries.

- [PH gov't to ensure safety of Zaldy Co -- Palace](#) (2026-04-21 08:44)

The Philippine government will ensure the safety and protection of former lawmaker Zaldy Co, Malacañang said Tuesday.

- [Saudi Arabia turns over 30 tons of premium dates to PH for Muslim community](#) (2026-04-21 05:48)

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Saudi Embassy Chancery have turned over 30 tons of premium pressed dates to the Philippine government.

- [Bong Revilla's Bulacan flood control project in 2025 budget upon Cabral's order](#) (2026-04-21 04:49)

The P92.8-million flood control project in Pandi, Bulacan was included in the 2025 General Appropriations Act, with then senator Ramon Bong Revilla Jr as proponent, upon the instructions of the late Public Works and Highways undersecretary Cathy Cabral, a witness told Sandiganbayan Tuesday.

- [Galvez out: Palace confirms OPAPRU leadership change](#) (2026-04-21 04:25)

Malacañang on Tuesday confirmed the change of leadership at the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity.

- [PH welcomes Japan's easing of arms export rules for defense](#) (2026-04-21 03:36)

The Philippines welcomed Japan's easing of long-standing restrictions on arms exports, saying the move could enhance Manila's access to high-quality military equipment and strengthen regional security.

- ['Safer Cities' violators decline, growing public compliance seen --PNP](#) (2026-04-21 02:08)

'Safer Cities' violators decline, growing public compliance seen --PNP

- [PUV drivers, operators stage another strike vs high fuel prices](#) (2026-04-20 23:52)

Transport groups staged another nationwide strike on Tuesday to press the government for action on rising fuel prices.

- [LNU Dagupan grad revealed as top scorer in March 2026 physicians licensure exam](#) (2026-04-20 17:05)

A graduate of the Lyceum Northwestern University-Dagupan City has been revealed as the top scorer in the March 2026 licensure examination for physicians.

- [DSWD: 977k PUV drivers given P5k aid, more payouts for MC taxi, delivery riders](#) (2026-04-20 16:13)

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has given P5,000 in cash relief assistance (CRA) each to 977,036 public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers so far to help cushion the impact of high fuel costs due to the Middle East conflict.

- [Czech authorities silent on Zaldy Co's detention amid European privacy laws](#) (2026-04-20 14:30)

PRAGUE - Czech authorities won't comment on the reported detention of former Ako Bicol Rep. Zaldy Co, who, according to top Philippine officials, was detained in the Czech Republic after being stopped at the German border on Thursday.

- [PCSO: No jackpot winners for April 20 major lotto draws](#) (2026-04-20 14:27)

No one took home the jackpot prizes in the major lotto draws of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) on Monday night, April 20.

- [What to do after spotting a Finlayson's squirrel?](#) (2026-04-20 13:53)

They may be cute, but the Finlayson's squirrels spotted in different parts of the country may be doing more harm than good.

- [First Lady Liza alerts public on scammers soliciting money in her name](#) (2026-04-20 11:35)

First Lady Louise "Liza" Araneta-Marcos on Monday warned against individuals who were posing as her to deceive and solicit money.

- [DepEd spotlights skills-based learning at 2026 National Festival of Talents](#) (2026-04-20 11:03)

DepEd opened the 2026 National Festival of Talents in Roxas City, Capiz, where students from 18 regions gathered for a weeklong showcase of technical, artistic, and academic competencies.

- [SC: Cyberlibel prescribes one year from discovery](#) (2026-04-20 10:42)

The Supreme Court (SC) has affirmed the doctrine that cyberlibel prescribes one year from the time of discovery, not from the date of publication.

- [CSPC Nabua grad tops April 2026 midwives licensure exam](#) (2026-04-20 10:21)

A graduate of Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges-Nabua grad topped the midwives licensure examination given earlier this month, the Professional Regulation Commission said.

- [DepEd expands allowable use of Special Education Fund](#) (2026-04-20 09:47)

The Department of Education (DepEd) said it is expanding the allowable use of the Special Education Fund (SEF) to cover a broader range of education needs, including classrooms, learning resources, and student support programs.

- [LPG rollback set for Tuesday, April 21, 2026](#) (2026-04-20 09:43)

Consumers may expect another round of rollback for liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) this week.

- [VP Sara liable for P375 million confi funds use without documentation --COA](#) (2026-04-20 09:28)

Vice President Sara Duterte and three others are responsible for the use of P375 million in confidential funds in 2023 that are unsupported by documents or proven accomplishments, COA said.

- [What is the function of the National Security Adviser?](#) (2026-04-20 09:27)

What exactly does a National Security Adviser do? The NSA is the Director General of the National Security Council (NSC), which serves as an advisory body to the President on matters

concerning national security. This position holds the rank of Secretary in the government and is appointed by the President.

- [PH fuel inventory increased by 2 more days --DOE](#) (2026-04-20 09:09)

The country's fuel inventory amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East now averages 52.02 days, after two more days were added due to steady deliveries and a decrease in consumption, Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said Monday.

- [PNP bus driver, supervisor relieved from posts over EDSA Busway collision](#) (2026-04-20 09:00)

The cop involved in the viral collision along EDSA Busway, as well as his immediate supervisor, have been relieved from their duties, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said Monday.

- [EXPLAINER: How new three-term school calendar will work for SY 2026-2027](#) (2026-04-20 08:46)

The Department of Education (DepEd) will implement a new three-term school calendar beginning School Year 2026-2027, introducing a restructured academic schedule designed to balance instruction, assessment, and student recovery periods.

- [Eduardo Oban takes oath as new National Security Adviser](#) (2026-04-20 08:35)

President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. on Monday administered the oath of office of Eduardo Oban Jr. as the National Security Adviser.

- [NAPOLCOM probes viral EDSA busway incident, cop driver apologizes](#) (2026-04-20 08:09)

The National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) ordered an immediate investigation into a viral traffic incident along the EDSA busway involving a passenger bus and Philippine National Police coaster bus.

- [DepEd: Classes to start June 8, end April 8 under 3-term calendar](#) (2026-04-20 07:23)

The Department of Education (DepEd) has released the official school calendar for School Year 2026-2027, with classes set to begin on June 8, 2026, and end on April 8, 2027.

- [US reaffirms commitment to PH despite Middle East conflict -- Brawner](#) (2026-04-20 06:30)

The United States remains firmly committed to its alliance with the Philippines despite ongoing



conflicts in the Middle East, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief General Romeo Brawner Jr. said Monday.

- [House panel flags 'gaps' in DepEd's three-term calendar](#) (2026-04-20 05:26)

Lawmakers on Monday raised concerns over the Department of Education's (DepEd) planned shift to a three-term school calendar, citing possible gaps in instructional time, lack of buffer days, and unclear learning targets under the proposed system.

- [PH, US open Balikatan 2026 drills](#) (2026-04-20 05:17)

The Philippines and the United States on Monday formally opened their annual joint Balikatan Exercise for this year, with 17,000 troops and several other countries expected to join.

- [P299M in cash delivered in boxes at Brice Hernandez' DPWH office --witness](#) (2026-04-20 04:48)

An employee of contractor SYMS Construction on Monday testified that she delivered P299 million cash in grocery boxes to the office of then Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Assistant District Engineer Brice Hernandez.

- [SP Sotto: Some senators discussed possible VP Sara Duterte impeachment trial](#) (2026-04-20 04:32)

Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III on Monday said that he had invited some senators from the majority bloc to discuss the possibility of the Articles of Impeachment against Vice President Sara Duterte being transmitted to the Senate by the House of Representatives.

- [175 passengers safe after PAL Express flight diverted to Iloilo --CAAP](#) (2026-04-20 03:58)

The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) on Monday confirmed that a PAL Express flight bound for Manila made an emergency diversion to Iloilo on Sunday due to a pressurization issue.

- [Marcos inspects service contracting program in QC](#) (2026-04-20 03:48)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Monday inspected the implementation of the service contracting program at the Araneta City Bus Station in Cubao, Quezon City.

- [Luistro: Petition to block House access to ITR now moot](#) (2026-04-20 03:41)

House Justice Committee Chairperson Gerville Luistro said Monday that she believes the petition filed by Vice President Sara Duterte's husband to prevent the House Justice panel from obtaining and disclosing their income tax returns is already moot.

- [Marcos' performance rating up, VP Sara Duterte down in Q1 2026 --OCTA](#) (2026-04-20 03:31)

About 55% of adult Filipinos expressed satisfaction with the performance of President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. during the first quarter of 2026, while fewer were satisfied with that of Vice President Sara Duterte, results from a non-commissioned survey by OCTA Research showed Monday.

- [Marcos: We will bring Zaldy Co home in accordance with law](#) (2026-04-20 03:10)

"We will bring Zaldy Co home and we will do so in accordance with the law." This was the commitment made by President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Monday in relation to the case of former lawmaker Zaldy Co, who is currently in the custody of Czech Republic authorities.

- [PNP ready to help arrest Filipino wanted by FBI](#) (2026-04-20 02:29)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Monday said it is ready to assist the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in locating a Filipino accused of exploiting minors through online gaming and social media platforms.

- [Over 19,000 PUVs join gov't service contracting program](#) (2026-04-20 01:48)

More than 19,000 public utility vehicles across the country are expected to operate under the government's service contracting program starting Monday amid high fuel costs.

- [DSWD eyes e-wallets for ayuda payout after motorcycle taxi rider's death](#) (2026-04-20 00:27)

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on Monday said it is considering the use of digital payment systems for cash aid distribution following the death of a motorcycle taxi rider during a payout activity in Quezon City.

- [LIVE UPDATES: Conflict in the Middle East \(April 20, 2026\)](#) (2026-04-19 23:09)

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

- [LTFRB thanks TNCs for slashing commission rates amid higher oil prices](#) (2026-04-19 17:12)

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has commended transport network companies (TNCs) that lowered base commission rates for their ride-hailing services partners amid higher prices of fuel products.

- [No jackpot winners in April 19 major lotto draws - PCSO](#) (2026-04-19 14:16)

No one won the jackpot prizes in the major lotto draws of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) on Sunday, April 19.

- [Ridon: Additional P300-million OVP confidential funds release disallowed](#) (2026-04-19 12:37)

House Committee on Public Accounts chairperson Terry Ridon said another notice of disallowance (ND) was issued by the COA against OVP confidential funds amounting to P300 million.

- [PH: Release of ex-Myanmar President U Win Myint 'constructive step' for peace](#) (2026-04-19 11:52)

The Philippine government on Sunday welcomed the release of former Myanmar President U Win Myint, following the granting of amnesty to 4,514 prisoners.

- [List of vehicles currently or previously owned by Madriaga released](#) (2026-04-19 11:20)

House Committee on Justice member Representative Terry Ridon on Sunday released a list of Ramil Madriaga's current and previously owned vehicles registered with the LTO.

- [FBI offers \\$25,000 reward for info on Filipino linked to online group targeting minors](#) (2026-04-19 06:37)

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is offering a reward for information leading to the identification and arrest of a Filipino national allegedly involved in an online child exploitation ring targeting minors through gaming and social media platforms.

- [BSKE postponement 'unconstitutional'; PH has enough aid funds --Sen. Gatchalian](#) (2026-04-19 06:08)

Postponing the 2026 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections (BSKE) once again would be

“unconstitutional” since the country still has a budget to support its aid programs amid the fuel crisis, Senator Sherwin Gatchalian said Sunday.

- [Madriaga could be a state witness in VP Sara Duterte impeachment case --legal expert](#) (2026-04-19 01:48)

Ramil Madriaga, a former aide and alleged bagman of Vice President Sara Duterte, could be a state witness in the latter's impeachment case since he took part in the alleged misuse of public funds, a constitutional law expert said Sunday.

## Source: PhilStar Global

- [Mike Defensor's wife denies ties to raided Pasig City establishment](#) (2026-04-26 02:52)

The wife of former lawmaker Mike Defensor has broken her silence, denying allegations linking her and her daughter to an establishment recently raided by the National Bureau of Investigation.

- [2 dead, 5 injured in Marikina road crash](#) (2026-04-25 16:00)

Two people died and five others were injured after a truck loaded with sugar crashed into a store in Marikina yesterday.

- [Cagayan de Oro LGU bracing for El Niño](#) (2026-04-25 16:00)

The city government of Cagayan de Oro has activated safety measures to cushion the impact of the El Niño phenomenon on farmers, particularly in upland barangays.

- [Bataan town gets cold storage facility](#) (2026-04-25 16:00)

A solar and wind-powered modular cold storage facility was turned over to the municipal government of Dinalupihan, Bataan on Thursday, to improve post-harvest systems.

- [Special holidays declared in 9 areas](#) (2026-04-25 16:00)

Malacañang has declared special non-working holidays in nine areas in the country, allowing residents to participate in the celebration of local founding and charter anniversaries as well as festivals.

- [P54.4 million shabu seized in Zamboanga stings](#) (2026-04-25 16:00)

Shabu with estimated street value of P54.4 million has been seized in separate anti-narcotics operations that also resulted in the arrest of three suspects in this city.

- [Cop tagged in illegal cigarette production](#) (2026-04-25 16:00)

Following the destruction of a large-scale illegal cigarette production and distribution network in Negros Occidental, the Department of the Interior and Local Government tagged a police officer as a protector of the illegal activity involving Chinese nationals.

- [Fil-Am among 19 fatalities in Negros encounter](#) (2026-04-25 16:00)

Aside from a student leader and a party-list group nominee, an American citizen of Filipino descent was among 19 people killed in an encounter in Toboso, Negros Occidental last week.

- [DMW repatriates 7,674 OFWs](#) (2026-04-25 16:00)

A total of 7,674 overseas Filipino workers have so far been repatriated amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, the Department of Migrant Workers reported yesterday.

- [Tourist bus catches fire along EDSA](#) (2026-04-25 16:00)

A tourist bus traveling to Cavite caught fire on Friday, leading to delayed train operations and heavy traffic along EDSA, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority said.

- [Coliseo de Manila files cases vs CIDG](#) (2026-04-25 16:00)

Administrative complaints were filed by the management of the Coliseo de Manila in Tondo against 10 Criminal Investigation and Detection Group officers whom it accused of stealing cash and other belongings during a CIDG raid on March 24.

- [Task Force GenSan placed under Army's 10th Infantry Division control](#) (2026-04-25 08:25)

The Army's 10th Infantry Division on Friday, April 24, assumed control of the anti-terror Task Force GenSan covering the entire General Santos City, now among the cities and provinces under its jurisdiction.

- [8 drug den operators nabbed in Cotabato](#) (2026-04-25 07:50)

Agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency arrested in an entrapment operation on Thursday, April 23, eight individuals, five of them women, together operating a clandestine drug den in Barangay Rosary Heights 10 in this city.

- [P54.4 million worth of shabu seized in 2 separate operations](#) (2026-04-25 07:12)

Agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency 9 seized P54.4 million worth of shabu in two separate entrapment operations in Zamboanga City on Friday, April 24.

- [SBMA closes the loop on electronic waste](#) (2026-04-25 06:42)

The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority has launched a program to recover and recycle electronic and electrical wastes in the Subic Bay Freeport, aiming to close the loop on the fastest-growing waste stream and further promote a sustainable circular economy.

- [Bong Go pushes fire preparedness, emergency support systems](#) (2026-04-24 16:00)

Sen. Bong Go underscored the need for stronger fire preparedness and accessible emergency support systems during a visit to families affected by a fire in Barangay Bagong Ilog, Pasig on Thursday.

- [Review center shut down for ‘illegal recruitment’](#) (2026-04-24 16:00)

A review center for International English Language Testing System or IELTS in Santiago, Isabela has been ordered closed after it was allegedly found engaging in illegal recruitment activities.

- [President Marcos distributes cash assistance in Batangas](#) (2026-04-24 16:00)

President Marcos distributed P200,000 in cash assistance to each barangay in Batangas yesterday, to support local projects including scholarship programs.

- [Independent probe of Negros Occidental clash sought](#) (2026-04-24 16:00)

Rights group Karapatan is seeking an independent investigation into a recent encounter that killed 19 people in Toboso, Negros Occidental.

- [Senator files bill for social media ban on minors](#) (2026-04-24 16:00)

Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian has filed a bill seeking to ban children below 16 years old from having social media accounts.

- [2 PCG men nabbed in Cebu, Davao stings](#) (2026-04-24 16:00)

Two members of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) have been arrested in separate anti-narcotics operations in Cebu and Davao this week.

- [Second corpse flower found in Bulacan forest](#) (2026-04-24 16:00)

Another rare corpse flower or *Rafflesia lagascae* has been found in the forest of Doña Remedios Trinidad town in Bulacan, according to the office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Central Luzon.

- [SC OKs case vs Chinese in P6.4 billion shabu shipment](#) (2026-04-24 16:00)

Chinese businessman Chen Julong must face trial for his involvement in the importation of P6.4 billion worth of shabu in 2017, the Supreme Court said.

- [Teachers march to Mendiola, demand P15,000 pay hike](#) (2026-04-24 16:00)

Public school teachers from the National Capital Region, Calabarzon, Central Luzon and Region 1 marched from the Department of Budget and Management main office in San Miguel, Manila to Mendiola to demand action from the Marcos administration on the pending bills providing for a P15,000 across-the-board salary increase.

- [5 dead, 5 injured in PNP vehicle crash](#) (2026-04-24 16:00)

Five inmates died after a Philippine National Police vehicle crashed into a concrete wall in Quezon City yesterday, an accident that also left another inmate and four escorting PNP officers injured.

- [Independent probe of Negros Occidental clash sought](#) (2026-04-24 16:00)

Rights group Karapatan is seeking an independent investigation into a recent encounter that killed 19 people in Toboso, Negros Occidental.

- [PDEA seizes 1 kilo of shabu in Marawi operation](#) (2026-04-24 10:10)

Agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency seized P6.8 million worth of shabu from a dealer reportedly linked to remnants of the now-defunct Dawlah Islamiya, who was entrapped in Barangay Banga, Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, on Wednesday, April 22.

- [Motorcycle taxi bill pushed](#) (2026-04-24 09:27)

Motorcycle taxi riders are calling on regulators and legislators to ensure that the protection of rider livelihoods remains at the center of any regulation governing the motorcycle taxi industry.

- [Maranao woman killed, 4 wounded in Lanao del Sur ambush](#) (2026-04-24 09:17)

Gunmen killed a Maranao woman and wounded four others in an ambush in Barangay Bubongaranao, a hinterland village in the town of Calanogas, Lanao del Sur, on Thursday night, April 23.

- [Dawlah remnants linked to fatal ambush of 2 women joggers in Lanao del Norte](#) (2026-04-24 09:11)

Army and police intelligence officials are investigating assertions that remnants of the now-defunct Dawlah Islamiya were behind the fatal ambush of two women who were jogging along a highway in Barangay Muntay, Kolambugan, Lanao del Norte on Tuesday morning, April 21.

- [Anti-trafficking raid in Pasay tied to Mike Defensor's family – NBI](#) (2026-04-24 05:38)

NBI links establishments in trafficking raid to Mike Defensor's wife and son, citing corporate records.

- [Implementing 2014 CAB a work cut out for civilians, says MILF exec](#) (2026-04-24 00:11)

Implementing the 2014 Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro requires sustained civilian governance and institutional coordination, a senior Moro Islamic Liberation Front official said.

- [5 get life for Antipolo trader's kidnap-slay](#) (2026-04-23 16:00)

Five people have been sentenced to life in prison in connection with the kidnapping and murder of a businessman in Antipolo City in 2013.

- [Drought hits 15 Luzon provinces](#) (2026-04-23 16:00)

Fifteen provinces in Luzon are experiencing drought as dry season persists, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said yesterday.

- [3 slain in Zamboanga anti-crime ops](#) (2026-04-23 16:00)

Three members of a family were killed while three others were wounded in a police operation against a wanted person in this city on Thursday.

- [Party-list nominee among fatalities in Negros clashes](#) (2026-04-23 16:00)

A nominee of the Kabataan party-list group and a student activist were among 19 people killed in a series of clashes that occurred recently in Toboso, Negros Occidental, rights groups said yesterday.

- [Marcos inspects housing project in Nueva Ecija](#) (2026-04-23 16:00)

President Marcos yesterday visited Palayan City in Nueva Ecija to inspect a housing project and distribute rice to vendors.

- [Cybercrime chief Asueta gets promotion](#) (2026-04-23 16:00)

The cybercrime chief of the Philippine National Police has been promoted to the next rank.

- [BOC seizes P174.8 million smuggled goods](#) (2026-04-23 16:00)

Vape products and other illegal items totaling P174.86 million have been seized in Valenzuela.

- [LTFRB summons 3 PUV drivers over fare discount](#) (2026-04-23 16:00)

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board has issued show-cause orders to three public utility vehicle drivers under the service contracting program for not granting the mandated 20 percent discount to passengers.

- [Isko asks DPWH: Rush Beata Bridge repairs](#) (2026-04-23 16:00)

Manila Mayor Isko Moreno asked the Department of Public Works and Highways on Wednesday to speed up repair works on the Beata Bridge in Pandacan.

- [NCRPO: No crime wave amid oil crisis](#) (2026-04-23 16:00)

Amid speculations that the energy crisis maybe fueling a spate of criminal activities, the National Capital Region Police Office sees the “gas-and-run” cases in Quezon City as isolated incidents.

- [Price Tracker: Oil, fuel monitor for Apr. 23](#) (2026-04-22 23:30)

The oil shock is showing up beyond pump prices.



- [Technician nabbed over bomb joke](#) (2026-04-22 16:00)

A 28-year-old air-conditioning technician was arrested for making a bomb joke in a shopping mall in this city on Tuesday afternoon.

- [New chemotherapy center in Laguna opened](#) (2026-04-22 16:00)

Cancer patients in this province may avail themselves of free chemotherapy services at the newly opened AML Life-Care Chemotherapy Center in Sta. Rosa City.

- [PNP probes minor's death in GenSan 'shootout'](#) (2026-04-22 16:00)

The Philippine National Police has started investigating the death of a 12-year-old girl in an alleged shootout between policemen and an armed man in General Santos City on Saturday.

- [3 Laguna cop chiefs relieved for poor performance](#) (2026-04-22 16:00)

Three police chiefs in Laguna have been relieved from their posts due to poor performance, particularly in stopping illegal gambling in their respective jurisdictions.

- [9 charged over hazing of 22 PNPA cadets](#) (2026-04-22 16:00)

Criminal complaints have been filed against seven cadets and two police officers in connection with the alleged hazing of 22 plebes at the Philippine National Police Academy.

- [Mayon monitoring equipment cables stolen](#) (2026-04-22 16:00)

Several meters of power cables connecting equipment used in monitoring the activities of Mayon Volcano in Albay have been stolen, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

- [Fire hits Sierra Madre](#) (2026-04-22 16:00)

A forest fire struck a portion of the Sierra Madre mountain range in Kalayaan, Laguna on Tuesday afternoon.

- [2 Chinese caught with P278.8 million shabu](#) (2026-04-22 16:00)

Anti-narcotics agents confiscated 41 kilos of shabu valued at P278.8 million from two Chinese nationals who were arrested in Quezon City on Tuesday night.

- [25 OFWs return from Israel, Lebanon](#) (2026-04-22 16:00)

Twenty-five overseas Filipino workers from Israel and Lebanon arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Pasay on Tuesday.

- [Grassroots transport alliance wins prize in New York City](#) (2026-04-22 16:00)

The Move as One Coalition has won the Ross Center Prize for Cities for taking collective action on the Philippines' transport woes.

- [Over 10,000 villagers benefit from Army-NGO health mission](#) (2026-04-22 11:03)

More than 10,000 villagers benefited from a three-day medical, dental and community health intervention mission of the Army's 10th Infantry Division and the Youth With A Mission (YWAM) Ships Philippines in Barangay San Isidro in Talaingod, Davao del Norte.

- [Basilan gov't service center opens to public](#) (2026-04-22 10:55)

Officials launched on Tuesday, April 21, the newly-constructed multi-million public service center of the Bangsamoro regional government in Basilan, built with the help of foreign benefactors.

- [PAGASA raises alert for possible El Niño by mid-2026](#) (2026-04-22 07:43)

State weather bureau PAGASA has raised its El Niño Southern Oscillation Alert to "El Niño Alert," warning that a warm phase of the climate phenomenon is increasingly likely to develop by mid-2026.

- [Aparri under 'danger level' heat index — PAGASA](#) (2026-04-22 04:43)

Aparri in Cagayan may experience scorching heat on Wednesday, April 22, the state weather bureau PAGASA said.

- [SC rules on filing of cyber libel cases](#) (2026-04-21 16:00)

Complaints of cyber libel must be filed within one year from the time the victims discovered the libelous online posts, according to the Supreme Court.

- [PNP: Safer Cities violators drop](#) (2026-04-21 16:00)

Metro Manila residents are now complying with local ordinances as fewer people have been apprehended in the past days under the government's Safer Cities initiative.

- [2 'gas-and-run' suspects arrested](#) (2026-04-21 16:00)

Police apprehended two people who fled from a gas station in Quezon City without paying P1,500 worth of fuel on Monday.

- [Bato urged: Forgo salary, allowances](#) (2026-04-21 16:00)

Sen. Joseph Victor Ejercito is appealing to Sen. Ronald dela Rosa to voluntarily forgo his salary and allowances and subject himself to the same "no work, no pay" policy that ordinary Filipinos face.

- [PhilSA: 71.5% of Navotas sanitary landfill burned](#) (2026-04-21 16:00)

Around 28.6 hectares or 71.5 percent of the 40-hectare Navotas sanitary landfill have been burned, according to the Philippine Space Agency.

- [Quezon City kids fold paper cranes for peace](#) (2026-04-21 16:00)

Amid the Middle East war, children at the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Quezon City are folding close to 2,000 paper cranes as they call for world peace.

- [Bus falls off cliff in Quezon; 2 dead, 37 injured](#) (2026-04-21 16:00)

Two people died while 37 others were injured when a passenger bus plunged into a ravine in Pagbilao, Quezon on Monday night.

- [6 killed in Pangasinan fire](#) (2026-04-21 16:00)

Six people were killed in a fire that struck a residential area in this city at dawn on Monday.

- [5 rebel leaders among 19 fatalities in Negros clashes](#) (2026-04-21 16:00)

Five of the 19 New People's Army guerrillas killed in a series of encounters in Toboso, Negros Occidental recently were allegedly key leaders of the NPA's Komiteng Rehiyonal Northern Negros Front, according to Brig. Gen. Ted Dumosmog, chief of the Army's 303rd Infantry Brigade.

- [Ex-DILG chief Sarmiento named peace adviser](#) (2026-04-21 03:17)

Former Interior and Local Government Secretary Mel Senen Sarmiento is set to assume a key role in the national government's peacebuilding program.

- [Rollback: Fuel prices down for second straight week](#) (2026-04-21 01:30)

Fuel prices will drop for a second straight week, with diesel down by at least P24.94 per liter.

- [Price Tracker: Oil, fuel monitor for Apr. 21](#) (2026-04-20 23:30)

Fuel prices are set for another round of rollbacks.

- [Removal of unfinished pumping station in Quezon City begins](#) (2026-04-20 16:00)

The Department of Public Works and Highways has started removing an unfinished pumping station in Quezon City, which the local government said worsened flooding in the area.

- [7 cops sacked over rental kickback scheme](#) (2026-04-20 16:00)

Seven police officers were sacked from their posts and are under investigation for alleged involvement in a rental kickback scheme targeting Philippine National Police trainees.

- [NPA leader, 18 others killed in Negros gunfight](#) (2026-04-20 16:00)

A leader of the New People's Army and 18 other NPA rebels were killed, the largest number since the 1990's, in a clash with the Army's 79th Infantry Battalion in Toboso town in Negros Occidental on Sunday.

- [NBI probes government execs over land transfers](#) (2026-04-20 16:00)

The National Bureau of Investigation is probing the involvement of government officials in the anomalous registration and transfer of 13 parcels of land in Mangatarem town in Pangasinan to a private firm used by dismissed Bamban, Tarlac mayor Alice Guo.

- [Driver flees without paying P1,500 fuel](#) (2026-04-20 16:00)

Police are tracking down a motorist who drove away without paying P1,500 worth of fuel at a gas station in Quezon City yesterday.

- [CAAP deploys new rescue, firefighting vehicles](#) (2026-04-20 16:00)

The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines has deployed new aircraft rescue and firefighting or ARFF vehicles to eight regional airports, marking a significant step in CAAP's ongoing modernization of airport emergency response capabilities.

- [48 held in Parañaque scam hub](#) (2026-04-20 16:00)

The National Bureau of Investigation has dismantled an alleged online scam hub in Parañaque following the arrest of 48 people in an operation targeting cyber fraud.

- [Navotas landfill firefighting continues](#) (2026-04-20 16:00)

As Metro Manila's air quality remains "unhealthy" due to the burning Navotas sanitary landfill, efforts to extinguish the smoldering fire continue.

- [FL warns public vs scammers](#) (2026-04-20 16:00)

First Lady Liza Marcos yesterday warned the public against scammers using her name to deceive people.

- [Cop sacked over EDSA busway accident](#) (2026-04-20 16:00)

A police officer has been relieved from his post after a government vehicle he was driving crashed into a passenger bus along the exclusive EDSA busway in Quezon City.

- [P12M worth of marijuana plants destroyed in Mountain Province](#) (2026-04-20 09:51)

Authorities burned about P12 million worth of marijuana plants in a joint operation on Saturday, April 18, 2026, along the boundary of Saclit, Sadanga and Tinglayan, Kalinga.

- [BARMM cops seize P5.4M worth of smuggled cigarettes](#) (2026-04-20 09:37)

Policemen intercepted a convoy of three vehicles loaded with P5.4 million worth of imported cigarettes in an anti-smuggling operation in Parang, Maguindanao del Norte, before dawn on Monday, April 20.

- [2 killed, 1 injured in daytime ambush in BARMM town](#) (2026-04-20 09:08)

Two Moro men were killed, while another was seriously wounded in an ambush in Barangay Sambulawan, Kadayangan town, Cotabato province, on Sunday afternoon, April 19.

- [Sangley Point to hit 'danger' heat index — PAGASA](#) (2026-04-20 02:31)

Metro Manila sites, including Quezon City and Pasay, are also expected to experience high heat index.

- [Price Tracker: Oil, fuel monitor for Apr. 20](#) (2026-04-19 23:58)

Another round of sharp fuel price rollbacks is expected this week, extending the relief that began on April 14.

- [2 dead in General Santos gun rampage](#) (2026-04-19 16:00)

A man who fired a pistol indiscriminately was killed in a gunfight with responding policemen on Saturday in Barangay Labangal in General Santos City – an incident that killed a 12-year-old girl who was caught in the crossfire.

- [2 dead, 7 injured in Bataan road crash](#) (2026-04-19 16:00)

Two people died when a closed van malfunctioned and rammed several houses before hitting seven maritime cadets who were out jogging along MAAP road in Mariveles, Bataan on Saturday.

- [2 soldiers, rebels injured in Negros gunfights](#) (2026-04-19 16:00)

A soldier and several New People's Army rebels were injured in a series of gunfights in Cauayan and Toboso towns in Negros Occidental over the weekend.

- [BI deploys 28 new border control officers](#) (2026-04-19 16:00)

The Bureau of Immigration will be deploying 28 new border control officers to strengthen the country's security at the frontline, the BI said yesterday.

- [Marcos Jr. asked: Avert fishing, canning industry shutdown](#) (2026-04-19 16:00)

Government officials and fishing industry operators have sought the immediate intervention of President Marcos to prevent a possible halt in fishing operations and a shutdown of the canning industry due to rising fuel costs.

- [PNP on alert after Lanao clash](#) (2026-04-19 16:00)

The Philippine National Police has placed all PNP units in the Bangsamoro region on heightened alert following an armed encounter with the Dawlah Islamiyah-Maute group in Lanao del Sur that left 10 suspected terrorists dead.

- [JoyRide cuts commissions as fuel prices rise](#) (2026-04-19 16:00)

Amid higher fuel prices, JoyRide Philippines is reducing commission rates for both motorcycle taxi (MC) and car services to ease the burden on driver-partners.

- [BOC sets auction of 12 luxury cars](#) (2026-04-19 16:00)

The Bureau of Customs is hoping to generate around P352 million in revenue from the public auction of 12 luxury vehicles at the Port of Manila next week.

- [DepEd expands reintegration for OFW teachers](#) (2026-04-19 16:00)

With more licensed teachers returning from their jobs abroad, the Department of Education has expanded its national reintegration network or NRN Fairs to more parts of the country to accommodate the overseas Filipino workers who have expressed interest in returning to Philippine classrooms.

- [EDSA crash involving police vehicle probed](#) (2026-04-19 16:00)

Amid possible violations of deployment protocols and accountability of personnel, the Philippine National Police has launched an investigation into a traffic collision along EDSA involving a PNP-marked vehicle.

- [BARMM parties cooperate to ensure peaceful regional polls](#) (2026-04-19 09:54)

Officials of four of the 16 parties now preparing for the September 14 Bangsamoro parliamentary polls have cautioned members and supporters against maligning any of the regional political blocs and the endorsed candidates of each for seats in the region's lawmaking body.

- [Attacker, girl killed in gun rampage in General Santos City](#) (2026-04-19 09:14)

A man who fired a pistol indiscriminately was killed in a gunfight with responding policemen on Saturday, April 18, in Barangay Labangal, General Santos City, an incident that also left a 12-year-old girl dead in the crossfire.

- [Cargo vehicle driver killed in grenade, gun attack in Cotabato](#) (2026-04-19 08:28)

A Moro driver of a multicab loaded with fruits died instantly from gunshot and grenade shrapnel wounds sustained in an attack in Barangay Takepan in Pikit town, Cotabato province, on Saturday afternoon, April 18.

- [DENR lifts halt order on Monterrazas project in Cebu after compliance](#) (2026-04-19 07:59)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) Region 7 has officially lifted the “cessation of operations order” against the Monterrazas development project in Cebu.

## Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer

- [Midnight fire razes homes, boarding house in Bukidnon town](#) (2026-04-26 14:02)

MARAMAG, Bukidnon — A fire that broke out past midnight on Sunday, April 26, destroyed several structures in Purok 1, Barangay Dologon here, forcing residents to flee their homes.

Shouts of “Fire! Fire!” woke the community as flames rapidly spread, catching some residents asleep and prompting families to rush outside and salvage what belongings they

- [Archdiocese of Manila: Collect used cooking oil for biodiesel conversion](#) (2026-04-26 13:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The Archdiocese of Manila has called on its parishes to gather used cooking oil for conversion into biodiesel amid an ongoing fuel crisis driven by escalating military tensions in the Middle East. The metropolitan see came up with the initiative after recent projections indicated that global oil demand would continue to increase. READ:

- [Another UP student among killed in Negros clash; UPOU calls for probe](#) (2026-04-26 13:06)

MANILA, Philippines — Another UP student has been identified among those killed in a military encounter in Negros Occidental, as the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) called for a transparent investigation of the incident and its circumstances. In a statement on Saturday, UPOU said that one of the fatalities was Maureen Keil Santuyo,

- [CHR launches independent probe into Negros clash that killed 19](#) (2026-04-26 12:57)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Human Rights (CHR), through its office in the Negros Island Region, launched an independent investigation of the April 19 armed clash in Negros Occidental that left 19 people dead. Among those killed were University of the Philippines Diliman student leader Alyssa Alano and Altermidya Network community journalist RJ Ledesma. READ:

- [P8.2-M shabu seized, 2 nabbed in Leyte drug den bust](#) (2026-04-26 12:35)

TACLOBAN CITY— Authorities dismantled a suspected drug den and seized more than P8.2 million worth of shabu in a joint anti-drug operation in Barangay Damulaan, Albueria, Leyte on Saturday, April 25, police said. Operatives from the Philippine National Police (PNP) and Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) conducted a coordinated buy-bust that led to the arrest

- [Samar town alerts residents vs alleged ‘Maharlika’ investment fraud](#) (2026-04-26 11:59)

TACLOBAN CITY — The municipal government of Paranas in Samar has warned residents against a suspected investment scam after several locals reported losing money to a group calling itself the “Royal Kingdom of Maharlika” (RKOM). According to local officials, the group has been selling colored “membership cards” priced from ₱150 up to ₱5,500, claiming investors

- [PNP: ‘Full investigation’ into vehicle crash that killed 5 detainees](#) (2026-04-26 11:36)

MANILA, Philippines – The Philippine National Police (PNP) has ordered a “full investigation” of the vehicle crash in Quezon City that killed five persons under police custody (PUPCs), the PNP announced on Sunday. This came after a police vehicle carrying six PUPCs and four police officers crashed into a wall along Payatas road en route

- [Edsa-Ortigas interchange to reopen on Monday — DPWH](#) (2026-04-26 10:41)

MANILA, Philippines – The Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (Edsa)-Ortigas Interchange will reopen to light vehicles on Monday, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) said. According to the DPWH, the temporary closure was implemented to give way to repairs scheduled until Sunday, following the bus fire that occurred at the interchange. “The EDSA-Ortigas Interchange

- [HEAT INDEX ALERT: Danger level expected in Cavite, Batangas](#) (2026-04-26 09:05)

LUCENA CITY — Two areas in the Calabarzon are expected to experience danger-level heat index levels on Sunday and Monday, April 26 and 27, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa). Based on Pagasa’s 5 p.m. monitoring on Saturday, Sangley Point in Cavite City is forecast to reach a heat index

- [Taal Volcano logs two minor eruptions, 48 seismic events in 24 hours](#) (2026-04-26 08:59)

LUCENA CITY — Taal Volcano showed renewed activity as two minor phreatic eruptions and a spike in seismic events were recorded over the past 24 hours, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) reported Sunday, April 26. In its morning bulletin, Phivolcs logged two steam-driven eruptions, locally known as “pusngat,” which lasted 10 minutes,

- [Oil spill hits coastal village in Guimaras; residents warned](#) (2026-04-26 08:49)

ILOILO CITY — An oil spill was reported along the shoreline of Barangay Hoskyn in Jordan town, Guimaras early Saturday (April 25), prompting officials to warn residents and fisherfolk to stay away from the affected coastal areas. The spill was detected at 7:05 a.m. near the barangay hall and covered court, affecting parts of Sitio

- [Rains possible across PH on Sunday due to easterlies, frontal system](#) (2026-04-26 07:35)

MANILA, Philippines – Many areas in the Philippines are forecast to have cloudy skies with a chance of rain on Sunday due to the easterlies and the frontal system, the state weather bureau said. In its 5 a.m. weather forecast, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) reported that the frontal system will

- [Ombudsman: Asset freeze vs Romualdez, HDO bid vs Escudero](#) (2026-04-26 05:48)

MANILA, Philippines — After obtaining a freeze order on the assets of former Speaker Martin Romualdez and stopping him from leaving the country, the Office of the Ombudsman on Saturday sought to prevent the departure of former Senate President Francis “Chiz” Escudero who is under investigation for alleged plunder, graft and bribery. The antigraft court,

- [State witness a billionaire? Bernardo vows to return P1B to gov’ t](#) (2026-04-26 05:46)



MANILA, Philippines — Former Public Works Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo has pledged to return around P1 billion to the government coffers as part of his restitution of kickbacks he received to be admitted into the witness protection program. During Friday's Sandiganbayan Third Division hearing on the malversation case against former Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., Bernardo

- [With Duterte going on trial, focus shifts to dela Rosa, et al](#) (2026-04-26 05:44)

MANILA, Philippines — Former high-ranking police officials identified as co-perpetrators in the case against ex-President Rodrigo Duterte in the International Criminal Court (ICC) may face charges aside from crimes against humanity. Based on what was revealed during the pretrial hearing, they may also be charged over the questionable arrest of hundreds of thousands of individuals

- [DBM orders agencies to report savings made amid oil crisis](#) (2026-04-26 05:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) has directed all government agencies to identify their savings, which can be pooled to fund relief measures in response to the Iran war and its ensuing oil crisis. National Budget Circular (NBC) No. 602, issued by the DBM on April 23, said all agencies must

- [Jobseekers, entrepreneurs flock to Go Negosyo fair](#) (2026-04-26 05:38)

MANILA, Philippines — As hundreds of jobseekers and small entrepreneurs flocked to SM City Fairview on April 25 for Go Negosyo's Trabaho at Negosyo job fair and MSME mentoring event, Go Negosyo founder Joey Concepcion said increased effort will be poured into more nationwide events for the massive movement of providing jobs and livelihoods for

- [DA readies changes in land conversion rules](#) (2026-04-26 05:36)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) is aiming to release the revised guidelines for the issuance of a certification on the reclassification of agricultural lands within June, its official said. "We need to finalize the guidelines before the end of the six-month moratorium," Agriculture Undersecretary Asis Perez told the Inquirer in a Viber

- [Lawmaker seeks probe of Negros Island battle](#) (2026-04-26 05:34)

MANILA, Philippines — ACT Teachers Rep. Antonio Tinio on Saturday urged a congressional panel to investigate a military operation last week that left 19 people dead in Negros Occidental, including a 22-year-old student of the University of the Philippines (UP). "We cannot accept a blanket 'encounter' narrative that automatically justifies the deaths of 19 people

- [BOC distributes abandoned 'balikbayan' boxes to OFWs](#) (2026-04-26 05:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BOC) said on Saturday it has facilitated the release of abandoned "balikbayan" boxes previously held at the Manila International Container Port, returning the shipments to overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) after delays linked

to freight forwarding issues. The distribution was carried out on Tuesday as part of ongoing efforts

- [Pagasa warns of 42°C heat index in 14 areas](#) (2026-04-26 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) warned the public of dangerous heat levels in 14 areas around the country as local governments stepped up measures to deal with their dwindling water supply. The state weather bureau considers heat index levels between 42°C and 51°C as dangerous and suggests significant risks

- [Green barriers take root in Zambales town](#) (2026-04-26 05:17)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales — At low tide along the coast of Masinloc, volunteers wade through muddy flats, carefully pushing slender mangrove propagules into the ground. Each seedling, planted by hand, is meant to grow into something larger than a tree — part of a living shield protecting communities along the province's vulnerable shoreline. The planting

- [This week's milestones: April 26 to May 2](#) (2026-04-26 05:15)

April 27, 1871 Montalban in the province of Rizal was established as a pueblo when Governor-General Rafael Gerónimo Cayetano Izquierdo y Gutiérrez issued a decree separating Balite, Burgos, Marang, and Calipahan from San Mateo. Prior to this, the whole territory was known among the natives as Balite. In 1901, Montalban was incorporated into the province

- [Inmates in Mimaropa region receive aid from Dole](#) (2026-04-26 00:56)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — A total of 1,239 inmates in the Mimaropa (Mindoro Occidental and Oriental, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan) region received financial assistance amounting to P6,825 each from the Department of Labor and Employment (Dole) through the 15-day Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (Tupad) program. The aid was distributed through the partnership

- [Eastern Samar fisherfolk return to paddles amid fuel price surge](#) (2026-04-25 23:39)

TACLOBAN CITY — Fishermen in Eastern Samar are abandoning motorized boats and returning to traditional paddling methods as soaring fuel prices make daily fishing trips increasingly unaffordable, highlighting the deepening impact of rising oil costs on coastal communities. In the island village of Apiton in San Policarpo, several fisherfolk have opted to leave their engines

- [150 hectares of palay farms ravaged by 'ulmog' in Cagayan town](#) (2026-04-25 23:26)

TUGUEGARAO CITY, Cagayan — More than 150 hectares of rice fields in Ballesteros town, Cagayan were ravaged by “ulmog” or brown planthopper this month, the local government said in a statement. Ballesteros agriculture officials said “there is a risk of a major reduction or loss of rice yield in the town if the destruction of

- [Sighting of scrubfowl offers hope for Homonhon Island after grass fires](#) (2026-04-25 23:15)

TACLOBAN CITY — A rare ground-dwelling bird was spotted during a post-fire environmental assessment on historic Homonhon Island in Guiuan, Eastern Samar, offering a positive sign of ecological resilience despite recent grass and forest fires that hit parts of the island. This was disclosed by the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO) in

- [DAR gives 6 trucks to Passi City coops to improve farm logistics](#) (2026-04-25 22:39)

ILOILO CITY – In a significant move to modernize agricultural logistics and enhance the livelihood of local farmers, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) provided six cargo trucks to various Agrarian Reform Beneficiary Organizations (ARBOs) in Passi City, Iloilo recently. The grant, provided under the Support Services of the Sustainable and Resilient Agrarian Reform Communities

- [DSWD trains Calabarzon college students for tutoring program](#) (2026-04-25 22:14)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon — The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has begun training college students in the Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon) region for the “Tara, Basa!” tutoring program, which is set to roll out next month. In a report, the DSWD in Region IV-A said the first batch of capacity-building sessions

- [Quezon 4Ps beneficiaries to be integrated into PhilSys, CBMS](#) (2026-04-25 21:57)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon — Beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) in Quezon province will be integrated into the Philippine Identification System (PhilSys) and the Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) to improve the efficiency and speed of government aid delivery. The move was agreed upon by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Region

- [No jackpot winner in 6/55, 6/42 Lotto draws on Saturday, April 25](#) (2026-04-25 21:48)

MANILA, Philippines – No bettor won the jackpot prize in either the Grand Lotto 6/55 and Lotto 6/42 draws on Saturday, April 25, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. Grand Lotto 6/55 result: 41-43-35-15-10-40 Jackpot: ₱66.01 million Lotto 6/42 result: 26-32-19-01-22-17 Jackpot prize: ₱24.66 million Minor games 6D Lotto: 9-4-0-8-5-7; ₱3.38 million; no winner 3D

- [Mimaropa region logs 4.2% economic growth in 2025](#) (2026-04-25 21:41)

CALAPAN CITY — The Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan) region’ s economy expanded by 4.2 percent in 2025, slightly slower than the 4.4-percent growth recorded in 2024, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). The PSA said the region’ s gross regional domestic product (GRDP), measured at constant 2018 prices, reached P447.47 billion in 2025. The agency

- [1 dead, 8 others injured in Leyte road mishap](#) (2026-04-25 21:22)

TACLOBAN CITY — A three-year-old girl died while eight others, including several minors, were injured when a vehicle plowed into pedestrians along Imelda Lane in Barangay Imelda, Tolosa, Leyte Friday evening. The incident occurred at around 7:55 p.m. as police officers from the Tolosa Municipal Police Station (MPS) were conducting foot patrol and visibility operations

- [Drug suspect wounded, arrested in alleged shootout with Cavite cops](#) (2026-04-25 21:13)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon — A suspected drug pusher was wounded in a buy-bust operation that escalated into an alleged encounter with the police in Bacoor City, Cavite early Saturday. The Police Regional Office IV-A reported that operatives from a local drug enforcement unit conducted the sting in Barangay Talaba 3 at around 1 a.m. The

- [Metro Cebu air quality turns unhealthy anew amid heat, lack of rain](#) (2026-04-25 21:02)

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol — Air quality in Metro Cebu was classified as unhealthy anew for vulnerable groups, the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) – Region 7 reported on Saturday. In its latest monitoring, EMB-7 said air quality has been fluctuating between “fair” and “unhealthy for sensitive groups” over the past five days, with a noticeable increase

- [Cagayan festival highlights use of charcoal from alternative materials](#) (2026-04-25 20:55)

TUGUEGARAO CITY, Cagayan – A festival in Buguey, Cagayan on Saturday highlighted the use of charcoal made from alternative materials instead of the usual wood. The town’s 4th Agri Festival featured the roasting of 140 pigs and the cooking of large volumes of vegetables and rice cakes which were serve to everyone in attendance. The

- [Intense heat, power outage strike Samar on Saturday](#) (2026-04-25 20:34)

TACLOBAN CITY – Calbayog City and the municipality of Matuguinao in Samar were gripped by punishing heat on Saturday, as temperatures soared to dangerous levels amid warnings of intensifying dry conditions linked to the developing El Niño. The state weather bureau earlier warned the heat index in the two localities could reach as high as

- [National University unveils Davao campus, its first in Mindanao](#) (2026-04-25 20:14)

DAVAO CITY – This premier urban center in Mindanao boosts its role as a hub of education as National University (NU) unveiled its campus here on Saturday. Business tycoon Hans Sy, NU board chairman who toured the Davao campus on Saturday morning, said he is very happy NU is now in Davao City. “I’m very

- [DOE encourages power consumers to join weekly power-saving activity](#) (2026-04-25 19:55)

MANILA – Power consumers may help save electricity to address oil supply issues due to the Middle East conflict by joining the hour-long Oras Natin sa Efficiency (ONE) from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. starting on Saturday. The weekly activity is among the programs of the Department of Energy (DOE) targeted to reduce electricity use

- [DMW shuts down Cagayan training center for alleged illegal recruitment](#) (2026-04-25 19:32)

TUGUEGARAO CITY, Cagayan – Following complaints of alleged illegal recruitment, a team from the Department of Migrant Workers-Anti-Illegal Recruitment and Trafficking in Persons Program (DMW-ARTPP) shut down a farm and training center in Barangay Iringan, Allacapan, Cagayan on Friday. The alleged illegal recruitment of workers for overseas placement by Estepa’s Integrated Farm and Training Center

- [Scorching heat gripping many parts of the Visayas](#) (2026-04-25 19:06)

ILOILO CITY — High heat index levels continue to persist across the Visayas, with several areas, including Iloilo, remaining under the extreme caution and dangerous levels, according to the state weather bureau. Data from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) as of 5 p.m. on Saturday showed Iloilo City reaching a heat

- [NCIP, Bukidnon agri office seek resolution over lechon festival row](#) (2026-04-25 18:56)

MALAYBALAY CITY, Bukidnon — Officials of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and the Provincial Agriculture Office (PAgrO) had sought to address the controversy surrounding the Lechon Festival held during Kaamulan 2026. Ma. Shirlene D. Sario, former NCIP Bukidnon provincial officer, and current provincial head Ronaldo Bayaon took part in discussions last April 23

- [Sen. Mark Villar bats for urban green spaces via BERDE Act](#) (2026-04-25 18:10)

MANILA, Philippines – As residential subdivisions, towering buildings, and sprawling commercial establishments continue to swallow what remains of our green spaces, Senator Mark A. Villar filed Senate Bill No. 2049, known as the Building Eco-Friendly Recreational Destinations for Every (BERDE) City and Municipal Act, which mandates the creation of at least one public green park

- [Ex-speaker Romualdez’ assets frozen by CA, Ombudsman Remulla confirms](#) (2026-04-25 17:58)

MANILA, Philippines — The Court of Appeals (CA) ordered the freezing of assets of former House Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez over alleged involvement in the flood control scandal, Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla said on Saturday. In a DZRH radio interview, Remulla was asked who the sitting lawmaker is in connection with the freeze order secured

- [Lawyer sees probable cause in Sara Duterte impeachment complaints](#) (2026-04-25 17:16)

MANILA, Philippines – Veteran litigator Atty. Lorna Kapunan believes the House Committee on Justice has seen and heard enough—from the discrepancies in Vice President Sara Duterte’s declared net worth to the flagged bank transactions—to find probable cause to impeach her. “Na-meet na ng House Committee on Justice ‘yung target nila na to prove probable

- [NBI ready for Sara Duterte impeachment hearing focusing on threats](#) (2026-04-25 17:02)

MANILA, Philippines – National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Director Melvin Matibag on Saturday said the agency is prepared to appear at Tuesday’ s House Committee on Justice hearing on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte, where one of the issues to be taken up is her alleged threats against President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.,

- [Educ group seeks restoration of P5 billion budget for last mile schools](#) (2026-04-25 16:59)

MANILA, Philippines — E-Net Philippines, a civil society network for education reforms, has renewed its call for the Congress to restore a P5 billion budget for last mile schools (LMS) in the 2027 national budget, emphasizing the need to address gaps in infrastructures and education in geographically isolated areas. The Department of Education (DepEd) was

- [Rare Rafflesia flower thriving in Bulacan’ s biodiversity haven](#) (2026-04-25 15:56)

DOÑA REMEDIOS TRINIDAD, Bulacan — The rare Rafflesia lagascae, known for its reddish bloom and pungent odor, continues to thrive in the forests of this town, officials said on Saturday. Mayor Rolando Flores said more sightings are likely in mountainous barangays such as Sapang Bulac and Kabayunan, noting that the town’ s forests remain well-preserved and

- [2 suspected NPA rebels killed in Samar clash](#) (2026-04-25 15:48)

TACLOBAN CITY — Two suspected New People’ s Army (NPA) rebels were killed in an encounter with government troops in Samar on Friday morning, according to the Philippine Army. The Army’ s 8th Infantry Division, based in Catbalogan City, said troops from the 46th Infantry Battalion engaged remnants of the Yakal Platoon under the Eastern Visayas Regional

- [Mindanao 2025 economic growth surpasses national rate](#) (2026-04-25 15:40)

GENERAL SANTOS CITY – Mindanao’ s economic growth of 4.69 percent in 2025 surpassed the national rate of 4.40 percent, as five of its six regions landed in the Top 10 fastest-growing regional economies in the country, latest data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed. National Statistician Claire Dennis Mapa said in a statement that

- [PDEA seizes P34-M shabu in Zamboanga City sting; 1 suspect arrested](#) (2026-04-25 15:30)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur – Operatives of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) Regional Office 9, backed by multiple law enforcement units, seized P34 million worth of suspected shabu in a buy-bust operation on Friday in Barangay Culianan, Zamboanga City. The operation, carried out at around 6:10 p.m., was a joint effort of PDEA’ s

- [Butuan City bracing for scorching weekend, water supply woes](#) (2026-04-25 15:24)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur – As extreme temperatures continue to affect large portions of the country, Butuan City residents are preparing for scorching weekend, with the state weather bureau forecasting a heat index that could reach 45°C on Saturday. According to a social media advisory of Butuan City Public Information Office (PIO), this places

- [7 rescued as boat sinks off Bohol and Southern Leyte](#) (2026-04-25 15:16)

TAGBILARAN CITY — Seven passengers, including four senior citizens, were rescued after a motorbanca sank off President Carlos P. Garcia, Bohol and Maasin City, Southern Leyte on Friday. The Philippine Coast Guard said its Coast Guard Sub-Station in Pres. Carlos P. Garcia, working with Task Force Kalikupan, swiftly launched search and rescue operations following reports

- [Sara Duterte commends military unit in Negros Occidental encounter](#) (2026-04-25 14:45)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte on Saturday lauded the Philippine Army's 79th Infantry Battalion for what she described as a "successful combat operation" that left 19 individuals dead in Toboso, Negros Occidental. "On behalf of the Office of the Vice President, I extend my commendation to the brave men and women of the

- [Sariaya, Quezon trims Agawan Festival activities amid energy crisis](#) (2026-04-25 14:23)

LUCENA CITY — The annual Agawan Festival in Sariaya, Quezon next month will still push through but minus the popular house decoration competition which was cancelled by the local government amid the national energy emergency. In a Facebook post in Filipino on Friday, the municipal Public Information Office (PIO) said the Sariaya Tourism, Culture, and

- [Ombudsman files precautionary HDO petition vs Escudero, Maynard Ngu](#) (2026-04-25 13:51)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the Ombudsman on Saturday filed a precautionary hold departure order before the Sandiganbayan against Senator Francis Escudero over complaints of plunder, graft, and bribery. Also included in the travel restriction request is Maynard Ngu, the alleged "bagman" of Escudero over alleged anomalies in the flood control fiasco. The petition

- [Tinio seeks congress' probe into Negros clash that left 19 dead](#) (2026-04-25 12:18)

MANILA, Philippines — ACT Teachers Rep. Antonio Tinio on Saturday urged a congressional panel to investigate a military operation last week that left 19 people dead in Negros Occidental. The request comes amid conflicting accounts from the armed forces and human rights groups over the clash. In a statement, Tinio said the House Human

- [8-hour power interruption scheduled in parts of Oriental Mindoro](#) (2026-04-25 11:09)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — An eight-hour power interruption is scheduled on Sunday, April 26, 2026 in parts of the towns of Socorro and Pola in Oriental Mindoro. This disruption is meant to allow substation upgrades and maintenance work, the local electric utility announced. In an advisory, the Oriental Mindoro Electric Cooperative Inc. said the

- [Dumangas, Butuan City brace for 45°C danger level of heat index](#) (2026-04-25 10:35)



MANILA, Philippines — Dumangas, Iloilo and Butuan City, Agusan del Norte are forecast to reach the danger level of the heat index at 45°C on Saturday, the state weather bureau said. In its updated forecast as of Friday, 5 p.m., the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said that 12 other areas are

- [Kanlaon Volcano in Negros Island spews ash Saturday morning \(April 25\)](#) (2026-04-25 10:34)

MANILA, Philippines — Kanlaon Volcano in Negros Island Region emitted ash on Saturday, producing plumes that rose 300 meters above its crater, according to the state seismologist. The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) recorded the event at around 8:32 a.m. “This event generated grayish plumes that rose 300 meters above the crater before

- [Baguio LGU to spend P1.1 billion yearly to make fuel supply stable](#) (2026-04-25 09:38)

BAGUIO CITY — Concluding that the projected impact of the war on Iran could be worse for the country than the coronavirus pandemic, Mayor Benjamin Magalong and the Baguio City Council said as they adapted an economic continuity program this week. The initiative aims to secure the city’s power and water, widen access to food

- [Hot and humid weather to prevail on Saturday, April 25](#) (2026-04-25 09:19)

MANILA, Philippines — Scattered rainshowers will prevail over Batanes while the rest of the country will experience hot and humid weather on Saturday, the state weather bureau said. In the 5 a.m. weather forecast of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, weather specialist Leanne Loreto said that the frontal system is affecting Batanes

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of Saturday, April 25, 2026](#) (2026-04-25 09:08)

MANILA, Philippines — Motorists face fresh fuel price adjustments this week as diesel prices are expected to drop further by P8 to P10. This decrease could bring fuel costs to an average of P100 per liter. The new price adjustments come after the relentless double-digit increases following the Middle East war which broke out on

- [Samar gov’t eyes Mangrove Safari as eco-tourism site](#) (2026-04-25 07:15)

TACLOBAN CITY — The provincial government of Samar is positioning the Pinabacdao Mangrove Safari as a key emerging eco-tourism destination following an on-site inspection by provincial and local officials. Governor Sharee Ann Tan and Mayor Via Mabag visited on Thursday the site to assess its potential as part of the province’s expanding tourism portfolio. The initiative

- [Marcos vows hike in local government aid funds](#) (2026-04-25 05:52)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday vowed to increase funding for local government units (LGUs) in the next national budget, provided that ongoing government



assistance programs continue to deliver positive results nationwide. “We will continue to do this, and I’m telling all of you — do not think this is a one-time

- [Agriculture officials fear ‘super’ El Niño](#) (2026-04-25 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — As high fuel prices drive up farm input and production costs, the Department of Agriculture (DA) has warned against the possibility of a “super” El Niño toward the end of the year. “It is no longer a question whether we will experience another El Niño after the 2024 episode that undermined rice

- [NBI raps Defensors for trafficking, drugs](#) (2026-04-25 05:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation has filed charges against the wife and son of former Rep. Mike Defensor for allegedly being involved in a human trafficking case, but Defensor’s wife Julie, slammed NBI Director Melvin Matibag for his “baseless” and “malicious” lies against them. “Let me be absolutely clear regarding the recent

- [Ridon: Saying Sara money lumped with ‘others’ in SALN is ‘insulting’](#) (2026-04-25 05:38)

MANILA, Philippines — A lawmaker on Friday criticized Vice President Sara Duterte’s legal team in the impeachment complaints against her for lumping the money in her bank accounts under a different category in her net worth statements, calling it a feeble attempt to gloss over inconsistencies in her finances. Bicol Saro Rep. Terry Ridon said

- [Ex-DPWH exec has ‘P10M’ in SALN but returns P130M to gov’t](#) (2026-04-25 05:34)

MANILA, Philippines — A former public works official linked to the flood control scandal told the Sandiganbayan on Friday that he had already remitted P130 million out of the P150 million that he pledged to return to the government to qualify for the witness protection program (WPP). But the thing is, Gerard Opulencia, the former

- [Romualdez asks Remulla to stop ‘biased’ probe](#) (2026-04-25 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Speaker Martin Romualdez has asked the Office of the Ombudsman to stop investigating his alleged role in the multibillion-peso flood control corruption scandal, saying that the government’s chief antigraft prosecutor was biased against him and had prejudged his case. The Leyte representative made the request through his lawyers from the Villaraza

- [Independent probe sought into deadly Negros encounter](#) (2026-04-25 05:06)

MANILA, Philippines — Several groups on Friday called for an independent investigation into the anti-insurgency operation in Toboso, Negros Occidental, that left 19 people dead, including a University of the Philippines (UP) student, a journalist and peasant advocates. On the sidelines of a protest outside Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City, Human rights group Karapatan condemned

- [Iloilo student-athlete builds wooden treadmill](#) (2026-04-25 05:04)

ILOILO CITY — For 22-year-old John Leadro Malojo, the road to the Philippine National Team is being paved — not with asphalt, but with mahogany and marine plywood. A first-year Physical Education student at Central Philippine University (CPU), Malojo is a marathoner who refuses to let rainy weather disrupt his training. When faced with the

- [Subanen tribe in Zamboanga del Sur gets ancestral domain title](#) (2026-04-25 05:02)

PAGADIAN CITY — After two decades of struggle, the Subanen tribe in Bayog town, Zamboanga del Sur, finally received their certificate of ancestral domain title (CADT) covering 25,549 hectares, a milestone hailed by tribal leaders as a victory for indigenous peoples' rights. Gukom Lucenio Manda, tribal chieftain and head claimant of the Bayog ancestral domain,

- [Exhibit showcases market-ready innovations in Bukidnon](#) (2026-04-24 23:45)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — Government agencies and industry partners gathered for the Northern Mindanao Regional Innovation Program and Exhibit (NorMinRIPE) 2026 on April 21–22, highlighting market-ready technologies aimed at driving regional development beyond agriculture. The event, led by the Regional Research, Development and Innovation Council 10, brought together key agencies including the Department of Science

- [DOE openness to new coal plants draws concern in Quezon](#) (2026-04-24 23:26)

LUCENA CITY — An environmental group and a church leader in Quezon province have raised alarm over the openness of the Department of Energy (DOE) to lift its moratorium on building new coal-fired power plants amid the ongoing oil crisis linked to tensions in the Middle East. “It is alarming that the Department of Energy

- [P714,000 shabu seized from ‘high-value’ suspects in Angeles City](#) (2026-04-24 23:15)

MABALACAT CITY, Pampanga — Authorities arrested two persons and confiscated some P714,000 worth of suspected shabu (crystal meth) in a buy-bust operation at Sta. Trinidad village in nearby Angeles City on Thursday evening, April 23. In a statement on Friday, the Police Regional Office 3 (PRO3) said the two arrested suspects were listed as “high-value

- [Iloilo, Capiz brace for up to 47°C heat index on weekend](#) (2026-04-24 22:41)

ILOILO CITY — Parts of Western Visayas are set to endure dangerously high heat index levels this weekend, with some areas forecast to reach as high as 47°C, according to the latest data from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa). Figures released as of 5 p.m. on April 24 show that several

- [P20.4M shabu seized in Zamboanga City; 2 arrested](#) (2026-04-24 21:57)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur — Two alleged high-value drug personalities were arrested in a buy-bust operation conducted by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) and local police on Friday, April 24, in Barangay Cabatangan, Zamboanga City. Authorities identified the

suspects as alias Rudy, 39, of Bongao, Tawi-Tawi; and alias Boss Al, 28, of Barangay

- [No jackpot winner in Ultra, Mega Lotto draws on Friday, April 24](#) (2026-04-24 21:55)

MANILA, Philippines—No bettor won the Ultra Lotto 6/58 and Mega Lotto 6/45 jackpot prizes in the draws on Friday, April 24, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. Ultra Lotto 6/58 result: 37-42-36-21-47-27. Jackpot prize: ₱75 million Mega Lotto 6/45 result: 41-15-38-11-33-43 Jackpot prize: ₱41.68 million Minor games • 4D Lotto: 4-2-6-7 – ₱25,247 prize,

- [Aetas’ ‘Luto sa Buho’ highlights ‘Flavors of Subic Bay’ food fest](#) (2026-04-24 21:47)

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT — Bamboo tubes filled with seasoned ingredients slowly cooked over open flames as members of the Aeta community in Pastolan village demonstrate “luto sa buho,” a traditional bamboo cooking method, during the opening of the food festival at the Subic Bay Boardwalk here on Friday. The indigenous cooking practice is among the

- [Police official tagged in illegal cigarette trade in Negros Occidental](#) (2026-04-24 21:34)

BACOLOD CITY – Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla on Friday told reporters that a police major had protected a Chinese crime syndicate behind an illegal cigarette factory in Bago City, Negros Occidental. Remulla on Friday visited the factory in Barangay Calumangan, Bago City that was raided by law enforcers on Wednesday, leading to the arrest of

- [Calawis water treatment plant reinforces Manila Water supply](#) (2026-04-24 21:33)

As the country braces for a possible severe El Niño this year, which may extend until early 2027, Manila Water continues to strengthen its water supply system through strategic investments in alternative water sources, ensuring that customer experience in the East Zone remains reliable even under challenging climate conditions. One of these key facilities is

- [4 abandoned parcels yield P6.9-M drugs at Pasay mail hub](#) (2026-04-24 21:33)

MANILA, Philippines — Four abandoned inbound parcels containing P6.9 million worth of suspected drugs were found at the Central Mail Exchange Center in Pasay City, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Friday. The parcels were flagged last Thursday during a routine X-ray screening by Bureau of Customs personnel and later verified through K-9 and

- [P784-M counterfeit cigarettes seized, 10 Chinese arrested in Negros Occ.](#) (2026-04-24 21:11)

MANILA, Philippines — Allegedly counterfeit cigarettes worth P784 million were confiscated by the police in Negros Occidental, leading to the arrest of 10 Chinese individuals, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said on Friday. Authorities earlier this week discovered the purported cigarette manufacturing operation in a warehouse in Purok Rosas, Barangay Calumangan,

- [Marcos vows to boost Local Government Support Fund](#) (2026-04-24 20:54)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Friday pledged to increase funding for the Local Government Support Fund (LGSF) if it is utilized properly. He made the remarks during a rice and financial subsidy distribution program in Batangas City, where a P200,000 financial assistance package was distributed to each of the 1,078 barangays

- [LTO summons cop, driver in viral traffic incident](#) (2026-04-24 20:39)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Office (LTO) has summoned a police officer and the driver involved in a viral traffic incident. In a statement on Friday, the LTO said it issued a show cause order (SCO) following an incident involving a Philippine National Police-marked pickup truck loaded with two wood pushcarts that protruded beyond

- [MRT-3 resumes normal operations after Edsa-Ortigas bus fire](#) (2026-04-24 20:16)

MANILA, Philippines – The Metro Rail Transit (MRT-3) resumed normal operations after passenger bus caught fire near its tracks at the southbound portion of the Epifanio delos Santos Avenue – Ortigas flyover Friday evening. READ: MRT-3 operations disrupted by Edsa-Ortigas bus fire MRT-3 management announced the resumption of normal operations as of 6:50 p.m. It earlier reported

- [Land for the people: DENR awards over 800 land titles in Iloilo](#) (2026-04-24 20:16)

ILOILO CITY — For many Filipino families, the dream of security begins with the land beneath their feet. On Friday, April 24, at the Iloilo River Esplanade, that dream became a reality for hundreds of beneficiaries as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) launched its landmark program: “Luntiang Bukas: Pamilyang May Lupa, Komunidad

- [Stir created as petition filed to block accreditation of MILF pol party](#) (2026-04-24 19:59)

COTABATO CITY – The Commission on Elections (Comelec) has deferred action on the application for accreditation of the political party of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) so they can participate in the parliamentary elections of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) on Sept. 14 this year. The deferment of action came as

- [Flood control mess: Bernardo vows to return P1B to gov’ t](#) (2026-04-24 19:58)

MANILA, Philippines — State witness and former Public Works Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo has pledged to return around P1 billion to the government as part of his restitution to be admitted into the Witness Protection Program. During the Sandiganbayan Third Division hearing for the malversation case of former Senator Ramon “Bong” Revilla Jr. and his co-accused,

- [Dangerous heat index in Cotabato City and Cavite City on Saturday](#) (2026-04-24 19:58)

MANILA, Philippines — Cotabato City and Sangley Point in Cavite City are forecast to experience a dangerous heat indices on Saturday, the state weather bureau said. In its two-day forecast as of Thursday, 5 p.m., the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services

Administration (Pagasa) said that Cotabato City will reach the highest record of heat

- [El Niño drives water supply decline in Butuan City watershed](#) (2026-04-24 19:31)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur – The ongoing dry spell, worsened by the onset of El Niño, has caused a sharp drop in water levels at the Taguibo watershed, which is the primary water source for Butuan City, seat of the Caraga region. According to the Butuan City Public Information Office (PIO), the Taguibo Aquatech

- [Angara orders nationwide teacher orientation ahead of policy shifts](#) (2026-04-24 19:28)

Heads of public schools nationwide have begun orientation sessions as the Department of Education (DepEd) intensifies preparations for key teaching and learning reforms set for School Year 2026–2027. The orientations, which began on April 24, aim to ensure that school heads are fully equipped to strengthen leadership readiness and manage the new academic protocols. Regional

- [Bohol ramps up El Niño preparedness measures](#) (2026-04-24 19:28)

TAGBILARAN CITY – The provincial government has reinforced proactive measures to cushion the impact of the possible onset of El Niño, with contingency plans already in place to protect agriculture, food supply and vulnerable communities. Larry Pamugas, assistant provincial agriculturist, said the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPA) is intensifying preparations to mitigate potential production

- [Revilla targeted as low-hanging fruit; bail resolution on May 6 — counsel](#) (2026-04-24 19:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Senator Ramon “Bong” Revilla Jr.’ s counsel on Friday said he was implicated in a flood control anomaly because he is a low-hanging fruit, adding that they remain confident in their position on the case. Lawyer Reody Anthony Balisi made the remark following the Sandiganbayan Third Division bail hearing of Revilla and

- [NTF-Elcac decries death of Fil-Am in Negros Occidental encounter](#) (2026-04-24 19:22)

TAGBILARAN CITY Bohol — The National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-Elcac) on Friday expressed concern over the death of a Filipino-American in an armed encounter in Toboso, Negros Occidental on Sunday, warning of the dangers of recruitment that could draw individuals into armed conflict. In a statement, the task force extended

- [Basilan gov, MILF leadership welcome Sarmiento as new peace adviser](#) (2026-04-24 19:14)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY— Basilan Governor Mujiv Hataman welcomed the appointment of former Interior Secretary Mel Senen Sarmiento as the government’ s new peace adviser, citing his extensive local governance experience as a vital asset as the Bangsamoro region approaches its first parliamentary elections. In al statement, Hataman expressed optimism that Sarmiento’ s grounded approach to governance

- [Leviste hits exclusion of 84 Batangas barangays in aid distribution](#) (2026-04-24 19:03)

MANILA, Philippines – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. visited Batangas on Friday for the distribution of ₱200,000 assistance to every barangay. Batangas 1st District Rep. Leandro Legarda Leviste, however, said in a statement that at least 84 barangays were not invited and one barangay captain was told by the Batangas Liga ng Barangay president that

- [MRT-3 operations disrupted by Edsa-Ortigas bus fire](#) (2026-04-24 18:56)

MANILA, Philippines – Metro Rail Transit (MRT-3) operations were delayed Friday evening due to a bus fire along the Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (Edsa) Ortigas flyover. The MRT-3 reported the delays as of 6:30 p.m. READ: Hopes on track: How are PH railway projects going? “Firefighters are on site and responding to the incident, while

- [Justice sector maps out more ways to fight online child exploitation](#) (2026-04-24 18:42)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY — Efforts to combat online sexual abuse and exploitation of children (OSAEC) in Northern Mindanao are expected to gain momentum following a milestone capacity-building convergence of justice sector professionals in Makati City. From April 13 to 17, 28 judges, prosecutors, and law enforcement officers from across the country gathered at the

- [EMB downgrades haze alert as Metro Cebu air quality improves](#) (2026-04-24 18:19)

TAGBILARAN CITY—Air quality in Metro Cebu has significantly improved, prompting authorities to downgrade the alert status as haze that blanketed the area earlier this week has largely dissipated. In its advisory on Friday, April 24, the Environmental Management Bureau in Central Visayas (EMB-7) reported “improving conditions,” with pollutant concentrations dropping across monitored areas. READ: Metro

- [5 detainees dead after police mobile crashes in Quezon City](#) (2026-04-24 18:09)

MANILA, Philippines — Five persons under police custody (PUPCs) died after the police mobile they were riding crashed into a wall in Quezon City on Friday. Six PUPCs and four Philippine National Police (PNP) personnel escorting them were aboard the police mobile along Payatas Road on the way to the Quezon City Jail when it

- [Revilla got P1.5B project ‘allocation,’ P500M cash – witness](#) (2026-04-24 18:06)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Sen. Ramon Bong Revilla has a purported allocation of P1.5 billion worth of projects from the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), which was “funded” in 2025, and P500 million in “commitments,” a state witness told the Sandiganbayan on Friday. Revilla, who attended the bail hearing, told reporters before the

- [BOC offers 4 seized Discaya vehicles for negotiated sale on April 30](#) (2026-04-24 18:05)

MANILA, Philippines — The four remaining luxury vehicles seized from contractor couple Pacifico “Curlee” and Cezarah “Sarah” Discaya will be up for negotiated sale after failure to

be sold in previous public auctions, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) said on Friday. In an advisory, the BOC said that the negotiated sale will be held next

- [Tricycle drivers in Calabarzon receive cash aid](#) (2026-04-24 18:03)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon — The distribution of government cash aid to tricycle drivers across the Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon) region has benefited 2,230 drivers as of Friday, April 24. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Region IV-A reported that simultaneous payouts were conducted in Tuy, Batangas; Kalayaan, Pakil, and Pangil towns

- [DA braces for impact of looming El Niño on rice production](#) (2026-04-24 17:50)

MANILA – Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has directed the Masagana Rice Industry Development Program (MRIDP) alongside the Philippine Rice Research Institute and other units to be on close watch over the potential effects of the looming El Niño phenomenon on the local rice sector. The Department of Agriculture (DA) is also in close

- [Bullying goes beyond school grounds, child rights advocates say](#) (2026-04-24 16:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Bullying among Filipino children is no longer discussed only within classrooms and school corridors. Child rights advocates said recent incidents — including stories shared publicly by actor and Quezon City Councilor Alfred Vargas and actress Yasmien Kurdi — have reopened a difficult national conversation: Bullying can happen not only inside schools but

- [Temporary outages may be implemented as Mindoro faces power deficit](#) (2026-04-24 15:44)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines — The Oriental Mindoro Electric Cooperative Inc. has placed its system on alert and is preparing for possible manual load dropping (MLD) on Friday as electricity demand is expected to exceed available supply. In a 10 a.m. advisory, Ormeco said it is in “operational readiness” for MLD implementation during morning,

- [Alleged rebel killed, 2 firearms seized in fresh Negros clashes](#) (2026-04-24 15:19)

A suspected member of the New People’s Army (NPA) was killed following a series of armed encounters with government troops in Barangay Bucalan, Canlaon City, Negros Oriental, on Thursday. Brig. Gen. Ted Dumosmog, commander of the 303rd Infantry Brigade, identified the fatality as Jomarie “Yulo” Pañe. Pañe was reportedly a remnant of the dismantled Central

- [LRT-2 to offer free parking for passengers at Santolan starting April 27](#) (2026-04-24 15:12)

MANILA, Philippines — The Light Rail Transit 2 (LRT-2) will offer free parking for its passengers at Santolan Station starting Monday, April 27, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) said on Friday. According to the DOTr, this is in line with the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to encourage the use of public transportation amid



- [Pagadian LGU rescues 2 fishers detained in Indonesia after sea ordeal](#) (2026-04-24 14:26)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur— Two fishermen from Zamboanga del Sur have returned home after spending 60 days in detention in Indonesia following a harrowing ordeal at sea that left them drifting for five days without food or potable water. The fishermen were identified as Mark Hugo, 36, of Barangay Kawit, Pagadian City, and Rolando

- [PNP: ‘No-shirt policy’ back in Manila, QC but with ‘common sense’](#) (2026-04-24 14:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The policy against not wearing a shirt in public spaces has been reinstated in Manila and Quezon City, but this time, it is being implemented with “common sense,” the Philippine National Police (PNP) said. The Manila and Quezon City Police Districts previously suspended the policy under the Department of the Interior and

- [Gatchalian seeks social media ban for children under 16](#) (2026-04-24 13:41)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian has filed a bill seeking to ban Filipino children under 16 years of age from using any social media platforms, emphasizing the need to safeguard children from online risks and threats. Gatchalian filed Senate Bill (SB) No. 2066 or the Social Media Safety for Children Act last April 22.

- [PNP maintains ‘gas-and-run’ incidents ‘isolated cases for now’](#) (2026-04-24 13:31)

MANILA, Philippines — “The PNP (Philippine National Police) is treating recent [gas-and-run] incidents... as isolated cases for now.” The law enforcement agency’s chief, Police Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr., said this in a statement on Friday, three days after the police caught two suspects for allegedly refilling their vehicle with P1,500 worth of fuel then

- [UP Baguio walkout: Students protest killing of peer, Middle East war](#) (2026-04-24 13:29)

BAGUIO CITY — About a hundred students of the University of the Philippines Baguio walked out of their classrooms for a protest rally against the United States and Israeli war on Iran, and the recent disclosure that a UP student was among 19 people killed in a military attack in Negros Occidental. The students lit

- [TIEZA allocates P70 million for Pagadian City airport rehab](#) (2026-04-24 12:55)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur— Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) Chief Operating Officer Mark Lapid inspected the domestic terminal of Pagadian City Airport on Wednesday, assuring passengers that rehabilitation work will be completed before year-end. Lapid, joined by officials from the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) and the local government, said

- [3 family members killed in Zamboanga police raid; probe underway](#) (2026-04-24 12:34)



PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur— Authorities are investigating a fatal early-morning police operation in Barangay Sinunuc, Zamboanga City, after three members of a family were killed and another wounded during an encounter between law enforcers and armed occupants of a residence linked to a wanted fugitive on Thursday. Police reports said joint operatives of the

- [Revilla case witness returns P130M to gov’ t despite only ‘P10M’ in SALN](#) (2026-04-24 12:31)

MANILA, Philippines — The witness in the malversation case of former Sen. Ramon “Bong” Revilla Jr. told the court he has already returned P130 million to the government despite only declaring approximately “P10 million” at the Statement of Assets Liability and Net Worth (SALN). Gerard Oplencia, the former regional director of the Department of Public

- [Heavy traffic hits key sections of NLEX Friday afternoon](#) (2026-04-24 12:27)

MANILA, Philippines — Motorists experienced slow-moving traffic along parts of the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) on Friday afternoon following separate road crashes, according to NLEX Corporation. In its 12 p.m. traffic advisory, NLEX Corp. said vehicles were running at around 10 to 20 kilometers per hour (kph) along the NLEX Harbor Link Interchange

- [Ridon slams Duterte camp’ s bank cash defense as impeachment push builds](#) (2026-04-24 12:25)

MANILA, Philippines – Bicol Saro Rep. Terry Ridon on Friday criticized Vice President Sara Duterte’ s legal team for explaining that her bank cash was lumped under a different category in her net worth statements, calling it an attempt to gloss over her financial inconsistencies as lawmakers weigh grounds to impeach her. In a statement, Ridon

- [DepEd starts repair of heritage Gabaldon school in Batangas](#) (2026-04-24 12:02)

LUCENA CITY — The Department of Education (DepEd) has begun repair and rehabilitation works of a heritage Gabaldon-type school building in Talisay, Batangas. On Thursday morning, Mayor Nestor Natanauan inspected the ongoing works at the Venancio Trinidad Sr. Memorial School compound in the town proper. Natanauan said the inspection aimed to monitor the project’ s progress

- [Charges filed vs Mike Defensor’ s wife, son over human trafficking case](#) (2026-04-24 11:58)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has filed charges against the wife and son of former Rep. Mike Defensor for allegedly being involved in a human trafficking case. NBI Director Melvin Matibag confirmed this to the INQUIRER on Friday. According to Matibag, the NBI filed a case for violation of the Anti-Trafficking

- [Bam Aquino files bill to strengthen laws vs driving under influence](#) (2026-04-24 11:48)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Bam Aquino has filed a measure seeking to strengthen and address gaps in the country’ s current anti-drunk and drugged driving law to further protect Filipino

youth. Under Senate Bill No. 2068, received by the Senate Office of the Secretary on Thursday, Aquino seeks to amend Republic Act No. 10586, or the

- [Romualdez continues to oversee congressional duties, still in PH – aide](#) (2026-04-24 11:46)

TACLOBAN CITY — Leyte 1st District Rep. Martin Romualdez remains in the country and continues to oversee his congressional duties despite mounting speculation about his absence from public events, a senior staff member from his Tacloban-based office said Friday. The clarification came after rumors circulated online claiming that the former House Speaker had gone into

- [Rights group seeks ‘independent’ probe on Negros ‘clash’ that killed 19](#) (2026-04-24 11:33)

MANILA, Philippines — Rights group Karapatan called for an “independent” investigation into the anti-insurgency operation in Toboso, Negros Occidental that left 19 individuals dead, supposedly including a University of the Philippines (UP) student, a local journalist and two peasant advocates. “We want to know the truth, what really happened that day,” Karapatan Secretary-General Tinay Palabay

- [Heat index in Batangas town hits 40°C, residents warned](#) (2026-04-24 11:10)

LUCENA CITY — The Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (MDRRMC) of Talisay, Batangas, on Friday warned residents of dangerous heat after the heat index reached 40°C. “As per monitoring from [Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration], Talisay, Batangas is currently experiencing a Heat Index of 40°C, classified under extreme caution,” the MDRRMC

- [Metro Manila air quality ‘still not normal’ due to Navotas landfill fire — PhilSA](#) (2026-04-24 11:09)

MANILA, Philippines — Nearly two weeks after a landfill fire started in Navotas City, the Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA) said air quality in Metro Manila “has not returned to normal levels.” PhilSA cited Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) data showing “smoldering conditions” as of April 23. It also said nitrogen dioxide concentrations over Metro Manila

- [Bulacan landmark gets colorful makeover ahead of int’l art festival](#) (2026-04-24 11:01)

PULILAN, Bulacan — In this quiet agricultural town, a familiar landmark has been transformed into a striking work of art, offering a symbol of life and hope amid ongoing global tensions and a lingering fuel crisis. The town’s iconic kneeling carabao—once a plain, black cement figure perched atop the Pulilan public market—now bursts with vivid

- [P727-million road project to link Zambales farms to markets](#) (2026-04-24 10:42)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales — More than 1,500 farmers and about 4,500 households, including indigenous peoples communities, are expected to benefit following the approval of a

P727-million farm-to-market road (FMR) project in Masinloc town. This would pave the way for what officials described as a major boost to agricultural connectivity in the province. The Central Luzon

- [Romualdez seeks Ombudsman disqualification from probe over bias claims](#) (2026-04-24 10:41)

[Updated April 24, 2026, 11:23 a.m.] MANILA, Philippines – Leyte Rep. Ferdinand Martin Romualdez sought to stop the Office of the Ombudsman from investigating his alleged role in the flood control scandal, his office said on Friday, as he urged investigators not to single him out in its probe into the graft controversy. An independent

- [Palarong Pambansa host town warns of scams, overpriced homestays](#) (2026-04-24 10:11)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Local officials have moved to curb alleged price gouging in accommodations ahead of the Palarong Pambansa 2026, with Mayor Grace Carmel Paredes-Bravo warning the public against dealing with unauthorized homestay brokers. READ: All systems go for Palarong Pambansa 2026, organizers say In an advisory, Bravo urged homestay owners to

- [Solon asks for more Pera for gov' t workers amid soaring fuel prices](#) (2026-04-24 10:03)

MANILA, Philippines – The government should raise the monthly allowance for state workers to P5,000 from P2,000, ACT Teachers Rep. Antonio Tinio said on Friday, as the increase would help them cope with rising living costs driven by elevated fuel prices from the conflict in the Middle East. In a statement, Tinio said the Personnel

- [Super El Niño, global shocks and PH' s rising rice import risk](#) (2026-04-24 09:54)

The Philippines faces a critical food security challenge in 2026 as projections for rice imports diverge widely. The U.S. Department of Agriculture projects rice imports at 5.1 million metric tons (MMT), while the Department of Agriculture estimates 3.6 to 3.8 MMT, assuming record palay output of 20.3 MMT. The gap reflects the difference between international

- [Eastern Visayas growth slows to 1% in 2025 amid bridge restrictions](#) (2026-04-24 09:50)

TACLOBAN CITY — Eastern Visayas' economy expanded by just one percent in 2025, a sharp slowdown from the 6.1 percent growth recorded in 2024, as mobility restrictions at the San Juanico Bridge and setbacks in public construction dampened economic activity, regional officials said on Thursday. Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed that the

- [Multi-sector group plants 300 seedlings for Earth Month in Rizal](#) (2026-04-24 09:28)

LUCENA CITY — A multi-sector tree-planting initiative in San Mateo, Rizal, brought together volunteers, government agencies, and civic groups to celebrate Earth Month and promote environmental sustainability. In a statement on Thursday, Shincheonji Volunteers (SCJ Volunteers) in Manila said they joined forces with the Philippine Army' s 2nd Civil-Military

Operations Battalion, the Department of Agriculture–Bureau of

- [Ex-DPWH exec to testify vs Bong Revilla in Sandiganbayan bail hearing](#) (2026-04-24 09:19)

MANILA, Philippines — After skipping the previous hearing, state witness and former Public Works Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo will testify in the Sandiganbayan against former Senator Bong Revilla on Friday afternoon. Prosecutors told the anti graft court’s Third Division that Bernardo will take the witness stand at 2:00 p.m during the bail hearing of Revilla and

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of April 24, 2026](#) (2026-04-24 09:00)

MANILA, Philippines – Motorists face fresh fuel price adjustments this week as oil companies implemented new oil prices, even as the government warned of strict penalties for firms that violate newly imposed limits under the national energy emergency. The Department of Energy (DOE) said the latest price movements come amid continued volatility in global oil

- [Oriental Mindoro on red alert amid projected power shortfall](#) (2026-04-24 08:27)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The province was placed under red alert on Friday, April 24, as the local electric cooperative projected significant power deficits during all peak periods of the day. Data from the Integrated Control and Command Center of the Oriental Mindoro Electric Cooperative (Ormeco) showed that available supply is 58.71 megawatts (MW),

- [HEAT INDEX WATCH: 3 areas under ‘danger’ level on Friday – Pagasa](#) (2026-04-24 07:58)

[Updated April 24, 2026, 8:36 a.m.] MANILA, Philippines — Three areas in the country are expected to experience a “dangerous” heat index on Friday, April 24, according to the state weather bureau. These places are Cavite City in Cavite, Cotabato City in Maguindanao del Norte, and Butuan City in Agusan del Norte. Based on the Philippine

- [Easterlies to bring hot, humid weather on Friday, April 24](#) (2026-04-24 07:24)

MANILA, Philippines — The weather system, easterlies, is forecast to continue bringing hot and humid weather with chances of localized thunderstorms across the country on Friday, the state weather bureau reported. According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), the easterlies, which refer to the warm winds coming from the Pacific Ocean,

- [SWS: Quality of life dips for 5 in 10 Filipinos](#) (2026-04-24 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Five out of 10 Filipinos said their quality of life became worse over the past 12 months, according to the latest Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey released on Wednesday. The survey, which was conducted from March 24 to March 31, found that 50 percent of respondents said their quality of life worsened

- [UP student, journalist killed in clashes](#) (2026-04-24 05:46)

BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, Philippines — After the alleged encounters on April 19 that left 19 people dead in Toboso town, Negros Occidental, the military and the New People's Army (NPA) are engaged in a word war over the real events on that day. On Thursday, the NPA's Apolinario Gatmaitan Command in Negros said in

- [Comelec: Birth certificates now a must for bets](#) (2026-04-24 05:44)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Elections (Comelec) will now require candidates for the Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections (BSKE) set to be held on Nov. 2 and all other succeeding elections to submit birth certificates along with their certificates of candidacy (COCs). Comelec Chair George Erwin Garcia said on Thursday that the move was

- [MMDA will use traffic cams to spot litterbugs, too](#) (2026-04-24 05:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) may start using artificial intelligence (AI) cameras to flag improper waste disposal in Metro Manila under the agency's No Contact Apprehension Policy (NCAP) beginning next week, MMDA general manager Nicolas Torre II said on Thursday. This came a day after Torre said the NCAP will soon

- [Witness: 'Boxes, maleta' sent to 2 senators, Bonoan, Cabral, Olaivar](#) (2026-04-24 05:36)

MANILA, Philippines — A prosecution witness in the malversation case against former Sen. Bong Revilla said he delivered what would later be revealed as large sums of cash to Revilla, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, then Public Works Secretary Manuel Bonoan, the now-deceased former Undersecretary Cathy Cabral, and former Education Undersecretary Trygve Olaivar from 2023 to 2025.

- [Palace spox to VP: Travel permit assured, but why take 'vacation' now?](#) (2026-04-24 05:34)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang assured Vice President Sara Duterte that the Office of the President (OP) will approve her new travel authority request. However, Palace press officer Claire Castro questioned the timing of Duterte's planned "vacation" covering five countries mostly in Europe, citing the crisis caused by the Middle East conflict and the ongoing House

- [VP blasts Trillanes, COA, AMLC](#) (2026-04-24 05:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte on Thursday denied that she and her husband had billions of pesos flowing through their bank accounts, lashing back at former Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV for making the allegation and the Commission on Audit (COA) and the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) for backing him. Testifying before the House

- [DepDev: Agri sector helped drive Cordillera growth in '25](#) (2026-04-24 05:04)

BAGUIO CITY, Philippines — The Cordillera regional economy in 2025 had been robust with a 4.4-percent growth, including a surprise 4.3-percent expansion for the perennially underperforming agriculture sector. The total value of economic production in the region,

known as the gross regional domestic product (GRDP), was P394.96 billion in 2025, its growth driven largely by

- [DA ready to aid farmers, fishers amid El Niño](#) (2026-04-24 05:02)

ILOILO CITY, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) has activated a comprehensive response strategy to mitigate the impact of El Niño on the country's agricultural sector following the announcement by the state weather bureau on Wednesday about the onset of a dry spell. At a briefing here on Wednesday, Undersecretary Cherryl Marie Caballero, who

- [Pest attack prompts alert in Quezon coconut sector](#) (2026-04-24 01:37)

LUCENA CITY, QUEZON, Philippines — Coconut experts in Quezon province have been placed on alert following reports of pest infestation affecting farms in Tayabas City. In a report released Thursday, the provincial government said the Provincial Agriculturist Office-Coconut Development Division conducted pest surveillance on April 16 after farmers reported increasing pest activity in Barangay Ibabang

- [Marawi City drug buy-bust nets shabu worth P6.8M](#) (2026-04-24 01:28)

COTABATO CITY, BARMM, Philippines — Anti-narcotics agents arrested a suspected drug peddler and seized about P6.8 million worth of prohibited drugs during a buy-bust operation in Marawi City on Wednesday afternoon, April 22. Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (PDEA-BARMM) Regional Director Edgar Jubay said their operatives, backed by

- [‘Danger’ level heat indices to hit 3 areas; Cotabato to reach 44°C](#) (2026-04-24 01:22)

MANILA, Philippines — At least three areas are expected to reach “danger” level peak heat indices on Friday, April 24, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said. Pagasa defines heat index as the “measure of the contribution that high humidity makes with abnormally high temperatures in reducing the body's ability to cool

- [Iloilo City OKs P1.41-B supplemental budget focused on services, aid](#) (2026-04-24 01:19)

ILOILO CITY, Philippines — The Sangguniang Panlungsod of Iloilo City approved a P1.41-billion supplemental budget during its 15th regular session on April 22, channeling surplus funds toward social protection, infrastructure, and long-term development programs amid the ongoing national energy emergency. Mayor Raisa Trefias said the additional budget stemmed from a “careful and responsible review” of

- [Sari-sari store in Iloilo City yields P1M in suspected meth](#) (2026-04-24 01:12)

ILOILO CITY, Philippines — A sari-sari store in Barangay Bolilao, Mandurriao district here yielded over P1 million worth of suspected meth or shabu during a buy-bust operation on Wednesday, April 22. The suspect who runs the store is identified as alias “Harry,” 36, and

classified by authorities as a High Value Individual (HVI). The operation

- [Military: Detained suspected NPA rebels clashed with soldiers in Negros](#) (2026-04-24 00:45)

BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS, OCCIDENTAL, Philippines — Police and military authorities tagged five persons who were recently in Talisay City, Negros Occidental as New People's Army (NPA) rebels who were involved in the armed encounter with soldiers in Toboso town last Sunday. Combined forces of the Army and various police units served a warrant against Glenmar

- [BARMM: Fatwa restricting women's unaccompanied travel for work issued](#) (2026-04-24 00:25)

COTABATO CITY, BARMM, Philippines — The Bangsamoro Darul-Ifta' (BDI) has issued a fatwa, or religious ruling, prohibiting women from traveling for work without a mahram, a male relative whom they cannot marry, such as a father, brother, or son. BDI is the official Islamic advisory body in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)

- [DENR, 2 private firms join hands to rehabilitate Cavite, Batangas creeks](#) (2026-04-23 23:39)

LUCENA CITY, QUEZON, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through its Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) in Region 4A, has partnered with private firms to rehabilitate two creeks in Cavite and Batangas. On Thursday, April 23, EMB-Region 4A and Jollibee Foods Corporation signed a memorandum of agreement to conserve, protect, and develop

- [NBI nabs man in Cavite for abusing a child](#) (2026-04-23 22:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has arrested a man in Dasmariñas City, Cavite, for allegedly physically and psychologically abusing a seven-year-old child. According to the NBI, its Homicide Division conducted the operation on Tuesday, April 21, following reports from relatives and other witnesses that he inflicted a pattern of harm and

- [DA ready to aid farmers, fishers amid El Niño](#) (2026-04-23 22:06)

ILOILO CITY, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) has activated a comprehensive response strategy to mitigate the impact of El Niño on the country's agricultural sector following the announcement by the state weather bureau on Wednesday about the onset of a dry spell. At a briefing here on Wednesday, Undersecretary Cherryl Marie Caballero, who

- [April 23: No jackpot winner in SuperLotto, Lotto 6/42 draws](#) (2026-04-23 21:58)

MANILA, Philippines — No jackpot winner emerged in Thursday's draws for SuperLotto 6/49 and Lotto 6/42, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO). The PCSO said the winning combination for SuperLotto 6/49 was 11-35-40-01-18-08 for a jackpot of ₱25 million. No ticket holder matched all six numbers. For Lotto 6/42, the winning combination was

- [Lawmaker pushes for more benefits for barangay tanods](#) (2026-04-23 21:57)



MANILA, Philippines — Parañaque Rep. Brian Yamsuan has pushed for more benefits for barangay tanods or barangay watchmen as he hailed their role as “unsung first responders” in maintaining peace and safety in the barangay. Yamsuan filed House Bill (HB) No. 6598, which pushes to upgrade the benefits for barangay tanods who have been in

- [Brian Poe urges evidence-based medical cannabis law](#) (2026-04-23 21:31)

QUEZON CITY — House Assistant Majority Leader Brian Poe called for a carefully designed, evidence-based medical cannabis framework that learns from international experience, during a forum hosted by the UP Law Center Institute of Human Rights at the University of the Philippines College of Law in Diliman. Speaking at the forum titled “From Stigma to

- [BOC seizes P174-M illegal goods in Valenzuela warehouse](#) (2026-04-23 20:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BOC) has confiscated P174 million worth of various illegal goods believed to have originated from China. In a statement on Thursday, the BOC said that it conducted an operation last April 14, in close coordination with the Philippine National Police. It noted that it implemented a Letter of

- [Beating the heat: Iloilo City to set up cooling centers](#) (2026-04-23 20:26)

ILOILO CITY — In a proactive bid to protect residents from dangerously high temperatures, the Iloilo City government is finalizing plans to establish cooling centers across various barangays while ramping up its water distribution efforts. Mayor Raisa Treñas announced the initiative as part of the city’s two-pronged approach to combating the extreme heat index currently

- [4 areas reach ‘danger’ level heat indices on Thursday, April 23](#) (2026-04-23 20:22)

MANILA, Philippines — Four areas registered “danger” level peak heat indices on Thursday, April 23, the state weather bureau said. Based on data released by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) as of 5 p.m. of April 23, Cotabato City, Maguindanao reached a peak of 44°C, logging the highest recorded heat index

- [Angara ramps up support for learning continuity spaces rollout](#) (2026-04-23 19:20)

MAKATI CITY — Education Secretary Sonny Angara intensified technical support for field offices of the Department of Education (DepEd) to fast-track the nationwide expansion of Learning Continuity Spaces (LCS), ensuring learners in disaster-prone communities have safer, dedicated areas to study. This strategic push aims to provide resilient facilities that allow classes to go on despite

- [Sara Duterte camp: ‘Suspicious transaction’ doesn’t equate wrongdoing](#) (2026-04-23 19:15)

MANILA, Philippines – “Suspicious transaction does not equate to any wrongdoing or unlawful activity.” This was how Vice President Sara Duterte’s impeachment counsel responded to the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) report that banks flagged billions worth of suspicious



transactions linked to her and her husband, Manases Carpio. During the House committee on justice' s impeachment hearing

- [Lawmakers scoff at 'ampaw' Sara Duterte defense camp presser](#) (2026-04-23 18:28)

MANILA, Philippines — House lawmakers on Thursday scoffed at the press conference of Vice President Sara Duterte' s defense team, with one of them calling it “ampaw,” while another dared her to show up at the impeachment proceedings. Deputy Speaker Paolo Ortega V of La Union called it “ampaw” as it did not address the questions

- [Sara Duterte won' t appear at April 29 House impeachment hearing — Poa](#) (2026-04-23 18:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte will not attend the House committee on justice' s next hearing on the impeachment complaints against her. Atty. Michael Poa, spokesperson for Duterte' s defense team, confirmed this in a press conference on Thursday, a day after the justice panel held its second hearing on the impeachment complaints, where the

- [Piñol defends Uy after drug lord tag during VP Duterte impeach hearing](#) (2026-04-23 17:58)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Agriculture Secretary Manny Piñol on Thursday defended Samuel Uy, whom he said was “unjustly vilified and destroyed” during the House panel proceedings on the impeachment of Vice President Sara Duterte. On Wednesday, former Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV accused the Dutertes of receiving payouts from Uy, whom Trillanes alleged to be a drug

- [Marcos declares special non-working days for local festivals](#) (2026-04-23 17:48)

MANILA, Philippines – President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has declared several special non-working days in parts of Laguna, Quezon, Batangas, and Misamis Oriental to allow residents to celebrate local festivals and anniversaries. Proclamation 1219 sets April 30 as a special non-working day in the municipality of San Francisco, Quezon, for its founding anniversary. On the same date,

- [CIDG: Uncle arrested for online sexual abuse of minor niece in Tagum](#) (2026-04-23 17:48)

MANILA, Philippines — A man was arrested for allegedly sexually abusing and exploiting his minor niece online, following a rescue operation in Barangay Visayan Village, Tagum City, on April 20. The operation was conducted by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group Davao del Norte Provincial Field Unit, in coordination with the City Social Welfare and

- [NCRPO: 6 nabbed for siphoning palm oil in Valenzuela City](#) (2026-04-23 17:33)

MANILA, Philippines — Six individuals were arrested for allegedly siphoning palm oil in Valenzuela City, the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) said on Thursday. After a palm oil company' s delivery driver and his helper supposedly deviated from their scheduled route, operatives tracked them to a vacant lot in Barangay Punturin, Valenzuela City, on Wednesday,

- [Cordillera food fair opens in Burnham Park](#) (2026-04-23 17:30)

BAGUIO CITY — The 7th “Mangan Taku” (Let’s Eat) Cordillera Food Fair opened Thursday at the Rose Garden of Burnham Park, featuring indigenous dishes and traditional food practices from across the region. Visitors flocked to stalls serving Cordilleran staples, with etag (salted and smoked pork) among the top draws. The meat is preserved through curing

- [Palace: Marcos to file comment on SC drug test petition](#) (2026-04-23 17:24)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will heed the Supreme Court’s order for him to comment on a petition seeking a hair follicle test and other examinations related to claims of illegal drug use, according to Palace press officer Claire Castro. “If that is an order from the Supreme Court, it will be carried

- [P3.4-M drugs seized, 4 arrested in Quezon City, Pasay drug stings](#) (2026-04-23 17:00)

MANILA, Philippines — Suspected drugs worth a total of P3.4 million were confiscated, and four individuals were arrested in buy-bust operations in Quezon City and Pasay City on Wednesday night and early Thursday morning. In a statement on Thursday, the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) said it entrapped two suspects in front of a restaurant

- [Villar urges swift passage of urban agriculture bill amid fuel crisis](#) (2026-04-23 16:55)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Mark Villar is pushing for the immediate passage of Senate Bill No. 1422, or the proposed Integrated Urban Agriculture Act, as rising fuel prices threaten to disrupt food supply chains and drive up the cost of basic goods. Villar said the ongoing fuel crisis, linked to disruptions in the Middle East,

- [House panel to probe Duterte ‘death threats,’ tax records on April 29](#) (2026-04-23 16:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives committee on justice is set to tackle one of the most explosive charges in the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte — her alleged grave threats against President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos, and former Speaker Martin Romualdez — at what could be its final

- [Flood mess: Revilla could be freed on bail without Bernardo’s testimony](#) (2026-04-23 16:10)

MANILA, Philippines — The testimony of the lead witness and former Public Works undersecretary Roberto Bernardo is needed to block the bid for temporary freedom of former Senator Ramon “Bong” Revilla Jr. Associate Justice Karl Miranda, the chairman of the anti-graft court’s Third Division, stressed the importance of Bernardo’s testimony during the bail hearing for

- [PNP: Academy undergoing ‘aggressive reforms’ amid fresh hazing case](#) (2026-04-23 16:08)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. maintained on Thursday that the agency's academy was undergoing "aggressive reforms" amid a new alleged hazing case that surfaced among its cadets. "We will not allow favoritism or any cover-up. Anyone found responsible, regardless of their year level, will face the full

- [PNP to officers: Speed up inspections of trucks with essential goods](#) (2026-04-23 15:42)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. has ordered police officers conducting checkpoint operations to speed up inspections of trucks transporting essential goods. "Amid the challenging situations that our country is experiencing, our personnel on the ground stationed at checkpoints will ensure that the flow of goods remains unhampered

- [Snake triggers power disruption in Olongapo City](#) (2026-04-23 15:36)

SAN ANTONIO, Zambales, Philippines — An unexpected power interruption affected parts of Olongapo City on Thursday after a snake came into contact with electrical equipment at a local substation. In an advisory, Olongapo Electricity Distribution Company (OEDC) reported that the reptile had climbed onto a gantry structure within one of its substations. The animal's contact with energized

- [Cute, but invasive: Finlayson's squirrels in Metro Manila](#) (2026-04-23 15:29)

They may be attractive, but the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said the presence of a non-native squirrel species sighted in Metro Manila last week is "not promoted." The DENR said that "while every wildlife species has inherent value," the Finlayson's squirrel (*Callosciurus finlaysonii*) is an "invasive species that may threaten local ecosystems."

- [Father among 4 arrested in Bulacan teen's rape-slay](#) (2026-04-23 15:04)

BUSTOS, Bulacan, Philippines — A 40-year-old truck driver and three others were arrested by the police on Tuesday for the rape-slay of his 16-year-old daughter almost two weeks ago. Col. Jay Baybayan, Bulacan police director, identified the arrested father of the victim as Daniel Gallano, of Purok 5, Poblacion, this town. He and his cohorts, identified

- [Boxes allegedly sent to Revilla, Estrada, Bonoan; 'maleta' for Olaivar](#) (2026-04-23 14:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Several boxes were allegedly brought for former Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, and ex-Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) chief Manuel Bonoan, a witness told the Sandiganbayan on Thursday. Vergel Niño Garcia, a former driver and aide of state witness and ex-DPWH Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo, made the revelation

- [Marcos inspects 11-ha township built under govt's 'pabahay' program](#) (2026-04-23 14:36)

PALAYAN CITY, Nueva Ecija – President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., on Thursday, inspected the 11-hectare township built under the administration’s Pambansang Pabahay para sa mga Pilipino (4PH) program in Barangay Atate here. READ: LOOK: Marcos visits Palayan City in Nueva Ecija The Palayan City Township Project, which, according to Palayan City Mayor Vianne Nicole Cuevas, already

- [Marcos OKs promotion of 17 senior PNP officers – DILG](#) (2026-04-23 14:29)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has approved the rank promotion of 17 senior Philippine National Police (PNP) officers, according to a memorandum from the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). The appointment papers had been signed by Marcos and transmitted to the DILG by Executive Secretary Ralph Recto, according to a

- [EU-funded BARMM satellite offices up in Tawi-Tawi, Basilan](#) (2026-04-23 14:24)

TACURONG CITY, Sultan Kudarat– The Office of the Chief Minister (OCM) in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) has established satellite offices, funded by the European Union (EU), in Basilan and Tawi-Tawi to bring the government closer to its constituents there. Interim Chief Minister Abdulraof Macacua inaugurated the satellite branches along with Governors

- [Palace to Sara Duterte: Travel authority usually given day before flight](#) (2026-04-23 14:18)

MANILA, Philippines — “Ibigay ang hilig ng walang ligalig.” (Give the desire without trouble.) This was the response of Palace Press Officer Claire Castro to questions on why the Office of the President (OP) approved Vice President Sara Duterte’s request for a 22-day overseas travel. At a briefing on Thursday, Castro also refuted claims that

- [BARMM seeks to safeguard forests, biodiversity](#) (2026-04-23 14:08)

COTABATO CITY — The Forest Foundation Philippines (FFP) and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) have partnered to advance forest restoration, community-based forest management, and climate initiatives across the region, officials announced on Thursday. The collaboration was formalized with the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on April 16, between FFP and

- [Palace distances Marcos from Romualdez corruption scandal allegations](#) (2026-04-23 13:54)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. does not feel alluded to by the video statement of his cousin, former Speaker Martin Romualdez, that the buck stops with the executive branch over the 2025 budget mess and the infrastructure corruption scandal. Romualdez is facing cases of plunder, graft, indirect bribery, and money laundering before the Sandiganbayan in

- [Calapan City hits dangerous 43°C heat index; residents warned anew](#) (2026-04-23 13:43)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Department (CDRRMD) on Thursday warned residents of dangerous heat levels after the heat index in Calapan reached 43 degrees Celsius. A day before, the heat index in the city was at 42°C. In an advisory issued at 11 a.m. on Thursday, the CDRRMD

- [Sara Duterte impeachment: Senate readiness ensures orderly trial—Garin](#) (2026-04-23 13:43)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate’s preparations for a possible impeachment trial would help ensure the smooth handling of the case against Vice President Sara Duterte, allowing proceedings to move in an orderly manner and without delay should it be elevated, House Deputy Speaker Janette Garin said on Thursday. She welcomed the Senate’s readiness and the

- [4 nabbed for selling puffer fish in Camarines Sur](#) (2026-04-23 13:21)

LEGAZPI CITY, Albay — Four vendors were arrested on Wednesday after authorities seized more than 66 kilograms of puffer fish being sold at the public market in Nabua town in Camarines Sur. The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources in Bicol (BFAR-5), in coordination with the Nabua police, inspected the public market at 6 a.m.

- [Sara Duterte blasts Trillanes, COA, AMLC: Billions in banks untrue](#) (2026-04-23 13:13)

MANILA, Philippines – After weeks of silence, Vice President Sara Duterte on Thursday denied that there were billions of pesos’ worth of transactions in her bank accounts and blasted not just former Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV for these allegations, but also the Commission on Audit (COA) and the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) for now being

- [MMDA employing AI cameras to flag improper waste disposal under NCAP](#) (2026-04-23 13:05)

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) may start using artificial intelligence (AI) cameras to flag improper waste disposal under the No Contact Apprehension Policy (NCAP) in Metro Manila next week, General Manager Nicolas Torre II said on Thursday. This came a day after Torre said that the NCAP will soon cover littering through

- [Man nabbed in CDO for selling ‘kidney cleanser’ not registered with FDA](#) (2026-04-23 12:56)

MANILA, Philippines — A man was arrested in Cagayan de Oro City for allegedly selling a supposed “kidney cleanser” food supplement that was not registered with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Anti-Cybercrime Group (ACG) said on Thursday. The suspect, identified only by the alias “Carl,” was entrapped along Julio Pacana Street last April

- [Oriental Mindoro youth set up community pantry to aid PUV drivers](#) (2026-04-23 12:56)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Amid rising fuel costs and mounting economic pressure, youth volunteers in this province have launched a relief drive for public utility vehicle (PUV)

drivers while pushing for long-term agricultural reforms. On April 22, the Kilos Ko Youth(KY)–Oriental Mindoro chapter led a “TODA Rescue” initiative in Barangay Camilmil here, setting

- [Cops, soldiers discover arms cache in Butuan City](#) (2026-04-23 12:46)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Joint operating troops from the Police Regional Office in Caraga (PRO-13) and the Philippine Army uncovered an arms cache believed to belong to the New People’s Army (NPA) in Barangay Antongalon, Butuan City, on Monday. Police Brig. Gen. Marcial Mariano P. Magistrado IV, director of PRO-13, said the discovery was

- [4 held for fuel theft in Laguna](#) (2026-04-23 11:45)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon – Police arrested four men allegedly involved in fuel pilfering, locally known as “paihi,” during a late-night operation on Wednesday in Alaminos, Laguna. The Police Regional Office 4A said local police, assisted by barangay tanods (village watchmen), were conducting a routine patrol when they caught the suspects in the act of siphoning

- [5 alleged NPA rebels arrested in Negros Occidental](#) (2026-04-23 11:38)

BACOLOD CITY—Five alleged members of the New People’s Army (NPA) were arrested during a warrant service operation in Talisay, Negros Occidental, on Wednesday, following a recent deadly clash in the province. READ: Army: NPA leadership in Negros wiped out The military operation was conducted along the Circumferential Road, Barangay Matab-ang of Talisay City, Negros

- [DOTr, OSG settle 345 expropriation cases for railway projects](#) (2026-04-23 11:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Office of Solicitor General (OSG) have finalized 345 expropriation cases to expedite land acquisitions for the North South Commuter Railway project (NSCR) and the Metro Manila Subway Project (MMSP). In a statement on Thursday, the DOTr said that securing right-of-way (ROW) for major transportation projects

- [Apayao town declares state of calamity due to fuel crisis](#) (2026-04-23 11:26)

TUGUEGARAO CITY, Cagayan -The local government of Calanasan in Apayao province was placed under a state of calamity on Wednesday due to the worsening socioeconomic effects of the ongoing energy crisis. In a statement, the local government said the town council has passed a resolution on the calamity declaration, and Mayor Shamir Bulut approved it.

- [Cops nab suspect, seize P680,000 worth of shabu in Cavite](#) (2026-04-23 11:15)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon – Anti-narcotics operatives arrested a big-time drug trafficker and seized about P680,000 worth of suspected shabu (crystal meth) in Dasmariñas City, Cavite on Wednesday. In a belated report released Thursday, Police Regional Office 4A said the suspect, identified only by the alias “Amo,” was arrested after selling a P500 sachet of shabu

- [El Niño to hit farmers hard, group warns](#) (2026-04-23 11:04)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon – Looming dry spells and drought in several parts of the country due to the intensifying El Niño phenomenon will pose tougher challenges for farmers struggling to sustain their livelihoods, a national peasant group said Thursday. “El Niño does not only mean hotter days. For farmers, it means dry fields, weak crops,

- [LOOK: Marcos visits Palayan City in Nueva Ecija](#) (2026-04-23 10:36)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. visited Palayan City in Nueva Ecija on Thursday to review the implementation of several government initiatives aimed at helping the poor. At around 9 a.m., Marcos went to the Palayan City Township Project, one of the key developments under the Expanded Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino Program, where

- [PNP names 6 of 19 fatalities in Negros Occidental clash](#) (2026-04-23 10:30)

BACOLOD CITY—The Police Regional Office Negros Island Region (PRO NIR) has activated a Special Investigation Task Group to establish the identities of bodies recovered following a series of “encounters” in Toboso, Negros Occidental, on Sunday. Through forensic examination, documentation, and coordination with local government units and relatives, the task group aims to provide a formal accounting of the deceased, said the PRO

- [Martin Romualdez still in PH amid travel ban order, says lawyer](#) (2026-04-23 10:11)

MANILA, Philippines — Former House Speaker and Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez is still in the Philippines, according to his lawyer and spokesperson Ade Fajardo on Thursday. In a statement, Romualdez’ camp acknowledged the precautionary hold departure order (PHDO) issued by the Sandiganbayan despite getting clearance from House Speaker Bojie Dy to travel to Singapore for

- [Sara Duterte to file new travel request, asks for prompt processing](#) (2026-04-23 10:05)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte on Thursday said that she will ask for a new travel request as her plans have changed due to uncertainty whether she would be allowed to travel abroad. “Thank you for the last-minute issuance of the travel authority,” Duterte said in a statement addressed to the Office of

- [NTF-Elcac endorses new policies to address insurgency](#) (2026-04-23 09:57)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-Elcac) Executive Committee has endorsed several key policy directions to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. aimed at addressing the communist insurgency and advancing development. In a press release on Thursday, the Presidential Communications Office said the committee recommended extending the Amnesty Program and

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of April 23, 2026](#) (2026-04-23 08:31)



MANILA, Philippines- Following a fragile ceasefire in the Middle East, the domestic market has seen a glimmer of relief with two consecutive weeks of substantial fuel price adjustments. As of Tuesday, April 21, 2026, motorists welcomed another major double-digit rollback on diesel prices, which saw a reduction of P24.94 per liter. READ: Oil prices rise

- [HEAT INDEX ALERT: 3 areas to reach 41°C on Thursday — Pagasa](#) (2026-04-23 07:37)

MANILA, Philippines — Three areas are forecast to register the highest record of heat index at 41°C on Thursday, the state weather bureau said. In its latest heat index bulletin, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said that these areas will hit 41°C hit index: Cotabato City, Maguindanao; Tuguegarao City, Cagayan; and

- [Hot, humid weather in most parts of PH on Thursday, April 23 – Pagasa](#) (2026-04-23 05:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Many areas in the country will experience hot and humid weather with chances of rainshowers on Thursday, the state weather bureau said. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said that the ridge of the high pressure area will continue to prevail over Northern and Central Luzon, bringing less chance

- [PNP chief orders audit over rent kickbacks scheme](#) (2026-04-23 05:48)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. on Wednesday ordered a sweeping audit of all regional police training units nationwide following allegations that police trainees in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) were forced to shoulder part of their superiors' housing expenses through a rent "kickback" scheme. "I have ordered a

- [Gov't agencies sign rules to end Pogos for good](#) (2026-04-23 05:46)

MANILA, Philippines — Government agencies signed on Wednesday a set of rules which "will put the final nail in the coffin" of Philippine offshore gaming operators (Pogos) and "prevent their resurrection in a different form." Executive Secretary Ralph Recto led the signing in Malacañang of the "Inter-Agency Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on the Implementation of

- [PNPA hazing: 7 cadets, 2 police execs charged](#) (2026-04-23 05:44)

MANILA, Philippines — The police have filed a criminal complaint against seven cadets and two police officers of the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) in Silang, Cavite, over the alleged hazing of 22 plebes (first-year cadets) on April 3, Good Friday. The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) filed the complaint for violation of Republic

- [Ombudsman secures court order keeping Romualdez in PH](#) (2026-04-23 05:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan on Wednesday issued a precautionary hold departure order (PHDO) against former Speaker Martin Romualdez, a travel restriction sought



by the Ombudsman in connection with the case it is preparing against the lawmaker and several others being linked to the flood control corruption scandal. The antigraft court's Seventh Division granted a

- [Sara Duterte gets Palace approval for 22-day overseas travel](#) (2026-04-23 05:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Wednesday confirmed that Vice President Sara Duterte had been granted travel authority and will be out of the country from April 23 to May 15. The Vice President's declared itinerary includes the Netherlands, South Korea, Belgium, Germany, and the United Kingdom. In a message to the Inquirer, Executive Secretary Ralph

- [Luistro: Sara Duterte also trying to 'gaslight' House panel](#) (2026-04-23 05:34)

MANILA, Philippines — The chairperson of the House panel evaluating the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte not only noted her continuing absence in the proceedings but also took issue with how she had chosen to respond to the accusations through press statements and social media posts. For Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro, it seemed

- ['Vindicated' Trillanes tells House: Duterte, kin got drug lord money](#) (2026-04-23 05:32)

MANILA, Philippines — It was the 18 confirmed bank transactions worth hundreds of millions of pesos that vindicated his allegations of corruption and links to drug money against Vice President Sara Duterte and her family, but former Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV also lamented that it took 10 years and “huge damage” supposedly caused by the

- ['Smoking gun' ? Gap between VP's bank info, SALN noted](#) (2026-04-23 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Bank transactions worth billions of pesos and tied to Vice President Sara Duterte did not match the net worth she had been declaring annually, based on records presented on Wednesday during House deliberations on the impeachment complaints against her. According to Akbayan Rep. Chel Diokno, the disparity could be the “smoking gun”

- [DPWH exec: Fund release for 'ghost' project illegal](#) (2026-04-23 05:10)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) released funds amounting to at least P92.8 million for a flood control project in Pandi, Bulacan, linked to former Sen. Ramon “Bong” Revilla Jr. and several others, despite alleged irregularities in billing documents, an official told the Sandiganbayan's Third Division on Wednesday. Testifying at

- [Local journo among dead in Negros Occidental clash](#) (2026-04-23 05:06)

BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, Philippines — Community journalist RJ Nichole Ledesma was among 19 people killed in a clash between government soldiers and suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Negros Occidental province on Sunday, Altermidya Network confirmed on Wednesday. The Philippine Army earlier reported that Sunday's series of armed encounters with supposed NPA remnants

- [In Manaoag, Marian image marks crowning centennial](#) (2026-04-23 05:04)

MANAOAG, PANGASINAN, Philippines — The Catholic faithful in Pangasinan marked the centennial on Wednesday of the canonical coronation of the image of Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Manaoag in Manaoag town. The image, which is widely regarded as miraculous, is enshrined at the Minor Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Manaoag, a major

- [MILF vows cooperation with new peace adviser](#) (2026-04-23 05:02)

COTABATO CITY, BARMM, Philippines — The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) welcomed the appointment of former Interior Secretary Mel Senen Sarmiento as the new presidential adviser on peace, reconciliation and unity. “We recognize an opportunity in his appointment for the substantial fulfillment of the CAB (Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro) and building the foundations of

- [BARMM chief lauds outgoing Galvez, welcomes new peace adviser](#) (2026-04-23 01:56)

COTABATO CITY, BARMM, Philippines — The Bangsamoro government extended its gratitude to former presidential peace adviser Carlito Galvez Jr. for his dedicated public service. “The Bangsamoro Government extends its sincere gratitude to Secretary Carlito G. Galvez Jr. for his dedicated service and commitment as Secretary of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation,

- [Illegal cigarette manufacturing: 9 Chinese, 4 locals arrested in Negros](#) (2026-04-23 01:40)

BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, Philippines — A cigarette manufacturing operation in a warehouse at Purok Rosas, Barangay Calumangan, Bago City, Negros Occidental, was discovered, and nine Chinese nationals and four Filipinos were arrested on Tuesday, April 21, the police said. A 10th Chinese national remains at large. The discovery was made during an inspection conducted

- [Mother-daughter pair falls in Iloilo drug sting](#) (2026-04-23 00:16)

ILOILO CITY, Philippines — A mother-and-daughter duo, both classified as high-value individuals (HVIs) in the regional drug trade, was arrested by authorities following a midnight buy-bust operation in Jaro district here on Tuesday. Personnel from the Iloilo City Police Office-City Drug Enforcement Unit (ICPO-CDEU) conducted the sting at around 12:05 a.m. on April 21, in

- [2 alleged street pushers busted, yield P142,000 worth of shabu in Rizal](#) (2026-04-23 00:08)

LUCENA CITY, QUEZON, Philippines — Police anti-narcotics operatives arrested two alleged street drug pushers, and seized P142,000 worth of shabu (crystal meth) in a buy-bust operation early Wednesday, April 22, in Rodriguez town in Rizal province. The Rizal police reported that a team of operatives held “Vonvon,” 33, and “Cristi,” 36, after they sold P500

- [Ilonggo Pride: Oton native tops April 2026 Pharmacy board exam](#) (2026-04-23 00:04)

ILOILO CITY, Philippines — The province of Iloilo has once again secured its place as a hub for academic excellence as Royce Arjan Fantillan, a native of Oton town, claimed the top spot in the April 2026 Pharmacists Licensure Examination. The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) announced on Wednesday that Fantillan, a graduate of the University

- [Increased seismic activity recorded in Bulusan Volcano anew – Phivolcs](#) (2026-04-23 00:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) on Wednesday said increased seismic activity has been recorded at Bulusan Volcano in Sorsogon. Phivolcs issued the advisory after a total of 101 volcano-tectonic (VT) earthquakes were recorded in Bulusan since 4:50 a.m. on Wednesday. According to Phivolcs, these VT events were generated by

- [Raps filed vs Daulah Islamiya suspects in Maguindanao del Sur ambush](#) (2026-04-22 23:57)

COTABATO CITY, BARMM, Philippines — Criminal complaints have been filed against several suspects in connection with the ambush of a police patrol team belonging to the Provincial Mobile Force Company (PMFC) of the Maguindanao del Sur Police Provincial Office (MDSPPPO) on the night of March 28. The filing came three weeks after the creation of

- [UP student leader slain in Negros clash](#) (2026-04-22 23:51)

BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, Philippines — The UP Diliman University Student Council has confirmed the death of its councilor, Alyssa Alano, while on a community visit in Toboso, Negros Occidental. In a statement, the USC said Alano died while soldiers “rained bullets” on Barangay Salamanca of Toboso town last Sunday. The USC is calling for

- [Wife of ‘killed’ jeepney driver in drug war finds hope in ICC decision](#) (2026-04-22 23:49)

MANILA, Philippines — The wife of a jeepney driver killed at the height of ex-President Rodrigo Duterte’s war on drugs has found hope after the International Criminal Court (ICC) denied the former leader’s jurisdiction appeal over his “crimes against humanity” case. Jane Lee, 43, from Caloocan, was one of the families of drug war victims

- [Farmer, believed drunk, drowns while swimming in Pangasinan](#) (2026-04-22 23:12)

ALAMINOS CITY, Pangasinan – A 58-year-old farmer from this city drowned at the Hundred Islands National Park, where he reportedly drank liquor and went swimming. Police report showed that the victim was staying at a rented cottage on Quezon Island on Wednesday. In the afternoon, while his daughter was cooking, he went for a swim.

- [Benguet town suspends trekking due to forest fires](#) (2026-04-22 23:04)

ITOGON, Benguet — Authorities here have suspended trekking and other eco-tourism activities in key mountain destinations as forest fires across Benguet continue to rise, already surpassing last year’s record. In Executive Order No. 21, series of 2026, Mayor Bernard Waclin ordered the temporary closure of major eco-tourism sites in Itogon, citing the growing number of

- [Pampanga exec charged with estafa set for transfer to Valenzuela City](#) (2026-04-22 22:57)

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga — Board Member Estelito “Shiwen” Lim is set for transfer from the Pampanga Provincial Jail (PPJ) to a Valenzuela City detention center, where he would be held while he continues to face charges of large-scale estafa. Lim’s transfer came after Presiding Judge Mary Jane Dacara-Buenaventura of Regional Trial Court Branch

- [Colmenares, Conti confident ICC will confirm charges vs Duterte](#) (2026-04-22 22:12)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Bayan Muna Party-list Rep. Neri Colmenares and human rights lawyer Kristina Conti are confident that the International Criminal Court (ICC) will also confirm the charges against former President Rodrigo Duterte next week in connection with his administration’s bloody war on drugs. The human rights lawyers said this following the Appeals Chamber’s

- [Court bars Romualdez from leaving PH](#) (2026-04-22 22:04)

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan has issued a precautionary hold departure order against former Speaker Martin Romualdez over his pending cases at the Office of the Ombudsman that include plunder, graft, indirect bribery, and money laundering. These cases are supposedly linked to national budget insertions tied to anomalous flood control projects. The Sandiganbayan’s Seventh Division

- [No jackpot winner in April 22 Grand, Mega lotto draws](#) (2026-04-22 21:53)

MANILA, Philippines — No bettor won the jackpots for Grand Lotto 6/55 and MegaLotto 6/45 in the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office draws on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, according to PCSO. Grand Lotto 6/55 produced the combination 30-43-51-44-46-32 for a jackpot of about ₱62.29 million, with no winner. MegaLotto 6/45 drew 10-37-11-43-18-15 for a jackpot of

- [MMDA: June 12 marathon on Edsa busway won’t disrupt traffic](#) (2026-04-22 21:29)

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) on Wednesday assured the public that a marathon that will use the Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (Edsa) bus carousel lane on June 12, 2026 will not cause major traffic disruptions. According to MMDA general manager Nicolas Torre II, the agency has started preparing for the Manila

- [Bernardo to skip hearing; court orders condition check in hospital](#) (2026-04-22 20:59)

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan on Wednesday ordered its medical officer to verify the condition in the hospital of state witness and former Public Works Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo, who will skip several hearing dates for the bail hearing of former Sen. Ramon “Bong” Revilla Jr. and his co-accused due to illness. Associate Justice Karl Miranda,

- [Boracay Water gets DENR nod for Nabaoy watershed rehab](#) (2026-04-22 20:52)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has officially validated the successful establishment and maintenance of Boracay Water’ s 20-hectare adopted watershed area in Sitio Mananga, Barangay Nabaoy, Malay, Aklan, reinforcing the company’ s long-term commitment to watershed protection and water security for Boracay Island and the municipality of Malay. The DENR Provincial

- [Mel Sarmiento takes oath as Marcos’ presidential peace adviser](#) (2026-04-22 20:45)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday administered the oath of office to Mel Senen Sarmiento as the new chief of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (Opapru) in Malacañang. Sarmiento succeeds Carlito Galvez Jr., who stepped down from the post to spend more time with his family. As

- [MMDA to process up to 1 ton of water hyacinth into coal daily](#) (2026-04-22 20:36)

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) is eyeing to process half a ton to a ton of water hyacinth into coal every day, its general manager Nicoles Torre II said on Wednesday. According to Torre, water hyacinth clogs waterways and drainage systems, which also causes major flooding in Metro Manila. Through this

- [Bad day for Dutertes? Sara hit by AMLC report, Rodrigo setback at ICC](#) (2026-04-22 20:23)

MANILA, Philippines — Two of the Duterte family’ s central figures, Vice President Sara Duterte and former President Rodrigo Duterte, were subjected to scrutiny on Wednesday, April 22, as both the impeachment proceedings and the crimes against humanity case before the International Criminal Court (ICC) moved forward. At the House of Representatives’ committee on justice, allegations that

- [Aparri, Cotabato log ‘danger’ level heat indices on April 22](#) (2026-04-22 19:59)

MANILA, Philippines — Two areas registered “danger” level peak heat indices on Wednesday, April 22, said the state weather bureau. Based on data released by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) as of 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Aparri, Cagayan and Cotabato City, Maguindanao each recorded a peak index of 42°C. Wednesday marks

- [WATCH: Trillanes discusses Dutertes’ bank accounts during impeach hearing](#) (2026-04-22 19:51)

This video is part of Inquirer’ s special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte’ s impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — Rep. Percival Cendaña asks former Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV about the bank accounts of Vice President Sara Duterte and former President Rodrigo Duterte during the third House hearing on the impeachment complaints

- [House panel to NBI: Submit report on Sara Duterte ‘threats’ probe](#) (2026-04-22 19:23)

This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — The House justice panel ordered the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) to present the findings of its probe on the “threats” made by Vice President Sara Duterte. House committee on justice chairperson

- [Trillanes ‘relieved’ after AMLC report, but laments Dutertes’ damage](#) (2026-04-22 19:06)

This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — While he is relieved that Vice President Sara Duterte's questionable transactions — which he mentioned as early as 10 years ago — were confirmed by authorities, former Senator Antonio Trillanes IV believes

- [Sara Duterte as firm board member during VP term against charter — Suan](#) (2026-04-22 18:57)

MANILA, Philippines — The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on Wednesday said Vice President Sara Duterte appeared to have been listed as a board member of a firm during her term, and Cagayan de Oro 1st District Rep. Lordan Suan said this is against the 1987 Constitution. Gerardo Del Rosario, director of the Company Registration

- [House panel defers opening box containing Duterte tax records](#) (2026-04-22 18:50)

This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives justice committee voted to defer opening a box containing the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) records of Vice President Sara Duterte, her husband, and their firms. The

- [Trillanes: Magdalo to push for Hontiveros presidential bid](#) (2026-04-22 18:10)

MANILA, Philippines — The Magdalo group will push for Sen. Risa Hontiveros to run for president in the 2028 elections, according to former Senator Antonio Trillanes IV. “We’ve scrutinized the prospective candidates,” Trillanes told reporters. “As of the moment, the person whom we want to push for the presidency is Senator Risa Hontiveros. She has

- [PCG rescues 6 from capsized motorbanca off Occidental Mindoro](#) (2026-04-22 17:53)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) rescued six passengers from a capsized motorbanca in waters off Barangay Pag-asa, San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, on Wednesday, April 22. According to the PCG, the incident was reported at around 11 a.m., prompting authorities to deploy a search and rescue (SAR) team using a floating

- [Trillanes: Up to Duterte supporters to believe AMLC findings on Uy](#) (2026-04-22 17:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Senator Antonio Trillanes IV said it was up to Vice President Sara Duterte’ s supporters to believe the Anti-Money Laundering Council’ s (AMLC) confirmation of his claims that she had received money from purported drug lord Samuel Uy. “It’ s all been confirmed by the AMLC. I did not make that up. Why would

- [Legarda: Filipinos must unite vs climate crisis this Earth Day](#) (2026-04-22 17:39)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Loren Legarda urged Filipinos on Wednesday to harness their individual and collective power to combat the climate crisis, marking Earth Day 2026 under the theme “Our Power, Our Planet.” “In the face of a worsening climate crisis, we are called not only to observe, but to reflect and to act. This

- [Drug war victims’ kin gather for ICC decision on Duterte’ s plea](#) (2026-04-22 17:24)

MANILA, Philippines — Families of victims of the bloody war against illegal drugs during the administration of former President Rodrigo Duterte gathered on Wednesday, April 22, to witness the International Criminal Court (ICC) decision on the former leader’ s jurisdiction appeal regarding his “crimes against humanity case.” Also attending the gathering dubbed “Duterte Panagutin’ s Justice Watch”

- [UP president: No commercialization in Diliman campus](#) (2026-04-22 17:20)

MANILA, Philippines — The leadership of the University of the Philippines (UP) on Wednesday maintained that there was no commercialization on its Diliman campus, despite the construction of two establishments that community members have opposed. UP President Angelo Jimenez said the construction of “DiliMall” and the “GyudFood” food hub was decided by the administrations that

- [Belmonte to 142 QC barangays: Slash energy use amid global crisis](#) (2026-04-22 17:19)

QUEZON CITY — Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte has issued a direct order to all 142 barangays to immediately implement aggressive energy-saving measures — marking a critical turning point in the city’ s response to mounting pressures on power supply and fuel availability. Under Memorandum Circular No. 8, Series of 2026, barangays are mandated to reduce

- [Trillanes vindicated: AMLC confirms Sara Duterte’ s 18 transactions](#) (2026-04-22 16:58)

This report is part of Inquirer’ s special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte’ s impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — After years of criticizing the Dutertes, it appears former Senator Antonio Trillanes IV has finally been vindicated as the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) confirmed several financial transactions made by Vice President

- [Madiaga testimony weighs less than Duterte SALNs, AMLC report — Diokno](#) (2026-04-22 16:53)



This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — The testimony of Ramil Madriaga, the self-proclaimed “bagman” for Vice President Sara Duterte, now weighs less than her Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth (SALN) and an Anti-Money Laundering Council

- [Barbers flags growing Duterte-Carpio business interests in SALNs](#) (2026-04-22 16:48)

This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — A year-by-year review of Vice President Sara Duterte's Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN) drew fresh scrutiny at the House committee on justice on Wednesday after a lawmaker pressed

- [LTO revokes accreditation of 12 driving schools in NCR over multiple violations](#) (2026-04-22 16:34)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Office (LTO) has revoked the accreditation of 12 driving schools in Metro Manila over multiple violations. In a statement on Wednesday, the LTO said this came after its resolution of multiple show-cause orders issued to the driving schools and its evaluation of their compliance with existing guidelines under Memorandum Circular No.

- [Luistro: Sara Duterte impeach hearings enter ‘forensic truth’ phase](#) (2026-04-22 16:17)

This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro said Wednesday the House Committee on Justice is entering the “territory of forensic truth” in the impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte,

- [Diokno: Difference in VP Duterte's SALNs, transactions is ‘smoking gun’](#) (2026-04-22 16:16)

MANILA, Philippines — The difference between Vice President Sara Duterte's Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth (SALN) and billions of pesos worth of transactions linked to her and her husband is a “smoking gun,” Akbayan party-list Rep. Chel Diokno said on Wednesday. A net inflow of P2.87 billion was recorded in 33 suspicious transaction

- [WATCH: Rep. Marcoleta makes manifestation at VP Duterte impeachment hearing](#) (2026-04-22 16:14)

This video is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — Rep. Paolo Marcoleta makes a manifestation on the impeachment complaints filed against Vice President Sara Duterte on the third hearing conducted by the



House committee on justice. /atm

- [Closer look: Sara Duterte, Carpio careers, businesses from 2006-2025](#) (2026-04-22 16:11)

This video is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. Financial records spanning 2006 to 2025 involving Vice President Sara Duterte and her husband, lawyer Manases Carpio, are now under scrutiny. The House of Representatives Committee on Justice is taking a closer look at

- [Pagasa: Fewer but stronger cyclones may hit PH during El Niño](#) (2026-04-22 16:09)

MANILA, Philippines — Fewer but stronger tropical cyclones may enter the country during the development of El Niño this year. This was the answer that Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) Climate Monitoring and Prediction Section chief Ana Liza Solis gave when asked whether there would be fewer but stronger tropical cyclones. "That

- [WATCH: Businesses of VP Duterte, husband examined during hearing](#) (2026-04-22 15:56)

This video is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — The House committee on justice scrutinizes the business interests of Vice President Sara Duterte and her husband, Manases Carpio, on the third hearing on the impeachment complaints filed against the vice president.

- [Solons: AMLC can tackle Duterte's bank accounts; this is an impeachment](#) (2026-04-22 15:55)

This video is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — Several lawmakers have maintained that the House committee on justice can discuss reports from the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) on Vice President Sara Duterte's financial transactions. They also believe impeachment proceedings are

- [Human activities blamed for fires in Agusan Marsh peatlands](#) (2026-04-22 15:54)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — A new wave of peatland fires has once again sounded the alarm over the delicate state of the Agusan Marsh, with authorities and experts blaming human activity for fueling the flames for the second consecutive year. The most recent fire, which ravaged Talacogon Peatland from March 29 to April 9,

- [Angara advances barangay-level mapping of learning gaps](#) (2026-04-22 15:47)

MAKATI CITY — Education Secretary Sonny Angara is moving to adopt barangay-level education mapping to pinpoint learning gaps and direct resources to the most underserved communities, as the Department of Education (DepEd) sharpens its data-driven reforms. The initiative follows

a presentation by University of the Philippines student Timothy Hormigos, who developed a granular map of

- [Ejercito: Dela Rosa waiving Senate pay, perks may help his ethics case](#) (2026-04-22 15:46)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa’s ethics complaint may be dismissed if he waives his salaries and allowances from the Senate, Sen. JV Ejercito said on Wednesday. Ejercito, who heads the Senate ethics panel, made the remark after he appealed for Dela Rosa to decline his salary while he is absent. In an

- [LOOK: Former Senator Trillanes ‘sinumpaang salaysay’](#) (2026-04-22 15:40)

This report is part of Inquirer’s special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte’s impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines – Former Senator Antonio Trillanes IV appeared before the House Committee on Justice on Wednesday as it continued its hearing on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara

- [UP: ‘Inclusive’ 2026 UPCAT results with more passers from public schools](#) (2026-04-22 15:38)

MANILA, Philippines — The University of the Philippines (UP) has touted the 2026 results of its entrance exam as “inclusive,” after more than half of the passers came from public schools, with more from indigenous communities and underserved areas. The 2026 UP College Admission Test (UPCAT) recorded a 12.44 percent qualification rate, or a total

- [EXPLAINER: What are ‘covered, suspicious transactions’](#) (2026-04-22 15:37)

This report is part of Inquirer’s special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte’s impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. As the impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte resumed on Wednesday, April 22, lawmakers put financial review in focus, citing Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) reports on “covered transactions” and

- [Revilla case: Funds released for ‘ghost’ project despite irregularities](#) (2026-04-22 15:11)

MANILA, Philippines — Funds for the P92.8-million flood control project in Pandi, Bulacan, were still released despite alleged irregularities in billing documents. Genevieve Cuaresma, finance director of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), confirmed this when she testified on Wednesday during the bail hearing for the malversation case of former senator Bong Revilla

- [PAF goes on aerial check of Homonhon Island grass fire in Eastern Samar](#) (2026-04-22 14:52)

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippine Air Force conducted an aerial flight over Homonhon Island in Guiuan, Eastern Samar to assess the extent of a grass fire that has been burning across the

remote areas of the island. Air Force helicopters from the 205th Tactical Helicopter Wing and Tactical Operations Group 8 were deployed Tuesday to monitor the

- [WATCH: Chua questions Ombudsman about VP Duterte's SALN](#) (2026-04-22 14:46)

This video is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — Officials from the Office of the Ombudsman answer questions from Rep. Joel Chua about the statement of assets, liabilities, and net worth of Vice President Sara Duterte during the April 22, 2026,

- [Pagasa issues El Niño Alert; drought in PH now likely](#) (2026-04-22 14:35)

MANILA, Philippines — The state weather bureau has issued an El Niño Alert, which means there is a high chance of dry spells and droughts in parts of the country. In a statement on Wednesday, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said that while the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Neutral prevails

- [Calapan City hits 42°C 'danger' heat index; residents warned](#) (2026-04-22 14:35)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The city's disaster risk reduction and management office (DRRMO) on Wednesday warned residents of dangerous heat levels after the heat index reached 42 degrees Celsius late morning. In an advisory issued at 11 a.m., the DRRMO said the recorded heat index at the Calapan City Public Market monitoring station fell

- [WATCH: VP Duterte impeach hearing continues without her again](#) (2026-04-22 14:09)

This video is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — Rep. Gerville Luistro opens the April 22, 2026, hearing on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte, noting her continued absence and summarizing the revelations made during the previous proceedings.

- [Over 600 transactions of Sara Duterte worth P6.7B flagged by AMLC](#) (2026-04-22 13:44)

This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — The Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) reported that billions of pesos worth of transactions linked to Vice President Sara Duterte and her husband were flagged by banks. These

- [MMDA pushes 'Yes to Ayos' to enhance order in Metro Manila](#) (2026-04-22 13:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) on Wednesday pushed its "Yes to Ayos" campaign, an initiative aimed at promoting discipline and responsible behavior in public spaces across Metro Manila. The effort follows President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s directive to strengthen programs that foster a culture of discipline.

READ: Bittersweet traveling in the Philippines

- [Raffy Tulfo flags inaccurate Dole inspections on ‘5-5-5’ jobs](#) (2026-04-22 13:25)

MANILA, Philippines – Sen. Raffy Tulfo criticized on Wednesday the inaccuracy of the Department of Labor and Employment’s (Dole) inspections in detecting “5-5-5” working schemes, which refers to service contracting that lasts only five months to prevent regularization at the sixth month of employment. Tulfo presided over the Senate Labor, Employment, and Human Resources Development

- [AMLC confirms suspicious transactions made by Sara Duterte, kin](#) (2026-04-22 13:09)

This report is part of Inquirer’s special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte’s impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — The Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) has confirmed to the House committee on justice that it found covered and suspicious transactions made by Vice President Sara Duterte and her

- [PNP orders audit of training units over alleged rental kickbacks](#) (2026-04-22 13:01)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) ordered a sweeping audit of all regional police training units nationwide following allegations that trainees were forced to cover part of their superiors’ housing expenses through an alleged rental kickback scheme. “I have ordered a mandatory audit of all lease agreements involving trainees,” said the PNP

- [NCAP to soon cover improper waste disposal — MMDA](#) (2026-04-22 12:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The No Contact Apprehension Policy (NCAP) will soon cover improper waste disposal monitored through closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras in Metro Manila, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) General Manager Nicolas Torre II said on Wednesday. According to Torre, proper waste disposal is a “cat-and-mouse” situation, noting that some residents only comply with regulations

- [Bid to block Romualdez’s trip abroad up for Sandiganbayan’s resolution](#) (2026-04-22 12:41)

MANILA, Philippines — The precautionary hold departure order (PHDO) against former House Speaker and Leyte Rep. Ferdinand Martin Romualdez has been submitted for resolution in the Sandiganbayan. Sandiganbayan Seventh Division chairperson Associate Justice Lorifel Lacap-Pahimna made the announcement during Wednesday’s hearing. PHDO is a written court order directing the Bureau of Immigration to prevent any

- [Bank account under Dutertes’ name still active, says Cendaña](#) (2026-04-22 12:34)

This report is part of Inquirer’s special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte’s impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — A bank account under the names of Vice President Sara Duterte and her

father, former President Rodrigo Duterte, is still active, according to Akbayan party-list Rep. Perci

- [Marcoleta told: SALN issue included in Duterte impeachment complaint](#) (2026-04-22 12:33)

This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — Lawmakers cited grounds mentioned in the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte to Sagip party-list Rep. Paolo Henry Marcoleta after he claimed that her Statements of

- [Sara Duterte declared no cash, bank deposits since 2019 in SALNs](#) (2026-04-22 12:17)

This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte declared having no petty cash nor bank deposits since 2019, according to her net worth documents released on Wednesday, even as her wealth

- [Remulla signals move to block Romualdez's Singapore medical checkup trip](#) (2026-04-22 11:51)

MANILA, Philippines — “It is what it is.” Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla said this on Wednesday in response to House of Representatives Speaker Faustino ‘Bojie’ Dy III supposedly allowing Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez to fly to Singapore for a checkup following a previous angioplasty. Would the Office of the Ombudsman block the House's travel clearance

- [Marcos prays for grace as he attends Our Lady of Manaoag event](#) (2026-04-22 11:50)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday prayed for grace to follow the virtues of Our Lady of Manaoag and for a renewed commitment to serve with love and compassion. He made these invocations during the prayer for the centennial anniversary of the canonical coronation of Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Manaoag, enshrined

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of April 22, 2026](#) (2026-04-22 11:47)

MANILA, Philippines — Yesterday, April 21, motorists saw another significant, double-digit rollback for diesel. This means P112 per liter for the regular diesel and around P147 per liter for premium variants—significantly lower from previous highs of about P170 per liter. Gasoline and kerosene also saw small rollbacks of P3.41 and P2 per liter, respectively. READ:

- [Smokey Mountain residents protest P26-B WTE project, cite health risks](#) (2026-04-22 11:42)

MANILA, Philippines—Hundreds of residents, environmental advocates and urban poor groups gathered in Smokey Mountain, Tondo, in April as part of Earth Month activities to oppose a proposed waste-to-energy (WTE) incinerator project, raising concerns about its potential impact on health, housing and livelihoods. The mobilization, organized by groups including the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA)

- [Ombudsman exec confirms Sara Duterte’ s SALNs from 2007 to 2024](#) (2026-04-22 11:27)

This report is part of Inquirer’ s special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte’ s impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — An official from the Office of the Ombudsman has confirmed the veracity of Vice President Sara Duterte’ s Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth (SALN) from 2007 to 2024 that were submitted

- [SC urged: Compel Marcos to undergo medical, drug exams](#) (2026-04-22 11:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez has urged the Supreme Court to compel President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to undergo a physical and mental examinations, including a drug test, citing what he described as signs of a “worsening” health condition. Alvarez, together with Virgilio Garcia, Juan Raña, and Raymundo Junia, filed a petition for mandamus

- [Romualdez should have testified before the Senate blue ribbon – Lacson](#) (2026-04-22 11:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Former House Speaker Martin Romualdez should have appeared during the Senate inquiry into the alleged anomalous flood control projects, Senate President Pro Tempore Sen. Panfilo “Ping” Lacson said on Wednesday. Lacson, who heads the Senate blue ribbon panel, made the remark in a social media post after Romualdez came out to deny

- [Luistro blasts Duterte for skipping probe, ‘gaslighting’ committee](#) (2026-04-22 10:54)

This report is part of Inquirer’ s special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte’ s impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — House justice committee chair and Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro has criticized Vice President Sara Duterte for continuing to skip impeachment hearings, saying the country’ s second-highest official has chosen

- [Sara Duterte a no-show in Wednesday’ s impeachment hearing](#) (2026-04-22 10:51)

This report is part of Inquirer’ s special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte’ s impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines – Vice President Sara Duterte did not appear before a congressional panel holding impeachment proceedings against her on Wednesday, signalling that she may continue skipping the hearings that

- [7 PNPA cadets face criminal rap for alleged maltreatment of 22 students](#) (2026-04-22 10:41)

MANILA, Philippines—A criminal case has been filed before the Office of the Provincial Prosecutor in Imus, Cavite against seven cadets of the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) over alleged maltreatment of 22 other cadets. The Criminal Investigation and Detection

Group (CIDG) filed the complaint for violation of Republic Act No. 11053 or the Anti-Hazing Act of 2018.

- [South Cotabato's Lake Holon reopens to tourists](#) (2026-04-22 10:23)

KORONADAL CITY, South Cotabato – The scenic Lake Holon in Tboli, South Cotabato, which had been closed for about two weeks due to security concerns, has reopened to the public. Tboli Mayor Keo Dayle Tuan lifted the closure order through Executive Order 31, signed on Monday, with a copy made public on Tuesday at noon. “After

- [103 families left homeless by massive fire in Bacolod City](#) (2026-04-22 10:12)

BACOLOD CITY—A massive fire razed 37 houses in Barangay 14 here on Tuesday, leaving affected families homeless. The fire displaced 103 families with 307 members from Purok Ramon Magsaysay Dawis, according to Richelle Verdeprado-Mangga, head of the Bacolod Department of Social Services and Development. She said that based on the initial count, 27 houses were destroyed

- [Ombudsman Remulla arrives at House panel on Duterte impeachment](#) (2026-04-22 10:11)

This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla has arrived at the House of Representatives for its justice committee's third hearing on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte on

- [Nearly ₱280M worth of shabu seized in Quezon City; 2 Chinese arrested](#) (2026-04-22 10:05)

MANILA, Philippines—Suspected methamphetamine hydrochloride, locally known as shabu, valued at ₱278.8 million were confiscated and two Chinese were arrested in a buy-bust operation in Quezon City on Tuesday. Anti-narcotics operatives from the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) and the Philippine National Police seized around 41 kilograms of the illegal drugs, hidden in a paper bag

- [Lawmakers resume probe into Sara Duterte impeachment complaints](#) (2026-04-22 10:00)

This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines – Impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte continued on Wednesday, with lawmakers expected to scrutinize her financial records as part of an inquiry into the complaints that

- [Trillanes, Clavano arrive at House panel hearing on Duterte impeachment](#) (2026-04-22 09:56)

This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment.



MANILA, Philippines — Former Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and Assistant Ombudsman Mico Clavano have arrived at the House of Representatives for its justice committee's third hearing on the impeachment complaints

- [PNP probes ₱16.12-M smuggled cigarettes in Lanao del Sur trucks](#) (2026-04-22 09:34)

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippine National Police (PNP) ordered an investigation on Wednesday into the origin and possible networks linked to ₱16,120,000 worth of suspected smuggled cigarettes found in abandoned trucks in Malabang, Lanao del Sur. Boxes of suspected smuggled cigarettes seized by the Police Regional Office–Bangsamoro Autonomous Region were discovered stashed beneath coconuts in three left-behind

- [Taal Volcano logs minor eruption, 6 seismic events — Phivolcs](#) (2026-04-22 09:22)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon — Taal Volcano recorded a minor phreatic eruption, along with four volcanic earthquakes and two tremors, over the past 24 hours, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology reported on Wednesday. The eruption, locally referred to as “pusngat,” occurred at 7:10 p.m. and lasted for about one minute. It generated a plume

- [What to expect: 2nd hearing on Sara Duterte's impeachment raps](#) (2026-04-22 09:10)

This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. MANILA, Philippines — As the House of Representatives' committee on justice is set to resume discussions on Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment, there are several topics that the panel is expected to discuss. In a

- [WATCH: House impeachment hearing vs VP Sara Duterte | April 22](#) (2026-04-22 08:33)

This report is part of Inquirer's special coverage of Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment proceedings. For real-time updates, follow our live coverage of the impeachment. The House Committee Justice panel on Wednesday, April 22, resumes its deliberations on the impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte. READ: Senate may convene on May 4 for Duterte impeachment upon transmittal READ:

- [UPCAT 2026 results now out](#) (2026-04-22 07:33)

MANILA, Philippines — The results of the University of the Philippines College Admission Test (UPCAT) for the incoming first year college students for school year 2026-2027 have been released. READ: 17,996 applicants pass UPCAT 2025; 6.74% higher than last year This was announced by the state university on Wednesday morning, as it encouraged applicants to

- [UPCAT 2026 results now out](#) (2026-04-22 07:33)

{Updated April 22, 2026, 8:53 a.m.} MANILA, Philippines — The results of the University of the Philippines College Admission Test (UPCAT) for the incoming first year college students for school year 2026-2027 have been released. READ: 17,996 applicants pass UPCAT 2025; 6.74%



higher than last year This was announced by the state university on Wednesday

- [Hot, humid weather forecast in most parts of PH on Wednesday — Pagasa](#) (2026-04-22 06:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Most parts of the country will experience hot and humid weather on Wednesday brought by the easterlies, the state weather bureau said. In the 5 a.m. weather forecast of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration, weather specialist Chenel Dominguez said that the easterlies, or the warm winds coming from the

- [Romualdez on corruption probe: ‘I’ m no scapegoat’](#) (2026-04-22 05:55)

MANILA, Philippines — Leyte Rep. Ferdinand Martin Romualdez on Tuesday broke his silence over allegations linking him to the controversial portions of the 2025 national budget, saying he would not allow himself “to be turned into the scapegoat so that others who are actually accountable can walk away clean.” Romualdez, a cousin of President Ferdinand

- [Remulla: Romualdez can’ t leave; asset freeze sought](#) (2026-04-22 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla on Tuesday said his office “did not respond favorably” to Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez’ s request to leave the country for a medical checkup in Singapore, as he disclosed that initial steps had been taken for the issuance of a freeze order on the former Speaker’ s assets. Later in

- [Galvez resigns; Sarmiento next Marcos peace adviser](#) (2026-04-22 05:45)

MANILA, Philippines — Carlito Galvez Jr. resigned on Tuesday as chief of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (Opapru), saying he needed to take care of his wife and spend more time with his family. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. named retired general and former Interior Secretary Mel Sarmiento, 65, as

- [Gov’ t to agencies, LGUs: Don’ t delay food trucks](#) (2026-04-22 05:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Tuesday urged national agencies and local government units (LGUs) to help farmers and traders take advantage of reduced toll and port fees to cushion the impact of high fuel prices on food. “This begins with the speedy accreditation of farmers and traders who are qualified for the toll fee waiver,”

- [VP impeach hearing takes up SALN, SEC, BIR papers—and Trillanes](#) (2026-04-22 05:35)

MANILA, Philippines — The committee on justice of the House of Representatives has obtained copies of Vice President Sara Duterte’ s statement of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN), as well as documents from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), in time for today’ s hearing on the impeachment complaints

- [Leni Robredo rules out national run in ’ 28](#) (2026-04-22 05:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Vice President Leni Robredo on Tuesday ruled out a run for national office in the 2028 elections, saying she preferred to remain in Naga City, a move analysts said could weaken the opposition's effort to challenge Vice President Sara Duterte's political ambitions. Robredo said she plans to seek a second term

- [Cops nab 2 men in second 'gas-and-run' case in QC](#) (2026-04-22 04:55)

MANILA, Philippines — Two individuals have been arrested after they allegedly fled in a white Toyota Vios from a gas station in Payatas Road, Quezon City, without paying for P1,500 worth of fuel, the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) said on Tuesday. In a statement, the QCPD said the suspects identified only as "Tyron" and

- [QC students back Pope's call for peace through paper cranes](#) (2026-04-22 04:50)

MANILA, Philippines — A parish in Quezon City is showing its support for Pope Leo's call for an end to the Middle East conflict by making 1,000 paper cranes. On Tuesday, students from public and private schools gathered at the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Project 8, Quezon City, to work on the

- [Army: NPA leadership in Negros wiped out](#) (2026-04-22 04:45)

BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, Philippines — Five of the 19 suspected rebels killed in an encounter on Sunday were key officials of the New People's Army's Northern Negros Front (NNF), creating a leadership vacuum in the area, a Philippine Army official said Tuesday. Brig. Gen. Ted Dumosmog, commander of the 303rd Infantry Brigade, said the

- [Bicol farm losses reach P4.8M amid lack of rain](#) (2026-04-22 04:40)

LEGAZPI CITY, ALBAY, Philippines — Agricultural losses in the Bicol region have reached P4.8 million due to declining rainfall and the onset of the dry season, the Department of Agriculture (DA) reported on Tuesday. Lovella Guarin, DA Bicol information officer, told the Inquirer that data from automated weather stations showed below-normal rainfall across the region

- [On Earth Day, Zamboanga geologist shares life behind explorations](#) (2026-04-22 04:35)

PAGADIAN CITY, ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR, Philippines — For Dr. Lawrence Zamora, supervising geologist of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) in the Zamboanga Peninsula, his profession demands grit, precision, and constant exposure to the elements—whether under scorching heat, heavy rain, or in steep and flood-prone terrain, sometimes even in communities wary of outsiders. Marking Earth

- [Iloilo air stays safe as haze affects other areas](#) (2026-04-22 04:30)

ILOILO CITY, Philippines — Air quality in Metro Iloilo remains within acceptable levels despite haze reports in Metro Cebu and parts of Metro Manila, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources–Environmental Management Bureau (DENR–EMB) in Western Visayas. In its monitoring on Tuesday, the regional EMB reported Air Quality Index

(AQI) readings ranging from

- [Sara, Rodrigo Duterte’ s alleged joint bank account still active – solon](#) (2026-04-22 01:28)

MANILA, Philippines — Akbayan party-list Rep. Perci Cendaña on Tuesday confirmed that the alleged joint bank account of Vice President Sara Duterte and her father, former President Rodrigo Duterte remains active. Cendaña confirmed the bank account’ s status after depositing money himself ahead of Sara Duterte’ s impeachment hearing before the House justice panel on Wednesday, April

- [LOOK: Strike divides transport workers in Iloilo City](#) (2026-04-22 00:58)

ILOILO CITY, Philippines — Amid a call for strike, some traditional and modernized jeepneys continue to ply their routes in Iloilo City on Tuesday. The jeepneys drove along Rizal Street and City Proper on Tuesday, April 21, while some transport groups hold a local demonstration to cry “Sobra na! Tama na” pertaining to alleged overpricing

- [Alleged ‘high-value’ drug suspect busted; P680,000 shabu seized in Rizal](#) (2026-04-22 00:50)

LUCENA CITY, QUEZON, Philippines — Authorities arrested an alleged high-value drug suspect and seized about P680,000 worth of shabu in a buy-bust operation early Tuesday, April 21, in Angono, Rizal, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) Region IV-A reported. Operatives from the PDEA-Rizal office, along with police operatives, apprehended the suspect, identified only by the

- [P1.4M in suspected shabu seized from elderly suspect in Butuan City](#) (2026-04-21 23:41)

TANDAG, SURIGAO DEL SUR, Philippines — Some P1.43 million worth of suspected shabu was seized from an elderly man in a buy-bust operation conducted on Monday, April 20, in Butuan City. The suspect, identified as alias “Angkol,” 63, of Barangay Maon, is classified as a high-value individual. Seized during the operation were approximately 210 grams of

- [Dole to consider impact of Middle East crisis in next wage review cycle](#) (2026-04-21 23:06)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Labor and Employment (Dole) said it will consider concerns related to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East during the next round of wage review cycle in the National Capital Region that is scheduled this May. In a statement on Monday, Dole said it is preparing for the next

- [Bohol hosts first Glow-in-the-Dark International Dragon Boat Festival](#) (2026-04-21 22:58)

TAGBILARAN CITY, BOHOL, Philippines — Despite external challenges affecting international participation, Bohol successfully staged the first-ever Glow-in-the-Dark International Dragon Boat Festival 2026, held on April 18 to April 19, transforming the waters of Tagbilaran City into a vibrant nighttime sporting spectacle. The two-day night racing event drew eight teams and over 200 paddlers, including participants

- [No jackpot winner in 6/58, 6/49, 6/42 lotto draws on Tuesday, April 21](#) (2026-04-21 22:03)

MANILA, Philippines—No bettor won the jackpot prize in the Ultra Lotto 6/58, SuperLotto 6/49 and Lotto 6/42 draws on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. Ultra Lotto 6/58 result: 58-34-43-05-40-03 Jackpot prize: ₱75 million Super Lotto 6/49 result: 45-10-36-43-13-19 Jackpot prize: ₱25 million. Lotto 6/42 result: 22-04-33-11-09-15 Jackpot prize: ₱17.86

- [4,000 more Calabarzon tricycle drivers receive financial aid](#) (2026-04-21 21:57)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon – The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) distributed cash assistance on Tuesday, April 21, to 4,000 more tricycle drivers across the Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon) region. The DSWD-Region IV-A said the tricycle drivers, who will each receive ₱5,000 from the national government, are from Antipolo City in Rizal, and

- [‘Very weak’ minor phreatic eruption recorded at Taal Volcano – Phivolcs](#) (2026-04-21 21:52)

MANILA, Philippines — A “very weak” minor phreatic eruption was recorded at Taal Volcano on Tuesday evening, said the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs). According to Phivolcs in a time-lapse footage posted in its social media pages, the phreatic eruption was recorded at Taal Volcano’s main crater between 7:10 p.m. and 7:11 p.m.

- [LTO suspends bus driver’s license over fatal Quezon bus crash](#) (2026-04-21 21:47)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon — The Land Transportation Office (LTO) has suspended for 90 days the license of the bus driver involved in a fatal road crash in Pagbilao, Quezon on Monday night. In a Facebook post on Tuesday, LTO-Region IV-A said the preventive suspension was imposed “as an initial measure to ensure public safety while

- [Metro Cebu air quality improving](#) (2026-04-21 21:35)

CEBU CITY — Air quality in Metro Cebu is improving as shifting wind patterns help disperse the haze that lingered over the area in recent days, the Environmental Management Bureau in Central Visayas (EMB-7) said Tuesday. As of April 21, the Air Quality Index (AQI) dropped to 139, lowering the classification from “Very Unhealthy” to

- [P16-M suspected smuggled cigarettes recovered in Lanao del Sur](#) (2026-04-21 21:21)

COTABATO CITY – The Police Regional Office–Bangsamoro Autonomous Region (PROBAR) seized an estimated ₱16,120,000 worth of suspected smuggled cigarettes after spotting three abandoned trucks on Monday in Barangay BPS Village in Malabang, Lanao del Sur. Brig. General Jayzen De Guzman, director for PROBAR, said that personnel from the Malabang municipal police station, together with the

- [HEAT INDEX WATCH: Aparri, Cagayan to reach 42°C on Wednesday, April 22](#) (2026-04-21 20:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The heat index in Aparri, Cagayan is forecast to reach a peak of 42°C on Wednesday, April 22, said the state weather bureau. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) defines heat index as the “measure of the contribution that high humidity makes with abnormally high temperatures in reducing the

- [Pangilinan respects, disagrees with Leni Robredo plan on '28 nat' I polls](#) (2026-04-21 20:26)

MANILA, Philippines – “We respect her decision even as we disagree with it.” This was the statement of Sen. Francis “Kiko” Pangilinan on Tuesday after former vice president and incumbent Naga City Mayor Leni Robredo announced that she will not run for national position in the upcoming 2028 elections “We respect her decision even as

- [Legarda's Local Harvest Support Act protects farmers' livelihoods, ensures food supply](#) (2026-04-21 19:58)

MANILA, Philippines – Senator Loren Legarda has filed Senate Bill No. 2051, or the Local Harvest Support Act of 2026, to strengthen food security and protect the livelihoods of farmers and fisherfolk at a time when rising fuel costs and soaring prices of basic goods are pushing rural producers to the brink. “Kapag bumabagsak ang

- [Forthwith? Solons believe strong case vs Duterte leads to Senate preps](#) (2026-04-21 19:51)

MANILA, Philippines — At least two ranking House of Representatives lawmakers believe that the strong case and evidence presented against Vice President Sara Duterte has prompted the Senate leadership to prepare for a possible impeachment trial. In a statement on Tuesday, Assistant Majority Leader and Lanao del Sur Rep. Zia Alonto Adiong said that Senate President

- [DepEd expands summer programs to help struggling learners catch up](#) (2026-04-21 19:44)

MANILA, Philippines — From May 6 to June 3, 2026, learners at risk of falling behind will be given a critical chance to succeed as the Department of Education (DepEd) rolls out its expanded summer remediation programs to help them recover foundational skills and return to grade-level readiness. Education Secretary Sonny Angara emphasized the urgency and purpose of the initiative:

- [AMLC receives House subpoena on Duterte-Carpio transactions](#) (2026-04-21 19:31)

MANILA, Philippines – The Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) has received a subpoena from the House committee on justice requiring its top official to appear at the next impeachment hearing this Wednesday and submit financial records involving Vice President Sara Duterte and her husband. The subpoena ad testificandum et duces tecum, dated April 15, 2026, directs

- [PNP tightens security in Negros Occidental after Army clash with NPA](#) (2026-04-21 19:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. ordered the agency to intensify its presence and security measures in Negros Occidental following a clash between government forces and the New People's Army (NPA). "Our top priority is to ensure the safety of our communities while operations continue in Negros Occidental,"

- [P1.53-M shabu seized, 2 nabbed in Parañaque drug sting](#) (2026-04-21 19:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Suspected shabu (crystal meth) worth P1.53 million was confiscated, and two individuals were arrested in a buy-bust operation in Parañaque City early Tuesday morning, the Southern Police District (SPD) said. A poseur-buyer arranged to meet with the two suspects, identified by the aliases "Muksimin," 27; and "Jarbbby," 22, along Santa Rita Extension

- [Paper trail: SALN, AMLC records to take center stage in April 22 hearing](#) (2026-04-21 19:13)

MANILA, Philippines – House Committee on Public Accounts Chairperson Terry Ridon said Tuesday the next impeachment hearing against Vice President Sara Duterte this Wednesday will be more consequential, as the House Committee on Justice is set to rely primarily on financial documents, tax records, and bank transactions in determining probable cause over allegations of ill-gotten

- [Ortega to VP Duterte: Do a Madriaga – take oath, sign bank waiver](#) (2026-04-21 19:02)

MANILA, Philippines – As a test of credibility, Deputy Speaker Paolo Ortega V of La Union on Tuesday urged Vice President Sara Duterte to personally attend the next hearing of the House committee on justice on April 22, take her oath, sign a bank waiver, and directly answer allegations raised by resource person Ramil Madriaga.

- [Barrick Gold deposits \\$50-M in escrow; 1st payment in Marcopper mining tragedy](#) (2026-04-21 18:58)

MANILA, Philippines—30 years after the toxic mine tailings spill in the rivers of Boac and other towns in Marinduque, the Canada-based Barrick Gold Corporation has now deposited fifty million dollars in the escrow account for the rehabilitation of the abandoned mine site. This move was confirmed by former Marinduque Governor Presbitero Velasco. The amount is

- [DepEd to start expanded summer programs next month – Sec. Angara](#) (2026-04-21 18:54)

MANILA, Philippines – The Department of Education (DepEd) on Tuesday said it will roll out its expanded summer remediation programs in May to help learners "at risk of falling behind" and return to their grade-level readiness. The program will run from May 6 to June 3 this year, according to Education Secretary Sonny Angara, as

- [NBI arrests man for assaulting, threatening ex-partner](#) (2026-04-21 18:54)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has arrested a man who allegedly assaulted and threatened his former partner. In a statement on Tuesday, the NBI said the hot pursuit operation against the suspect in Pasay City followed a complaint filed by his ex-partner before the NBI Cybercrime Division on April 10. READ:

- [NBI probing everyone who threatens First Family, not just Baste Duterte](#) (2026-04-21 18:44)

MANILA, Philippines — National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Director Melvin Matibag has signed an administrative order to investigate not only Davao City Mayor Sebastian “Baste” Duterte but “everyone” who threatens the First Family. In a press conference, Matibag noted that the administrative order was signed “a few days ago” but clarified that “it” s not directed

- [Romualdez says only Escudero, Co responsible for budget decisions](#) (2026-04-21 18:44)

MANILA, Philippines — While he was Speaker of the House of Representatives when the 2025 national budget was crafted, Leyte Rep. Ferdinand Martin Romualdez has disputed claims that he interfered in discussions — noting that budget decisions were made just by two officials. According to Romualdez, the two individuals are former Senate President Francis “Chiz” Escudero

- [Cables powering Mayon monitoring station cut, stolen – Phivolcs](#) (2026-04-21 18:31)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) on Wednesday said cables used for real-time monitoring data communications at Mayon Volcano were stolen in Albay. According to Phivolcs, the cables were discovered to be cut and stolen during a routine maintenance activity by Mayon Volcano Observatory personnel at the Ligao Observation Station

- [Rights watchdog says PH at critical crossroad; calls for urgent action](#) (2026-04-21 18:29)

MANILA, Philippines — Human rights watchdog Amnesty International Philippines (AIPh) warned that the country stands at a “critical crossroad,” calling on the government to act with urgency amid mounting concerns over shrinking civic space, persistent red-tagging, arrests of protesters, and the killing of journalists. “The Philippines stands at a critical crossroad. Democratic institutions are being

- [Remulla: Co to be included in ‘main’ plunder case vs Romualdez, Escudero](#) (2026-04-21 18:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Former lawmaker Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co will be included in the “main case” of plunder being built against former Speaker Martin Romualdez and former Senate President Francis Escudero, Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla said on Tuesday. Once he returns to the Philippines, Co will have to answer questions on whether or not he will



- [Romualdez to Ombudsman: Don't single me out in flood probe](#) (2026-04-21 18:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Leyte Rep. Ferdinand Martin Romualdez urged the Office of the Ombudsman to not single him out in the flood control controversy, saying investigators should pursue other leads and not focus solely on him amid furor over alleged involvement in the corruption scheme. In a video statement, Romualdez said he was breaking his silence

- [Romualdez: How can I be mastermind if Congress doesn't build projects?](#) (2026-04-21 18:11)

MANILA, Philippines — Leyte Rep. Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, the former House speaker, has broken his silence over the 2025 budget mess and the infrastructure corruption issue, asking how he would become the mastermind of the supposed scheme when crafting the annual budget and implementation of projects does not rest on Congress alone. In a video statement

- [LTFRB suspends 9 buses after fatal road crash in Quezon](#) (2026-04-21 18:03)

MANILA, Philippines – The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has suspended nine units of a bus company for 30 days after issuing a show cause order (SCO) over a fatal road crash in Quezon. In a statement on Tuesday, LTFRB Chair Vigor Mendoza II said the agency had summoned Delmonte Motor Works Inc.,

- [PNP orders probe into cold kidnap-for-ransom cases](#) (2026-04-21 18:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. ordered the agency to investigate cold kidnap-for-ransom (KFR) cases after the rescue of a 78-year-old kidnapping victim in Parañaque City. “While the Parañaque operation is considered closed, the involvement of rogue ex-personnel necessitates a deeper probe into potential syndicates,” Nartatez said Tuesday.

- [PNP-IAS probes minor's death in GenSan shootout](#) (2026-04-21 17:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police – Internal Affairs Service (PNP-IAS) is investigating the death of a minor during a police shootout with a suspect who had allegedly been firing his gun indiscriminately in General Santos City. “This has been taken up by the Internal Affairs Service as a motu proprio investigation,” Inspector General

- [Castro: Public sees who works, who's on vacation amid ratings](#) (2026-04-21 17:43)

MANILA, Philippines — Palace press officer Claire Castro on Tuesday said she was grateful that the public could see who was truly working and who was merely taking vacations, following President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s recent trust and performance ratings. Based on OCTA Research's Tugon ng Masa survey for the first quarter of 2026, 54 percent

- [Ombudsman seeks precautionary hold departure order vs Romualdez](#) (2026-04-21 17:33)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the Ombudsman has asked the Sandiganbayan to issue a precautionary hold departure order (PHDO) against Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez. If granted,



this PHDO would prevent the former House speaker from leaving the country. The request came after a petition for PHDO against Romualdez had reached the anti-graft court and

- [Ombudsman seeks to bar Romualdez from leaving PH over plunder complaint](#)

(2026-04-21 17:33)

MANILA, Philippines — A petition for precautionary hold departure order (PHDO) was filed by the Office of the Ombudsman on Tuesday before the Sandiganbayan against Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez over plunder complaints lodged by prosecutors who accused him of allegedly “masterminding” a kickback scheme which they said reached around P56 billion. If granted, this PHDO will prevent the overseas travel

- [LOOK: Piston, Manibela launch transport strike on April 21](#) (2026-04-21 17:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Transport groups Piston and Manibela joined forces on Tuesday as they once again launched a transport strike to protest rising fuel prices that have been affecting their livelihoods since tensions in the Middle East began. READ: Another transport strike set for April 21 Manibela began its main program in front of a gas station

- [BI intercepts 5 suspected trafficking victims at Mactan-Cebu airport](#) (2026-04-21 17:10)

MANILA, Philippines — Five individuals suspected of being trafficking victims were intercepted at the Mactan-Cebu International Airport, the Bureau of Immigration (BI) said Tuesday. According to the BI, the victims — all in their late 30s to 40s — were bound for a Cathay Pacific flight to Thailand on April 12 when they were blocked

- [Dela Rosa urged to decline Senate salary, allowances amid absences](#) (2026-04-21 17:07)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate ethics committee chairperson Sen. JV Ejercito on Tuesday urged Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa, who has been absent from Senate sessions since November 2025, to voluntarily decline his salaries and allowances. “We are appealing to Sen. Bato dela Rosa to voluntarily decline his salaries and allowances in the Senate,” Ejercito said

- [PNP bus driver faces reckless imprudence raps over Edsa busway collision](#) (2026-04-21 17:05)

MANILA, Philippines — The driver of the Philippine National Police (PNP) coaster bus that was involved in a crash with an Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (Edsa) carousel bus is now facing a case for reckless imprudence resulting in damage to property. The case was lodged before the Quezon City Prosecutor’s Office on Tuesday morning, District

- [House OKs Romualdez’s Singapore trip for angioplasty follow-up check](#) (2026-04-21 16:37)

MANILA, Philippines — Speaker Faustino “Bojie” Dy III has allowed Leyte Rep. Ferdinand Martin Romualdez’s travel to Singapore for a check-up regarding a previous angioplasty surgery, but the former Speaker has not left the country yet amid questions on whether he is

free to fly abroad. Romualdez' office on Tuesday provided reporters a copy of his

- [House justice panel gets Sara Duterte' s SALNs, SEC docs following subpoena](#) (2026-04-21 16:34)

MANILA, Philippines — The House committee on justice has obtained copies of Vice President Sara Duterte' s statement of assets, liabilities, and net worth (SALN). It has also received other documents from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) that may be used for the impeachment proceedings. Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry Ridon on Tuesday sent to the panel

- [Romualdez' lawyer says ex-Speaker not barred from leaving PH](#) (2026-04-21 16:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Former House of Representatives Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez is not barred from leaving the country as only an immigration lookout bulletin order has been issued against him, his lawyer said on Tuesday. In a statement on Tuesday, lawyer Ade Fajardo said that Romualdez is not prohibited to travel as what he simply has

- [Marcos admin guarantees Zaldy Co' s safe return to PH – Palace](#) (2026-04-21 16:18)

MANILA, Philippines — The Marcos administration guarantees the safe return of former lawmaker Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co to the Philippines, but noted that alleged threats against his life have yet to be verified, Malacañang said on Tuesday. At a briefing, Palace press officer Claire Castro was asked to assure Co' s safe return after Sen. JV Ejercito

- [Bureau of Customs – Clark intercepts P33.9-M shabu from Africa, US](#) (2026-04-21 16:10)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BOC) – Port of Clark seized an estimated P33.945 million worth of shabu from Africa and the United States declared as various items. In a statement on Tuesday, the BOC – Port of Clark said that five parcels showed suspicious images, which led to physical examination, including a

- [Direct flights to Manado to boost Mindanao-North Sulawesi trade](#) (2026-04-21 15:58)

DAVAO CITY — The Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) announced that reviving the direct air route between Davao City and Manado is expected to reduce travel time from 19 hours to just over an hour. Previous attempts to sustain direct flights between the two cities were hindered by inconsistent passenger demand, low cargo volume, and underdeveloped tourism

- [Group lauds Galvez' s service as he steps down as peace adviser](#) (2026-04-21 15:40)

COTABATO CITY – A non-government organization advocating for peace in the country has expressed appreciation to outgoing Peace Adviser Carlito Galvez Jr for his dedicated service to the Filipino people. READ: Carlito Galvez Jr. out, Mel Sarmiento in as new presidential peace adviser The Institute for Autonomy and Governance (IAG), one of the partners of

- [Palace on not releasing Zaldy Co' s photos: Gov' t being 'careful'](#) (2026-04-21 15:33)

MANILA, Philippines — Amid doubts about the legitimacy of the arrest of former lawmaker Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co, Palace press officer Claire Castro on Tuesday said they cannot release photos and videos of the apprehension because the government is being “careful” since another country is involved. During a briefing at Malacañang, Castro refused to provide details on exactly

- [NBI nabs 3 suspects at KTV bar in Pampanga for human trafficking](#) (2026-04-21 15:28)

MANILA, Philippines — Three individuals were arrested in Mabalacat City, Pampanga, for alleged involvement in human trafficking activity, according to the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI). The NBI also said in a statement on Tuesday that 21 human trafficking victims were rescued during the entrapment operation. READ: 48 arrested as NBI raided online scamming hub

- [Senate may convene on May 4 for Duterte impeachment upon transmittal](#) (2026-04-21 15:19)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate may convene as an impeachment court as early as May 4 once the articles of impeachment against Vice President Sara Duterte are transmitted from the House of Representatives, Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III said on Tuesday. He made the statement in a press briefing a day before the third

- [Quirino declares state of energy emergency](#) (2026-04-21 15:19)

CABARROGUIS, Quirino — The Sangguniang Panlalawigan (provincial board) here has declared a state of energy emergency amid fuel supply constraints and rising energy costs linked to the ongoing national energy crisis. In a resolution approved on Tuesday, board members authorized the provincial governor to implement urgent measures to ensure the continuity of essential services, disaster

- [Coast Guard tightens port security after Dumaguete travel chaos](#) (2026-04-21 15:10)

DUMAGUETE CITY — The Coast Guard (CG) District Southern Visayas is enhancing security protocols in the ports of Dumaguete and Siquijor following a chaotic weekend, an official said Monday. Commodore Christopher Auro, commander of the CG District Southern Visayas, reported that travelers jostled for tickets at the city port en route to Siquijor for a festival

- [Woman displaced by Navotas landfill blaze dies in Bulacan](#) (2026-04-21 15:08)

OBANDO, Bulacan — A 54-year-old woman evacuated following a fire at the Navotas sanitary landfill died on Tuesday, due to suspected health complications, local officials said. Mayor Leonardo Valeda identified the victim as Arlene Abot, a resident of the island barangay of Salambao in this town. Valeda said Abot was rushed aboard a municipal ambulance

- [Fire volunteer sues 2 Manila cops over alleged blocking of fire truck](#) (2026-04-21 14:59)

MANILA, Philippines — A fire volunteer filed administrative complaints before the National Police Commission (Napolcom) against a Manila Police District (MPD) personnel for allegedly blocking their truck during a fire incident; and the officer's brother for allegedly harassing him. In a statement on Tuesday, Napolcom said the complainant, identified as Manila Department of Social Welfare

- [Ombudsman thumbs down Romualdez's Singapore bid; freeze order looms](#) (2026-04-21 14:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla on Tuesday said his office “did not respond favorably” to Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez's request to leave the country for medical treatment in Singapore, as initial steps toward a freeze order on the lawmaker's assets are now in the works. The lawmaker's lawyer and spokesperson, Ade Fajardo, clarified

- [Ilocos Norte eyes defunct tomato plant for ecozone development](#) (2026-04-21 13:50)

LAOAG CITY — The dissolved Northern Foods Corporation (NFC) in Sarrat, Ilocos Norte is being considered for development as an economic zone, signaling a strategic shift toward sustainable land use and regional agricultural growth. An ecozone declaration provides investors with tax holidays and other government incentive packages. Rona Leigh Bueno, head of the Ilocos Norte Trade

- [Ejercito: Challenge is bringing Zaldy Co home 'in one piece'](#) (2026-04-21 13:22)

MANILA, Philippines — Senator JV Ejercito on Tuesday said the biggest challenge in bringing alleged “floodgates scandal” figure Zaldy Co back to the Philippines is ensuring his safety, warning that some groups may not want him to return and testify on the controversy. This statement came as President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. vowed to bring Co

- [Sara Duterte urged to attend impeachment hearing on April 22](#) (2026-04-21 13:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte should attend Wednesday's impeachment hearing and take her oath if she wants to counter the allegations against her, Deputy Speaker Paolo Ortega V said on Tuesday. He also said Duterte should directly respond to the accusations being made against her in the proceedings instead of skipping the hearings

- [Lacson: DOE price adjustments better than giving oil companies control](#) (2026-04-21 13:17)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Energy's (DOE) price adjustment is preferable than allowing private oil firms control, Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo “Ping” Lacson said on Tuesday. Lacson made the remark after the DOE announced on Monday that it has the authority to prescribe the price of petroleum products during crisis situations. “The government

- [Some teachers claim DepEd didn't consult them over trimestral shift](#) (2026-04-21 13:03)

MANILA, Philippines — A leader of a teachers’ union has accused the Department of Education (DepEd) of failing to consult them regarding proposals to shift from a quarterly to a trimestral school calendar, lamenting that the change may only cause additional burden on faculty members. During the hearing of the House of Representatives’ committee on basic

- [Iloilo groups rally support for April 21 strike](#) (2026-04-21 12:59)

ILOILO CITY — Sectoral groups in Iloilo province stepped up calls for public participation in the nationwide transport and people’s strike on Tuesday, April 21, as at least one town confirmed a temporary suspension of transport operations in support of the protest. On Monday, groups under Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN)-Panay staged a picket at the

- [Albay suspends in-person classes amid transport strike](#) (2026-04-21 12:51)

LEGAZPI CITY — In-person classes in Albay province were suspended on Tuesday due to the two-day transport strike. READ: Another transport strike set for April 21 Albay Gov. Noel Rosal said both public and private schools shifted to alternative learning modalities at all levels. Rosal also advised government and private offices to ferry their employees

- [Cabral’s order yields budget for project in Revilla case, court told](#) (2026-04-21 12:41)

MANILA, Philippines — Late Public Works Undersecretary Maria Catalina “Cathy” Cabral was the one who included in the 2025 budget amendments the alleged anomalous project in Pandi, Bulacan, which is the subject of a graft and malversation case against former Senator Bong Revilla. It was the first time Cabral — who died in what authorities

- [Batangas City offers free e-trike rides amid fuel price hike](#) (2026-04-21 12:38)

LUCENA CITY — The Batangas City government will roll out free rides using electric-powered tricycles to help commuters cope with rising fuel costs driven by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. READ: Batangas City offers free e-trike rides amid fuel price hike The city’s Public Information Office (PIO) said on Monday that the “e-Trike

- [Trillanes, AMLC get subpoena for Sara Duterte’s April 22 impeach hearing](#) (2026-04-21 12:29)

MANILA, Philippines — Both former Senator Antonio Trillanes IV and the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) have received the orders from the House of Representatives’ committee on justice to appear during the next impeachment hearing against Vice President Sara Duterte, to shed light into issues of alleged unexplained wealth. The House committee on Tuesday shared copies of

- [Carlito Galvez Jr. out, Mel Sarmiento in as new presidential peace adviser](#) (2026-04-21 12:20)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has appointed Mel Senen Sarmiento as the new Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (Opapru). Palace press officer

Claire Castro in a message on Tuesday confirmed that Marcos earlier accepted the resignation of retired military general Carlito Galvez Jr. from the post. [READ: Oban replaces Año as top security](#)

- [Magnitude 4.4 earthquake jolts Aurora; Intensity IV in Dinalungan](#) (2026-04-21 12:16)

MANILA, Philippines — A magnitude 4.4 earthquake struck parts of Aurora and nearby provinces early Tuesday, April 21, with the strongest shaking reported at Intensity IV in Dinalungan, state volcanologists said. According to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs), the quake was tectonic in nature and was traced 12 kilometers northwest (N 87°

- [P8.9M methanol seized from tanker, 6 nabbed in Caloocan City — PNP HPG](#) (2026-04-21 12:09)

MANILA, Philippines — Methanol worth P8.9 million was discovered in a tanker traced by the authorities to a lot in a residential area in Caloocan City, leading to the arrest of six workers, the Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group (PNP-HPG) said Tuesday. Police officers on an anti-carnapping patrol operation just outside the lot along

- [Tagbilaran' s free ride program serves 4,000 commuters daily](#) (2026-04-21 12:02)

TAGBILARAN CITY — The city government' s “Libreng Sakay” program is drawing an average of 4,000 commuters daily just days after its April 13 launch, highlighting its role as an immediate relief measure for residents facing rising transportation costs. The initiative, part of the P40.35-million Energy Crisis Social Protection Package, provides free rides on participating jeepneys

- [QCPD: 2 nabbed over P1,500 ‘gas-and-run’ case](#) (2026-04-21 11:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Two individuals were arrested for allegedly refueling a white Toyota Vios and fleeing without paying for P1,500 worth of fuel at a gas station, the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) said on Tuesday. Identified by the aliases “Tyron” and “Ricky,” the two suspects were arrested at their respective homes in Rodriguez, Rizal,

- [2 dead, 35 hurt as passenger bus falls into ravine in Quezon](#) (2026-04-21 11:46)

LUCENA CITY — Two people were killed while 35 others were injured after a Manila-bound passenger bus plunged into a 32-foot-deep ravine on Monday night in Pagbilao, Quezon, police said. The fatalities were identified only as “Sonny,” 34, of Mercedes, Camarines Norte, and “Ian,” 31, of Jose Panganiban, Camarines Norte. Police said the DLTB bus,

- [Accreditation of farmers, traders to program that cuts toll rate urged](#) (2026-04-21 11:45)

MANILA, Philippines — Executive Secretary Ralph Recto has called for the immediate accreditation of farmers and traders to the Department of Agriculture' s (DA) Food Lane Program, which provides reduced toll and port fees. In a press release on Tuesday, he urged

national agencies and local governments to assist truckers of farm produce in utilizing the

- [Emergency fuel shipment arrives in Subic amid energy concerns](#) (2026-04-21 11:33)

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT — The Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC), a government-owned and controlled corporation, has received a large diesel shipment at the Port of Subic Bay, the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) said Tuesday. The delivery, totaling 44,119 metric tons or about 329,505 barrels of diesel, underscores efforts to reinforce fuel reserves and stabilize

- [Sara Duterte urged to return flagged funds for oil crisis response](#) (2026-04-21 11:23)

MANILA, Philippines – The Makabayan bloc on Tuesday urged Vice President Sara Duterte to return to government coffers the hundreds of millions of pesos in confidential funds flagged by the Commission on Audit (COA), saying the money should be redirected to the state’s fund for oil crisis response. The disallowed confidential funds should be recovered

- [LTO revokes female vlogger’s license after viral traffic violation](#) (2026-04-21 11:20)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Office (LTO) has revoked the driver’s license of a female vlogger over a viral traffic violation incident and imposed a two-year disqualification of her license renewal. According to the LTO, the vlogger identified as Ishi Lee failed to attend the hearing and submit a verified explanation to the agency

- [Dawn fire in Urdaneta City leaves 6 dead as probe continues](#) (2026-04-21 11:08)

URDANETA CITY — The cause of a pre-dawn fire that gutted two houses and killed six people, including two children, in Barangay Nancayasan on Monday remains under investigation, police said. A belated police report identified the victims as two 11-year-old girls, two women aged 72 and 59, and two men aged 45 and 42. According

- [1,891 Davao Sur tricycle drivers to get P5,000 fuel subsidy \(April 21-23\)](#) (2026-04-21 11:08)

DAVAO CITY — The Department of Social Welfare and Development–Davao Region (DSWD-11) will distribute cash relief assistance (CRA) to 1,891 tricycle drivers in six Davao del Sur municipalities on April 21 to 23 (Tuesday to Thursday). In a statement Monday, DSWD-11 said the national government program aims to cushion vulnerable transport workers from the impact of

- [Vince Dizon, Vico Sotto inspect damaged F. Manalo Bridge in Pasig City](#) (2026-04-21 10:08)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Public Works and Highways is aiming to finish the permanent rehabilitation of the damaged F. Manalo Bridge in Pasig City within one and a half years, citing right of way acquisition as one of the main concerns, its secretary Vince Dizon said on Tuesday. The bridge was temporarily closed

- [Oriental Mindoro faces power deficit, says electric coop](#) (2026-04-21 10:04)



CALAPAN CITY — The Oriental Mindoro Electric Cooperative (ORMECO) has placed the province under red alert on Tuesday, April 21, as projected electricity demand is expected to exceed available supply throughout the day. READ: Luzon, Visayas electricity grids placed under ‘yellow’ alert In its advisory, ORMECO said the province’ s power supply is capped at 60.04

- [P33,950 in church offerings stolen in Southern Leyte parish](#) (2026-04-21 09:49)

TACLOBAN CITY— Authorities are investigating a robbery incident involving nearly P34,000 in church funds reported missing from a parish in Sogod town, Southern Leyte, police said. A parish finance officer, identified as alias “Marie,” 53, reported to the Sogod Municipal Police Station that a total of P33,950 in collected church offerings had been stolen from

- [DOLE Mindoro to hold Labor Day job fair in Calapan](#) (2026-04-21 09:34)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Job seekers in Oriental Mindoro will get a chance to land employment as the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) prepares for the 124th Labor Day Job Fair on May 1. The event will be held at the Bulwagang Panlalawigan, Provincial Capitol Complex in Barangay Camilmil, Calapan City, in partnership

- [LIST: Power interruptions on April 21 in parts of QC, Rizal](#) (2026-04-21 09:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Several areas in Quezon City and Antipolo, Rizal may experience power interruptions on Tuesday, April 21, due to line construction and reconductoring works, the Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) announced. According to Meralco’ s advisory, below are the areas possibly affected by the interruptions. READ: Meralco announces power interruptions due to maintenance work Quezon

- [Young farmers pitch innovations for nat’ l grants in Iloilo tilt](#) (2026-04-21 09:17)

ILOILO CITY — More than 100 young agricultural entrepreneurs from 16 regions have gathered in Iloilo City for the Department of Agriculture’ s (DA) Young Farmers Challenge (YFC) National Pitching Competition, where millions of pesos in grants are up for grabs. Running from April 20 to 24, the event features a high-stakes pitching competition, a business

- [Luistro: Duterte-Carpio tax documents next up in impeachment hearing](#) (2026-04-21 08:35)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives’ committee on justice will touch on the tax documents of Vice President Sara Duterte and her husband Manases Carpio when the impeachment hearing resumes on April 22, Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro said on Monday. Luistro in an online interview said that while the hearing on Wednesday will focus

- [State of calamity declared in Cagayan due to drought, rising oil prices](#) (2026-04-21 08:28)

TUGUEGARAO CITY — The Cagayan provincial government on Monday, April 20,, declared a state of calamity due to the severe effects of drought and rising oil prices. The declaration came after the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (PDRRMC) approved a resolution recommending the move during its second-quarter meeting, led by Provincial



Administrator Atty.

- [HEAT INDEX ALERT: Cavite expected to reach ‘danger’ level Tuesday](#) (2026-04-21 08:24)

MANILA, Philippines — The highest heat index nationwide may reach 43°C in Sangley Point, Cavite, placing it under the “danger” category, while Metro Manila is expected to remain under the “extreme caution” level with temperatures ranging from 38°C to 39°C, according to the state weather bureau. Heat index refers to the “feels like” temperature, or

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of April 21, 2026](#) (2026-04-21 08:20)

MANILA, Philippines – Motorists are set to get a major reprieve starting today as oil companies implement another round of double-digit rollback in diesel. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. announced on Monday that diesel prices will drop by nearly P25 per liter, marking one of the biggest reductions in recent months. READ: Diesel prices to drop

- [Pagasa: Easterlies to bring hot, humid weather, likely afternoon rains](#) (2026-04-21 07:46)

MANILA, Philippines — Easterlies will continue to bring hot and humid weather with chances of isolated thunderstorms across the country on Tuesday, the state weather bureau said. According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), the easterlies, or warm winds from the Pacific Ocean, are affecting Southern Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. “Hot

- [Asia-Pacific’ s largest news media event reveals program and global speaker lineup for WAN-IFRA Digital Media Asia 2026](#) (2026-04-21 06:00)

The Philippines is set to welcome the world’ s most influential voices in news publishing as WAN-IFRA Digital Media Asia (DMA) 2026 unveils its program and distinguished roster of speakers. With the support of the Department of Tourism and the presence of Manila City Mayor Francisco “Isko” Moreno Domagoso at the opening ceremonies, this landmark event

- [COA disallows P375M in OVP’ s secret funds](#) (2026-04-21 05:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Audit (COA) has flagged P375 million worth of confidential expenditures under the Office of the Vice President (OVP) in 2023 because they were not justified, lacked supporting documents, and disbursed by unauthorized personnel, documents shared by Bicol Saro Rep. Terry Ridon on Monday showed. Ridon noted that, based on

- [DOE: Hefty fine awaits oil firms defying price orders](#) (2026-04-21 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Local oil firms that defy the government’ s cap on fuel price hikes and the set minimum rollback could face hefty fines and jail time. In a media briefing on Monday, Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said the state of national energy emergency declared by President Marcos gives the government more authority to dictate

- [Court told: Brice Hernandez got P299M in boxes of soy sauce, chips](#) (2026-04-21 05:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The goddaughter of former Public Works engineer Brice Hernandez on Monday testified in court that Hernandez received around P299 million cash placed inside boxes of grocery items like “toyo” (soy sauce) and Piattos potato chips. Monica Louis Ocampo-Santos, the liaison officer of SYMS Construction, made the revelation on the witness stand of

- [CA urged to junk conviction of Tacloban-based journalist](#) (2026-04-21 05:35)

MANILA, Philippines — An advocacy group on Monday urged the Court of Appeals (CA) to overturn the conviction of community journalist Frenchie Mae Cumpio and community worker Marielle Domequil due to the “clear legal inconsistency” in their case. Cumpio and Domequil, who were arrested in Tacloban City in February 2020, were acquitted of illegal possession

- [PNP ‘Libreng Sakay’ driver, supervisor fired over Edsa busway collision](#) (2026-04-21 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The driver of a police bus that collided with an Edsa Carousel public utility bus (PUB) has been relieved of his post along with his immediate supervisor pending an investigation of the accident that happened in Quezon City on April 17, a Philippine National Police official said on Monday. “There are no

- [7 cops relieved over ‘kickbacks’ from rent for trainees’ lodging](#) (2026-04-21 05:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Seven police officers have been relieved from their posts after they were accused of demanding “kickbacks” from providers of temporary lodging for policemen undergoing field training in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR). At a press briefing held in Camp Crame on Monday, a copy of the relief order shared by Philippine National

- [NPA leader, 18 other rebels slain in Negros](#) (2026-04-21 04:45)

BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, Philippines — At least 19 alleged members of the New People’s Army (NPA), including a wanted rebel leader with a P2-million bounty, were killed in a series of encounters with Army troops in Barangay Salamanca, Toboso, northern Negros Occidental, on Sunday, officials said on Monday. Brig. Gen. Ted Dumosmog, commander of

- [DENR crackdown forces closure of Bohol furniture workshops](#) (2026-04-21 04:40)

TAGBILARAN CITY, BOHOL, Philippines — More small-scale woodcraft furniture makers in Bohol are facing shutdowns after the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) issued closure and stoppage orders, requiring permits they say were never part of the rules when they began operating. Operators in the towns of Loay, Loboc, and Sikatuna said they received

- [P10-M fish hatchery in Albay to boost Bicol aquaculture sector](#) (2026-04-21 04:35)

ALBAY, Philippines — A P10-million fish hatchery broke ground in Albay recently to boost the aquaculture sector in the Bicol Region, according to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR). The Albay Provincial Multi-Species Freshwater Hatchery at the Albay Farmers Bounty Village in Camalig town will serve as a breeding and grow-out site, as

- [LTFRB summons operator, driver of UV Express in fatal Cubao road crash](#) (2026-04-20 23:35)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Monday said it suspended for 30 days the operation of a UV Express involved in a road crash incident in Cubao, Quezon City. According to the LTFRB, the suspension came after a show-cause order was issued to the transport cooperative, which was summoned

- [48 arrested as NBI raided online scamming hub in Parañaque](#) (2026-04-20 22:38)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has arrested 48 individuals allegedly involved in an online scamming hub in a condominium in Parañaque City. In a statement on Monday, the NBI said the 48 individuals—41 Filipino females and seven foreign nationals—conducted illegal online scams, such as “Love Scamming Activities,” “Pig Butchering,” and “Cryptocurrency

- [Ex-Marine nabbed for using gun to threaten group drinking on road](#) (2026-04-20 22:11)

MANILA, Philippines — A retired 67-year-old member of the Philippine Marine Corps was arrested in Taguig City for allegedly using his gun to threaten a group that was drinking on the street, the Southern Police District (SPD) said on Monday. The purported altercation began on Sunday night after a group of individuals drinking along Camachile

- [No jackpot winner in Grand Lotto, Mega Lotto draws on Monday, April 20](#) (2026-04-20 22:05)

MANILA, Philippines – No bettor won the jackpot prize in the Grand Lotto 6/55 and Mega Lotto 6/45 draws on Monday, April 20, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. Grand Lotto 6/55 result: 33-36-17-40-22-45 Jackpot prize: ₱58.76 million. MegaLotto 6/45 result: 34-12-29-08-27-17 Jackpot prize: ₱34.15 million. Minor games Draw schedule Grand Lotto 6/55 draws

- [Manila Water marks Earth Day with Lakbay Kalikasan at La Mesa Nature Reserve](#) (2026-04-20 21:58)

MANILA, Philippines – In celebration of Earth Day 2026, Manila Water brought together communities and partners for Lakbay Kalikasan 2026: Let’s Move for Nature, a nature-based fitness and advocacy activity on Saturday at the La Mesa Nature Reserve in Novaliches, Quezon City. Attended by 110 participants from the private and public sectors, the activity was

- [NCR’s 6th most wanted nabbed over Pasay kidnapping case](#) (2026-04-20 21:28)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Capital Region Police Office’ s (NCRPO) sixth most wanted person was arrested over a kidnapping case in Pasay City, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Monday. Identified as a 39-year-old man under the alias “Jaycee,” the suspect was caught last Sunday at the Baseco Port Area in Manila, according to

- [4 foreigners nabbed for allegedly detaining Filipina worker in Pasay](#) (2026-04-20 21:28)

MANILA, Philippines — Four foreigners were arrested on Monday afternoon for allegedly detaining a Filipina working for them at a Pasay City condominium, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said. Police officers came to rescue the Filipina at a condominium unit along FB Harrison Street in Barangay 13 after she was able to instruct the group’ s

- [SC affirms ruling on cyberlibel prescription period](#) (2026-04-20 21:19)

MANILA, Philippines – The Supreme Court (SC) has closed the door on the debate over the “expiration period” of cyber libel, affirming its 2023 ruling that it should be one year from the discovery of the offense. In a resolution, the SC en banc, through Associate Justice Henri Jean Paul Inting denied the separate motions

- [Dangerous heat index grips 3 areas on Monday](#) (2026-04-20 21:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Three areas experienced a dangerous heat index on Monday, according to the state weather bureau. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) reported that as of 5 p.m., Sangley Point, Cavite logged the highest peak heat index for the day at 43°C. This marked the second consecutive day Sangley Point recorded

- [OVP’ s use of secret funds for different purpose is malversation — Ridon](#) (2026-04-20 21:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the Vice President’ s (OVP) utilization of confidential funds (CF) outside of its intended purpose is already tantamount to malversation, Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry Ridon said on Monday. Ridon, in an ambush interview was asked if the two notices of disallowance issued by the Commission on Audit’ s Intelligence and Confidential

- [House reso commends BINI performance at Coachella 2026](#) (2026-04-20 18:58)

MANILA, Philippines — A resolution that seeks to recognize and congratulate Pinoy-pop girl group BINI after their performance at Coachella 2026 — the first Filipino pop group to perform in the United States-based arts and music festival — has been filed before the House of Representatives. In a statement on Monday, Negros Occidental Rep. Javi Benitez

- [PNP orders safety measures for cops amid toxic smoke from Navotas fire](#) (2026-04-20 18:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) ordered safety measures for units affected by toxic smoke brought by the lingering haze at the Navotas City sanitary landfill

facility. “Our chiefs of police and unit commanders in the affected areas were already instructed to implement measures to ensure the safety and protection of our personnel

- [Caap eyes deployment of firefighting vehicles at regional airports](#) (2026-04-20 18:34)

MANILA, Philippines—The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (Caap) on Monday said it plans to deploy new aircraft rescue and firefighting (ARFF) vehicles at regional airports to enhance emergency response capabilities. In a statement, Caap said an Oshkosh Striker 6×6 fire truck was brought to Laoag International Airport on April 19, with another unit delivered

- [Groups urge probe into Metro Manila air quality after landfill fire](#) (2026-04-20 18:32)

MANILA, Philippines – Environmental groups on Monday called for an expanded investigation into the air quality in Metro Manila, noting that the fire at the Navotas sanitary landfill continues to produce toxic smoke, posing serious health risks. In a statement, the Ateneo Center for Research and Innovation (ACRI) and Breathe Metro Manila said the air

- [Tuguegarao cop relieved for allegedly hitting driver after road crash](#) (2026-04-20 18:25)

MANILA, Philippines — A Tuguegarao City, Cagayan police officer was relieved from his post for allegedly hitting a tricycle driver after a road crash, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Monday. “Your badge is a symbol of service, not a license for abuse. Ang utos natin ay malinaw: maximum tolerance at laging pairalin ang

- [Visayas heat index rises; some areas hit danger level—Pagasa](#) (2026-04-20 18:22)

ILOILO CITY — Heat index levels across the Visayas have intensified further, with some areas now breaching the “danger” threshold, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa). In its updated five-day computed heat index and two-day forecast released at 5 p.m. on April 20, Pagasa reported that large parts of Western,

- [Another transport strike set for April 21](#) (2026-04-20 18:21)

MANILA, Philippines — Another transportation strike is set for Tuesday, April 21, as groups intensify their calls for the government to bring down petroleum prices, as well as suspend the excise and value-added taxes imposed on petroleum products. The strike will be led by transport groups Manibela and Piston, with protests also to be held

- [Palace warns vs scammers posing as First Lady Liza Marcos on WhatsApp](#) (2026-04-20 18:13)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Monday warned the public against criminals who are posing as First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos to raise money and even give directives to ranking government officials. In a message to reporters, Palace press officer Claire Castro said some personalities were using the First Lady’s profile photo to scam people on WhatsApp. “I’ve

- [Next Sara Duterte impeach hearing to tackle alleged unexplained wealth](#) (2026-04-20 18:11)

MANILA, Philippines — The next hearing on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte will focus on allegations of unexplained wealth and failure to fully disclose personal wealth in her Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth (SALN), Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro said on Monday. Luistro, in an online interview with reporters covering the House

- [DILG urges LGUs to pass ordinances backing Safer Cities initiative](#) (2026-04-20 17:56)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) has urged local government units (LGUs) to pass ordinances in support of its Safer Cities initiative. In a statement on Monday, the DILG enjoined LGUs, citing that “local chief executives are mandated under the law to implement measures that promote the general welfare,

- [Ex-AFP chief Oban Jr. takes oath as national security adviser](#) (2026-04-20 17:44)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday swore in former Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Eduardo Oban Jr. as the new national security adviser. Oban replaced Eduardo Año, who retired from public service due to health reasons. READ: Marcos accepts Eduardo Año’s resignation as national security adviser In a press release

- [PNP: Over 1,000 erring cops dismissed since August 2025](#) (2026-04-20 17:36)

MANILA, Philippines — A total of 1,010 erring police officers were dismissed from the service across the country between August 26, 2025, and April 15, 2026, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said Monday. Although it did not specify which units the cops were dismissed from or why, the PNP noted that 326 of the officers’

- [Hontiveros bats for more measures to combat oil price surge](#) (2026-04-20 17:34)

MANILA, Philippines – Sen. Risa Hontiveros on Monday pushed for additional measures to ease the effects of the ongoing oil crisis, in addition to the price cut announced by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. In a statement, Hontiveros said that Filipinos would benefit from the suspension of both the value-added tax and the excise tax. “Malayo pa

- [Legarda urges stronger environmental action on Earth Month](#) (2026-04-20 17:28)

MANILA, Philippines – Senator Loren Legarda called on governments, institutions, and communities to confront the country’s climate and energy challenges through stronger environmental action, as the Philippines marks Earth Month this April and prepares to observe Earth Day on April 22. She warned that the ongoing global energy crisis, driven by volatile fuel markets, supply

- [DA rolls out P20 rice program in Capiz](#) (2026-04-20 17:19)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) on Monday said its flagship P20-per-kilo rice program has reached Capiz province in Western Visayas. According to the DA, the “Benteng Bigas, Meron Na!” (P20-per-kilo rice, now available) program was rolled out during the province’s 125th founding anniversary, or the Capiztahan Festival. READ: DA sets Metro Manila-wide

- [Ridon sees ‘pattern of misuse’ as COA flags secret funds in Duterte’s office](#) (2026-04-20 16:59)

MANILA, Philippines — There appears to be a “pattern of misuse” within the Office of the Vice President (OVP) if the two notices of disallowance (ND) on confidential fund (CF) expenditures are checked. Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry Ridon made the observation in an ambush interview with reporters covering the House of Representatives. Ridon said that

- [OIL PRICE WATCH as of April 20, 2026](#) (2026-04-20 16:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Motorists are set to get fresh relief as oil companies prepare to implement another round of rollbacks this week, with diesel prices expected to drop by nearly P25 per liter. In a video message posted on Facebook, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said the price of diesel will be lowered by P24.94 per

- [‘Flogging’ victim, suspect found dead at Manila condominium](#) (2026-04-20 16:29)

MANILA, Philippines — The victim and the suspect in an alleged “flogging” were found dead at a condominium in Tondo, Manila, the police said. The purported incident was discovered by an unnamed witness around 9 p.m. on Sunday, April 19, the Manila Police District (MPD) reported. “[The witness], while inside her room, heard someone screaming

- [Angara defends K-12 program amid calls for abolition](#) (2026-04-20 15:48)

ROXAS CITY, Capiz – Education Secretary Juan Edgardo “Sonny” Angara has expressed his unwavering support for the K to 12 program amid abolition calls. As one of the original authors of the law, Angara emphasized that the department’s priority is not to discard the system, but to refine it to meet global standards and industry

- [PRC finally names 2026 Physicians Licensure Examination topnotcher](#) (2026-04-20 15:34)

MANILA, Philippines — The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) finally named the topnotcher of the 2026 Physicians Licensure Examination. The board topnotcher is Erwin Ken Parchaso of the Lyceum Northwestern University (LNU) of Dagupan City, according to a Facebook post of PRC on Apr. 17. The PRC earlier said that the name of the licensure examination

- [‘Gas-and-run’ 2.0: Driver evades paying P1,500 fuel at QC gas station](#) (2026-04-20 15:26)

MANILA, Philippines — The unidentified driver of a white Toyota Vios got P1,500 worth of fuel at a gas station in Quezon City, and drove away without paying the bill, the police said. The vehicle



fled with the unpaid fuel from a gas station along Payatas Road in Barangay Payatas early Monday morning, according to

- [Angara bolsters aid for teachers amid Middle East tensions](#) (2026-04-20 15:23)

ROXAS CITY, Capiz — Amid rising global oil prices driven by escalating tensions in the Middle East, the Department of Education (DepEd) has reiterated its existing mechanisms designed to protect the welfare of public school teachers against the worsening financial crisis. Due to inflation and the rising cost of living, many teachers are facing challenges

- [HEAT INDEX WATCH: Calapan City hits ‘danger’ heat index at 42°C](#) (2026-04-20 15:20)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Authorities issued a warning Monday afternoon after the city’s heat index soared to a dangerous 42 degrees Celsius, based on a 2 p.m. reading at the Calapan City Public Market. The City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO) said the heat index falls under the “danger” category, which can

- [2 killed, 2 wounded in Calbayog shooting](#) (2026-04-20 15:03)

TACLOBAN CITY, Philippines — Two men were killed while a barangay official and a child were injured after unidentified gunmen opened fire on a group traveling along a road in Barangay San Jose, Calbayog City, Samar, on Sunday night. Police identified the fatalities as alias “Joe” and alias “Osep,” a 37-year-old farmer. Wounded were alias

- [SAF deputy chief Malimban is new PNP integrity monitoring unit head](#) (2026-04-20 14:59)

MANILA, Philippines — Special Action Forces (SAF) Deputy Director Brig. Gen. Rex Arvin Malimban has been appointed the new director of the Philippine National Police Integrity Monitoring and Enforcement Group (PNP IMEG) in an acting capacity. The appointment took effect on Monday, April 20, with the issuance of General Order No. NHQ-GO-DES-2026-2040. READ: PNP reshuffle:

- [Ex-Dawlah Islamiyah leader dies of heart failure after gun attack](#) (2026-04-20 14:51)

COTABATO CITY – A former leader of the Moro extremist group blamed for roadside bombings against government troops in Maguindanao del Sur over the past five years has died due to cardiac arrest, the Army here said Monday. Lt. Colonel Ronald Suscano, 6th Infantry Division spokesperson, identified the fatality as Esmail Abdulmalik, alias Abu Turaife,

- [Higher survey figures show Marcos on right track – House execs](#) (2026-04-20 14:44)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is on the right track despite being the subject of disinformation and criticism, as shown by his higher trust and performance ratings, according to two ranking members of the House of Representatives. In separate statements on Monday, Deputy Speakers Paolo Ortega V and Jefferson Khonghun cited figures from

- [COA ruling raises VP Duterte’s confidential fund liability to P448M](#) (2026-04-20 14:41)



MANILA, Philippines – The total amount that may be ordered returned by Vice President Sara Duterte and key officials of the Office of the Vice President (OVP) could reach ₱448 million, following a new Commission on Audit (COA) disallowance covering ₱375 million in confidential funds. In a Notice of Disallowance (ND) dated March 31, 2026,

- [BARMM cops seize P5.4-M smuggled cigarettes, nab 12 suspects](#) (2026-04-20 14:34)

COTABATO CITY– Police authorities in Parang, Maguindanao del Norte, arrested 12 persons and seized from them P5.4 million worth of smuggled cigarettes and a pistol, the police spokesperson in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao said Monday. Capt. Steffi Salanguit, speaking for the Police Regional Office Bangsamoro Autonomous Region (PRO-BAR), said the 12 suspects

- [PNP-CARTC chief relieved over instructor’ s alleged rape of trainee](#) (2026-04-20 14:34)

MANILA, Philippines — The chief of the Philippine National Police – Cordillera Administrative Region Training Center (PNP-CARTC) was relieved of his post over the alleged rape of a female trainee by an instructor. “He volunteered to be relieved to give way to the impartial investigation,” National Police Training Institute (NPTI) Director Maj. Gen. Roy Parena

- [Angara lauds creativity, tech skills of Filipino youth at nat’ l talent fest](#) (2026-04-20 14:26)

MANILA, Philippines – Education Secretary Sonny Angara on Sunday formally opened the 2026 National Festival of Talents (NFOT) in Roxas City, Capiz, underscoring the government’ s push to expand opportunities for learners to develop skills aligned with future careers. Held at the Dinggoy Roxas Civic Center, the annual festival gathered top student performers from across the

- [Teacher training needed to remedy subject mismatch – Gatchalian](#) (2026-04-20 14:17)

MANILA, Philippines – Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian on Monday pushed for teacher training to address the high mismatch between college majors and assigned teaching subjects. Gatchalian, also the vice chair of the Senate basic education panel, urged the intervention based on the Second Congressional Commission on Education (Edcom II) report showing the misalignment of Physical and

- [P10 jeepney fare hike petition filed](#) (2026-04-20 14:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Transport group Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Tsuper at Operator Nationwide (Piston) on Monday asked the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) for a P10 jeepney fare increase to address the sustained economic losses of drivers and operators due to the high cost of fuel. In a petition filed before the

- [P375-M secret OVP funds banned over wrong use, unauthorized execs – Ridon](#) (2026-04-20 14:12)

MANILA, Philippines — The P375 million worth of confidential expenditures under the Office of the Vice President (OVP) in 2023 was flagged because it was used wrongly and funds were

disbursed by unauthorized personnel. These pieces of information were contained in the documents shared by Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry Ridon on Monday. In the documents he

- [Octa survey shows Mindanao majority backs VP Duterte impeach trial – Ortega](#) (2026-04-20 14:04)

MANILA, Philippines – The new Octa Research survey showing majority support for an impeachment trial for Vice President Sara Duterte in Mindanao and across all socioeconomic classes reflects a broad and growing public belief that the constitutional process should be allowed to take its course. Deputy Speaker Paolo Ortega V of La Union on Monday

- [Ridon rebuts VP camp’ s due process claim, cites final COA liability](#) (2026-04-20 13:49)

MANILA, Philippines – The camp of Vice President Sara Duterte cannot credibly claim it was denied due process in the Commission on Audit (COA) proceedings involving confidential funds, as the audit process itself afforded the Office of the Vice President (OVP) and its officials multiple opportunities to respond, a House leader said Monday. Bicol Saro

- [7 cops relieved over alleged unauthorized PNP trainee lodging fees](#) (2026-04-20 13:41)

MANILA, Philippines — Seven police officers were relieved from their posts for allegedly imposing unauthorized additional fees to lodge Philippine National Police (PNP) trainees at the Cordillera Administrative Region Special Training Unit (RTSU-CAR). A copy of the relief order shared by PNP Training Service Director Brig. Gen. Rolindo Suguilon, in a press briefing in Camp

- [Driver of PNP bus, supervisor relieved over Edsa busway crash](#) (2026-04-20 13:05)

MANILA, Philippines — The driver of the Philippine National Police (PNP) coaster bus that crashed into an Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (Edsa) carousel bus in Quezon City has been relieved from his post, alongside his immediate supervisor. The Philippine National Police gave this information on Monday. The two officers were relieved from their posts last

- [INQToday: Marcos to DOJ, DFA: Lead high-level Czech talks for Zaldy Co’ s return](#) (2026-04-20 12:59)

Marcos to DOJ, DFA: Lead high-level Czech talks for Zaldy Co’ s return President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said on Monday that a “high-level coordination team” will be sent to the Czech Republic to oversee the deportation of fugitive Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co to Manila. In a video statement, Marcos said he has tasked the Department of Justice

- [Oriental Mindoro inflation rises to 4.6% in March](#) (2026-04-20 12:37)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The province’ s inflation rate climbed to 4.6 percent in March, up from 2.7 percent in February, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) said in its monthly report. Dr. Charlyn Romero-Cantos, chief statistical specialist of the Oriental Mindoro Provincial Statistical Office, said the increase was mainly driven by the faster annual rise

- [PNP vows transparency in processing Zaldy Co upon return to PH](#) (2026-04-20 12:35)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) said that it will be transparent in processing former House of Representatives appropriations chairperson and resigned Ako Bicol party-list Rep. Zaldy Co upon his possible return to the Philippines. PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Randolph Tuaño gave this assurance to the public in a press briefing in Camp

- [Agusan mayor warns vs. fraudulent investment schemes](#) (2026-04-20 12:29)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Mayor Grace Carmel Paredes-Bravo has warned the public against fraudulent investment schemes targeting residents, following an advisory from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Butuan Extension Office. The SEC identified BG Wealth Sharing Ltd., League of Seagull Ltd. (also known as Seagull Alliance operating under the Riscoin platform), and

- [Will Zaldy Co be jailed at Camp Crame Custodial Center? It's for demolition](#) (2026-04-20 12:22)

MANILA, Philippines — Can former House appropriations chairperson and resigned Ako Bicol party-list Rep. Zaldy Co be detained at the Philippine National Police (PNP) Custodial Center in Camp Crame? The PNP on Monday said the option to detain Co at its Custodial Center has become “moot.” “At present, the Custodial Center cannot hold whomever the

- [ChEd urges Eastern Visayas colleges to delay tuition hikes](#) (2026-04-20 12:16)

TACLOBAN CITY — The Commission on Higher Education (ChEd) in Eastern Visayas has confirmed that several private higher education institutions in the region have filed applications for tuition and other fee increases ahead of the upcoming enrollment period. However, ChEd regional director Maximo Aljibe appealed to school administrators to consider deferring any planned increases, citing

- [Court told: Hernandez gets P299M encased in boxes of soy sauce, Piattos](#) (2026-04-20 12:15)

MANILA, Philippines — The goddaughter of former public works engineer Brice Hernandez on Monday said he received around P299 million in cash encased in grocery boxes of items like “toyo” (soy sauce) and Piattos potato chips. Monica Louis Ocampo-Santos, liaison officer of SYMS Construction, made the revelation on the witness stand of the Sandiganbayan Third

- [Rebel leader, over 10 others killed in Negros clash — Army](#) (2026-04-20 12:04)

BACOLOD CITY—More than 10 members of the New People's Army (NPA), including their reported leader, were killed in an encounter in Barangay Salamanca, Toboso, northern Negros Occidental, on Sunday, the Philippine Army said. READ: Over 600 flee homes as Army, NPA clash in Negros Occidental Brig. Gen. Ted Dumosmog, commander of the 303rd Infantry Brigade

- [Sotto urges peers to stay impartial in Sara Duterte impeachment trial](#) (2026-04-20 12:03)

MANILA, Philippines — As they prepare for “any eventuality,” Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III on Monday reminded his colleagues to remain impartial in case the Articles of Impeachment against Vice President Sara Duterte reach the upper chamber for trial. The House of Representatives committee on justice is currently holding hearings to determine if there is probable

- [Zaldy Co arrest: PNP says up to DFA to release details](#) (2026-04-20 12:02)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) defers to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to release details on the arrest of former House of Representatives appropriations chairperson Zaldy Co in the Czech Republic. The law enforcement agency said this in response to a question at a press briefing in Camp Crame on Monday

- [Iloilo City transport groups to skip April 21 strike -mayor](#) (2026-04-20 11:54)

ILOILO CITY — Public transportation in Iloilo City is expected to operate normally on Tuesday, April 21, despite a planned nationwide transport strike, after a major local coalition of operators confirmed it will not join the protest, Mayor Raisa Treñas said. In a statement on Monday, April 20, Treñas said the Western Visayas Alliance of

- [Police security plan for Zaldy Co’ s return in place](#) (2026-04-20 11:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The security plan of the Philippine National Police is ready for the return of former House appropriations chairperson and resigned Ako Bicol party-list Rep. Zaldy Co. “The Philippine National Police is ready for Co’ s return to the Philippines,” the law enforcement agency’ s spokesperson, Brig. Gen. Randulf Tuaño, said in a press briefing

- [Haze blankets Metro Cebu; air quality remains ‘very unhealthy’](#) (2026-04-20 11:32)

TAGBILARAN CITY — A persistent haze has blanketed parts of Metro Cebu since April 17, with air quality in some areas remaining at critical levels despite slight improvement, authorities said Monday. The Environmental Management Bureau in Central Visayas (EMB-7) said data from the Talisay City monitoring station showed the Air Quality Index (AQI) dropped from

- [4Ps students on Polillo Island get free internet from gov’ t](#) (2026-04-20 11:20)

LUCENA CITY — Students from 913 beneficiary households of the government’ s Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) in the island town of Polillo, Quezon, will now have access to free mobile data to support their education, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) said. In a report on Monday, the DSWD Region IV-A said the

- [Visayas stays under ‘extreme caution’ — Pagasa](#) (2026-04-20 10:58)

ILOILO CITY — Heat index levels across the Visayas remain elevated, with most areas still under the “extreme caution” category and some locations nearing “danger” levels, according to the latest monitoring by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa). In its updated five-day heat index outlook and two-day forecast issued

at 5 p.m.

- [Driver of PNP Libreng Sakay bus apologizes over Edsa busway crash](#) (2026-04-20 10:41)

MANILA, Philippines — The driver of a Philippine National Police (PNP) coaster bus for its Libreng Sakay (free rides) program apologized for crashing into an Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (Edsa) carousel bus. Identified as Chief Master Sgt. Jenifer Bredico, the PNP coaster bus driver appeared before the National Police Commission (Napolcom) in Quezon City on

- [Marcos trust rating inches up; Duterte performance dips slightly](#) (2026-04-20 10:13)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. moderately regained his trust and performance ratings in the first quarter of 2026. On the other hand, Vice President Sara Duterte's performance score showed a slight decline. These results come from OCTA Research's Tugon ng Masa survey. The outcomes made public on Monday said that 54 percent of

- [Boy drowns during family camping trip in Antipolo City](#) (2026-04-20 09:54)

LUCENA CITY — A seven-year-old boy drowned in a river at a campsite in Antipolo City, Rizal, during a family camping trip on Sunday, police said. In a report on Monday, the Police Regional Office 4A identified the victim only as “Vin,” a Grade 2 pupil, who was staying at a campsite in Barangay San

- [Marcos: Gov't seeking more aid for Filipinos hit by Middle East conflict](#) (2026-04-20 09:43)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday said the government is continuously looking for ways to assist Filipinos as they continue to bear the brunt of the conflict in the Middle East. He made the remarks in a brief media interview after inspecting the implementation of the Department of Transportation's (DOTr) Service Contracting

- [Mindoro ports office adopts compressed work schedule](#) (2026-04-20 09:28)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The Philippine Ports Authority–Port Management Office (PPA-PMO) Mindoro has implemented a four-day compressed workweek as part of government efforts to promote energy conservation and improve workplace efficiency. In an advisory, the agency said office transactions will now be held Monday to Thursday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with no public

- [56,400 Negros sugarcane farmers to benefit from P240-M gov't aid](#) (2026-04-20 09:19)

BACOLOD CITY—A total of P240 million in Presidential Assistance for Farmers and Fisherfolk (PAFF) will be distributed to 102,237 sugarcane farmers, 70,415 of whom are from the Visayas, according to Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) Administrator Pablo Luis Azcona on Saturday, April 18. He said 56,400 recipients are from the Negros Island Region, which accounts for

- [Over 600 flee homes as Army, NPA clash in Negros Occidental](#) (2026-04-20 08:40)

BACOLOD CITY— An encounter between soldiers of the 79th Infantry Battalion and remnants of the New People's Army (NPA) in Barangay Salamanca, Toboso, Negros Occidental triggered the mass evacuation of 653 residents on Sunday, April 19. Toboso Mayor Richard Jaojoco said the exact number of casualties had yet to be confirmed. "We are still awaiting

- [HEAT INDEX ALERT: 'Dangerous' level forecast in Cavite on Monday](#) (2026-04-20 08:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Sangley Point, Cavite, was forecast to sizzle at a 42°C heat index on Monday, April 20, falling within the "danger" level threshold, the state weather bureau reported. According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), the heat index measures the level of discomfort an average person experiences due to

- [Hot weather with isolated rains expected across PH on Monday](#) (2026-04-20 07:28)

MANILA, Philippines — A hot and humid weather with chances of isolated rain showers is expected across the country on Monday, April 20, according to the state weather bureau. Based on its morning weather forecast, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) forecasts Metro Manila's temperature to range from 24°C to 34°C. The

- [Police instructor faces probe; trainee cries rape](#) (2026-04-20 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police placed a 41-year-old police training instructor under restrictive custody and launched investigations after a female trainee accused him of raping her twice inside a Cordillera facility earlier this year. PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said in a statement on Sunday that the instructor has been disarmed

- [House panel eyes April 29 wrap on impeachment hearings](#) (2026-04-20 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The House committee on justice is targeting to conclude by April 29 its impeachment hearings on Vice President Sara Duterte, as it moves to determine probable cause on the impeachment complaints against her. Lanao del Sur Rep. Zia Alonto Adiong, a member of the justice panel, disclosed that scheduled date, saying the

- [Group slams Pax Silica as 'massive sellout' of country](#) (2026-04-20 05:05)

SAN ANTONIO, ZAMBALES, Philippines — A farmers' group on Sunday criticized the government for backing a proposed 1,619-hectare (4,000 acres) economic security zone under the Luzon Economic Corridor, saying the US-initiated project could intensify land grabbing, resource extraction, and militarization in rural areas. The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) said in a statement the planned

- [Motorcycle taxi driver dies while lining up for cash aid](#) (2026-04-20 05:00)

MANILA, Philippines — A motorcycle taxi driver died on Saturday while lining up to get his cash relief assistance from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) at a payout site in Quezon Memorial Circle. The unidentified driver died of a heart attack, according to news reports quoting his relatives. The DSWD confirmed the

- [Crowds brave heat for Kaamulan Festival](#) (2026-04-20 04:40)

MALAYBALAY CITY, BUKIDNON, Philippines — Despite months of preparation, intense heat and rising costs, including pressures linked to global fuel volatility, nine contingents pushed through one of the biggest highlights of the Kaamulan Festival—the street dancing, float and ground presentation competitions held on Saturday. Participants from Valencia City, Manolo Fortich, Malitbog, San Fernando, Don Carlos,

- [Air support sought as forest fire ravages Homonhon Island in E. Samar](#) (2026-04-20 04:35)

TACLOBAN CITY, LEYTE, Philippines — A grass and forest fire continues to spread across the historic Homonhon Island in Guiuan, Eastern Samar, prompting Rep. Christopher Sheen Gonzales to request immediate air support from the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP). The fire reportedly started in Barangay Casuguran on April 17 and has since been observed in

- [P6-M fuel seized, 2 nabbed in Agusan del Norte bust](#) (2026-04-20 04:30)

SAN FRANCISCO, AGUSAN DEL SUR, Philippines — The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) dismantled another illegal fuel operation in Agusan del Norte, seizing petroleum products worth an estimated P6.62 million and arresting two suspects in Barangay Santa Ana, Tubay, last Friday. CIDG operatives caught the suspects during a raid on an alleged fuel pilferage

- [Marcos orders release of P17.27B to build 4,960 classrooms nationwide](#) (2026-04-20 01:06)

MANILA, Philippines — In a bold push to address classroom shortages and uplift the quality of basic education, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. has ordered the release of P17.27 billion to accelerate the construction of classrooms nationwide. Acting on this directive, Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Secretary Rolando “Rolly” Toledo approved on April 13,

- [Marcos pushes release of P46.22B for 1,743 infra projects nationwide](#) (2026-04-20 01:02)

MANILA, Philippines — In line with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s directive to accelerate infrastructure development and sustain economic momentum, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Secretary Rolando “Rolly” Toledo has approved the release of P46.22 billion to fund 1,743 infrastructure projects nationwide. The amount was released to the Department of Public Works and Highways

- [IBC 13 launches TreZe: A Gen Z news revolution on TV and digital](#) (2026-04-20 00:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Intercontinental Broadcasting Corporation (IBC 13) has unveiled TreZe, an aggressive multimedia news initiative designed to combat misinformation while establishing itself as the trusted TV news source for Gen Z and millennial Filipinos. The strategic overhaul



introduces 14 specially trained Gen Z news anchors and a dynamic team of young reporters across multiple

- [80% of Filipino youth oppose social media curbs – Arkipelago Analytics](#) (2026-04-19 23:49)

MANILA, Philippines — A new national survey by Arkipelago Analytics shows that Filipino youth remain firmly opposed to restrictions on social media, even as many face worsening financial stress, lower happiness, and growing social disconnection. The findings show that 8 in 10 Filipino youth, or 80 percent, oppose any form of social media restriction, underscoring

- [No jackpot winner in Ultra Lotto, Super Lotto draws on Apr. 19](#) (2026-04-19 21:52)

MANILA, Philippines – No bettor won the jackpot prize in the Ultra Lotto 6/58 and SuperLotto 6/49 draws on Sunday, April 19, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. Ultra Lotto 6/58 result: 40-50-13-33-15-58 Jackpot prize: ₱75 million SuperLotto 6/49 result: 16-43-21-35-14-37 Jackpot prize: ₱25 million. Minor games Draw schedule Ultra Lotto 6/58 draws are

- [DepEd chief Angara leads opening of Nat’l Festival of Talents in Capiz](#) (2026-04-19 20:01)

ROXAS CITY, Capiz — The National Festival of Talents (NFOT) 2026 officially commenced at the Dinggoy Roxas Civic Center in this city on Sunday, bringing together delegates and officials from the Department of Education (DepEd) across the country’s regions for a celebration of student excellence and creativity. DepEd Secretary Juan Edgardo “Sonny” Angara formally declared

- [Transpo network firms cut commissions from drivers amid oil price hikes](#) (2026-04-19 19:52)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Sunday said several transport network companies (TNCs) have reduced their commissions from driver-partners in response to rising oil prices. This is after the TNCs met with the LTFRB Chairperson Vigor Mendoza II and discussed the lowering of the commission last week. “The

- [Ex- IBP head says Sara Duterte should attend impeach hearings, testify under oath](#) (2026-04-19 19:28)

MANILA, Philippines – Former Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) national president Atty. Domingo “Egon” Cayosa on Sunday said Vice President Sara Z. Duterte should attend the impeachment hearings and testify under oath, just like her alleged bagman, Ramil L. Madriaga. Cayosa, a constitutional lawyer, explained that it’s easy for the vice president to make

- [Vehicles Madriaga bought with alleged Duterte funds registered with LTO – Ridon](#) (2026-04-19 19:13)

MANILA, Philippines – The Land Transportation Office (LTO) confirmed that all motor vehicles registered under the name of Vice President Sara Z. Duterte’s alleged bagman, Ramil L. Madriaga, are in its records, including those he claimed were purchased with funds allegedly



given to him by former President Rodrigo Duterte. House committee on public accounts chairperson

- [Back to PH classrooms: DepEd reaches more OFW teachers via NRN fairs](#) (2026-04-19 18:55)

MANILA, Philippines – The Department of Education (DepEd) has successfully expanded its reintegration support for overseas Filipino worker (OFWs) teachers, amid an increase in educators seeking to return to local classrooms. This week’s nationwide Bayanihan Para sa Balikbayang Manggagawa National Reintegration Network (NRN) Fairs, held in collaboration with the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW), provided

- [Dumaguete – Manila PAL flight makes emergency landing in Iloilo](#) (2026-04-19 18:31)

ILOILO CITY — A Philippine Airlines (PAL) flight bound for Manila from Dumaguete made an emergency landing at the Iloilo International Airport on Sunday afternoon after reports of insufficient oxygen supply inside the cabin. PAL Flight PR 2544 was forced to divert and land in Iloilo at around 4:30 p.m., according to an advisory posted

- [House panel eyes to end Sara Duterte impeachment hearings by April 29](#) (2026-04-19 18:24)

MANILA, Philippines — The House committee on justice is targeting to conclude its impeachment hearings against Vice President Sara Duterte on April 29. Lanao del Sur Rep. Zia Alonto Adiong, a member of the justice panel, bared the date after stating that the committee is already nearing the end of its evidence-gathering phase, with key

- [Motorcycle taxi rider dies while lining up for cash aid in QC](#) (2026-04-19 16:38)

MANILA, Philippines – A motorcycle taxi rider died on Saturday while lining up to claim his cash relief assistance from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) at a payout site at the Quezon City Memorial Circle. The DSWD confirmed the incident in a Facebook post on Sunday, in which it assured that assistance

- [VAT-free essential childcare products for solo parents bill pushed](#) (2026-04-19 16:27)

MANILA, Philippines — Trabaho party-list Rep. Johanne Bautista on Sunday called for the swift passage of the Parental Childcare Bill which seeks to reduce financial burden for solo parents. Under the proposed measure, a VAT exemption will be placed on essential childcare goods, such as infant formula, diapers, and vitamins, for households earning below P250,000

- [Stratbase backs Balikatan, cites need for stronger PH defense in WPS](#) (2026-04-19 15:58)

MANILA, Philippines—A think tank on Sunday urged the Philippines to strengthen military cooperation with allies and sustain a firm defense posture in the West Philippine Sea as the country prepares for its largest-ever Balikatan exercises amid rising tensions with China. In a statement, Stratbase Institute president and CEO Victor Andres “Dindo” Manhit expressed

“unequivocal support”

- [Dead leatherback sea turtle found along Iloilo coast](#) (2026-04-19 15:17)

ILOILO CITY — A female leatherback sea turtle was found dead along the shoreline of Barangay Sta. Rosa in Guimbal, Iloilo, on Saturday, April 18, authorities and marine experts confirmed. The incident was reported around 11:30 a.m., prompting personnel from the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center FishWorld to respond immediately and assess the situation. Upon

- [Bataan freeport residents assured of housing privileges despite ID issue](#) (2026-04-19 15:00)

MARIVELES, Bataan — The requirement imposed by the Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan (AFAB) for residents of Barangays Malaya and Maligaya to secure residential identification will not affect their eligibility for housing privileges within the Freeport Area of Bataan (FAB). This was clarified by AFAB Administrator and CEO Hussein Pangandaman during a recent

- [PNP probing into police instructor’ s alleged rape of female trainee](#) (2026-04-19 14:55)

MANILA, Philippines – The Philippine National Police (PNP) placed a 41-year-old police training instructor under restrictive custody and launched investigations after he was accused of raping a female trainee twice inside a Cordillera facility earlier this year. In a statement on Sunday, PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio C. Nartatez Jr. said the instructor has been

- [Rizal drug suspect falls, P2.7 M shabu seized](#) (2026-04-19 14:47)

LUCENA CITY — A suspected high-value drug trafficker was arrested on Saturday in a buy-bust operation in Cainta, Rizal, resulting in the seizure of more than P2.7 million worth of shabu (crystal meth). The Rizal Police Provincial Office said local anti-narcotics operatives collared the suspect, identified as “Has,” at 11:15 p.m. after he allegedly sold

- [Cop fatally electrocuted in Ormoc City mishap](#) (2026-04-19 14:38)

TACLOBAN CITY — A police officer died while two other persons were injured after a metal post they were installing accidentally touched a live power line in Barangay Libertad, Ormoc City, Leyte, on Saturday afternoon. The fatality, identified only as “Leo,” 55, was a member of the Philippine National Police assigned to Ormoc City Police

- [Calapan City residents told to take precautions amid intense heat](#) (2026-04-19 14:30)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The city government unit on Sunday advised residents to take precautions against heat-related illnesses after the heat index reached 40 degrees Celsius late in the morning. The City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Department (CDRRMD) said the “extreme caution” heat index level was recorded at 11 a.m. at the Calapan

- [River eco-park in Isabela draws tourists seeking relief from heat](#) (2026-04-19 14:24)

CITY OF ILAGAN, Isabela — Extreme heat indices reaching 40 to 41 degrees Celsius in Isabela and Cagayan have driven residents and tourists to seek relief in cool destinations, including the Abuan River Adventure and EcoPark in Villa Imelda village, located at the foothills of the Sierra Madre mountain range. While water levels have slightly

- [PNP probes into collision of its Libreng Sakay bus and another bus in Edsa](#) (2026-04-19 13:04)

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippine National Police (PNP) ordered an impartial investigation of a collision along Edsa involving a police-marked vehicle and a public utility bus on April 17. Video of this incident along Main Avenue near Cubao in Quezon City became viral. The investigation was launched following concerns about possible breaches of standard operating procedures and

- [DOE, DOJ asked: Go after perpetrators of ‘unreasonable’ fuel price hikes](#) (2026-04-19 12:48)

MANILA, Philippines — Amid the oil crisis triggered by the war in the Middle East, the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) should crack down on “unreasonable” fuel price increases. This is the view of House Minority Leader and 4Ps party-list Rep. Marcelino “Nonoy” Libanan. Libanan on Sunday urged the two

- [Low water pressure, discoloration to affect parts of Calapan City](#) (2026-04-19 12:39)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Several barangays here may experience low water pressure and possible water discoloration beginning Monday night, April 20, due to scheduled maintenance work, the local water utility said. In a public advisory issued Sunday, Calapan Water said it will go on an interconnection activity in Barangay Lumangbayan from 9 p.m. on

- [Firearms, cash, jewelry looted from retired cop’ s house in Lucena City](#) (2026-04-19 12:31)

LUCENA CITY — Burglars broke into the home of a retired police officer in this city and carted away multiple firearms, along with about P500,000 in cash and jewelry. The incident happened while the owners were in the United States, police said Sunday, April 19. A police report identified the victims as “Vic,” 70, a

- [Senate urged to finalize flood control scam probe upon Zaldy Co’ s return](#) (2026-04-19 11:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate blue ribbon panel should finalize its inquiry into the alleged anomalous flood control projects upon the return of former congressman and fugitive Zaldy Co, Sen. Erwin Tulfo said on Sunday. Tulfo made the remark a few days after Co was arrested by authorities in the Czech Republic as he was

- [Two rebels killed, one surrenders in Surigao del Sur encounter](#) (2026-04-19 11:19)

TANDAG CITY, Surigao del Sur — An encounter between government and communist rebels, labeled as members of the Communist Terrorist Group (CTG), left two insurgents dead and another surrendering in Surigao del Sur. Col. Glenn Joy Aynera, acting commander of the 401st Infantry Brigade, said the clash occurred around 9 a.m. on Friday (April 17)

- [PNP on alert after 10 rebels died in clash with cops in Lanao del Sur](#) (2026-04-19 10:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) placed all units in the Bangsamoro region on heightened alert following a deadly clash in Lanao del Sur that killed 10 Dawlah Islamiyah-Maute Group (DI-MG) members. The move comes as the police consider the possibility of retaliatory attacks from the remaining terrorists. In a statement on Sunday,

- [DSWD completes P5,000 aid rollout for Western Visayas tricycle drivers](#) (2026-04-19 10:09)

ILOILO CITY — The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Field Office VI concluded on Saturday, April 18 its three-day cash relief distribution for tricycle drivers across Western Visayas. This phase marks the final leg of a region-wide rollout aimed at cushioning transport workers from rising economic pressures. The payout, which began on April

- [Boracay group opposes bridge plan, seeks Palace review](#) (2026-04-19 09:33)

ILOILO CITY — The Boracay Foundation Inc. (BFI) formally raised concerns over the proposed Boracay Bridge in a letter to President Marcos Jr., warning of potential environmental and socio-economic impacts on the island. In a Facebook post on April 17, BFI said the letter, dated February 4, 2026, conveyed the collective position of business groups,

- [Hot, humid morning, cloudy afternoon forecast across PH Sunday \(April 19\)](#) (2026-04-19 07:33)

MANILA, Philippines — A combination of hot and humid weather, as well as cloudy skies, is expected to prevail across the country on Sunday, the state weather bureau reported. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), in its 5 a.m. weather forecast, said clouds are forecast in the afternoon and they may bring

- [Marcos: ‘Big’ price rollback for diesel at P24.94 per liter](#) (2026-04-19 05:37)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Saturday asked oil companies to fully implement rollbacks on fuel products as he announced another round of price reductions next week, with diesel prices expected to be slashed by almost P25 per liter. In a video message posted on Facebook, Marcos said the price of diesel will

- [Madriaga waiver makes him potential ‘star witness’ vs Sara Duterte](#) (2026-04-19 05:35)

MANILA, Philippines — Confessed “bagman” Ramil Madriaga could be a key witness in the impeachment case against Vice President Sara Duterte after he waived his bank secrecy rights, a move that a House leader said could help establish a money trail linking him to the Duterte family. In a statement on Saturday, Deputy Speaker Paolo

- [CA stops AMLC bid to forfeit P.5M seized from Cumpio](#) (2026-04-19 05:33)

MANILA, Philippines — The Court of Appeals (CA) has prevented the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) from forfeiting over half a million pesos seized from community journalist Frenchie Mae Cumpio and church worker Marielle Domequil accused of supporting communist insurgents during a crackdown on activists in 2020. Citing lack of merit, the appellate court's Third Division

- [DOTr disburses P1.5B in transport sector aid](#) (2026-04-19 05:31)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Transportation (DOTr) has disbursed at least P1.5 billion in relief assistance to the transport sector amid the rising costs of fuel. “The budget for DOTr is P2.5 billion. To date, we have disbursed P1.5 billion,” DOTr Acting Secretary Giovanni Lopez said at the Saturday News Forum in Quezon City.

- [Food prices remain stable despite hike in input costs](#) (2026-04-19 05:29)

MANILA, Philippines — Retail food prices remain relatively stable despite higher farm input costs caused by the ongoing crisis in the Middle East, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said. There were price increases in imported rice as well as local beef and pork, but monitoring by the DA's Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service showed that

- [New case vs Alice Guo: False representation over farmland](#) (2026-04-19 05:27)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Justice (DOJ) has recommended a new case against former Bamban Mayor Alice Guo, who is currently detained after being convicted of qualified trafficking last year — this time for allegedly falsely declaring the identities and nationalities regarding the ownership of an agricultural property. The DOJ issued a resolution dated

- [DSWD: No Comelec certification needed to get cash relief assistance](#) (2026-04-19 05:25)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on Saturday said it is not requiring a certification from the Commission on Elections (Comelec) for qualified public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers to get their cash relief assistance. The DSWD made the clarification following reports that the agency's cash relief was being associated with

- [Chocolate Hills: Debate arises over Bohol wonder](#) (2026-04-19 05:17)

TAGBILARAN CITY — A living postcard — that is how travelers often describe the iconic Chocolate Hills, a surreal landscape in Bohol that feels almost imagined, yet is undeniably real. For many visitors, a trip to the province is incomplete without witnessing its most celebrated natural wonder. Among them was Louie Guarin, a retired travel

- [This week's milestones: April 19 to April 25](#) (2026-04-19 05:15)

April 21, 1926 The image of Our Lady of Manaoag was canonically crowned under Pope Pius XI through Msgr. Guglielmo Piani, then apostolic delegate to the Philippines. Carved in wood with

an ivory face and hands and approximately 145 centimeters in height, the image of Our Lady of the Rosary was brought from Spain via

- [Alleged leader of crime group killed, 2 others nabbed in Isabela](#) (2026-04-19 00:46)

DELFIN ALBANO, Isabela — An alleged leader of a crime group operating in northern Isabela was killed while two of his members were arrested in an operation in nearby Barumbun, Santo Tomas town on Thursday, April 16, after shooting a farmer in this town, police said. Delfin Albano and Santo Tomas police, along with the

## Source: The Manila Times

- [Parts of Metro Manila, Rizal, Cavite to have water interruptions this week due to maintenance works](#) (2026-04-26 05:29)

MANILA, Philippines — Some areas in Metro Manila, Rizal, and Cavite will have water interruptions this week because of maintenance works, Manila Water Company Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc. said. Manila Water said that in Taguig City, some places in the villages of Katuparan and North Signal will have no water on April 27-28 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of step testing activities at MRT Ave. corner Pag-asa St. to detect possible leaks. Also, some areas in Brgy. Ligid-Tipas will have service interruptions on April 27-28 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. due to declogging works at Dr. Natividad St. cor. J. Ramos St. In Pateros City, some locations at Brgy. Poblacion will have water interruptions on April 27-28 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of declogging activities at B. Morcilla St. cor. M. Almeda St. In Rizal, some portions of Brgy. San Isidro in Taytay will have no water on April 27-28 and between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of step testing works along Sierra Valley, San Isidro. Next, other areas in Brgy. San Isidro will have no water service on April 30-May 1 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of step testing activities along E. Rodriguez St. Some places in the villages of San Juan and Muzon in Taytay; several areas in the villages of San Isidro, Kalayan, Sto. Niño, San Vicente, San Roque, Bagumbayan, San Pedro, Poblacion Itaas, Poblacion Ibaba in Angono; And some locations in the villages of Brgy. Pag-Asa, Binangonan will have water interruptions on April 27-28 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of zero pressure testing activities along National Rd. in Brgy. San Juan, Taytay. Also, some areas in Brgy. San Isidro in Rodriguez, Rizal will have no water on April 28-29 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. due to step testing works at Eastwood Greenview Phase 1, Phase 2, Phase 3, Phase 4, Phase 5, Phase 3A, Phase 3B, Phase 5E and Victoria Trails. Some parts of Cainta and Taytay in Rizal will have service interruptions on April 28-29 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. also because of step testing activities. Meanwhile, Maynilad said that in Parañaque City, some areas in Brgy. Tambo will have water interruptions on April 26-27 between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. because of decommissioning activities at Diosdado Macapagal near Macaraeg Bridge. In Manila City, some places in the villages of 313, 314, 329, 330 and 335 at Santa Cruz will have service interruptions on April 26-May 3 between 10 p.m. and 5.00 a.m. because of leak exploration works. In Tondo, Manila City, some areas in the

villages of 124, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 177, 179, 180, 181, and 182, will have no water on April 26-May 3 between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. because of leak exploration. Still in Tondo, some places in the villages of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 74, 75, 76, 78, 81, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 163, 168, 169, 170, 171, and 172 will have service interruptions on April 27-May 3 everyday between 12 a.m. and 3 a.m. because of leak exploration activities. Some areas in the villages of 36, 39, 40, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197 in Caloocan City; and also some places in the villages of 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220 and 202-A in Manila City will have water interruptions on April 27-May 3 between 12 a.m. and 3 a.m. because of leak exploration works at Rizal Ave. Some parts of the villages of 167 and 169 in Caloocan City, and some places in the villages of Nagkaisang Nayon and San Agustin in Quezon City will have water service interruptions on April 27-28 between 10 p.m. and 3 a.m. because of the replacement of a gate valve. Some places in Brgy. Novaliches Proper, Quezon City will have no water service on April 27-28 between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. because of leak detection activities. In Valenzuela City, some places in the villages of Gen. T. De Leon, Karuhatan, Malinta, Marulas, Maysan, and Parada will have no water on April 27, April 28, April 30, and May 1 between 12:01 a.m. and 4 a.m. due to network maintenance activities. In Imus City, Cavite, several places in the villages of Alapan I-C, Anabu I-A, Anabu I-B, Anabu I-C, Anabu I-D, Anabu I-E, Anabu I-F, Anabu II-A, Anabu II-B, Anabu II-C, Anabu II-D, Anabu II-E, Bayan Luma I, Bayan Luma II, Bayan Luma III, Bayan Luma IV, Bayan Luma V, Bayan Luma VI, Bayan Luma VII, Bayan Luma VIII, Bayan Luma IX, Bukandala III, Bukandala IV, Bukandala V, Carsadang Bago I, Carsadang Bago II, Malagasang 1-A, Malagasang I-B, Malagasang I-C, Malagasang I-D, Malagasang I-E, Malagasang I-F, Malagasang I-G, Medicion I-B, Poblacion III-B, Poblacion IV-B, Poblacion IV-D, and Tanzang Luma VI will have no water on April 27-May 1 between 5 a.m. and 12 a.m. because of high water demand at the Patindig Araw pumping station.

- [Riders push urgent motorcycle taxi law, seek stronger livelihood protection](#) (2026-04-26 03:07)

MANILA, Philippines — Motorcycle taxi riders urged the government to prioritize livelihood protection in regulating the industry and called for the immediate passage of a motorcycle taxi law. In a statement, Motorcycle Taxi Community Philippines Chairman Romeo Maglunsod said any policy governing the sector must ensure that riders can earn sustainably while maintaining dignity in their work. The group welcomed the government's P5,000 fuel subsidy, describing it as a meaningful relief as rising fuel prices continue to cut into riders' earnings. "We are grateful for the assistance extended by the government to riders during the fuel crisis. For many riders, almost half of their daily income is already spent on fuel, and the P5,000 assistance is a big help," Maglunsod said. However, he stressed that financial aid is only a temporary solution, adding that long-term protection should come from stable and humane livelihood policies. "At this time of crisis, no rider's family should go hungry or suffer because of the lack of humane and stable livelihood," he said. The group said the passage of a motorcycle taxi bill has become



urgent, noting that the government's pilot program has been in place for nearly a decade. Maglunsod said the proposed law should recognize motorcycle taxis as part of the gig economy and uphold the rights of gig workers, including flexibility and independence. "What riders want is to remain the boss of their own livelihood," he said, citing the need for riders to freely choose platforms, access incentives, and manage their working hours. The group also proposed that franchises or accreditation be granted directly to individual riders, similar to transport network vehicle service drivers, instead of being held by platforms. Under such an arrangement, riders would have greater control over their operations, while platforms would serve mainly as tools to connect them with passengers and provide support services, Maglunsod said. "The rider should hold the power to decide how to earn a living. Platforms should be instruments that support riders, not structures that limit their freedom," he added. The group also pointed to the public service role of motorcycle taxi riders, saying they help commuters reach workplaces, schools, hospitals, and other essential destinations. "Our call is clear: protect rider livelihoods, protect our freedom as gig workers, and pass the motorcycle taxi bill in a way that is fair, just, and humane," Maglunsod said.

- [Shooting suspect was 'would-be assassin,' Trump says](#) (2026-04-26 02:58)

WASHINGTON, United States — US President Donald Trump said Saturday that the suspect behind a shooting incident at a media gala in Washington was a "would-be assassin," adding that the man was "armed with multiple weapons." The man charged past a security checkpoint, Trump told a press briefing at the White House, adding: "One officer was shot but saved by the fact that he was wearing a, obviously, a very good bulletproof vest." "We looked at all of the conditions that took place tonight, and I will say, you know, it's not a particularly secure building," the US leader added.

- [Some areas in Metro Manila, 3 provinces to have power interruptions due to maintenance works](#) (2026-04-26 02:49)

MANILA, Philippines — Some parts of Metro Manila, Bulacan, Cavite, and Quezon will have power interruptions this week because of maintenance works, Meralco said on Sunday. Some areas in the villages of Payatas and Commonwealth in Quezon City will have no power on April 28 between 1 a.m. and 6 a.m. because of the relocation of electricity facilities along Payatas Road (Litex Road). Also, some parts of Brgy. San Bartolome in Novaliches will have power interruptions on April 29-30 between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. because of the replacement of electricity poles and line reconductoring works along Pablo dela Cruz St. and inside RT Gonzales Ville Subd. In Valenzuela City, some areas in Brgy. Marulas will have no electricity on April 28 between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. due to the upgrading and installation of electricity facilities along Tampoy 2 St. In Manila City, some areas in Sta. Cruz will have no power on April 28-29 between 11 p.m. and 3 a.m. because of line reconductoring works and also maintenance works along Fuguso St. near Rizal Ave. Some portions of Sampaloc, Manila City will have no electricity on April 29 between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. because of electricity line conversion works along Piña Ave. In Mandaluyong City, some places in Brgy. Highway Hills will have power interruptions on



April 29-30 between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of the replacement of an electricity pole along Madison St. In Las Piñas City, some areas in BF Martinville Subd., Brgy. Manuyo Dos will have no electricity on April 29-30 between 11:30 p.m. and 4:30 a.m. due to the replacement of a badly-leaning electricity pole along Exodus St. In Caloocan City, some locations in Camarin will have no power on May 1 between 12:01 a.m. and 5 a.m. because of line reconstruction works and the replacement and installation of electricity poles along Camarin Road. In Bulacan, some areas in Brgy. Duhat, Bocaue, and some places in Brgy. Patubig, Marilao will have power interruptions on April 28-29 between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. because of the replacement and installation of electricity facilities and line reconductoring works. Some parts of Brgy. Borol 2nd, Balagtas, Bulacan will also have no electricity on April 30 between 1 a.m. and 6 a.m. due to line reconductoring works in the village. In Cavite, the whole of Magallanes and Ternate; Brgy. Kaytitinga II in Alfonso; the villages of Aguado, Cabuco, De Ocampo, Lapidario, Pasong Kawayan I, and San Agustin in Trece Martires City; The villages of A. Dalusag, Batas, Castaños Cerca, Castaños Lejos, Kabulusan, Lumipa, Tabora, and town proper in Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo; the villages of Bucal 1, Bucal 2, Bucal 3-B, Bucal 4-A, Bucal 4-B, Caingen, Garita 1-A, Garita 1-B, Layong Mabilog, Mabacao, Mabato, Pinagsanhan 1-A, Pinagsanhan 1-B, San Miguel A, San Miguel B, Talipusngo, Tulay Kanluran, Tulay Silangan and town proper in Maragondon; and the villages of Bagong Kalsada, Bancaan, Bucana Malaki, Bucana Sasahan, Calubcob, Gomez-Zamora, Halang, Humbac, Ibayo Estacion, Ibayong Silangan, Kanluran, Labac, Latoria, Mabolo, Makina, Malainen Bago, Malainen Luma, Molino, Munting Mapino, Muzon, Nazareno, Palangue 1, Palangue 2, Palangue 3, Sabang, San Roque, Santulan, Sapa, Timalan Balsahan, Timalan Concepcion, and Timalan Lontoc in Naic will have short power interruptions on April 29 and April 30 between 11:30 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. (April 29) and 6:01 a.m. and 6:30 a.m. (April 30) because of the energization of the Meralco-Osorio substation. In addition to this, some areas in Brgy. Osorio, Treces Martires City will have no power on April 30 between 6 a.m. and 11 a.m. because of the energization of the Meralco-Osorio substation. In Quezon, some places in the villages of Kinatihan II, Malabanan Norte, Malabanan Sur, Masalukot I, Masalukot III, Masalukot IV, Mayabobo, Pahinga Norte, San Andres, San Isidro, Sta. Catalina Norte, Sta. Catalina Sur, and Poblacion in Candelaria; and the villages of Manggalang-Bantilan and Manggalang-Kiling in Sariaya will have power interruptions on April 27 between 12:01 a.m. and 1 a.m. and also between 4 a.m. and 5 a.m. because of the replacement of electricity facilities along Maharlika Highway in Brgy. Lumington, Tiaong. Some areas in the villages of Lalig, Bulakin, Bungoy and Dagatan in Tiaong will have no electricity on April 27 between 1 a.m. and 4 a.m. because of the replacement of electricity facilities along Maharlika Highway in Brgy. Lumington, Tiaong.

- [LTFRB completes taxi fuel subsidy rollout, P135M disbursed](#) (2026-04-26 02:43)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) said it had completed the distribution of fuel subsidies to taxi drivers, releasing a total of P135 million to help cushion the impact of rising fuel costs on the transport sector. In a statement issued Sunday, LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II said 5,440 taxi drivers received P5,000 each on April 25, amounting to P27.2 million in assistance. The payout was extended until 9 p.m. to

accommodate all qualified beneficiaries present at designated sites. The previous day's rollout covered around 2,000 drivers, with roughly P10 million released. Mendoza said that fuel subsidies for other public utility vehicle (PUV) sectors have also been distributed, partly through checks issued to transport service entities in various regions to facilitate payouts to their members. He credited coordination among government personnel and stakeholders for the smooth rollout of the program. Beyond the one-time P5,000 assistance, the LTFRB said it is working with the Department of Energy and Land Bank of the Philippines on the implementation of a P10-per-liter fuel discount scheme for PUV operators nationwide.

- [Shots fired, Trump evacuated unhurt from press dinner in Washington](#) (2026-04-26 02:26)

WASHINGTON, United States — Shots were fired as US President Donald Trump attended a media gala in Washington on Saturday night, with the gunman detained at a screening area just outside the hotel ballroom where hundreds of guests had gathered. Trump was rushed off the stage and security teams swarmed past groups of invitees at the black-tie White House Correspondents' Dinner, as people dived under tables in chaotic scenes. "Secret Service and Law Enforcement did a fantastic job. They acted quickly and bravely. The shooter has been apprehended," Trump said on social media. He said he would shortly hold a press conference at the White House. "Law Enforcement has requested that we leave the premises," he added. "The First Lady, plus the Vice President, and all Cabinet members, are in perfect condition." He said he planned to re-schedule the event within a month despite the security scare. The Secret Service confirmed that one suspect was in custody, adding the shooting incident took place near the main security screening area. Tactical teams with guns drawn took position on the stage where Trump had been sitting during dinner before he was evacuated. Police swarmed the Washington Hilton Hotel, and helicopters hovered overhead. Glitzy annual gala The incident erupted after the welcoming speech and during dinner, before Trump was due to speak. Trump administration officials appeared to have been evacuated first and uncertainty remained as to what exactly happened. A cabinet official, Mehmet Oz, said "shots fired upstairs" as he was rushed out by security. Trump was the target of an assassination attempt during a rally in Butler, Pennsylvania in 2024. A gunman fired several shots, killing a rally goer and lightly wounding the president in the ear. A few months later, another man was arrested after a Secret Service agent saw the barrel of a rifle poking from the bushes on the perimeter of the West Palm Beach golf course where Trump was playing a round. The Washington Hilton where Saturday's gala was taking place was the site where Republican President Ronald Reagan was shot by a would-be assassin in 1981. Organizers told guests that the White House Correspondents' Dinner would continue despite the incident, before announcing it had been postponed. Trump was attending the event for the first time while in office. The White House Correspondents' Association (WHCA) invited Trump this year despite his repeated attacks on the media. Unlike all other presidents from the past 100 years, Trump had never attended while in office. The "Nerd Prom" as attendees dub it brings together hundreds of Washington journalists and media executives to raise funds for scholarships and awards. The event often has a comedian joking about the president, who traditionally gets his own back with some jokes, though no comedian was

booked this year.

- [Despite Iran tensions, King Charles III will follow his mother's lead in celebrating US-UK bonds](#) (2026-04-26 01:56)

LONDON — The challenge for King Charles III when he embarks on next week's state visit to the U.S. is, as always, to live up to his mother's example. The late Queen Elizabeth II wowed Congress in 1991 with a speech that celebrated the shared democratic traditions of Britain and the United States, quoted Abraham Lincoln, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Ralph Waldo Emerson, and highlighted the deep bonds between the two nations. Those themes will also be at the top of Charles' agenda as he celebrates America's 250th birthday and seeks to calm tensions surrounding Prime Minister Keir Starmer's refusal to support U.S. President Donald Trump's war against Iran, said Douglas Brinkley, a presidential historian at Rice University in Texas. "We've got to always make the distinction that there's a difference between the government of the U.K. and the kings and queens of Great Britain, who are really always coming to try to put (on) a good face," Brinkley told The Associated Press. "Politics come and go, prime ministers, presidents, come and go, but there's something deeper about the special relationship between the United States and the U.K." Charles and Queen Camilla will begin their four-day trip on Monday, when they will have tea with the president and first lady Melania Trump, then tour the White House beehive in a nod to the king's focus on conservation. The formal arrival ceremony will take place on Tuesday, with a 21-gun salute, brass bands playing the national anthems of both countries and a contingent of U.S. service members passing in review. The ceremonies will be followed by a meeting between Trump and Charles. Behind the scenes But beneath the pomp and pageantry will be a carefully choreographed diplomatic event staged, like all royal visits, at the request of the British government. Starmer resisted pressure to cancel it after Trump belittled the British military's sacrifices in Afghanistan and criticized him personally for failing to back the U.S. in Iran. Despite those tensions, Trump has continued to speak warmly about Charles. "History has shown that President Trump really tries to be impressive whenever he's dealing with British royalty," Brinkley said. "And I'm sure it'll be the same this time around." Ever since 1939, when King George VI became the first British monarch to set foot on the soil of the country's former colony, there's been a special sort of excitement whenever the royals come to the United States. Take that first visit, which took place as World War II loomed over Europe. The royals toured the east coast and attended a "picnic" at Roosevelt's private home in Hyde Park, New York. "King tries hot dog and asks for more," declared the New York Times. But the big moment was when the royals traveled to Mount Vernon to lay a wreath at the tomb of George Washington, America's first president. It showed respect at a time of isolationism. "People could see the handwriting on the wall and know that it was going to be important for the United States and Britain to stay strong for fighting against Hitler," said Barbara Perry, a presidential scholar at the University of Virginia's Miller Center. But bonding over sausages had broader benefits, helping the royals build links to the general public as well as its leadership. After war broke out in September 1939, Queen Elizabeth, the wife of George VI and mother of the future Elizabeth II, wrote to first lady Eleanor Roosevelt to say how

moved she'd been by letters from Americans who enclosed small sums for British forces. "Sometimes, during the last terrible months, we have felt rather lonely in our fight against evil things, but I can honestly say that our hearts have been lightened by the knowledge that friends in America understand what we are fighting for," she wrote. The queen's connection Queen Elizabeth II built on those relationships, making four state visits to the U.S. during her 70-year reign. She helped President Gerald R. Ford celebrate America's bicentennial in 1976 and met with President George W. Bush in 2007 as British and American forces fought in Iraq and Afghanistan. Smoothing turbulent waters and reminding both sides about their common bonds were what those trips were all about. Charles' visit will be no different. It includes a commemoration of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, a ceremony honoring fallen service members and an event to be attended by Queen Camilla to mark the 100th anniversary of Winnie the Pooh stories by British author A.A. Milne. Awkward events will be avoided. The royals won't meet with Jeffrey Epstein's victims, despite calls for the king to address his brother's links to the convicted sex offender. Nor are there plans for Charles to meet with his son Prince Harry, who has been a critic of the monarchy since giving up royal duties and moving to California. Those issues aren't the priority, said Robert Hardman, author of "Elizabeth II: In Private. In Public. The Inside Story." "He's going because 250 years ago the Founding Fathers of the USA kicked out his great-times-five grandfather, and he's going to say, 'No hard feelings, it's been a great divorce, we've had a lovely 250 years and let's reflect on the high points,'" Hardman said. "I mean, there are going to be some very, very large elephants in the room during that visit ... but, you know, there are plenty of other things for the king to focus on." History, not politics Charles' speech to a joint session of Congress offers the chance to deliver the message that long-term friendship is more important than transient disputes. He is also likely to offer a bit of humor, as his mother did when she faced lawmakers in 1991. Wearing soft peach amid a sea of gray suits, the diminutive monarch began her remarks with a joke about an earlier blunder at the White House when her lectern was so tall it obscured the audience's view of her. "I do hope you can see me today from where you are," she deadpanned. The chamber erupted in laughter. A standing ovation followed. Then she launched into a speech about democratic values, the rule of law and the Atlantic Alliance. But Charles will have to offer his own take on those ideas, Brinkley said. "The theme of the speech is going to be American exceptionalism, American history, the importance of U.S.-British alliance, and some memories from the past," he said. "But also about the love affair the two countries share with each other, even though it goes over rocky rapids from time to time."

- [Easterlies, frontal system to bring rain, cloudy skies — Pagasa](#) (2026-04-26 01:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The easterlies and a frontal system will prevail in the next 24 hours, bringing cloudy skies and scattered rains, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said on Sunday. The easterly winds which pass through the Pacific Ocean will affect Caraga, Eastern Samar, and Southern Leyte where cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms are likely, weather specialist Veronica Torres said. The easterlies will also affect Metro Manila and the rest of the country where partly cloudy

to overcast skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms are likely. Meanwhile, Torres said Batanes will have scattered rains and isolated thunderstorms due to the frontal system within the day. “Flash floods or landslides due to moderate to at times heavy rains would be possible,” she said in a 5 a.m. forecast. A frontal system is defined as a “transition-boundary separating two air masses of contrasting properties (temperature and humidity).” “Simply put, fronts form when one kind of air mass enters an area occupied by another kind of air mass,” Pagasa chief Nathaniel Servando explained. Pagasa said Metro Manila would likely have a heat index of 41 degrees Celsius on Sunday, which falls under extreme caution category, while the highest could be in Negros Occidental at 44 degrees Celsius.

• [A sudden shift: ICE arrests drop nearly 12% after Minneapolis killings and immigration shake-up](#) (2026-04-26 01:33)

At the peak of the crackdown, carloads of masked immigration officers were a common sight in the streets of Minneapolis, while thousands of people were being arrested every week in Texas, Florida and California. “Turn and burn,” top Border Patrol commander Gregory Bovino called the strategy, with relentless displays of force and teams of agents descending on restaurant kitchens, bus stops and Home Depot parking lots. In December, arrests by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents peaked at nearly 40,000 nationwide and were nearly as high the next month, according to data provided to UC Berkeley’s Deportation Data Project and analyzed by The Associated Press. In late January, the killings in Minneapolis of two American citizens by immigration officers and growing concerns over the government’s heavy-handed tactics led to a shake-up of top immigration officials. In the weeks that followed, ICE arrests across the country dropped on average by nearly 12%. Polling has found the general public felt the immigration enforcement operation in Minnesota went too far, a factor that may have contributed to the abrupt firing of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem in early March. The numbers don’t follow the same pattern everywhere. Bovino, who swaggered through raid scenes in tactical gear and was the public face of the Trump administration crackdown, was pushed aside following the killings in Minneapolis of Renee Good and Alex Pretti. Border czar Tom Homan was then sent to the Twin Cities to chart a new course for immigration enforcement, and he announced the drawdown of immigration agents in the state on Feb. 4. An AP analysis of ICE arrest records show the department averaged 7,369 weekly arrests nationwide in the five weeks after Homan’s drawdown announcement, the most recent period for which data is available, down from 8,347 per week in the previous five weeks. Those arrest numbers were still higher on average than during much of the first year of President Donald Trump’s second term, and were dramatically higher than during the Biden administration. The numbers were not, however, uniform across the country. ICE arrests rose significantly in Kentucky, Indiana, North Carolina and Florida during those five weeks, in some cases hitting their highest weekly count since the start of Trump’s second term. In Kentucky alone, weekly arrests more than doubled, reaching 86 by early March. Those increases were offset by steep drops in a handful of large states, including Minnesota and Texas. Many arrested were not Trump’s ‘worst of the worst.’ The Trump administration insists it is targeting the most vicious criminals living illegally in the U.S., and the

president has referred to them as "the worst of the worst." In some cases the description is accurate, but the reality is complicated. Many of the toughest criminals taken into ICE custody were already in prison, but many others who were arrested have no criminal history. Nationally, some 46% of the people ICE arrested in the five weeks before Feb. 4 had no criminal charges or convictions, dropping to 41% in the five weeks that followed. Yet that's still above the 35% weekly average for the time since Trump returned to office. And in a number of states, even after Feb. 4, the share of noncriminals being arrested went up, not down. Has there been a change in approach? Across the country, thousands of federal court filings offer an imperfect window into how the Trump administration's deportation tactics remain in high gear, even if activity has waned. Like the 21-year-old Honduran man with no criminal record who has filed a petition for release after being arrested Feb. 22 in a suburban San Diego traffic stop. The father of three U.S. citizen children — ages 5, 3 and 10 months — had been under ICE surveillance, the petition says, before officers in tactical gear pulled him over. Or the 33-year-old Venezuelan woman, a well-known South Texas doctor who worked in a region designated as medically underserved, who was arrested earlier this month with her five-year-old daughter, a U.S. citizen, on her way to her husband's asylum hearing. She was arrested, officials said, for overstaying her visa. Aaron Reichlin-Melnick, a senior fellow with the research and advocacy group the American Immigration Council, says he sees signs of change in lower arrest and detention numbers but warns it's too early to know if those shifts are permanent. "The Trump administration says: 'We're not slowing down,' 'Nothing has changed,'" in immigration enforcement, he said. "But it's very clear that they have pulled back from some of the tactics of Operation Metro Surge," the crackdown that swept Minneapolis.

- [An explosive device kills 13 and injures 38 on a bus in southwestern Colombia as violence persists](#) (2026-04-26 01:14)

BOGOTÁ, Colombia — An explosive device killed 13 people traveling on a bus in southwestern Colombia on Saturday, an attack the country's army chief described as a "terrorist act" that also left at least 38 injured as violence linked to drug trafficking in the region escalates. Octavio Guzmán, the governor of the region of Cauca, said on X that the device was set off while the bus was traveling along the Panamerican Highway in the municipality of Cajibío. Five children were among the injured, Cauca Health Secretary Carolina Camargo told Noticias Caracol, a TV news program. Gen. Hugo López, commander of Colombia's Armed Forces, told a news conference that it was a "terrorist act" and blamed the network of a man known as "Iván Mordisco" — one of Colombia's most wanted figures — and the Jaime Martínez faction. Both are dissidents of the now-defunct Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia that operate in the region. Neither Iván Mordisco nor the Jaime Martínez faction abide by the peace agreement signed with the state in 2016. Colombian President Gustavo Petro condemned the attack on X. "Those who carried out the attack and killed seven civilians — and wounded 17 others — in Cajibío — many of them Indigenous people — are terrorists, fascists, and drug traffickers," he wrote. The attack is the latest in a spate of explosions that have attempted to target public infrastructure. At least 26 incidents have taken place in the past two days in southwestern Colombia, which López said has



only affected civilians. They included a shooting at a police station in the rural area of Jamundi, and an attack on a Civil Aviation radar facility in El Tambo, where authorities took down three explosives-laden drones earlier on Saturday. No one was hurt. On Friday, two vehicles rigged with explosives were detonated near military units in Cali and Palmira, causing material damage. The escalation of violence in that region — a territory contested by illegal armed groups linked to drug trafficking — prompted the mobilization of high-ranking officials on Saturday. Led by Defense Minister Pedro Sánchez, the delegation that includes regional governors and local authorities, was meeting in Palmira when the deadly explosion occurred. "These criminals seek to instill fear, but we will respond with firmness," Sánchez said on X. Meanwhile, Francisca Toro, governor of Valle del Cauca, has called upon the national government to provide "immediate support." In a message on X, Toro called for a reinforcement of public security forces, enhanced intelligence operations and "decisive actions" against crime in the face of a "terrorist-level escalation." According to authorities, Cauca and Valle del Cauca serve as a critical hub for illicit activities of illegal armed groups vying for control over sea and river access routes leading to the port of Buenaventura — a key transit point used to traffic drugs to Central America and Europe. The government has also offered a reward of more than 1 million dollars for information leading to the capture of "Marlon," who is identified as the leader of the region's dissident group. On Friday, local authorities offered more than \$14,000 for information leading to the identification and location of those behind the attacks in Cali and Palmira.

- [Close watch on how Trump and journalists will get along at White House correspondents' dinner](#) (2026-04-26 01:00)

Donald Trump's attendance at Saturday's annual White House Correspondents' Association dinner in Washington for his first time as president is putting his administration's often-contentious relationship with the press on full public display. Trump arrived Saturday night to an event where the leaders of a nation at war mingled with celebrities, journalists and even a puppet — Triumph the Insult Comic Dog — in a dinner that typically generates debate about whether the relationship between journalists and their sources should include socializing together and putting aside sometimes adversarial relationships. Trump was being watched closely at the event held by the organization of reporters who cover him and his administration. Past presidents who have attended have generally spoken about the importance of free speech and the First Amendment, adding in some light roasts about individual journalists. The Republican president did not attend during his first term or the first year of his second. He came as a guest in 2011, sitting in the audience as President Barack Obama, a Democrat, made some jokes about the New York real estate developer. Trump also attended as a private citizen in 2015. Trump entered the subterranean banquet hall of the Washington Hilton to the strains of "Hail to the Chief" and greeted prominent journalists on the dais, also pausing to laud White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt with a cheerful pointing of his finger. Past dinners have also featured comedians who poke at presidents. This year, the group opted to hire mentalist Oz Pearlman as the featured entertainment. Trump's appearance is rekindling a longer running



debate about the dinner and events like it — in particular, whether it is poor form for journalists to be seen socializing with the people they cover. The New York Times, for example, stopped attending the dinner more than a decade ago for that reason. "What was once (a fairly long time ago) a well-intended night of fundraising and camaraderie among professional adversaries is now simply a bad look," wrote Kelly McBride, ethics expert at the Poynter Institute, a journalism think tank. A contentious relationship between berating individual reporters, fighting organizations like the Times, The Wall Street Journal and The Associated Press in court and restricting press access to the Pentagon, the administration's animus toward journalists has been a fixture of Trump's second term. On the eve of the dinner, nearly 500 retired journalists signed a petition calling on the association "to forcefully demonstrate opposition to President Trump's efforts to trample freedom of the press." The WHCA president, CBS News reporter Weijia Jiang, said the organization was fighting for all different forms of the press that have a line in to the American people. "I don't think people realize how closely we are working with the White House," she said on CSPAN before the dinner convened. "The relationship is important. It can be complicated. It can be intense. But it is robust." Welcoming guests, Jiang alluded to the contentious relationship in thanking Leavitt "for everything your team does to work with us every day, whether you like it or not." Veteran reporter Manu Raju of CNN, as he entered the Washington Hilton for the dinner, said it was not his role to express his opinion on Trump's relationship with the press. "I'm not an activist," he said. "My job is not to protest." A few dozen protesters stood across the hotel in the runup to the event. One was dressed in a prison uniform, wearing a Pete Hegseth mask and red gloves. Another carried a sign saying "Journalism is dead." Many reporters who attend consider it a valuable opportunity to get story ideas and establish personal connections with those in government, one that may pay dividends with returned telephone calls in the future. Some news organizations invite sources as guests; journalists often invite sources as guests at the dinner. It will be noticed Saturday whether administration officials who have also expressed hostility to the press will attend, and with whom they will be sitting. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said he was invited by the New York Post; Interior Secretary Doug Burgum and Secretary of State Marco Rubio were NBC guests. The Associated Press invited a former Trump official that it sued last year. Taylor Budowich, a former White House deputy chief of staff who crafted communications policy, was a named defendant last year when the AP sued the administration after it reduced its access to the president because the news outlet did not follow Trump's lead in renaming the Gulf of Mexico. "We maintain professional relationships with people across the political spectrum because we are nonpartisan by design — focused on reporting the facts in the public's interest," AP spokesman Patrick Maks said. The White House correspondents will also hand out awards for exemplary reporting. That includes some stories that displeased Trump, such as one from the Journal about a birthday message Trump once sent to convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. The story led to a presidential lawsuit.

- [Julie Defensor denies human trafficking rap](#) (2026-04-25 16:14)

THE wife of former lawmaker Mike Defensor denied allegations she was involved in the recent National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) raid on a Pasay City establishment engaged in human trafficking. In a statement late on Friday, Julie Defensor called the accusations against her and her daughter baseless and malicious. “I am issuing this statement to categorically and forcefully deny the baseless, malicious allegations directed at me, my daughter, and our associated businesses,” Mrs. Defensor said. “Let me be absolutely clear regarding the recent NBI operation: we have absolutely no connection to the targeted establishment or its operations. Any attempt to link our family to the abhorrent acts allegedly committed there is a deliberate, dangerous, and desperate lie,” she added. Mrs. Defensor described the motive of the NBI operations as part of a smear campaign, saying that 1,000 employees’ lives are at stake because of a “political attack.” “This is a fabricated pretext designed to artificially manufacture a case, with the chilling goal of filing unwarranted, unbailable charges against me and my daughter,” she said. “This is part of a relentless pattern of harassment, and the collateral damage is devastating. Because of these political attacks, approximately 1,000 hardworking employees across various companies have abruptly lost their jobs — simply due to a perceived association with my husband, Mike. These are 1,000 families stripped of their livelihoods in the middle of a crisis. It is unconscionable that innocent workers are being sacrificed as pawns in someone else’s political vendetta,” Mrs. Defensor added. She also told NBI director Melvin Matibag that if he has any problem with her husband, he should take it up with him. “I address this to attorney Matibag: if you have a political or personal grievance with Mike, have the courage to resolve it with him directly. Stop using me, our daughter, and hundreds of innocent, displaced workers as collateral damage in a dispute that has nothing to do with us,” Mrs. Defensor said. “As a mother, my priority will always be the protection of my family. We will not be bullied, silenced, or intimidated by these cowardly tactics. We will exercise the full extent of the law to clear our names, expose this harassment, and hold those responsible accountable,” she added. In a statement on Friday, the NBI said they rescued 54 women in an “entrapment and rescue operation” against a suspected “trafficking-in-persons network operating” in the Chicago Nightclub and Bleu Hotel in Ortigas, Pasig City, allegedly owned by Mrs. Defensor. Defensor defended his wife and daughter in an interview with radio DZMM and said it had something to do with his involvement in the 18 Marines, who served as bagmen for fellow former lawmaker Zaldy Co. “Don’t touch my family... of course, for me, I know that they have a case against me, but people are also being affected,” he said. The former lawmaker said his family gave up ownership of the hotel in 2019. “We gave up the operations of this hotel in 2019. I think there’s a document saying we still own this place, but technically, the corporation of the hotel operating under my name is no more,” Defensor said in Filipino. “It still exists but the operations ceased in 2019, but some financial documents need to be fixed, so it hasn’t closed,” he added. Defensor said the karaoke bar where the NBI operation took place is not owned by them.

- [ICC prosecutors seek to remove defense redactions](#) (2026-04-25 16:13)

PROSECUTORS at the International Criminal Court (ICC) have asked judges to order the public release of a redacted defense filing in the case against former president Rodrigo Duterte, arguing that confidentiality claims are unjustified and could undermine witness confidence. In a submission dated April 24 before Pre-Trial Chamber I, the Office of the Prosecutor sought the reclassification of a defense response that had been partially withheld from public view. The chamber is composed of Judges Iulia Antoanella Motoc, Reine Adelaide Sophie Alapini-Gansou, and Maria del Socorro Flores Liera. Prosecutors said the redactions conceal a key clarification by Duterte's legal team that six individuals — Salvador Medialdea, Salvador Panelo, Martin Delgra, Silvestre Bello, Alfredo Lim, and Cesar Dulay — are not members of the defense team in the ICC case. According to the filing, the defense had earlier "affirmed, confirmed, assured and guaranteed" that the six lawyers were not part of Duterte's ICC counsel. However, this statement was later removed in the public version of the response. The prosecution argued that the defense's justification — to protect the lawyers' "dignity" — does not outweigh the court's principle of transparency. "It is unclear how confirming to the public that these lawyers do not work for the Defense team would negatively impact their dignity," prosecutors said, adding that court proceedings should generally remain public. The Office of the Prosecutor, led by Deputy Prosecutor Mame Mandiaye Niang, also said keeping the information confidential could create confusion among potential witnesses and victims. Prosecutors said earlier statements and actions by defense counsel had created the impression that the six lawyers were part of Duterte's legal team, prompting a formal request for clarification in March. They warned that leaving the issue unresolved in public records could have a "chilling effect" on ongoing investigations, particularly if witnesses fear that individuals linked to Duterte might have access to sensitive case information. The prosecution added that some of the six lawyers had held senior government positions during Duterte's presidency, a period covered by the ICC investigation into alleged crimes. Efforts to resolve the issue privately failed after the defense declined to seek reclassification, maintaining that the redactions were appropriate to avoid possible embarrassment to the individuals involved. Prosecutors, however, questioned that reasoning and said the defense had not explained its apparent change in position after previously agreeing to make certain information public.

- [Dangerous heat index levels seen in 14 areas](#) (2026-04-25 16:12)

FOURTEEN areas in the country will experience sweltering temperatures due to a danger-level heat index, the weather bureau said Saturday. Heat index is what the temperature feels like to the human body when relative humidity combines with air. A peak heat index of 45 degrees Celsius is forecast in Dumangas, Iloilo and Butuan City, Agusan del Norte, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa). The following areas will also see danger-level heat indices: San Ildefonso, Bulacan – 43 C Sangley Point, Cavite – 42 C Aborlan, Palawan – 44 C Roxas City, Capiz – 42 C Mamburao, Capiz – 42 C Iloilo City, Iloilo – 43 C La Granja, La Carlota, Negros Occidental – 44 C Catbalogan, Western Samar – 43 C VSU Baybay, Leyte – 42 C Borongan, Eastern Samar – 44 C Guiuan, Eastern Samar – 42 C Cotabato City, Maguindanao del Norte – 43 C Heat cramps and heat exhaustion are likely under

a danger-level heat index of 42 C to 51 C. Meanwhile, the heat index may reach 41 C in Aparri, Cagayan; San Jose, Occidental Mindoro; Puerto Princesa City and Cuyo in Palawan; Legazpi City, Albay; Catarman, Northern Samar; Tacloban City, Leyte; Dipolog, Zamboanga del Norte; Zamboanga City, Zamboanga del Sur; and Davao City, Davao del Sur. A heat index of 40 C is forecast over Dagupan City, Pangasinan; Tuguegarao City, Cagayan; ISU Echague, Isabela; Baler and Casiguran in Aurora; CLSU Muñoz, Nueva Ecija; TAU Camiling, Tarlac; Ambulong, Tanauan, Batangas; Romblon, Romblon; Daet, Camarines Norte; Siquijor, Siquijor; Mactan, Cebu; Maasin, Southern Leyte; Surigao City, Surigao del Norte; and Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur. Meanwhile, cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms are expected over Batanes due to the frontal system. The rest of the country will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms due to the easterlies and localized thunderstorms. Light to moderate winds and slight to moderate seas will prevail across the archipelago. The Department of Health (DOH) warned the public against heat-related illnesses as the heat index across the country continues to rise. With many areas experiencing heat index levels exceeding 40 degrees Celsius, DOH spokesman Albert Domingo told The Manila Times on Saturday that it is important for the public to avoid outdoor activities between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. and to stay hydrated. “The DOH warns against heat-related illnesses ranging from heat cramps and heat exhaustion to life-threatening heat stroke. Heat stroke is a medical emergency occurring when body temperatures exceed 40 C, potentially leading to seizures, coma, or altered mental status,” Domingo said. He added that while everyone can be affected, individuals with comorbidities like hypertension or diabetes are more susceptible to heat-related illnesses. “Prevention centers on staying hydrated with 8-10 glasses of water daily (for those not undergoing dialysis) while avoiding dehydrating drinks like coffee, soda, or alcohol,” Domingo added. The agency also said that certain medications and alcohol may increase the risk of heat-related illnesses by accelerating dehydration. “When outdoors, shield yourself from direct sunlight by wearing light, breathable clothing and using umbrellas, caps, or fans,” Domingo said. The weather bureau raised an El Niño alert on Tuesday, which may bring “drier-than-usual” conditions, further exacerbating the heat levels.

- [Panel found probable cause to impeach Sara, lawyer says](#) (2026-04-25 16:11)

LAWYER Lorna Kapunan said she believes that the House of Representatives Committee on Justice has seen and heard enough — from the discrepancies in Vice President Sara Duterte’s declared net worth to the flagged bank transactions — to find probable cause to impeach her. “The House Committee on Justice has already met its target to prove probable cause, that a crime was committed, that a violation of law was committed, and that the vice president is probably guilty thereof. But it’s not guilt beyond reasonable doubt,” she said in Filipino and English in a radio interview on Friday. The veteran litigator also warned the public not to be swayed by the vice president’s press releases, her defense team, or online trolls seeking to discredit the nondisclosure findings in Duterte’s statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALNs) and the Anti-Money Laundering Council’s (AMLC) report. “No spin can change what is already on official record,” she said. “With all the evidence, follow the numbers. Don’t

believe the press releases, trolls, and statements outside the Committee on Justice. Believe in the numbers. Let the numbers speak for themselves,” she said. Kapunan noted that the evidence shown are official records of government agencies: the Office of the Ombudsman for the SALNs; the AMLC reporting on suspicious and covered transactions; and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) for the companies of the Vice president and her husband, Manases Carpio. The records, she said, raise legitimate questions that cannot be ignored. “So, these are records, they don’t lie. When speaking of litigation, there is already the presence of hard evidence, documentary from official sources. This is not opinion, this is not hearsay. These are documents,” Kapunan said. During the April 22 hearing, committee members uncovered a more than elevenfold jump in Duterte’s net worth, from P7.2 million in 2007 to P88.4 million in 2024. Despite the dramatic surge, it also found that she had failed to report her cash on hand and bank deposits under personal assets in her SALNs from 2019 to 2024. Meanwhile, the AMLC reported to the justice panel that more than 600 transactions worth P6.7 billion from Duterte and her husband’s bank accounts had been flagged as covered or suspicious from 2006 to 2025. The AMLC also confirmed that 19 of the bank transaction entries presented by former senator Antonio Trillanes IV matched its own records on the same dates and amounts, including the P22 million Duterte had allegedly received from Samuel Uy, a purported drug lord and close business associate of the Duterte family. Kapunan, meanwhile, noted that the Committee on Justice has given the Vice President ample opportunity to address the allegations and defend herself, but instead, the defense team filed a non-answer and Duterte continues to shun the hearings. She emphasized that Duterte cannot hide behind jurisdictional arguments to avoid attending the hearings, pointing out that the Constitution itself grants the House the authority to initiate impeachment proceedings. Moreover, she noted, the hearings are clarificatory rather than evidentiary, meaning the Committee on Justice is simply examining the facts cited in the impeachment complaints and giving the respondent the opportunity to be heard before ruling on probable cause. Duterte’s defense team also cannot claim to be “surprised” at the evidence and testimonies being examined, she said, given that “all hearings are being televised and subpoenas publicly issued.” The Committee on Justice is set to hold its final hearing on April 29, where the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) will present its findings on the alleged death threats Duterte made against President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., first lady Liza Araneta-Marcos, and former House speaker Martin Romualdez. The panel will then vote on whether probable cause exists for each allegation in the impeachment complaints. Due process. Meanwhile, Sen. Robinhood Padilla emphasized that any impeachment proceedings against Duterte must strictly adhere to due process, warning against attempts to expedite or bypass constitutional procedures. Interviewed on a TV news program, Padilla, a Duterte ally, said the process should not skip mandated steps, particularly the requirement for deliberation in the House of Representatives before advancing to the Senate for trial. “The process cannot be skipped. It must go through due process. The Supreme Court of the Philippines has repeatedly underscored its importance,” Padilla said. “If we skip it, we risk wasting the people’s time and money.” Padilla also raised broader concerns about the relevance of impeachment proceedings amid pressing national issues, suggesting that economic concerns, such as wages, should take precedence. “Is impeachment really the solution to the country’s

problems?” he asked. “Why don’t we talk about people’s wages, like the minimum wage? That is the real problem of the people.”

- [Bonoan denies alleged box deliveries](#) (2026-04-25 16:10)

FORMER Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) secretary Manuel Bonoan denied the alleged delivery of 55 boxes allegedly meant for him. In a statement on Friday, Bonoan said Garcia “made uncorroborated statements against me regarding the alleged deliveries.” Bonoan described the testimony as false. “I categorically and vehemently deny and have no knowledge whatsoever regarding these vague and unfounded allegations. In the first place, let it be of record that I am not involved in any manner as regards the subject case of the former senator Revilla Jr.,” Bonoan said. Bonoan said “in the absence of specific details surrounding his accusations or corroborating evidence to support his allegations, Garcia’s statements are mere hearsay.” On Thursday, Vergel Niño Garcia testified before the Sandiganbayan Third Division that he was a former driver of state witness and former DPWH undersecretary Roberto Bernardo. Garcia testified that there was a delivery of the following to Bonoan: 15 sealed boxes allegedly taken by a then-driver of Bonoan in November 2024; 20 boxes in 2025; and 20 boxes allegedly taken by the said then-driver of Bonoan in Quezon City. Garcia, who also testified on the alleged delivery of boxes allegedly meant for several other people, was testifying before the court as a prosecution witness in the bail hearing in the malversation through falsification case filed against former senator Bong Revilla and other people. The Office of the Ombudsman filed the case before the Sandiganbayan in January 2026 in connection with the alleged ghost project in Pandi, Bulacan. Bonoan is not an accused. Garcia, who did not see the contents of the alleged boxes, testified that he learned about the alleged contents only during an investigation of the flood control mess. On Thursday afternoon, the prosecution presented Francisco Dela Fuente Jr. as witness. “Our reaction? Is it believable? To us, no,” Reody Anthony Balisi, Revilla’s lawyer, said in Filipino and English in an interview on Thursday. “If you will notice and if you listened carefully, they did not attach proof in their sworn statements,” Balisi said. Revilla’s camp has said that Revilla had no hand in the project in Pandi, whether it was a ghost project or not. Balisi said in the interview on Thursday that for the defense, the two testimonies were not relevant. “If you will notice, in all that they (witnesses) said, and this was not denied by the prosecution, NCR projects were what was being discussed..... That was clear. So we just wanted to point out, why are we still talking about this here?” he said. Balisi said that the defense’s position has always been that “there is no evidence linking him (Revilla) to this project.” The other accused were Brice Hernandez, Juanito Mendoza, Arjay Domasig, Emelita Juat, Christina Mae Pineda, and Jaypee Mendoza. The accused, except Jaypee Mendoza, seek bail. Revilla refused to enter a plea during his arraignment in February but the Sandiganbayan Third Division entered a not guilty plea for him. Juanito Mendoza, Hernandez, Jaypee Mendoza, Domasig, Juat, and Pineda pleaded not guilty to the charge.

- [Taxi drivers get P10M fuel subsidy](#) (2026-04-25 16:09)



THE Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) announced the release of P10 million in fuel subsidies to taxi drivers on the first day of a two-day payout. In a statement, LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II said approximately 2,000 taxi drivers received P5,000 each after claiming their subsidy at designated distribution points, including the central offices of the LTFRB and the Land Transportation Office (LTO). The subsidy forms part of the national government's broader assistance program for the public transport sector, with nearly P98 million initially allocated for taxi drivers nationwide. With the additional P10 million disbursed on Friday, total funds released for the sector have exceeded P108 million so far, the agency said. Mendoza, however, cautioned drivers against attempting to claim the subsidy more than once after 10 individuals were flagged for alleged double claims during the first day of distribution. "We are sending this warning that once any taxi driver is caught, we will request the LTO to revoke his driver's license," Mendoza said. Despite the incident, the LTFRB maintained that the overall distribution process remained orderly and efficient. The LTFRB said it has intensified monitoring measures to allow for real-time intervention in case of issues during the payout. Mendoza also assured that the agency would continue the distribution process until all intended beneficiaries have received their assistance, in line with the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. The fuel subsidy program aims to cushion the impact of rising fuel costs on public utility drivers and operators resulting from the war in the Middle East.

- [PLHIV at higher risk of tuberculosis](#) (2026-04-25 16:08)

THE Department of Health (DOH) warned that people living with human immunodeficiency virus (PLHIV) are more susceptible to developing tuberculosis (TB) due to a weakened immune system. "HIV is a disease that attacks the immune system, particularly the CD4 T-cells," the agency said in a Facebook post on Friday. CD4 T-cells are a type of white blood cell that serve as the immune system's managers, helping defend against bacteria. The DOH said that when the CD4 T-cells run out, the body's defense against various diseases is weakened. "This is where opportunistic infections such as tuberculosis enter. Many of us may have TB bacteria sleeping inside the body because it is usually controlled by a strong immune system. But because HIV weakens the immune system, TB wakes up and becomes an active disease," it added. The agency noted that this could lead to chronic diseases such as blood clotting, body collapse and possible death. The DOH urged PLHIV to avail themselves of medications against TB, as well as the importance of promoting safe sex through the use of condoms, lubricants and pre-exposure prophylaxis, which is said to be 99-percent effective against HIV. "For persons living with HIV, the key is to take an antiretroviral therapy, or ART, for HIV, along with TPT (tuberculosis preventive treatment) for TB; it is effective in stopping the spread of the same disease and can reduce the risk of other complications," it said. DOH spokesman Albert Domingo said in an interview that while taking TB medication can be challenging, the treatment can be completed in only four to nine months. "Let's not be afraid of the next pandemic. The next variant of Covid is not scary; TB is scary. It does not have to choose the rich or the poor; everyone can have TB because it is airborne," Domingo said.



- [Senate panel pushes stricter standards, national framework for local colleges](#) (2026-04-25 16:07)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate Committee on Higher and Technical-Vocational Education has called for sweeping reforms to strengthen oversight and improve the quality of local universities and colleges (LUCs), amid concerns over uneven standards and rapid sector growth. Chaired by Senator Loren Legarda, the hearing, held on Wednesday, April 23, highlighted long-standing governance gaps affecting LUCs, which are established and funded by local government units (LGUs). Lawmakers and education officials emphasized the need for a unified national framework to ensure accountability and quality across institutions. Data presented by the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM 2) showed that LUCs are now the fastest-growing segment of the higher education system. Enrollment in baccalaureate programs rose by 44 percent—from around 343,000 in 2021 to approximately 493,000 in 2023—reflecting increasing reliance on locally run institutions for tertiary education access. Despite this growth, oversight remains inconsistent. Of the 152 LUCs listed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), only 107 have been granted Institutional Recognition for Academic Year 2024–2025, raising concerns about compliance with minimum standards. EDCOM 2 Commissioner Sherwin Gatchalian warned that a significant portion of LUCs may be operating below required quality benchmarks. “About 34 percent of LUCs do not have institutional recognition. That means there are issues with quality and compliance with CHED requirements, and in effect, these institutions cannot access free higher education,” Gatchalian said. Structural challenges persist. Beyond regulatory gaps, officials pointed to systemic constraints affecting LUC performance, particularly disparities in faculty compensation. According to EDCOM 2 Executive Director Karol Mark Yee, salaries in LUCs are tied to the income classification of their respective LGUs, limiting the ability of poorer areas to attract qualified educators. “In some cases, instructors in LUCs receive only about 65 percent of the salary of their counterparts in state universities and colleges,” Yee said, describing a cycle where limited resources hinder faculty recruitment and, ultimately, education quality. The commission also underscored the lack of a clear legal framework governing LUCs. While their establishment is generally anchored on the Local Government Code of 1991 and Batas Pambansa Blg. 232, these policies are seen as outdated and insufficient to address current challenges. Compliance with CHED standards has historically been weak, Yee noted, with many LUCs only seeking recognition after the enactment of the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act, which tied government subsidies to quality assurance. Push for nationwide standards. CHED Chairperson Shirley Agrupis backed proposals to introduce stricter, standards-based pathways for LUC development, emphasizing that public support should be contingent on demonstrated capacity and compliance. Legarda said the proposed measure would establish mandatory national guidelines covering the creation, operation, and quality assurance of LUCs, including minimum requirements that LGUs must meet before setting up institutions. “We need to ensure that from the outset, LUCs meet quality standards. Over a third of publicly funded institutions operate without meeting minimum requirements, and that is a problem we must address,” she said.

- [OFWs warned against fraudulent contracts](#) (2026-04-25 16:06)

THE Philippine Embassy in Cairo issued an advisory to overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) to validate employment contracts before accepting jobs abroad.” Ensuring your contract is properly reviewed and authenticated protects your rights and welfare as a worker,” the advisory read. It said that employment contracts must be thoroughly reviewed and officially authenticated to ensure legitimacy and compliance with both Philippine and host country laws. This process, the embassy stressed, verifies essential details such as salary, job responsibilities, working hours and benefits, and confirms that these terms are recognized by authorities in both countries. It added that authentication helps prevent illegal recruitment, contract substitution and unsafe working conditions — common risks faced by migrant workers. Such a measure also plays a vital role in combating human trafficking and labor exploitation. The Philippine Embassy has established several critical guidelines for Filipinos seeking employment in Egypt to ensure their protection and legal standing. Primarily, individuals are advised never to sign or accept any contract that is unclear or not fully understood. It is essential to verify the legitimacy of all recruiters and to report any suspicious job offers immediately to the proper authorities. Once in the country, workers must remain vigilant against contract substitution or unauthorized changes to their terms of employment. Furthermore, employees should not agree to any transfers involving their employer, job position or workplace without obtaining proper authorization and a newly authenticated contract. Finally, it is vital to ensure that the actual job role and workplace address consistently align with the specific terms outlined in the original employment agreement. The advisory aligns with the efforts of the Department of Migrant Workers to strengthen protections for OFWs through stricter documentation and monitoring requirements. For verification or assistance, OFWs may contact the Philippine Embassy or Consulate in Egypt through official communication channels.

- [Go calls for stronger fire preparedness](#) (2026-04-25 16:04)

SEN. Bong Go on Thursday underscored the importance of fire preparedness and accessible emergency support systems as he visited families affected by a recent blaze in Barangay Bagong Ilog, Pasig City. He inspected the fire-hit area and met with displaced residents alongside Vice Mayor Richard Vincent Jude “Dodot” Jaworski and local officials, including councilors and barangay leaders. The visit aimed to assess damage, deliver assistance and ensure that the immediate needs of affected families were being addressed. Immediate response A total of 152 families displaced by the fire received relief packages during the distribution held at Bagong Ilog Elementary School Pavilion. Assistance included food packs, water, clothing, vitamins, recreational items and financial aid intended to help families begin recovery. Go encouraged victims to remain resilient, emphasizing community solidarity. “Don’t thank me. I should be the one to thank you because you allowed me to help,” he said, urging Filipinos to support one another during crises. Push for fire preparedness The senator reiterated calls for stricter adherence to fire safety measures, particularly those issued by the Bureau of Fire Protection. He warned against illegal electrical connections and unsafe cooking practices, which are among the leading causes of residential fires in densely populated communities. Go is the principal author

and co-sponsor of Republic Act (RA) 11589, a law mandating a 10-year modernization program for the fire service. The measure includes provisions for upgraded equipment, expanded manpower, enhanced training and intensified fire prevention campaigns in coordination with local government units. Long-term solutions Highlighting the need for sustainable disaster-response infrastructure, Go pushed for the construction of permanent evacuation centers. He cited RA 12076, which requires every city and municipality to establish disaster-resilient evacuation facilities. According to the senator, such centers are essential to ensure that displaced families — especially children — have access to safe, clean and comfortable temporary shelter, reducing the risk of illness while awaiting resettlement. “Preparedness means investing in permanent, well-equipped facilities rather than relying on improvised shelters,” Go said, recalling discussions with local officials on prioritizing such infrastructure. Go also linked disaster preparedness to health care access, highlighting the role of Malasakit Centers in assisting victims with medical expenses. He authored and sponsored RA 11463, which institutionalized these one-stop service centers nationwide. Operated in coordination with the Department of Health, Malasakit Centers help indigent patients reduce hospital bills and access government assistance. As of the latest data, 167 centers are operational nationwide, including one at Rizal Medical Center in Pasig. Amid broader national and global challenges, Go called for unity and vigilance, urging Filipinos to remain focused on public welfare and the fight against corruption. “The whole world is in turmoil... When the world is in turmoil, our people are affected,” he said. “Let’s not forget to fight for our countrymen.”

• [St. Luke’s, German group pilot theranostics in PH](#) (2026-04-25 16:02)

THE St. Luke’s Medical Center (SLMC) has partnered with Germany-based International Centers for Precision Oncology (ICPO) Foundation to launch a global pilot program on theranostics, positioning the Philippines as a potential model for future precision oncology initiatives worldwide. In a statement on Friday, SLMC highlighted the crucial role that theranostics, or targeted therapeutics and diagnostics for cancer treatment, will play in advancing cancer care for its patients. “Theranostics exemplifies the promise of personalized medicine by integrating molecular imaging with targeted therapy. It allows us not only to see disease with remarkable clarity but also to deliver treatment with precision and purpose,” said Dr. Anthony Perez, St. Luke’s-Global City SVP and medical director. SLMC is the first and only ICPO Clinical Theranostics Center of Excellence in the Philippines, which was granted on May 15, 2025. In its recent hosting of the “Theranostics Day: Awareness and Exchange about New Precision Cancer Care,” the SLMC highlighted how theranostics is reshaping modern medicine, which is moving beyond the typical “one-size-fits-all” approach. “It is a true precision medicine approach where treatment is tailored specifically to the patient,” said Dr. Eduardo Erasto Ongkeko, head of the St. Luke’s-Global City Department of Nuclear Medicine and Theranostics. Meanwhile, Akbayan Party-list Rep. Chel Diokno hopes for accessible precision treatment for Filipino patients. “What is most important to me regarding this event is the equality in terms of access to affordable health care,” said Diokno.

- [Wife being forced out of residence by a cheating husband](#) (2026-04-25 16:01)

Dear PAO,I am in a difficult situation and I need legal advice. I recently discovered that my husband has a mistress. He is trying to force me out of our condominium unit. My question is simple: What should I do? Should I just leave and let him live there with his mistress? Or can I require them to leave because I am the legal wife? The problem is that the condo is registered solely in his name. He never transferred the title to include my name.I need to know my rights. I feel like I should not be the one to leave, but I am not sure whether I have the power to evict them. Please give me a clear answer. Can I go back to the condo and stay there? If I do that, can he call the police against me?

Mitsuha YamanoDear Ms. Yamano,Republic Act (RA) 9262, or the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004, provides remedies for women victims of domestic violence, the purpose of which “prevents further acts of violence against the victim, safeguards them from harm, minimizes disruptions in their life and helps regain control over their life.” (Ruiz vs. AAA GR 231619, 15 Nov. 2021; Ponente: Senior Associate Justice Marvic M.V.F. Leonen) Section 8 of RA 9262 provides that a woman may apply for a protection order, which not only covers prevention of a respondent from threatening to commit or committing, personally or through another, acts of violence, but also to direct the respondent to do or desist from doing certain acts: “SECTION 8. Protection Orders. — A protection order is an order issued under this Act for the purpose of preventing further acts of violence against a woman or her child specified in Section 5 of this Act and granting other necessary relief. The relief granted under a protection order should serve the purpose of safeguarding the victim from further harm, minimizing any disruption in the victim’ s daily life, and facilitating the opportunity and ability of the victim to independently regain control over her life. The provisions of the protection order shall be enforced by law enforcement agencies. The protection orders that may be issued under this Act are the barangay protection order, temporary protection order and permanent protection order. The protection orders that may be issued under this Act shall include any, some or all of the following reliefs: xxx “d. Directing the respondent to stay away from petitioner and designated family or household member at a distance specified by the court, and to stay away from the residence, school, place of employment, or any specified place frequented by the petitioner and any designated family or household member; xxx” In your case, the infidelity of your partner, not to mention the threat to unhouse you from your home may be considered a form of domestic violence, which is covered by the law’ s definition of psychological violence, if done with intent to cause mental or emotional anguish, public ridicule or humiliation to you, as his wife. (XXX264870 vs. People, GR 264870, 21 April 2025; Ponente: Senior Associate Justice Marvic M.V.F. Leonen).This means that you are not helpless. The law gives you a specific remedy: a protection order. Once you apply for one — either through the barangay or the PNP Women’ s and Children’ s Desk — the court or barangay can direct your husband to stay away from the condo and allow you to stay there, even if the title is in his name alone. You do not need to wait until you are on the street; the protection order is designed to prevent further harm and disruption to your life.You may go to the barangay hall or the nearest police station. Tell them you are a legal wife being unlawfully ejected from the conjugal dwelling, which causes psychological abuse or violence to

you. Ask for assistance in applying for a protection order. If issued, such an order will give you the legal backing to have your husband and his other woman removed from your condo. Do not let the fact that the title is in his name stop you — your right as a wife to be secure in your home is protected by law. We hope that we were able to answer your queries. This advice is solely based on the facts you have narrated and our appreciation of the same. Our opinion may vary when other facts are changed or elaborated. Thank you for your continued trust and support. Editor's note: Dear PAO is a daily column of the Public Attorney's Office. Questions for Chief Acosta may be sent to [dearpao@manilatimes.net](mailto:dearpao@manilatimes.net).

- [Hold departure order against Escudero sought](#) (2026-04-25 16:00)

THE Office of the Ombudsman is seeking a precautionary hold departure order (PHDO) from the Sandiganbayan against Sen. Francis Escudero and his alleged bagman, Maynard Ngu. The Ombudsman's application was raffled off to the anti-graft court's Sixth Division. While it was not clear yet what exactly the application stemmed from, Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla said in a press conference earlier this month that they have been "seriously preparing a case of plunder against" Escudero, who is a former Senate president, and Leyte 1st District Rep. and former speaker Martin Romualdez. What was being prepared at that time was in connection with the budget process. Remulla said the "element of conspiracy" was "involved in the preparation of the complaint." Last year, former Public Works undersecretary Roberto Bernardo had alleged that Ngu was Escudero's bagman. The senator denied the allegations.

- [Court orders freeze on Romualdez assets](#) (2026-04-25 16:00)

(UPDATE) THE Court of Appeals has ordered a 20-day freeze on a P1.665-billion Forbes Park estate and dozens of bank accounts connected to former House speaker Martin Romualdez and businessman Jose Raulito Enoy Paras, as authorities pursue a widening investigation into alleged corruption involving public infrastructure funds. In a resolution dated April 22, the appellate court said there was sufficient basis to believe the assets may be linked to unlawful activity, including potential violations of Republic Act 9160, or the Anti-Money Laundering Act. The freeze order prevents any movement, transfer, or withdrawal of the identified properties and funds while proceedings continue. The order covers a 3,196-square-meter residential property on Tamarind Road in South Forbes Park, Makati, which was purchased in 2023 by Golden Pheasant Holdings Corp., a company wholly owned by Paras. The estate was previously owned by shipping executive Doris Magsaysay-Ho. Also included are 35 bank accounts reportedly associated with Romualdez, some jointly held with family members, as well as 38 accounts linked to Paras. The businessman is also connected to corporate holdings that include cash deposits and seven condominium units in Bonifacio Global City. The Court of Appeals directed that a summary hearing be conducted within 20 days to determine whether the freeze order should be extended or lifted. The petition originated from the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) following a complaint filed by the Office of the Ombudsman. The complaint alleges plunder, graft, and bribery tied to a supposed P56-billion kickback scheme involving flood control projects. The freeze application cited testimonies from Senate Blue Ribbon

Committee hearings, where witnesses claimed that cash-filled suitcases were delivered to residences allegedly linked to Romualdez and former lawmaker Zaldy Co, who has been in hiding in several European countries. Other statements pointed to alleged intermediaries who facilitated the movement of funds connected to public works contracts. In a press briefing on April 21, Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla said the Office of the Ombudsman endorsed a complaint to the AMLC and that his office was waiting for the council to seek a freeze order on Romualdez. On April 22, 2026, the Sandiganbayan Seventh Division issued a precautionary hold departure order (HDO) against Romualdez. The application was anchored on the complaint-affidavit filed by the Ombudsman's Special Panel of Investigators before the Office of the Ombudsman's Preliminary Investigation, Administrative Adjudication and Monitoring Office against Romualdez and others for plunder. The Office of the Ombudsman said the complaints involved "the alleged kickback scheme tied to flood control projects, purportedly masterminded by the respondent, with the total amount of such kickbacks reaching" P56 billion. Mentioned in the application were Co's statements in video recordings as well as Orly Guteza's testimony. Romualdez has denied any wrongdoing. "I have never authorized, instructed, or allowed anyone to engage in any conduct that would betray the people or taint my name," he said. He has reiterated that he never received any alleged kickback in any infrastructure project. In a video message issued on April 21, Romualdez said that he would defend himself fully and not let himself be turned into the scapegoat in connection with the flood control mess. "And to those who think they can throw me under the bus to save themselves, this is what I have to say to you: I am ready to defend my name," he said.

- [No winners in Grand Lotto 6/55, Lotto 6/42 draws for April 25](#) (2026-04-25 15:15)

There were no winners in the Grand Lotto 6/55 and Lotto 6/42 draws on Saturday night, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said. The winning combination for the Grand Lotto 6/55 was 41-43-35-15-10-40, with a jackpot prize of P66,008,898.49. There were also no winners in the Lotto 6/42 draw, which had the winning combination 26-32-19-01-22-17 and a jackpot prize of P24,655,209.60.

- [Tourist bus fire forces Ortigas flyover closure](#) (2026-04-25 13:24)

THE EDSA-Ortigas Flyover southbound lane was temporarily closed to vehicles on Saturday, April 25, after a tourist bus caught fire in the area the night before. The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority said the closure remained in effect as of 10 a.m., advising motorists to take alternate routes while authorities continued post-incident clearing and safety measures. The fire was first reported at around 6:10 p.m. on Friday, April 24, along the EDSA-Ortigas southbound lane, occupying two lanes and causing heavy traffic in the area. In an interview, Senior Fire Officer 4 Alvic Alabastro of the Mandaluyong Bureau of Fire Protection said the driver was alone when the incident happened. "Upon interview with the driver, he was alone. When he was going up the flyover, he suddenly felt that something seemed wrong with the movement of his bus, like something slammed the brakes, then the tire suddenly caught fire and burst. The tire exploded," Alabastro said. "We are investigating the possible cause of the



bus explosion. But according to the driver, allegedly, it suddenly seemed like something stopped the movement of his bus,” he added. Lane open The Department of Transportation earlier said MRT 3 operations resumed at 6:50 p.m. on Friday after slight delays caused by the fire, with trains running at reduced speeds between Ortigas and Santolan stations due to smoke from the burning bus. On Saturday, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) announced that the southbound lane of the flyover was opened to motorists following a thorough inspection and assessment. “Based on the assessment conducted by PDD (Planning and Design Department) Structural Engineer and District Representatives, the southbound lane of the Ortigas flyover has been cleared and is now passable to traffic,” it added. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has ordered the agency to conduct a safety check to ensure the lane is safe after the Friday fire incident. Meanwhile, the DPWH-NCR said the EDSA–Ortigas Interchange will undergo a more detailed inspection on Saturday to determine the extent of the damage and assess its structural integrity. “For the Ortigas Flyover Interchange, it is recommended to restrict access to light vehicles only,” it said. “Further testing is also advised to support a more detailed structural analysis, as exposed rebars and areas of spalling were observed in sections affected by the fire incident.”

- [DMW: 36 OFWs return home from Middle East, over 5K since March](#) (2026-04-25 10:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Amid the ongoing war in the Middle East, the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) on Saturday said that 36 overseas Filipino workers and two dependents arrived in two separate flights from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The Filipinos were assisted by representatives of the DMW and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) and were given financial assistance, transport services and temporary accommodation. According to the DMW, from March 5 until April 25, 7,674 OFWs have returned home since the start of the Middle East war. Among them were 7,051 Filipinos, with 5,669 OFWs included, 1,382 dependents, who elected to return via government-chartered flights. “The government continues to strengthen its repatriation and reintegration programs in line with the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., to ensure the safety of OFWs and to support their smooth return and fresh start in the country,” the DMW said in Filipino.

- [UP identifies second student killed in Negros clash](#) (2026-04-25 10:08)

MANILA, Philippines — The University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) on Saturday identified another student killed in a military encounter in Negros Occidental last week. Maureen Keil Santuyo was killed alongside UP Diliman political science major Alyssa Alano at Barangay Salamanca, Toboso, last April 19. Santuyo is an Associate of Arts student of UPOU and described as “a compassionate youth advocate who has committed to supporting and working with marginalized agrarian communities.” “The University also expresses concerns over circumstances surrounding the military encounter. We call for a transparent and thorough investigation, with full accountability if human rights violations are established,” UPOU said. “We urge sobriety in public discourse, especially in instances that promote the spread of unverified accusations and the labeling of members of the academic community without



evidence,” it added.

- [Probable cause exists to impeach Sara, says veteran lawyer](#) (2026-04-25 09:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Lawyer Lorna Kapunan said she believed that the House of Representatives Committee on Justice has seen and heard enough – from the discrepancies in Vice President Sara Duterte's declared net worth to the flagged bank transactions – to find probable cause to impeach her. “Na-meet na ng House Committee on Justice ‘yung target nila na (The House Committee on Justice has already met its target) to prove probable cause, that a crime was committed, that a violation of law was committed, and that the Vice President is probably guilty thereof. Hindi naman (But it's not) guilt beyond reasonable doubt,” she said in a radio interview on Friday. The veteran litigator also warned the public not to be swayed by the vice president's press releases, her defense team, or online trolls seeking to discredit the non-disclosure findings in Duterte's Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALNs) and the Anti-Money Laundering Council's (AMLC) report. “No spin can change what is already on official record,” she said. “Siguro naman sa dami ng ebidensya, follow the numbers. Huwag tayong maniwalang sa mga press release, sa mga trolls, sa mga statements outside the Committee on Justice. Maniwala tayo sa numbers (With all the evidence, follow the numbers. Don't believe the press releases, trolls, and statements outside the Committee on Justice. Believe in the numbers). Let the numbers speak for themselves.” Kapunan noted that the evidence shown were official records of government agencies: the Office of the Ombudsman for the SALNs; the AMLC reporting on suspicious and covered transactions; and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) for the companies of the Vice President and her husband, Manases Carpio. The records, she said, speak for themselves and raise legitimate questions that cannot be ignored. “So, these are records, they don't lie. Kung litigation ang pinag-uusapan natin, nandyan na ang (When speaking of litigation, there is already the presence of) hard evidence, documentary from official sources. This is not opinion, this is not hearsay. These are documents,” Kapunan said. During the April 22 hearing, committee members uncovered a more than elevenfold jump in Duterte's net worth, from PHP7.2 million in 2007 to PHP88.4 million in 2024. Despite the dramatic surge, it also found that she had failed to report her cash on hand and bank deposits under personal assets in her SALNs from 2019 to 2024. Meanwhile, the AMLC reported to the justice panel that more than 600 transactions worth PHP6.7 billion from Duterte and her husband's bank accounts had been flagged as covered or suspicious from 2006 to 2025. The AMLC also confirmed that 19 of the bank transaction entries presented by former Senator Antonio “Sonny” Trillanes IV matched its own records on the same dates and amounts, including the PHP22 million Duterte had allegedly received from Samuel “Sammy” Uy, a purported drug lord and close business associate of the Duterte family. Kapunan, meanwhile, noted that the Committee on Justice has given the Vice President ample opportunity to address the allegations and defend herself, but instead, the defense team filed a non-answer and Duterte continues to shun the hearings. She emphasized that Duterte cannot hide behind jurisdictional arguments to avoid attending the hearings, pointing out that the Constitution itself grants the House the authority to initiate impeachment proceedings. Moreover, she noted, the

hearings are clarificatory rather than evidentiary, meaning the Committee on Justice is simply examining the facts cited in the impeachment complaints and giving the respondent the opportunity to be heard before ruling on probable cause. Duterte's defense team also cannot claim to be “surprised” at the evidence and testimonies being examined, she said, given that “all hearings are being televised and subpoenas publicly issued.” The Committee on Justice is set to hold its final hearing on April 29, where the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) will present its findings on the alleged death threats Duterte made against President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos, and former House Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez. The panel will then vote on whether probable cause exists for each allegation in the impeachment complaints.

- [Pasay roads closed for Quaker Fit Run 2026](#) (2026-04-25 06:56)

MANILA, Philippines — Several roads in Pasay and parts of Makati will be closed early Sunday for a marathon event. The Pasay Traffic and Parking Management Office said the closures would be implemented from 1:30 a.m. to 7 a.m. on Sunday morning for the Quaker Fit Run 2026. The affected areas are some roads around the Makati Triangle, Buendia from Makati to Roxas Boulevard in Pasay City, and the southbound lane of Roxas Boulevard from Quirino Avenue to Pasay City. Authorities said the Buendia closure would cover the inner lane, with a zipper lane to be used during the event. Motorists were advised to plan their trips ahead and use alternate routes to avoid delays during the road closure period.

- [DOH warns against cramps, exhaustion, stroke as heat index rises](#) (2026-04-25 06:53)

MANILA, Philippines—The Department of Health (DOH) warned the public against heat-related illnesses as the heat index across the country continues to rise. With many areas experiencing heat index levels exceeding 40 degrees Celsius, DOH Spokesman Albert Domingo told The Manila Times on Saturday that it was important for the public to avoid outdoor activities between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. and to stay hydrated. “The DOH warns against heat-related illnesses ranging from heat cramps and heat exhaustion to life-threatening heat stroke. Heat stroke is a medical emergency occurring when body temperatures exceed 40°C, potentially leading to seizures, coma, or altered mental status,” Domingo said. He added that while everyone can be affected, individuals with comorbidities like hypertension or diabetes are more susceptible to heat-related illnesses. “Prevention centers on staying hydrated with 8-10 glasses of water daily (for those not undergoing dialysis) while avoiding dehydrating drinks like coffee, soda, or alcohol,” Domingo added.

- [Ombudsman seeks precautionary 'hold order' vs Escudero, alleged bagman from Sandiganbayan](#) (2026-04-25 06:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the Ombudsman is seeking a precautionary Hold Departure Order (PHDO) from the Sandiganbayan against Sen. Francis Escudero and his alleged bagman. The Ombudsman filed on Saturday the Verified Ex Parte Application for the issuance of a PHDO. There is no case filed before the Sandiganbayan against Escudero or Maynard Ngu, the

tech billionaire who was reported to have funded the senator's campaign.

- [Truck crashes into bridge entering Marikina after losing brakes](#) (2026-04-25 06:11)

MANILA, Philippines — Motorists were advised to avoid Barangka Bridge entering Marikina City after a truck lost its brakes and crashed into a store along A. Bonifacio Avenue, according to Marikina Rescue 161. Motorists heading to Marikina were advised to use Marcos Highway as an alternate route. The Manila Times has reached out to Marikina Rescue 161 for confirmation of injuries or fatalities, but has yet to receive a response as of posting time. Authorities also reminded drivers to take extra caution when passing through nearby roads.

- [CA issued freeze order on Romualdez assets, says Ombudsman](#) (2026-04-25 05:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla said the Court of Appeals (CA) issued a freeze order on the assets of Leyte 1st District Rep. and Ferdinand Martin Romualdez. "Yes", Remulla said when asked in DZRH's Executive Session on Saturday whether the court granted the petition for a freeze order. In a press briefing last April 21, 2026, Remulla said the Office of the Ombudsman endorsed a complaint to the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) and that his office was waiting for the AMLC to seek a freeze order on the former speaker.

- [Court of Appeals freezes Romualdez assets, bank accounts](#) (2026-04-25 05:25)

(UPDATE) MANILA, Philippines — The Court of Appeals has ordered a 20-day freeze on a luxury property at a posh subdivision in Makati City and dozens of bank accounts linked to former speaker Martin Romualdez and a businessman in connection with an expanding probe into alleged corruption tied to public infrastructure spending. In an order dated April 22, the appellate court said there was probable cause to believe the assets were related to unlawful activities, including possible violations of the Republic Act 9160. The freeze prohibits any withdrawal, transfer, or movement of the identified funds and properties while the case undergoes further review. Central to the order is a 3,196-square-meter estate on Tamarind Road in South Forbes Park, Makati, acquired in 2023 for ₱1.665 billion by Golden Pheasant Holdings Corp., a company wholly owned by Jose Raulito Enoy Paras. The property had previously been owned by shipping executive Doris Magsaysay-Ho. The freeze order also covers 35 bank accounts linked to Romualdez across major financial institutions, some jointly held with family members. Paras, for his part, is associated with 38 accounts in several banks, along with assets under his holding firm, including deposits and seven high-end condominium units in Bonifacio Global City. The court said a summary hearing would be conducted before the 20-day period lapses to determine whether the freeze order should be extended or lifted. The action stemmed from findings by the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC), which initiated a financial investigation following a complaint filed by the Office of the Ombudsman. The complaint accuses Romualdez and others of plunder, bribery, and graft in connection with an alleged ₱56-billion kickback scheme tied to flood control projects. Testimonies cited in the court order were drawn from hearings of the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee, where witnesses claimed that cash-filled suitcases were delivered to residences associated with Romualdez and former

lawmaker Elizaldy Co, who has reportedly gone into hiding. Other accounts pointed to intermediaries allegedly tasked with handling funds linked to public works contracts. Earlier on Saturday, Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla disclosed the CA freeze order in a radio interview. In a press briefing last April 21, 2026, Remulla said the Office of the Ombudsman endorsed a complaint to the AMLC and was waiting for it to seek a freeze order on the former speaker.

- [DOH warns people with HIV at higher risk of tuberculosis](#) (2026-04-25 04:36)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Health (DOH) warned the public, particularly people living with human immunodeficiency virus (PLHIV), that they are more susceptible to developing tuberculosis (TB) due to a weakened immune system. In a Facebook post Friday, the DOH said that if a person has HIV, they were more likely to develop TB as the virus weakens the body's immune system. "HIV is a disease that attacks the immune system, particularly the CD4 T-cells," the agency said. CD4 T cells are a type of white blood cell that serve as the immune system's managers, helping defend against bacteria. The DOH said that when the CD4 T cells run out, the body's defense against various diseases is weakened. "This is where opportunistic infections such as tuberculosis enter. Many of us may have TB bacteria sleeping inside the body because it is usually controlled by a strong immune system. But because HIV weakens the immune system, TB wakes up and becomes an active disease," the agency said.

- [Former DPWH secretary Bonoan denies alleged box deliveries in flood control hearing](#) (2026-04-25 04:04)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) secretary Manuel Bonoan denied the alleged delivery of 55 boxes meant for him. "I categorically and vehemently deny and have no knowledge whatsoever regarding these vague and unfounded allegations. In the first place, let it be of record that I am not involved in any manner as regards the subject case of the former senator Revilla, Jr.", Bonoan said in a statement on Friday. Bonoan said that "in the absence of specific details surrounding his accusations or corroborating evidence to support his allegations, Garcia's statements are mere hearsay." Last Thursday, Vergel Niño Garcia testified before the Sandiganbayan Third Division that he was a former driver of state witness and former DPWH undersecretary Roberto Bernardo. Garcia testified that there was a delivery of the following as to Bonoan: 15 sealed boxes allegedly taken by a then driver of Bonoan in Nov. 2024; 20 boxes in 2025; and 20 boxes allegedly taken by the said then-driver of Bonoan in Quezon City. Garcia, who also testified on the alleged delivery of boxes meant for several other people, was testifying before the court as a prosecution witness in the bail hearing in the malversation through falsification case filed against Revilla and other people. The Office of the Ombudsman filed the case before the Sandiganbayan in January 2026 in connection with the alleged ghost project in Pandi, Bulacan. Bonoan is not an accused.

- [Ex-congressman Defensor's wife denies trafficking allegations, calls them a 'political attack'](#) (2026-04-25 03:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The wife of former lawmaker Mike Defensor denied allegations she was involved in the recent National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) operation involving a Pasay City establishment linked to her, describing it as a "political attack." In a statement late on Friday, Julie Defensor said she called the accusations against her and her daughter as baseless and malicious. "I am issuing this statement to categorically and forcefully deny the baseless, malicious allegations directed at me, my daughter, and our associated businesses," Defensor said. "Let me be absolutely clear regarding the recent NBI operation: we have absolutely no connection to the targeted establishment or its operations. Any attempt to link our family to the abhorrent acts allegedly committed there is a deliberate, dangerous, and desperate lie," she added. Defensor described the motive of the NBI operations as part of a smear campaign, saying that 1,000 employees' lives are at stake because of a "political attack." "This is a fabricated pretext designed to artificially manufacture a case, with the chilling goal of filing unwarranted, unbailable charges against me and my daughter," she said. In a statement on Friday, the NBI said they rescued 54 women in an "entrapment and rescue operation" against a suspected "trafficking-in-persons network operating" in the Chicago Nightclub and Bleu Hotel in Ortigas, Pasig City, allegedly owned by Defensor.

- [EDSA-Ortigas flyover, interchange partially open after bus fire, authorities say](#) (2026-04-25 03:18)

MANILA, Philippines — The southbound lane of the EDSA-Ortigas flyover in Mandaluyong City is now open, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) said on Saturday, a day after a bus caught fire, affecting train operations and causing heavy traffic in the area. Based on the incident report, the DPWH-National Capital Region (NCR) said motorists were now allowed to pass the structure after the Planning and Design Department Structural Engineer and District Representatives assessed that the southbound lane of the Ortigas flyover has been cleared and is now passable to traffic. President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. ordered the agency to conduct a safety check to ensure that the road was safe for travel after a public utility bus caught fire on Friday. Meanwhile, the DPWH-NCR said the EDSA-Ortigas Interchange would undergo a more detailed inspection on Saturday to determine the extent of the damage and assess its structural integrity. "For the Ortigas Flyover Interchange, it is recommended to restrict access to light vehicles only," it said. "Further testing is also advised to support a more detailed structural analysis, as exposed rebars and areas of spalling were observed in sections affected by the fire incident." In a separate advisory, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) advised motorists to take alternate routes while authorities continued post-incident clearing and safety measures. A bus caught fire along the EDSA-Ortigas flyover on Friday evening. The fire was first reported at around 6:10 p.m. on Friday, along the EDSA-Ortigas southbound lane, occupying two lanes and causing heavy traffic in the area. In an interview, Senior Fire Officer 4 Alvic Alabastro of the Mandaluyong Bureau of Fire Protection said the driver was alone when the incident happened. "When he was going up the flyover, he suddenly felt that something seemed wrong with the movement of his bus, like something stopped the brake, then the tire suddenly caught fire and something exploded. The tire exploded," Alabastro said. "We are

investigating the possible cause of the bus explosion. But according to the driver, allegedly, it suddenly seemed like something stopped the movement of his bus,” he added. The Department of Transportation said MRT-3 operations resumed at 6:50 p.m. Friday after slight delays caused by the fire, with trains running at reduced speeds between Ortigas and Santolan stations due to smoke from the burning bus. Two lanes along EDSA White Plains were affected, causing heavy traffic in the area.

- [Pagasa warns of dangerous heat index levels in 14 areas](#) (2026-04-25 03:12)

MANILA, Philippines – Fourteen areas in the country will experience sweltering temperatures due to a danger-level heat index, the weather bureau said Saturday. Heat index is what the temperature feels like to the human body when relative humidity combines with air. A peak heat index of 45°C is forecast in Dumangas, Iloilo and Butuan City, Agusan del Norte, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa). The following areas will also see danger-level heat indices: - San Ildefonso, Bulacan - 43°C- Sangley Point, Cavite - 42°C- Aborlan, Palawan - 44°C- Roxas City, Capiz - 42°C- Mamburao, Capiz - 42°C- Iloilo City, Iloilo - 43°C- La Granja, La Carlota, Negros Occidental - 44°C- Catbalogan, Western Samar - 43°C- VSU Baybay, Leyte - 42°C- Borongan, Eastern Samar - 44°C Guiuan, Eastern Samar - 42°C Cotabato City, Maguindanao del Norte - 43°C Heat cramps and heat exhaustion are likely under a danger-level heat index of 42°C to 51°C. Meanwhile, the heat index may reach 41°C in Aparri, Cagayan; San Jose, Occidental Mindoro; Puerto Princesa City and Cuyo in Palawan; Legazpi City, Albay; Catarman, Northern Samar; Tacloban City, Leyte; Dipolog, Zamboanga del Norte; Zamboanga City, Zamboanga del Sur; and Davao City, Davao del Sur. A heat index of 40°C is forecast over Dagupan City, Pangasinan; Tuguegarao City, Cagayan; ISU Echague, Isabela; Baler and Casiguran in Aurora; CLSU Muñoz, Nueva Ecija; TAU Camiling, Tarlac; Ambulong, Tanauan, Batangas; Romblon, Romblon; Daet, Camarines Norte; Siquijor, Siquijor; Mactan, Cebu; Maasin, Southern Leyte; Surigao City, Surigao del Norte; and Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur. Meanwhile, cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms are expected over Batanes due to the frontal system. The rest of the country will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms due to the easterlies and localized thunderstorms. Light to moderate winds and slight to moderate seas will prevail across the archipelago.

- [Around P10M fuel subsidy released to taxi drivers on first day — LTFRB](#) (2026-04-25 02:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) said it distributed around P10 million in fuel subsidies to taxi drivers on Friday, the first day of a two-day payout, describing the rollout as “peaceful and orderly” while warning against fraudulent claims. In a statement, LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II said approximately 2,000 taxi drivers received P5,000 each after claiming their subsidy at designated distribution points, including the central offices of the LTFRB and the Land Transportation Office (LTO). The subsidy forms part of the national government’s broader assistance program for the public transport sector, with nearly P98 million initially allocated for taxi drivers nationwide. With the additional



P10 million disbursed on Friday, total funds released for the sector have exceeded P108 million so far, the agency said. Mendoza, however, cautioned drivers against attempting to claim the subsidy more than once after 10 individuals were flagged for alleged double claims during the first day of distribution. “We are sending this warning that once any taxi driver is caught, we will request the LTO to revoke his driver’s license,” Mendoza said. Despite the incident, the LTFRB maintained that the overall distribution process remained orderly and efficient. The agency expects more drivers to claim their subsidies on the second and final day of distribution in Metro Manila on Saturday, April 25. The LTFRB said it has intensified monitoring measures to allow for real-time intervention in case of issues during the payout. Mendoza also assured that the agency would continue the distribution process until all intended beneficiaries have received their assistance. The fuel subsidy program aims to cushion the impact of rising fuel costs on public utility drivers and operators.

- [ICC asked to order public release of redacted Duterte defense filing to avoid withholding of key info](#) (2026-04-25 02:20)

MANILA, Philippines -- Prosecutors at the International Criminal Court (ICC) have asked judges to order the public release of a redacted defense filing in the case against former president Rodrigo Duterte, arguing that confidentiality claims are unjustified and could undermine witness confidence. In a submission dated April 24, 2026 before Pre-Trial Chamber I, the Office of the Prosecutor sought the reclassification of a defense response that had been partially withheld from public view. The chamber is composed of Judges Iulia Antoanella Motoc, Reine Adelaide Sophie Alapini-Gansou, and Maria del Socorro Flores Liera. Prosecutors said the redactions concealed a key clarification by Duterte’s legal team that six individuals — Salvador Medialdea, Salvador Panelo, Martin Delgra, Silvestre Bello, Alfredo Lim, and Cesar Dulay — were not members of the defense team in the ICC case. According to the filing, the defense had “affirmed, confirmed, assured and guaranteed” that the six lawyers were not part of Duterte’s ICC counsel. However, this statement was later removed in the public version of the response. The prosecution argued that the defense’s justification — to protect the lawyers’ “dignity” — did not outweigh the court’s principle of transparency. “It is unclear how confirming to the public that these lawyers do not work for the Defense team would negatively impact their dignity,” prosecutors said, adding that court proceedings should generally remain public. The Office of the Prosecutor, led by Deputy Prosecutor Mame Mandiaye Niang, also raised concern that keeping the information confidential could create confusion among potential witnesses and victims. Prosecutors said statements and actions by defense counsel had created the impression that the six lawyers were part of Duterte’s legal team, prompting a formal request for clarification in March. They warned that leaving the issue unresolved in public records could have a “chilling effect” on ongoing investigations, particularly if witnesses fear that individuals linked to Duterte might have access to sensitive case information. The prosecution added that some of the six lawyers had held senior government positions during Duterte’s presidency, a period covered by the ICC investigation into alleged crimes. Efforts to resolve the issue privately failed after the defense declined to seek reclassification, maintaining



that the redactions were appropriate to avoid possible embarrassment to the individuals involved. Prosecutors, however, questioned that reasoning and said the defense had not explained its apparent change in position after previously agreeing to make certain information public.

- [Brawner on UP student killed in Negros clash: ‘She was armed, she was fighting’](#) (2026-04-24 21:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Romeo S. Brawner Jr. on Friday said University of the Philippines (UP) student leader Alyssa Alano was “armed and fighting” during the Toboso, Negros Occidental clash supporting the military’s claim that all 19 casualties were identified members of the New People’s Army (NPA). “If she is innocent and she has no intentions of joining the armed group then bakit nung nakita siya naka rig siya, combat rig, may vest kung saan nandito ‘yung mga magazines,” Brawner told reporters in an interview in Cebu. (If she is innocent and has no intentions of joining the armed group, then why was she in a combat rig, with vest full of magazines.) “She was armed, she was fighting. Kitang-kita ng mga sundalo natin na lumalaban sila (our soldiers clearly saw they were fighting) unlike dun sa case ni Chantal na nahuli sa Mindoro (unlike Chantal [Anicoche] who was found in Mindoro.)” Filipino-American activist Chantal Anicoche was found alive after she went missing following a deadly encounter between government troops and NPA rebels in Abra de Ilog, Occidental Mindoro. Brawner emphasized that soldiers are “not human rights violators.” He said it was the series of civilian killings in the NIR caused by the remaining members of the NPA are what caused the armed forces to elevate their operations in the area.

- [NBI files trafficking raps vs Defensor kin after Pasig raid; 54 women rescued](#) (2026-04-24 21:41)

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has filed human trafficking charges against the wife and son of former congressman Mike Defensor following an entrapment and rescue operation that uncovered an alleged sexual exploitation scheme involving a nightclub and hotel in Pasig City. NBI Director Melvin Matibag confirmed that cases for violations of Republic Act 9208 were filed before the Pasig City Prosecutor’s Office against Julie Defensor and Miguel Defensor, along with several other individuals. The charges stem from an April 21, 2026 operation conducted by the NBI Special Task Group in coordination with the Department of Justice–Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking and the Department of Social Welfare and Development. The operation targeted Chicago Nightclub and Bleu Hotel in Ortigas. Authorities said the probe began after a confidential informant reported the alleged recruitment and sexual exploitation of women. Surveillance and case build-up indicated that customers were entertained at the nightclub through a “line-up” system, after which selected women were brought to rooms in the adjacent hotel where sexual services were allegedly carried out. Investigators said transactions ranged from ₱10,000 to ₱20,000 per encounter, with proceeds reportedly shared among facilitators, managers, and other individuals involved. The raid led to the rescue of 54 women and the arrest of 15 individuals, including managers,

facilitators, and customers who allegedly availed themselves of the victims' services. Authorities said the customers may also face charges under laws penalizing the exploitation of trafficked persons. Recovered during the operation were marked money, suspected illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, and documentary evidence linked to the alleged activities. These findings prompted additional charges under Republic Act 9165. Matibag said investigators established that the Defensor family owns the hotel where the alleged exploitation took place. He clarified, however, that ownership records are part of the ongoing probe and do not, by themselves, establish criminal liability. The rescued women have been turned over to social welfare authorities for care, protection, and assistance. The NBI said it will continue pursuing those behind the operation, reiterating that all respondents are presumed innocent unless proven guilty in court.

- [VP Duterte poll lead slips, Robredo gains](#) (2026-04-24 16:15)

(UPDATE) VICE President Sara Duterte's lead has narrowed in the survey on possible presidential candidates for 2028 survey conducted by OCTA Research. The survey, conducted from March 19 to 25, also had former vice president and Naga City Mayor Leni Robredo coming in second to Duterte. Duterte still leads with 33-percent preference, down by 5 percentage points from 38 percent in the fourth quarter of 2025. Robredo had a 21-percent preference, up 13 points from the previous quarter, the largest gain among all presidential hopefuls surveyed. The gap between Duterte and Robredo has shrunk from 30 percentage points to 12 percentage points. OCTA noted that despite the narrowing gap, Duterte's decline is still within the survey's margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent. This is the first survey since Duterte announced her presidential run on Feb. 18. It did not cover the announcement of Robredo on April 20 not opting to run for a national post. Coming in third was Manila Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso at 10 percent, an increase of 2 percent from the previous survey, followed by Raffy Tulfo at 4 percent, and Sen. Bam Aquino also at 4 percent. A small proportion of respondents were undecided or refused to answer, while other personalities account for 20 percent of the responses, indicating that preferences beyond the top five remain widely distributed and fragmented. OCTA said that while Duterte continues to lead, the observed decline in her support should be interpreted cautiously, and does not, on its own, conclusively establish a definitive downtrend. Robredo's 13-point surge, on the other hand, suggests a "statistically meaningful gain and a notable change in respondent preference within the survey period," OCTA said. The results reflect a "hypothetical and early stage preference measure, and are not predictive of actual electoral outcomes," the pollster said. "[T]hey provide a snapshot of current public sentiment, which may evolve as political conditions, candidate positioning, alliances and national issues develop," OCTA said. The survey had 1,200 respondents nationwide.

- [Palace: No contradiction in Co's Prague detention](#) (2026-04-24 16:13)

(UPDATE) MALACANANG on Friday maintained there was no contradiction in the pronouncements of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and other Philippine officials regarding the

detention of former lawmaker Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co in the Czech Republic. In a statement, Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said Co was apprehended due to immigration concerns, and that the word “arrest” did not come from the president. “The President and Secretary of Justice Frederick Vida were clear in their statements. There is no contradiction,” Castro said. “What the President said was that Zaldy Co is in the custody of the Czech Republic due to a lack of proper documentation. Zaldy Co was apprehended due to immigration concerns,” she said. Quoting Justice spokesman Polo Martinez, Castro said “Co’s liberty was indeed restrained due to lack of proper documentation.” She said “it’s similar to a situation in the airport where the person arrives and immigration denies entry or excludes the person.” “There is a deprivation of liberty to a certain degree. Apprehended due to immigration concerns,” Castro said. On April 16, Marcos announced that Co was apprehended in Prague, the Czech Republic capital, after allegedly crossing the border without the required documents. He has since been under the custody of Czech authorities. On Thursday, Vida and Chief State Counsel Dennis Chan left for Prague to discuss with Czech authorities the possible return of Co. The Department of Justice has said it was considering deportation, extradition or invoking the United Nations Convention Against Corruption — to which both the Philippines and the Czech Republic are signatories — as options to facilitate Co’s return. Co has been charged with malversation of public funds and graft in connection with a P289.5-million road dike project in Oriental Mindoro. His whereabouts have been unclear since he left the country in July last year, supposedly for medical treatment in the United States. In September, his travel authority was revoked, and he was ordered to return after he was implicated in budget insertions and anomalous flood control projects. He later resigned as Ako Bicol Party-list representative.

- [PH, Indonesia reaffirm strategic partnership](#) (2026-04-24 16:12)

THE Philippines and Indonesia reaffirmed their long-standing partnership and expanded areas of cooperation during the 8th ministerial meeting of the Philippines-Indonesia Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation (JCBC), officials said on Friday. The meeting was co-chaired by Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro and Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono. The commission serves as the primary dialogue mechanism between the two Southeast Asian neighbors, providing a platform to review engagements, identify new areas of collaboration and implement initiatives under the Philippines-Indonesia Plan of Action (2022–2027). Discussions during the meeting were described as “comprehensive and productive,” covering a wide range of priority areas, including:– Enhancement of border agreements.– Strengthening defense and maritime cooperation.– Expansion of trade and investment ties.– Energy collaboration.– Food security initiatives.– Legal cooperation.– People-to-people exchanges. The two sides highlighted the importance of ensuring the welfare of Persons of Filipino Descent residing in Indonesia. The ministers exchanged views on key regional concerns, including developments in Myanmar, tensions along the Cambodia–Thailand border and ongoing disputes in the South China Sea. They also acknowledged the broader implications of the Middle East conflict, particularly its impact on energy supply and food

security across the region. The ministers committed to supporting regional approaches within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to address shared challenges. Ahead of the ministerial meeting, a Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) was held, co-led by Philippine Assistant Secretary Marshall Louis Alferez and Indonesian Director General Santo Darmosumarto. The SOM reviewed the status of existing agreements and negotiations aimed at strengthening cooperation between the two maritime nations. The JCBC was established through a memorandum of understanding signed in 1993, but had not convened for a decade until its revival under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. The Philippines and Indonesia established diplomatic relations on Nov. 24, 1949, making it Indonesia's oldest bilateral relationship in the region and among the earliest for the Philippines in Southeast Asia. The two countries are founding members of Asean.

- [PH must 'choose dialogue' in sea row](#) (2026-04-24 16:11)

THE Philippines could become a “bridge nation” by working with China's concept of a Maritime Community of Shared Future, a prominent Filipino security analyst said last Friday. Speaking at a forum organized by based think tank Asian Century Philippines Strategic Studies Institute, Prof. Rommel Banlaoi said the Philippines could position itself as a “bridge nation” between major powers by embracing Beijing's concept of a Maritime Community of Shared Future (MCSF), rather than acting as a proxy in the geopolitical rivalry between China and the United States. Banlaoi, who is director of the Philippines-China Studies Center and president of the Philippine Society for International Security Studies, outlined what he described as a “maritime governance triad” to manage maritime tensions. Under this framework, the MCSF provides the overarching vision, the Bilateral Consultative Mechanism (BCM) between Manila and Beijing serves as the operational platform, and the proposed Asean-China Code of Conduct (COC) institutionalized rules at the regional level. China and Asean have accelerated negotiations on a binding COC this year, adopting a road map in January to fast-track talks. The Philippines and China also resumed BCM discussions last month in Fujian, covering cooperation in fisheries conservation, marine environmental monitoring, coast guard communication and scientific research. Banlaoi clarified that the COC is “not a peace treaty or boundary delimitation accord. It is a mechanism to ensure that all parties will exercise good manners and right conduct at sea.” He outlined four governance principles embedded in China's maritime vision: shared security to address transnational threats, shared prosperity through joint development of resources, shared responsibility among coastal states and shared heritage — a concept he is promoting among scholars and practitioners. “We need to educate scholars and practitioners to view the South China Sea as a shared maritime heritage,” he said, noting that historically, the contested waters served as a “port of connection” among coastal states. Despite maritime tensions and overlapping claims, China has remained the Philippines' largest trading partner since 2016, with bilateral trade reaching \$42.27 billion in 2024, Banlaoi said. He proposed practical areas for cooperation, including joint marine scientific expeditions, climate and disaster resilience initiatives, blue economy projects such as sustainable aquaculture and offshore renewable energy, and expanded academic exchanges. Banlaoi

rejected concerns that engagement with Beijing could weaken Philippine sovereignty, saying dialogue is itself an assertion of national independence. Engaging with China “is not appeasement. It is not surrender. It is in fact a positive exercise of sovereignty,” he said. As chairman of Asean in 2026, Manila must balance national interests with regional stability, Banlaoi said, stressing that security norms in Southeast Asia should emerge from within the region rather than be dictated by external powers. “Instead of confrontation, choose dialogue. Instead of competition, choose cooperation. And instead of rivalry, choose a community of shared future,” he said.

- [Sandigan: DPWH exec’s testimony flawed](#) (2026-04-24 16:10)

THE members of the Sandiganbayan’s Third Division expressed dismay over the testimony of Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) National Capital Region Director Gerard Opulencia, saying he did not know how commitments for flood control projects were prepared. “Commitments” are the percentage money received by DPWH district engineers from contractors. Testifying at the bail hearing of former senator Ramon Revilla Jr. and his co-accused at the anti-graft court on Friday, Opulencia said that he was the one who submitted the list of projects for funding to former DPWH undersecretary Roberto Bernardo. Opulencia identified to Associate Justice and Division Chairman Karl Miranda four district engineers to whom he gave these lists: Denryl Caesar Cortuna, Manny Bulusan, Ruel Umali, and Arturo Gonzales Jr., whom he alleged prepared the “commitments” for these projects. He claimed to be the one who delivered the list of commitments to the respondents at the Manila Diamond Hotel. When Miranda asked if he had knowledge of how these commitments were implemented, Opulencia said that he had limited knowledge on the matter because his role was only for coordination. Miranda accused Opulencia of “cherry picking his testimony” despite being under conditional immunity. Upon further questioning by Associate Justice Ronald Moreno, Opulencia reiterated that his only duty was to give the project list to Bernardo. He added that he has no knowledge of the flood control projects in Bulacan, which led the justices to question why he was accepted as a state witness in the first place. Opulencia said that he became a state witness after the determination of the Department of Justice that he was involved in the anomaly and was ordered to return P150 million. When asked by Moreno how he got P150 million, Opulencia said that it came from “pasasalamat” or “thank you” money from contractors after completing such projects in his district. He stressed that the money came after the projects were completed. Opulencia said the idea of “project commitments” came from Bernardo, whom he said he owes a lot of gratitude as he was the one who recommended him to be appointed as district engineer and regional director. After Opulencia’s testimony, Revilla told reporters that he is now seeing the truth coming out. Meanwhile, after being indisposed for a few days, Bernardo appeared at the court wearing a face mask. He told the court that he still has bouts of cough but was otherwise well enough to appear before the division. Before the cross-examination, both the prosecution and the defense were debating on whether they would demonstrate how many boxes would fit inside a Toyota 4Runner after his affidavit noted that he was able to fit around six to 15 boxes of money when he was delivering it to the proponent

Revilla. He said in his affidavit that he was able to deliver P135 million in 2024 and a total of P375 million in 2025 separated into two tranches. Both the prosecution and the defense stipulated later on being against the demonstration, with the cross-examination of Bernardo's affidavit being conducted by Revilla counsel Reody Balisi.

- [Survey: Tax cut sentiment tied to govt trust deficit](#) (2026-04-24 16:09)

PUBLIC support for tax reduction, postponement, or abolition has strengthened alongside declining trust in government institutions, with concerns largely driven by perceived gaps in transparency and accountability, according to the latest pollster Pahayag survey. The PQ1-2026 nationwide survey found that a dominant majority of voters, or 88 percent, supported calls to reduce, delay, or remove certain taxes. Researchers said the sentiment reflected broad fiscal dissatisfaction and frustration over governance issues. The same level of public attention was observed for transparency-related issues, with respondents expressing strong backing for a Supreme Court petition seeking the release of the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee report on alleged flood control anomalies. Closely linked to this was a concern about the handling of investigations into alleged irregularities in flood control programs, which was shared by 84 percent of respondents. Support for political reform also remained high, with 81 percent of those surveyed favoring a proposal to ban political dynasties up to the second degree of consanguinity, covering grandparents, grandchildren, siblings, and half-siblings. Meanwhile, 50 percent of respondents supported the termination of the Independent Commission for Infrastructure (ICI) on March 31, 2026, citing perceived deficiencies in transparency and accountability in its operations. The survey results indicated that calls for tax relief were closely associated with broader demands for governance reforms, particularly on transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption measures. PQ1-2026 was an independent, noncommissioned nationwide purposive sampling survey conducted from March 21 to 24, 2026, with 1,509 respondents who were registered Filipino voters. Participants were randomly selected from the market research panel of PureSpectrum, a US-based panel marketplace with global operations and a regional office in Singapore. The survey had a national margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent. Pahayag is the corporate social responsibility arm of Publicus Asia Inc., which has tracked key governance and public opinion metrics since 2017. Vox Opinion Research has served as its commissioned research arm since 2013.

- [Price of diesel down, gasoline up next week](#) (2026-04-24 16:08)

THE price of diesel is expected to drop by as much as P10 next week, while that of gasoline will rise by P1. The estimates are based on the Mean of Platts, Singapore (MOPS), the pricing basis of refined goods in Southeast Asia. A local oil industry source said “renewed geopolitical tensions in the Middle East have caused the MOPS prices and premiums to rebound during the past two trading days, in turn reducing the potential rollback for diesel next week.” Diesel continued its sharp price decline, slashed by P24.94 per liter this week. In a related development, the Philippine National Police (PNP) has stepped up its monitoring of “gas-and-run” incidents — motorists leaving gasoline stations after filling up without paying. PNP chief Jose Melencio



Nartatez Jr. said recent cases, including those in Metro Manila, are still considered “isolated” but are being closely analyzed. “While we treat these as isolated cases for now, we are not letting our guard down. We are analyzing the patterns to ensure this doesn’t evolve into a common modus operandi,” Nartatez said in a statement. On April 21, two gas-and-run suspects were arrested by police in Barangay Payatas, Quezon City. Police said a motorist driving a white Toyota Vios took P1,500 worth of fuel and fled toward Barangay Commonwealth without paying. The case is the second reported in Metro Manila within a month. On March 22, a 27-year-old transport network vehicle service driver later surrendered after fleeing a gas station in Balintawak, Quezon City, with P5,196 worth of unpaid fuel. Nartatez has ordered police units to boost visibility, particularly in high-risk and 24-hour establishments, and to work with private businesses to enhance CCTV coverage and real-time reporting. In a press briefing on Friday, PNP spokesman Randulf Tuaño reported that 77 individuals have been arrested over various fuel-related crimes, including hoarding and profiteering, as of Thursday. Tuano said the PNP recorded nine incidents of hoarding, one case of profiteering and 21 other violations, including “paihi,” an illegal fuel pilferage scheme. Based on PNP monitoring, 287 of the country’s 14,529 gas stations remained closed as of April 23 due to supply constraints linked to the war in the Middle East.

- [Romualdez urges Ombudsman to inhibit from his case](#) (2026-04-24 16:08)

FORMER House speaker and Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez has filed a motion to the Office of the Ombudsman, asking it to inhibit from the flood control scam case against him. Romualdez said the probe is tainted by a “pattern of prejudgment” that violated due process. In a four-page letter dated April 22, signed by his lawyers Alejandro Navarro, Augusto San Pedro, Ruth Nichole Ureta and Via Monina Valdepenas, Romualdez argued that the public statements by Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla and his officials show that a prosecution for plunder had effectively been decided in advance — despite the absence of a formal complaint or preliminary investigation. “There is a reasonable impression that the Ombudsman has already resolved to prosecute our client,” it read. It added that the alleged bias was evident as early as November 2025, when Remulla announced that his office had been studying the case for weeks and was already discussing possible plunder charges. By April 2026, these statements had escalated into public declarations that a plunder case was being “seriously prepared,” possibly involving conspiracy and multiple actors. Romualdez’s lawyers deemed the statements no longer neutral investigative updates but early disclosures of a prosecution theory. They flagged statements within the Ombudsman’s ranks, including a press briefing by Assistant Ombudsman and Spokesman Jose Dominic Clavano IV that referred to Romualdez as a “master plunderer.” They noted that even as Remulla acknowledged the difficulty of proving plunder under current jurisprudence, he continued to publicly discuss filing such charges — suggesting, they argued, that the charge had been predetermined. Taken together, the lawyers said the statements create the impression that any investigation would be a “mere formality” to justify a pre-set outcome. They warned that even subordinate officials may feel compelled to align with their chief’s public position. Invoking Supreme Court doctrine on the appearance of



impartiality, Romualdez asked that the Ombudsman inhibit from the case and that any complaint be handled by a neutral and independent-minded official. “This is not about questioning integrity, but about safeguarding due process and public confidence in the justice system,” the letter said. In an earlier statement, Romualdez’ s spokesman, Ade Fajardo, said they would question the precautionary hold departure order issued to him by the Sandiganbayan.

- [Go says misuse of funds hurts people](#) (2026-04-24 16:06)

SEN. Bong Go called for accountability and prioritization of public welfare as court proceedings on diverted health funds continue. During the second round of oral arguments on Tuesday, Supreme Court magistrates examined the constitutionality of unprogrammed appropriations embedded in the 2024, 2025, and 2026 General Appropriations Act. The hearings focused on whether such funds — typically contingent on excess revenues or new financing — were used within constitutional bounds. Government economic managers defended the allocations as flexible fiscal tools necessary for economic stability. However, several budget analysts warned that unprogrammed appropriations have increasingly enabled opaque spending practices. A key issue raised during the session was whether the Bicameral Conference Committee exceeded its authority by increasing budget allocations beyond the president’ s original proposal. Critics argued that this could mirror earlier justifications used in the controversial transfer of funds from PhilHealth to the National Treasury. Go, vice chairman of the Senate Committee on Health and Demography, said the legal questions now before the court stem from unresolved concerns over the diversion of 89.9 billion pesos in PhilHealth funds, including an initial 60 billion peso tranche. “As Supreme Court lawyers debate unprogrammed funds, let’ s not forget where it all began. The current oral arguments are just a continuation of what we fought for before against the PhilHealth fund sweep,” Go said. The senator had been among the earliest critics of the fund transfer, calling it “immoral” and “unacceptable,” and insisting that contributions earmarked for health services should not be repurposed. “Health money should be used only for health. It is not ‘excess’ while many Filipinos still cannot afford to pay for hospitals,” he added. Go first raised concerns publicly on July 19, 2024, warning of potential repercussions on health care delivery. By July 30, during a Senate hearing, he intensified his criticism, describing the move as “maybe legally but morally wrong.” A petition challenging the legality of the transfer was filed before the Supreme Court on Aug. 2, 2024, followed by similar filings from advocacy groups in October. Beyond legal technicalities, Go emphasized the human impact of fiscal decisions, pointing to what he described as a “double blow” to the health sector: the fund transfer itself and the subsequent lack of budget allocation for PhilHealth in the following year’ s General Appropriations Act. “The ones who are being hurt are the sick who are relying on government assistance... patients who were not given free medicine or who were not able to get dialysis because the funds that should have been for them were gone,” he said. “This is not just an accounting issue — this is an issue of accountability to the people,” Go added.

- [Affordable housing gets boost](#) (2026-04-24 16:05)

THE Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has partnered with the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) to expand access to affordable housing for qualified beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps). The collaboration aims to assist 4Ps graduates in transitioning to homeownership through the Expanded Pambansang Pabahay Para sa Pilipino (4PH) program. The initiative forms part of a whole-of-government approach to sustain the gains of the country's flagship anti-poverty program. Under the program, qualified beneficiaries are those who have achieved self-sufficiency and can consistently pay monthly amortizations for housing units. DSWD Secretary Rexlon Gatchalian met with 4Ps beneficiary-homeowners who successfully availed themselves of housing assistance. "The plan of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. is that after graduating from 4Ps, beneficiaries should be able to enter the 4PH program so that support continues, and we are helping many graduates access housing through our partnership with DHSUD," Gatchalian said. Beneficiaries shared that the housing program has provided them with safer living conditions and reduced their financial burden compared to previous rental arrangements. The DSWD noted that the synergy between the 4Ps and 4PH programs allows families to transition from financial assistance to long-term stability. The housing initiative also reinforces responsibility among beneficiaries by encouraging them to sustain their payments and invest in their future. Through the partnership, the government aims to empower low-income families by providing both social protection and opportunities for permanent homeownership.

- [Meeting with Takaichi to cap Marcos visit to Japan](#) (2026-04-24 16:05)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will visit Japan from May 26 to 29 to further reinforce Manila's strategic partnership with Tokyo, Malacañang announced on Friday. The Presidential Communications Office said the president was invited to by the Japanese government. Marcos and first lady Liza Araneta-Marcos will be received by Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako at the Imperial Palace for a welcome ceremony, state call and state banquet. Marcos will hold talks with Prime Minister Takaichi Sanae to discuss ways to strengthen their countries' ties. They will resume their recent discussions on current international developments, especially about energy, food security and maritime security. Marcos will also meet with Japanese business groups and members of the Filipino community during the state visit. The visit coincides with the 70th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Japan. The two countries established diplomatic ties on July 23, 1956, and elevated their relations to a "Strengthened Strategic Partnership" in June 2015 through a joint declaration between the late president Benigno Aquino III and then-prime minister Shinzo Abe. Emperor Emeritus Akihito and Empress Emerita Michiko last made a state visit to the Philippines in January 2016. Marcos last state visit to Japan was in February 2023. He went there in December of that year for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-Japan Summit. In June of last year, the first couple visited Osaka for the World Expo 2025.

- [Public schools get land ownership](#) (2026-04-24 16:05)

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) announced Friday the issuance of 660 legal titles granting public schools permanent ownership of the land they occupy. It said the initiative is a joint project with the Department of Education (DepEd), noting special patents or presidential proclamations remove the risk of land disputes or repossession, establishing school lots as permanent government assets. DENR Secretary Juan Miguel Cuna said that clear titles allow school leaders to confidently build stronger facilities and improve classrooms without legal uncertainty. He added that the initiative is an investment in the Filipino youth, securing educational spaces that will drive social progress and economic growth. “Education is the surest path out of poverty and the foundation of national development,” said Cuna.

“When we secure the land where our children study, we protect their classrooms, their playgrounds, and their future. A titled school lot means safer buildings, better planning, and more opportunities for every child to learn and grow.” The land titling process starts with identification, where DepEd provides the DENR with a list of school sites and identifies which schools need titling. According to the DENR, 44,178 school sites were on DepEd's list as of March 6. After identification, the DENR's regional field offices begin validation by conducting on-the-ground surveys, mapping boundaries, and verifying them. Field validation involves consulting representatives such as school principals, village officials, and community members. The next step is processing legal documents for applications for special patents or presidential proclamations that recognize the school sites as permanent government assets. The DENR said its Land Management Bureau oversees and monitors the entire project implementation. The titling initiative is a component of the DENR's Handog ng Pangulo: Luntian Bukas program. This four-part approach secures land titles, promotes climate-ready homes, creates public green spaces, and restores forests while supporting livelihoods. Cuna vowed to ensure a transparent and inclusive process by working alongside local government units in publishing maps and keeping communities informed about the initiative.

- [Hontiveros renews call for solid waste law review](#) (2026-04-24 16:04)

SEN. Risa Hontiveros has renewed her call for a comprehensive review of the country's solid waste management framework following a massive landfill fire in Navotas that blanketed nearby communities in hazardous smoke and raised serious environmental and public health concerns. “For days, residents in the Camanava area, some parts of the National Capital Region, and even as far as Bataan, have been exposed to unhealthy air quality that was never supposed to pose this kind of danger. This incident is deeply alarming,” Hontiveros said. The senator pointed to systemic weaknesses in the implementation of Republic Act (RA) 9003, the country's primary law governing waste management. She emphasized the need to revisit both the law and its amendments to address recurring failures in landfill regulation and oversight. In February, Hontiveros filed Senate Resolution (SR) 285, which seeks a Senate investigation into the country's solid waste management system. The resolution was prompted by the collapse of the Binaliw landfill in Cebu City, an incident she described as symptomatic of broader institutional lapses. “This is exactly what we wanted to avoid when we filed SR 285. Such incidents should never happen again. The real tragedy is if we do nothing to fix the obvious

lapses in our solid waste management system,” she said. Hontiveros emphasized that the Navotas fire is not an isolated case, citing past landfill-related disasters in Cebu City and Rodriguez. She warned that continued reliance on landfills — rather than waste reduction, segregation, and recycling — has increased the risks of environmental hazards. “Our laws are clear. Landfills are meant to be the last resort and not the default solution. But gaps in implementation at the local level continue to push large volumes of waste into landfills,” she noted. The senator also flagged regulatory gaps in monitoring landfill operations. She cited provisions under DENR Administrative Order 2017-15, particularly Section 16.1, which limits Multipartite Monitoring Teams (MMTs) to Environmentally Critical Projects (ECPs). As a result, landfills classified as non-ECPs or Category B projects often escape regular oversight. “If monitoring is weak, there is a real risk of environmental standards being violated. The DENR must ensure that obligations under the Environmental Compliance Certificate are strictly implemented, including proper closure and rehabilitation of landfills,” Hontiveros said. She reiterated her call for an immediate inquiry under Senate Resolution 285, stressing the urgency of accountability and reform. “This is no longer a simple waste management issue. The health of the people, the environment, and the safety of our communities depend on it. We need immediate action before the tragedy is repeated elsewhere,” she said.

- [Govt extending support to 3 Pinoys in Algeria](#) (2026-04-24 16:03)

THE Philippine government is supporting three Filipino seafarers detained in Algeria, the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) said Friday. In a statement, the DMW said they coordinate with the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to monitor the three expatriates. DMW Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac said they remain in “close contact with the families and are providing assistance as the case moves forward.” According to the DMW, the three Filipinos were aboard the commercial vessel Harris, and were arrested on July 28, 2023, after Algerian authorities discovered 35.8 kilograms of cocaine in their possession. The agency, in coordination with the DFA through the country’s embassy in Tripoli, Libya, conducted jail visits to the detained Filipinos to check on their welfare. Cacdac said the government is “carefully reviewing” the legal remedies for the three Filipinos’ case. “We remain in touch with the families and have been supporting them throughout the past three years as the case continues,” the DMW chief said. “We are working closely with the DFA to assess the merits of their plea and its potential impact on the appeal. Based on this, we will make the appropriate recommendation to the president (Ferdinand Marcos Jr.),” he added.

- [Pasig completes P2.2M drainage, sidewalk](#) (2026-04-24 16:02)

PASIG City has completed a P2.2-million drainage and sidewalk project in Kapitolyo, combining flood control work with safer pedestrian access along part of East Capitol Drive and Sta. Rosa Street. Pasig City government announced Friday that the project covered the installation of a 232-meter drainage line canal made of reinforced concrete culvert pipes, with concrete inlet manholes to carry rainwater from the road into the drainage system. A one-meter-wide concrete sidewalk was also built above the drainage line and fitted with safety bollards to protect

pedestrians. Mayor Vico Sotto said the city would strictly enforce laws against the discharge of untreated wastewater into drainage systems, a practice that can worsen clogging and flooding. He also said Pasig was working to make its roads more walkable by ensuring that sidewalks are safe and usable for pedestrians. The master plan was launched through Pasig City Resolution 175-11, series of 2023, to lay down long-term solutions to drainage and flooding problems in Pasig.

- [Air-conditioned waiting area opened at LRT-1 Baclaran Station](#) (2026-04-24 16:01)

THE Light Rail Manila Corp. (LRMC) on Friday launched an air-conditioned waiting room at the northbound area of Baclaran station, aiming to provide relief to commuters amid rising summer temperatures. The facility, open to all LRT-1 passengers, offers a cooled space where commuters can stay while waiting for incoming trains, particularly during peak heat hours. LRMC president and chief executive officer Enrico Benipayo said the project forms part of the company's efforts to improve daily travel conditions for passengers. "Our goal is to constantly find ways to make the daily journey better for our passengers. This new air-conditioned space is a simple yet significant way to provide additional comfort, especially during these hot summer months," Benipayo said. The waiting area was developed through a partnership with Mitsubishi Heavy Industries – Mahajak Air Conditioners Co. Ltd., which supplied the cooling systems installed at the station. LRMC said priority use of the facility will be given to senior citizens, pregnant women, and persons with special needs, in line with efforts to make station amenities more inclusive. Passengers were also advised to use the waiting room only during train intervals and proceed to the boarding area once their train arrives, to allow others to access the space.

- [ICC jurisdiction over Duterte case doubted](#) (2026-04-24 16:00)

A JUDGE of the International Criminal Court (ICC) said the tribunal may have exceeded its legal bounds in asserting jurisdiction over Rodrigo Duterte, even as the court's Appeals Chamber cleared the way for the trial of the former president to proceed. In a partly dissenting opinion issued on April 22, Judge Gocha Lordkipanidze said the ICC should not be able to exercise jurisdiction over alleged crimes linked to Duterte's antidrug campaign, since the prosecution failed to formally trigger the court's authority before the Philippines' withdrawal from the Rome Statute took effect. The Appeals Chamber majority dismissed all four grounds of appeal raised by Duterte's defense and upheld an earlier ruling by Pre-Trial Chamber I upholding jurisdiction, reasoning that the prosecution had already begun a preliminary examination before the Philippines withdrew from the ICC. The ruling effectively affirmed the court's authority to hear the case and allowed proceedings against Duterte to move forward. Lordkipanidze broke with the majority on a central issue — the interpretation of Article 127(2) of the Rome Statute, which governs the effects of a state's withdrawal. While he agreed that Article 12(2), which sets the preconditions for jurisdiction, must be read alongside Article 127, he rejected the conclusion that a preliminary examination constitutes a "matter under consideration" by the court prior to withdrawal. "A preliminary examination is not a 'matter under consideration by the Court,' " he wrote, stressing that only a formally authorized

investigation by a pretrial chamber meets that threshold. A situation comes under the court's consideration only when judges authorize an investigation under Article 15(4) — not when prosecutors begin preliminary review, which Lordkipanidze described as informal and lacking sufficient legal weight. He argued that the ICC's jurisdiction must be "triggered" before a state's withdrawal becomes effective, and that this requirement was not met in the Philippines' case. The Philippines formally withdrew from the ICC in 2019 under Duterte's administration amid growing scrutiny of his controversial drug war. Lordkipanidze emphasized that Article 127 enshrines a state's "fundamental right" to withdraw from a treaty, warning that an expansive interpretation of the court's powers risks undermining that right and upsetting the balance between state sovereignty and the ICC's mandate to end impunity. He also argued that the Pre-Trial Chamber committed an error in law in interpreting Article 127(2), and that the majority's position could conflict with principles under the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. Lordkipanidze noted that in previous cases, such as Burundi, the ICC retained jurisdiction because judicial authorization for investigation had been secured before withdrawal took effect — a condition he said was absent in the Philippines' case. On Friday, Malacañang brushed aside the claim of Duterte lawyer Nicholas Kaufman that the Philippine government under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. was aiding the prosecution instead of assisting the defense. In a statement, Palace Press Officer Claire Castro told Kaufman to concentrate on defending Duterte instead of monitoring Philippine political developments. "He should focus on his defense and legal strategies, not on President Marcos Jr. He is losing track of his case because he keeps monitoring Philippine politics," Castro said. Kaufman said in an interview with international media the Marcos government was facilitating the case, contrary to its public stance of noncooperation with the ICC. The Philippine government has been "helping the prosecution right from before the time that the former president was surrendered to the court," he said. Castro said the government respects the Pre-trial Chamber's unanimous ruling. She said the ruling marked a significant step toward ensuring accountability. "We respect the ruling of ICC that confirms all charges of crimes against humanity against the former President Duterte. Justice is what needs to be achieved in these cases," she said. Duterte faces charges of crimes against humanity, including murder and attempted murder, allegedly committed when he launched the antidrug war during his time as Davao City mayor and later as president. Government records showed that around 6,200 drug suspects were killed, while human rights organizations claim the number could reach 30,000. Duterte was arrested in Manila in March 2025 and flown hours later to The Hague, Netherlands, where he was placed under ICC detention. A group of Filipinos in the Netherlands welcomed the ICC decision to confirm the charges against Duterte. In a statement sent to The Manila Times late on Thursday, the Panagutin Netherlands Network said confirming the charges is a victory for the families of drug war victims. "For years, they carried immense grief and endured fear of retaliation, yet they continued to demand accountability even when giving up was the easier path. Their perseverance and the determination of the entire Filipino people brought this case to where it is today," the group said. The group hopes to see more officials, particularly Senators Ronald Dela Rosa and Bong Go, and former police chief Oscar Albayalde, put on trial. "And while we celebrate this win today, we know this is just the beginning of a longer battle for accountability



ahead. Those who planned, enabled and carried out the bloodshed must also be investigated and held to account,” Panagutin said. Former senator Antonio Trillanes IV, who filed one of the cases to the ICC, also welcomed the ruling. “I am happy for the thousands of families of the victims of EJKs (extrajudicial killings). This is another big step toward achieving the justice we have long hoped for. The next thing we will wait for is the start of Duterte’s trial,” he wrote late on Thursday. Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima, who was detained in Camp Crame for almost the duration of the Duterte administration, said the former president should have been charged a long time ago. “The charges against Duterte have finally been confirmed for crimes for which he should have been punished a long time ago. The wheels of justice should not have taken this long to turn. But we take what we are dealt with for the sake of the rule of law,” de Lima wrote on Thursday. “This is still a great day for the fighters against impunity and state-sponsored violence. This is also a victory for the families of the victims — for those left behind who have long been seeking justice. Today we celebrate even as we grieve for those we lost to Duterte’s madness,” she said.

- [New obesity drug launched](#) (2026-04-24 16:00)

GLOBAL pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk launched Friday a prescription-based management for obesity. Wegovy is a semaglutide 2.4 mg once-weekly injectable medication that mimics the glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) hormone, which is responsible for regulating appetite and blood sugar produced by the body. The drug can help individuals feel fuller for longer periods, reducing cravings and supporting sustained weight management. According to the Epidemiological Burden and Cost of Obesity in the Philippines (Epicob-PH), four in 10 Filipinos are obese, a problem that cost the Philippine economy approximately P1.9 trillion in 2025. During the launch of the new treatment in Makati City, Dr. Christiana Vida Montefalcon, head of Clinical, Medical, Regulatory and Pharmacovigilance of Novo Nordisk Philippines, emphasized the need for improved obesity treatments in the country — shifting from short-term weight loss to long-term overall health outcomes. “Science now helps us understand how the body regulates hunger, how metabolism adapts, and why sustained change can be difficult.... As long as it's prescribed by health care professionals and used as a part of a comprehensive care approach, these solutions are now moving us forward into the future,” said Montefalcon. Unlike Ozempic — which has also been proven to be effective in weight loss — Wegovy contains a higher dose of semaglutide. Ozempic is mainly used to treat Type 2 diabetes. Wegovy, on the other hand, is designed for obesity treatment. While semaglutide is not a cure-all, its benefits extend far beyond aesthetics, such as improving cardiometabolic health, aside from the reduction of food cravings and supporting fat loss. Novo Nordisk stressed the importance of pairing medication with lifestyle change, stressing that medication alone is not enough. “Medication alone is never going to solve all the problems. And we need the diet, and we need the exercise as well. So it's important to actually have the lifestyle change together with the medication,” said Wei Sun, general manager of Novo Nordisk Philippines. Wegovy, soon available in drugstores nationwide, cannot be dispensed without a prescription.

- [No winners in Ultra Lotto 6/58, Mega Lotto 6/45 draws for April 24](#) (2026-04-24 14:40)



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 the Ultra Lotto 6/58 was 37-42-36-21-47-27, with a jackpot prize of P75,000,000.00. There were also no winners in the Mega Lotto 6/45 draw, which had the winning combination 41-15-38-11-33-43 and a jackpot prize of P41,679,165.33.

- [Recto: Nothing unusual with giving travel authority day before trip](#) (2026-04-24 14:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Executive Secretary Ralph Recto on Friday said there was nothing unusual with Malacañang granting a travel authority a day before the trip of a government official. Recto issued the statement after Vice President Sara Duterte claimed that the Office of the President belatedly issued her travel authority on purpose to derail her plans. Speaking to reporters in Batangas City, Recto denied that Duterte's travel request was approved at the last minute. "As there are many travel authority, it usually happens that we issued it a day before the trip," Recto said during a chance interview. Based on a document signed by Recto, Duterte has been granted travel authority to the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, Belgium, Germany, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from April 23 to May 15.

- [Marcos to visit Japan to tackle strategic ties with Takaichi](#) (2026-04-24 14:08)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will visit Japan from May 26 to 29 to advance Manila's strategic partnership with Tokyo, Malacañang announced Friday. The Presidential Communications Office (PCO) said the state visit was upon the invitation of the Japanese government. During the visit, Marcos and First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos will be received by Their Majesties, Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, at the Imperial Palace for a welcome ceremony, state call, and state banquet. Marcos will hold a summit meeting with Prime Minister Takaichi Sanae where they are expected to discuss the future trajectory of the Philippines and Japan's strengthened strategic partnership. They will also continue their recent discussions on current international developments, especially about energy, food security, and maritime security. Marcos will also meet with Japanese business groups and members of the Filipino community during the state visit.

- [AFP chief: Firing against government troops makes you a combatant](#) (2026-04-24 13:56)

MANILA, Philippines — Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Romeo S. Brawner Jr. on Friday reminded everyone that firing against government troops automatically makes the attacker a "combatant" which legitimizes counter action from soldiers. His clarification came amid backlashes to the military following its controversial operation in Toboso, Negros Occidental that resulted in 19 deaths of 14 individuals believed to be members of the NPA sling with some identified leaders. Apart from the casualties, multiple high-powered firearms were also confiscated - a confirmation, the AFP says, of the legitimacy of their intelligence report.

"Once you start fighting, firing against government forces then, you are a combatant and of course kasama ka sa maaring maging casualties (you can be a casualty)," Brawner told reporters during a visit to Cebu. The Philippine Army (PA) clarified that the clash was an

“intelligence-driven legitimate armed encounter” from verified civilian reports. It also denied that it was an attack on civilians and that residents were safely evacuated to safer grounds before government troops rained gunshots on the rebels. Despite the PA’s series of clarifications, various groups have expressed condemnation over the clash even calling it a “massacre” of civilians because of deaths of youth leaders “confirmed” by institutions they belong to.

- [WHO urges leaders in the Western Pacific to reach ‘zero-dose’ children](#) (2026-04-24 13:49)

MANILA, Philippines — The World Health Organization (WHO) has urged leaders in the Western Pacific Region to prioritize reaching “zero-dose” children and expanding immunization efforts. In a statement released Friday for World Immunization Week, the WHO highlighted the critical role vaccines play in protecting people of all ages, while warning of the risks posed by the resurgence of vaccine-preventable diseases. The agency said around 2.1 million children in the Western Pacific region have missed at least one vaccine dose. “When children are still being missed and diseases like measles can return, it is a stark reminder that we must protect progress,” said Saia Ma’u Piukala. “World Immunization Week is a call to action: to reach those left behind, strengthen trust in science, and ensure immunization remains strong for every generation,” he added. The WHO also noted a rising trend of misinformation about vaccines, particularly on social media, which threatens immunization gains. As part of its campaign, the organization is emphasizing the importance of providing families with accurate, science-based information to help them make informed decisions about vaccination. WHO said it is working with governments and partners across the region to strengthen immunization systems, improve access for underserved populations, and respond to emerging health threats. “Political leadership at the highest levels must commit to investing in policies and decisions aimed at protecting every generation,” said Huong Tran. The agency also encouraged families to review their vaccination records and catch up on missed doses during World Immunization Week, which runs from April 24 to 30. “Vaccines save lives. This week, we call on families to check their vaccination records, communities to seek trusted health information, and countries to prioritize immunization as a cornerstone of public health,” Tran added.

- [DNA test confirms body of high-ranking NPA leader in Samar](#) (2026-04-24 13:34)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) Forensic Group has confirmed through DNA testing the identity of a decomposing cadaver recovered in the hinterlands of Cabalagnan, Hinabangan last March as a high-ranking leader of the New People's Army (NPA). On March 14, troops from the 63rd Infantry Battalion discovered the remains following an armed encounter between Barangays Cabalagnan and Tabay while pursuing two fleeing members of the Sub-Regional Committee (SRC) Sesame. Former NPA members initially identified the body through personal belongings as Lupito Bucatcat, also known as “Hunyo,” believed to be the secretary of SRC Sesame under the Eastern Visayas Regional Party Committee (EVRPC). The 63rd Infantry “Innovator” Battalion, under the 8th Infantry Division, said the

body was already in an advanced state of decomposition. However, DNA testing yielded a 99.9 percent kinship and paternity match from collected samples, confirming the identity as Bucatcat. Alias “Hunyo” was considered a key figure in the dwindling insurgent structure in the province and had spent years involved in armed struggle, reportedly playing a role in directing activities and maintaining influence in affected communities. Lt. Col. Ricky James L. Rosalejos, commanding officer of the 63rd Infantry Battalion, said Bucatcat was ultimately abandoned by the organization he served. “Instead of being rescued, cared for, or even given dignity in death, Lupito Bucatcat was left behind, neglected, and ignored by the same group he fought for,” Rosalejos said. “His decomposing body, recovered alone in the hinterlands, reflects the harsh reality behind the group’s claims of brotherhood and loyalty,” he added.

- [Recto: Marcos 'master of multitasking, healthy leader'](#) (2026-04-24 13:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Executive Secretary Ralph Recto on Friday assured the public that President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. remains fit to lead, dismissing what he described as baseless rumors about the President’s health from a “few weak-minded critics.” Recto issued the statement as he also confirmed that he and Marcos would comply with a directive from the Supreme Court of the Philippines to comment on a petition seeking the disclosure of the President’s medical examination report. Speaking during an aid distribution event at the Batangas Province Events Center in Batangas City, Recto described the 68-year-old President as a “master of multitasking” who maintains an intense work pace both inside and outside Malacañang. “I think reports even serve as his pillow at night. That is not the style of a ‘low-batt’ leader, unlike the baseless attacks coming from a few weak-minded critics,” Recto said. “This is a high-energy presidency of a healthy leader—no wheelchair, no cane, and not frail or weak,” he added.

- [Marcos vows to increase financial support for LGUs](#) (2026-04-24 13:16)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Friday vowed to increase funding for local government units (LGUs) in the next national budget to help expand their programs. The President made the commitment during his visit to Batangas City, where he witnessed the distribution of rice under the Local Government Support Fund (LGSF), observed an orientation for Presidential Scholars under the Socio-Civic Projects Fund (SCPF), and led the turnover of SCPF financial assistance to presidents of the Association of Barangay Captains (ABC). In his remarks, Marcos urged local officials to properly implement government programs to justify increased funding in the coming year. “We will continue doing this, and I’m telling all of you, do not think this is a one-time effort. But I also return the challenge to you—our government officials and our local governments—do your best in implementing these programs,” Marcos said. “If the results are good, you can expect that in the next budget, we will allocate even more funds for this,” he added.

- [Pasig eyes zero-balance billing deal with The Medical City](#) (2026-04-24 13:07)

MANILA, Philippines — Pasig City is looking to forge a formal agreement with The Medical City to help qualified patients in its 51-bed PhilHealth ward leave the hospital with zero balance billing. Mayor Vico Sotto said on Friday, April 24, that the city government plans to propose an arrangement where Pasig would shoulder additional costs not covered by PhilHealth or the Department of Health. Sotto, along with Health Secretary Ted Herbosa, was given a tour of the hospital's PhilHealth ward, also known as the Bengzon Patient Access Ward. "Did you know that The Medical City Pasig also has a 51-bed PhilHealth ward?" Sotto said. "Depending on the patient's eligibility and condition, they are already implementing zero balance billing," he added. Sotto noted that countries with more advanced universal health care systems rely heavily on private hospitals while keeping patients' out-of-pocket expenses low. He cited Japan and Netherlands as examples where hospitals are largely privately run but patients pay minimal costs. He added that the Philippines should move toward a similar model as PhilHealth coverage and processes continue to improve. "Especially now that PhilHealth's coverage and processes are improving, we should also think like this here," Sotto said. "We should support private institutions in these efforts and strengthen our health care provider network," he added.

- [PH, Indonesia reaffirm strategic ties at ministerial meeting](#) (2026-04-24 07:01)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines and Indonesia reaffirmed their longstanding partnership and expanded areas of cooperation during the 8th Ministerial Meeting of the Philippines-Indonesia Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation (JCBC), officials said Friday. The meeting was co-chaired by Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa P. Lazaro and Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono, marking a continued effort by both nations to strengthen bilateral relations across political, economic, and security fronts. Key platform for bilateral cooperation The JCBC serves as the primary dialogue mechanism between the two Southeast Asian neighbors, providing a platform to review ongoing engagements, identify new areas of collaboration, and implement initiatives under the Philippines-Indonesia Plan of Action (2022–2027). Discussions during the meeting were described as "comprehensive and productive," covering a wide range of priority areas, including: Enhancement of border agreements Strengthening defense and maritime cooperation Expansion of trade and investment ties Energy collaboration Food security initiatives Legal cooperation People-to-people exchanges Both sides also emphasized the importance of ensuring the welfare of Persons of Filipino Descent (PFDs) residing in Indonesia.

- [Palace clarifies: Co not arrested, but 'liberty was restrained' due to immigration concerns](#) (2026-04-24 06:58)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Friday clarified that there was no contradiction on the pronouncements of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and other Philippine officials regarding former lawmaker Zaldy Co, saying he was indeed apprehended due to immigration concerns. In a statement, Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said that the word "arrest" did not come from the President. "The President and Secretary of Justice Frederick Vida were clear in their statements. There is no contradiction," Castro said. "What the President said was that Zaldy Co is

in the custody of the Czech Republic due to a lack of proper documentation. Zaldy Co was apprehended due to immigration concerns," she added. Quoting Justice spokesman Polo Martinez, Castro said that "Co's liberty was indeed restrained due to lack of proper documentation." "For analogy, it's similar to a situation in the airport where the person arrives and immigration denies entry or excludes the person," Castro said. "There is a deprivation of liberty to a certain degree. Apprehended due to immigration concerns," she added. On April 16, 2026, Marcos announced that Co was apprehended in Prague, Czech Republic after allegedly crossing the border without proper documentation. He has since been held under the custody of the Czech authorities.

- [Public Works engineer's testimony at Revilla bail hearing boosts ex-senator's innocence](#)  
(2026-04-24 05:58)

MANILA, Philippines — Members of the Sandiganbayan's third division were dismayed over the testimony of Department of Public Works and Highways National Capital Region Director Gerard Opulencia for not knowing how the "commitments" for flood control projects were prepared. "Commitments" are the percentage money given by contractors and district engineers to be delivered to alleged recipients. Testifying at the bail hearing of former senator Ramon Revilla Jr. and his other co-accused at the anti-graft court on Friday, Opulencia said that he submitted the list of projects for funding to former DPWH undersecretary Roberto Bernardo. Opulencia identified before Associate Justice and Division Chairman Karl Miranda four district engineers to whom he gave these lists — Denryl Caesar Cortuna, Manny Bulusan, Ruel Umali, and Arturo Gonzales Jr. — and for whom he prepared the "commitments" for these projects. When Miranda asked if he had knowledge on how these commitments were implemented, Opulencia said that he had limited knowledge on the matter because his role was only for coordination. Miranda was visibly irked by Opulencia's response. Upon further questioning by Associate Justice Ronald Moreno, Opulencia reiterated that his only duty was to give the project list to Bernardo. Opulencia also revealed that he was ordered by the Department of Justice to return P150 million, which he said came from "pasasalamat" or "thank you" money from contractors after completing the projects. After Opulencia's testimony, Revilla told reporters that "he is now seeing the truth coming out."

- [Romualdez urges Ombudsman to inhibit from investigating him to avoid 'prejudgment'](#)  
(2026-04-24 05:36)

MANILA, Philippines — Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez filed a motion to the Office of the Ombudsman to inhibit from investigating him over the alleged flood control scandal, noting that the probe is tainted by a "pattern of prejudgment" that violated his due process. In a four-page letter dated April 22, 2026, Romualdez's counsels, Villaraza and Angcangco, argued that the public statements by Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla and his officials showed that a "prosecution for plunder had effectively been decided in advance—despite the absence of a formal complaint or preliminary investigation." The lawyers who signed the letter were Alejandro Navarro, Augusto San Pedro, Ruth Nichole Ureta, and Via Monina Valdepenas. "There

is a reasonable impression that the Ombudsman has already resolved to prosecute our client,” they added. The letter traced the alleged bias to as early as November 2025, when Remulla disclosed that his office has been studying the case for weeks and was already discussing possible plunder charges. By April 2026, these statements had escalated into public declarations that a plunder case was being “seriously prepared,” possibly involving conspiracy and multiple actors. His camp believes that these statements are no longer neutral investigative updates—but early disclosures of a prosecution theory. They also flagged statements within the Ombudsman's ranks, including a press briefing by Assistant Ombudsman and Spokesman Jose Dominic Clavano IV that referred to Romualdez as a “master plunderer.” Taken together, according to his counsels, the statements create the impression that any investigation would be a “mere formality” to justify a pre-set outcome. They even warned that even subordinate officials may feel compelled to align with their chief’s public position. Invoking Supreme Court doctrine on the appearance of impartiality, Romualdez asked that the Ombudsman inhibit from the case and that any complaint be handled by a neutral and independent-minded official. “This is not about questioning integrity, but about safeguarding due process and public confidence in the justice system,” the letter said.

- [UPD committee condemns Negros killing of student](#) (2026-04-24 05:11)

MANILA, Philippines — The University of the Philippines (UP) in Diliman, Quezon City on Friday condemned the killing of one of its students during a military “encounter” in Negros Occidental. “Alyssa was widely admired by her peers and teachers as a decisive student leader with a sharp, critical mind that discerned the structure of injustice perpetuating the deep poverty and oppression of the landless farmers and agricultural workers of Negros. She understood how work in the student council intersected with service to the basic masses that sustain the education of the Iskolar ng Bayan. Through her work with progressive organizations, she learned that violence waged to silence the voices of truth and enrich those in power must always be met with resistance. This is the enduring lesson that took her from the lecture halls of the University to the sugarcane fields of Negros, where the sakadas then became her teachers. She will also be remembered for her warmth, generosity, and infectious energy that inspired all who knew her to live more fully,” according to the statement by the Committee on the Protection of Academic Freedom and Human Rights (CPAFHR). The group said, “We cannot ever rejoice in the ‘triumph’ of a state that maintains the dehumanization of the poorest Filipinos and then snuffs out our brightest lights—supposedly to protect us. But protect us from whom? Systemic injustice and inequality are the biggest threats to our freedoms and rights. As long as they remain, it is our responsibility to confront their reality, dismantle their mechanisms, and bring their perpetrators to justice. The root of decades-long suffering on the island of Negros is the exploitation of sugarcane workers by powerful hacenderos, heightened by counter-insurgency military operations that seek to suppress dissent and organization through manifold killings and human rights violations throughout history.”

- [Duterte lead in 2028 presidential survey down, Robredo gains ground](#) (2026-04-24 04:50)



MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte's lead narrowed while predecessor and Naga City Mayor Leni Robredo gained ground although still in second spot in the 2028 Presidential election survey conducted by independent pollster OCTA Research. In its Tugon ng Masa survey conducted from March 19-25, 2026, Duterte is still ahead with a 33 percent preference but down by five percentage points from 38 percent in the fourth quarter of 2025. Second is Robredo, with a 21 percent voter preference, a 13 point increase from the previous quarter and the largest among all candidates surveyed. As a result, the gap between Duterte and Robredo has narrowed from 30 percentage points in the previous quarter to 12 percentage points in the current quarter. OCTA, however noted, that while there was a drop in Duterte's lead against Robredo, the decline was still within the survey's margin of error of plus or minus three percent. Coming in third was Manila Mayor and 2022 presidential candidate Isko Moreno at 10 percent, followed by Raffy Tulfo at 4 percent and Sen. Bam Aquino at 4 percent. A small proportion of respondents were undecided or refused to answer. OCTA stressed that the results reflected a "hypothetical and early-stage preference measure, and are not predictive of actual electoral outcomes. Rather, they provide a snapshot of current public sentiment, which may evolve as political conditions, candidate positioning, alliances, and national issues develop." The survey had 1,200 respondents nationwide.

- [Marcos to pay state visit to Japan in May](#) (2026-04-24 02:50)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr will make a state visit to Japan from May 26 to 29 at the invitation of the Japanese government, his office said on Friday. During the visit, Marcos is set to meet with Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi to discuss their countries' strategic partnership.

- [Dissenting Opinion: ICC judge says court may have overstepped legal bounds in jurisdiction case](#) (2026-04-24 01:32)

MANILA, Philippines — A judge of the International Criminal Court (ICC) has warned that the tribunal may have overstepped its legal bounds in asserting jurisdiction over former president Rodrigo Duterte, even as the court's Appeals Chamber allowed the case to proceed. In a dissenting opinion issued April 22, Judge Gocha Lordkipanidze said the court should not be able to exercise jurisdiction over alleged crimes linked to Duterte's anti-drug campaign, arguing that prosecutors failed to formally trigger the court's authority before the Philippines' withdrawal from the Rome Statute took effect. The majority of the Appeals Chamber dismissed all four grounds of appeal raised by Duterte's defense and upheld a previous ruling that the ICC retained jurisdiction because the prosecution had begun a preliminary examination prior to the country's withdrawal. But Lordkipanidze rejected that reasoning, saying a preliminary examination does not qualify as a matter "under consideration" by the court under Article 127(2) of the Rome Statute. "A situation is only under consideration by the Court once a pre-trial chamber authorizes an investigation," he wrote, emphasizing that preliminary examinations are informal and do not carry sufficient legal weight to establish jurisdiction. He argued that the ICC's jurisdiction must be triggered before a state's withdrawal becomes



effective, which in this case would have required authorization of a formal investigation within the one-year withdrawal period. According to the dissent, allowing jurisdiction based solely on a preliminary examination risks stretching the court's authority beyond what the treaty permits and could undermine the rights of states to withdraw. Lordkipanidze also pointed to what he described as a careful balance in the Rome Statute between ending impunity and respecting state sovereignty, warning that the majority's interpretation could upset that balance. "The Statute thus gives the Court an opportunity to assert its jurisdiction. However, it also respects the States' right to withdraw," he said, adding that extending jurisdiction indefinitely would render the withdrawal clause meaningless. He argued that the Pre-Trial Chamber committed an error in law in interpreting Article 127(2), and that the ICC should not proceed with the case. Despite the dissent, the Appeals Chamber's ruling stands, allowing proceedings against Duterte to continue before the ICC.

- [ICC confirms charges; Duterte to stand trial](#) (2026-04-23 16:20)

(UPDATE) THE International Criminal Court (ICC) on Thursday confirmed crimes against humanity charges against former president Rodrigo Duterte, paving the way for his trial to proceed over his alleged role in a deadly anti-drugs campaign that killed thousands of civilians. In a sweeping 50-page decision, the Pre-Trial Chamber I ruled that Duterte, who served as president from 2016 to 2022 and previously as mayor of Davao City, bears individual criminal responsibility for murders and attempted murders committed between November 2011 and March 2019. The chamber confirmed three counts against the 81-year-old former leader, involving at least 78 victims across 49 incidents cited as illustrative examples of a far wider campaign of violence. Prosecutors say the actual scale of victimization included thousands of killings. Duterte is charged under multiple legal theories: as an indirect co-perpetrator who controlled a "common plan" to "neutralize" alleged criminals and alternatively as having ordered, induced, or aided and abetted the killings. A "widespread and systematic" attack. The court found that Duterte, first as mayor of Davao City and later as president, led a hierarchical network that carried out a "widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population" of the Philippines. During his mayoral period, the court said, Duterte controlled the so-called Davao Death Squad — a combination of police officers and paid hitmen who killed alleged drug pushers, thieves and other suspected criminals. After becoming president in June 2016, he expanded the operation nationwide through what prosecutors called the "National Network." The chamber concluded that the word "neutralize" as used by Duterte and his associates meant "to kill" — despite defense arguments that it referred to lawful restraint or arrest. Essential contributions. Presiding Judge Iulia Antoanella Motoc, writing for the unanimous three-judge panel, detailed how Duterte made "essential contributions" to the criminal scheme. These included designing the policy, publicly naming targets, providing weapons and resources, offering financial rewards, appointing key personnel and shielding perpetrators from prosecution. The court cited witness testimony that Duterte personally approved killing operations in Davao City, and that law enforcement officers who failed to kill enough people faced threats and potential death. The chamber noted that Duterte's public speeches

contained “clear directives and incitement to kill criminals,” including promises to protect and pardon those involved in killings. It rejected defense arguments that official documents containing self-defense language negated criminal intent, finding that such references could not be assessed in isolation from the broader pattern of violence.

**Victim incidents** Among the confirmed incidents cited in the decision:– Three alleged drug pushers killed in Davao City in 2013.– The November 2016 killings of two men in police custody at Leyte Sub-Provincial Jail.– The July 2017 killings of Ozamiz City Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog Sr. and multiple others at the mayor’s residence.– The August 2017 killing of 17-year-old Kian Loyd Delos Santos in Caloocan City.– Two attempted murders of individuals who survived being shot.

**Fit for trial** The chamber found Duterte fit to participate in proceedings despite defense requests for indefinite adjournment based on medical concerns. The former president waived his right to attend the February 2026 confirmation hearing. Duterte was surrendered to the court on March 12, 2025, following a warrant issued March 7, 2025. He has remained in detention, with appeals chambers twice confirming decisions denying his interim release. The court rejected defense arguments that the charges were overbroad, finding that given the “scale of criminality” and Duterte’s position “at the apex” of the operation, a broader description of charges through illustrative examples was “necessary to cover the extent of [his] alleged criminality.” Duterte now faces trial before an ICC Trial Chamber. The court ordered the registrar to transmit the decision and record of proceedings to the presidency.

**Jurisdiction settled** Earlier this week, the Pre-Trial Chamber threw out the Duterte defense team’s challenge to the ICC’s jurisdiction over the case. Defense lawyer Nicholas Kaufman said he was not surprised by the decision, but maintained it raised serious legal concerns and would continue to be contested. In a statement issued after the ruling, Kaufman said the defense would press on with legal remedies, including a possible further appeal, while arguing that Duterte’s rights were not adequately upheld during the proceedings. For families of those killed in the antidrug campaign, the ruling on Wednesday affirming the ICC’s jurisdiction over the case marked a decisive step in their long pursuit of justice. In a joint statement, victims’ lawyers Joel Butuyan and Gilbert Andres said those affected welcomed the ruling, describing it as a “triumph of victims’ rights to the truth and justice.” The Appeals Chamber affirmed the ICC’s authority to proceed with the case despite the Philippines’ withdrawal from the Rome Statute, reinforcing the treaty’s objective of ending impunity for perpetrators of grave international crimes. “The decision sends a strong message that mere withdrawal from the Rome Statute does not shield state officials from accountability for crimes against humanity,” the lawyers said. They pointed in particular to Article 127(2) of the Rome Statute, which provides that a state’s withdrawal does not affect ongoing proceedings already under consideration by the court prior to the withdrawal taking effect. The lawyers noted the ruling’s significance in light of Duterte’s role in initiating the Philippines’ exit from the ICC while now facing charges of crimes against humanity, specifically murder, before the tribunal.

WITH JAVIER JOE ISMAEL

- [Palace: President will comply with SC order](#) (2026-04-23 16:19)

(UPDATE) PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Executive Secretary Ralph Recto will heed the order of the Supreme Court to submit his comment on a petition that seeks the disclosure of his medical examination report, Malacañang said on Thursday. “If that is the order of the Supreme Court, we will follow. A comment will be made,” Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro said in Filipino in a press briefing. “Soon as there is a comment, we will immediately release it,” Castro said. The high tribunal’s order stemmed from the petition of Pantaleon Alvarez, Virgilio Garcia, Juan Raña and Raymundo Junia against Marcos and Recto. They argued that the chief executive’s health is a matter of public concern, especially with the country dealing with the effects of the crisis triggered by the hostilities in the Middle East. In their petition for a writ of mandamus, they sought to have Marcos submit himself to physical and mental examinations, including a hair follicle drug test. It also requires the chief executive to make public results of the tests, including medical and clinical confirmation of his physical and medical fitness to prove whether or not he is fit to discharge the powers and duties as president. They invoked Section 12, Article VII of the Constitution, which mandates public disclosure of the chief executive’s health in case of serious illness. Marcos last January was diagnosed with diverticulitis and had to scale back attending events in and out of Malacañang. The president himself recently said he has since fully recovered and does not have any restrictions in his activities or his diet. The president even went as far as tagging as liars those who have been spreading unverified reports about his health. “So, from now on, those people who told you that I’m sick, that I’m disabled, they are all liars. Everything they say is a lie. So, don’t believe whoever those people are. Now you know who the liars are and who is telling the truth,” he said.

- [Sara denies transaction reports, attacks AMLC](#) (2026-04-23 16:18)

(UPDATE) VICE President Sara Duterte on Thursday said reports by the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) that she and her husband had P6.7 billion in bank transactions over the last 20 years were “untrue,” and that real thieves do not put money in banks, but rather in suitcases. Her statement came after testimony before the House Committee on Justice, which is hearing impeachment complaints against her, detailed bank transactions that were not reflected in Duterte’s statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALNs). In the same hearing, which she did not attend, former senator Antonio Trillanes IV alleged that Duterte received millions of pesos from alleged drug lord Sammy Uy, and had ill-gotten wealth alongside her father, former president Rodrigo Duterte. In a statement on Thursday, Duterte said that Trillanes has been “peddling the same incredible story about alleged billions in bank accounts,” for the past 10 years. But Trillanes, Duterte said, is now backed by a “sitting president who must be compelled to submit to a simple drug test; ‘law-bender’ members of the House of Representatives that have received ‘maletas’ (suitcases) and have repeatedly disregarded constitutional limits; a Commission on Audit that appears to time its issuances in a manner that conveniently aligns with political attacks; and newly installed AMLC officials who remain silent and refuse to clarify that there have been no findings of violations of anti-money laundering laws, and the billions of peso in bank accounts are untrue.” “The timing of all this

also cannot be denied. The series of allegations and cases against me began after I left the Cabinet, at a time when I refused to sign a national budget that I could not defend to the people,” Duterte said. She said her service record is clean, she did not have a case involving the use of public funds, and she declared all her assets and money in her SALN. Duterte was accused of misusing the confidential funds of her office, a charge that was supported by documents showing that the funds were disbursed to people with fictitious names that combined the names of restaurants and snack food brands, such as Mary Grace Piattos. “Every centavo comes from a legitimate source and is supported by documentation. Real thieves do not put their money in the bank — they put it in suitcases,” Duterte said. Instead of explaining the bank transactions, however, Duterte attacked the administration for the billions lost to corruption. She urged Filipinos to “not be deceived by the noise of this impeachment.” But Malacañang said the vice president should explain the billions of pesos in transactions flagged by the AMLC, saying that accountability and transparency were expected from all public servants like her. Speaking to reporters, Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said these revelations were not new and did not warrant a comment from President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. “It would be better for us to hear the Vice President’s reaction because billion-peso transactions in her bank accounts have been disclosed,” she added. Meanwhile, Duterte’s impeachment defense team said the P6.7-billion bank transactions that were unreported in her SALN are aggregated transactions from 2006 to 2025, which could lead for the figures to be “bloated.” They also reiterated that her continued nonappearance before the panel is based on their position that the committee has no jurisdiction on the ongoing proceedings. In a press briefing on Thursday, Defense panel spokesman Michael Wesley Poa said the AMLC presented the aggregate of all transactions during the years covered. “All inflows, all outflows are added up, so there is a tendency for those figures to be bloated,” Poa said. He added that if both outflows and inflows are “bloated,” it means that the net amount of transactions will be bloated. “It is not determinative or conclusive how much [is] inside the account. For us we believe the numbers are bloated,” Poa said. He said that Duterte’s SALNs before she became vice president should not be included in the discussion. In the House hearing on Wednesday, the AMLC noted a significant increase in Duterte’s assets, which grew from P504,000 in 2005 to P280 million in 2007, when she was first elected as vice mayor of Davao City. Meanwhile, amid calls for her to show up at the House impeachment hearing, lead counsel Shiela Sison reiterated that the current proceedings are “unconstitutional” as they believe that the evidence should only be scrutinized at the proper forum, which is the Senate Impeachment Court. Several current and former lawmakers also defended Duterte from unexplained wealth claims and the figures presented by the AMLC. “An AMLC report is not a conviction. It is not proof of plunder. It is not proof of malversation. It is not proof that public funds entered a personal account,” Davao City 3rd District Rep. Isidro Ungab said. He said that under AMLC rules, a suspicious transaction may be reported based on red flags such as unusual activity, lack of apparent economic purpose, deviation from a client’s profile, or possible relation to unlawful activity. “If there is real evidence of money laundering, the law provides the proper route: the AMLC may cause the filing of complaints with the DOJ or the Ombudsman for prosecution of money laundering offenses. Until that happens, the House cannot treat ‘reported transaction’ as equal to

‘stolen money,’ ” Ungab said. Without citing any figures or proof, former Bagong Henerasyon Partylist representative Bernadette Herrera said the claims against Duterte are not only “inaccurate but also exaggerated.” “They are stretching the facts in order to paint a negative picture against the vice president. This is all being done to condition the minds of the people even before any real evidence has been presented to substantiate the allegations against the vice president,” Herrera said.

- [88% favor impeachment trial for vice president](#) (2026-04-23 16:17)

(UPDATE) A LARGE majority of Filipinos want Vice President Sara Duterte to face a Senate impeachment trial, with 88 percent saying she should answer allegations in a formal proceeding, a survey released on Thursday by research firm Tangere showed. The poll, conducted from April 22 to 23, indicated that respondents view a Senate trial not primarily as punishment but as a venue for the vice president to publicly defend herself and address the accusations against her. About 70 percent of those surveyed said Duterte should personally testify and respond to the allegations, while 51 percent want her to present evidence — such as bank records — to clarify financial issues raised against her. The same proportion cited the need to uphold due process, describing the Senate trial as the proper constitutional mechanism for resolving impeachment complaints. The survey also pointed to expectations that a trial could help restore confidence in government. Around 52 percent said facing the allegations directly could rebuild public trust in the Office of the Vice President, while an equal share said a public trial would ensure transparency. Meanwhile, 44 percent believe a definitive legal process could end ongoing political attacks. Support for a Senate trial was consistent across political affiliations, including Duterte supporters, opposition voters, administration allies and undecided respondents, the firm said. Tangere Chief Executive Martin Peñaflor said the findings suggest broad agreement among Filipinos on the need for a formal legal process. “Whether supportive or critical, there is a shared view that the vice president should address the allegations in the Senate and be given the opportunity to defend her integrity,” Peñaflor said. The noncommissioned survey polled 1,200 respondents nationwide using a mobile-based application and stratified random sampling, with a margin of error of  $\pm 2.77$  percent at a 95-percent confidence level. Meanwhile, the petitioners who filed a case before the Supreme Court challenging aspects of the impeachment process against the vice president raised concerns over the House Committee on Justice hearing on April 22, saying the proceedings went beyond the original impeachment complaints. In a statement, the petitioners, led by lawyer Israelito Torreon, said what transpired during the hearing “confirmed” their position before the Supreme Court that the committee had considered materials not originally attached to the impeachment complaints, including post-filing affidavits, statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALNs), Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC)-related documents, and corporate and tax records of entities not cited in the complaints. They described this as a “continuing post-filing expansion” of the case, arguing that impeachment proceedings should remain limited to the allegations and supporting documents as originally filed. The petitioners raised particular concern over the use of SALNs they said were not part of the impeachment

complaints and covered periods when Duterte was not yet vice president. They also questioned the presentation of AMLC-related materials covering transactions over several years, including periods outside her current term. According to the group, impeachment should be confined to acts or omissions committed during the current term of an impeachable official and should not be used to examine earlier public positions or unrelated periods. They further criticized the alleged failure to provide the AMLC-related report to the respondent prior to the hearing, saying this deprived her of the opportunity to properly examine and respond to the material. The petitioners also took issue with the public discussion of AMLC-related findings during the hearing, saying that such reports are not proof of wrongdoing but only investigative leads that require proper validation and a clear financial trail.

- [Ex-driver of DPWH exec testifies at bail hearing](#) (2026-04-23 16:16)

PROSECUTION witness Vergel Niño Garcia testified before the Sandiganbayan Third Division on Thursday he delivered boxes that supposedly contained cash payoffs to former senator Ramon Revilla Jr. The prosecution presented Garcia as a witness in the hearing on the bail petitions of Revilla and several of his co-accused. Revilla and six other people are facing a malversation case in connection with the alleged ghost flood control works in Pandi, Bulacan. Most of the accused have petitioned for bail. Garcia testified he had served as a driver for Roberto Bernardo, now a former undersecretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), for about 15 years. Bernardo is a state witness in the case. Garcia testified that he delivered the boxes to Revilla, fellow senator Jinggoy Estrada, Trygve Olaivar, a certain person surnamed Villa, the late DPWH undersecretary Cathy Cabral and former Public Works secretary Manuel Bonoan. Garcia told the court he delivered 12 boxes to Estrada at the senator's residence in San Juan City in November 2024. He said he also made three deliveries to Olaivar, one at Rockwell involving four suitcases; one at Magallanes involving four suitcases; and one at Airport Road involving several boxes. Garcia said he delivered eight boxes to Villa's house in January 2025, and a sealed paper bag to the house of Cabral in 2023. That same year, he handed over a sealed box to Cabral's driver at the Quirino Grandstand in Luneta Park, Manila. Garcia said he delivered 15 sealed boxes to a driver of Bonoan in November 2024; 20 boxes in 2025; and 20 boxes in Quezon City. Garcia maintained that he never saw the contents of his deliveries, and learned about it only during an investigation of the flood control scandal. The prosecution presented Francisco Dela Fuente Jr. in the afternoon. Reody Anthony Balisi, Revilla's lawyer, refuted the testimonies of Garcia and Dela Fuente. He said the defense has not wavered in its position that there is no evidence linking Revilla to the Bulacan project. Accused with Revilla were Brice Hernandez, Juanito Mendoza, Arjay Domasig, Emelita Juat, Christina Mae Pineda and Jaypee Mendoza. All except Jaypee Mendoza are seeking bail. The case was filed by the Office of the Ombudsman last January. Revilla refused to enter a plea during his arraignment in February. The Sandiganbayan Third Division thus entered a not guilty plea for him. All the other accused pleaded not guilty.

- [Palace: Govt confident Co will be brought home](#) (2026-04-23 16:15)



(UPDATE) THE government is confident that former congressman Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co, one of the central figures in the multibillion-peso flood control scandal, will be brought home, Malacañang said Thursday. Palace Press Officer Claire Castro issued the statement after Justice Secretary Frederick Vida confirmed that he and Chief State Counsel Dennis Chan would fly to Prague, the Czech Republic, on Thursday to discuss with Czech authorities Co’s return. Castro said the government’s next steps in securing the return of Co would depend on its coordination and agreement with the Czech Republic. Asked how confident is the administration that Co will be brought back to the country after Vida’s trip, she said the government was “definitely confident.” “Since other countries are involved, let us just hope that Zaldy Co will be brought back to our country soon,” Castro said during a Palace briefing. The Department of Justice has said it was considering deportation, extradition or invoking the United Nations Convention Against Corruption — to which both the Philippines and the Czech Republic are signatories — as possible means to facilitate Co’s return. Co is facing an arrest warrant for alleged malversation of public funds and graft in connection with a P289.5-million anomalous dike project in Oriental Mindoro. He left the country in July last year, supposedly for medical treatment in the United States. In September, the government revoked Co’s travel papers after he was implicated in budget insertions and anomalous flood control projects. He later resigned as Ako Bicol Party-list representative. Co is being detained by Czech authorities after being flagged for illegal entry. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has said Co’s return would follow due process and international legal procedures.

• [Romualdez to question hold departure order](#) (2026-04-23 16:14)

(UPDATE) THE spokesman of former speaker Martin Romualdez said they will question the Precautionary Hold Departure Order issued to him by the Sandiganbayan. The anti-graft court issued the order on Wednesday, after the Office of the Ombudsman said it found probable cause that Romualdez might leave the country to evade arrest. Romualdez is being investigated for allegations of plunder, direct bribery and malversation in relation to the flood control scandal. In a statement, lawyer Ade Fajardo said. Romualdez “is in the Philippines and has not left the country. Any report or insinuation that he has fled is false and irresponsible.” Fajardo said Romualdez is seeking and securing necessary travel authority, and coordinated in good faith with the Department of Justice and the Bureau of Immigration. Romualdez was looking for a “brief, long-overdue four-day medical checkup with his attending physician in Singapore,” after his angioplasty surgery, she continued. “This is fully consistent with his conduct from the very beginning — one of cooperation, transparency and respect for legal processes. Unfortunately, this legitimate act has been twisted to create a prejudicial narrative that he intended to flee.” The congressman from Leyte “remains committed to facing these allegations squarely,” Fajardo said. Partido Demokratiko Pilipino deputy national spokesman Ferdinand Topacio on Friday appealed to Romualdez to “redeem himself and his family’s legacy” by exposing everything he knows about the corruption in government, including unconstitutional insertions in the General Appropriations Act and the flood control scandal. “We are aware that such revelations may involve close members of his family,



including the President, and that he may be holding back information to protect certain personalities, but his recent warnings that he will spill the beans, as it were, should charges against him be politicized and he become the ‘fall guy’, indicates that Romualdez knows many things that will help unravel the Gordian knot regarding these massive anomalies,” Topacio said. On Thursday, Malacañang said the President does not feel alluded to by Romualdez’ s remarks. Palace Press Officer Claire Castro told reporters it was Marcos himself who ordered an investigation into anomalous flood control projects. “Whatever defense will be made against the possible accusations against former Speaker Romualdez, that is his defense,” Castro said. “And if he is saying that the executive has command responsibility, that is precisely why the President gave orders: the matter was not ignored, there was no cover-up, and he initiated an investigation. So that if there are any anomalies and whoever should be held accountable, they must indeed be held accountable.” Romualdez, a cousin and a close ally of the President, denied any role in the supposedly corruption-tainted 2025 national budget, saying there was “no evidence that proves that he committed plunder, conspiracy to commit plunder, or any similar offense that the Ombudsman may be contemplating against me.” He said that if anyone bears command responsibility over the budget, it would be the Executive branch. “If corruption were to occur on the scale alleged in recent months, it is clear that it would not happen at the level of general legislative approval alone. It happens at the level of execution of the General Appropriations Act,” Romualdez said in a video message. “That is why command responsibility is more logically attributed to the Executive branch, where there is actual supervision, operational control and on-the-ground implementation, rather than to a collegial legislative body whose constitutional role is deliberation and appropriation,” he said. Romualdez did not name Marcos, and pointed instead at former Senate president Francis Escudero and former House appropriations committee chairman Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co. Castro said that when the President found out about the anomalous flood control projects in 2025, “he himself ordered the investigation. He created an independent investigating body to ensure that there will be no cover-up, especially about the actions and inactions of the DPWH (Department of Public Works and Highways).” Castro said some DPWH officials, including former Public Works secretary Manuel Bonoan, have been charged in court. She refused to characterize the relationship between Marcos and Romualdez, following the latter’ s resignation as speaker in September last year.

- [Go calls for stronger OFW safeguards after Beirut killings](#) (2026-04-23 16:13)

SEN. Bong Go has called for stronger protection for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) following the fatal shooting of two Filipina household service workers in Beirut, Lebanon. The incident, confirmed by the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW), occurred on April 15 during a hostage situation in the Lebanese capital. Authorities reported that the victims were shot by their employer. The suspect has been arrested and is awaiting the filing of charges. “This news is painful. Our compatriots working abroad are sacrificing for their families, so we must ensure that they are safe wherever they are,” Go said, underscoring the risks faced by Filipino workers overseas. The DMW said it is coordinating closely with the Philippine Embassy in Lebanon and

local authorities for a thorough investigation. Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacadac has directed concerned agencies to extend full assistance to the victims' families, including repatriation arrangements, financial aid and access to government benefits. Go stressed that beyond immediate relief, authorities must reinforce preventive mechanisms, including stronger coordination with host governments and stricter monitoring of working conditions for deployed Filipinos. He emphasized that the tragedy highlights risks faced by OFWs, particularly domestic workers. He said that in 2018, during the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte, the Philippines stopped deploying workers to Kuwait following a series of OFW abuse and death cases. Deployment resumed only after both countries agreed on enhanced labor protection and monitoring systems. Go reiterated the importance of institutional reforms such as Republic Act 11641, which created the Department of Migrant Workers to streamline services and strengthen protection mechanisms for OFWs. He is among the law's authors and co-sponsors. The Beirut killings come amid growing concerns over the safety of Filipinos in volatile regions. Recent reports also confirmed the deaths of Filipina workers in Israel. Mary Ann de Vera was identified in March as the first Filipino casualty in the ongoing war, followed by another Filipina killed in a missile strike in Haifa in April.

- [All systems go for Asean Summit – palace](#) (2026-04-23 16:12)

MALACAÑANG on Thursday said it is “all systems go” for the staging of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summit and Related Summits this year despite the crisis the nation is facing. In a press briefing, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro gave assurances that the first high-level meeting, the 48th Asean Leaders' Summit and Related Meetings in Cebu on May 7 and 8, is all set. “All systems go. We are ready,” she said in Filipino. Last month, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ordered a recalibration of the Philippines' hosting of Asean 2026, scaling down non-essential activities “in order to save on expenses and focus on the most important” amid the effects of the war in the Middle East. While smaller engagements would be conducted virtually, the Leaders Summit would be face-to-face in a “very bare-bones” format. Marcos earlier said he had consulted with fellow leaders, who agreed to push through with the summit. The Palace earlier said 650 ministerial and senior official meetings that the Philippines was supposed to host would instead be conducted online. Asean leaders are expected to join the Leaders' Summit on May 7 to 8 in Cebu. Meanwhile, the Asean Summit and Related Meetings are set in Manila later this year.

- [Taiwanese official visits disputed island](#) (2026-04-23 16:11)

TAIPEI — A Taiwanese government minister has made a rare visit to a Taiwan-controlled island in the hotly contested South China Sea, as the coast guard held drills including a simulated boarding of a suspect vessel. Taiping island, also known as Itu Aba, is the largest in the disputed Spratly archipelago, which is also claimed by China, the Philippines and Vietnam. Ocean Affairs Council Minister Kuan Bi-ling visited Taiping on Tuesday, the Coast Guard Administration said in a statement on Wednesday. Kuan is the first Taiwanese government minister to set foot on the island in seven years, Taiwan's Central News Agency reported. Taiwan's coast guard held

exercises during Kuan's visit, including armed special forces practice boarding a suspicious cargo ship that had failed to respond to calls. In another drill, coast guard personnel carried out a humanitarian emergency rescue operation. The defense ministry also dispatched a C-130 transport aircraft to join the exercises. To assert its claim on Taiping, Taiwan has installed a solar-powered lighthouse, an airstrip and a pier. The island covers about 0.51 square kilometers (0.19 square miles) and most of its inhabitants work for the coast guard. Taiwan has rejected a 2016 ruling by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, which was brought by the Philippines against China over the South China Sea. The tribunal found China's claims to almost the entire waterway had no legal basis. It also stated that Taiping was legally a "rock" and not entitled to its own exclusive economic zone, undermining Taiwanese claims to waters surrounding the island. Taiwan's government rejected the court's ruling, saying it "severely jeopardized" Taiwan's rights. It said the judgment has no legally binding force since the tribunal did not formally invite Taipei to take part in its proceedings or solicit its views.

- [Nuclear energy is having a global revival 40 years after Chernobyl](#) (2026-04-23 16:10)

THE 1986 Chernobyl disaster fueled global fears about nuclear power and slowed its development in Europe and elsewhere. Four decades later, however, there's a revival around the world, a trend that has been given a big boost by war in the Middle East. Over 400 nuclear reactors are operational in 31 countries, while about 70 more are under construction. Nuclear power accounts for producing about 10 percent of the world's electricity, equivalent to about a quarter of all sources of low-carbon power. Nuclear reactors have seen steady improvements, adding more safety features and making them cheaper to build and operate. While Chernobyl and the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan diminished the appetite for such power sources, it was clear years ago that there probably would be a revival, said Fatih Birol, executive director of the International Energy Agency. With the war in the Middle East, "I am 100-percent sure nuclear is coming back," he added. "It's seen as a secure electricity generation system, and we will see that the comeback of nuclear will be very strong, both in (the) Americas, in Europe and in Asia," Birol told The Associated Press (AP). Nuclear energy reliance stays strong. The United States is the world's largest producer of nuclear power, with 94 operational reactors accounting for about 30 percent of global generation of nuclear electricity. And it is increasing efforts to develop nuclear energy capacity with a goal to quadruple it by 2050. "The world cannot power its industries, meet the demands of artificial intelligence, or secure its energy future without nuclear power," US Undersecretary of State Thomas DiNanno said last month. China operates 61 nuclear reactors and is leading the world in building new units, with nearly 40 under construction with a goal to surpass the US and become the global leader in nuclear capacity. European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen has acknowledged that it was Europe's "strategic mistake" to cut nuclear energy and outlined new initiatives to encourage building power plants. Russia, meanwhile, has taken a strong lead in exporting its nuclear know-how, building 20 reactors worldwide. Chernobyl's Reactor No. 4 exploded on April 26, 1986, while Ukraine was still part of the Soviet Union. The accident contaminated nearby areas and spewed radiation across Europe. Ukraine still relies heavily on nuclear plants

to generate about half of its electricity. Those plants have played a vital role after Russia sent troops into Ukraine in 2022. Moscow's forces have captured Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, and Kyiv accused Russia of a drone attack on the protective containment structure covering the damaged Chernobyl reactor. Japan has restarted 15 reactors after reviewing the lessons of the earthquake and tsunami that damaged the Fukushima plant, and 10 more are in the process of getting approval to restart. South Africa has the only nuclear power plant on the African continent, although Russia is building one in Egypt, and several other African nations are exploring the technology. "The momentum we are seeing today is the result of a growing recognition that reliable, low-carbon electricity will be essential to meet the world's rising energy demand," said Rafael Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency. EU eyes nuclear expansion Europe sought to wean itself off Russian energy after the Ukraine conflict, but its dependence on hydrocarbons was underlined by the war in the Middle East. The European Commission has shifted its perception of nuclear energy and views it as part of clean energy, along with wind and solar power, to achieve climate goals. In 1990, nuclear energy accounted for about a third of Europe's electricity; now it's only about 15 percent, and von der Leyen has acknowledged that its reliance on imported fossil fuels puts it at a disadvantage. "I believe that it was a strategic mistake for Europe to turn its back on a reliable, affordable source of low-emissions power," she said recently. "In the last years, we see a global revival of nuclear energy. And Europe wants to be part of it." The EU is considering the development of Small Modular Reactors. Expected to become operational in the early 2030s, they are seen as cheaper and faster to build and more flexible than traditional reactors. France and a few other EU members, including Sweden and Finland, have spearheaded nuclear power. On the other hand, Germany, Austria and Italy are among the EU members that outlawed its use. In a major policy reversal last year, Belgium repealed a law that demanded the closure of its reactors and extended their lifespan. Spain, meanwhile, still plans to phase out its nuclear capacity and shut down its seven operational reactors between 2027 and 2035. France remains a nuclear powerhouse. With 57 reactors at 19 plants, France relies on nuclear power for nearly 70 percent of its electricity. Successive governments have backed nuclear power as central to France's energy independence, undeterred by the Chernobyl disaster. In 2022, President Emmanuel Macron announced plans to build six new pressurized water reactors, aiming to cut greenhouse gas emissions and support the transition to low-carbon energy. The Covid-19 pandemic, combined with the gas supply crunch triggered by the conflict in Ukraine, "revealed the limits of deploying renewable electricity and Europe's dependence on gas," said Nicolas Goldberg, a partner at Paris-based Columbus Consulting. "France has therefore been reinforced in its strategy of maintaining its existing nuclear plants, which means extending their lifespan as much as possible," he said. Germany stands firm in phasing it out. Decades of anti-nuclear protests in Germany, stoked by past accidents, had pressured successive governments to end using a technology that critics saw as unsafe and unsustainable. Germany switched off its last three nuclear reactors in 2023, the final step in plans that had been drawn up by governments of various political stripes over two decades. A significant nuclear revival in Europe's biggest economy still looks far-fetched, despite recent talk among some in Chancellor Friedrich Merz's center-right bloc about being open to a possible future generation

of small modular reactors. “The decision is irreversible — I regret it, but that’s how it is,” Merz said, noting the plant operators’ “consistent answer was: ‘We are too far along with demolition.’” Russian domestic nuclear expansion Russia has aggressively expanded its nuclear power capacity both domestically and internationally. It has 34 operational reactors, including eight Chernobyl-type RBMK reactors, known as the light water graphite reactors, which account for about a quarter of all nuclear power generation. They have seen extensive modernizations, adding safety features to fix the inherent design flaw that, coupled with human error, triggered the Chernobyl disaster. Key projects under construction include new units at the Kursk, Leningrad and Smolensk sites, a prospective plant in the Far East, and prospective floating nuclear units. Russia also is building 20 reactors in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East, and has signed contracts to launch construction in several other countries. Russia has built the first nuclear reactor for neighboring ally Belarus, which has seen a third of its territory contaminated from the Chernobyl accident.

- [Marcos still against PH rejoining ICC](#) (2026-04-23 16:09)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has not changed his stance to not allow the Philippines to rejoin the International Criminal Court (ICC), Malacañang said Thursday. Palace Press Officer Claire Castro issued the statement after the ICC Appeals Chamber upheld its jurisdiction over former president Rodrigo Duterte. Some groups have urged the government to return to the ICC to strengthen accountability mechanisms and safeguard against abuses. “The President said we are not rejoining the ICC for now,” Castro said during a press conference. She also maintained that the government’s actions were independent of the ICC ruling on the Duterte case. Castro said the move was based on Philippine laws and international obligations through law enforcement channels. “The transfer of former president [Rodrigo] Duterte was not to comply with an ICC order. As we said, this is based on our laws and our relationship with Interpol (International Criminal Police Organization),” she said. Castro also pushed back against remarks by Duterte’s lawyer Nicholas Kaufman, who questioned the Marcos administration’s position on ICC jurisdiction. “Tell Attorney Kaufman not to live in the past,” she said. The Philippines withdrew from the ICC on March 17, 2019, a year after the government revoked its ratification of the Rome Statute, the treaty that established the court. Duterte initiated the withdrawal a year earlier following the ICC prosecutor’s preliminary examination into alleged crimes linked to his administration’s antidrug campaign. Despite the country’s exit, the ICC retained jurisdiction over alleged crimes committed while the Philippines was still a member of the court. Duterte has been in ICC detention in The Hague since his arrest in March 2025, and is facing charges of crimes against humanity for actions tied to the antidrug campaign during his tenure as Davao City mayor and later as president. The ICC tries people accused of the most serious crimes under international law, including genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

- [DILG tightens accountability measures](#) (2026-04-23 16:08)

THE Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said it is intensifying the nationwide monitoring of more than \$57 billion worth of Local Government Support Fund (LGSF) projects. It added that for 2026, the Marcos administration allocated \$57.87 billion for the LGSF to finance priority infrastructure and essential services in local government units (LGUs), particularly in areas where local governments have limited fiscal capacity. At the core of the monitoring framework is the SubayBAYAN portal, an online system that allows LGUs to register and update project status in real time, enabling both government and the public to track progress. This is supported by the Project Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation (PrIME) system, which identifies high-risk projects and flags delays or implementation gaps for immediate intervention. In 2025, the PrIME system assessed 161 projects nationwide. On the ground, local project monitoring committees oversee implementation in LGUs, focusing on compliance with standards, timeliness, and responsiveness to community needs. The DILG has expanded third-party monitoring in partnership with civil society organizations, which has so far tracked 933 infrastructure projects valued at \$5.8 billion. The department said the system is complemented by continuous capacity-building programs for LGUs, aimed at improving planning, execution, and long-term sustainability of local infrastructure. Several completed projects were cited as examples of the program's impact. The DILG said it would continue strengthening oversight mechanisms to ensure timely and effective delivery of LGSF-funded projects, stressing that improved local development contributes to national progress.

- [QC villages urged to cut energy use](#) (2026-04-23 16:07)

(UPDATE) MAYOR Joy Belmonte ordered Thursday all 142 villages of Quezon City to implement strict energy-saving measures to mitigate the effects of the war in the Middle East on fuel prices. Belmonte said the villages are mandated to cut their monthly electricity and fuel consumption by at least 10 percent while ensuring that frontline services remain fast, efficient, and uninterrupted. “The effects of global instability are already being felt at the community level,” Belmonte said. “Concerned barangay authorities in the city must act decisively — reducing energy use while continuing to deliver responsive and reliable services to our people,” the city chief executive stressed. To meet targets, the villages were required to enforce several measures including the use of air conditioning units from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., keeping temperatures at 24 degrees Celsius and switching off non-essential lighting, including a lights-off period from noon to 1 p.m. Village officials were ordered to ensure electricity is turned off in unused spaces, ban personal appliances within city facilities and reduce unnecessary travel, among others. Village officials were also directed to encourage residents to avail of city programs such as the QCity Bus “Libreng Sakay” (free ride) and the QC E-Services Platform. Belmonte also urged businesses and civil society organizations to adopt energy-saving practices. “Private sector partners are likewise encouraged to support food rescue and redistribution efforts and assist in price and supply monitoring under the Quezon City Price Coordinating Council,” she said.

- [Foreigner arrested for assaulting NAIA guard](#) (2026-04-23 16:06)



(UPDATE) A FOREIGNER was arrested for theft and physical assault at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 3, airport security said Wednesday. Initial reports showed that Lockheed Security Agency personnel, in coordination with terminal food outlet staff, reported the suspect to the Philippine National Police Aviation Security Group (Avsegroup) for allegedly refusing to pay his bill. It noted that the store's staff and manager confronted the suspect, who refused to cooperate. During the confrontation, the suspect allegedly turned violent and repeatedly struck a responding security officer, causing injuries. He was later subdued by other responding airport security and immediately brought to NAIA Police Station 3 for investigation, documentation and proper disposition. In another incident, a 27-year-old American was detained by police at NAIA Terminal 1 following unruly behavior. The Avsegroup said that the Taipei-bound man was apprehended "due to disorderly and scandalous actions." The incident occurred in the NAIA departure lobby on April 21, 2026. Police added that the suspect is now in the custody of NAIA Police Station 1 and will undergo inquest proceedings for violation of Article 155 of the Revised Penal Code. Cases of unruly behavior at Philippine airports fall under the jurisdiction of Avsegroup by virtue of the rules of the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines.

- [More charges to be filed against Italian entrepreneur](#) (2026-04-23 16:05)

(UPDATE) THE Department of Justice (DOJ) said it has recommended the filing of additional charges for large-scale illegal recruitment and estafa against London-based Italian entrepreneur Adel En Nouri and several co-accused in connection with an alleged recruitment scam. In a 10-page resolution, the DOJ Office of the Prosecutor in Tanauan City, Batangas, granted a motion for reconsideration filed by complainants Maria Anne Castro and Brian De Chavez, reinstating Adel En Nouri and Mohammed En Nouri as respondents after their earlier exclusion. The complainants initially withdrew the case but later sought their re-inclusion, saying they did not fully understand the legal implications of their earlier move. The respondents also failed to submit a required comment despite a DOJ directive. The DOJ found probable cause that En Nouri conspired with other accused in an illegal recruitment scheme involving Tamber International Placement Agency, which is not licensed by the Department of Migrant Workers. The complainants reportedly paid 160,000 pesos in total based on false job offers. The resolution also recommended estafa charges, citing deliberate misrepresentation that induced the victims to part with their money. The case is separate from earlier proceedings. The Bacoor City Regional Trial Court previously issued arrest warrants for qualified human trafficking on March 4, followed by another warrant on April 10 for serious illegal detention and large-scale illegal recruitment, all non-bailable. The complainants have also sought assistance in pursuing an Interpol red notice against En Nouri for possible international tracking and arrest.

- [Malabon marks 25th cityhood anniversary](#) (2026-04-23 16:04)

MALABON City Mayor Jeannie Sandoval urged residents Thursday to embody the spirit of "bayanihan" (communal unity) amid energy challenges resulting from the war in the Middle East. The mayor issued the call as Malabon celebrates its 25th cityhood anniversary. "As we



celebrate Malabon's 25th Cityhood Anniversary, let me remind that cooperation and volunteerism must prevail upon us in the wake of the economic challenges most of us are experiencing nowadays," Sandoval said in a statement. "The spirit of bayanihan would serve as our strength in order for all of us here in our beloved city to overcome whatever crisis that will come," she added. Sandoval noted that the city remains proactive in ensuring the continuous delivery of basic and direct services while encouraging volunteerism among residents. City Administrator Alex Rosete said Malabon has rolled out several programs under the "Walang Tulugan Serbisyo" caravan for the occasion, including the release of the second tranche of the Malabon Ahon Blue Card financial assistance to 93,000 households and a mega job fair. "We also hold the monthlong Malabon Pasalubong Trade Fair, which promotes products of local micro, small and medium enterprises to boost the local economy," Rosete said. Rosete named other projects such as mobile shower, mobile laundry, mobile water and charging station, first aid and safety training, and distribution of financial assistance and pensions to senior citizens and persons with disabilities. Malabon became a city by virtue of Republic Act 9019, which was authored by former representative Ricky Sandoval, the mayor's husband.

- [Customs agents raid Valenzuela smuggling hub](#) (2026-04-23 16:03)

A SUSPECTED smuggling hub packed with P174 million worth of illicit goods was raided by the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and the Philippine National Police (PNP), the bureau said Thursday. Assistant Commissioner Vincent Philip Maronilla said operatives of the BOC and the PNP raided a warehouse believed to be a distribution point for illegally imported vape products and other contraband based on gathered intelligence. Maronilla said that found inside the warehouse were vape products, machinery, electronic devices, imported medicines, food items, apparel, cosmetics, and LED lighting equipment, suggesting a large-scale, multi-product smuggling operation. Authorities estimated the total value of the seized items at P174,863,576.94. Investigators believe the goods originated from China and were brought into the country without the required import permits, duties, and regulatory clearances. Maronilla said the operations were indicative of sophisticated methods used by smuggling syndicates to evade detection. He noted that unaccounted goods not only undermine legitimate businesses but also deprive the government of revenue. The BOC is coordinating with the National Bureau of Investigation to build cases against the perpetrators. Maronilla said the operation aligns with the order of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to intensify the campaign against smuggling. "What concerns us most is that these products, if they make their way into our markets and homes, may pose serious risks to the health and safety of our people," Customs Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno said.

- [Pasig geriatric facility to widen services](#) (2026-04-23 16:02)

PASIG City has taken over the operations of the Magokoro elderly care facility to expand its services, the city government said Thursday. This comes after the project, supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), completed its one-year pilot implementation. The

200-square-meter care facility is located inside the Pasig City Mega Dialysis Center on Eusebio Avenue in San Miguel. JICA said the initiative showed how Japanese-style, people-centered care could be adapted to the local context. “Through this JICA-supported pilot initiative, Magokoro Pasig has shown how Japanese-style, people-centered care can be thoughtfully adapted to the local context, providing dignity, comfort, and an improved quality of life for senior citizens,” JICA said. Pasig City said its plans for 2026 to 2028 include improving the exterior of the facility, adding more caregivers and conducting home-based caregiving training for the community. JICA Chief Representative Baba Takashi, Infic President Masuda Masatoshi and Pasig City Mayor Vico Sotto met on April 16 to confirm the project’s achievements and the city’s future plans for the program. Infic Inc. is a specialized Japanese company that combines traditional nursing care with advanced technology (CareTech) to support elderly independence.

- [No winners in Super Lotto 6/49, Lotto 6/42 draws for April 23](#) (2026-04-23 14:24)

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 the Super Lotto 6/49 was 11-35-40-01-18-08, with a jackpot prize of P25,000,000.00. There were also no winners in the Lotto 6/42 draw, which had the winning combination 09-23-42-37-24-10 and a jackpot prize of P21,185,563.23

- [Marcos doesn't feel alluded to by Romualdez remarks on flood mess](#) (2026-04-23 14:07)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. does not feel alluded to by former Speaker Martin Romualdez's remarks that command responsibility for the 2025 budget mess and the infrastructure corruption scandal lies with the Executive branch, Malacañang said Thursday. Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said that Marcos himself ordered an investigation into alleged anomalous flood control projects based on command responsibility. “Whatever defense will be made against the possible accusations against former Speaker Romualdez, that is his defense,” Castro said during a press conference. “And if he is saying that the executive has command responsibility, that is precisely why the president gave orders: the matter was not ignored, there was no cover-up, and he initiated an investigation. So that if there are any anomalies and whoever should be held accountable, they must indeed be held accountable,” she added.

- [Kiko Pangilinan: Robredo's refusal to seek 2028 presidency may create a 'leadership vacuum](#) (2026-04-23 13:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Francis Pangilinan expressed concern that Leni Robredo’s refusal to run for president in 2028 could create a “leadership vacuum” that may be difficult for other contenders to fill. In a recent radio interview, Robredo said she intends to seek a second term as mayor of Naga City, adding that she is certain she “will no longer run for any national position.” Pangilinan said it would be best if Robredo reconsiders and “heeds the growing clamor of the people for her to lead the nation’s fight for genuine service and good governance.” “Now more than ever, having witnessed the largest corruption scandal in

Philippine history, our people are crying out for good governance and public accountability,” Pangilinan said. “Now more than ever, all those who believe in meaningful change, honesty, and integrity in our public institutions must come together and sacrifice our time and effort for the sake of a better future for our children,” he added. Meanwhile, former senator Antonio Trillanes IV said on Wednesday that the Magdalo group, where he belongs, would endorse Sen. Risa Hontiveros if she decides to run for higher office in 2028. Trillanes said it would be preferable for Robredo to endorse either Hontiveros or Sen. Bam Aquino should she opt not to seek the presidency, so that her support base could be transferred to them. Hontiveros and Aquino have yet to respond to media queries regarding Trillanes’ statement. Earlier, Pangilinan warned that Robredo’s refusal to join the 2028 presidential race “could lead to disunity among our ranks and the splintering not just of our forces but of all potential allies outside our ranks.” “The net effect will be the fielding of various political parties and groups with their respective presidential bets, further weakening our chances and delivering victory to our adversaries,” Pangilinan wrote on Facebook.

- [De Lima greets Robredo on her birthday](#) (2026-04-23 13:43)

MANILA, Philippines — Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima greeted Naga Mayor Leni Robredo on her birthday. “Beyond leadership, you remain a source of hope, strength, and inspiration to many of us. In these times, as the country faces issues of corruption, your service remind us what accountability, transparency, and integrity truly look like”, de Lima said in a post on social media. The lawmaker also said that “we remain hopeful for your continued leadership and guidance, just as we also wish you and your beautiful family good health, success and happiness.”

- [DMW: 15 Pinoy seafarers onboard Iran-held ships safe](#) (2026-04-23 13:07)

The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) on Thursday said that 15 Filipino seafarers aboard two container ships intercepted by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps are safe and unharmed. In a statement, the DMW said the families of the crew members have been informed of their condition. DMW Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac said the vessels Epaminondas and MSC Francesca were attempting to leave the Strait of Hormuz on Wednesday when they were intercepted by the IRGC. Ten Filipinos were on board the Epaminondas, while five others were aboard the MSC Francesca. “We have been assured that all 15 seafarers are safe and unharmed. We remain in close coordination with their families, the manning agency, and shipowners, and continue to provide updates and support,” Cacdac said.

- [Imee Marcos slams ICC decision to commit former president Rodrigo Duterte to trial](#) (2026-04-23 12:58)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Imee Marcos criticized the decision of the International Criminal Court to confirm charges against former president Rodrigo Duterte and commit him to trial. The ICC’s Pre-Trial Chamber I unanimously confirmed all charges against Duterte, consisting of three counts of crimes against humanity, and ordered that he stand trial before a Trial

Chamber. In a statement issued Thursday, Marcos said the ICC's action "once again raises serious concerns about selectivity and fairness in the exercise of international justice." "It is difficult to ignore the perception that cases are pursued more aggressively against smaller or less influential states, while more powerful nations remain beyond its reach," she said. Marcos also raised concerns about how Duterte was handled domestically. "Equally troubling is the manner by which former President Rodrigo Duterte was dealt with domestically," she added. She warned that "any action that appears to sidestep constitutional safeguards in order to achieve political ends diminishes public trust in our institutions and weakens the rule of law." A known ally of Duterte, Marcos had earlier expressed disappointment over the ICC's assertion of jurisdiction over the case. "This determination disregards the Philippines' sovereign withdrawal from the Rome Statute," she said. In its ruling, Pre-Trial Chamber I said there are substantial grounds to believe Duterte is responsible for crimes against humanity, specifically murder and attempted murder, under the Rome Statute. "These crimes were committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack against a civilian population on the territory of the Republic of the Philippines between November 1, 2011 and March 16, 2019, in the context of the 'war on drugs' campaign," the ICC said. The chamber based its decision on evidence and arguments presented by both the prosecution and defense during the confirmation of charges hearings held from February 23 to 27, as well as documents submitted by victims' families.

- [Duterte to face ICC trial after judges confirm charges](#) (2026-04-23 10:19)

(UPDATE) MANILA, Philippines — The International Criminal Court confirmed charges of crimes against humanity on former president Rodrigo Duterte on Thursday, finding substantial grounds to believe he orchestrated a deadly anti-drugs campaign that killed thousands of civilians. In a 50-page decision, Pre-Trial Chamber I ruled that Duterte, who served as president from 2016 to 2022 and previously as mayor of Davao City, bore individual criminal responsibility for murders and attempted murders committed between November 2011 and March 2019. The chamber confirmed three counts against the 81-year-old former leader, involving at least 78 victims in 49 incidents cited as illustrative examples of a far wider campaign of violence. Prosecutors say the actual scale of victimization included thousands of killings. Duterte is charged under multiple legal theories: as an indirect co-perpetrator who controlled a "common plan" to "neutralize" alleged criminals, and alternatively as having ordered, induced, or aided and abetted the killings. A 'widespread and systematic' attack The court found that Duterte, first as mayor of Davao City and later as president, led a hierarchical network that carried out a "widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population" of the Philippines. As mayor, the court said, Duterte controlled the so-called Davao Death Squad — a combination of police officers and paid hitmen who killed alleged drug pushers, thieves, and other suspected criminals. After becoming president in June 2016, he expanded the operation nationwide through what prosecutors called the "National Network." The chamber concluded that the word "neutralize" as used by Duterte and his associates meant "to kill" — despite defense arguments that it referred to lawful restraint or arrest. Essential contributions Presiding

Judge Iulia Antoanella Motoc, writing for the unanimous three-judge panel, detailed how Duterte made "essential contributions" to the criminal scheme. These included designing the policy, publicly naming targets, providing weapons and resources, offering financial rewards, appointing key personnel, and shielding perpetrators from prosecution. The court cited witness testimony that Duterte personally approved killing operations in Davao City, and that law enforcement officers who failed to kill enough people faced threats and potential death. The chamber noted that Duterte's public speeches contained "clear directives and incitement to kill criminals," including promises to protect and pardon those involved in killings. It rejected defense arguments that official documents containing self-defense language negated criminal intent, finding that such references could not be assessed in isolation from the broader pattern of violence.

**Victim incidents** Among the confirmed incidents cited in the decision:

- Three alleged drug pushers killed in Davao City in 2013
- The November 2016 killings of two men in police custody at Leyte Sub-Provincial Jail
- The July 2017 killings of Ozamiz City Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog Sr. and multiple others at the mayor's residence
- The August 2017 killing of 17-year-old Kian Loyd Delos Santos in Caloocan City
- Two attempted murders of individuals who survived being shot

The chamber found Duterte fit to participate in proceedings despite defense requests for indefinite adjournment based on medical concerns. The former president waived his right to attend the February 2026 confirmation hearing. Duterte was surrendered to the court on March 12, 2025, following a warrant issued March 7, 2025. He has remained in detention, with appeals chambers twice confirming decisions denying his interim release. The court rejected defense arguments that the charges were overboard, finding that given the "scale of criminality" and Duterte's position "at the apex" of the operation, a broader description of charges through illustrative examples was "necessary to cover the extent of [his] alleged criminality."

Duterte now faces trial before an ICC Trial Chamber. The court ordered the registrar to transmit the decision and record of proceedings to the presidency. Duterte will be the first Asian former head of state to face trial at the ICC, which prosecutes individuals for the world's worst crimes such as war crimes and crimes against humanity. The court faces the most difficult time in its 24-year history, with the United States sanctioning key judges and officials after the ICC issued arrest warrants for Israel's leader over the Gaza war. It is unclear whether the 81-year-old Duterte will attend his trial.

**'Smoking gun'** During the confirmation of charges hearing, his defense lawyer Nicholas Kaufman said his client "maintains his innocence absolutely." Kaufman acknowledged that Duterte's speeches were peppered with threats but told judges there was no proven link between his client's rhetoric and the alleged crimes. "There is no smoking gun in this case," Kaufman told the three-judge panel at the ICC. "Not one witness relevant to any of the 49 incidents with which Mr. Rodrigo Duterte is charged will testify that he received a direct order from the former president to go out and kill someone." Kaufman also accused prosecutors of "cherry-picking" the speeches, noting there were several examples of Duterte telling authorities to only act within the law. A lawyer for the victims, Paolina Massidda, said the loved ones of those killed "have waited years for this moment." Addressing the judges directly, Massidda said: "Today, the victims stand before you with the hope that justice long denied may finally be within reach. This court is their last refuge." In a separate procedure, the ICC Appeals Court on Wednesday confirmed the court had jurisdiction on the case, quashing a

challenge from the defense.

- [Philippine Army refutes reported civilian casualties in Negros clash](#) (2026-04-23 08:58)

MANILA, Philippines — The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Thursday rejected claims that among those who were killed in the Toboso, Negros Occidental were “civilians.” “The AFP underscores that the operation was conducted in accordance with established rules of engagement and with full regard for civilian safety,” Col. Francel Padilla, AFP spokesman, said in a statement. “In close coordination with local government units and partner agencies, affected residents were safely evacuated at the height of the encounter and have since returned to their communities. The AFP continues to work hand-in-hand with local authorities to ensure security, stability, and the swift restoration of normalcy,” she added. The PA confirmed that an armed encounter occurred last April 19 in Barangay Salamanca, Toboso, Negros Occidental between troops of the 79th Infantry “Masaligan” Battalion, under the 303rd Infantry Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, and members of the New People’s Army (NPA) in the Northern Negros area. This resulted in the death of 19 members, including some identified leaders operating in the region. The operation was launched based on verified reports from civilians on the presence of armed elements in the area, the PA said. The PA’s statement came amid accusations of the NPA’s Apolinario Gatmaitan Command that only a small number of those killed were armed fighters and that some were civilians. “Among the casualties were local and foreign journalists and human rights advocates who only carried notebooks, cameras, and the grievances of the poor — tools far more threatening to the status quo than any rifle,” the group said. On Wednesday night, the University of the Philippines Diliman University Student Council said student leader Alyssa Alano was among those killed. The Philippine Army countered this claim by asking the supposed civilians on the purpose of their presence in the encounter site. “Ano ang ginagawa ng mga sinasabi nilang journalist, social workers, faculty members, spokesperson ng mga progresibong grupo sa loob ng encounter site na may mga bitbit na baril at nakikipagbarilan sa ating mga sundalo?” Colonel Louie Dema-alas, Philippine Army (PA) spokesman, said in a statement. “Yan ang tanong ko sa kanila,” Dema-ala said. (What were these so-called journalist[s], social workers, faculty members, spokesperson[s] of these progressive groups doing inside an encounter site, holding guns and exchanging fire with government troops? That is my question to them.) Dema-ala cleared that “the AFP did not hunt people — it responded to the community’s own call for protection.”

- [PH confident Co will be brought home, says Palace](#) (2026-04-23 08:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine government is confident that fugitive lawmaker Zaldy Co, one of the central figures in the multibillion-peso flood control scandal, will be brought home, Malacañang said Thursday. Palace Press Officer Claire Castro issued the statement after Justice Secretary Frederick Vida confirmed that he and Chief State Counsel Dennis Chan would fly to Prague on Thursday to discuss with Czech authorities the possible return of Co. “On the part of the Philippines, we are definitely confident. Since other countries are involved, let us just hope that Zaldy Co will be brought back to our country soon,” Castro said during a press



conference. The Department of Justice said it was considering deportation, extradition or invoking the United Nations Convention Against Corruption – to which both the Philippines and the Czech Republic are signatories – as possible means to facilitate Co's return. Co is facing an arrest warrant for alleged malversation of public funds and graft in connection with a P289.5-million anomalous road dike project in Oriental Mindoro.

- [Who believes them, says Teodoro on China claim PH ship dumping garbage in Ayungin Shoal](#) (2026-04-23 06:56)

MANILA, Philippines — Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. on Thursday trashed China's recent accusation that the Philippine Navy ship anchored on Ayungin (Second Thomas) Shoal in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) has been damaging the marine ecosystem by burning garbage and dumping waste into the open sea. Chinese media outlets released a video of what they claim to be the BRP Sierra Madre (LS-57) with crew on board seen burning items on the deck. The video later focused on a supposed Philippine Coast Guard vessel whose crew were caught throwing what seems to be trash into the sea. Chinese daily Chinadaily.com also reported that the "latest incident is not an isolated case" and that "It is yet another exposure of the Philippines' long-term pollution of the ecosystem around Ren'ai Reef" — China's name for Ayungin Shoal. "Maniwala ka naman dyan sa mga 'yan. Eh accuse ng accuse 'yang mga 'yan eh. O kung may accusation sila prebahan nila, bakit lahat ng accusation nila e ayaw nilang prebahan," Teodoro said on the sidelines of the Commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Yultong at the Libingan ng mga Bayani. (They keep accusing. If they have an accusation then prove it, why can't they prove all of their accusations?) "Nung tayo ang nademanda sa arbitral tribunal. Magagaling lang yan sa ganyan, pag oras na kailangang prebahan na nila sa isang patas, patas ha na proceeding na sa ilalim ng internal law ayaw nila," he said. (When we filed a case [against them] at the arbitral tribunal, they were only good at [accusing]. The moment they need to substantiate [their claim] in a fair proceeding, under international law, they don't want to.) Teodoro said he has yet to see the actual video but stressed that it was China who would spread false and deceptive narratives. "I don't know what video they're pushing. Who likes to fake? Who likes to copy?" he said.

- [88% of Filipinos want Sara Duterte to face Senate impeachment trial — survey](#) (2026-04-23 06:45)

MANILA, Philippines — A large majority of Filipinos want Vice President Sara Duterte to face a Senate impeachment trial, with 88 percent saying she should answer allegations in a formal proceeding, according to a survey released Thursday by research firm Tangere. The poll, conducted from April 22 to 23, indicated that respondents viewed a Senate trial not primarily as punishment but as a venue for the vice president to publicly defend herself and address the accusations against her. About 70 percent of those surveyed said Duterte should personally testify and respond to the allegations, while 51 percent want her to present evidence—such as bank records—to clarify financial issues raised against her. The same proportion cited the need to uphold due process, describing the Senate trial as the proper constitutional mechanism for



resolving impeachment complaints. The survey also pointed to expectations that a trial could help restore confidence in government. Around 52 percent said facing the allegations directly could rebuild public trust in the Office of the Vice President, while an equal share said a public trial would ensure transparency. Meanwhile, 44 percent believe a definitive legal process could end ongoing political attacks. Support for a Senate trial was consistent across political affiliations, including Duterte supporters, opposition voters, administration allies, and undecided respondents, the firm said. Tangere chief executive Martin Peñaflor said the findings suggest broad agreement among Filipinos on the need for a formal legal process. “Whether supportive or critical, there is a shared view that the vice president should address the allegations in the Senate and be given the opportunity to defend her integrity,” Peñaflor said. The non-commissioned survey polled 1,200 respondents nationwide using a mobile-based application and stratified random sampling, with a margin of error of  $\pm 2.77$  percent at a 95 percent confidence level.

- [‘All systems go’ for Asean Summit, Palace says](#) (2026-04-23 06:21)

MANILA, Philippines – Malacañang on Thursday maintained it was “all systems go” for the staging of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summit and related Summits this year despite the crisis the nation is facing. In a press briefing, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro gave reassurance that the first high-level meeting, the 48th Asean Leaders Summit and Related Meetings in Cebu on May 7 and 8, is all set. “All systems go. We are ready,” she said in Filipino. Last month, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ordered a recalibration of the Philippines’ hosting of Asean 2026, scaling down non-essential activities “in order to save on expenses and focus on the most important” amid the effects of the war in the Middle East. While smaller engagements would be conducted virtually, the Leaders Summit would be face-to-face in a “very bare-bones” format.

- [Metro Manila air remains polluted—PhilSA](#) (2026-04-23 06:15)

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA) said the air quality in Metro Manila remained polluted as the Navotas Landfill fire continued to deteriorate the air quality. In a statement, PhilSA reported that as of 8:45 a.m. on Thursday, its daily satellite monitoring showed that Metro Manila and surrounding areas were still experiencing elevated levels of air pollution. The agency explained that its satellite images use color indicators to show concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), with darker red hues representing higher levels of pollution. PhilSA noted, however, that its observations were limited to that time alone, as “NO<sub>2</sub> levels generally decrease throughout the day.”

- [Ecologist warns against ‘alarming’ presence of invasive squirrel](#) (2026-04-23 06:10)

MANILA, Philippines — An ecologist warned that the presence of the Finlayson’ s squirrel—an invasive species classified by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)—is alarming, noting that its presence competes with native wildlife. This comes after the DENR warned the public following multiple sightings of the non-native squirrel species across Metro

Manila, noting that its presence is “not promoted.” In an exclusive interview with The Manila Times on Thursday, Von Eric Tagarino of the University of the Philippines Baguio explained why this was a growing threat. “These squirrels are generalist species. They can feed on a variety of food sources. So they're really survivalists in a sense. So they feed on seeds, fruits, crops, and even bird eggs—which can be concerning,” Tagarino said. He added that it directly competed with native species for resources, potentially disrupting local ecosystems.

- [Rep. Romualdez's camp to question 'Hold' order](#) (2026-04-23 04:55)

MANILA, Philippines —A spokesman for Leyte Rep. Martin Romualdez said they will question the Precautionary Hold Departure Order (PHDO) issued to his client by the Sandiganbayan. The anti-graft court issued the order on Wednesday night, saying that the Office of the Ombudsman finds probable cause for the respondent to fly out of the Philippines to evade arrest. The former speaker is being investigated for allegations of plunder, direct bribery and malversation in relation to the flood control scandal. In a statement, lawyer Ade Fajardo said they acknowledged the issuance of the order against his client. “At the outset, we categorically clarify: Rep. Romualdez is in the Philippines and has not left the country. Any report or insinuation that he has fled is false and irresponsible,” Fajardo said. Fajardo said that Romualdez followed the proper process by seeking and securing necessary travel authority, and coordinated in good faith with the Department of Justice and the Bureau of Immigration. Romualdez Fajardo said, was looking for a “brief, long-overdue four-day medical check-up with his attending physician in Singapore,” after his angioplasty surgery. “This is fully consistent with his conduct from the very beginning—one of cooperation, transparency, and respect for legal processes. Unfortunately, this legitimate act has been twisted to create a prejudicial narrative that he intended to flee,” Fajardo said. Fajardo reiterated that his client would “avail of all appropriate legal remedies to question the issuance of this order before the proper forum.” “Rep. Romualdez remains committed to facing these allegations squarely,” Fajardo said.

- [Marcos to heed SC order to comment on petition to disclose health, medical tests](#) (2026-04-23 04:33)

MANILA, Philippines – President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will heed the order of the Supreme Court (SC) to submit his comment on a petition that seeks the disclosure of his medical examination report, Malacañang said on Thursday. The same order was handed down to Executive Secretary Ralph Recto. “If that is the order of the Supreme Court, we will follow. A comment will be made,” Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro said in Filipino in a press briefing. The high tribunal’s order stemmed from the petition of Pantaleon Alvarez, Virgilio Garcia, Juan Raña, and Raymundo Junia against Marcos and Recto. The petition for a writ of mandamus sought to have Marcos submit himself to physical and mental examinations, including a hair follicle drug test. It also requires the chief executive to make public results of the tests, including medical and clinical confirmation of his physical and medical fitness to prove whether or not he is fit to discharge the powers and duties as president. “Soon as there is a comment, we will immediately release it,” Castro said.

- [UP student leader's death in military 'encounter' with NPA rebels in Negros condemned](#) (2026-04-23 04:17)

MANILA, Philippines — Students from the University of the Philippines (UP) in Diliman, Quezon City are in mourning after one of their own was killed in what the military described as an encounter with rebels of the New People's Army (NPA) in Toboso, Negros Occidental last April 19, 2026. The UP Diliman University Student Council confirmed late on Wednesday that the victim was identified as Alyssa Alano, an Education and Research Councilor. "In connection with this, the UP Diliman University Student Council reports that one of those killed was our fellow Iskolar ng Bayan, USC Councilor Alyssa Alano, due to the fascist attack and military repression in Negros," the council said in a statement in Filipino. The council condemned Alano's killing by the Philippine Army's 79th Infantry Battalion against an innocent civilian. "Alyssa lived and studied among our farmer brothers and sisters in Negros to understand their true conditions in the face of land grabbing, exploitation, and militarization," the council said. "As long as the root causes of poverty remain unresolved, there will be more like Alyssa who are willing to study society and fight for a society free from exploitation. The spirit of Alano will never fade among the ranks of Iskolar ng Bayan, who will further strengthen unity to ultimately defeat an oppressive and exploitative social system," they added. Meanwhile, the UP Office of the Student Regent also condemned the death of Alano, who also served as chairman of the UP Diliman division of the League of Filipino Students and led a walkout that was participated by 8,000 students. "Even before this, Alyssa had already made significant contributions in amplifying campaigns against corruption, against the militarization of the university, and for increasing the UP budget. Her commitment to immersing herself in the conditions of farmers reflects the spirit of public service and compassion expected of an Iskolar ng Bayan," the office said.

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- [Pasig takes over JICA-backed elderly care facility, eyes wider services](#) (2026-04-23 03:46)

MANILA, Philippines — Pasig City has taken over the Japan International Cooperation Agency-backed Magokoro elderly care facility after the completion of its one-year pilot implementation, with the local government set to continue and expand services for senior citizens, the local government said Thursday. Magokoro facility is a 200-square-meter care facility located at the Pasig City Mega Dialysis Center on Eusebio Avenue in San Miguel village where activities initiated by JICA, INFIC Inc. showed how Japanese-style, people-centered care could be adapted to the local context. “Through this JICA-supported pilot initiative, Magokoro PASIG has shown how Japanese-style, people-centered care can be thoughtfully adapted to the local context, providing dignity, comfort, and an improved quality of life for senior citizens,” JICA said. Pasig City said its plans for 2026 to 2028 included improving the exterior of the facility, adding more caregivers and conducting home-based caregiving training for the community. JICA Chief Representative Baba Takashi, INFIC President Masuda Masatoshi and Pasig City Mayor Vico Sotto led the project results meeting on April 16, 2026 to confirm the project’s achievements and the city’s future plans for the program. As the project formally transitions to Pasig City, JICA said it expected the initiative to continue growing under stronger local ownership and operational capacity. “With strengthened local ownership and operational capacity, Magokoro PASIG is well-positioned to expand its reach and serve more beneficiaries in the years to come,” JICA said. It added that the initiative was expected to inspire and serve as a model for inclusive, community-based elderly care in the Philippines.

- [Quezon City villages ordered to cut energy use, boost efficiency](#) (2026-04-23 03:39)

MANILA, Philippines – Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte has ordered all 142 villages to implement strict energy-saving measures—aimed at reducing costs, stabilizing supply, and protecting communities from the ripple effects of the ongoing crisis. In a memorandum circular, Belmonte said the villages were mandated to cut their monthly electricity and fuel consumption by at least 10 percent while ensuring that frontline services remained fast, efficient, and uninterrupted. “The effects of global instability are already being felt at the community level,” Belmonte said. “Concerned barangay authorities in the city must act decisively—reducing energy use while continuing to deliver responsive and reliable services to our people,” the city chief executive said. To meet targets, the villages are required to enforce several measures, including the use of air conditioning units from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., keeping temperatures at 24 degrees Celsius and switching off non-essential lighting, including a lights-off period from 12

p.m. –1 p.m. In the same directive, village officials must also make sure that power is turned off in unused spaces, personal appliances are banned within barangay facilities and unnecessary travel, among others, is prohibited. Beyond internal operations, the villages are also directed to help residents lower their own energy costs by maximizing city programs such as the QCity Bus ‘Libreng Sakay’ (free ride) and the QC E-Services Platform, which provide accessible, efficient alternatives for mobility and government transactions. In related development, Belmonte issued an executive order, calling businesses and civil society organizations to adopt similar energy-saving practices and improve fuel efficiency through trip consolidation and smarter operations. “Private sector partners are likewise encouraged to support food rescue and redistribution efforts and assist in price and supply monitoring under the Quezon City Price Coordinating Council,” the city chief executive said. To ensure effective implementation, the city’s Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Department and the Business Permits and Licensing Department will provide guidance and technical support to organizations ready to take part, she added.

- [Philippine airport security busy subduing foreigners for unruly behavior](#) (2026-04-23 02:51)

(UPDATE) MANILA, Philippines — The Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) has been busy these past few days as two foreigners were apprehended separately for unruly behavior. NAIA Terminal 3 security arrested a foreigner on Thursday for striking an officer who responded to a call for help from a food stall where the man bought food and refused to pay for it. The confrontation turned violent when the foreigner repeatedly struck the officer, resulting in injuries. He was later subdued by other responding airport security and immediately brought to NAIA Police Station 3 for investigation, documentation, and proper disposition. Two days before this incident, a 27-year-old American was detained by police at NAIA Terminal 1 after the Taipei-bound passenger drew attention "due to disorderly and scandalous actions," prompting intervention from NAIA Police Station 1. The incident occurred at the NAIA departure lobby on April 21, 2026, causing alarm among other travelers. "Responding officers took the individual into custody, informed him of the nature of his offense, and apprised him of his constitutional rights in a language (English) known to him," the Avsegroup said. Police added that the suspect was now in the custody of NAIA Police Station 1 and would undergo inquest proceedings for violation of Article 155 of the Revised Penal Code also known as "Alarms and Scandals." Unruly behavior at Philippine airports is strictly regulated by the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP), with enforcement actions often handled by the Philippine National Police Aviation Security Group. While official figures for 2026 are not yet finalized, a series of recent arrests highlight a trend of unruly passenger behavior at NAIA. In late January, a 40-year-old American male was arrested at Terminal 3 after causing a scene on a domestic flight from Cebu. Two months later, on March 21, authorities apprehended a 63-year-old man for similar disruptions reported by his fellow travelers.

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- [DOJ files additional criminal charges vs foreign illegal recruiter](#) (2026-04-23 02:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Justice (DOJ) has recommended the filing of additional criminal charges for large-scale illegal recruitment and estafa against London-based Italian entrepreneur Adel En Nouri and several others in connection with an alleged recruitment scam. In a 10-page resolution, the DOJ Office of the Prosecutor in Tanauan City granted a motion for reconsideration filed by complainants Maria Anne Castro and Brian De Chavez, effectively reinstating Adel En Nouri and Mohammed En Nouri as respondents in the case. The complainants initially moved to withdraw the case against the two respondents, prompting their exclusion. However, they later sought their re-inclusion, arguing that they had not fully understood the legal consequences of their withdrawal and only grasped its implications after consulting legal counsel. In a March order, the DOJ directed Adel En Nouri and Mohammed En Nouri to submit their comment on the motion for reconsideration, but they failed to comply. This led the prosecution to reassess the evidence and ultimately include them anew in the criminal complaint. Based on the complaint, the respondents presented themselves as representatives of Tamber International Placement Agency, which records from the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) show is not licensed to recruit workers for overseas employment. It added that Adel En Nouri and Mohammed En Nouri allegedly posed as employers, which directly induced the complainants to engage in the recruitment arrangement. The DOJ also



found probable cause to charge all respondents with estafa, after the complainants reportedly paid P80,000 each, or a total of P160,000, based on what were later determined to be false representations. The case is separate from criminal proceedings filed against Adel En Nouri and others. On March 4, the Regional Trial Court (RTC) of Bacoor City issued an arrest warrant against him and several co-accused for qualified human trafficking under Republic Act 9208, as amended by Republic Act 10364, a non-bailable offense. A second arrest warrant was later issued on April 10 by the same court for serious illegal detention and large-scale illegal recruitment charges, both also non-bailable offenses. The complainants have sought assistance from the Philippine National Police (PNP) in pursuing the issuance of an Interpol red notice against En Nouri, which requests global law enforcement agencies to locate and provisionally arrest a person pending extradition or legal proceedings.

- [Sara says travel plans 'changed' after late issuance of travel authority](#) (2026-04-23 02:41)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte said that her travel plans have "changed" after the Office of the President (OP) issued a travel authority for her on Wednesday night. Executive Secretary Ralph Recto confirmed that the OP issued a travel authority for Duterte from April 23 to May 15, covering several countries including The Netherlands, South Korea, and Germany. In a statement, Duterte thanked the OP but said that her plans "have since changed due to uncertainty whether I will be permitted to depart." She added that a new request would be issued soon and urged the OP to ensure that the "necessary documents be processed and issued promptly, allowing sufficient time for travel preparations rather than only a few hours before the intended departure." She also said that ensuring "the confidentiality and proper handling of sensitive documents would greatly contribute to maintaining effective security arrangements," after an online news released the first travel request.

- [SC intervention sought over 'expanded' House impeach proceedings](#) (2026-04-23 01:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Petitioners who have filed a case before the Supreme Court challenging aspects of the impeachment process against Vice President Sara Duterte raised concerns over the hearing at the House of Representatives on April 22, 2026, saying the proceedings went beyond the original impeachment complaints. In a statement, the petitioners, led by lawyer Israelito Torreon, said what transpired during the justice committee hearing "confirmed" their position before the Supreme Court that the committee had considered materials not originally attached to the impeachment complaints, including post-filing affidavits, Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALNs), Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC)-related documents, and corporate and tax records of entities not cited in the complaints. They described this as a "continuing post-filing expansion" of the case, arguing that impeachment proceedings should remain limited to the allegations and supporting documents as originally filed. The petitioners raised particular concern over the use of SALNs which, they said, were not part of the impeachment complaints and covered periods when Duterte was not yet vice president. They also questioned the presentation of AMLC-related materials covering transactions over several years, including periods outside her current term. According to the



group, impeachment should be confined to acts or omissions committed during the current term of an impeachable official and should not be used to examine previous public positions or unrelated periods. They further criticized the alleged failure to provide the AMLC-related report to the respondent prior to the hearing, saying this deprived her of the opportunity to properly examine and respond. The petitioners also took issue with the public discussion of AMLC-related findings during the hearing, stressing that such reports were not proof of wrongdoing but only investigative leads that required proper validation and a clear financial trail. “An AMLC report is not a conviction,” the statement read, adding that references to large sums and broad timelines without substantiated links risked turning the proceedings into what they described as “theater.” They likewise objected to the presentation of corporate records, including General Information Sheets and tax-related documents of entities they said were not mentioned in any verified impeachment complaint, arguing that the committee was acting beyond its mandate by considering materials not originally pleaded. The group also raised concerns over the testimony of former senator Antonio Trillanes IV, who reportedly submitted an affidavit dated April 21, 2026. They said the affidavit and its contents, including allegations of alleged financial links involving former president Rodrigo Duterte and Vice President Duterte, were not part of the impeachment complaints or their attachments. The petitioners argued that introducing such material during the hearing amounted to a “post-filing evidentiary expansion” and deprived the respondent of proper notice and opportunity to respond. They also questioned the inclusion of allegations linking businessman Sammy Uy, describing parts of the narrative as “inherently implausible” and unsupported by clear factual basis. The statement further warned against what it called attempts to draw associations involving members of the Duterte family without properly pleaded allegations or supporting evidence, saying such approaches risked turning the proceedings into reputational attacks rather than constitutional accountability. The petitioners maintained that impeachment proceedings must be limited to the ultimate facts and supporting materials contained in the complaints, and that introducing new affidavits, documents, or theories during hearings violates constitutional due process requirements. Citing these developments, they reiterated their call for the Supreme Court to issue injunctive relief to restrain what they described as the continued expansion of the proceedings beyond the impeachment complaints. They said the Court’s intervention was necessary to ensure adherence to constitutional limits, due process, and fairness in impeachment proceedings.

- [NLEX enforces rerouting, road closures in Quezon City for Northlink works](#) (2026-04-23 00:41)

MANILA, Philippines — Motorists in Bagbag, Quezon City will have to slow down or take alternate routes from April 22 to April 30 as the North Luzon Expressway enforces traffic restrictions for its Northlink construction works. NLEX Corp. said Class 1 vehicles would be allowed under a stop-and-go scheme until 9:59 p.m. on April 30, while Class 2 and Class 3 vehicles were advised to use alternate routes. From 10 p.m. on April 30 until 5 a.m. on May 4, the affected road section will be fully closed. The advisory covers the Katipunan Kaliwa Street-Lukaria Street stretch and is part of traffic management for the construction of the

NLEX-C5 Northlink Segment 8.2 Section 1A. For motorists from Novaliches heading to Quirino Highway via Gen. Luis Street, all vehicle classes may pass through Gen. Luis Street, turn left to Katipunan Avenue, then left at Berkeley Street toward P. Dela Cruz before proceeding to Quirino Highway. For Class 1 and Class 2 vehicles from Novaliches going to Quirino Highway via Gen. Luis Street, NLEX said they may also turn from Gen. Luis Street to Katipunan Avenue, then right to King Christopher Street toward Quirino Highway. Motorists coming from NLEX and heading to Novaliches were advised to take the Mindanao Avenue exit, turn right onto Mindanao Avenue, make a U-turn after the Tullahan Bridge, then continue along Mindanao Avenue and turn right to Gen. Luis Street toward Novaliches Proper. NLEX said the temporary traffic scheme was meant to give way to the Northlink project.

- [Fewer tropical cyclones forecast up to Oct but most likely to develop into typhoons, super typhoons — Pagasa](#) (2026-04-23 00:26)

MANILA, Philippines – The Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said fewer tropical cyclones would likely occur until October this year but many of them would be typhoons and even super typhoons. Pagasa chief Nathaniel Servando cited the weather agency's monitoring and analysis that showed nine to 17 tropical cyclones may enter the Philippine Area of Responsibility from May until October in 2026. "There would only be fewer number of tropical cyclones based on our forecast especially during the latter of the year but they may develop into typhoons and even super typhoons," Servando told The Manila Times. The El Niño phenomenon - characterized by cooler-than-average sea surface temperatures (SSTs) over the Philippine Sea and warmer-than-average SSTs in the Central and Eastern Equatorial Pacific – will start weak from June to August but could reach moderate to strong levels between September and November, the Pagasa administrator said. "Strong to very strong El Niño is not being ruled out by October until January next year," he added. In the meantime, weather specialist Leanne Loreto said most parts of the archipelago would continue to experience clear but hot and humid weather in the next three days. She said three weather systems – ridge of high pressure area (HPA), easterlies and localized thunderstorms – would prevail, bringing hotter temperatures but isolated downpours in some areas during late afternoon and at night. In particular, the ridge or extension of HPA – opposite of low pressure area – has been extending over the eastern sections of Northern and Central Luzon while easterly winds would likely occur over Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The rest of Luzon will be experiencing partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms owing to the effect of the localized thunderstorms, the Pagasa forecaster said.

- [ICC rejects Duterte jurisdiction appeal](#) (2026-04-22 16:10)

INTERNATIONAL Criminal Court (ICC) judges on Wednesday threw out a challenge against the court's jurisdiction by former president Rodrigo Duterte, removing another obstacle to his trial for crimes against humanity over his bloody war on drugs. The 81-year-old faces three counts of crimes against humanity at the international court based in The Hague over murders

allegedly committed as part of his crackdown on drug users and pushers. The allegations relate to his time as mayor of Davao City between 2013 and 2016, and then as president until March 2019, when the Philippines, upon his orders, withdrew from the ICC. Duterte's defense had argued the court had no jurisdiction over alleged crimes in the Philippines because the country is no longer subject to the Rome Statute, the ICC's founding text. The prosecution countered that the alleged crimes occurred while the Philippines was still a member of the ICC and so judges can rule on Duterte's case. In an initial decision in October, the ICC Pre-Trial Chamber sided with the prosecution, ruling that the investigation into Duterte began before the Philippines' withdrawal. The appeals court threw out the defense team's challenge of that decision and said it failed to demonstrate any error of law in the Pre-Trial Chamber's decision. The court "has rejected all four grounds of appeal," said Presiding Judge Luz del Carmen Ibáñez Carranza. "Having rejected the entire appeal, the appeal chamber considers that the defense request for the immediate and unconditional release of Mr. Duterte is moot," she added. In a separate procedure, judges are weighing whether to confirm the charges against Duterte, the final step before a trial, which would be the first against a former head of state from Asia. That decision is expected to be released by April 28 or earlier. At hearings in February, the prosecution alleged that Duterte was responsible for thousands of deaths during his war on drugs. His defense said there was no "smoking gun" directly linking Duterte's fiery rhetoric and threats against drug users and actual murders. In any case, Duterte is unlikely to appear in court. The court granted his request not to appear for the hearings in February, with his defense saying he was not mentally fit. The only time he has been seen since his arrest and transfer to The Hague was at an initial appearance via videolink, at which he came across as confused and exhausted. He did not appear at Thursday's reading of the decision. Accountability Groups calling for accountability for the victims of the drug war welcomed the ICC ruling. In a statement sent to The Manila Times on Wednesday, a spokesman for the group Duterte Panagutin (Make Duterte Accountable), Joel Vega, said they expected the ruling. "Although we anticipate this ruling, we welcome this definitive development since the Duterte defense lawyers have exploited all opportunities to derail or block a full trial," Vega said. "We now expect the confirmation of charges soon. All these developments are to be expected given the strong evidence that will be presented in court," he added. Vega said his group, which held a protest against Duterte outside the ICC, was heckled by supporters of the former president. He added that Dutch residents in the area were complaining about how the Duterte supporters were obstructing bike lane traffic and posed a danger to pedestrians. The activist, known also for petitioning Dutch authorities to reject the asylum bid of former Duterte spokesman Harry Roque, said Filipinos should also help families of drug war victims. "Looking beyond the ICC, the Filipino people should also exert efforts to support the families of EJK (extrajudicial killing) victims. They are still facing intimidation and political hatred coming from the Duterte camp," Vega said. "Even the ICC judges are not spared from the vicious attacks made online and in person by the DDS crowd. We see this happening today when they heckled our group while we were gathering at the ICC grounds," he added. The Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (Pahra) also welcomed the developments. "By dismissing the final challenge to its authority, the court has cleared the path for a full trial. The ruling reaffirms that

withdrawing from the Rome Statute does not grant immunity for crimes committed during the period of membership,” the group said in a statement. “This decision is a clear warning to Duterte and his accomplices that the era of abusing power is over. They are now under a court where justice is upheld, unlike how they did it to the Filipino people,” Pahra Secretary-General Edgar Cabalitan said. “No technicality will ever erase the blood on their hands. This victory belongs to the orphans and widows who refused to be silenced, proving that the reach of justice is longer than the reach of any tyrant,” Cabalitan added. Tindig Pilipinas co-convenor Kiko Aquino Dee said he has confidence in the process of the ICC. “Eyes now should fall on the Pre-Trial Chamber’s decision on whether there are substantial grounds for the trial to continue, which is also expected within the month,” he said. On the other hand, Sen. Imee Marcos, a Duterte supporter, expressed disappointment over the ICC decision. In a statement on Wednesday, Marcos said, “This determination disregards the Philippines’ sovereign withdrawal from the Rome Statute.” It also undermined “the fundamental principle that domestic institutions must be given primacy where they are able and willing to act,” she said. Meanwhile, PUBLiCUS Asia Inc. said its Pahayag survey showed a majority of Filipino voters favor requiring Philippine courts to review arrest warrants issued by the ICC before they are enforced in the country. The poll found that 60 percent of respondents support a proposed Senate resolution mandating local judicial review of ICC-issued warrants, indicating a preference for domestic due process. Twenty-five percent opposed the measure, while 15 percent said they were unaware of the issue. WITH AFP AND BERNADETTE TAMAYO Support was strongest in North-Central Luzon at 67 percent and in the Visayas at 64 percent. By age group, those ages 40 to 49 posted the highest approval at 71 percent. The proposal also received majority backing across political alignments, with 63 percent support recorded among pro-administration, anti-administration and anti-opposition respondents. By generation, Millennials led with 63 percent support, followed by Generation X at 61 percent. A smaller majority, 54 percent, said the Philippines should rejoin the ICC. Some 28 percent opposed reentry into the tribunal and 18 percent said they lacked sufficient knowledge to decide. Support for rejoining the ICC was highest in the National Capital Region and South Luzon, both at 62 percent. Younger voters drove the pro-ICC sentiment, with 60 percent of respondents ages 18 to 24, and 63 percent of those ages 25 to 29 expressing support. Among generational groups, Generation Z recorded 62 percent approval. Across political groupings, support for reentry was strongest among pro-administration respondents at 73 percent, followed by anti-opposition voters at 60 percent. The survey, conducted from March 21 to 24, covered 1,509 registered voters using purposive sampling from the PureSpectrum research panel and carried a margin of error of  $\pm 3$  percent. Pahayag is the corporate social responsibility initiative of PUBLiCUS Asia Inc., with Vox Opinion Research serving as its commissioned research arm.

- [Court orders Palace to comment on petition seeking drug test for Marcos](#) (2026-04-22 16:09)

THE Supreme Court has required Malacañang to comment on a petition seeking to compel President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to undergo physical and mental examinations, including a hair

follicle drug test, and to disclose the results to the public. Without giving due course to the petition, the Court ordered respondents President Marcos and Executive Secretary Ralph Recto to submit their comment within a non-extendable period of 10 days from receipt of notice. The petition for mandamus, filed on April 15, was lodged by former House speaker Pantaleon Alvarez, retired general Virgilio Garcia, Juan Raña and Raymundo Junia, all acting as registered voters and taxpayers. It also sought to compel the president to undergo medical evaluation and to direct the publication of his medical report, including findings on his physical and mental fitness to discharge the duties of the presidency. The petitioners anchored their arguments on Article VII, Section 12 of the 1987 Constitution, which requires public disclosure of the president's health in cases of serious illness, and Article III, Section 7 on the right of the public to information on matters of public concern. They argued that the president's health condition was a matter of "paramount public concern," citing the declaration of a state of national emergency on March 24, due to surging petroleum prices linked to the conflict in Iran. The petition cited alleged observations during public appearances, including "slurring speech, incoherent statements and apparent general weakness in physical demeanor," as well as unverified reports of possible hospitalization. It also referred to a November 2025 statement attributed to the president's sister, Sen. Imee Marcos, alleging a "long-standing addiction to illegal drugs," which the petitioners said warranted further investigation. The filing acknowledged the president's recent public appearance where he performed brief physical exercises at Malacañang, but the petitioners argued it was insufficient, claiming he appeared "flustered and out of breath." The group contended that the constitutional provision on presidential health disclosure is self-executing and enforceable without legislation, arguing that the president has a ministerial duty to respond to public concerns over his fitness. Citing jurisprudence, the petitioners claimed all requirements for mandamus were present, including a clear legal right, a corresponding ministerial duty and lack of an adequate legal remedy. They also justified bypassing lower courts, arguing that the case involved "transcendental importance" and national security concerns given the president's role in government operations and policy direction.

- [P6B in bank transactions not in VP Sara's SALN](#) (2026-04-22 16:08)

THE Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) on Wednesday said they discovered more than P6 billion in combined bank transactions in the last 20 years for Vice President Sara Duterte and her husband, lawyer Manases Carpio, none of which were reflected in her statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN). The transactions were documented in covered transaction reports and suspicious transaction reports from 2006 to 2026, which have all been transmitted to the House Committee on Justice, said AMLC Executive Director Ronel Buenaventura, during the panel's hearing on impeachment complaints against the vice president. Covered transactions are transactions in cash or other equivalent monetary instrument involving a total amount in excess of P500,000 within one banking day. Suspicious transactions, on the other hand, are those, regardless of the amounts involved, where there is no underlying legal or trade obligation, purpose or economic justification; the client is not properly identified; the amount

involved is not commensurate with the business or financial capacity of the client; is perceived that the client's transaction is structured to avoid being the subject of reporting requirements; any circumstance relating to the transaction which is observed to deviate from the profile of the client or the client's past transactions; or transactions that are in any way related to an unlawful activity or offense. "Yes, there are suspicious transactions and covered transactions in our system, database or record," Buenaventura told the committee. Buenaventura said the council has identified 313 covered transactions and 17 suspicious transactions in Duterte's accounts, and 317 covered transactions and 16 suspicious transactions in those of her husband. The transactions totaled P6.77 billion, broken down into P3.77 billion linked to Duterte's accounts and P2.99 billion to Carpio's. It also identified P791.1 million in transactions that could not be determined based on available records. Buenaventura said the records showed an inflow of P1.83 billion into Duterte's accounts and P2.59 billion into Carpio's, equivalent to P4.43 billion in total deposits. On the outflow side, he said that P1.21 billion was withdrawn from Duterte's accounts and P343.32 million from Carpio's accounts. Buenaventura said his agency found a marked increase in the historical trend of Duterte's bank transactions, which surged from P540,000 in 2005, to P208.15 million in 2007. That was the year she was first elected vice mayor of Davao City, while her father, the former president, was mayor. The bulk of the transactions involved credit memos amounting to P1.41 billion, debit memos at P1.03 billion and fund transfers totaling P521.86 million, followed by time deposit preterminations of P218.74 million and miscellaneous transactions of P209.29 million. Other transactions identified included time deposit placements and payments amounting to P109.15 million each, withdrawals totaling P62.79 million and check deposits worth P48.33 million. Panel member and Manila Rep. Joel Chua said the bank transactions were not reflected in the vice president's SALNs. Bicol Saro Partylist Rep. Terry Ridon also noted that there was a "significant gap" in her financial activity and her declared personal assets after reviewing the yearly transaction figures alongside Duterte's net worth in her SALNs. In earlier testimony, the Office of the Ombudsman confirmed that Duterte declared no cash on hand or bank deposits for six consecutive years from 2019 to 2024, even as her net worth rose more than 10 times to P88.4 million in 2024 from only P7 million in 2007. Akbayan Rep. Jose Manuel Diokno said Duterte should explain the discrepancy between the AMLC report and her SALNs. "For me, it is a smoking gun in at least insofar as probable cause is concerned," Diokno told reporters. ACT Teachers Partylist Rep. Antonio Tinio, meanwhile, said these figures from the AMLC should be "reconciled with the vice president's SALNs and with lawful sources of income. The public deserves clear explanations, supported by documents — not vague assurances." Meanwhile, in his affidavit, former senator Antonio Trillanes IV alleged that the Duterte family received P188 million from alleged drug lord Samuel Uy. In her opening remarks, House Justice Committee chairman and Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro said her panel is the "proper forum" for Vice President Duterte to answer the allegations against her as she did not show up again in her impeachment hearing on Wednesday. In her opening statement, Luistro railed against Duterte's statement that criticized the committee's examination on her academic records revealed by Ramil Madriaga instead of discussing her confidential funds and transactions. However, Luistro said that among the hundreds of pieces of evidence presented



during the hearings, only one was targeted. “The truth is, we are being ghosted and gaslighted. The most important question is where is the money, but the answer that we received was about college grades. And the worst part? This explanation was not being made here, but everywhere else,” Luistro said in Filipino, referring to Duterte’s reaction to testimony that she did not do well in school. Luistro said her committee will evaluate everything, including the testimony of Duterte’s alleged bagman, Ramil Madriaga, documents from the Commission on Audit, National Bureau of Investigation findings and certifications from the Philippine Statistics Authority. “Everything that needs to be faced should be scrutinized and investigated, and those persons who should face questions should take their oath and explain before the committee, because this is the proper forum,” Luistro said. “If there is anything to clarify, the best — and the only — place to do that is here, before this committee, under oath and on record,” she added. She said that their investigation has entered the part where the numbers have to be studied, compared and analyzed. “And numbers, unlike people, do not have motives. Numbers do not lie,” Luistro said. RED MENDOZA

- [Sandiganbayan set to rule on travel ban on Romualdez](#) (2026-04-22 16:07)

THE Sandiganbayan has considered a petition from the Office of the Ombudsman to prevent former speaker Martin Romualdez from leaving the country, and the anti-graft court’s Seventh Division has submitted it for resolution. The Ombudsman’s application for the issuance of a precautionary hold departure order was raffled off Tuesday to the Seventh Division, which heard the case on Wednesday. While there is no case filed in the Sandiganbayan against Romualdez, the congressional representative of Leyte’s first district, the Ombudsman based its application on a complaint-affidavit filed by its Special Panel of Investigators before its Preliminary Investigation, Administrative Adjudication and Monitoring Office against Romualdez and others for plunder. The Ombudsman said the complaints involved “the alleged kickback scheme tied to flood control projects, purportedly masterminded by the respondent, with the total amount of such kickbacks” reaching P56 billion. Mentioned in the application were former lawmaker Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co’s statements in video recordings as well as Orly Guteza’s testimony. Romualdez, who has asked the House to authorize his travel to Singapore for medical reasons, has denied all charges against him. “I have never authorized, instructed or allowed anyone to engage in any conduct that would betray the people or taint my name,” he said. He also reiterated that he never received any kickbacks in any infrastructure project. Romualdez, who is still in the country, said he has been cooperative. “I personally appeared before the proper authorities. I voluntarily submitted my affidavit to the ICI (Independent Commission for Infrastructure). I provided the information and documents asked of me. I did not hide. I did not run. I did not evade scrutiny. I faced it head-on, within the proper channel, because I know there is no evidence that proves I committed plunder, conspiracy to commit plunder or any similar offense, he said, referring to the Independent Commission for Infrastructure that had recommended further investigation of the former speaker’s role. But Sen. Panfilo Lacson said the Senate gave Romualdez the opportunity to refute allegations linking him to the “mangling” of the 2025 budget, but he did not do it. The senator, chairman of the Senate Blue



Ribbon Committee (BRC), said Romualdez had been invited on Nov. 14, 2025 and Jan. 19, 2026 to attend the investigation on the flood control budget scandal. “The Blue Ribbon Committee gave the former speaker at least two chances through official invitations to testify under oath and public scrutiny to what may be his strong argument against allegations of masterminding the ‘mangling beyond recognition’ of the 2025 national budget during the bicameral conference, which he now claims to have been made by only two people — then SP (Senate President) [Francis] Chiz Escudero and ex cong[ressman] and House Appropriations Chairman Zaldy Co,” Lacson wrote on X. The BRC sent the invitations to Romualdez through the office of Speaker Faustino Dy III, in keeping with inter-parliamentary courtesy but Romualdez failed to attend. On Tuesday, Romualdez issued a video message denying involvement in the 2025 budget deliberations. He attributed the budget decisions to Escudero and Co. Romualdez also said that he was not part of the bicameral conference committee or the “small committee” that made changes to the 2025 General Appropriations Bill after it was approved by the Senate and the House of Representatives. The opposition-led August Twenty-One Movement (ATOM) on Wednesday called on Romualdez to name more names if he does not want to “go alone.” In a statement, the group, known for its involvement in the 1986 People Power Revolution, said the Filipino people are done being played. “This is not politics anymore; it is a racket. A system of powerful people protecting each other while the rest of us pay for it, literally and otherwise. Enough with the shows and excuses. We’re fed up,” ATOM said. “Officials on both sides are running the same tired playbook: deny everything, hide behind procedure, weaponize technicalities, hire better if not more lawyers, release carefully worded statements and wait for the public to get tired,” they added. “Meanwhile, billions disappeared into ‘projects’ no one can verify, confidential funds escape audit and communities drown while the people responsible go on television looking offended that anyone would dare ask a question.” The group said Romualdez’s statement is “less like a principled stand and more like a threat dressed up as a warning.” “You promised sworn statements and supporting documents, so deliver them, all of them, unredacted, right now, not in the next press conference. If you truly will not go alone, then name the people who stand with you. Show the approvals, the signatures, the insertions, the decision points, the text messages, the chain of command,” they said. “And accept that accountability doesn’t conveniently stop at your district or your allies — it follows the money wherever it goes, no matter how far it reaches or who needs to be charged. If you meant what you said, then stand by it. If not, then you’re just another politician buying time,” the opposition group added.

- [Tulfo, Poe lead Magic 12 in survey](#) (2026-04-22 16:06)

SEN. Raffy Tulfo and former senator Grace Poe remained on top of the Magic 12 in Tangere’s April 2026 senatorial preference survey. Results of the nationwide poll, conducted from April 1 to 3 among 1,500 respondents, showed Tulfo leading with 44.8 percent, followed by Poe with 40.1 percent and Sen. Loren Legarda with 39.3 percent. The three maintained a clear advantage over other contenders, reflecting continued voter preference for experienced national figures. Despite holding on to the top spot, Tulfo’s rating declined from 49.8 percent in

January, while Poe's dropped from 43.5 percent, indicating that voter preferences are becoming more fragmented as more names gain traction ahead of the 2028 midterm elections. Manila Mayor Isko Moreno Domagoso ranked fourth with 38.2 percent, while Davao City Mayor Sebastian "Baste" Duterte and Davao City First District Rep. Paolo Duterte placed fifth and sixth with 37.9 percent and 36.9 percent, respectively, signaling strong support for local executives and the continued influence of Davao-based candidates. The Duterte brothers' numbers remained largely steady compared to January, suggesting a stable support base. Meanwhile, Education Secretary Sonny Angara and Social Welfare Secretary Rex Gatchalian sustained their earlier ratings at 29.2 percent and 24.8 percent, respectively, pointing to consistent public backing for administration figures. The survey also pointed to a tight contest for the final spots in the winning circle. Broadcaster Ben Tulfo holds 12th place with 24.1 percent but faces close competition from Akbayan Party-list Rep. Chel Diokno (22.3 percent), actor Dingdong Dantes (21.7 percent) and Benhur Abalos (21.3 percent). Tangere Chief Executive Officer Martin Peñaflor said the results reflect an increasingly fluid electoral landscape, with voters beginning to weigh performance and consistency alongside name recall. The noncommissioned survey used a stratified random sampling method and had a margin of error of plus or minus 2.15 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level. Respondents were distributed across major regions, including the National Capital Region, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

- [Opposition urges Robredo to run in '28](#) (2026-04-22 16:05)

MEMBERS of the opposition have renewed their call for former vice president and now Naga City Mayor Leni Robredo to reconsider her decision not to run in the 2028 presidential elections. Sen. Francis Pangilinan, Robredo's running mate in 2022, said while the opposition respects her decision, it disagrees with it, noting there is still time to change her mind. "Given her rising poll numbers, I believe that Leni is in the best position to build the broadest and strongest unity not just amongst the ranks of the Liberal Party and our allies but to include all other groups and personalities outside our allied forces who are also looking to participate in the 2028 Presidential elections," Pangilinan said on Facebook on Tuesday. "With her at the helm going into 2028 and given her current poll numbers that are much higher now than in the run-up to the 2022 Presidential elections, a formidable coalition, far broader and more inclusive than the one we forged in 2022, can be cobbled together and lead us to victory in 2028," he added. The former Liberal Party (LP) chairman said should Robredo refuse to run, it could create a leadership vacuum that cannot be adequately filled by other contenders. This, he said, could lead to disunity and splintering of the opposition and its potential allies. "The net effect will be the fielding of various political parties and groups of their respective Presidential bets, further weakening our chances and delivering victory to our adversaries," Pangilinan said. In a statement in Filipino, the LP echoed Pangilinan's statement. "Although this brings us great sadness, we respect Mayor Leni Robredo's most recent statement regarding the upcoming 2028 elections. Nevertheless, as we continue to follow her achievements in Naga, we sincerely pray that the day will come when she hears the call of our growing number of fellow Filipinos:

that she would once again lead the campaign for honest and effective governance,” it read. “In the face of global crises and widespread revelations of anomalies in our government, many Filipinos are now deeply yearning for leadership that can truly respond to their needs. Now more than ever, we need leadership that serves the people, rather than rulers who act like kings and squander the nation’s wealth. The upcoming election will not only determine the lives and livelihoods of Filipinos; its outcome will also shape the future path that the Philippines will take,” it added. The LP noted that Robredo is enjoying support way beyond her party. “Many young people who are only now becoming politically aware have expressed admiration for her. Numerous personalities and institutions have shown willingness to contribute should she decide to run for president. And the respect and recognition she receives from our partners and allies in the international community are undeniable,” it said. Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima, who chairs the Liberal Party, said the opposition respects Robredo’s wisdom. Tindig Pilipinas co-convenor Kiko Aquino Dee said that should Robredo decide not to run, the opposition has a lot of substitutes with strong showing in last year’s midterm elections. “Because of our strong showing in 2025, the opposition has plenty of strong contenders for 2028 if Mayor Leni’s decision is final. But I also wouldn’t rule out people like Sen. Kiko [Pangilinan] being able to convince her to reconsider,” Dee told The Manila Times on Wednesday. In a radio interview on Tuesday, Robredo ruled out running for a higher position in the 2028 elections, noting she intends to run for another term as Naga City mayor. “I am very sure about myself that I’ll no longer run for any national post,” Robredo said in Bicolano.

- [CFO improves support for migrants in Eastern European countries](#) (2026-04-22 16:04)

THE Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) expanded its migrant support programs in Eastern Europe amid the reported increase in Filipinos marrying nationals of Romania, Bulgaria, and Moldova. Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority and the Department of Foreign Affairs showed that thousands of Filipinos depart annually as marriage migrants. Europe indicated a “growing share of these unions,” the CFO said in a statement on Wednesday. CFO Secretary Dante Ang II recently met Philippine Embassy officials in Bucharest to discuss cooperation and address migrant concerns in Romania, Bulgaria, and Moldova. Philippine Ambassador to Romania Noel Servigon and Consul Iris Caranzo reported a steady increase in Filipino spouses residing in these three countries. They also discussed trafficking and complaints from Filipino student interns in Bulgaria who entered the country under “misclassified” visa categories. The CFO said Ang is committed to enhancing interagency coordination to address the issues raised by the embassy and ensure stronger protection mechanisms for Filipinos in the region. CFO said marriage migration “remains a significant pathway for permanent relocation, particularly among Filipino women.” This is one of the reasons why the CFO needed to strengthen pre-departure orientation and post-arrival support systems. The CFO, mandated under Batas Pambansa 79 to provide guidance to Filipinos leaving the country under family reunification or marriage visas, plays a critical role in processing and registering marriage migrants. Through its pre-departure orientation seminar and guidance and counseling program, the CFO said it

“equips migrants with essential information on cultural adaptation, legal rights, and protection mechanisms abroad.” The CFO works closely with the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking to combat human trafficking through stricter counseling protocols, red-flagging of suspicious cases, and coordination with foreign posts. The embassy shared a directory of Filipino organizations in its jurisdiction to support the CFO’s Linkapil Program, which channels donations from overseas Filipinos to development projects in the Philippines.

- [Go blasts improper use of funds](#) (2026-04-22 16:03)

SEN. Bong Go on Wednesday challenged the government’s economic managers to justify what he described as inconsistent budget priorities. Go’s action comes as the Supreme Court continues oral arguments on the constitutionality of unprogrammed appropriations. The high court, in hearings held on April 21, examined the legality of unprogrammed funds included in the 2024 to 2026 national budgets. The proceedings follow a landmark December ruling that declared unconstitutional the transfer of P60 billion from the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth), reigniting debate over how public funds are allocated and reallocated. Go said the ongoing legal debate highlights the government’s ability to maneuver funds when needed, but he questioned its reluctance to mobilize resources for fuel relief amid rising oil prices. “While lawyers in the Supreme Court are exchanging legal arguments about unprogrammed funds, our drivers and commuters on the road have a simple question: If you found a way to sweep away the billions in PhilHealth funds before, why is it that now, when it comes to fuel relief, the answer always seems to be no funds?” he said in Filipino. The senator argued that if the government can justify the transfer of so-called “excess funds” into unprogrammed appropriations for various projects, similar mechanisms should be used to cushion Filipinos from the impact of the global oil crisis. However, he emphasized that funds belonging to PhilHealth should not be tapped again, stressing the need to protect resources intended for health care.

- [NHMFC declares housing payment moratorium](#) (2026-04-22 16:02)

THE National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. (NHMFC) announced a three-month moratorium on housing loan payments to help mitigate the impact of the Middle East war. Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling made the announcement on Wednesday following a meeting with NHMFC officials led by its president, Renato Tobias. Over 50,000 borrowers will benefit from the moratorium. “In response to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s call for a whole-of-government approach amid the ongoing crisis in the Middle East that is affecting many nations, including our country, we are implementing shelter-related financial relief programs, including that from NHMFC,” Aliling said. NHMFC is one of DHSUD’s attached key shelter agencies. Under the moratorium program, all eligible borrowers will automatically be covered for three months from May 1 to July 31, 2026, without the need to file an application. The relief measure allows borrowers to temporarily suspend their monthly amortization payments without incurring penalties or additional interest. Loan terms will be extended accordingly based on the duration of the

moratorium, according to the NHMFC chief. Aliling, who chairs Pag-IBIG Fund's board of trustees, said that it has also approved a special benefits package for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who were repatriated due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. OFW members may apply to withdraw up to 100 percent of their Pag-IBIG Regular Savings, including their employee share, employer share, and dividends earned, even before its 20-year maturity. They can also withdraw up to 100 percent of their Modified Pag-IBIG II, or MP2 Savings, including returns earned, even before its five-year maturity or avail of a three-month moratorium on Pag-IBIG Housing Loan payments, free from interest and penalties, with the loan term extended by three months, the housing czar said. Records showed that Pag-IBIG Fund has close to 900,000 registered OFW members in the Middle East as of February this year.

- [OWWA, GCash team up for OFW digital payment access](#) (2026-04-22 16:02)

MOBILE payment platform GCash and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) teamed up to enable overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) to pay their membership dues via the app's "Bills Pay" feature. In a statement, GCash said that the partnership came amid the war in the Middle East. Active OWWA membership provides essential OFW support, including emergency repatriation services and reintegration, as well as social benefits like health care, legal assistance, and livelihood programs. OWWA Administrator PY Caunan and GCash Vice President and Head of the Public Sector Cleo Santos signed a memorandum of agreement, formalizing their partnership. "Digitizing the OWWA membership renewal via GCash is a vital component of how our agency is continuously modernizing for the benefit of our countrymen working abroad. ... We're glad to have allies in the private sector to help us continue extending the safety of home and the protections of the government to our migrant workers," Caunan said. OWWA membership payments have been made available through the GCash app since April 16, with transaction fees waived for three months until July 16. "Beyond membership payments, OFWs can also use GCash to send remittances, pay bills in the Philippines, and access savings, credit, insurance, and investment products, helping them manage their finances and stay connected to their families," the statement read. Those who wish to pay their OWWA membership should open their GCash app, tap Bills, select Government, choose the OWWA icon, enter their personal details and reference number, and proceed with the payment. "Through this partnership with OWWA, we have better opportunities to serve OFWs with a range of safe, convenient, and real-time services, from gateways to government programs that ensure continued well-being, to our comprehensive digital financial ecosystem that empowers through true inclusion," Santos said. According to the mobile app's statement, OWWA membership integration into GCash is "the first significant step in a long-term shared commitment to strengthening support systems for OFWs." "GCash looks forward to leveraging digital solutions to complement government services and to ensure that Filipinos remain protected, connected, and supported wherever they are," the app's statement read. ARIC JOHN SY CUA

- [DSWD's Pag-Abot program assists 105 street families](#) (2026-04-22 16:02)

THE Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has extended transitory shelter assistance to 105 beneficiaries under its Pag-Abot Program, targeting families and individuals in street situations (FISS). The initiative aims to help beneficiaries transition from living on the streets to securing safe and decent temporary housing. The program was institutionalized in 2024 through Executive Order 52, strengthening the government's response to homelessness. According to the DSWD, transitory shelter assistance provides temporary but secure housing while beneficiaries work toward long-term stability. Beyond housing, the agency also delivered psychosocial support and community-based interventions to ensure holistic recovery. Beneficiaries were likewise given livelihood assistance, including startup capital and materials for small businesses such as food carts and sari-sari stores. "Providing a safe roof for our beneficiaries is just the very first step, because we also want to ensure they have a sustainable source of income to support their daily needs," Assistant Secretary Irene Dumlao said. "Even if we give them shelter, without a source of daily income, there is a chance they may return to the streets, which is why we also provide livelihood assistance," she added. The DSWD said it continues to monitor beneficiaries to ensure that the interventions lead to long-term economic stability. "We in the DSWD are deeply committed to pulling these families out of poverty and giving them a genuine chance to rebuild their lives in a secure environment, and we hope this becomes a pathway for their recovery," Dumlao said. MOISES CRUZ

- [QC to host 'All aBOARD Expo 2026'](#) (2026-04-22 16:02)

IN partnership with the Gaming Library, Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte announced on Wednesday that the local government will again host the "All aBOARD Expo," which is expected to bring gamers, publishers, partners, and international guests. Set from May 28 to 31, 2026, at the city's M.I.C.E. Center inside the City Hall Complex, the region's largest expo would have its registration open for six pass types, Belmonte said. She said VIP (Very Important Person) passes would be priced from P1,000 to P5,500 with exciting perks, such as collectible items, exclusive freebies, and board games valued at up to P4,000. Tickets for non-city residents would be P150, while "QCitizens" with a valid QC identification card or proof of residency, and children aged 12 and below may enter for free. The expo's highlights include international personalities, exclusive board game content launches, and Asia Championship of Unmatched and Grand Archive Regionals, and major tournaments like Cascadia and Harmonies Catan. The expo would also feature learning sessions, workshops and community activities as well as expanded partnerships, prize pools and publisher showcases, it said. Over 200 exclusive board games would also be released, including local versions of international bestsellers. Belmonte said that the launch was part of the city's drive to promote culture, creativity and inclusive entertainment. "Through partnerships such as this, Quezon City continues to be a hub of creativity and global culture. The All aBoard Expo proves that our city can bring together different communities and industries in celebration of learning and shared experiences," she said. City Administrator Michael Alimurung said All aBOARD has become more than a gaming convention but a tradition of togetherness. "Residents and visitors alike are already excited for 2026 because they know it will bring new ways to learn, connect and celebrate community," he



said.CEO Hans Kenner Fernandez of Gaming Library — the country’ s premier board game retailer, publisher, and community hub — noted that last year’ s event was a record-breaking feat. “This year, we aim to break barriers. All aBoard Expo 2026 is much-awaited because it will bring in more international creators, bigger tournaments, and new gaming experiences that Southeast Asia has never seen before,” Fernandez said. “It’ s not just a convention, it’ s the start of a tradition that gamers from all walks of life look forward to every year,” he pointed out.All aBoard Expo 2026 is made possible through the support of the city’ s tourism department, highlighting the local government’ s commitment to cultural innovation, local tourism, and strengthening community ties, the top officials said. Arlie Calalo

- [Immigration Bureau probes Subic Bay resort 'takeover'](#) (2026-04-22 16:01)

BUREAU of Immigration (BI) spokesman Dana Sandoval on Wednesday confirmed the veracity of reports that a group of foreigners tried to take over a private resort facility inside the Subic Bay Freeport Zone.Sandoval said Immigration Commissioner Joel Anthony Viado ordered a comprehensive investigation and verification of the identities, immigration records, and on-ground activities of those involved.Included in the investigation is Timothy Desmond, an American, who was reportedly among those who tried to access the property without proper authority.The incident happened last April 8. “We will not allow foreign nationals to exploit their presence in the country to interfere in domestic affairs or disrupt public order,” Sandoval quoted Viado as saying.The BI chief also directed concerned units to work in close coordination with the National Police Commission, Philippine National Police, and Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority to piece together the full sequence of events, determine accountability, and assess potential security implications.Authorities are digging deeper into the group’ s visa status, travel history, and purpose of stay, with Viado ordering a parallel review to determine whether there are grounds to place the individuals under the immigration watchlist or blacklist.The BI assured the public that it is moving swiftly to safeguard national interest, enforce immigration laws, and ensure that no foreign individual or group undermines public order or sovereignty within Philippine territory.

- [P98M subsidy released to taxi operators, drivers](#) (2026-04-22 16:01)

THE Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) said more than P98 million in fuel subsidies has been distributed to taxi operators and drivers to cushion the impact of the Middle East conflict on fuel prices.LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II said the agency is accelerating aid rollout to other public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers. “Our coordination with transport service entities, including taxi operators, remains continuous. We are closely monitoring the distribution to allow real-time intervention in case of glitches and other concerns,” Mendoza said.The LTFRB said the bulk of the funds has been distributed through its central office in Quezon City, with additional disbursements recorded in the Davao Region, Central Visayas, and Western Visayas.Mendoza said regional directors, particularly in highly urbanized areas, have been directed to coordinate directly with transport service entities to speed up the distribution process. “The funds are available, and our goal is to release them as



quickly as possible so all beneficiaries can receive assistance at the soonest time," he said. The agency said it is due to implement another round of payouts on Friday, April 24, and Saturday, April 25, at the LTFRB and Land Transportation Office central offices in Quezon City. Mendoza said that due to logistical challenges, the agency is intensifying coordination with stakeholders to ensure faster delivery of assistance. He encouraged beneficiaries experiencing difficulties in claiming their subsidies to reach out through LTFRB hotlines and official social media channels.

Franco Jose Baroña

- [Sarmiento takes oath as presidential peace adviser](#) (2026-04-22 15:04)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Interior secretary Mel Senen Sarmiento on Wednesday took his oath as the head of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (Opapru). Sarmiento was sworn in by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in a ceremony in Malacañang. He replaced retired military general Carlito Galvez Jr., who announced his departure from Opapru after eight years last Tuesday. The Opapru leads the government's peace efforts, handling negotiations with insurgent groups and overseeing programs on reconciliation, reintegration, and development in conflict-affected areas, particularly in Mindanao.

- [Magdalo wants to back Risa for president](#) (2026-04-22 14:34)

MANILA, Philippines — The Magdalo group wanted to support senator Risa Hontiveros for president. The group said in Filipino and English in a media interview on Wednesday that "as of now, the one we want to push for president is Senator Risa Hontiveros." They added that she possessed the qualifications "and she really stands up and fights."

- [Court issues precautionary HDO vs. Romualdez](#) (2026-04-22 14:22)

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan Seventh Division issued a precautionary Hold Departure Order (HDO) against former speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez. The Office of the Ombudsman had filed the Verified Ex Parte Application for the Issuance of a Precautionary Hold Departure Order before the Sandiganbayan and it was raffled off on, Tuesday to the said court division. On Wednesday, the court heard the application which was later submitted for resolution. There is no case filed in the Sandiganbayan against Romualdez who is the congressional representative of Leyte's first district. "This Application is anchored on the Complaint-Affidavit" dated Apr. 20, 2026 filed by the Ombudsman's Special Panel of Investigators, as nominal complainant, before the Ombudsman's Preliminary Investigation, Administrative Adjudication and Monitoring Office against, among others, Romualdez for, among others, alleged plunder. The Ombudsman said the complaints involved "the alleged kickback scheme tied to flood control projects, purportedly masterminded by the respondent, with the total amount of such kickbacks reaching approximately PhP56B." Mentioned in the application were former lawmaker Elizaldy Co's statements in video recordings as well as Orly Guteza's testimony. Romualdez has said, "I have never authorized, instructed, or allowed anyone to engage in any conduct that would betray the people or taint my name". He has reiterated that

he never received any alleged kickback in any infrastructure project.

- [Imee Marcos rejects ICC jurisdiction over former president Rodrigo Duterte](#) (2026-04-22 14:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Imee Marcos expressed disappointed with the decision of the International Criminal Court (ICC) asserting jurisdiction over the case of former president Rodrigo Duterte. In a statement on Wednesday, Marcos said, "This determination disregards the Philippines' sovereign withdrawal from the Rome Statute." "It also undermined the "fundamental principle that domestic institutions must be given primacy where they are able and willing to act," she said. "At its core, this development raises serious concerns about the inviolate respect for national sovereignty and the proper limits of international jurisdiction," said Marcos, a Duterte ally. "Justice must be pursued in a manner consistent with our Constitution, our laws, and the integrity of our own judicial processes," she added.

- [No winners in Grand Lotto 6/55, Mega Lotto 6/45 draws for April 22](#) (2026-04-22 14:10)

There were no winners in the Grand Lotto 6/55 and Mega Lotto 6/45 draws on Wednesday night, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said. The winning combination for the Grand Lotto 6/55 was 30-43-51-44-46-32, with a jackpot prize of P62,292,600.08. There were also no winners in the Mega Lotto 6/45 draw, which had the winning combination 10-37-11-43-18-15 and a jackpot prize of P37,882,594.88

- [JV Ejercito: Dismissal of ethics complaint vs Dela Rosa for continued absence depends on panel members](#) (2026-04-22 14:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The ethics complaint against Sen. Ronald Dela Rosa for his continued absence in the Senate may be dismissed if he gives up his salary and allowances, Sen. JV Ejercito said on Wednesday. A civil society group led by former Finance undersecretary Cielo Magno filed a complaint against Dela Rosa for his failure to perform his duties since November 2025. Ejercito, Senate Committee on Ethics and Privileges chairman, on Tuesday appealed to Dela Rosa to give up his salary and allowances, citing the "no work, no pay" rule imposed on Filipino workers. But the senator said the decision to dismiss the complaint against Dela Rosa still depends on the panel members. The panel is composed of Sen. Francis Pangilinan (vice chairman) and members Senators Erwin Tulfo, Bong Go, Rodante Marcoleta and Imee Marcos, and Risa Hontiveros. "I'm just a facilitator. It would be the [committee] members who must decide [on the matter] because that is the basis of the complaint," Ejercito said in a chance interview. "It might be a basis for the dismissal [of the ethics case against him] because if he will not accept his salary and allowances there is no more basis for the complaint," he added. Dela Rosa has shunned the public and ceased going to the Senate since November 2025 after the reported issuance of a warrant of arrest by the International Criminal Court against him. Dela Rosa had been identified as co-conspirator of former president Rodrigo Duterte, now detained at The Hague, Netherlands to face crimes against humanity in relation to his bloody war on drugs.

- [7 cadets, 2 police officers face criminal raps over PNPA hazing](#) (2026-04-22 13:29)

MANILA, Philippines — Seven cadets and two police officers are facing charges for violation of Republic Act 11053 or the Anti-hazing law in connection with the April 3 hazing incident within the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA), the PNP said on Thursday. The accused cadets include five third class cadets and two second class cadets including a police major and a police senior master sergeant. The PNP identified the following cadets and police officers as: Cadet 3rd Class Harold Locop HejeCadet 3rd Class Lance Elroy Guinitaran GayramonCadet 3rd Class Mhicco Legarda EscalanteCadet 3rd Class Renz Matthew Abuhan CutabCadet 3rd Class Renald Perfecto BrunioCadet 2nd Class James Baldazan Bandao Cadet 2nd Class Christopher Fernandez DayagTactical Officer of the Day Police Major Mark Anthony T. CailingTactical Police Non-Commission Officer Police Senior Master Sergeant Silverio M. Dolorfino Jr.Maranan said the case has now been filed before the Imus Provincial Prosecutor's Office. Administratively, he is set to sign the recommendation of the Tactics group of terminating the cadetship of the seven cadets and dismissing them from the program. According to Maranan, the seven cadets were directly involved in the hazing activity whereas the two police officers were charged because of command responsibility. "When it [hazing] happens to the training institution, there is also a responsibility of the direct supervisors who are on duty, that they are in charge of supervising personally and directly to the cadets or to the trainees," Maranan told reporters in a press briefing at the PNPA. Investigation is still ongoing in terms of the administrative lapses of the two police officers but initial probe suggests "there was no one in the area who supposedly should be supervising. They were absent," Maranan said.

- [Groups welcome ICC ruling](#) (2026-04-22 13:12)

MANILA, Philippines — Filipino groups calling for accountability over the victims of the drug war of former president Rodrigo Duterte welcomed the ruling of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Appeals Chamber rejecting all four appeals filed by the defense team. In a statement sent to The Manila Times on Wednesday, Duterte Panagutin spokesman Joel Vega said the group had anticipated the ruling. "Although we expected this outcome, we welcome this definitive development since Duterte's defense lawyers have already exhausted all avenues to derail or block a full trial," Vega said. "We now expect the confirmation of charges soon. These developments are consistent with the strength of the evidence that will be presented in court," he added. Vega also said their group was heckled by Duterte supporters. "Our group was heckled by Duterte supporters who gathered even though their permit was not yet in effect for another hour. We are documenting these incidents and will consider filing appropriate complaints against the DDS to put a stop to their disruptive activities near the detention center. Dutch residents have already complained that these gatherings obstruct bike lanes and pose a danger to pedestrians," he said. "The Dutch police ordered the DDS supporters to leave and return only at their designated time," Vega added. The activist—also known for petitioning Dutch authorities to reject the asylum bid of former Duterte spokesman Harry Roque—urged Filipinos to support families of drug war victims. "Beyond the ICC proceedings, the Filipino people must continue to support the families of extrajudicial killing (EJK) victims. They still face

intimidation and political hostility from the Duterte camp,” Vega said. “Even ICC judges have not been spared from vicious attacks online and in person by DDS supporters. We witnessed this firsthand when they heckled our group at the ICC grounds,” he added. The Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (Pahra) also welcomed the development. “By dismissing the final challenge to its authority, the Court has cleared the path for a full trial. The ruling reaffirms that withdrawing from the Rome Statute does not grant immunity for crimes committed during the period of membership,” the group said. “This decision sends a clear message to Duterte and his accomplices that the era of abusing power is over. They are now subject to a court where justice is upheld—unlike what many Filipinos experienced under their rule,” said Pahra Secretary-General Edgar Cabalitan. “No technicality will erase the blood on their hands. This victory belongs to the orphans and widows who refused to be silenced, proving that justice can outlast any tyrant,” Cabalitan added. Meanwhile, Tindig Pilipinas co-convenor Kiko Aquino Dee expressed confidence in the ICC process. “Attention should now turn to the pre-trial chamber’s decision on whether there are substantial grounds for the trial to proceed, which is expected within the month,” he told The Manila Times in a Messenger chat.

- [2 injured in another hazing incident at Philippine National Police Academy](#) (2026-04-22 13:07)

MANILA, Philippines — Barely a month after the hazing at the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) where over 20 senior cadets were injured, two more were victimized in another incident where fraternity members subjected their neophytes to physical abuse. In a press conference on Wednesday, BGen. Redrico Maranan, PNPA acting director, said the incident was discovered on April 19, 2026 following a regular body check. This time, the two cadets sustained bruises on their feet after allegedly being struck by two upperclassmen. “Nasabi ng dalawang cadet na it was due to a stick used by their two upperclassmen,” Maranan told reporters. (The two cadets said [their bruises] were due to a stick used by their two upperclassmen). Maranan said the two cadets involved were now under police custody at the Silang Municipal Station.

- [AFP names Air Force general as new vice chief of staff](#) (2026-04-22 12:42)

MANILA, Philippines — The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has appointed Lt. Gen. Rommel Roldan of the Philippine Air Force as its new vice chief of staff during a joint ceremony, which also marked the promotion of senior officers. Vice Adm. Alan Javier and BGen. Phillipp Alvarez Jr. likewise donned their new ranks during the ceremony on April 20, 2026, presided over by Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr., AFP chief of staff. Prior to his appointment, Roldan served as AFP deputy chief of staff where he played a key role in advancing the military’s strategic and operational initiatives. Roldan was then appointed acting vice chief of staff, the second-highest ranking post in the military, last March 11. Javier is set to continue serving as chief naval staff of the Philippine Navy while Alvarez remains commander of the AFP Counter-Intelligence Group. “The event highlighted the AFP’s enduring tradition of recognizing merit, dedication,

and leadership among its officers. These milestones reflect the institution’ s continuous effort to strengthen its leadership foundation as it advances its vision of building a Strong AFP for a Strong Philippines,” the AFP said in a statement.

- [Govt allows Sara to travel to Europe, South Korea](#) (2026-04-22 12:37)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang has authorized Vice President Sara Duterte to travel to at least five countries, Executive Secretary Ralph Recto confirmed Wednesday. In a text message, Recto said that Duterte would go to The Netherlands, South Korea, Belgium, Germany, and the United Kingdom from April 23 to May 15. "Yes, she requested for travel authority to visit those countries from April 23 to May 15," Recto said. Based on Duterte’ s request, her 22-day foreign travel will be made "while on leave of absence, at no cost to the government." The vice president's departure from the country comes while the House of Representatives Committee on Justice is in the middle of hearing the impeachment complaints filed against her.

- [Pagasa raises El Niño Alert](#) (2026-04-22 10:49)

MANILA, Philippines – The Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) raised the El Niño Alert on Wednesday, saying it has a strong chance of developing in the third quarter of 2026. Pagasa Administrator Nathaniel Servando told a press conference that the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)-Neutral currently prevails over the Tropical Pacific. "However, most climate models combined with expert judgements suggest 79 percent chance of El Niño emerging in June-July-August 2026 season and is likely to persist until early 2027," the Pagasa head told reporters. "With this development, Pagasa’ s ENSO Alert and Warning System is now raised to El Niño Alert," Servando said. Characterized by cooler-than-average sea surface temperatures (SSTs) over the Philippine Sea and warmer-than-average SSTs in the Central and Eastern Equatorial Pacific (CEEP), El Niño is a warm phase of ENSO, according to the national weather bureau. Ana Solis, Pagasa’ s Climate Monitoring and Prediction Section head, said during the same press briefing that when conditions were favorable for the development of El Niño, with a forecast probability of 70 percent or more within the next two to three months, an alert is issued. "During an El Niño event, there is an increased possibility of drier-than-usual conditions, which can lead to negative impacts such as droughts and dry spells in some parts of the country," Solis warned. However, Solis said above-normal rainfall conditions may also be experienced over the western section of the country during the southwest monsoon ( ‘habagat’ ) season which may occur during the third quarter of the year. Marcelino Villafuerte II, deputy administrator for research and development, said the strong impact of the phenomenon would be felt during the first quarter of 2027. Although, Pagasa did not rule it out, Villafuerte said there was still a slim possibility of ‘very strong El Niño’ or super El Niño as what others called it but climate models would only suggest that it could be a moderate to strong phenomenon.

- [SC orders Malacañang to comment on petition seeking Marcos medical, drug tests](#) (2026-04-22 10:04)

MANILA, Philippines — The Supreme Court has directed Malacañang to comment on a petition seeking to compel President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to undergo physical and mental examinations, including a hair follicle drug test, and to disclose the results to the public. Without giving due course to the petition, the Court ordered President Marcos and Executive Secretary Ralph Recto to submit their comment within 10 days from receipt of notice. The petition for mandamus, filed on April 15, 2026 by former speaker Pantaleon Alvarez, retired Gen. Virgilio Garcia, Juan Raña, and Raymundo Junia, asked the High Court to require the President to undergo medical and drug testing and publish the findings on his fitness for office. The petitioners cited constitutional provisions on public disclosure of the President's health and the right to information, arguing that Marcos' physical and mental condition is a matter of public concern, especially amid the state of national emergency declared on March 24, 2026 due to rising fuel prices linked to the Iran conflict. They also pointed to alleged public observations of the President's condition, unverified reports of hospitalization, and past claims regarding possible drug use, while acknowledging but questioning his recent public display of physical activity in Malacañang. The group argued that the Constitution makes health disclosure a ministerial duty and asked the High Court to compel the President to undergo medical evaluation and release a complete clinical report confirming his fitness to govern.

- [ICC Appeals Chamber upholds ruling on jurisdiction over Duterte case, dismisses release bid](#) (2026-04-22 09:56)

MANILA, Philippines — The Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Court (ICC) has dismissed all four grounds of appeal raised by former president Rodrigo Duterte's defense, effectively upholding the tribunal's ruling on its jurisdiction over the case despite the Philippines' withdrawal from the Rome Statute. With the unanimous rejection of the defense's arguments, the five-judge panel confirmed that the Pre-Trial Chamber did not err in law when it found that ICC proceedings may continue in relation to alleged crimes committed while the Philippines was still a State Party to the treaty. One judge issued a partial dissent on an earlier ground of appeal, but the majority position prevailed on all key issues raised by the defense. As a result of the full dismissal of the appeal, the court also declared moot the defense request for Duterte's immediate and unconditional release. The ruling effectively leaves intact the Pre-Trial Chamber's interpretation of Article 127 of the Rome Statute, which governs the legal effects of a state's withdrawal from the ICC, including whether ongoing proceedings may continue after withdrawal takes effect. In its judgment, the Appeals Chamber rejected the defense argument that the Statute's object and purpose did not allow for investigations to proceed post-withdrawal. It found no error in the lower chamber's reasoning that such interpretation is consistent with the treaty framework designed to balance state sovereignty with accountability for serious crimes. The judges also dismissed claims that the Pre-Trial Chamber improperly relied on policy considerations or political context in its interpretation of the law, saying the analysis remained grounded in treaty interpretation principles under international law. The ICC has been investigating Duterte's anti-drug campaign, which is alleged to have resulted in thousands of killings between 2011 and 2019, spanning his tenure as



mayor of Davao City and later as president. With the Appeals Chamber's decision, the case is now set to proceed within the ICC process following the confirmation that jurisdictional challenges have been conclusively rejected at the appellate level.

- [ICC Appeals Chamber rejects Duterte defense claim on interpretation of withdrawal rule under Rome Statute](#) (2026-04-22 09:34)

MANILA, Philippines — The International Criminal Court (ICC) Appeals Chamber has rejected a key argument raised by former president Rodrigo Duterte's defense, ruling that there was no legal error in the interpretation of provisions governing a state's withdrawal from the Rome Statute. In its judgment, the five-judge panel dismissed the defense's first ground of appeal, which claimed that ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I erred in treating Article 127(2) of the Rome Statute as a special rule overriding Articles 12(2) and 13(c) in cases involving a State Party's withdrawal. The Appeals Chamber said the defense argument focused heavily on the abstract application of the legal principle of *lex specialis*, but stressed that the central issue was whether the lower chamber committed an error in interpreting the statute. "The key issue in this appeal is not how the principle is classified or applied in theory, but whether the Pre-Trial Chamber made a legal error," the chamber said in a summary of its ruling. Judges declined to rule on the broader theoretical arguments raised by the defense, saying these did not affect the outcome of the case. Instead, the Appeals Chamber found that the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute — particularly those governing jurisdiction and withdrawal — must be read together to determine the applicable legal framework. It upheld the Pre-Trial Chamber's interpretation that Article 12(2), which requires a state to be a party to the statute at the time the court exercises jurisdiction, must be considered alongside Article 127, which sets out when a withdrawal takes effect and its legal consequences. "In the view of the Appeals Chamber, the provisions ... read together with Article 127(2), settle the legal regime applicable to situations of a State Party withdrawal," the judges said. The chamber concluded that there was no error in the earlier ruling and unanimously rejected the defense's first ground of appeal.

- [Schools shut in Swedish town after 'threat': officials](#) (2026-04-22 08:46)

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN — Authorities ordered 16 public schools to shut in the central Swedish town of Borlänge on Wednesday after receiving a threat of violence, officials said. Private schools also kept their doors closed after being told of the threat. "The decision is a precautionary measure due to a potential threat of violence against school activities," the Borlänge municipality said in a statement. It listed 16 municipal pre-schools, elementary and secondary schools that were to remain shut for the day. A number of private schools decided independently to close. Police said in a statement they had received tips about "threats directed at schools in Borlänge." "The police have opened a preliminary investigation into serious unlawful threats against a group. No one has been detained, and it is too early to say whether the threat has any substance or not," police said. Borlänge, a town of about 45,000 people, is some 200 kilometres (125 miles) north of Stockholm. Police were to hold a press conference at 11:00 am (0900 GMT). Attacks on schools are relatively rare in Sweden. In February 2025, a



35-year-old gunman killed 10 people at an adult education centre in Orebro -- Sweden's worst mass shooting -- which police said was motivated by the killer's wish to end his life because of financial and psychological woes. In March 2022, an 18-year-old student stabbed two teachers to death at a secondary school in the southern city of Malmo. And in October 2015, three people were killed in a racially motivated attack at a school in the western town of Trollhattan by a sword-wielding assailant who was killed by police.

- [More students from public schools, indigenous communities qualify in UP College entrance exam](#) (2026-04-22 08:30)

MANILA, Philippines – The University of the Philippines (UP)-Diliman on Wednesday announced that out of 147, 437 applicants, some 18, 350 students qualified for admission through the UP College Admission Test (UPCAT) for academic year 2026-2027. UP President Angelo Jimenez also noted that the percentage of qualifiers from public schools has climbed up to 57.1 percent from last year's 55 percent, which he described to be a continuing trend of more qualifiers from the public schools since 2023. Jimenez told a press conference that the successful examinees, including both degree program qualifiers and those on the waitlist, have received notices from the UP Office of Admissions. "They comprise 12.44 percent of the total number of applicants for the coming academic year," he stressed. The premier state university said that UPCAT 2026, which was administered August 2025 in 117 testing centers nationwide, posted a higher number of applicants and qualifiers as compared with last year's 17,996 successful examinees out of 135,236 applicants. Citing the higher number of UPCAT takers this year, Jimenez said it only showed that "more families continue to look to UP as a place where their children's potential can grow." While UP Diliman continues to receive the largest share of qualifiers at 32.4 percent, the top university head said that more than 6,701 or 36.52 percent of this year's qualifiers received admission notices to campuses outside UPD, UP Los Baños, and UP Manila. "This marks an increase from last year's 34.8 percent or over 6,200 students, which reflects continuing efforts to strengthen the entire UP system and to encourage students to consider the full range of academic opportunities across UP's constituent universities," Jimenez said. This year's results also saw more qualifiers coming from more regions and provinces, he pointed out. Qualifiers from indigenous communities, which comprise 439 or 2.4 percent of the total number of qualifiers, also increased by 16 percent from last year. Moreover, UP Diliman said the Cordillera Administrative Region had 78 qualifiers while the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao had 59. "These trends suggest that the steps we have taken to expand and democratize access to quality UP education are beginning to make an impact in meaningful ways," Jimenez said. He reiterated that the share of qualifiers from public schools increased from 55 percent last year to 57.1 percent this year. Three years ago, more qualifiers came from private schools, 56 percent, than from public schools, 44 percent, the university president said. "UP is inching closer to its preferred intake ratio of 60:40 in favor of public schools," he said.

- [AMLC reveals P6B in transactions by Sara, husband](#) (2026-04-22 06:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The Anti-Money Laundering Council said it discovered around P6 billion in covered transaction reports (CTR) and suspicious transaction reports (STR) from both Vice President Sara Duterte and her husband and lawyer Manases Carpio. AMLC Executive Director Ronel Buenaventura told the justice committee at the House of Representatives on Wednesday that the CTRs and STRs and financial intelligence reports of the couple covered 2006 to 2026. Buenaventura said that Duterte's accounts had a total of 371 large transactions and 30 suspicious transactions from Oct. 13, 2006 to Jan. 28, 2026 with amounts reaching as high as around P55 million. Buenaventura testified at the resumption of the hearing on Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment case

- [Sandiganbayan to rule on Ombudsman's application for hold departure order vs Romualdez](#) (2026-04-22 05:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the Ombudsman is waiting for the Sandiganbayan's ruling on its application for a precautionary Hold Departure Order against former speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez. The petition for a Verified Ex Parte Application for the Issuance of a Precautionary Hold Departure Order was raffled off on Tuesday, April 21, to the Sandiganbayan's seventh division. On Wednesday, the court heard the application which was later submitted for resolution. No case has been filed before the Sandiganbayan against Romualdez, representative of Leyte's first district. The application for HDO was based on the complaint-affidavit dated April 20, 2026 filed by the Ombudsman's Special Panel of Investigators, as nominal complainant, before the Ombudsman's Preliminary Investigation, Administrative Adjudication and Monitoring Office against Romualdez for alleged plunder. The Ombudsman said the complaints involved "the alleged kickback scheme tied to flood control projects, purportedly masterminded by the respondent, with the total amount of such kickbacks reaching approximately P56 billion." Mentioned in the application were former lawmaker Elizaldy Co's statements in video recordings as well as Orly Guteza's testimony. Romualdez has denied involvement in anomalous flood control projects. "I have never authorized, instructed, or allowed anyone to engage in any conduct that would betray the people or taint my name," he said, reiterating that he never received any kickback in any infrastructure project. On Tuesday, Romualdez said he would defend himself from allegations of wrongdoing in connection with the flood control mess.

- [AirAsia PH shares summer luggage tips, group seating promo](#) (2026-04-22 05:52)

MANILA, Philippines — AirAsia Philippines issued travel reminders for the summer peak season, highlighting baggage policies and seating arrangements for passengers traveling in groups. The airline advised travelers to manage additional luggage, electronics, and seating preferences in advance to ensure smoother airport operations during the high-traffic period. "To avoid higher last-minute charges, guests are advised to pre-book baggage and add-ons at least two hours before departure via the AirAsia MOVE app or the official website," AirAsia said. The airline allows checked baggage ranging from 20 kilograms to 60 kilograms, with no limit on the number of bags, provided the total weight remains within the purchased allowance. For safety,

no single checked bag may exceed 32 kilograms. For carry-ons, passengers are entitled to two items within the standard seven-kilogram allowance (one cabin bag and one personal item). Those needing extra space may opt for "Xtra Carry-On," which offers up to 14 kilograms for as low as P360 when pre-booked. Fragile items such as glassware and electronics are accepted but must be properly packed, as they are carried at the owner's risk. "For many Filipinos, travel is best shared with family and barkada. With AirAsia's 'Seat Together' option, guests can enjoy up to 50 percent savings compared to booking seats individually," AirAsia said. Passengers in a single booking can select side-by-side seats for a more convenient and connected journey. To book, passengers can go to "Add-ons," select "Pick-a-Seat," toggle "Seat Together" on, and confirm their selection before proceeding to payment.

- [Revilla defense challenges testimony on P92.8M Pandi project, cites double hearsay](#) (2026-04-22 05:49)

MANILA, Philippines — The defense team of former senator Ramon Revilla Jr. questioned prosecution evidence linking him to the P92.8 million Pandi flood control project, arguing that the claim is based on "multiple layers of hearsay." At the center of the dispute is the testimony of Department of Public Works and Highways Planning Service chief engineer Peter Paul Cortez, who told the Sandiganbayan's Third Division that he was informed the late DPWH undersecretary Catalina Cabral directed the inclusion of the project in the 2025 budget amendments and tagged Revilla as its proponent. Revilla's lawyers said Cortez's statement was not based on personal knowledge but on information relayed by unidentified sources, making it "more than double hearsay" and therefore unreliable as evidence. They also stressed that the alleged directive could no longer be verified, as Cabral is dead. During the hearing, Cortez confirmed that the supposed instruction from Cabral was not in writing and was not supported by any memorandum or document. Cortez testified that the Pandi, Bulacan flood control project was not part of the original list submitted by DPWH regional offices but was later inserted through an "errata," or correction sheet, transmitted to the House Committee on Appropriations. While the errata identified Revilla as the project proponent, Cortez acknowledged there was no signature from the former senator and no separate communication showing his endorsement or request for the project. He reiterated that DPWH Programming Division records did not list Revilla as the originator of the proposal, nor did the office receive any formal funding request from him. Cortez explained that the division's function is limited to encoding and processing project entries for evaluation and does not include verifying the identities of listed proponents. He admitted he had no direct dealings with Revilla or his representatives regarding the project. The witness also confirmed the absence of a transmittal sheet or acknowledgment receipt tracing how the project moved from the Office of the Undersecretary to the Programming Division, leaving gaps in the documentary trail. The defense also cited a September 9, 2024 errata letter signed by Public Works Secretary Manuel Bonoan, saying it served as the operative document for the project's inclusion in the national budget and identified DPWH leadership—not any legislator—as proponent. In earlier hearings, Revilla's legal team pointed to what it described as weak documentary evidence and the

absence of direct testimony linking the former senator to the conceptualization or funding of the project.

- [Marcos declares 9 local holidays](#) (2026-04-22 05:39)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. declared special non-working days in various provinces across the country to commemorate their founding anniversaries and local festivities, Malacañang announced Wednesday. Under Proclamation 1215, Marcos declared May 2, Saturday, a special non-working day in the Municipality of Bauan in Batangas for the celebration of the Sublian Festival. The festival is known for its cultural and religious significance, honoring the Holy Cross and Sto. Niño through traditional dance and rituals. The President also issued Proclamation 1216 declaring May 4, Monday, a special non-working day in the Municipality of Taytay in Palawan for the Pasinggatan Festival, which showcases the town's rich history and heritage. Proclamation 1217 declared May 8, Friday, a special non-working day in the municipality of Camiling, Tarlac, to celebrate its annual town fiesta, a longstanding tradition marked by religious activities and community festivities. Under Proclamation 1218, Marcos declared April 21, Tuesday, a special non-working day in Calamba City, Laguna, in celebration of its 25th Cityhood Anniversary. April 30, Thursday, will also be a special non-working day in the Municipality of San Francisco, Quezon Province for its founding anniversary under Proclamation 1219. Marcos also declared April 30, Thursday, a special non-working day in the Municipality of Calatagan, Batangas, through Proclamation 1220, to celebrate its Cultural Day, an event highlighting the town's heritage and local traditions. Furthermore, the President issued Proclamation 1221 declaring May 15, Friday, a special non-working day in the Municipality of Calauan in Laguna for the annual Calauan Pinya Festival, which honors the town's pineapple industry. He also declared the same date a special non-working day in Lucban, Quezon, under Proclamation 1222 for the celebration of the Pahiyas Festival, one of the country's most colorful and well-known harvest festivals. Lastly, Proclamation 1223 designated May 22, Friday, a special non-working day in Gingoog City, Province of Misamis Oriental, for the celebration of the Lubi-Lubi Festival, which showcases the city's agricultural heritage, particularly the coconut, through street dancing and festivities.

- [Majority backs PH court review of ICC arrest warrants — survey](#) (2026-04-22 04:55)

MANILA, Philippines — A majority of Filipino voters favor requiring Philippine courts to review arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) before they are enforced in the country, according to a survey released on Wednesday. The poll found that 60 percent of respondents supported a proposed Senate resolution mandating local judicial review of ICC-issued warrants, indicating a preference for domestic due process. Twenty-five percent opposed the measure, while 15 percent said they were unaware of the issue. Support was strongest in North-Central Luzon at 67 percent and in the Visayas at 64 percent. By age group, those aged 40 to 49 posted the highest approval at 71 percent. The proposal also received majority backing across political alignments, with 63 percent support recorded among pro-administration, anti-administration, and anti-opposition respondents. By generation,

Millennials led with 63 percent support, followed by Generation X at 61 percent. In contrast, public opinion on whether the Philippines should rejoin the ICC was more divided. The survey showed that 54 percent supported reentry into the tribunal, while 28 percent opposed it and 18 percent said they lacked sufficient knowledge to decide. Support for rejoining the ICC was highest in the National Capital Region and South Luzon, both at 62 percent. Younger voters drove the pro-ICC sentiment, with 60 percent of respondents aged 18 to 24 and 63 percent of those aged 25 to 29 expressing support. Among generational groups, Generation Z recorded 62 percent approval. Across political groupings, support for reentry was strongest among pro-administration respondents at 73 percent, followed by anti-opposition voters at 60 percent. The findings indicate a dual public stance: strong backing for asserting Philippine judicial authority over international legal processes, alongside moderate openness to renewed engagement with the ICC. The survey, conducted from March 21 to 24, 2026, covered 1,509 registered voters using purposive sampling from the PureSpectrum research panel and carried a margin of error of  $\pm 3$  percent. Pahayag is the corporate social responsibility initiative of PUBLiCUS Asia Inc., with Vox Opinion Research serving as its commissioned research arm.

- [3-month payment moratorium set for over 50K Pag-IBIG housing beneficiaries](#)  
(2026-04-22 04:48)

MANILA, Philippines – Over 50,000 beneficiaries under the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC) stand to enjoy the three-month moratorium it set on housing payments to help mitigate the impact of the Middle East war. Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling made the announcement on Wednesday following his meeting with NHMFC officials led by its president, Renato Tobias. “In response to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s call for a whole-of-government approach amid the ongoing crisis in the Middle East that is affecting many including our country, we are now implementing shelter-related financial relief programs, including that from NHMFC,” Aliling said. NHMFC is one of DHSUD’s attached key shelter agencies. Under the NHMFC moratorium program, all eligible borrowers nationwide will automatically be covered for a three-month period from May 1 to July 31, 2026, without the need to file an application. The DHSUD reiterated that over 50,000 member-beneficiaries could avail of the moratorium. The relief measure allows borrowers to temporarily suspend their monthly amortization payments without incurring penalties or additional interest. Loan terms will be correspondingly extended based on the duration of the moratorium, according to the NHMFC chief. Complementing this initiative, Aliling, who heads Pag-IBIG Fund’s board of trustees, said that it has also approved a special benefits package for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) who were repatriated due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. Under the benefits package, qualified OFW members may apply to withdraw up to 100 percent of their Pag-IBIG Regular Savings, including their employee share, employer share, and dividends earned, even before its 20-year maturity. They can also withdraw up to 100 percent of their Modified Pag-IBIG II or MP2 Savings, inclusive of returns earned, even before its five-year maturity or avail of a three-month moratorium on Pag-IBIG Housing Loan payments, free from interest and penalties, with the loan term extended by three

months, the housing czar said. Records showed that Pag-IBIG Fund has close to 900,000 registered OFW members in the Middle East as of February this year. The DHSUD chief stressed that the combined interventions from NHMFC and Pag-IBIG Fund form part of a broader strategy to safeguard Filipino families from the economic pressures brought about by the energy crisis, while also supporting vulnerable sectors such as repatriated OFWs.

- [3-month payment moratorium set for over 50K NHMFC housing beneficiaries](#) (2026-04-22 04:48)

MANILA, Philippines – Over 50, 000 beneficiaries under the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC) stand to enjoy the three-month moratorium it set on housing payments to help mitigate the impact of the Middle East war. Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling made the announcement on Wednesday following his meeting with NHMFC officials led by its president, Renato Tobias. “In response to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s call for a whole-of-government approach amid the ongoing crisis in the Middle East that is affecting many including our country, we are now implementing shelter-related financial relief programs, including that from NHMFC,” Aliling said. NHMFC is one of DHSUD’s attached key shelter agencies. Under the NHMFC moratorium program, all eligible borrowers nationwide will automatically be covered for a three-month period from May 1 to July 31, 2026, without the need to file an application. The DHSUD reiterated that over 50,000 member-beneficiaries could avail of the moratorium. The relief measure allows borrowers to temporarily suspend their monthly amortization payments without incurring penalties or additional interest. Loan terms will be correspondingly extended based on the duration of the moratorium, according to the NHMFC chief. Complementing this initiative, Aliling, who heads Pag-IBIG Fund’s board of trustees, said that it has also approved a special benefits package for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) who were repatriated due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. Under the benefits package, qualified OFW members may apply to withdraw up to 100 percent of their Pag-IBIG Regular Savings, including their employee share, employer share, and dividends earned, even before its 20-year maturity. They can also withdraw up to 100 percent of their Modified Pag-IBIG II or MP2 Savings, inclusive of returns earned, even before its five-year maturity or avail of a three-month moratorium on Pag-IBIG Housing Loan payments, free from interest and penalties, with the loan term extended by three months, the housing czar said. Records showed that Pag-IBIG Fund has close to 900,000 registered OFW members in the Middle East as of February this year. The DHSUD chief stressed that the combined interventions from NHMFC and Pag-IBIG Fund form part of a broader strategy to safeguard Filipino families from the economic pressures brought about by the energy crisis, while also supporting vulnerable sectors such as repatriated OFWs.

- [Tulfo, Poe lead Tangere April 2026 senatorial survey as race for ‘Magic 12’ tightens](#) (2026-04-22 03:59)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Raffy Tulfo and former senator Grace Poe remained the top choices of voters in Tangere’s April 2026 senatorial preference survey, even as competition for the



final slots in the so-called “Magic 12” intensified. Results of the nationwide poll, conducted from April 1 to 3 among 1,500 respondents, showed Tulfo leading with 44.8 percent, followed by Poe with 40.1 percent and Sen. Loren Legarda with 39.3 percent. The three maintained a clear advantage over other contenders, reflecting continued voter preference for experienced national figures. Despite holding on to the top spot, Tulfo’s rating declined from 49.8 percent in January, while Poe’s dropped from 43.5 percent, indicating that voter preferences are becoming more fragmented as more names gain traction ahead of the 2028 midterm elections. Manila Mayor Isko Moreno ranked fourth with 38.2 percent, while Davao City Mayor Sebastian “Baste” Duterte and Davao City First District Rep. Paolo Duterte placed fifth and sixth with 37.9 percent and 36.9 percent, respectively, signaling strong support for local executives and the continued influence of Davao-based candidates. The Duterte brothers’ numbers remained largely steady compared to January, suggesting a stable support base. Meanwhile, Education Secretary Sonny Angara and social Welfare Secretary Rex Gatchalian maintained their ratings at 29.2 percent and 24.8 percent, respectively, pointing to consistent public backing for administration figures. The survey also pointed to a tight contest for the final spots in the winning circle. Broadcaster Ben Tulfo currently held 12th place with 24.1 percent but faced close competition from Akbayan Party-list Rep. Chel Diokno (22.3 percent), actor Dingdong Dantes (21.7 percent), and Benhur Abalos (21.3 percent). Tangere Chief Executive Officer Martin Peñaflor said the results reflected an increasingly fluid electoral landscape, with voters beginning to weigh performance and consistency alongside name recall. The non-commissioned survey used a stratified random sampling method and had a margin of error of  $\pm 2.15$  percent at a 95 percent confidence level. Respondents were distributed across major regions, including the National Capital Region, Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

• [Justice panel 'proper forum' for Sara to answer charges, says lawmaker](#) (2026-04-22 03:55)

MANILA, Philippines — Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro reiterated that her panel was the “proper forum” for Vice President Sara Duterte to answer the allegations against her as she did not show up in her impeachment hearing on Wednesday. In her opening statement, the chairman of the House justice committee railed against Duterte’s statement that criticized the examination on her academic records as revealed by Ramil Madriaga instead of discussing her confidential funds and transactions. “I completed my studies on my own terms. I placed a higher premium on living a well-rounded life rather than pursuing academic excellence. I never asked any professor for special accommodation for my grades because the bare minimum was easy enough to meet. I was never the subject of any complaint for rudeness or violence against other students at SSC-R College of Law,” Duterte said. SSC-R is San Sebastian College-Recoletos. However, Luistro said that among the hundreds of pieces of evidence presented during the hearings, only one was targeted. “Sa totoo lang, na-ghost na nga tayo, tila gina-gaslight pa tayo. Ang mas mahalagang tanong ay kung nasaan ang pera, ngunit ang sagot sa atin ay tungkol sa grado sa kolehiyo (In fact, we are being ghosted and gaslighted. The most important question is where is the money, but the answer that we received is about college grades). And the worst part? This explanation is not being made here, but everywhere else,”



Luistro said. She reiterated that her committee would evaluate everything, from Madriaga's testimony, documents from the Commission on Audit, National Bureau of Investigation findings, and certifications from the Philippine Statistics Authority. "Lahat ng ito ay kailangang iharap dito, suriin dito, at timbangin dito. Pero dapat dito. Humarap ang kailangang humarap, manumpa at magpaliwanag. Dito sa Komiteng ito. (Everything that needs to be faced should be scrutinized and investigated, and those persons who should face questions should take their oath and explain before the committee) Because this is the proper forum," Luistro said. "If there is anything to clarify, the best—and the only—place to do that is here, before this Committee, under oath, and on record," she added. The committee has resumed the impeachment hearings of Duterte to focus on her alleged unexplained wealth, which is covered in one of the articles of impeachment against her.

- [Opposition calls for Robredo to run in 2028](#) (2026-04-22 01:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Members of the opposition are urging former vice president and Naga City Mayor Leni Robredo to reconsider her decision not to seek a national post in 2028. Sen. Francis Pangilinan, Robredo's running mate in 2022, said while the opposition respected, but disagreed with her decision, there was still time to change her mind. "Given her rising poll numbers, I believe that Leni is in the best position to build the broadest and strongest unity not just amongst the ranks of the Liberal Party and our allies but to include all other groups and personalities outside our allied forces who are also looking to participating in the 2028 Presidential elections," he wrote in a Facebook post late on Tuesday. "With her at the helm going into 2028 and given her current poll numbers that are much higher now than in the run up to the 2022 presidential elections, a formidable coalition, far broader and more inclusive than the one we forged in 2022, can be cobbled together and lead us to victory in 2028," Pangilinan added. Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima, who is currently Liberal Party chairman, said the party respected Robredo's wisdom. "We fully understand what VP/Mayor Leni wants to accomplish for Naga and our fellow Bicolanos... but like many of us, including myself, she's still the most winnable among the possible opposition candidates," she said in a Facebook and X post late on Tuesday. Tindig Pilipinas co-convenor Kiko Aquino Dee also agrees with Pangilinan and De Lima, citing the opposition's strong showing in last year's midterm elections. "Because of our strong showing in 2025, the opposition has plenty of strong contenders for 2028 if Mayor Leni's decision is final. But I also wouldn't rule out people like Sen. Kiko [Pangilinan] being able to convince her to reconsider," Dee told The Manila Times in a Messenger chat on Wednesday. In a radio interview on Tuesday, Robredo ruled out running for a national post in the 2028, instead choosing to run for reelection as mayor of Naga City.

- [Sara's 'unexplained wealth' faces scrutiny as House panel resumes impeach hearing](#) (2026-04-22 01:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives is set to resume the hearings on the impeachment case against Vice President Sara Duterte today, Wednesday, to focus on her alleged unexplained wealth, which is covered in one of the charges. For this hearing, the justice

committee has summoned former senator Antonio Trillanes IV, Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla, and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Eli Remolona Jr., who sits as the chairman of the Anti-Money Laundering Council, as well as officials from the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Securities and Exchange Commission. The hearing hopes to determine whether Duterte and her husband and lawyer Manases Carpio had accumulated unexplained wealth based on Duterte's statement of assets, liabilities, and net worth. Several lawmakers have pressed Duterte to attend the hearings to explain her side, but the vice president has opted not to attend as she stressed that impeachment was not one of her priorities right now. Her defense team and several of her legal allies have a pending motion at the Supreme Court that stops the proceedings.

- [Hot, humid weather to prevail over most of PH](#) (2026-04-21 23:27)

MANILA, Philippines – Hot, humid winds passing through the Pacific Ocean, or the easterlies, would bring hot and humid weather in most parts of the archipelago within 24 hours, the national weather agency said on Wednesday. In particular, the easterly winds would affect the Visayas, Mindanao, and Southern Luzon, weather specialist Chenel Dominguez of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said. She said the same weather system, however, would bring partly cloudy skies with isolated downpours or thunderstorms over Metro Manila, CALABARZON (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon), and MIMAROPA (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, and Palawan). In its 5 a.m. advisory, the state-run weather bureau said the rest of Luzon would likely have a similar weather pattern, but due to localized thunderstorms. It added that it has not monitored any low-pressure area forming inside or outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility in the coming days. A heat index of 38 degrees Celsius is possible over Metro Manila on Wednesday, and the highest could be recorded and felt over Aparri, Cagayan, at 42 degrees Celsius, which falls under the danger category, according to Pagasa.

- [ICC to rule on key Duterte challenge today](#) (2026-04-21 16:21)

THE International Criminal Court (ICC) is poised to issue a key ruling on whether it has jurisdiction over the case of former president Rodrigo Duterte, marking a critical juncture in proceedings related to his bloody war on drugs. The ICC Appeals Chamber is scheduled to release its decision on April 22 (5 p.m. to 6 p.m., Manila time), following challenges from Duterte's legal team, which argued that the court no longer has authority after the Philippines withdrew from the Rome Statute in 2019. A ruling affirming jurisdiction would allow the case to proceed further into the pre-trial phase, including a determination on whether to confirm charges of crimes against humanity filed by ICC prosecutors. Charges and allegations Prosecutors have accused Duterte of playing a central role in thousands of killings linked to the government's war on drugs, describing him as "pivotal" in the alleged campaign. The charges focus on murder as a crime against humanity, covering selected incidents that prosecutors say reflect a broader pattern of violence. Human rights groups have long claimed that the total number of deaths tied to the anti-drug campaign could reach into

the tens of thousands, although only a portion of these cases form part of the ICC complaint. The case remains in the pre-trial stage, where judges are assessing whether sufficient evidence exists to move forward to a full trial. Confirmation of charges hearings were held earlier this year, with Duterte opting not to attend key proceedings in The Hague. His legal team cited health concerns in requesting his absence, though ICC judges have previously ruled that he is mentally fit to stand trial. Duterte remains under ICC custody after judges denied motions for interim release, citing concerns including possible flight risk and interference with proceedings. What comes next Following the Appeals Chamber ruling, the court is expected to decide whether to confirm the charges against Duterte, a decision that is expected to be issued by April 28 or earlier. If confirmed, the case would advance to a full trial — potentially one of the most high-profile international prosecutions involving a former Southeast Asian leader. The ICC maintains that it retains jurisdiction over alleged crimes committed while the Philippines was still a member of the Rome Statute, a position strongly contested by Duterte's camp. Duterte was arrested in March 2025 under an ICC warrant and transferred to The Hague, where he has since faced legal proceedings related to his administration's anti-drug operations.

- [Balikatan troops rescue 6 after truck falls into ravine](#) (2026-04-21 16:20)

TROOPS from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the United States Marine Corps participating in this year's Balikatan military exercise showed their real-world emergency response capability by rescuing six injured civilians after a cement-loaded truck lost control and plunged into a ravine. Four of the injured civilians were immediately extricated from the truck and transported to a nearby hospital. The two others, trapped and assessed with life-threatening injuries, were later rescued and airlifted by a US HH-60 Black Hawk helicopter to a higher-level medical facility for advanced treatment. US Marine Corps personnel in the area witnessed the incident and rendered initial assistance, while the troops from the 17th Infantry Battalion under Joint Task Force "Tala" reinforced rescue efforts and coordinated with the Philippine National Police for investigation. All individuals involved were confirmed to be Filipino civilians, with no military personnel affected. A report from Camp Melchor F. Dela Cruz noted that the joint response demonstrated interoperability and readiness beyond training scenarios. "This incident highlights the continued commitment of Balikatan forces to respond rapidly and effectively to emergencies, demonstrating strong interoperability and readiness in saving lives and assisting communities in times of need," the report said. Exercise Balikatan (shoulder to shoulder) pulls over 17,000 participants from the Philippines, United States, Japan, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and France, and is observed by 18 countries. It opened on April 20 and is set to conclude on May 8. Meanwhile, the AFP dismissed China's warning that the Philippines and its defense partners are "playing with fire" for participating in the joint military drills. As Exercise Balikatan 41-2026 opened on Monday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun warned participating countries, particularly the Philippines, the United States and Japan, that "binding themselves together in the name of security will only be akin to playing with fire." "We have to understand that the actions of the government of the Republic of the Philippines are one of a sovereign state. Meaning to say, We are allowed to engage any

like-minded country, like-minded state in furtherance of our national interest,” Rear Admiral Roy Vincent Trinidad, AFP spokesman for the WPS, told reporters on Tuesday. Trinidad emphasized that the exercises are part of the AFP’s modernization, making its military more capable, which are all “part of a sovereign nation’s actions to prepare her armed component,” Trinidad said. On the other hand, the constant war rhetoric, rapid military build-up, and illegal presence and aggressive actions of the Chinese Communist Party have been the reasons for instability in the region, Trinidad said.

- [Witness: Cabral ordered inclusion of Pandi ghost project](#) (2026-04-21 16:19)

(UPDATE) PROSECUTION witness Peter Paul Cortez told the Sandiganbayan Third Division on Tuesday that the alleged ghost project in Pandi, Bulacan, was included in a budget errata upon the instruction of the late Public Works undersecretary Catalina Cabral. Cortez, the division chief of the programming division of the Department of Public Works and Highways’ planning service, testified at the hearing on the bail petitions filed by former senator Bong Revilla and by most of his co-accused in the malversation through falsification case filed in connection with the alleged ghost project. Cortez testified that the project was not in the National Expenditure Program for 2025 submitted by the executive to the House of Representatives and that it was included in an errata. “We inputted it per” instruction of Cabral,” he told the court in Filipino and English, in response to a question from Associate Justice Karl Miranda, the chairman of the court’s Third Division. Revilla’s camp has said that he had no hand in the project in Pandi, whether it was a ghost project or not. The other accused in the case are Brice Hernandez, Juanito Mendoza, Arjay Domasig, Emelita Juat, Christina Mae Pineda, and Jaypee Mendoza. The accused, except Jaypee Mendoza, sought bail. The case was filed by the Office of the Ombudsman in January 2026. Revilla refused to enter a plea during his arraignment in February, but the court entered a not guilty plea for him. Juanito Mendoza, Hernandez, Jaypee Mendoza, Domasig, Juat, and Pineda pleaded not guilty to the charge. Cabral died in December 2025 under mysterious circumstances. Her body was found at the bottom of a ravine along Kennon Road in Tuba, Benguet.

- [US, Iran ready for war as truce nears end](#) (2026-04-21 16:18)

TEHRAN — The United States and Iran both warned they were ready for war as the clock ticked down on a ceasefire on Tuesday, with uncertainty over whether talks that President Donald Trump had announced would resume in Pakistan. The White House said Vice President JD Vance was ready to fly back to Islamabad, which was preparing for a second round of talks on ending the war that has engulfed the Middle East and shaken global markets. However, Tehran’s government declined to confirm that it would participate and accused the United States of violating the truce through its blockade of Iranian ports and seizure of a ship. “By imposing a blockade and violating the ceasefire, Trump wants to turn this negotiating table into a surrender table or justify renewed hostilities, as he sees fit,” said Iran’s powerful parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, who headed the delegations to talks in the Pakistani capital two weeks ago. “We do not accept negotiations under the shadow of threats, and in the last two

weeks we have been preparing to show new cards on the battlefield,” he wrote on X.Iran’s Revolutionary Guards warned of targeting any vessel attempting to pass through the Strait of Hormuz without permission.Trump has similarly accused Tehran of violating the truce by harassing vessels in the key strait, the transit passage for about a fifth of the world’s oil that Iran had all but shut in retaliation for the war launched by the United States and Israel on Feb. 28.The channel sees around 120 daily transits in peacetime, according to Lloyd’s List, a shipping industry intelligence site.The site reported on Tuesday that more than 20 Iranian “shadow vessels” had transited past the US blockade.Trump insisted in one of a series of posts on his Truth Social platform that the blockade was “absolutely destroying” Iran and said it will not end “until there is a ‘DEAL’ ,” in which the United States is pressing for Iranian concessions on its contested nuclear program.Trump told PBS News that Iran was “supposed to be there” at the talks in Pakistan. “We agreed to be there,” he said, warning that if the ceasefire expired, “then lots of bombs start going off.” He separately told Bloomberg News it was “highly unlikely” he would extend the two-week truce.Based on its start time, the truce theoretically expires overnight on Tuesday, Tehran time, although Trump said in his comments to Bloomberg the end was a day later, on Wednesday evening Washington time.Oil prices fell on Tuesday while most stocks rose on lingering hopes for a deal to end the war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz.Despite some normality returning to Tehran during the ceasefire, city residents who spoke to Paris-based AFP journalists said the situation was far from ideal. “Let’s see what happens by Tuesday,” one 30-year-old doctor said on condition of anonymity.Saghar, 39, said there was little hope for Iranians squeezed by the government and the war’s impact, adding that the “economy is horrible.” New Israel-Lebanon talksA separate ceasefire agreed between Israel and Lebanon was announced on Friday and included Hezbollah, whose rocket fire in support of Iran drew Lebanon into the war.Israel and Lebanon, which have no diplomatic relations, will hold a second round of talks in Washington on Thursday, a State Department official told AFP.Sporadic violence continued, and Israel’s military warned civilians against returning to dozens of villages in southern Lebanon, claiming Hezbollah’s activities were violating the truce.The UN Security Council condemned on Monday the killing of a French peacekeeper in Lebanon, whose death Paris blamed on Hezbollah.The Frenchman was killed, and three others were wounded when their unit was ambushed on Saturday as it headed to a UN Interim Force in Lebanon (Unifil) outpost cut off from the fighting between Hezbollah and Israel.Hezbollah lawmaker Hassan Fadlallah told AFP that his group would work to break the “Yellow Line” that Israel has established in the south, even as he said it wanted “the ceasefire to continue.” Israeli attacks on Lebanon have killed at least 2,387 people since the start of the war, a Lebanese government body said in its latest toll.Another major issue in the US-Iran negotiations has been Tehran’s stockpile of enriched uranium.Trump, who previously said Iran had agreed to hand over the uranium, said late on Monday that doing so would be “long” and “difficult” after US strikes on Tehran’s nuclear sites last year. “Operation Midnight Hammer was a complete and total obliteration of the Nuclear Dust sites in Iran,” Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform. “Therefore, digging it out will be a long and difficult process.” Trump uses the term “nuclear dust” to refer to Iran’s stock of enriched uranium, which the United States accuses Iran of hoarding in order to

make an atomic bomb. Iran's foreign ministry said earlier that the stockpile was "not going to be transferred anywhere" and that the option was "never raised" in talks with US negotiators.

- [Senate prepares for possible Sara Duterte impeachment](#) (2026-04-21 16:17)

(UPDATE) SENATE President Vicente Sotto III said he will act "forthwith" if the House of Representatives transmits to the Senate the impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte. The senator said he has been reviewing the rules of court and the Senate rules on impeachment so that he would be ready for any eventuality. The Senate serves as the impeachment court to try and decide on any complaint to unseat the president and vice president and other impeachable officers. "I will act on it with dispatch. Definitely forthwith. I know what the meaning of forthwith is," Sotto said in a press briefing. "As soon as the Senate receives it, I will inform the Senate and refer it to the Committee on Rules," he said. "We have to convene as an impeachment court. So, technically, we may convene by May 4. That's just two weeks away. So, we may be able to do that," Sotto said. The Senate chief recently hosted a dinner with some fellow senators to discuss the impeachment proceedings against Duterte before the House's Committee on Justice. He implored fellow senator-judges "to be impartial in and out of the court," as some of them are allied with Duterte. "In the discharge of duties, a judge shall not only be impartial but must also appear to be impartial." Sotto said he also advised fellow senators to brush up on the rules of court, which cover the official set of procedural rules that govern how Duterte's case would be filed, heard and decided. "We can't be fumbling, because there may be issues the presiding officer will raise to the body, or objections from members that we should know how to properly address," Sotto said. "We are simply preparing just in case. Since the possibility is already there, it is part of the Senate's responsibility. We are empowered to do so, and the relevant offices within the Senate are likewise authorized to prepare," he said. "We are merely getting ready to ensure we are not caught off guard or forced into a rush should the House of Representatives transmit the Articles of Impeachment. If no such articles are sent, then that is well and good, and we will return our focus to legislation," Sotto said. Another petition Meanwhile, petitioners challenging the impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte returned to the Supreme Court, questioning what they described as "deeply irregular" developments during an April 14 hearing conducted by the House of Representatives. The petitioners — led by lawyers Israelito Torreon, Resci Rizada-Nolasco, and Jimmy Bondoc — argued that the House Committee on Justice anchored its proceedings on testimony and a supplemental affidavit from Ramil Madriaga that were not part of the original impeachment complaints. They said only Madriaga's earlier affidavit dated Nov. 29, 2025, had been included in the complaints when these were filed and referred. The petitioners said the supplemental affidavit introduced new accusations, expanded factual claims, and additional narratives that went beyond the original submissions, yet lawmakers allegedly treated these as if they had long been part of the official record. They contended that this constituted more than a clarification of existing allegations, describing it instead as an improper expansion of the factual basis of the proceedings. This,



they said, violated principles of notice, fairness, due process and orderly pleading. The petitioners also questioned the committee's approval of a subpoena for former senator Antonio Trillanes IV. They argued that the subpoena was based solely on a footnote in one of the complaints referencing a 2016 news article about Trillanes' public statements on alleged Duterte bank accounts. The filing stressed that the cited article was neither a sworn statement nor competent evidence of the allegations it contained. In addition, the petition challenged a motion directing the Anti-Money Laundering Council to produce reports and documents on alleged covered and suspicious transactions involving Duterte and her husband, Manases Carpio, spanning nearly two decades. The petitioners argued that the directive lacked a clear anchor in specific allegations of ultimate fact regarding supposed unexplained wealth. They said the move effectively sought to obtain evidence outside the "four corners" of the complaint, characterizing it as a sweeping attempt to search for incriminating material. They further maintained that the committee could not bypass safeguards under the Anti-Money Laundering Act and bank secrecy laws through a legislative directive alone. Taken together, the petitioners said the developments during the April 14 hearing showed that the proceedings had moved away from a threshold determination of the sufficiency of the impeachment complaints. Instead, they alleged, the process had turned into a "fishing expedition" aimed at generating new material and accusations to support what they described as a constitutionally deficient case. Another survey Meanwhile, the latest Pahayag survey showed Filipino voters remain sharply divided over the impeachment of Duterte. The nationwide poll found that 51 percent of respondents support impeachment complaints against Vice President Duterte, while 33 percent oppose them and 16 percent are unaware of the issue. In contrast, 48 percent of voters opposed dismissing impeachment complaints against President Marcos, compared with 29 percent who supported dismissal and 23 percent who were unaware. The findings were at odds with the Tugon ng Masa survey, released by OCTA Research in mid-April that found 69 percent of Filipinos saying the vice president should face an impeachment trial.

- [Romualdez's Singapore trip gets House nod](#) (2026-04-21 16:16)

(UPDATE) THE House of Representatives has allowed former speaker Martin Romualdez to travel to Singapore for medical reasons. "As requested, travel clearance is hereby granted to Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, Representative, 1st District, Leyte, in connection with his personal trip to Singapore from April 20 to May 4, 2026," a travel clearance dated April 20, 2026, from House Secretary General Cheloy Velicaria-Garafil stated. "This clearance is issued predicated upon the Honorable Representative's commitment to return to the Philippines forthwith following his medical procedure. It is understood that the Representative shall maintain accessibility for any urgent official functions or legal proceedings during his absence," it said. As of about 4:15 p.m. Tuesday, Romualdez was still in the Philippines. In a letter addressed to Speaker Faustino Dy III through Garafil, Romualdez asked for a travel clearance to Singapore from April 20 to May 4, 2026. "I have also written the Department of Justice of my intention to travel, in view of an Immigration Lookout Bulletin Order (ILBO) issued last Oct. 8, 2025," Romualdez said. "I give my unequivocal assurance that I will return to the Philippines



immediately upon completion of my medical engagement and remain accessible for any urgent legislative matters during this period,” he said. In a press briefing on Tuesday, Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla said that “because we have a bulletin, a lookout order with Immigration [...], we did not respond favorably to the request that he be allowed to leave.” Romualdez’ s lawyer, Ade Fajardo, said in a statement later Tuesday that the immigration lookout bulletin order does not bar travel “but simply requires prior coordination with authorities.” “In fact, Rep. Romualdez sought travel authority in all good faith — and this authority has been granted,” Fajardo said. “This underscores his full compliance with the law and negates any insinuation of flight risk.” Also in the briefing, Remulla said his office endorsed a complaint to the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) and that his office was waiting for the AMLC to seek a freeze order on Romualdez. Fajardo said the AMLC “must file a formal application before the Court of Appeals, supported by evidence, before any freeze order may be issued.” “As of this time, we have received no official notice of any such application or order. Any statement suggesting that a freeze order is imminent remains speculative,” he said. Fajardo said that Romualdez “has consistently respected legal processes and will continue to do so.”

- [GSIS releases loan amortization refunds](#) (2026-04-21 16:15)

MORE than half a million government workers and pensioners have received loan amortization refunds under the Government Service Insurance System’ s (GSIS) Balik Ginhawa program. A total of P7.3 billion has been credited to member accounts as of April 20. Data from the GSIS showed that 598,420 applications have been received since the program’ s rollout. Of these, 525,447 applicants — nearly nine out of 10 — have been confirmed eligible and processed for payouts. GSIS said it has instructed its partner banks to credit a total of P7.5 billion to qualified members. The remaining balance is currently being processed and is expected to be deposited within the next few working days. GSIS President and General Manager Jose Arnulfo Veloso said the initiative forms part of the agency’ s support for the national government’ s broader relief efforts. The Balik Ginhawa program is aligned with the administration’ s Unified Package for Livelihoods, Industry, Food, and Transport, a whole-of-government response designed to cushion the impact of rising living costs on Filipino workers and their families. Under the program, GSIS grants a lump-sum refund equivalent to up to three months of eligible loan amortizations, covering payments made for December 2025, January 2026, and February 2026. While regular loan deductions continue, the loan term is extended accordingly, with no additional interest or penalties imposed. To qualify, members must have no arrears at the time of application, ensuring that their loan payments are up to date. Eligibility status and refundable amounts are displayed through the GSIS Touch mobile application before submission. Applicants who do not meet the criteria are notified through the platform. Approved refunds are credited within three working days, according to GSIS. The program remains voluntary, with applications open exclusively through the GSIS Touch app until Oct. 31, 2026.

- [Go honored at Asian Torch Excellence Awards](#) (2026-04-21 16:14)

SEN. Bong Go was inducted into the Public Service Hall of Fame during the 5th Annual Asian Torch Excellence Awards on April 18 at the Great Eastern Hotel in Quezon City. The event was organized by Realtalk Philippines. Leo Gamel Orendia, founder, president and CEO of Realtalk, chairs the Asian Torch Excellence Awards Council. The annual event recognizes individuals for leadership and contributions to their communities. Go, who was unable to attend the ceremony, commended the award-giving body for sustaining initiatives that highlight service-oriented leadership. “We would also like to thank the award-giving body for its efforts in organizing this event and for continuing to recognize individuals who make a difference through their work and service,” he said in a statement. “This event is a celebration not only of individual achievements but also of the shared commitment to serve and make a difference in the lives of others,” Go added.

- [DHSUD approves deferment period for developers](#) (2026-04-21 16:13)

THE Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) said it is giving developers 36 months to comply with the Balanced Housing Development Program (BHDP). This comes after the Commission on Audit (COA) flagged the DHSUD’s computation of incentivized balanced housing compliance. The DHSUD was urged by the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders’ Associations (Creba) to recalibrate the BHDP to make it more responsive to the needs of the homeless poor, without crippling the primary providers of housing. DHSUD Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling granted the request of the Subdivision and Housing Developers Association and the Organization of Socialized Housing Developers of the Philippines concerning compliances to BHDP, particularly on the mode of compliance and its timeframe. Aliling added six more months for housing projects with 30 or more months of approved duration to satisfy BHDP requirements as prescribed by Republic Act 7279, or the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992, as amended by RA 10884. COA earlier this year flagged DHSUD’s computation of incentivized balanced housing compliance, noting that provisions under the department order were inconsistent with existing laws, particularly those that effectively reduced developers’ required participation in the program. According to DHSUD, private developers, including Creba members, are required under the BHDP program to develop socialized housing equivalent to 15 percent of their subdivision project cost or 5 percent of the condominium cost. “With our open-door policy, the DHSUD has always been ready to communicate and hold dialogues with all the stakeholders with one goal of providing shelters, especially for the poor Filipinos,” Aliling said. He said the long deferment period would benefit DHSUD’s partner-developers in continuously providing safe and affordable housing units under the national government’s expanded Pambansang Pabahay para sa mga Pilipino (4PH) program. “During the maximum 36-month deferment period, developers can decide whether to opt for the incentivized compliance or direct participation in socialized housing under BHDP as prescribed by law,” Aliling said. Creba President Noel Cariño told The Manila Times that the government must institute major reforms to ensure more effective delivery of socialized housing to underprivileged Filipinos. He said private developers remain committed to abiding by government policies, especially on BHDP, which imposes a social

housing production quota on them. “While we affirm our long-standing position that the social housing quota is constitutionally infirm, nonetheless, for as long as it remains in our statutes, we are committed to abide,” Cariño said. “We urge judiciousness in promulgating its implementing rules — to ensure those infirmities are not exacerbated, the social objectives are not warped, and businesses are insulated from oppressive requirements, arbitrariness and extortive or corrupt influences,” he added. Cariño said the COA finding showed that “over the years, there has been failure to monitor, account for and report on the billions of pesos contributed by the developers for BHDP compliance purposes.”

- [Marcos names Sarmiento as peace adviser](#) (2026-04-21 16:12)

(UPDATE) FORMER Local Government secretary Mel Senen Sarmiento has been appointed as the Presidential Adviser for Peace, Reconciliation and Unity, bringing his long record in local governance and legislative reform to the government’s peace-building efforts, Malacañang said Tuesday. Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said Sarmiento would replace Carlito Galvez Jr., who has stepped down “after years of dedicated service to the country’s peace agenda.” “Secretary Sarmiento’s appointment marks a natural progression of the country’s peace work. With security and normalization milestones largely in place, the process now enters a phase that calls for civilian leadership — centered on reconciliation, local governance and socioeconomic reintegration,” Castro said during a press conference. “This is especially vital in the Bangsamoro as it moves toward its first parliamentary elections and the full realization of the Comprehensive Agreement, and Secretary Sarmiento’s background in local government and public administration equips him well for the task,” she added. Castro reaffirmed the administration’s commitment to a just and lasting peace, and called on all peace partners, stakeholders and communities “to stand with Secretary Sarmiento as he takes up this vital work.” Sarmiento’s entry into the peace portfolio comes with a background that combines executive leadership and legislative experience, including direct involvement in crafting measures that laid the groundwork for what would eventually become the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). A former member of the House of Representatives representing the first district of Samar from 2010 to 2015, Sarmiento served during a critical period when Congress deliberated on the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law. He was the principal author of House Bill 4994, which sought to establish a new autonomous political entity in Muslim Mindanao, replacing the previous regional framework. The measure, while not enacted in its original form, became part of the legislative progression which had set the framework for subsequent versions of the proposed legislation that ultimately contributed to the passage of the Bangsamoro Organic Law and the establishment of BARMM — widely regarded as a milestone in the country’s peace process. Sarmiento also authored and co-authored several major national laws, including Republic Act (RA) 10630, which strengthened the juvenile justice system, and RA 10364, which expanded the country’s anti-trafficking framework. He was also an original author of RA 11232, or the Revised Corporation Code, and RA 11392, which institutionalized national performing arts companies. Sarmiento served as secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) from September 2015

to June 2016, where he oversaw key national bodies involved in peace and security, including serving as chairman of the National Peace and Order Council and vice chairman for disaster preparedness of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council. As DILG chief, he sat in multiple interagency bodies such as the Justice Sector Coordinating Council and the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking, providing him exposure to cross-sectoral coordination — an essential component in advancing peace and reconciliation efforts. House Assistant Majority Leader and Lanao del Sur 1st District Rep. Zia Alonto Adiong welcomed the appointment of Sarmiento. In a statement, Adiong said he is confident that Sarmiento will bring “fresh energy and effective leadership to the crucial task of advancing lasting peace in Mindanao and across the Philippines.” He noted Sarmiento’s “extensive experience in public service, local governance, and his proven commitment to inclusive development and community empowerment.” “I look forward to working closely with him and the entire Opapru (Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity) team to strengthen the gains of the peace process, promote reconciliation and foster unity among our diverse communities. Together, we can build on the foundations already laid and ensure that every Filipino, especially those in conflict-affected areas, benefits from genuine and sustainable peace,” Adiong, a member of the House Committee on Muslim Affairs, added. Meanwhile, Castro said the president extended his gratitude to Galvez for his steadfast leadership of Opapru, particularly in advancing the implementation of signed peace agreements and sustaining the gains of the Bangsamoro transition. “His contributions — first as a soldier, and later as a peace negotiator and adviser — reflect a lifetime of service to the Republic, and the nation owes him a profound debt,” she said. Galvez announced his retirement from public office, citing personal and family obligations as the primary reason. “This decision is borne of a personal necessity to attend to the health of my wife, and to devote myself to my family — a commitment that is, perhaps, long overdue,” he said. Galvez expressed gratitude to Marcos for extending his tenure, allowing him the continuity “to see our shared peace initiatives through to this chapter.” Galvez described Sarmiento as a “champion of good governance and a man of peace.”

- [Ombudsman to subpoena Zaldy Co upon return to PH](#) (2026-04-21 16:11)

THE Office of the Ombudsman plans to subpoena former lawmaker Elizaldy “Zaldy” Co when he comes under jurisdiction. “Yes. There are still ongoing investigations.... If he is already under our jurisdiction, we will subpoena him to come over to explain matters under investigation, still under investigation with this Office,” Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla said in a press briefing on Tuesday. Co was denied entry from the Czech Republic last week at the German border. In a video message, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. later said Co was in Czech custody. Marcos expressed resolve to bring Co back to the Philippines, saying, “he will answer to the Filipino people.” In Nov. 2025, the Office of the Ombudsman filed a malversation through falsification case against Co and other individuals before the Sandiganbayan in connection with a road dike construction project in Oriental Mindoro. “Remember, he’s still a fugitive from justice technically until he comes back to our jurisdiction... and fugitives from

justice have... no right to defend themselves... when there are cases against them unless they submit to the jurisdiction of the court,” Remulla said. On Apr. 7, the prosecution presented its last witness in the malversation through falsification case filed against Co and others. The trial involved nine of the accused: Gerald Pacanan, Gene Ryan Altea, Ruben Santos Jr., Juliet Calvo, Dennis Abagon, Dominic Serrano, Montrexis Tamayo, Lerma Cayco and Felisardo Casuno. Careful with Zaldy Co The Philippine government is being cautious over the case of Co, citing diplomatic relations with the Czech Republic, Malacañang said on Tuesday. In a press briefing, Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro noted that pertinent agencies are being careful in issuing statements or releasing details and visuals regarding the “intervention” the Czech authorities did on Co last week. “Because there is another country involved, the government is careful in making any announcements. Let’s just let our government work,” Castro said in Filipino. The Palace official likewise said they are deferring to Justice Secretary Fredrick Vida to address other matters concerning Co, particularly the process of his return to the country. Vida previously said he was ready to fly to the Czech Republic within the week to have a face-to-face meeting with local authorities to “flesh out” the legal requirements for the former Ako Bicol Party-list representative’s deportation. Meanwhile, Castro reacted to an earlier statement of Sen. JV Ejercito that ensuring Co would remain unscathed is a big challenge amid efforts to repatriate him and have him face the graft and malversation charges filed against him over the questionable P289.5-million flood control project in Oriental Mindoro. Ejercito’s claim, Castro asserted, is unfounded. “We have to determine it first. Where are these supposed death threats coming from? Has anything been presented?” she said. “So, I think we should start there first because there’s no basis. Are there really death threats?” she added. The administration, she stressed, remains committed to ensuring the safety and security not just of Co but of every Filipino. “All Filipinos should be able to return safely to the Philippines,” she said. WITH A REPORT FROM KRISTINA MARALIT

- [Firm pushes kidney disease awareness](#) (2026-04-21 16:10)

A GLOBAL pharmaceutical company launched an initiative to increase kidney health awareness through early detection at the community level. In a statement on Tuesday, Boehringer Ingelheim said its “Iwas Dialysis, Ligtas Kidneys: Get CheCKD Habang Maaga Pa!” ( “Avoid dialysis, safer kidneys: Get checked while it’s still early” ) campaign, which kicked off in Quezon City, ensures that screening and awareness on kidney health remain accessible to all. “By partnering with barangay health centers and equipping community health workers, we help bring essential kidney health services closer to families who may otherwise have limited access. Early detection can make a real difference in people’s lives, and we are proud to support these efforts,” said Dr. Bin Wang, general manager of Boehringer Ingelheim Philippines Inc. Boehringer Ingelheim noted that 13 million Filipinos, or 11.2 percent of the population, are living with chronic kidney disease (CKD). Aside from this, 1 out of 3 patients has kidney disease in the late stages, driving up dialysis costs. This highlights the need for early detection mechanisms. The program sought to empower barangay health workers (BHWs). Over 200 health care providers — including doctors and BHWs from 20 barangay — have been

trained to conduct initial health assessments, communicate effectively with patients, and assist in administering the urine albumin-to-creatinine ratio test. To date, the initiative has benefited over 1,500 Filipinos, who have received free kidney health screenings. Those with abnormal results are referred to health care facilities for further evaluation and care. The initiative is part of its global Sustainable Development for Generations commitment, which seeks to improve health outcomes for 50 million people in underserved communities worldwide. A city-wide rollout in Antipolo City followed the campaign's launch in Quezon City.

- [No toll, port fees for farmers, traders](#) (2026-04-21 16:09)

MALACAÑANG on Tuesday called on national agencies and local governments to help truckers of farm produce take advantage of lower toll and port fees to fast-track the movement of food products. Executive Secretary Ralph Recto said this was in line with the directives of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to cushion the impact of high oil prices on food products. The government started implementing on April 20 a monthlong toll holiday for food trucks. They were also exempted from truck bans and delivery fees to ease logistics costs and help temper food prices. "This begins with the speedy accreditation of farmers and traders who are qualified for the toll fee waiver," Recto said in a statement. "Unnecessary and unreasonable stopping and inspection of food trucks by police and LGU (local government unit) checkpoints should also stop because it delays travel and wastes fuel," he added. Recto said that reducing delivery time was critical, especially during the peak harvest season when produce was highly perishable. He said "toll and port fees holiday" formed part of a broader government response to mitigate the impact of rising oil prices on food costs, including fuel subsidies for farmers and fisherfolk, and direct procurement of produce by the Department of Agriculture (DA). Under the DA's Food Lane Program, 1,162 accredited trucks can transport up to 7 million kilos of food daily to major markets. "The DA's goal is to encourage the 3,100 truckers previously registered to get their easy-to-renew accreditation," Recto said. The Philippine Ports Authority also reduced roll-on, roll-off terminal fees for agricultural cargo vehicles to P1, down from as much as P516, while the Maritime Industry Authority cut regulatory fees by up to 75 percent to support interisland transport. Recto said these interventions aimed to reduce logistics costs, which added an estimated P5 to P7 per kilo to food prices.

- [DPWH opens access road to fight landfill fire](#) (2026-04-21 16:08)

THE Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has shifted into high gear in its battle to fully extinguish the fire in the Navotas Sanitary Landfill, which has been smoldering for more than 10 days and continues to pose serious health and environmental risks. Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon said the situation remains critical, with thick, toxic smoke continuing to billow from the landfill and drift across Metro Manila and nearby provinces, including Bulacan and Bataan. According to Dizon, the prolonged fire, fueled by layers of compacted waste, has created deep underground hotspots that are difficult to reach and extinguish, prolonging the crisis and worsening air quality. To support firefighting operations, the DPWH has deployed a large fleet of heavy equipment, including dredgers, bulldozers, dump trucks and backhoes,



working alongside personnel from the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP). The coordinated effort, the DPWH chief explained, focuses on smothering both surface flames and deep-seated underground hotspots by layering soil and sludge over burning waste, effectively cutting off oxygen and halting combustion. “The strategy is straightforward but labor-intensive. Crews are continuously dumping soil and sludge over exposed flames and subsurface burning pockets to cut off oxygen, cool down heat zones, and prevent flare-ups,” added Dizon. What dramatically changed the pace of operations, Dizon pointed out, was the completion of a new access road linking the mainland directly to the landfill. He said that previously, equipment and materials had to be ferried in by barge, delaying response time. With uninterrupted land access, truckloads of soil and additional machinery can move in nonstop, enabling sustained, round-the-clock suppression efforts. Navotas Mayor John Rey Tiangco said operations are now focused on sealing off the fire at its source. “We are persistently covering the hotspots buried beneath the waste to suppress combustion and prevent reignition,” he said, adding that progress is being made but conditions remain challenging. Air quality in Navotas City has reached an “orange” classification, with an Air Quality Index (AQI) of 138, considered unhealthy for sensitive groups. Authorities warned that prolonged exposure to the smoke can aggravate respiratory conditions, especially among children, the elderly, and those with preexisting illnesses.

**28-hectare fire** The Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA) reported that over 28.58 hectares of the Navotas sanitary landfill have been burned by the fire that began on April 10, an area slightly larger than the Quezon Memorial Circle. The image of the destruction has since been submitted to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) to help prioritize areas that need swift response. The landfill, which has continued to burn, poses various health risks, particularly to vulnerable sectors such as children, senior citizens and individuals with existing respiratory illnesses. Infectious disease specialist Dr. Rontgene Solante told The Manila Times that exposure to the fire can lead to long-term complications such as chemical pneumonia, as fine particulate matter may be inhaled. Chemical pneumonia is caused by inhaling toxic substances, such as smog caused by fire. Solante said that inhaling the small particulate matter (PM), particularly the PM 2.5, may lead to serious respiratory issues. “The smog ... is an irritant to our airway. So, if you inhale that, especially the most vulnerable among those are those who are asthmatic and those who have COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) because their airway is already very sensitive,” Solante said. Solante emphasized the importance of wearing masks as air pollution persists. To prevent that, we need to advise wearing a face mask. Aside from wearing masks, Solante further advised the elderly to stay hydrated, noting that dehydration may exacerbate their COPD and asthma. As the Navotas fire continues to degrade air quality within its surrounding areas, Solante advised individuals experiencing difficulty breathing to seek medical attention immediately, as this may indicate chemical pneumonia. with a report from Allen Limos

- [LTFRB suspends bus firm fleet after crash](#) (2026-04-21 16:07)

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has suspended for 30 days the operations of nine buses owned by Delmonte Motor Works Inc. following a fatal road crash



in Pagbilao, Quezon that left two passengers dead and 31 others injured. In a statement issued Tuesday, LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II said a show cause order had been served on the bus operator in connection with the incident, which occurred along the national road in Barangay Silangang Malicboy. “We will be giving them the opportunity to explain their side as part of due process. But they are mandated to explain why their certificate of public convenience should not be suspended or revoked,” Mendoza said. The LTFRB said the crash may have violated regulations on ensuring passenger safety in public land transportation. Aside from the bus directly involved in the accident, eight other units operated by the firm were also suspended pending the outcome of the investigation. The agency directed the company to submit maintenance records of its fleet, noting that roadworthiness tests would be conducted on all its buses. The driver involved in the crash was ordered to undergo drug testing and attend a seminar on public safety. The LTFRB set the first hearing on the case for May 7. Failure to comply with the SCO may result in a P5,000 fine, the agency said.

- [UN AGENCY urges help for thousands of stranded sailors](#) (2026-04-21 16:06)

Singapore — The head of the UN maritime agency appealed on Tuesday for help for thousands of seafarers stranded due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, as the Middle East war paralyses the vital shipping route. Around 20,000 seafarers and 2,000 ships have been stranded after shipping was disrupted in the strategic strait following US-Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28 that triggered the war, according to the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Around one-fifth of the world’s crude and liquefied natural gas normally passes through the strait. IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez told a maritime conference in Singapore on Tuesday that stranded sailors were suffering from stress and fatigue. “We need to know everything that they’re going through,” he said. Dominguez urged shipping companies to provide remote support to the sailors on areas like mental health. He said some countries have established round-the-clock helplines for the seafarers, while others have been providing them with food. But more could be done on a personal level, such as proactively reaching out to sailors to listen to them so they feel less isolated. Shipping remained curtailed in the strait as the United States and Iran both warned they were ready for war, while the clock ticked down on a ceasefire set to expire Wednesday.

- [LTFRB sets hearing on P10 PUJ fare hike](#) (2026-04-21 16:05)

(UPDATE) THE Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has scheduled a public hearing on a petition filed by transport group Piston seeking a P10 increase in the minimum fare for public utility jeepney (PUJ), its chairman said Tuesday. LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II said the petition would undergo formal review, with commuter groups and other stakeholders invited to submit their positions as part of the regulatory process. “I have already ordered that it be set for a hearing. We will also allow commuter groups and other sectors to comment,” Mendoza said in an interview, noting the urgency of the request. The current minimum jeepney fare stands at P13. If approved, the proposed increase would bring it to P23. Mendoza said fare adjustments are typically guided by fuel price movements, citing a

long-standing rule of thumb of a P1 fare increase for every P10 rise in fuel prices. Under this benchmark, a P10 hike would correspond to an estimated P100 increase in fuel costs. However, he noted that while fuel prices had previously surged to levels that could justify such an adjustment, recent declines could affect the basis of the petition. The LTFRB chief said the board would weigh the petition against commuter affordability and broader economic conditions. “We will study that, and most important of all is the balance and affordability for our commuters. Can they afford the additional P10 if we grant it?” he said. Mendoza also recalled that the board had issued a decision on an earlier fare-hike petition more than two years ago. But its implementation was deferred due to concerns over its impact on the public. He said the timeline for resolving the new petition would depend on the level of opposition. If uncontested, a decision could be reached within two to three months, subject to requirements such as publication notices, consultation with the Office of the Solicitor General, and coordination with economic and labor agencies. “It depends on the opposition. If there is none, the process will be faster,” he said. Mendoza warned that any fare increase could have wider economic implications, noting that jeepney fares tend to have a significant inflationary effect due to their widespread use. Scant price rollback Transport group Manibela on Tuesday said that the inadequate diesel price rollback and a government fuel aid system that continues to burden drivers forced them to call for a three-day strike. The group said the rollback did not match cuts in world prices, and the costs at the pump have remained unjustly high. Manibela Chairman Mar Valbuena said transport workers expected a much bigger rollback, with fuel prices still hovering at around P94 to P100 per liter. “We expected that the rollback now should not be lower than P75 already, but why is it only P25?” Valbuena said. He said oil firms were quick to raise prices when global oil prices surged, but slow to cut them when the market moved down. Valbuena also hit the government’s subsidy distribution, saying the process had dragged on for weeks and forced drivers to comply with changing requirements repeatedly. He said the system was making drivers suffer to access public aid funded by taxpayers’ money. “It is not just or fair. The aid distribution system is being used for politics,” he said. Valbuena said many drivers in Metro Manila had been lining up for two to three weeks, only to be told to return with additional documents or corrections in their records. He said the changing requirements showed how inefficient and burdensome the process had become for transport workers already struggling with high fuel costs. “It is the taxpayers’ money. Why make it hard for us?” he said. Valbuena said transport groups were continuing the protest because they would not accept what they viewed as a misleading rollback and a broken subsidy system. WITH A REPORT FROM JAMES DANIEL DANIO

- [HPG seizes P8.9M petroleum products](#) (2026-04-21 16:04)

AT least P8.9 million worth of petroleum was seized and six persons were arrested in an operation in Caloocan City, the Philippine National Police-Highway Patrol Group (PNP-HPG) said on Tuesday. In a press briefing held at Camp Crame, PNP-HPG spokesman Lt. Nadame Malang said the six suspects were arrested on April 16 for alleged violation of Presidential Decree 1865 in relation to Batas Pambansa Bilang 33, which penalizes the illegal handling and distribution of

petroleum products. Nadame said the suspects were caught transferring methanol into large plastic containers with gasoline and diesel. “Operatives saw the six suspects transferring the methanol from the tanker to the plastic containers, which is not allowed since we have authorized depots for transferring these kinds of liquids,” Malang told reporters. Authorities said the practice increases fuel volume and maximizes profit. “Their purpose is to increase their supply of petroleum products. If they add 3,000 liters of methanol to 1,000 liters of diesel, they’d have a 4,000-liter diesel mixture,” he added. Police seized around 10,000 liters of methanol, 8,000 liters of unleaded gasoline, 1,000 liters of premium gasoline and 1,000 liters of diesel during the operation.

- [2nd tranche of aid for Malabueños released](#) (2026-04-21 16:03)

THE Malabon City government has released the second tranche of financial assistance under the 2026 Malabon Ahon Blue Card (MABC) program, benefiting 93,727 households and providing relief to Malabueños amid prevailing economic challenges. “The city government decided to release the regular financial aid to the qualified residents at a time when many of my constituents are experiencing hardship due to the unabated fuel costs that affect the prices of some commodities and other basic needs,” Mayor Jeannie Sandoval said. Sandoval told The Manila Times that the release of the MABC cash aid also coincided with the “Tambobong Festival 2026,” the monthlong celebration of Malabon’s 25th Cityhood Anniversary and 427th Founding Anniversary from April 21 to May 21. “It reminds the residents of the spirit of ‘bayanihan’ (community cooperation), which reflects the Malabueños’ enduring unity and willingness to uplift one another, especially in times of need,” according to the city’s first female chief executive. City administrator Alexander Rosete said the sustained rollout of the program reflects the Sandoval administration’s commitment to efficient and inclusive service delivery. He said that the MABC launched in 2022, has become one of the city government’s top-priority programs, providing financial assistance in multiple tranches every year, along with other benefits such as hospitalization and burial support. Blue cardholders may claim their P500 cash assistance at any BancNet-powered ATMs (automated teller machines) or USSC branches starting April 21, 8 a.m. to May 21, 11:59 p.m., according to the local government. Qualified households will receive a message from USSC once the cash assistance is available. They may also check the list of beneficiaries through the link posted on the Malabon Ahon Blue Card Facebook page, it added. Aside from financial aid, the city government has expanded MABC features, including burial and hospitalization assistance, which provided P5,000 aid to over 2,000 households for medical and burial expenses; and the Eskwela Savings Project, and MABC for Working Students, which support over 4,000 students in their educational needs. Also, Rosete said the “MABC para sa Kababaihan” provides livelihood opportunities for single mothers. He said the mayor is currently coordinating with various restaurants, fast-food chains, drugstores and other partner establishments to extend possible discounts to residents using their blue cards for purchases of goods and services. “This initiative aims to further assist residents amid the rising prices of oil and other commodities,” said Rosete as he explained that the blue card program has been designed to provide recurring, year-round aid to its

constituents instead of giving them a one-time grant.

- [Pasig tests recycled-plastic houses as temporary shelters](#) (2026-04-21 16:02)

PASIG City is testing a transition housing unit made from recycled plastic as a temporary shelter option for families who may be displaced during community upgrading works. Mayor Vico Sotto said Monday that the modular unit may help the city temporarily house residents while infrastructure projects are being carried out in their original communities. He said the sample unit, designed by Evergreen Labs, can be completed in two weeks and is durable despite being made from recycled plastic. Sotto said Pasig has already awarded thousands of lots to Pasigueño families, but acknowledged that some areas in the city still need physical upgrades. He said the modular setup could become a useful temporary housing model as the city improves older communities. Foreign officials from Sweden, Denmark and Norway, along with the Nordic Council of Ministers, were present during the presentation of the sample housing unit. The project could give Pasig a faster-build relocation option as it works on community improvement and housing-related upgrades.

- [Fears over threats to Zaldy Co's safety unfounded](#) (2026-04-21 14:44)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Tuesday tagged as unfounded claims that the safety of former congressman Zaldy Co, once he returns to the country, is at risk. Co, one of those implicated in the massive corruption scandal tied to the government's flood control projects, is currently detained in the Czech Republic for committing immigration violations last week. "We have to determine it first. Where are these supposed death threats coming from? Has anything been presented?" Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire said in Filipino in a Palace briefing. "So, I think we should start there first because there's no basis. Are there really death threats?" she added. The official was reacting to an earlier statement made by Senator JV Ejercito that making sure Co would remain unscathed is a big challenge amid efforts to repatriate him and have him face the graft and malversation charges filed against him over the questionable P289.5 million flood control project in Oriental Mindoro. Castro maintained that the administration remains committed to ensuring the safety and security not just of Co but of every Filipino. "All Filipinos should be able to return safely to the Philippines," she said.

- [No winners in Ultra Lotto 6/58, Super Lotto 6/49, Lotto 6/42 draws for April 21](#) (2026-04-21 14:26)

There were no winners in the Ultra Lotto 6/58, Super Lotto 6/49, and Lotto 6/42 draws on Tuesday night, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said. The winning combination for the Ultra Lotto 6/58 was 58-34-43-05-40-03, with a jackpot prize of P75,000,000. No winners were also recorded in the Super Lotto 6/49 draw, which had the combination 45-10-36-43-13-19 and a jackpot prize of P25,000,000. Meanwhile, the Lotto 6/42 draw yielded the combination 22-04-33-11-09-15, with a jackpot prize of P17,860,503.83.

- [Marcos wants sustained interventions amid oil crisis](#) (2026-04-21 14:08)

MANILA, Philippines – President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. wants sustained interventions meant to cushion the public from the effects of the lingering oil crisis triggered by hostilities in the Middle East. Marcos' order came during the fourth meeting of the Unified Package for Livelihoods, Industry, Food, and Transport (UPLIFT) Committee held in Malacañang on Tuesday where he directed agencies to identify additional measures to help shield citizens from the hit of the effects of the war, particularly volatile global oil supply and prices. In a Palace briefing, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro noted the president's stern directive for "active and responsive" initiatives to ease the burden of the public. "Aside from the programs and aid that have already been initiated, the president aims to identify other possible measures to ease the daily lives of Filipinos despite the challenges we face together," the official said in Filipino. She likewise reported that more than 24,000 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) have received assistance, while over 4,000 OFWs and 1,300 dependents have been repatriated safely from the Middle East. Castro likewise noted that the country now has an average oil supply of 52 days following the delivery of 471,000 barrels of oil. This would ensure that work and services would go unhampered. Stable electricity supply was also part of the discussion. "To ensure that our electricity supply is stable, the construction of 22 renewable energy projects with an equivalent capacity of 1,471 megawatts is currently being accelerated while 86.89 percent of the 665 government agencies are compliant with the government's energy saving measures. About 2,933 agencies and entities also follow flexible work arrangements to save on gasoline and electricity," Castro said. "The government continues to ensure that we have enough supplies to keep work and services running," she added.

- [Manibela slams aid system, 'wrong' fuel rollback on strike' s first day](#) (2026-04-21 13:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Manibela on Tuesday said it launched the first day of its three-day transport strike over what it called an insufficient fuel price rollback and a government fuel aid system that continues to burden drivers. Protesting in Philcoa, Quezon City, the group said the rollback did not match the decline in world oil prices and that pump prices remained unjustly high. Manibela Chairman Mar Valbuena said transport workers expected a much bigger rollback, with fuel prices still hovering at around P94 to P100 per liter. "We expected that the rollback now should not be lower than P75 already, but why is it only P25?" Valbuena said. He said oil firms were quick to raise prices when global oil prices surged but slow to cut them when the market moved down. Valbuena also hit the government's subsidy distribution, saying the process had dragged on for weeks and forced drivers to repeatedly comply with changing requirements. He said the system was making drivers suffer just to access public aid funded by taxpayers. "It is not just or fair, the aid distribution system is being used for politics" he said. Valbuena said many drivers in Metro Manila had been lining up for two to three weeks, only to be told to return with additional documents or corrections in their records. He said the changing requirements showed how inefficient and burdensome the process had become for transport workers already struggling with high fuel costs. "It is the taxpayers' money. Why make it hard for us?" he said. Valbuena said transport groups were continuing the protest

because they would not accept what they viewed as a misleading rollback and a broken subsidy system.

- [Stark challenges for returnees in war-ravaged Sudan: UN](#) (2026-04-21 13:15)

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND — The United Nations said Tuesday that nearly four million people had voluntarily returned to their places of origin in Sudan despite the ongoing civil war, warning they face stark challenges. Now in its fourth year, the war between Sudan's army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has killed tens of thousands. At its height, the war displaced over 12 million inside the country and sent over four million people fleeing into neighbouring countries as refugees, according to the UN's International Organization for Migration. But with the war having moved on from Khartoum since the military retook it last year, many of those displaced by the fighting have begun returning home to the capital and other areas where they believe security has improved. Between November 2024 and last month, 3.99 million people returned to their places of origin, especially Khartoum and the agricultural state of Al-Jazirah, southeast of the capital, IOM said. "Many are returning because they believe security has improved. Others return because life in displacement has become unbearable," IOM's deputy director for management and reform Sung Ah Lee told reporters in Geneva. "People want to rebuild. They want to return to their land, their homes, and their livelihoods," she said, speaking from Al-Jazirah. But she said "the reality many encounter upon arrival is stark... it is often the beginning of another struggle for survival". In Khartoum, she pointed out that many were returning to areas where homes and critical infrastructure, including water and electricity, had been heavily damaged. And yet, she said, more than two million additional people are expected to return to Khartoum this year alone. In Al Jazirah, one of Sudan's most important agricultural regions, farmers were meanwhile returning to fields where irrigation systems and equipment had been damaged, threatening food production and livelihoods. Lee said IOM had been able to reach four million people in Sudan with humanitarian aid since 2023. But she said "the scale of needs remains immense", pointing to the nearly nine million people who remained displaced. IOM is seeking \$170 million for its 2026 Sudan crisis response plan, but the agency said that plan remained "underfunded" by 97.2 million.

- [Counting a billion people: Inside India's mega census drive](#) (2026-04-21 12:48)

NEW DELHI, INDIA — Sukhwinder Kaur battles the scorching sun as she trudges door-to-door in New Delhi as part of India's colossal exercise to count more than one billion citizens. Kaur is among three million census enumerators fanning out across cities and villages in an exercise that will help shape policy for the country's estimated 1.4 billion people for years to come. Billed as the world's largest population count, the census is being held in two phases at a cost of \$1.25 billion, according to the government. Last week, the heat became overwhelming for Kaur, a government school teacher. "I went back home, but returned again in the evening," said Kaur, who will be paid 25,000 rupees (\$270) for the assignment, like other census enumerators. Feebly knocking on a door in the servants' quarters of an upscale housing society, Kaur, 38, tried to explain the purpose of her visit to an elderly resident. "Because we have been handling children,



we have, in a way, learned how to deal with all kinds of people," she said. "Some speak politely, some behave strangely but we know how to handle them." In the first phase, census takers ask 33 questions related to water, sanitation, electricity, cooking fuel and internet. The second phase next year will focus on economic status as well as the more contentious question of caste -- the millennia-old social hierarchy that is deeply entwined with Indian politics and welfare entitlements. As in the past, census results will be released in phases starting late next year.

- [Apple's Tim Cook to step down as CEO after 15-year run](#) (2026-04-21 12:34)

SAN FRANCISCO, UNITED STATES — Apple's Tim Cook will step down as the California tech giant's chief executive this year, handing the top job to a company veteran as it navigates a technology landscape being upended by AI. The 65-year-old Cook, who ran Apple for 15 years after taking the reins from its visionary co-founder Steve Jobs, will be succeeded by John Ternus, a senior vice president of hardware engineering. The announcement on Monday answered long-simmering questions about who would replace Cook, who said he will step down in September to become the board's executive chairman. "It has been the greatest privilege of my life to be the CEO of Apple and to have been trusted to lead such an extraordinary company," Cook said in a statement. Early Tuesday, the outgoing chief executive received a tribute of sorts from Donald Trump, a self-professed "big fan" of Cook, as the tech leader built a pragmatic relationship with the US president. "I was very impressed with myself to have the head of Apple calling to 'kiss my ass'," Trump said. Last year, Cook gifted Trump a gold and glass sculpture during a meeting in the Oval Office and announced an additional \$100 billion investment in American manufacturing, and in October Apple agreed to remove an app that could track US immigration agents. "Tim Cook had an AMAZING career, almost incomparable," Trump added.

- [China flexes energy leverage as the PH, US start annual war games](#) (2026-04-21 10:50)

BEIJING — China on Tuesday implied energy assistance for the Philippines could be tied to Manila holding military drills with the US and other allies, as its top newspaper showed Beijing's readiness to leverage its reserves in diplomatic disputes. In an editorial headlined "The Philippines should create conditions for deepening cooperation," the ruling Communist Party's official People's Daily accused the Philippines of hypocrisy for seeking the emergency supplies days before hosting annual drills involving more than 17,000 troops on a remote Philippine island near Taiwan. China has the world's largest strategic oil inventories. "These blatantly contradictory words and deeds expose the opportunistic nature of Philippine politicians," the commentary said, published under the pen name "Zhong Sheng," meaning "Voice of China," and commonly used to convey top officials' views on foreign policy. "How can (the Philippines) justify acting with complete disregard for the interests of its neighbors and yet expect them to come to its aid in a critical moment?," the commentary continued, calling on Manila to "create the right conditions" for improved two-way ties. Tying energy relief to diplomatic disputes suggests Beijing could start to use supply assistance as leverage against nations that have displeased it, analysts say, as it has with critical minerals exports to Japan. Relations between China and the Philippines have deteriorated over the two countries' competing claims in the



South China Sea, particularly over Second Thomas Shoal where Manila grounded a warship in 1999 and conducts regular supply missions to sailors stationed on board. The shoal lies within the Philippines' 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone and about 1,300 km (808 miles) off mainland China. China — the world's second-largest fertilizer exporter and a major fuel supplier in Asia — has reduced exports of refined fuels to neighboring countries, following reports in March that it had ordered a ban on fuel exports to prioritize its domestic supply. "I saw hints of an implied quid pro quo but not a direct conditionality of energy aid for political pre-conditions. What I saw more was the critique of the Philippines being ungrateful," said Eric Olander, co-founder of the China-Global South Project. "It wants to rely on China for economic 'emergency relief' while also stirring up trouble." Chinese officials last month offered Taiwan what they described as energy stability in exchange for accepting Beijing's rule. China's comparative energy advantage People's Daily highlighted China's decision to honor fertilizer contracts with the Philippines despite the March export ban and pointed to Manila's parallel interest in starting talks on oil and gas supplies. But it went on to list a series of grievances, including the war games. Running until May 8, the exercises known as "Balikatan" or "shoulder-to-shoulder", also include Australia, Canada, France and New Zealand. Maritime strike drills will take place on the island of Itbayat, the northernmost point of the Philippines about 155 km from democratically governed Taiwan, which China views as its own territory. Counter landing live fire drills will take place in Zambales province on the South China Sea, about 230 km from the hotly contested Scarborough Shoal, which China controls. Ruby Osman, a senior policy adviser at the Tony Blair Institute, said the energy shocks had vindicated China's early 2000s strategy of stockpiling and reinforced its ability to resist US pressure, encouraging Beijing to act more confidently in situations involving its geopolitical rival. But China's comparative energy advantage should not be confused with the overall health of the country's energy security, she warned. "China is still burning through strategic reserves they'd rather not have to, with limited say in the length and scale of the disruption." Chinese President Xi Jinping publicly called for the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz for the first time during a Monday call with Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, underlining the unease within the \$19 trillion economy over the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, as export-led growth relies on open sea lanes.

- [Sotto to act 'forthwith' if the impeachment complaint vs Sara reaches Senate](#) (2026-04-21 10:27)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate President Vicente Sotto III said he would act "forthwith" if ever the House of Representatives (HOR) would elevate to the Senate the impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte. The senator said he has been reviewing the rules of court and the Senate rules on impeachment so that he would be ready for any eventuality. The Senate serves as the impeachment court to try and decide on any complaint to unseat the president and vice president and other impeachable officers of the land. The Constitution states that "trial by the Senate shall forthwith proceed" once an impeachment case is elevated to the upper house. "I will act on it with dispatch. Definitely forthwith. I know what the meaning of forthwith

is," Sotto said in a press briefing. "As soon as the Senate receives it, I will inform the Senate and refer it to the Committee on Rules," he said. The Senate adjourned session on March 21 for the holy week break and would resume on May 4. "We have to convene as an impeachment court. So, technically, we may convene by May 4. That's just two weeks away. So, we may be able to do that," Sotto said. The Senate chief recently hosted a dinner with some fellow senators to discuss the ongoing impeachment proceedings against Duterte before the HOR Committee on Justice. "But then again, as presiding officer, I made sure that I will review the rules of court. I am being helped by a number of lawyers and at the very least two justices that are giving me a very good perspective of what to expect," Sotto said. "Because there are issues that the presiding officer may throw to the body or there may be an objection from any of the members that we should be able to know how to address these objections," he added. Sotto also implored fellow senator-judges "to be impartial in and out of the court" as some of them are allied with Duterte. "In the discharge of duties, a judge shall not only be impartial but must also appear to be impartial," Sotto said.

- [JV Ejercito appeals to Dela Rosa to give up salary, allowances over continued absence](#)  
(2026-04-21 10:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. JV Ejercito on Tuesday appealed to fellow Sen. Ronald Dela Rosa to give up his salary and allowances amid his continued absence in the Senate. Dela Rosa has been absent from the Senate since Nov. 2025 after a warrant was issued for his arrest by the International Criminal Court (ICC) over his alleged involvement in the drug killings under the administration of former president Rodrigo Duterte who appointed him as Philippine National Police (PNP) chief. Dela Rosa had been identified as co-conspirator of Duterte, now detained at The Hague, Netherlands for crimes against humanity. A civil society group led by former Finance undersecretary Cielo Magno filed a complaint against Dela Rosa for his continued absence from official duties for more than three months. Ejercito pointed out that ordinary Filipinos face the "no work, no pay" rule. Public servants should be covered by such regulation even more, he said. "Public service is a public trust, we are all accountable to the people we serve," Ejercito said in a statement. "As stated before, even by Senate President [Vicente] Sotto, the Senate has yet to establish rules that can compel [Dela Rosa's] attendance," he said in Filipino. "Any formal action will take time, as it must go through amendments and proper deliberation," said Ejercito, chairman of the Senate Committee on Ethics and Privileges. In the 58 roll calls made under the first regular session of the 20th Congress, four senators achieved perfect attendance while Dela Rosa recorded 31 absences. Ejercito said the Ethics committee could now conduct hearings on the complaints against some fellow senators after panel members approved the rules governing its operation. He said the committee could now discharge its functions, including the evaluation of complaints and conduct of hearings, as the panel's rules are set for publication which will allow the panel to proceed with its work.

- [Simple ways to make meetings work better for employees on the autism spectrum](#)  
(2026-04-21 10:00)

NEW YORK — Before Megan Pilatzke was diagnosed with autism, she wondered why she always felt drained when she got home from work. All day long, she'd labored to understand when to speak up or stay silent in meetings. She replayed conversations in her head, worrying she'd misunderstood or said the wrong thing. Noisy environments distressed her. She watched her peers receive promotions when she didn't. "I would come home burnt-out, anxious," Pilatzke said of her days working as an insurance claim specialist. "That just kept going, week after week, day after day." Her communication difficulties, sensitivity to noise and other problems at work began to make sense following her diagnosis, she said. Pilatzke, 36, now spends her days teaching employers how to make workplaces more accommodating for people on the autism spectrum. She works as an inclusion specialist at Specialisterne Canada, a nonprofit that helps organizations to better support employee neurodiversity. She also reframed the way she thinks about traits often associated with autism, viewing her ability to focus intensely and provide honest, direct feedback as strengths. Below are some ways to make meetings and other work rituals more accessible for autistic people, according to several adults with autism and neurodiversity experts. It begins with understanding Autism spectrum disorder is a developmental disorder that affects about 1 in 45 adults in the US, according to Autism Speaks, a nonprofit organization that supports autistic people and their families by funding research, providing resources and doing advocacy work. It presents in a variety of ways but can create challenges with social skills, speech and nonverbal communication. Some common characteristics include repetitive behaviors and sensitivity to noise. "Start by learning about different communication styles and being open-minded," Subodh Garg, who appeared in the first season of the Netflix reality TV show "Love on the Spectrum," said. "Inclusion begins with giving people a chance and making space for diverse ways of thinking and working. Employers can start with small intentional steps." Garg works part-time at a Southern California deli, where he handles invoices and restocks pastries. He also is studying to earn a bachelor's degree and is a "champion of change" advocate at Autism Speaks. Employers may have preconceived ideas about what autism means, when "the reality is, it is a massive spectrum," said Rita Ramakrishnan, who is autistic and founded a consulting company that provides leadership coaching for neurodivergent executives. "There's a community of people with much higher support needs, and then there are folks who are twice exceptional or otherwise extraordinarily high functioning. Their support needs are not as high, and their production capabilities are different. But they're all valid autistic experiences." Organizations should consult autistic employees when crafting policies that are designed to make workplaces more inclusive, Ramakrishnan said. "No one's expecting you to be an expert in this, but we are expecting a level of curiosity, not judgment, and we would love the ability to have a conversation around our needs," she said. "It doesn't mean you have to accommodate all of them or redesign for all of them, but at least listening is the first step." Making meetings more accessible Face-to-face communication can be difficult for some people with autism, so having the ability to participate in meetings online or through writing can be helpful, experts said. "Changing the expectations for social engagement during a meeting is really important," Ramakrishnan said. "In a neurotypical normative situation, things like eye contact are highly prized. I trust someone who makes eye contact with me. But for an autistic person, that is a

scary thing.” Making camera use optional during virtual meetings is a useful accommodation since said people with autism often feel pressure to “mask” their natural behaviors by mimicking the facial expressions of neurotypical colleagues, Pilatzke said. “Things like that can actually cause a lot of anxiety for individuals that are neurodivergent,” she said. “So having that pressure removed can be helpful.” Some people with autism find it’s easier to focus during virtual or in-person meetings when they’re doodling or walking around, said Natalie Longmire, a professor of organizational behavior at Tulane University’s Freeman School of Business. Managers can make it explicit that those behaviors are accepted, she said. Employees also can seek and normalize these types of accommodations by saying something like, “Hey if I get up and walk around, I’m doing that so I can be more engaged in what you’re saying,” Longmire suggested. Share agendas in advance Keith Wargo, president & CEO of Autism Speaks, said his organization sends out meeting agendas in advance and sometimes shares additional details. “That kind of clarity is really helpful,... even sometimes sort of saying, ‘This is going to be a 45-minute meeting and we’re breaking it down into five parts,’ ” Wargo said. “We may deviate from that a little bit, but having that kind of structure is good practice.” Allowing written input before and after meetings — and not prioritizing only what is spoken out loud during the allotted time — enables organizations to honor and take advantage of autistic individuals’ contributions, Ramakrishnan said. “Be explicit about, for each agenda item, is this a discussion? Is this a brainstorm? Are we making a decision here?” Ramakrishnan added. “That gives an autistic person the chance to prepare what they need to.” “These are the folks that are going to come up with the ideas that nobody else thinks about,” she added. Enable various modes of communication Have multiple lanes available to participate in meetings, such as chat windows for attendees to type their contributions, said Abigayle Jayroe, senior vice president for strategic operations at NEXT for Autism. “There may be people who just don’t feel comfortable speaking,” Jayroe said. Turning on captions can help people who prefer to process information by reading, she added. Normalizing the use of noise-canceling headphones and written communication can help, experts say. To reduce feelings of sensory overwhelm, an autistic participant could try saying, “I might ask a question over chat instead of raising my hand because it’s easier for me,” Longmire said. Garg, who was diagnosed with autism when he was 3 years old, said he was non-verbal early on but learned over time how to communicate and connect with other people. “One of the biggest challenges has been interviews because they focus a lot on social skills instead of the actual work,” he said. “Sometimes people misunderstand my communication style or underestimate what I can do. Even small things like clear instructions or written feedback really help me do my best.” Encouraging naysayers An issue some autistic people encounter at work or in social situations is having their tendency to speak in a forthright way misinterpreted as callousness, Ramakrishnan said. Colleagues can be explicit about whether it’s OK to be direct or whether they need to soften the language, she said. In Pilatzke’s view, many autistic people possess a strong sense of right and wrong, and feel a need to speak up when they perceive injustices. “I describe myself as a blunt person. I’m very honest. I’m going to say what I think,” she added. Organizations can benefit from staffers’ frankness by building a culture where everyone isn’t expected to agree. Have a designated naysayer or devil’s advocate in brainstorming meetings, Jayroe suggested. “The

best ideas are built off of poking holes in what everyone agrees on. So it lays the groundwork longer term for a company to have their employees feel comfortable raising red flags or building on ideas," she said.

- [Witness says Bulacan project included in 2025 budget errata on orders of late Public Works official](#) (2026-04-21 09:20)

MANILA, Philippines — A prosecution witness told the Sandiganbayan Third Division on Tuesday that the alleged ghost project in Pandi, Bulacan was included in a budget errata on orders of the late Public Works undersecretary Catalina Cabral. Peter Paul Cortez, the division chief of the programming division of the Department of Public Works and Highways' planning service, said the project was not in the National Expenditure Program for 2025 submitted by the Executive to the House of Representatives but was included in an errata. "We inputted it per instruction of [former undersecretary] Cabral," Cortez told the court in Filipino and English, in response to a question from Associate Justice Karl Miranda who is the chairman of the court's third division. Cortez testified at the hearing on the bail petitions by former senator Ramon Revilla Jr. and by the other accused in the malversation case linked to the ghost project. Revilla's camp has said that he had no hand in the project in Pandi. Cabral died last December. Her body was found at the bottom of a ravine along Kennon Road in Tuba, Benguet.

- [Blue Origin's New Glenn rocket is grounded after launching satellite into the wrong orbit](#) (2026-04-21 09:03)

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida — Jeff Bezos' rocket company, Blue Origin, blamed a bad engine Monday for a failed weekend launch that left a satellite in the wrong orbit, dooming it. Launches of the huge New Glenn rocket are grounded until Blue Origin and the Federal Aviation Administration complete their investigation. The rocket blasted off from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station on Sunday. The recycled first-stage booster performed well, landing on an ocean barge several minutes into the flight. But the upper stage was unable to put the satellite into a high enough orbit to begin operations. Preliminary data indicate that one of the upper stage engines failed to produce enough thrust, Blue Origin CEO Dave Limp said. The satellite was supposed to join AST SpaceMobile's orbiting network of satellites designed to provide direct space-to-smart phone service. The rocket's upper stage and satellite reentered the atmosphere Monday, according to the U.S. Space Force. No additional detail was available. It was only the third flight for New Glenn, Blue Origin's hulking rocket for delivering spacecraft to orbit. NASA is counting on New Glenn to launch Blue Moon lunar landers for the Artemis moon program. SpaceX's Starship is also in the running to land astronauts on the moon as early as 2028. Towering more than 320 feet (98 meters), the rocket is named for John Glenn, the first American to orbit Earth in 1962.

- [Over 28 hectares of Navotas landfill burned — PhilSA](#) (2026-04-21 08:49)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA) reported that over 28.58 hectares of the Navotas sanitary landfill have been burned due to the ongoing fire. According to its

satellite image released Tuesday, PhilSA said as of April 16, the estimated burned area from fire—which reportedly started on April 10—has reached about 28.58 hectares, or roughly the size of an area slightly larger than the Quezon Memorial Circle. They added that the image has since been submitted to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) to help prioritize areas for response.

- [DBM releases P46.22B for 1,743 infra projects nationwide, says Palace](#) (2026-04-21 08:42)

MANILA, Philippines — In line with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s directive to prioritize infrastructure development, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) has released P46.22 billion to fund 1,743 public works projects nationwide, Malacañang said Tuesday. Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said the funds were released to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) for the infrastructure projects that would improve road connectivity and mobility in the different regions of the country. The release of these funds aimed to ensure the continuous implementation of the infrastructure projects, and that no project would be delayed, Castro said during a press conference. She said the initiative was also part of the administration's efforts to accelerate infrastructure development and spur economic growth. Among the major projects is the Davao City Bypass Construction Project which has an approved allocation of more than P288 million for fiscal year 2026, Castro said.

- [House allows former Speaker Romualdez to travel to Singapore](#) (2026-04-21 08:34)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives authorized its former speaker Martin Romualdez to travel to Singapore for a check-up even after the Office of the Ombudsman rejected his request. "As requested, travel clearance is hereby granted to the Honorable Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez, Representative, 1st District, Leyte, in connection with his personal trip to Singapore from 20 April to 04 May 2026," said House Secretary General Cheloy Velicaria-Garafil. "This clearance is issued predicated upon the Honorable Representative's commitment to return to the Philippines forthwith following his medical procedure. It is understood that the Representative shall maintain accessibility for any urgent official functions or legal proceedings during his absence," Garafil said. In a press briefing on Tuesday, Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla said that "because we have a bulletin, a lookout order with Immigration [...], we did not respond favorably to the request that he be allowed to leave." Romualdez's lawyer, Ade Fajardo, said in a statement on Tuesday that the immigration lookout bulletin order did not bar travel "but simply requires prior coordination with authorities." "In fact, Rep. Romualdez sought travel authority in all good faith—and this authority has been granted," Fajardo said. "This underscores his full compliance with the law and negates any insinuation of flight risk." In the briefing, Remulla said his office endorsed a complaint to the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) and that his office was waiting for the AMLC to seek a freeze order on Romualdez. Fajardo said the AMLC "must file a formal application before the Court of Appeals, supported by evidence, before any freeze order may be issued." "As of this time, we have received no official notice of any such application or order. Any statement suggesting that a freeze order is imminent remains speculative", he said.



- [Japan overhauls decades-old weapons export rules](#) (2026-04-21 08:32)

TOKYO, Japan — Japan will ease decades-old arms export curbs, the government said Tuesday, in a major policy shift that paves the way for the sale of lethal weapons overseas as Tokyo ramps up its defence ambitions. The new rules end Japan's self-imposed curb on sales of lethal arms as Tokyo seeks to enter the international arms market, hoping to bolster national defence as well as boost economic growth. The move, which provoked an angry reaction from China, comes as anxiety increases over Beijing's escalating military activity in the region, as well as persistent security threats from North Korea and Russia. "These decisions have been made at a time when changes in the security environment surrounding our country are occurring at an accelerating pace, and they serve to ensure Japan's security while contributing even more to peace and stability in the region and the international community," the government's top spokesman Minoru Kihara told a news conference. "Today, no nation can safeguard its own peace and security by itself alone." China was "seriously concerned" by the changes and would "firmly resist Japan's reckless new-style militarisation", foreign ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun told a news briefing. Exports had previously been limited to equipment classified under five categories: search and rescue, transportation, warning, surveillance and minesweeping. However, Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi posted on X that "with this amendment, transfers of all defence equipment will in principle become possible". Proponents of the policy shift argue the change should further integrate Tokyo in the international defence supply chain, deepening defence, diplomatic and economic ties with partner nations as regional instability grows. But the decision has caused unease among some members of the Japanese public, with critics accusing Takaichi of eroding the proud history of the nation's staunch pacifism. "As a Hiroshima native, I grew up being taught the importance of peace, and I believe that the horror and devastation of the atomic bomb remain relevant today," 56-year-old Junichi Kikuta told AFP, explaining that he was against the move. "I still hope Japan, as the only country ever hit by a nuclear weapon, will continue to uphold its stance of relinquishing weapons and opposing wars." The policy change has been approved by the Cabinet and the National Security Council, Kihara said. Heigo Sato, an expert on defence issues and arms control at Takushoku University, said Japan must use this time of peace to ensure combat readiness by establishing "a system that ensures the smooth exchange of weapons and ammunition" between allies. He told AFP that exports require routine maintenance, providing defence contractors with steady business while also strengthening ties with buyer nations. By making the arms trade a two-way exchange, Japan might improve the chances of receiving help from allies in the event of an unexpected, prolonged conflict, he said. 'Turning point' The new rules are part of an incremental easing of the blanket export ban on weapons that was first introduced in 1976. Takaichi said export "recipients will be limited to countries that pledge to use the equipment in a manner consistent with the United Nations Charter". However, the Japanese public appears uneasy about the prospect of exporting lethal arms. A March survey by national broadcaster NHK showed that 53 percent of participants opposed the step, while only 32 percent supported it. Peace activists have staged rallies across the nation over concerns that Takaichi's hawkish world views and open support for US President Donald Trump could drag Japan into conflicts. Some appeared to



be protesting against the easing of arms export rules. Veteran activist Koji Sugihara warned that the change was "a historic turning point", arguing that Japan's pacifist reputation has historically aided its diplomatic and business relations. "People do not want Japanese-made products to be used to kill people in foreign countries," Sugihara told AFP. Japan previously exported bullets and military supplies to boost its economy, particularly during the Korean War in the 1950s, but adopted a conditional weapons export ban in 1967 before a total bar came in a decade later. Tokyo has made exceptions to the rules in recent decades, especially when joining international weapons development projects, before it opened the door to exports in 2014 in the five non-lethal military product categories. Five Japanese firms -- Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, NEC, Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Mitsubishi Electric and Fujitsu are among the world's top 100 arms companies, according to data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

• [US and Iran warn they are ready for war as talks in limbo](#) (2026-04-21 08:05)

TEHRAN, Iran — The United States and Iran both warned they were ready for war as the clock ticked down on a ceasefire on Tuesday, with uncertainty over whether talks that President Donald Trump had announced would resume in Pakistan. The White House said Vice President JD Vance was ready to fly back to Islamabad, which was preparing for a second round of talks on ending the war that has engulfed the Middle East and shaken global markets. However, Tehran's government declined to confirm that it would participate and accused the United States of violating the truce through its blockade of Iranian ports and seizure of a ship. "By imposing a blockade and violating the ceasefire, Trump wants to turn this negotiating table into a surrender table or justify renewed hostilities, as he sees fit," said Iran's powerful parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, who headed the delegations to talks in the Pakistani capital two weeks ago. "We do not accept negotiations under the shadow of threats, and in the last two weeks we have been preparing to show new cards on the battlefield," he wrote on X. Iran's Revolutionary Guards warned of targeting any vessel attempting to pass through the Strait of Hormuz without permission. Trump has similarly accused Tehran of violating the truce by harassing vessels in the key strait, the transit passage for about a fifth of the world's oil that Iran had all but shut in retaliation for the war launched by the United States and Israel on February 28. The channel sees around 120 daily transits in peacetime, according to Lloyd's List, a shipping industry intelligence site. The site reported on Tuesday that more than 20 Iranian "shadow vessels" had transited past the US blockade. Trump insisted in one of a series of posts on his Truth Social platform that the blockade was "absolutely destroying" Iran and said it will not end "until there is a 'DEAL'," in which the United States is pressing for Iranian concessions on its contested nuclear programme. "Agreed to attend talks Trump told PBS News that Iran was" supposed to be there" at the talks in Pakistan. "We agreed to be there," he said, warning that if the ceasefire expired "then lots of bombs start going off". He separately told Bloomberg News it was "highly unlikely" he would extend the two-week truce. Based on its start time, the truce theoretically expires overnight on Tuesday, Tehran time, although Trump said in his comments to Bloomberg the end was a day later, on Wednesday evening Washington time. Oil prices fell on

Tuesday while most stocks rose on lingering hopes for a deal to end the war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz. Despite some normality returning to Tehran during the ceasefire, city residents who spoke to Paris-based AFP journalists said the situation was far from ideal. "Let's see what happens by Tuesday," one 30-year-old doctor said on condition of anonymity. Saghar, 39, said there was little hope for Iranians squeezed by the government and the war's impact, adding that the "economy is horrible".

**New Israel-Lebanon talks** A separate ceasefire agreed between Israel and Lebanon was announced on Friday and included Hezbollah, whose rocket fire in support of Iran drew Lebanon into the war. Israel and Lebanon, which have no diplomatic relations, will hold a second round of talks in Washington on Thursday, a State Department official told AFP. Sporadic violence continued and Israel's military warned civilians against returning to dozens of villages in southern Lebanon, claiming Hezbollah's activities were violating the truce. The UN Security Council condemned on Monday the killing of a French peacekeeper in Lebanon, whose death Paris blamed on Hezbollah. The Frenchman was killed and three others wounded when their unit was ambushed on Saturday as it headed to a UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) outpost cut off from the fighting between Hezbollah and Israel. Hezbollah lawmaker Hassan Fadlallah told AFP that his group would work to break the "Yellow Line" that Israel has established in the south, even as he said it wanted "the ceasefire to continue". Israeli attacks on Lebanon have killed at least 2,387 people since the start of the war, a Lebanese government body said in its latest toll. Another major issue in the US-Iran negotiations has been Tehran's stockpile of enriched uranium. Trump, who previously said Iran had agreed to hand over the uranium, said late on Monday that doing so would be "long" and "difficult" after US strikes on Tehran's nuclear sites last year. "Operation Midnight Hammer was a complete and total obliteration of the Nuclear Dust sites in Iran," Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform. "Therefore, digging it out will be a long and difficult process." Trump uses the term "nuclear dust" to refer to Iran's stock of enriched uranium, which the United States accuses Iran of hoarding in order to make an atomic bomb. Iran's foreign ministry said earlier that the stockpile was "not going to be transferred anywhere" and that the option was "never raised" in talks with US negotiators.

- [Marcos names new peace adviser](#) (2026-04-21 04:13)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Interior secretary Mel Senen Sarmiento has been appointed as the Presidential Adviser for Peace, Reconciliation and Unity, bringing his long record in local governance and legislative reform to the government's peace building efforts, The Manila Times' source said Tuesday. Sarmiento will replace Carlito Galvez Jr., who has stepped down from his post. A former member of the House of Representatives representing the 1st District of Samar from 2010 to 2015, Sarmiento served during a critical period when Congress deliberated on the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law. He was the principal author of House Bill 4994, a key legislative measure that sought to establish a new autonomous political entity in Muslim Mindanao, replacing the previous regional framework. Beyond his role in peace-related legislation, Sarmiento also authored and co-authored several major national laws, including Republic Act (RA) 10630, which strengthened the juvenile justice system, and RA 10364, which

expanded the country's anti-trafficking framework. He was also an original author of RA 11232, or the Revised Corporation Code, and RA 11392, which institutionalized national performing arts companies. Sarmiento also brings to the position his experience as secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) from September 2015 to June 2016, where he oversaw key national bodies involved in peace and security, including serving as chairman of the National Peace and Order Council and vice chairman for disaster preparedness of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council. As DILG chief, he likewise sat in multiple inter-agency bodies such as the Justice Sector Coordinating Council and the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking, providing him exposure to cross-sectoral coordination - an essential component in advancing peace and reconciliation efforts. Prior to his national roles, Sarmiento built his political career at the local level, serving as mayor of Calbayog City for three terms from 2001 to 2010, and earlier as vice mayor. He also served as secretary general of the League of Cities of the Philippines and chaired the Regional Development Council in Eastern Visayas, underscoring his grounding in grassroots governance.

- [LTFRB sets hearing on petition for P10 jeepney fare hike](#) (2026-04-21 03:41)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) scheduled a public hearing on a petition filed by transport group Piston seeking a P10 increase in the minimum jeepney fare, its chairman said Tuesday. LTFRB Chairman Vigor Mendoza II said the petition would undergo formal review, with commuter groups and other stakeholders invited to submit their positions as part of the regulatory process. “I have already ordered that it be set for hearing. We will also give commuter groups and other sectors the opportunity to comment,” Mendoza said in an interview, noting the urgency of the request. The current minimum jeepney fare stands at P13. If approved, the proposed increase would bring it to P23. Mendoza said fare adjustments were typically guided by fuel price movements, citing a long-standing rule of thumb of a P1 fare increase for every P10 rise in fuel prices. Under this benchmark, a P10 hike would correspond to an estimated P100 increase in fuel costs. However, he noted that while fuel prices had previously surged to levels that could justify such an adjustment, recent declines could affect the basis of the petition. The LTFRB chief said the board would weigh the petition against commuter affordability and broader economic conditions. “We will study that, and most important of all is the balance and affordability for our commuters. Can they afford the additional P10 if we grant it?” he said. Mendoza also recalled that the board had issued a decision on a fare hike petition more than two years ago, but its implementation was deferred due to concerns over its impact on the public. He said the timeline for resolving the new petition would depend on the level of opposition. If uncontested, a decision could be reached within two to three months, subject to requirements such as publication notices, consultation with the Office of the Solicitor General, and coordination with economic and labor agencies. “It depends on the opposition. If there is none, the process will be faster,” he said. Mendoza warned that any fare increase could have wider economic implications, noting that jeepney fares tend to have a significant inflationary effect due to their widespread use.

- [DMW assures aid, justice for 2 OFWs killed in Lebanon](#) (2026-04-21 03:07)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) on Tuesday extended assistance to the families of two overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) killed in Beirut, Lebanon last April 15. In a statement, the DMW said the pair was killed by their employer during a hostage incident in the Lebanese capital. “The victims, both long-time household service workers in the residence, were fatally shot during the incident. The employer has been arrested and is currently under police custody pending formal charges,” the DMW said. DMW Undersecretaries Bernard Olalia and Felicitas Bay will personally visit the victims’ families to convey their condolences to assure them of government support. The DMW said the Migrant Workers Office (MWO) in Beirut, together with the Philippine Embassy in Lebanon, is “coordinating with local authorities to ensure a thorough investigation and the filing of appropriate charges”.

- [Oil jumps on Hormuz tensions, stocks mostly retreat](#) (2026-04-21 02:18)

NEW YORK, United States — US and European stocks reversed Monday as oil prices surged over fears hostilities could resume in the weeks-long Middle East war after Iran closed the Strait of Hormuz following its brief reopening. Investors were on edge approaching the end of the US-Iran ceasefire, with Washington saying it will send a delegation to Pakistan for a new round of talks “soon” and Iran saying it had yet to decide whether to attend. “The market mood is very different at the start of the week compared to Friday,” said Kathleen Brooks, research director at trading group XTB. Crude had plunged Friday after the Islamic republic said it would again allow ships to pass through the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas usually passes. But world oil prices bounced on Monday as Iran closed the waterway and said the US blockade and seizure of an Iranian cargo ship breached the two-week ceasefire. “Renewed attacks on commercial vessels in the Strait of Hormuz increased fears of supply disruptions and raised the risk of a broader escalation in hostilities between the US and Iran,” said Trade Nation analyst David Morrison. “Uncertainty also remains over whether negotiations in Islamabad will proceed after Iran said it would not attend talks while the blockade remains in place,” he added. Wall Street’s main stock indices dipped, with the S&P 500 and Nasdaq Composite edging down from record closes. While US investors are wary over what happens next, “they are afraid to step away from the market because we know that if a deal is announced, the market’s going to go up very quickly,” said Jack Ablin of Cresset Capital Management. The losses were sharper in Europe. Frankfurt dropped 1.2 percent, Paris shed 1.1 percent and London gave up 0.6 percent. That came after gains for Tokyo, Hong Kong and Shanghai. “Asian shares rebounded as they were in catch-up mode, having missed the rally seen in the US and Europe on Friday,” said AJ Bell investment director Russ Mould. “European indices presented a truer picture of the market mood, with investor wariness and weariness amid the continuing tensions in the Middle East,” he added before trading began in New York. The blockade of Iranian ports has been a significant sticking point in negotiations between the two countries, with both accusing the other of ceasefire violations. There has so far been only one negotiating session, held in Islamabad on April 11 that ended inconclusively, although groundwork for fresh talks continued afterwards. Chris Weston at Pepperstone said traders

were assessing "whether the ceasefire can be salvaged through this week' s diplomatic talks, with recalibration on the probability of military escalation". "Without a comprehensive agreement on Iran' s nuclear program, the ceasefire remained fragile." Key figures around 2050 GMT West Texas Intermediate: UP 6.9 percent at \$89.61 a barrel Brent North Sea Crude: UP 5.6 percent at \$95.48 a barrel New York - Dow Jones: DOWN less than 0.1 percent at 49,442.56 (close) New York - S&P 500: DOWN 0.2 percent at 7,109.14 (close) New York - Nasdaq Composite: DOWN 0.3 percent at 24,404.39 (close) London - FTSE 100: DOWN 0.6 percent at 10,609.08 (close) Paris - CAC 40: DOWN 1.1 percent at 8,331.05 (close) Frankfurt - DAX: DOWN 1.2 percent at 24,417.80 (close) Tokyo - Nikkei 225: UP 0.6 percent at 58,824.89 (close) Hong Kong - Hang Seng Index: UP 0.8 percent at 26,361.07 (close) Shanghai - Composite: UP 0.7 percent at 4,082.13 (close) Euro/dollar: UP at \$1.1786 from \$1.1765 on Friday Pound/dollar: UP at \$1.3535 from \$1.3516 Dollar/yen: UP at 158.88 yen from 158.64 yen Euro/pound: UP at 87.07 pence from 87.04 pence

- [Pasig tests recycled-plastic housing for community upgrades](#) (2026-04-21 01:36)

MANILA, Philippines — Pasig City is testing a transition housing unit made from recycled plastic as a temporary shelter option for families who may be displaced during community upgrading works. Mayor Vico Sotto said Monday evening that the modular unit may help residents temporarily while infrastructure projects were being carried out in their original communities. He said the sample unit, designed by Evergreen Labs, could be completed in two weeks and was durable despite being made from recycled plastic. The city chief said Pasig has awarded thousands of lots to Pasigueño families, but acknowledged that some areas in the city still needed to be physically upgraded. He said the modular setup could become a useful temporary housing model as the city improved older communities. Foreign officials from Sweden, Denmark and Norway, along with the Nordic Council of Ministers, were present during the presentation of the sample housing unit. The project gives Pasig a possible faster-build relocation option as it works on community improvement and housing-related upgrades.

- [Easterlies to bring warm, humid weather in Metro Manila, parts of PH](#) (2026-04-20 23:13)

MANILA, Philippines — The weather system - the easterlies - has resurfaced and is expected to bring warm and humid weather over Metro Manila and most parts of the country over the next three days, the state-run weather agency said on Tuesday. Weather specialist Veronica Torres of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said easterly winds would also affect Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) and Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan). The Bicol Region, Visayas, and Mindanao will have the same weather system in which partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rain showers or thunderstorms would occur. "During severe thunderstorms, flash floods or landslides would be possible in these areas," the Pagasa forecaster warned. In its 5 a.m. advisory, the national weather bureau said the rest of Luzon would likely experience a similar weather pattern but due to the localized thunderstorms. The highest heat index is likely to occur anew over Sangley Point, Cavite at 43 degrees Celsius, which falls under danger

category. Metro Manila, meanwhile, may hit 39 degrees Celsius heat index on Tuesday, it added.

- [Marcos bounces back in trust, performance](#) (2026-04-20 16:17)

(UPDATE) PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. regained ground in both trust and performance ratings in the first quarter of 2026, while Vice President Sara Duterte saw her performance score decline significantly, according to the latest Tugon ng Masa (TNM) survey conducted by independent pollster Octa Research. The non-commissioned nationwide survey, fielded from March 19 to 25, 2026, showed Marcos' trust rating climbing to 54 percent — a 6-percentage-point increase from the 48 percent recorded in the fourth quarter of 2025. The improvement exceeded the survey's  $\pm 3$  percent margin of error. The president also posted a 55-percent performance rating in the first quarter, up 4 percentage points from 51 percent in the previous quarter. That increase also surpassed the margin of error. Vice President Duterte, meanwhile, maintained a majority trust rating of 55 percent, slightly higher than the 53 percent she received in Q4 2025. However, her performance rating declined by 4 percentage points — from 54 percent to 50 percent — a drop that also exceeded the survey's margin of error. The survey covered 1,200 adult Filipinos aged 18 and above, selected through probability sampling, using face-to-face interviews. The national margin of error is  $\pm 3$  percent at a 95-percent confidence level. Sub-national estimates for the National Capital Region, Balance Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao each have a margin of error of  $\pm 6$  percent. Octa Research emphasized that the TNM survey is independent, nonpartisan, and released as a public service. Fieldwork was conducted from March 19 to 25, 2026.

- [Crude prices shoot up on Iran war escalation](#) (2026-04-20 16:15)

OIL prices surged Monday after a US destroyer fired on an Iranian-flagged cargo ship that tried to evade a US naval blockade in the Gulf of Oman Sunday, and Iran warned that it would soon retaliate against the “armed piracy” and the US military. The standoff between Iran and the US prevented tankers from using the Strait of Hormuz, the Persian Gulf waterway that is crucial to global energy supplies. The price of US crude oil increased 6.4 percent to \$87.90 per barrel an hour after trading resumed on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. The price of Brent crude, the international standard, climbed 5.8 percent to \$95.64 per barrel. The market reaction followed more than two days of lifted hopes and dashed expectations involving the strait. Crude prices plunged more than 9 percent Friday after Iran said it would fully reopen the strait, which it effectively controls, to commercial traffic. Tehran reversed that decision and fired on several vessels Saturday after President Donald Trump said a US Navy blockade of Iranian ports would remain in effect. On Sunday, Trump said the US attacked and forcibly seized an Iranian-flagged cargo ship that allegedly tried to get around the blockade. Iran's joint military command vowed to respond. Sunday's higher prices wiped out much of the declines seen Friday, signaling renewed doubts about how soon ships will again transport the vast amounts of oil the world gets from the Middle East. Contracts for West Texas Intermediate and Brent jumped sharply Monday, days before the end of a two-week ceasefire. The blockade of Iranian ports has been a significant sticking point in negotiations between the two countries, and state



broadcaster IRIB cited Iranian sources as saying “there are currently no plans to participate in the next round of Iran-US talks” in Pakistan. The Fars and Tasnim news agencies had earlier cited anonymous sources as saying “the overall atmosphere cannot be assessed as very positive,” adding that lifting the US blockade was a precondition for negotiations. WTI jumped more than 7 percent at one point, while Brent piled on more than 6 percent. There has so far been only a single, 21-hour negotiating session held in Islamabad on April 11 that ended inconclusively, though groundwork for fresh talks continued afterwards. “We’re offering a very fair and reasonable DEAL, and I hope they take it,” Trump said in a social media post Sunday, while also renewing his threats against Iran’s infrastructure if a deal is not made. But Iran’s Revolutionary Guards warned that any attempt to pass through the strait without permission “will be considered cooperation with the enemy, and the offending vessel will be targeted.” Foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said the blockade was “a violation” of the ceasefire. A spokesman for the military’s central command center, Khatam Al-Anbiya, accused the United States of having “violated the ceasefire” that has been in place since April 8. US President Donald Trump posted Sunday on Truth Social that after the Iranian vessel, *Touska*, ignored warnings to stop, the guided missile destroyer USS *Spruance* “stopped them right in their tracks by blowing a hole in the engine room.” “Right now, US Marines have custody of the vessel,” the US president added, “and are seeing what’s on board!” The incident comes with tensions high in the Strait of Hormuz, a vital conduit for the world’s oil and liquefied natural gas, which has been virtually closed since the start of the US-Israeli war with Iran seven weeks ago. Iran briefly reopened the strait on Friday in recognition of an Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire in Lebanon, but closed it again the following day in response to the United States maintaining its blockade on ships traveling to and from Iranian ports. In an earlier post on Sunday, Trump accused Tehran of violating the ceasefire, which expires Wednesday, by launching attacks on Saturday in the vital shipping lane.

- [BrahMos simulated firing part of Balikatan exercise](#) (2026-04-20 16:14)

THE Indian-made BrahMos cruise missile system, considered the most powerful weapon in the Philippine arsenal, will be subjected to simulation firing during the maritime strike phase of the Balikatan military exercises, which opened Monday. The BrahMos is a shore-based, supersonic anti-ship cruise missile system procured from India under a \$375-million deal signed in January 2022 to enhance maritime deterrence, particularly in the West Philippine Sea (WPS). Operated by the Philippine Marine Corps’ Coastal Defense Regiment, the missile can travel at speeds up to Mach 2.8 and has a range of 290 km, with the first units delivered in April 2024 and unveiled in November 2025. Some 17,000 troops from the United States, the Philippines, Australia, Canada, France and New Zealand will train together in the biggest Balikatan to date. Representatives from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Poland, Czechia, Lithuania, Germany, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea and India are listed as observers. Maj. Gen. Francisco Lorenzo Jr., Philippine exercise director, said the missile system would be used in simulation during a live fire maritime strike exercise in which troops from the Philippines, the United States and Japan would fire at a decommissioned patrol ship to



sink it. In its simulation firing, all sensors and fire control systems of the BrahMos system will be activated as if in an actual scenario, except that no missiles will be launched. Lt. Gen. Christian Wortman, commanding general of the I Marine Expeditionary Force, said the exact systems to be used by all participating nations are yet to be finalized but everyone is expected to bring in capabilities that will directly support combined and joint operations. He confirmed the presence of the Typhon Medium Range Capability (MRC) missile system in the Philippines, and said it would be incorporated “at some level” during the course of the exercise. Wortman added that they are also looking forward to the incorporation of the BrahMos, Typhon, NMESIS (Navy-Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System) and other-end systems into Balikatan. “We think it’s important that we gain experience planning, coordinating and integrating these capabilities, which have the potential to be more powerful when incorporated or applied together,” he said. The Typhon MRC was first deployed in the Philippines during the April 2024 “Salaknib” Army to Army exercise. It is a weapons platform capable of firing long-range missiles like Tomahawk Land Attack Missile and the Standard Missile-6, believed to have a range at least 1,000 nautical miles. China has objected to its presence in the Philippines. Meanwhile, NMESIS, a mobile anti-ship missile system with a range of 100 nautical miles, was first used in last year’s Balikatan. Wortman also highlighted the participation of BRP Quezon (PS-70), the decommissioned Philippine Navy patrol ship whose final fate is to be the target for the maritime strike activities. Originally a wartime US Navy Auk-class minesweeper, the 77-year-old PS-70 is nearly as old as the 74-year-old Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) between the Philippines and the United States, making its final act of service. Balikatan not against China Both Philippine and US military officials emphasized that Balikatan is not in any way a form of provocation against China, which has objected to military exercise staged by the Philippines and its defense partners in the WPS. “Emphatically no,” Wortman said when asked if the Balikatan was aimed at China. He emphasized that the exercise is simply about reinforcing the alliance between the US, the Philippines and its growing partners showing both nations’ iron-clad commitment to the MDT. “There is no target nation in terms of an adversary force that we’re exercising against. Our exercise objectives are really defined by that interoperability and readiness and our ability to support stability and a full range of operations from humanitarian assistance to security operations,” Wortman said. Wortman also said the US forces “do not have any plans” of expanding its presence in the country following President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s statement that the Philippines would surely be dragged into a conflict if Taiwan would be invaded by China. Lorenzo said US forces are expected to leave after the conclusion of exercise Balikatan on May 8. Both exercise directors also clarified that the military drills of both US and Filipino forces will not make the Philippines a target of retaliatory attacks by Iran because Balikatan is “not related” to the ongoing regional tensions within the Gulf states. Cornerstone At the Balikatan opening ceremony, US Embassy Chargé d’ Affaires, ad iterim Y. Robert Ewing described the 75-year-old MDT as “a cornerstone of peace and stability that has remained not only relevant, but essential, to the security architecture of the Indo-Pacific.” “For three-quarters of a century, this treaty has stood as a living testament to the enduring strength of the US-Philippines relationship — adapting to meet new challenges while remaining firmly grounded in our shared values, democratic principles, and common purpose,” he said. Ewing

confirmed that the 2026 iteration is the largest in Balikatan's history. Alongside US and Philippine forces, troops from the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, France, Japan, and New Zealand are participating in combined and joint operations. The exercise will cover all domains — land, sea, air, cyber, and space — reflecting what Ewing called “the complexity of today's security environment” and the allies' commitment to “readiness, interoperability, and collective defense.” “The very name ‘Balikatan,’ meaning ‘shoulder to shoulder,’ captures the essence of our alliance. We do not merely stand beside one another — we stand with one another, sharing responsibilities, facing challenges together, and supporting each other in times of need, whether in response to natural disasters, humanitarian crises, or security threats,” Ewing said. Beyond military drills Ewing stressed that Balikatan extends beyond military training. He pointed to the exercise's humanitarian civic assistance programs, which will construct classrooms, health facilities, and multi-purpose structures in partnership with local communities. Community health engagements are also scheduled, providing medical services, training, and education in trauma care, preventive medicine, and public health. “These efforts — alongside our civil-military engagements — help strengthen trust, deepen relationships, and improve lives across communities. They reflect a whole-of-society approach, ensuring that our work reaches from national leadership to the barangay level and responds to real needs on the ground,” he said. “This is our alliance in action — delivering meaningful impact where it matters most: in the daily lives of the Filipino people.” Over the coming weeks, Ewing said the two nations will reaffirm their “ironclad alliance both through words and action.” He noted that the professionalism, dedication, and capability of joint and combined forces will demonstrate commitment to regional security and to a free and open Indo-Pacific. Balikatan, which began in 1981, is the largest annual bilateral training exercise between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the US military. It has evolved from traditional field training to include maritime security, cyber defense, and humanitarian assistance components. The 2026 exercise comes amid heightened attention to security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

- [Witness says P299M sent in grocery boxes](#) (2026-04-20 16:13)

PROSECUTION witness Monica Louis Ocampo-Santos told the Sandiganbayan on Monday that P299 million was delivered to Brice Hernandez in connection with five projects — one of which included the subject of the case filed against former senator Bong Revilla Jr. and several others. Santos, who had served as a liaison officer of SYMS Construction, testified at the resumption of the hearing on the bail petitions filed by Revilla and most of his co-accused in the malversation through falsification case in connection with an alleged ghost project in Pandi, Bulacan. Answering questions from Associate Justice Karl Miranda, the chairman of the court's Third Division, she told the court that P74 million was delivered in connection with the project to Hernandez, a former assistant district engineer of the Department of Public Works and Highways' Bulacan 1st District Engineering Office. She said that the P299 million was placed in grocery boxes and delivered to Hernandez' office in 2025. Revilla's camp has said that he had no hand in the project in Pandi, whether it was a ghost project or not. The other accused were

Hernandez, Juanito Mendoza, Arjay Domasig, Emelita Juat, Christina Mae Pineda, and Jaypee Mendoza. The accused, except Jaypee Mendoza, are seeking bail. The case was filed by the Office of the Ombudsman in January 2026. Revilla refused to enter a plea during his arraignment in February, but the court entered a “not guilty” plea for him. Juanito Mendoza, Hernandez, Jaypee Mendoza, Domasig, Juat, and Pineda pleaded not guilty to the charge.

- [Chicken inasal gets nod at Ottawa chef showcase](#) (2026-04-20 16:12)

(UPDATE) CHICKEN “inasal” barbecue and other Filipino street food recently won the Judges’ Award at the 2026 YMCA Embassy Chef Showcase in Ottawa, the Philippine embassy in Canada said. The embassy, represented by Filipino Chef David Vinoya, snatched the award after featuring the street corner-themed Filipino cuisine. The embassy featured a curated selection of Filipino favorites such as beef tapa barbecue, chicken inasal barbecue, longganisa barbecue, pork barbecue and achara (pickled papaya) — collectively presented as “D’ Original Mang David’s BBQ.” The panel of judges, headed by Margaret Dickenson, a world-renowned Canadian cookbook author, columnist, and television host, “recognized the Philippine entry for its excellence in execution, presentation, taste, and creativity,” the embassy said. Philippine Ambassador to Canada Jose Victor Chan-Gonzaga said the event celebrated cultural diversity through cuisine while supporting charitable causes. “We did not only want Ottawa to get a taste of Philippine street food,” he said. “We wanted to let Ottawa experience how Filipinos end their work days, whether waiting in Cubao for their buses or jeepneys, or going home to their barangays, by eating comfort food at grill stations very much like D’ Original Mang David’s BBQ,” Chan-Gonzaga said. The Philippine booth became one of the event’s main attractions, with long lines of guests eager to sample the Philippines’ offerings. Guests enjoyed the authentic street food experience of dipping the BBQ skewers into classic Filipino sauces, the embassy said. The competition, held at the Horticulture Building in Lansdowne Park, Ottawa on April 16, brought together 15 countries, “each presenting signature dishes that reflect their respective culinary traditions,” it added. The embassy said the event provided “an excellent opportunity to highlight the Philippines’ culinary traditions while contributing to a meaningful cause,” as it celebrates Filipino Food Month and Filipino Restaurant Month in Canada. “Representing the Philippines was Executive Chef David Vinoya, assisted by Chef Jan Michael Co, who did a good job, not just in replicating the Philippine street food scene, but also recreating the day-to-day experience of Filipinos while showcasing his culinary caliber,” the embassy said. The embassy said its participation underscored its continuing efforts to “promote Philippine culture and gastronomy on the international stage, while supporting initiatives that foster cultural exchange and community engagement.” The experience was further enriched by “Love the Philippines” tourism campaign visuals, including posters and video presentations that showcased the country’s cultural and culinary heritage.

- [We will bring Zaldy Co home – Marcos](#) (2026-04-20 16:11)

(UPDATE) PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday reiterated his administration’s resolve to bring former Ako Bicol party-list representative Zaldy Co back to the Philippines. Last April 16,

Co was stopped at the German border after entering from the Czech Republic. He was denied entry and returned to Czech authorities, where he remains in custody. Co is facing charges in the Philippines for alleged involvement in the massive corruption tied to anomalous flood control projects. In a video message released by Malacañang, the president said Co remains in Czech Republic custody, and that he has directed the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to coordinate with the Czech authorities in ensuring that all necessary procedures are in order. The Philippine government has yet to provide photo or video documentation of Co's detention in the Czech Republic. The former lawmaker left the Philippines in July 2025, citing he needed medical treatment abroad. Co and several others were charged over the questionable P289.5-million flood works in Oriental Mindoro. After being implicated in the flood control scandal, Co was declared a "fugitive from justice" by the Sandiganbayan, who later ordered the DFA to cancel his Philippine passport. The court issued an arrest warrant for Co last November, and ordered the Anti-Money Laundering Council to freeze his assets.

- [Transport groups mount another 3-day strike](#) (2026-04-20 16:10)

TRANSPORT groups Manibela and Piston will stage another three-day transport strike starting today, April 21, as the groups push for further fuel price rollbacks and press the government for stronger relief amid the energy crisis. Manibela held a strike from April 15 to 17 over high oil prices and what it described as government inaction. Manibela Chairman Mar Valbuena said recent rollbacks were not enough, and that fuel prices should be slashed to about P50 to P60 per liter because that was the "real price" of fuel. Valbuena reiterated the group's call to remove value-added tax (VAT) and excise tax on diesel and gasoline products, saying drivers were still being crushed by high operating costs. Piston said the April 21 action would form part of a broader "Protestang Bayan" against war, high prices and poverty. In its statement, the group accused the Marcos administration of failing to respond adequately to the crisis and blamed rising fuel prices and other economic burdens for worsening the hardship faced by drivers and ordinary Filipinos. Manibela said it would proceed with the new three-day strike despite two successive fuel price rollbacks, insisting that drivers still needed more substantial intervention from the government. The Marcos administration has suspended taxes on kerosene and liquefied petroleum gas, while discussions on gasoline and diesel taxes remained under review. The fuel price rollbacks continue for the second week as the global oil market reacted to the ceasefire between the United States and Iran. Diesel was down by P24.94 per liter, gasoline by P3.41 per liter, and kerosene P2 per liter.

- [Motorcycle drivers' payout plan reviewed](#) (2026-04-20 16:09)

THE Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is reviewing its payout process for distributing cash relief assistance (CRA) to motorcycle taxi drivers and delivery riders in Metro Manila. The review follows reports of issues encountered during the April 18 to 19 special payouts. Assistant Secretary Irene Dumlao said the agency is preparing additional payout schedules to ensure all qualified beneficiaries receive cash aid. Dumlao said there are still

motorcycle taxi and delivery riders from Metro Manila who have not yet received their cash aid. “The DSWD decided to add payout schedules in the coming week, and we are looking to conduct this within the week,” she said. The DSWD admitted that despite extensive coordination with local government units, transport network companies, and delivery service groups, unexpected issues have cropped up. “We are studying and assessing these to prevent them from happening again,” Dumlao said. “For those who were not able to meet the cut-offs and have not yet claimed their cash relief assistance, we will not allow them to miss out, and we are studying the best way to address the issues encountered,” he said. Dumlao also conveyed condolences to the family of a driver who died while lining up at a payout center, stressing that capacity and safety considerations will be reviewed. The DSWD urged beneficiaries to check official announcements through its platforms and the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) for updates on payout schedules.

- [Comelec open to BSKE postponement](#) (2026-04-20 16:08)

THE Commission on Elections (Comelec) said it will not oppose Congress’ latest move to postpone the Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections (BSKE) on one condition: the reset must not go beyond May 2027. Comelec Chairman George Erwin Garcia stressed that pushing the polls past May would collide with the poll body’s full-scale preparations for the 2028 presidential elections, which begin in June 2027. “The new date must not extend beyond May 2027, as preparations for the automated elections will already be in full swing by June,” Garcia said. The House of Representatives is considering another reset of the BSKE, scheduled on Nov. 2 this year. Albee Benitez, deputy speaker and Bacolod City representative, proposed moving the elections and redirecting the P19-billion budget to mitigating the impact of soaring fuel prices and rising costs of basic goods amid the Middle East crisis. Congress has appropriated P19 billion for the BSKE, of which roughly P3 billion has already been spent by Comelec for printing around 90 million ballots and other election-related procurements. Garcia said that while Congress has the authority to reset elections, it cannot simply realign election funds to other uses. He pointed to 1987 Philippine Constitution, which prohibits the transfer of appropriations, except under specific conditions allowing limited augmentation within the same office. Still, the Comelec chief said the remaining P16 billion could be declared as savings if the elections are postponed. The money would then be reverted to the National Treasury. Garcia noted that any use of such funds must meet a “legitimate government interest,” citing a landmark Supreme Court ruling that struck down Republic Act 11935. For now, the Comelec is pressing ahead with preparations for the Nov. 2 BSKE. The last BSKE was held on Oct. 30, 2023. Meanwhile, Sen. JV Ejercito warned that the “productive years” of some aspiring young community leaders would go to waste if the youth council elections were postponed again. The senator noted that the holding of the BSKE had been suspended before on various grounds.

“Many of our fellow Filipinos wanted to choose their next leaders,” Ejercito said in Filipino. “Perhaps, some young Filipinos may miss the opportunity to serve [the public] because they are way past their productive years,” he said. He said that while Congress is empowered to suspend elections, it is necessary to study its legality. “If the oil crisis would be the reason to

postpone the BSKE, we must study whether it is within the guidelines issued by the SC (Supreme Court) in 2023,” Ejercito said. Sen. Imee Marcos earlier supported the postponement of the local elections to allow the government use the P16-billion poll budget for the sectors affected by the oil crisis. “At a time when the country is confronted with serious economic challenges brought about by the oil crisis, prudence demands that we prioritize the allocation of limited public resources,” Marcos said in a statement. Marcos said the fund “can be more urgently directed toward addressing the immediate needs of our people, including rising fuel costs, food security and essential public services.” “Equally important, postponement will allow our local officials to remain fully focused on governance and crisis response, rather than being drawn into the distractions of electoral politics,” she said. “In times such as these, continuity of leadership at the grassroots level can help ensure stability and more efficient delivery of public services.”

- [Strengthening Philippines' defense ties vital amid China tensions — think tank](#) (2026-04-20 16:07)

EXPANDING military cooperation with allied nations should anchor the Philippines’ strategic posture in the West Philippine Sea (WPS), a policy think tank said, citing rising tensions with China and the need for a stronger, alliance-driven defense framework. On the eve of the annual Balikatan Exercises, Stratbase ADR Institute President Victor Andres “Dindo” Manhit said deepening defense ties with like-minded partners is critical to safeguarding Philippine sovereignty and reinforcing a rules-based international order in the Indo-Pacific. This year’s Balikatan exercises, considered the largest to date, will involve more than 17,000 troops from the Philippines and partner nations, including the United States, Australia, Japan, Canada, France and New Zealand. Manhit said the scale and scope of the exercises signal a strengthening Philippine defense posture through credible partnerships. “These exercises represent the correct path forward. They send a clear and unambiguous message that the Philippines and its partners are prepared to defend the rules-based international order against coercion, intimidation and unlawful claims,” he said. Manhit added that expanded cooperation shows the Philippines is not acting in isolation but is anchored in a network of alliances with countries that uphold international law and support a free and open Indo-Pacific. His remarks came amid what he described as China’s increasingly “illegal, coercive, aggressive and deceptive” actions in the West Philippine Sea, as China continues to reject the 2016 ruling under the South China Sea Arbitration, which invalidated its sweeping claims in the South China Sea. The Philippines is set to mark the 10th anniversary of the arbitral ruling in July, a milestone that also recalls the role of former Foreign Affairs secretary Albert del Rosario in securing the decision. “That victory is final and nonnegotiable,” Manhit said. “To dilute it — whether through silence or inaction, especially as we approach its 10th anniversary — is to erode the legal and moral clarity it firmly established.” He said the Philippines is effectively in a “state of active defense” given ongoing developments in the disputed waters. “Public trust in engagements with China remains low because experience has repeatedly validated caution,” he said. “The Philippines must not bargain away its sovereign rights for promises that carry



neither credibility nor accountability.” Stratbase said a sustained strategy anchored on alliance-building, military interoperability and adherence to international law remains the most viable path forward in protecting the country’s maritime entitlements and supporting long-term regional stability.

- [Manila air still ‘unhealthy for sensitive groups’](#) (2026-04-20 16:06)

THE Manila city government on Monday classified the air quality in the city as “unhealthy for sensitive groups” as a fire at a sanitary landfill in Navotas City continues to smolder. In a statement, the Manila Public Information Office said the classification comes after air quality sensors activated by the Department of Environment and Public Services, and thermal drone images by the Manila City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Department showed the extent of damage caused by the fire. Thermal imaging enabled responders to detect heat signatures and pinpoint areas of extreme temperature within the landfill, providing the local government with a clearer picture of the situation and helping speed up firefighting operations, Manila Mayor Francisco “Isko Moreno” Domagoso said in Filipino in a Facebook post. Given the deteriorating air quality, Domagoso urged residents — particularly vulnerable sectors such as children, senior citizens and individuals with respiratory illnesses — to continue wearing face masks for protection.

- [Post Office offers fast release of postal IDs](#) (2026-04-20 16:05)

THE Philippine Postal Corp. (PHLPost) said applicants can now obtain their Postal ID on the same day at its branch on the fifth floor of the Government Express Center in SM City Manila. In an advisory, PHLPost said applications for same-day processing will be accepted between 11 a.m. and 12 noon. Requests filed beyond the cutoff will be processed for release the following day. Postal ID cards are released at 4 p.m., Monday to Friday. The agency said the move forms part of its ongoing expansion of satellite post offices in major shopping malls nationwide, aimed at improving public access to postal services by placing them in high-traffic locations. Applicants are required to appear in person and submit a completed application form, along with one valid proof of identity and proof of address. Accepted identification documents include a Philippine Statistics Authority-issued birth certificate, National ID, UMID, driver’s license, passport, or any government-issued ID bearing the applicant’s photo and signature. Proof of address may include a barangay certificate, utility bill, lease contract or similar documents. PHLPost said the Postal ID remains among the most widely accepted government-issued identification cards in the country, commonly used for financial transactions and other official purposes. Processing fees are P550 for regular applications and P650 for rush processing.

- [PAL pilots summoned over midflight incident](#) (2026-04-20 16:04)

THE Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) has summoned the pilots of a Philippine Airlines (PAL) plane to an investigation regarding cabin depressurization during midflight last Sunday. PAL Express flight 2P2544 was traveling from Dumaguete City to Manila when the plane encountered depressurization while cruising at 32,000 feet. The flight, carrying 175 passengers,



including three infants, was diverted to the Iloilo International Airport and landed safely at 4:27 p.m. Some passengers required medical attention, and CAAP confirmed they were promptly treated by airport staff and no major injuries were reported. The plane, an Airbus A320-214 (registry RP-C8619), was grounded for a technical inspection to determine if the failure resulted from component malfunction. “We recognize this was a difficult experience for those onboard, and we are assisting our passengers and crew,” PAL said in a statement on Sunday night.

- [Marikina City to start satellite payout for senior citizen social pensions](#) (2026-04-20 16:03)

MARIKINA City will begin releasing the first- and second-quarter social pension of senior citizens on Wednesday through satellite payout sites, allowing elderly beneficiaries to claim their aid closer to their communities. Marikina Mayor Marjorie “Maan” Teodoro announced the setup during the city’s flag ceremony on Monday. “What we will do is make it easier for our seniors because they will no longer need to travel far,” Teodoro said. “We will bring to our grandfathers and grandmothers the satellite areas where they can get their social pension. Simpler, faster, more caring,” she said. Senior citizens should wait for the letter that will be personally delivered by city workers and volunteers, indicating the venue and time for claiming their social pension. Teodoro also used the ceremony to highlight the city’s “Ligtas Komunidad Community Safety and Awareness Program,” in which personnel from the disaster risk reduction office, city rescue office, Bureau of Fire Protection, Philippine National Police, Marikina Social Office, Office of Public Safety and Security, City Veterinary Office and other departments visit barangay to provide information on fire prevention, local ordinances and disaster preparedness. “The truth is, it is not enough that only the government is prepared. The community, every family, must be prepared,” she said. Teodoro also reminded residents to uphold discipline, order, cleanliness and respect for one another, which she described as values associated with Marikina residents. The city’s environmental office, and the Marikina Animal Shelter and Rescue Office had also begun visiting communities to promote responsible pet ownership, she said.

- [COA disallows P375M OVP confidential funds](#) (2026-04-20 16:02)

THE Commission on Audit (COA) has disallowed in audit P375 million in confidential funds of the Office of the Vice President (OVP). COA found the following to be “responsible/liable” for the sum disallowed: Vice President Sara Duterte, Gina Acosta, Julieta Villadelrey, and Raymund Dante Lachica. “Please direct the aforementioned persons responsible/liable to settle immediately the said disallowance,” the Notice of Disallowance, which was dated March 31, read. A disallowance becomes final and executory if it is not appealed within six months or 180 days from receipt of the notice. In the notice, the COA said it had audited the submitted liquidation reports and supporting documents for the cash advances of confidential funds. It said that under a joint circular, “Cash advances shall be used for specific legal purpose related to CF and/or IF (intelligence fund). Under no circumstance shall it be transferred from one accountable to another.” It also disallowed P261,300,000 in confidential expenses. “The Certifications dated April 4, 2024 and September 30, 2023 issued by the VPSPG stated that the

confidential activities such as surveillance and information gathering conducted [...] during the 1st, 2nd and 3rd quarters of CY 2023, respectively, prevented untoward incidents from transpiring during the engagements of the Vice President in the implementation of the programs of the OVP, including the establishment of the three new Satellite Offices in Isabela, Cagayan Valley, Bicol and BARMM, and the implementation of the OVP Libreng Sakay Program, as reported in the attached Protective Intelligence Operations (PIO) in support to the Protective Security Operations intended for the security and safety of the VP and the implementation of the programs of the OVP from January 01 to September 30, 2023," the COA said in the notice. "However, these Certifications and PIO reports did not specify the particular accomplishments demonstrating the success of the information gathering and/or surveillance activities directly related to the confidential operations undertaken as required by Item 4.8.5.b of the Joint Circular that necessitated the payments of rewards," the notice said. It also said that the "purchases of supplies and provisions of medical/food aid totaling P199 million "were supported only by acknowledgment receipts." "Although the Joint Circular does not prescribe specificity to the documentary evidence of payments to be submitted to substantiate the disbursements made from the CF, this Office, pursuant to Item 6.2.3.7 of the Joint Circular, may require other supporting documents that we deem necessary for the proper evaluation of liquidation documents submitted. To ascertain the validity of such purchases of supplies and provision of medical and food aid, we deem it necessary that they be substantiated with appropriate documents such as official receipts or sales invoices. Though this Office recognizes that by the very nature of the CF where identities of those involved, i.e. the informants, for whom supplies were used, owners of safehouses, or owners of rented vehicles used for confidential activities, and the very details of the confidential activities are to be reasonably safeguarded, other details which can be disclosed evidencing validity should be submitted to warrant reasonable and adequate substantiation of the claimed confidential expenses in relation to Item 4.12 of the Joint Circular," it said.

- [No winners in Grand Lotto 6/55, Mega Lotto 6/45 draws for April 20](#) (2026-04-20 15:28)

There were no winners in the Grand Lotto 6/55 and Mega Lotto 6/45 draws on Monday night, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said. The winning combination for the Grand Lotto 6/55 was 33-36-17-40-22-45, with a jackpot prize of P58,762,800.20. There were also no winners in the Mega Lotto 6/45 draw, which had the winning combination 34-12-29-08-27-17 and a jackpot prize of P34,154,880.29.

- [Man found dead in Tondo condo; suspect dies after fall](#) (2026-04-20 15:12)

MANILA, Philippines — A man was found dead inside a condominium in Tondo, Manila, on Sunday night, while the alleged suspect later fell from the building and was pronounced dead at a nearby hospital. According to the initial report of the Manila Police District (MPD) on Monday, the incident happened at 9:12 pm Sunday, when witnesses found the victim, a 39-year-old resident, lying naked in the hallway. A cursory examination revealed multiple blunt force injuries to the head and face. The victim was then declared dead. Meanwhile, the MPD said that

while the witnesses were headed to the security office to report the incident, they saw the suspect, a 27-year-old male and resident of the same condominium, lying on the ground floor of the same building where he reportedly fell from the 8th floor. The suspect was rushed to Tondo Medical Center but was pronounced dead at 9:40 pm. Medical findings indicated his injuries were consistent with a fall from height. The MPD is conducting a full investigation into the incident.

- [PNP bus driver, supervisor relieved over Edsa busway crash](#) (2026-04-20 15:10)

MANILA, Philippines — The driver of the Philippine National Police (PNP) coaster bus that figured in a collision with an Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (Edsa) carousel bus in Quezon City has been relieved from his post along with his immediate supervisor, a PNP official said Monday. The two officers were relieved from their posts last Friday amid an administrative investigation into the incident that is ongoing, PNP Logistics Support Service (LSS) Director Brig. Gen. Noel Vallo bared in a press briefing in Camp Crame. “There are no sacred cows here. If you’re wrong, I’m sorry. This is just a job. Explain yourself. If there’s negligence on your part, sorry, you have to explain,” Vallo said. In a press briefing earlier on Monday, National Police Commission (Napolcom) Commissioner Rafael Calinisan identified the police bus driver as Chief Master Sgt. Jenifer Bredico. Vallo did not name Bredico’s immediate supervisor. During the Napolcom briefing, Edsa carousel bus driver Jessie Soledad alleged Bredico had demanded him to surrender his driver’s license, whereas passenger Marianne Ramos claimed no officers had guided the passengers after the incident. Bredico defended that he only entered the Edsa busway to get passengers for the Libreng Sakay program.

- [PNP Custodial center up for demolition, cannot detain Zaldy Co](#) (2026-04-20 14:35)

MANILA, Philippines — Fugitive former lawmaker Zaldy Co cannot be detained at the Custodial Center of the Philippine National Police (PNP) headquarters in Camp Crame upon his return to the country, as the facility is already slated for demolition, a PNP official said Monday. “The Custodial Center can no longer accommodate anyone apprehended by the PNP because it has already been condemned,” PCol. Randolph Tuaño, PNP Public Affairs chief, told reporters during a press briefing. He said that once Co undergoes physical and medical processing, he will be brought immediately to the Sandiganbayan for the return of the warrant—all within the same day—after which the court will decide where the former congressman will be detained. Tuaño added that the possibility of Co being held at the Custodial Center is now “moot and academic.” Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla earlier said Co would be brought to the PNP upon his return to the Philippines, noting that he would personally serve as the arresting officer and accompany the former lawmaker to the Sandiganbayan and to the PNP for processing to determine his fitness for trial. The PNP also assured transparency throughout the process—from Co’s arrival in the Philippines and transfer to Camp Crame to his physical and medical examination and the return of the warrant to the Sandiganbayan, Tuaño said. Authorities also assured Co’s safety while in custody. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. announced last week that Co was arrested in Prague after attempting to cross into the Czech Republic without proper

travel documents. Remulla said Co could be repatriated within one to three weeks, depending on the completion of processes led by the Department of Foreign Affairs. However, he noted that complications may arise, as the deportation order is based on a canceled passport rather than a red notice from the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol).

- [OVP to pursue remedies over disallowance of P375M](#) (2026-04-20 14:15)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the Vice President (OVP) said it will pursue remedies following the Commission on Audit's (COA) disallowance of P375 million in its confidential funds. In a statement on Monday, the OVP confirmed receipt of the "Notice of Disallowance pertaining to the 2023 Confidential Funds" and said it "will pursue the appropriate remedies in accordance with COA rules." COA identified the following individuals as

"responsible/liable" for the disallowed amount: Vice President Sara Duterte, Gina Acosta, Julieta Villadelrey, and Raymund Dante Lachica. "Please direct the aforementioned persons responsible/liable to immediately settle the said disallowance," the Notice of Disallowance (ND), dated March 31, 2026, read. Under the ND, the disallowance will become final and executory if it is not appealed within six months, or 180 days, from receipt.

- [US-PH 2026 Balikatan exercises is a commitment to regional security — US diplomat](#) (2026-04-20 13:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The 2026 Balikatan ("shoulder-to-shoulder") exercises between the United States and the Philippines demonstrate their unwavering commitment to regional security, US Embassy Chargé d' Affaires Robert Ewing said. The 41st edition of Balikatan brings together armed forces from the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, France, Japan, and New Zealand from April 20 to May 8. The exercise reaffirms the "ironclad alliance" between the United States and the Philippines, Ewing said during the Balikatan 2026 opening ceremony. He added that the professionalism, dedication, and capability of the two nations' joint and combined forces demonstrate their commitment to "a free and open Indo-Pacific." "This year's exercise is the largest in Balikatan's history, underscoring both the depth of our bilateral ties and the strength of our growing network of like-minded partners," Ewing said. US and Philippine forces are conducting combined and joint operations across all domains—land, sea, air, cyber, and space—alongside the six other participating armed forces. "These activities reflect not only the complexity of today's security environment but also our shared commitment to readiness, interoperability, and collective defense," Ewing added. For the third time, France is participating in the Balikatan exercises. It also marks the French Pacific Command's (FRPACOM) first contribution to a major inter-allied exercise in the region, according to FRPACOM. France is deploying about 20 military personnel to the multinational exercise headquarters staff, FRPACOM said in a statement shared by the French Embassy in Manila. "This contribution, which focuses on centralized allied command, will enhance interoperability with regional allies and partners while contributing to stability and security in the area," FRPACOM said. France also participated in the 2024 and 2025 exercises, amid improving military cooperation with the Philippines, highlighted by the signing of a Visiting

Forces Status Agreement on March 26, 2026, in Paris.FRPACOM, based in Papeete, relies on two permanent forces representing 3,200 military personnel stationed in New Caledonia and French Polynesia. “Its objective is to facilitate information sharing and ensure the coherence and effectiveness of French military operations in the theater,” FRPACOM said. “Through the reinforcement of its command structure, France reaffirms its status as a Pacific nation committed to regional stability,” it added.

- [Marcos inspects Service Contracting Program implementation at Araneta Center terminal](#) (2026-04-20 13:23)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday inspected the rollout of the government’ s Service Contracting Program (SCP) at the Araneta Center Passenger Terminal in Cubao, Quezon City.The SCP, being implemented by the Department of Transportation, is one of the administration’ s interventions to address the skyrocketing prices of fuel triggered by hostilities in the Middle East. It will run for two to three weeks. “We’re doing this, first and foremost, for our operators and drivers because the price of oil is too high, the price of diesel is too high, and they’re no longer making a profit. If they’re no longer making a profit, they won’t go out anymore—you’ll have no vehicles to ride. So, first and foremost, we’ll support the drivers and operators. Second, there are discounts we’re providing for the passengers,” Marcos said in Filipino.“As long as the price of oil remains high, the government’s assistance will continue,” he added.According to the DOTr, at least 19,000 public utility vehicles (PUV) — traditional and modern jeepneys as well as UV Express units, across the country have signed up for the SCP.Under the initiative, the government will pay drivers based on distance traveled: P30 per kilometer for traditional jeepneys, P40 per kilometer for modern jeepneys, and P100 per kilometer for buses.

- [DHSUD to create panel to look into concerns of Las Piñas village homeowners’ association](#) (2026-04-20 13:05)

MANILA, Philippines —The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) on Monday said that it would create an interim poll body in connection with the election of new officers of a village homeowners’ association in Las Piñas City.A ranking official of the agency told The Manila Times the DHSUD’ s National Capital Region (NCR) office has been assigned to look into the concerns of the members of the Woodridge Homeowners Association Inc. (WHAI) in Barangay Pulang Lupa.The official said the NCR office will issue an order on Monday for the appointment of an interim committee that will preside over the election.Earlier last week, WHAI members warned that chaos could mar the homeowners’ association election-related proceedings at the Woodridge Subdivision unless the DHSUD stepped in.The WHAI members have called on the department to intervene to stop alleged irregularities by members of an interim electoral body who were recently appointed by the agency itself.Former WHAI president Joselito Chua said the intervention of the DHSUD would prevent irregularities in the election of board members of the village. Chua’ s group claimed that the interim board failed to comply with the 30-day requirement for the organization of an

election committee (Elecom) as required under Section 8(b) of DHSUD Memorandum Circular 2025-003. “Notwithstanding such lapse, the remaining members of the interim board proceeded with the conduct of a general assembly and election-related activities on April 12, 2026,” the group said. Chua said they filed a formal notice of non-compliance and request for clarification, but “the interim board proceeded with the activity, the election of Elecom members.” Citing a department circular which requires that a majority of members in good standing must constitute a quorum for both general assembly and elections, Chua said only about 18 out of 108 homeowners were present during the assembly called by the interim body. The homeowners also said certain members of the interim body were also running as candidates in the polls, “raising serious concerns regarding conflict of interest, impartiality, and the independence of the election process.” Chua has called on the DHSUD to look into the alleged irregularities in the holding of the April 12 general assembly and declare actions taken beyond the mandatory 30-day period defective.

- [MWSS orders Maynilad to pay customers P54.2M](#) (2026-04-20 12:59)

MANILA, Philippines—The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System Regulatory Office (MWSS-RO) on Monday ordered Maynilad to pay its 165,518 customers bill rebates amounting to P54,283,839.29 for service interruptions in March. In a statement, the MWSS said that Maynilad should pay each affected customer P327.96. The payment should be reflected in the May billing period. “In March 2026, we monitored that there were prolonged and recurrent water service interruptions at southern portion of the West Concession area. Based on our investigation, Maynilad was found to have breached its service obligation to ensure the availability of an uninterrupted 24-hour water supply at a minimum pressure of 7 pounds per square inch to 165,518 connected customers within the Putatan and Poblacion Water treatment supply zones, particularly those in Las Piñas City, Muntinlupa City, Parañaque City, Imus City, and Bacoor City,” it said. The Manila Times reached out to Maynilad for comment on the order, but the company has yet to send a reply.

- [PNOC secures 21,000 metric tons of LPG from US](#) (2026-04-20 12:56)

MANILA, Philippines—The Department of Energy (DOE) on Monday said that the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC) has secured 21,000 metric tons of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) from the US. The LPG cargo, scheduled for delivery from May 20 to May 31, is expected to boost available supply. “Ensuring a stable and reliable supply of LPG is central to our responsibility to protect the welfare of every Filipino, from households that depend on it for their daily meals, to small businesses that keep our communities running. Overall, the government continues to strengthen the supply of LPG and other fuels while taking proactive steps to support stability amid global volatility,” Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said. As of April 17, 2026, the DOE said that the country’s LPG inventory stood at 40.26 days. The country’s gasoline supply is seen to last up to 54.47 days, diesel, 50.13 days, kerosene 129.93 days, and jet fuel, 60.69 days. The DOE said that the third and fourth diesel shipments secured under the government’s Emergency Energy Security Program will arrive on April 21 and April 24. “The government is actively



managing imports to bolster reserves. The third cargo of diesel, which consists of around 320,000 barrels of diesel, or 50.88 million liters, from Singapore will arrive in Subic. Meanwhile, the fourth shipment, likewise from Singapore with 330,000 barrels or 52.47 million liters, is scheduled to arrive in Davao," Garin said.

- [Tsunami warning as major quake hits northern Japan, shakes Tokyo](#) (2026-04-20 10:37)

TOKYO — A 7.5-magnitude earthquake struck northern Japan Monday, shaking large buildings in Tokyo hundreds of kilometers away and prompting a warning for tsunami waves of up to three meters (10 feet). The quake hit at 4:53 p.m. (0753 GMT) in Pacific waters off northern Iwate prefecture, Japan's Meteorological Agency (JMA) said. Around 40 minutes later, an 80-centimeter (31-inch) tsunami wave hit a port in Kuji in Iwate, according to the JMA, which initially estimated the quake's strength at 7.4 but later revised it upwards. "Evacuate immediately from coastal regions and riverside areas to a safer place such as high ground or an evacuation building," it said, warning that damage due to tsunami waves was expected. "Tsunami waves are expected to hit repeatedly. Do not leave safe ground until the warning is lifted," it said. Footage from national broadcaster NHK did not show any immediate visible damage around several ports in Iwate. A JMA official warned in a televised press briefing that more quakes could strike the area within the next week, particularly within the next two to three days, potentially "causing even stronger shaking." The prime minister's office said it had set up a crisis management team. "For those of you who live in areas for which the warnings have been issued, please evacuate to higher, safer places such as higher ground," Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi told reporters, adding that the government was trying to confirm whether there were any casualties or property damage. Japan is one of the world's most seismically active countries, sitting on top of four major tectonic plates along the western edge of the Pacific "Ring of Fire." The archipelago, home to around 125 million people, typically experiences around 1,500 jolts every year and accounts for about 18 percent of the world's earthquakes. The vast majority are mild, although the damage they cause varies according to their location and the depth below the Earth's surface at which they strike. Japan is haunted by the memory of a massive 9.0-magnitude undersea quake in 2011, which triggered a tsunami that killed or left missing around 18,500 people and caused a devastating meltdown at the Fukushima nuclear plant. In 2024, the JMA issued its first special advisory of a possible "megaquake" along the Nankai Trough. This 800-kilometer undersea trench is where the Philippine Sea oceanic tectonic plate is "subducting" — or slowly slipping — underneath the continental plate that Japan sits atop. The government has said a quake in the Nankai Trough and subsequent tsunami could kill as many as 298,000 people and cause up to \$2 trillion in damage. The JMA lifted the 2024 advisory after a week but it led to panic-buying of staples like rice and prompted holidaymakers to cancel hotel reservations. It issued a week-long second "megaquake" advisory in December 2025 after a magnitude-7.5 tremor struck off the northern coast. The December 8 quake triggered tsunami waves of up to 70 centimeters (28 inches) and injured more than 40 people, but no major damage was reported.

- [We will bring Zaldy Co home — Marcos](#) (2026-04-20 08:47)



MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday reiterated his administration's strong resolve to bring former Ako Bicol party-list representative Zaldy Co to the Philippines. Last week, Co was apprehended by authorities in the Czech Republic for immigration violations. He is wanted for his alleged involvement in massive corruption tied to anomalous flood control projects. "He remains in the custody of the Czech Republic and we are taking all necessary steps for his return to the Philippines. I have directed the Department of Justice together with the Department of Foreign Affairs to lead the coordination with the authorities of the Czech Republic to ensure that all necessary procedures are in order and in accordance with the process," Marcos said in Filipino in a video message released by Malacañang. A high-level team will be dispatched to coordinate with Czech officials, the President said. "These processes follow legal steps between countries and therefore require sufficient time to be carried out correctly," he said. "We will bring Zaldy Co home and we will do so in accordance with the law. He will answer to the Filipino people," he added.

- [Carney says Canada's economic ties with US are a weakness that must be corrected](#)  
(2026-04-20 08:27)

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said in a video address released Sunday that Canada's strong economic ties to the United States were once a strength but are now a weakness that must be corrected. In the 10-minute address, Carney spoke about his government's efforts to strengthen the Canadian economy by attracting new investments and signing trade deals with other countries. "The world is more dangerous and divided," Carney said. "The U.S. has fundamentally changed its approach to trade, raising its tariffs to levels last seen during the Great Depression. "Many of our former strengths, based on our close ties to America, have become weaknesses. Weaknesses that we must correct." Carney said tariffs imposed by U.S. President Donald Trump have affected workers in the auto and steel industries. He added that businesses are holding back investments "restrained by the pall of uncertainty that's hanging over all of us." Many Canadians have also been angered by Trump's comments suggesting Canada become the 51st state. Carney said he plans to give Canadians regular updates on his government's efforts to diversify away from the U.S. "Security can't be achieved by ignoring the obvious or downplaying the very real threats that we Canadians face," he said. "I promise you I will never sugarcoat our challenges." It's not the first time Carney, who served as a central bank governor, first at the Bank of Canada and later with the Bank of England, has spoken about a shift in world power. During a speech in January at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, he received widespread praise for condemning economic coercion by great powers against small countries. His remarks brought a rebuke from Trump. "Canada lives because of the United States," Trump said after the speech.

"Remember that, Mark, the next time you make your statements." There was no immediate White House reaction Sunday to the address. Carney's comments came days after securing a majority government following special election wins and as the opposition Conservatives push him to deliver a U.S. trade deal, which was among his promises in last year's election. A review of the current version of the North American Free Trade Agreement between Canada, the U.S.

and Mexico is scheduled for July. In his address, Carney said he wants to attract new investments into Canada, double the size of clean energy capacity and reduce trade barriers within the country. He also emphasized Canada's increased defense spending, reduction in taxes and efforts to make housing more affordable. "We have to take care of ourselves because we can't rely on one foreign partner," he said. "We can't control the disruption coming from our neighbors. We can't control our future on the hope it will suddenly stop. "We can control what happens here. We can build a stronger country that can withstand disruptions from abroad." Carney said simply hoping the "United States will return to normal" is not a feasible strategy. "Hope isn't a plan and nostalgia is not a strategy," he said. Carney said Canada has "been a great neighbor" standing with the U.S. in conflicts including Afghanistan, plus two World Wars. "The U.S. has changed and we must respond," he said. "It's about taking back control of our security, our borders and our future."

- [North Korea uses cluster bombs in latest missile test — KCNA \(2026-04-20 08:08\)](#)

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea fired multiple short-range ballistic missiles that tested the power of its cluster munitions, its government news agency said on Monday, confirming the latest in a flurry of launches by the nuclear-armed state. The Sunday launches, which were supervised by leader Kim Jong Un, aimed to "verify the characteristics and power of cluster bomb warhead and fragmentation mine warhead applied to the tactical ballistic missile", the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported. They followed other tests in recent weeks of weaponry, including ballistic missiles, anti-warship cruise missiles and cluster munitions. Neither Korea has signed the 2008 Oslo convention against cluster bombs. South Korea condemned the launches and called on the North to cease "provocations". KCNA said the manoeuvre tested the warhead of the Hwasongpho-11 Ra surface-to-surface tactical ballistic missile. Five projectiles were fired towards a target area around an island about 136 kilometres (85 miles) from the launch site, it said. They struck an area of 12.5 to 13 hectares with "very high density, fully displaying their combat might". Kim "expressed great satisfaction over the test results" and noted that the development of cluster bomb warheads "can... boost the high-density striking capability to quell a specific target area as well as the high-precision striking capability", KCNA said. Hong Min, a senior research fellow at the Korea Institute for National Unification, said the reported range would put Seoul and key US military installations within Pyongyang's reach. "This system appears designed to fill the gap between multiple rocket launchers and short-range ballistic missiles," he said. Yang Moo-jin, a professor at Seoul's University of North Korean Studies, noted that frontline corps commanders observed the test, in contrast to the weapons researchers who watched previous ones. "This suggests the system is nearing operational deployment, with the capability to be launched directly from forward positions against South Korea and US bases," he said. The United States stations about 28,000 troops in the South to help it defend against military threats from the North. 'Firm' defence posture South Korea reported the test on Sunday, saying its military had "detected several short-range ballistic missiles" fired from the Sinpo area in eastern North Korea. Seoul said it was maintaining a "firm combined defence posture" with the United States and would "respond overwhelmingly to any

provocation". "Pyongyang must immediately halt its successive missile provocations that are heightening tensions", and "actively engage in the South Korean government's efforts to establish peace", the defence ministry said. But analysts said the tests signalled that Pyongyang had rejected Seoul's attempts to repair strained ties. Among them was an expression of regret from Seoul over civilian drone incursions into the North in January, a gesture that Pyongyang initially seemed to welcome before reverting to describing the South as its "most hostile" enemy state. Two more destroyers North Korea is subject to multiple United Nations sanctions banning its nuclear weapons development and use of ballistic missile technology, restrictions it has repeatedly flouted. Earlier in April, Kim Jong Un oversaw tests of strategic cruise missiles launched from a naval warship, with official photos showing him watching the firings flanked by military officials. Those tests were carried out from the Choe Hyon, one of two 5,000-tonne destroyers in the North's arsenal, both launched last year. The North is also building two more 5,000-tonne class destroyers to add to its fleet. Citing satellite imagery from a US-based intelligence firm, a South Korean lawmaker said this month that the North was "accelerating the naval forces' modernisation on the back of military assistance from Russia". North Korea has sent ground troops and artillery shells to support Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and observers say Pyongyang is receiving military technology assistance from Moscow in return.

- [South Korea's Lee in India for talks on shipping, AI](#) (2026-04-20 08:05)

NEW DELHI, India — India gave a red-carpet welcome for South Korean President Lee Jae-myung in New Delhi on Monday, with shipbuilding and artificial intelligence high on the agenda for talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "Amidst ongoing supply chain instability and a global economic crisis stemming from the aftermath of the Middle East conflict, the Republic of Korea and India are emerging as increasingly vital strategic partners for one another," Lee, on his first visit to India, said in a statement on social media. Talks will include discussions on "shipbuilding, trade, investments, AI, semiconductors, critical and emerging technologies", India's foreign ministry said. Lee and Modi will also discuss "continuing constructive cooperation for the sake of peace on the Korean Peninsula and within the region", South Korea's National Security Adviser Wi Sung-lac said in Seoul ahead of Lee's state visit. Modi and Lee stood side-by-side outside the presidential palace, as lines of Indian troops marched past. South Korea has faced mounting risks to its energy supplies since US-Israeli attacks on Iran in late February prompted Tehran to effectively close the crucial Strait of Hormuz. The two countries are also seeking to bolster a 2010 economic partnership agreement. Bilateral trade has grown from \$14.2 billion at the time of its implementation to \$26.89 billion in 2024–25, an increase of nearly 90 percent, according to the Indian foreign ministry.

- [Eight children dead in US domestic violence shooting](#) (2026-04-20 08:04)

SHREVEPORT, United States — A man shot dead eight children -- seven of them his own -- early Sunday in the southern US state of Louisiana in an incident of domestic violence that spanned three locations, police said. The early morning massacre at a gray house in the city of Shreveport was the deadliest mass shooting in the United States in more than two years, according to data

from the Gun Violence Archive. Two women were shot and seriously injured, including the mother of some of the slain children. Three boys and five girls aged between three and 11 were shot and killed, the Caddo Parish Coroner's Office said. Seven of the children were siblings, and one was a cousin. Police identified the gunman as Shamar Elkins, 31. He had escaped the scene of the shootings in a carjacked vehicle and was chased by police, who then shot him dead. "At the end of that pursuit, the suspect exited the vehicle with a firearm, and ultimately our officers were forced to neutralize the suspect," police Corporal Chris Bordelon told reporters. An AFP videographer at the scene saw five bullet holes visible in the white door of the small, two-story house. Well-wishers laid bouquets of flowers nearby. Bordelon said seven of the eight children were the shooter's "own." He said police "are still actively investigating, trying to determine the why" and were combing for evidence in a crime scene that spanned three residences. "We do believe him to be the only individual that fired gunshots at these locations," Bordelon said, calling the incident a "domestic disturbance." Police said that Elkins was arrested in 2019 in a firearms case in which he pleaded guilty, but they were not aware of other issues of domestic violence in his past. "This is a terrible event to occur. It's especially important and distressing that the victims are all children," city Mayor Tom Arceneaux told reporters. "It lets you know that evil still exists in the world and that we need to be fighting everything we can to overcome that evil with good, to shed light in the darkness." Heartbroken Nine children were at the second residence visited by the gunman. One survived and was in a hospital with a non-life-threatening injury, Arceneaux said. The coroner's office said the children who were killed were identified by their mothers as: Jayla Elkins, 3; Shayla Elkins, 5; Kayla Pugh, 6; Layla Pugh, 7; Markaydon Pugh, 10; Sariah Snow, 11; Khedarrion Snow, 6; and Braylon Snow, 5. ABC affiliate KTBS reported that the two women were shot in the head. Police told AFP that one of the women who had been shot in the lower part of the face had raised the alarm with a neighbor who had made the 911 emergency call to alert authorities between 5:00 am and 5:30 am local time. Freddie Montgomery, 72, who lives across the street from the home where the children were killed said he saw police remove bodies from the house Sunday morning. "At this time yesterday afternoon, all of those kids were in the front yard playing. And he was sitting on the porch," Freddie told AFP. One of Louisiana's two US senators, Republican Bill Cassidy, called the incident an episode of "horrific violence" and wished the survivors a speedy recovery. Louisiana Governor Jeff Landry said he was "heartbroken." Mike Johnson, the speaker of the US House of Representatives who was born in Shreveport and is a congressman for the region, denounced the incident on X as a "senseless tragedy." "It's a terrible morning in Shreveport and we all mourn with the victims," Arceneaux said at a news conference. The United States, where firearms are readily available, is a frequent scene of gun violence, with thousands of people killed every year. It has the highest rate of gun-related deaths among all developed nations.

- [France summons Elon Musk over X probe](#) (2026-04-20 07:55)

PARIS, France — Billionaire Elon Musk has been summoned for a voluntary interview in Paris on Monday as part of a French probe into his social media platform X, though it remains unclear if he will appear. French authorities issued a summons for Musk in February as part of an

investigation, launched in January 2025, into allegations that X's algorithm was used to interfere in French politics. The probe was later expanded to include an investigation into X's AI chatbot Grok's dissemination of Holocaust denials and sexual deepfakes. In early February, French prosecutors searched the Paris offices of X, in what the social media giant -- which has denied any wrongdoing -- slammed as "politicized" raids and an "abusive judicial act". At the time, Paris prosecutors also summoned Musk and then-CEO Linda Yaccarino for voluntary interviews as the "de facto and de jure managers of the X platform at the time of the events", a move Musk called a "political attack". Yaccarino resigned as CEO of X in July last year after two years at the helm of the company. In February, Paris prosecutor Laure Beccau said X employees had also been summoned to appear between April 20 and 24 "to be heard as witnesses". But whether or not those invited for voluntary questioning appear would not be "an obstacle to the continuation of the investigation," the Paris prosecutor's office said on Saturday. Officials have not offered any details on the location or time of Musk's scheduled interview. The French investigation focuses on several suspected criminal offences including complicity in possessing child sexual abuse material and denial of crimes against humanity. The social media company in July called the probe "politically motivated".

Serious concerns The French investigation comes as part of a broader international backlash against Grok after it emerged that users could sexualise images of women and children using simple text prompts such as "put her in a bikini" or "remove her clothes". It generated an estimated three million sexualised images -- mostly of women, though also 23,000 that appeared to depict children -- in 11 days, the Center for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH), a nonprofit watchdog, said in late January. In a separate investigation, Britain's data regulator in February launched investigations into Musk's X and xAI over "serious concerns" regarding whether the companies complied with personal data laws when it came to Grok's generation of sexualised deepfakes. In late January, the European Union also hit X with a probe over Grok's generation of sexualised deepfake images of women and minors.

- [Shell, Seaoil to cut diesel prices by P24.94 per liter](#) (2026-04-20 05:23)

MANILA, Philippines — Shell and Seaoil on Monday said that they will lower diesel prices by P24.94 per liter, gasoline by P3.41 per liter, and kerosene by P2.00 per liter. This will be the second consecutive week that oil companies cut pump prices. The price adjustments will be implemented on Tuesday, April 21. Last week, diesel prices decreased by as much as P23 per liter, gasoline by P6.50 per liter, and kerosene by P8.50-P11.50 per liter.

- [Chicken inasal, Filipino street food win Judges' Award in Canada](#) (2026-04-20 03:58)

MANILA, Philippines — The chicken inasal and other Filipino street food recently won the Judges' Award at the 2026 YMCA Embassy Chef Showcase in Ottawa, the Philippine Embassy in Canada said. The embassy, represented by Filipino Chef David Vinoya, snatched the award after featuring the street corner-themed Filipino cuisine. The embassy featured a curated selection of Filipino favorites such as beef tapa barbecue, chicken inasal barbecue, longanisa barbecue, pork barbecue and achara (pickled papaya) – collectively presented as "D' Original Mang David's BBQ." The panel of judges, headed by Margaret Dickenson, a world-renowned Canadian

cookbook author, columnist, and television host, "recognized the Philippine entry for its excellence in execution, presentation, taste, and creativity," the embassy said. Philippine Ambassador to Canada Jose Victor Chan-Gonzaga said the event celebrated cultural diversity through cuisine while supporting charitable causes. "We did not only want Ottawa to get a taste of Philippine street food," he said. "We wanted to let Ottawa experience how Filipinos end their work days, whether waiting in Cubao for their buses or jeepneys, or going home to their barangay, by eating comfort food at grill stations very much like D' Original Mang David's BBQ." The Philippine booth became one of the event's main attractions, with long lines of guests eager to sample the Philippines' offerings. Guests enjoyed the authentic street food experience of dipping the BBQ skewers into classic Filipino sauces. The competition, held at the Horticulture Building in Lansdowne Park, Ottawa on April 16, brought together 15 countries, "each presenting signature dishes that reflect their respective culinary traditions," it added. The embassy said the event provided "an excellent opportunity to highlight the Philippines' culinary traditions while contributing to a meaningful cause," as it celebrates Filipino Food Month and Filipino Restaurant Month in Canada.

- [PH, US begin war games](#) (2026-04-20 03:35)

MANILA, Philippines — Thousands of American and Philippine troops, joined for the first time by a significant contingent of Japanese forces, began annual military exercises Monday set against the backdrop of the Middle East war. The war games will feature live-fire exercises in the north of the country facing the Taiwan Strait, as well as a province off the disputed South China Sea, where the Philippines and China have engaged in repeated confrontations. The Japanese military, which is contributing 1,400 personnel, will use a Type 88 cruise missile to sink a target ship off northern Paoay, Philippine exercise spokesman Colonel Dennis Hernandez said. More than 17,000 soldiers, airmen and sailors are taking part in the 19-day Balikatan, or Shoulder to Shoulder, exercises — about the same number as last year's edition — including contingents from Australia, New Zealand, France and Canada. "Balikatan... represents an opportunity to showcase our ironclad alliance with the Philippines and demonstrate our commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific," US exercise spokesman Colonel Robert Bunn said ahead of Monday's opening ceremony. Bunn added that US troop levels he described as "one of the largest deployments" in years would be unaffected by the ongoing Middle East war his country is waging, while declining to provide specific numbers. Balikatan comes as Iran and the United States, along with Israel, are just days away from the end of the two-week ceasefire that halted the Middle East war, ignited by surprise US-Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28. The conflict has sparked a global energy crisis that has left import-dependent Philippines reeling. The drills also come as Beijing ramps up military pressure around Taiwan, which it considers part of its territory and has threatened to use force to seize. Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos said last November that given his country's proximity to the self-ruled island and its surrounding waters, "a war over Taiwan will drag the Philippines, kicking and screaming, into the conflict." In February, US, Japanese and Philippine aircraft patrolled over the Bashi Channel separating the Philippines from Taiwan to test what Manila called their "ability to operate seamlessly together



in complex maritime environments." Marcos considers Manila's 1951 mutual defense pact with Washington a bedrock of national security and has been building up security ties with Western nations to deter China. Over the past two years, Manila has signed visiting forces or equivalent agreements with Japan, New Zealand, Canada and France, deals aimed at facilitating their participation in joint military exercises in the Philippines. Bunn said American forces would have the option of firing Tomahawk and NMEIS anti-ship missiles, without confirming they would. Integrated air and missile defense systems will also be put to the test, including technology for countering drones, Philippine spokesman Hernandez said. Week-long naval exercises will also take place in so far unspecified waters off the main Philippine island of Luzon, he added. Japan is deploying a tank landing ship, a destroyer, and a helicopter destroyer, while the US will use a cutter and a dock landing ship. They will join two Philippine frigates and another from Canada.

- [Fair weather to prevail, Sangley Point in Cavite to have highest temperature](#) (2026-04-20 02:46)

MANILA, Philippines— The country will have fair weather in the next 24 hours, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said on Monday. Weather specialist Aldazar Aurelio said no low pressure area was monitored inside or outside the country's area of responsibility. Pagasa said the temperature in the National Capital Region would likely reach 39 degrees Celsius. The highest temperature could be recorded in Sangley Point, Cavite at 42 degrees. Aurelio said the ridge or extension of the high pressure area has extended over Northern Luzon where cloud and thunderstorm development would be unlikely. The weather agency reminded the public to limit time spent outdoors especially when the sun's heat is at its peak, drink plenty of water and to bring umbrellas or hats when going out.

- [Marcos up in trust, performance ratings as Duterte's approval declines in Q1 2026 — Octa](#) (2026-04-20 02:14)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. regained ground in both trust and performance ratings in the first quarter of 2026, while Vice President Sara Duterte saw her performance score decline significantly, according to the latest Tugon ng Masa (TNM) survey conducted by independent pollster Octa Research. The non-commissioned nationwide survey, fielded from March 19 to 25, 2026, showed Marcos' trust rating climbing to 54 percent — a 6-percentage-point increase from the 48 percent recorded in the fourth quarter of 2025. The improvement exceeded the survey's  $\pm 3$  percent margin of error. The President also posted a 55 percent performance rating in the first quarter, up 4 percentage points from 51 percent in the previous quarter. That increase likewise surpassed the margin of error. Duterte, meanwhile, maintained a majority trust rating of 55 percent, slightly higher than the 53 percent she received in Q4 2025. However, her performance rating declined by 4 percentage points — from 54 percent to 50 percent — a drop that also exceeded the survey's margin of error. The survey covered 1,200 adult Filipinos aged 18 and above, selected through probability sampling, using



face-to-face interviews. The national margin of error is  $\pm 3$  percent at a 95 percent confidence level. Subnational estimates for the National Capital Region, Balance Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao each had a margin of error of  $\pm 6$  percent. OCTA Research emphasized that the TNM survey is independent, nonpartisan, and released as a public service. Fieldwork was conducted from March 19 to 25, 2026.

- [Chernobyl's radioactive landscape is a testament to nature's resilience and survival spirit](#)  
(2026-04-20 00:47)

CHERNOBYL, Ukraine — On contaminated land that is too dangerous for human life, the world's wildest horses roam free. Across the Chernobyl exclusion zone, Przewalski's horses — stocky, sand-colored and almost toy-like in appearance — graze in a radioactive landscape larger than Luxembourg. On April 26, 1986, an explosion at the nuclear power plant in Ukraine sent radiation across Europe and forced the evacuation of entire towns, displacing tens of thousands. It was the worst nuclear disaster in history. Four decades on, Chernobyl — which is transliterated as "Chornobyl" in Ukraine — remains too dangerous for humans. But the wildlife has moved back in. Wolves now prowl the vast no-man's-land spanning Ukraine and Belarus, and brown bears have returned after more than a century. Populations of lynx, moose, red deer and even free-roaming packs of dogs have rebounded. Przewalski's horses, native to Mongolia and once on the brink of disappearing, were introduced here in 1998 as an experiment. Known as "takhi" in Mongolia ("spirit"), the horses are distinct from domestic breeds, with 33 pairs of chromosomes, compared with 32 in domesticated horses. The modern name comes from the Russian explorer who first formally identified them. "The fact that Ukraine now has a free-ranging population is something of a small miracle," said Denys Vyshnevskyi, the zone's lead nature scientist. With human pressure gone, parts of the exclusion zone now resemble European landscapes from centuries past, he said, adding: "Nature recovers relatively quickly and effectively." The transformation is visible everywhere. Trees pierce abandoned buildings, roads dissolve into forest, and weathered Soviet-era signs stand beside leaning wooden crosses in overgrown cemeteries. Hidden cameras show the horses adapting in unexpected ways. They seek shelter in crumbling barns and deserted homes, using them to escape harsh weather and insects — even bedding down inside. The horses live in small social groups — typically one stallion with several mares and their young — alongside separate bands of younger males. Many died after their introduction, but others adapted. Declared extinct in the wild in 1969, Przewalski's horses survived only through captive breeding before reintroduction efforts rebuilt a global population of about 3,000, according to Florian Drouard, an operations manager at a program for the horses at Cevennes National Park in southern France. "This species is a remarkable example of successful reintroduction," he said. "While it is still far from being fully secure, it has shown that with proper preparation, a species kept in captivity can regain the social and ecological behaviors needed to live freely." The horse, he said, has proved unexpectedly adaptable, adapted to open landscapes but now also thriving in Ukraine's partly forested environment. Tracking the animals at Chernobyl takes time. Vyshnevskyi often drives alone for hours, setting motion-sensitive camera traps in camouflaged casings attached to

trees. Despite persistent radiation, scientists have not recorded widespread die-offs, though subtler effects are evident. Some frogs have developed darker skin, and birds in higher-radiation areas are more likely to develop cataracts. However, new threats have emerged. Russia's 2022 invasion brought fighting through the exclusion zone as troops advanced toward Kyiv, digging defenses into contaminated soil. Fires linked to military activity swept through forests. Harsh wartime winters have also taken a toll. Damage to the power grid left surrounding managed areas without resources, and scientists report increases in fallen trees and dead animals — casualties of both extreme conditions and hastily built fortifications. "Most forest fires are caused by downed drones," said Oleksandr Polischuk, who leads a firefighting unit in the zone. "Sometimes we have to travel dozens of kilometers to reach them." Fires can send radioactive particles back into the air. Today, the zone is no longer just an accidental refuge for wildlife. It has become a heavily monitored military corridor, marked by concrete barriers, barbed wire and minefields — a landscape of what some describe as grim beauty. Personnel rotate in and out to limit radiation exposure. Chernobyl is likely to remain off-limits for generations — too dangerous for people, yet full of life. "For those of us in conservation and ecology, it's kind of a wonder," Vyshnevskyi said. "This land was once heavily used — agriculture, cities, infrastructure. But nature has effectively performed a factory reset."

- [Pope prays at Catholic shrine in Angola that was a center of African slave trade](#)  
(2026-04-20 00:47)

MUXIMA, Angola — Pope Leo XIV on Sunday recalled the "sorrow and great suffering" Angolans endured for centuries, as the American pope prayed at a Catholic shrine located at the site of an important hub of the African slave trade during Portugal's colonial rule. Leo traveled to the Sanctuary of Mama Muxima, nestled in the Angolan savanas of baobab trees at the edge of the Kwanza River. It became a major pilgrimage destination after believers reported an appearance by the Virgin Mary around 1833. But the Church of Our Lady of Muxima was originally built by Portuguese colonizers at the end of the 16th century as part of a fortress complex and it became a hub in the slave trade. It was where enslaved Africans were gathered to be baptized by Portuguese priests before being forced to walk to the port of Luanda, over 110 kilometers (70 miles) to the north, to be put on ships to the Americas. Leo, whose own ancestors include enslaved people and slave owners, prayed the Rosary at the sanctuary, a simple whitewashed church with blue trim and a statue of the Madonna inside. Speaking in Portuguese, he recalled it was here "where, for centuries, many men and women have prayed in times of joy and also in moments of sorrow and great suffering in the history of this country." He didn't refer specifically to slavery. After viewing plans to build a basilica at the site, Leo urged the estimated 30,000 people gathered outside to also build "a better, more welcoming world, where there are no more wars, no injustices, no poverty, no dishonesty." Muxima's history is emblematic of the Catholic Church's role in the slave trade, the forced baptisms of enslaved people and what some scholars say is the Holy See's continued refusal to fully acknowledge it and atone for it. "For Black Catholics, Pope Leo's visit to the Muxima shrine is an important moment of healing," said Anthea Butler, senior fellow at the Koch Center, Oxford University. She noted that

many Black Catholics are Catholic because of slavery and the "Code Noir," which she said required slaves purchased by Catholic owners to be baptized in the church. "Others were already Catholic when they were trafficked from Angola to slave-holding colonies," said Butler, a Black Catholic scholar whose maternal family hails from Louisiana, where the pope's ancestors also had their roots. The role of papal bulls in the slave tradeAngola's Portuguese colonizers were emboldened by 15th-century directives from the Vatican that authorized them to enslave non-Christians. In 1452, for example, Pope Nicholas V issued the papal bull *Dum Diversas*, which gave the Portuguese king and his successors the right "to invade, conquer, fight and subjugate" and take all possessions — including land — of "Saracens, and pagans, and other infidels, and enemies of the name of Christ" anywhere, said the Rev. Christopher J. Kellerman, a Jesuit priest and author of "All Oppression Shall Cease: A History of Slavery, Abolitionism, and the Catholic Church." The bull also gave the Portuguese permission "to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery." That bull and another issued three years later, *Romanus Pontifex*, formed the basis of the Doctrine of Discovery, the theory that legitimized the colonial-era seizure of land in Africa and the Americas. The Vatican in 2023 formally repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery, but it never formally rescinded, abrogated or rejected the bulls themselves. The Vatican insists that a later bull, *Sublimis Deus* in 1537, reaffirmed that Indigenous peoples shouldn't be deprived of their liberty or the possession of their property, and were not to be enslaved. Ultimately, more than 5 million people left from Angola on the trans-Atlantic slave route, more than any other country and nearly half of the roughly 12.5 million African slaves sent across the ocean. Kellerman recalled that most of these direct victims were sold into slavery by other Africans and were not captured by Europeans. "That being said, at the time of the building of Muxima, the Portuguese were doing both — buying enslaved people and colonizing/slave raiding. So they were fully using their papal permissions during this time," Kellerman said in emailed comments to The Associated Press. He said the first pope to condemn slavery itself was Pope Leo XIII, the current pope's namesake, in two encyclicals in 1888 and 1890, after most countries had already abolished slavery. But Kellerman said that pope and others since have continued to perpetuate the "false narrative" that the Holy See always opposed slavery, when the historical record says otherwise. While Leo's visit to Muxima was to commemorate its role as a shrine, Kellerman said he hoped Leo had also learned about its role in the slave trade. "The popes repeatedly authorized Portugal's colonization efforts in Africa and Portuguese participation in the slave trade, but the Vatican has never fully admitted this," he said. "It would be so powerful if at some point Pope Leo were to apologize for the popes' role in the trade." During a 1985 visit to Cameroon, St. John Paul II asked forgiveness of Africans for the slave trade on behalf of Christians who participated in it, but not for the popes' own role in it. In a 1992 visit to Goree Island, Senegal, the largest slave-trading center in West Africa, he denounced the injustice of slavery and called it a "tragedy of a civilization that called itself Christian." Leo's own personal history a point of reflection According to genealogical research published by Henry Louis Gates Jr., 17 of Leo's American ancestors were Black, listed in census records as mulatto, Black, Creole or a free person of color. His family tree includes slaveholders and enslaved people, Gates wrote in the *New York Times*. Gates, a Harvard University professor who hosts the PBS documentary series "Finding Your Roots," presented his research to Leo

during a July 5 audience at the Vatican. According to a report of their meeting in The Harvard Gazette, "The pope asked about ancestors, both Black and white, who were enslavers." Leo has not spoken publicly about his family heritage or the genealogical research, and some Black Catholic scholars were hesitant to impose on him a narrative about his identity that he himself has not yet addressed. "It's important that we tell our own stories," said Tia Noelle Pratt, a sociologist of religion and professor at Villanova University, the pope's alma mater. "We haven't heard anything from him about what he thinks about it, and so to impose anything on him, I think would be completely inappropriate," said Pratt, author of "Faithful and Devoted: Racism and Identity in the African American Catholic Experience." Cardinal Wilton Gregory, the retired archbishop of Washington and the first African American cardinal, said he had facilitated the Gates-Leo encounter and was "delighted" to have done so. "It's one of the things that I think for many African Americans and people of color, they identify with great pride that the pope has roots in our own heritage," Gregory told AP. "And I think he's happy about that too, because it's another link to the people that he tries to serve and is called to serve."

- [Businesses can claim refunds starting Monday for Trump tariffs declared unconstitutional](#) (2026-04-20 00:46)

NEW YORK — A refund system for businesses that paid tariffs which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled President Donald Trump imposed without the constitutional authority to do so is scheduled to launch Monday. Importers and their brokers will be able to begin claiming refunds through an online portal beginning at 8 a.m., according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the agency administering the system. It's the first step in a complicated process that also might eventually lead to refunds for consumers who were billed for some or all of the tariffs on products shipped to them from outside the United States. Companies must submit declarations listing the goods on which they collectively put billions of dollars toward the import taxes the court subsequently struck down. If CBP approves a claim, it will take 60-90 days for a refund to be issued, the agency said. The government expects to process refunds in phases, however, focusing first on more recent tariff payments. Any number of technical factors and procedural issues could delay an importer's application, so any reimbursements businesses plan to make to customers likely would trickled down slowly. In a 6-3 decision, the Supreme Court on Feb. 20 found that Trump usurped Congress' tax-setting role last April when he set new import tax rates on products from almost every other country, citing the U.S. trade deficit as a national emergency that warranted his invoking of a 1977 emergency powers law. Although the court majority did not address refunds in its ruling, a judge at the U.S. Court of International Trade determined last month that companies subjected to IEEPA tariffs were entitled to money back. Not all taxed imports immediately eligible. Customs and Border Protection said in court filings that over 330,000 importers paid a total of about \$166 billion on over 53 million shipments. Not all of those orders qualify for the first phase of the refund system's rollout, which is limited to cases in which tariffs were estimated but not finalized or within 80 days of a final accounting. To receive refunds, importers have to register for the CPB's electronic payment system. As of April 14, 56,497 importers had completed registration and were eligible for refunds totaling \$127

billion, including interest, the agency said. System requires accuracy

Meghann Supino, a partner at Ice Miller, said the law firm has advised clients to carefully list in their declarations all of the document numbers for forms that went to CBP to describe imported goods and their value. "If there is an entry on that file that does not qualify, it may cause the entire entry to be rejected or that line item might be rejected by Customs," she said. Supino thinks the portal going live will require composure as well as diligence. "Like any electronic online program that goes live with a lot of interest, I would expect that there might be some hiccups with the program on Monday," she said. "So we continue to ask everyone to be patient, because we think that patience will pay off." Nghi Huynh, the partner-in-charge of transfer pricing at accounting and consulting firm Armanino, said most companies claiming refunds will have imported a mix of items, and not all will qualify right away. "It's about having a clear process in place and keeping track of what's been submitted and what's been paid, so nothing falls through the cracks," she said. "Each file can include thousands of entries, but accuracy is critical, as submissions can be rejected if formatting or data is incorrect." Patience with the process

Small businesses have eagerly awaited the chance to apply for refunds. Brad Jackson, co-founder of After Action Cigars in Rochester, Minnesota, said he starting compiling records and preparing to enter information into the system the minute CPB announced the launch date. The company imports cigars and accessories from Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic. Last year, it paid \$34,000 in tariffs and absorbed much of the cost instead of raising customer prices, Jackson said. Last spring, he had a two-week delay in a shipment due to a missing document, so he is being more careful with refund documents, he said. "My main concern is the turnaround time," Jackson said. "A refund process that takes several months to complete doesn't solve the cash flow problem that it is supposed to fix." Will consumers see refunds? Tariffs are paid by importers, and some companies pass on the tax costs to consumers via higher prices. The system starting up Monday will refund tariffs directly to the businesses that paid them, which are not obligated to share the proceeds with customers. However, class-action lawsuits that aim to force companies, ranging from Costco to Ray-Ban maker Essilor Luxottica, to reimburse shoppers are winding their way through the U.S. legal system. Individuals may be more likely to receive refunds from delivery companies like FedEx and UPS, which collected tariffs on imports directly from consumers. FedEx has said it would return tariff refunds to customers when it receives them from the CPB. "Supporting our customers as they navigate regulatory changes remains our top priority," FedEx said in a statement. "We are working with our customers as CBP begins processing refunds and plan to begin filing claims on April 20."

- [Oil prices rise anew after a US-Iran standoff in the Strait of Hormuz strands tankers](#)  
(2026-04-20 00:46)

NEW YORK — Oil prices rose in early trading Sunday as a standoff between Iran and the U.S. prevented tankers from using the Strait of Hormuz, the Persian Gulf waterway that is crucial to global energy supplies. The price of U.S. crude oil increased 6.4% to \$87.90 per barrel an hour after trading resumed on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. The price of Brent crude, the international standard, climbed 5.8% to \$95.64 per barrel. The market reaction followed more

than two days of lifted hopes and dashed expectations involving the strait. Crude prices plunged more than 9% Friday after Iran said it would fully reopen the strait, which it effectively controls, to commercial traffic. Tehran reversed that decision and fired on several vessels Saturday after President Donald Trump said a U.S. Navy blockade of Iranian ports would remain in effect. On Sunday, Trump said the U.S. attacked and forcibly seized an Iranian-flagged cargo ship that allegedly tried to get around the blockade. Iran's joint military command vowed to respond. Sunday's higher prices wiped out much of the declines seen Friday, signaling renewed doubts about how soon ships will again transport the vast amounts of oil the world gets from the Middle East. The US-Israeli war against Iran, now in its eighth week, has created one of the worst global energy crises in decades. Countries in Asia and Europe that import much of their oil from the Gulf have felt the most impact of halted supplies and production cuts, although rapidly rising gasoline, diesel and jet fuel prices are affecting businesses and consumers worldwide. Asked when he thought U.S. motorists would again see gas cost less than \$3 a gallon on average, Energy Secretary Chris Wright said prices at the pump might not go down that much until next year. "But prices have likely peaked, and they'll start going down," Wright told CNN's "State of the Union" on Sunday. The price of crude oil — the main ingredient in gasoline — has fluctuated dramatically since the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran on Feb. 28, and as Iran retaliated with airstrikes on other Gulf states. Crude traded at roughly \$70 a barrel before the conflict, spiked to more than \$119 at times, and previously closed Friday at \$82.59 for U.S. oil and \$90.38 for Brent. Industry analysts have repeatedly warned that the longer the strait is closed, the worse prices could get. A fragile, two-week ceasefire between the U.S. and Iran is set to expire Wednesday, while escalating tensions in the Strait of Hormuz puts the fate of new talks to end the war into question. Even if a lasting deal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz emerges, analysts say it could take months for oil shipments to return to normal levels and for fuel prices to go down. Backed-up tanker traffic, shipowners concerned about another sudden escalation, and energy infrastructure damaged during the war are factors that could impede production and shipment volumes from returning to pre-war levels. A gallon of regular gas cost an average of nearly \$4.05 a gallon in the U.S. on Sunday, according to motor club federation AAA. That's about 8 cents lower than a week ago, but far higher than \$2.98 before the war.

- [Iran not planning to attend talks with US in Pakistan](#) (2026-04-20 00:26)

WASHINGTON, United States — Iran is not currently planning to attend talks with the United States, state media said, after President Donald Trump ordered US negotiators to travel to Pakistan on Monday, just days before a ceasefire in the Middle East expires. The ongoing US blockade of Iranian ports has been a significant sticking point, an issue further complicated by an American destroyer on Sunday firing on and seizing an Iranian ship that tried to evade it. Tehran warned it would retaliate. State broadcaster IRIB on Sunday cited Iranian sources as saying "there are currently no plans to participate in the next round of Iran-US talks". The Fars and Tasnim news agencies had earlier cited anonymous sources as saying "the overall atmosphere cannot be assessed as very positive", adding that lifting the US blockade was a precondition for negotiations. State-run IRNA meanwhile pointed to the blockade and



Washington's "unreasonable and unrealistic demands", saying that "in these circumstances, there is no clear prospect of fruitful negotiations". Iran and the United States, along with Israel, are just three days away from the end of the two-week ceasefire that halted the Middle East war, ignited by surprise US-Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28. There has so far been only a single, 21-hour negotiating session held in Islamabad on April 11 that ended inconclusively, though groundwork for fresh talks continued afterwards. "We're offering a very fair and reasonable DEAL, and I hope they take it," Trump said in a post on Sunday, while also renewing his threats against Iran's infrastructure if a deal is not made. US fires on Iranian ship Trump has been under pressure to find an off-ramp since Tehran moved early in the war to choke off the Strait of Hormuz. The vital waterway is a conduit for a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas in peacetime, and its closure has hammered the global economy and roiled markets. Having failed to force it open again, Trump countered with a US naval blockade on Iranian ports in an attempt to cut off Tehran's oil revenues. On Sunday, he announced that a massive Iranian-flagged cargo ship "tried to get past our Naval Blockade, and it did not go well for them." A US destroyer warned the ship to stop and then forced it to by "by blowing a hole in the engineroom", Trump said, adding: "Right now, U.S. Marines have custody of the vessel." Trump said the Iranian-flagged ship, *Touska*, is under US Treasury sanctions "because of prior history of illegal activity." The ISNA news agency later cited a spokesperson for Iran's central command centre as warning that "the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran will soon respond and retaliate against this armed piracy and the US military". Iran had briefly reopened the strait on Friday in recognition of an Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire in Lebanon, but closed it again the following day in response to the United States maintaining its blockade. Iran's Revolutionary Guards warned that any attempt to pass through the strait without permission "will be considered cooperation with the enemy, and the offending vessel will be targeted". Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei on Sunday said the blockade was "a violation" of the ceasefire and illegal collective punishment of the Iranian people. A handful of oil and gas tankers had crossed the strait early on Saturday during the brief reopening, but by early Sunday morning tracking data showed the waterway empty of shipping. The afternoon before, a trio of incidents involving Iranian fire and threats towards commercial vessels demonstrated the danger of any attempted crossing. Heightened security In spite of the uncertainty surrounding the talks in Pakistan, security was visibly stepped up in Islamabad on Sunday in anticipation of the negotiations. Authorities announced road closures and traffic restrictions across the city, as well as in neighbouring Rawalpindi. The US president said his negotiators, whom he did not name, would arrive in the Pakistani capital on Monday evening. A White House official said the delegation would be led by Vice President JD Vance and include Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner. A major issue in the negotiations has been Iran's stockpile of near-weapons-grade enriched uranium. Trump said on Friday that Iran had agreed to hand over its roughly 440 kilogrammes of enriched uranium. "We're going to get it by going in with Iran, with lots of excavators," he said. But Iran's foreign ministry has said the stockpile, thought to be buried deep under rubble from US bombing in last June's 12-day war, was "not going to be transferred anywhere", and surrendering it "to the US has never been raised in negotiations". On Sunday, President Masoud Pezeshkian questioned



why Iran should give up its "legal right" to a nuclear programme.

- [Iran military vows to 'soon respond' after US destroyer hits cargo ship](#) (2026-04-20 00:26)

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's military has vowed to respond after a US destroyer on Sunday fired on an Iranian-flagged cargo ship in the Gulf of Oman that tried to evade a US naval blockade. "We warn that the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran will soon respond and retaliate against this armed piracy and the US military," said a spokesperson for the military's central command centre, Khatam Al-Anbiya, cited by ISNA news agency. He accused the United States of having "violated the ceasefire" that has been in place since April 8. US President Donald Trump posted Sunday on Truth Social that after the Iranian vessel, Touska, ignored warnings to stop, the guided missile destroyer USS Spruance "stopped them right in their tracks by blowing a hole in the engineroom". "Right now, U.S. Marines have custody of the vessel," the US president added, "and are seeing what's on board!" The incident comes with tensions high in the Strait of Hormuz, a vital conduit for the world's oil and liquefied natural gas, which has been virtually closed since the start of the US-Israeli war with Iran seven weeks ago. Iran briefly reopened the strait on Friday in recognition of an Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire in Lebanon, but closed it again the following day in response to the United States maintaining its blockade on ships travelling to and from Iranian ports. In an earlier post on Sunday, Trump accused Tehran of violating the ceasefire, which expires Wednesday, by launching attacks on Saturday in the vital shipping lane.

- [Iran closes Strait of Hormuz again](#) (2026-04-19 16:19)

TEHRAN — The crucial Strait of Hormuz will not reopen until the United States lifts its naval blockade on Iranian ports, Tehran said Saturday, as a top official warned that a final peace deal remained far off. Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, speaker of the Iranian parliament, said in a televised address that there has been "progress" in talks with Washington "but there are many gaps, and some fundamental points remain." "We are still far from the final discussion," said Ghalibaf, one of Tehran's negotiators in the talks aimed at ending the war launched by Israel and the United States against the Islamic Republic. A two-week ceasefire is set to end on Wednesday unless it is renewed. US President Donald Trump said, meanwhile, that "very good conversations" were going on with Iran but warned Tehran against trying to "blackmail" the United States. On Friday, Tehran had declared the Strait of Hormuz, which usually carries a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas, open after a ceasefire was agreed in Israel's war with Iran's ally Hezbollah in Lebanon. This prompted elation in global markets and sent oil prices plunging, but with Trump insisting the blockade of Iranian ports would continue until a deal is struck to end the wider war, Tehran said it was shuttering the strait once more. "If America does not lift the blockade, traffic in the Strait of Hormuz will definitely be limited," Ghalibaf said. Iran's supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei, who has yet to be seen since taking power, said, meanwhile, in a written message that Iran's navy "stands ready" to defeat the United States. Trump, speaking to reporters at a White House event, accused Iran of getting "a little cute" with its recent moves and warned Tehran not to try to "blackmail" Washington with its flip-flopping on the Strait of Hormuz. "We have very good

conversations going on,” the president said, adding that the United States was “taking a tough stand.” “Targeted” Iran’s Revolutionary Guards warned that any attempt to pass through the strait without permission “will be considered cooperation with the enemy, and the offending vessel will be targeted.” A handful of oil and gas tankers crossed the strait early on Saturday during the brief reopening, tracking data showed, but others retreated and tracking platforms showed hardly any vessels crossing the waterway by the late afternoon. A UK maritime security agency said the Revolutionary Guards fired at one tanker, while security intelligence firm Vanguard Tech reported the force had threatened to “destroy” an empty cruise ship that was fleeing the Gulf. In a third incident, the UK agency said it received a report of a vessel “being hit by an unknown projectile which caused damage” to shipping containers but no fire. The Indian foreign ministry said it had summoned the Iranian ambassador in New Delhi to lodge a protest over a “shooting incident” involving two Indian-flagged ships in the strait. French UN peacekeeper killed. On the diplomatic front, Egypt, which has been involved in mediation efforts along with Pakistan, appeared optimistic on Saturday with Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty saying Cairo and Islamabad hoped to secure a final agreement “in the coming days.” Two major sticking points in the talks have been Iran’s stockpile of near-weapons-grade enriched uranium and the future of the Strait of Hormuz. Trump declared Friday that Iran had agreed to hand over its 440 or so kilograms of enriched uranium. “We’re going to get it by going in with Iran, with lots of excavators,” he said. Iran’s foreign ministry has said the stockpile, thought to be buried deep under rubble from US bombing in last June’s 12-day war, was “not going to be transferred anywhere” and surrendering it “to the US has never been raised in negotiations.” The Middle East war began on Feb. 28 with a massive wave of US-Israeli surprise attacks on Iran, despite Washington and Tehran being engaged in negotiations at the time. The conflict rapidly spread across the region, with Iran targeting neighboring Gulf countries and Hezbollah dragging Lebanon into the conflict by launching rockets at Israel. A French soldier was killed and three others wounded in an ambush on Saturday on UN peacekeepers in Lebanon that French President Emmanuel Macron blamed on Hezbollah, an accusation the group denied. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemned the attack in a statement and said an initial assessment by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon found it was carried out by Hezbollah.

- [Marcos orders 1,743 infra projects rushed](#) Marcos orders 1,743 infra projects rushed (2026-04-19 16:18)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ordered the fast-tracking of 1,743 infrastructure projects meant to sustain economic momentum, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said over the weekend. In a statement, Acting Budget Secretary Rolando Toledo said the release of P46.22 billion to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) was approved in compliance with Marcos’ directive for “road connectivity, improving mobility and unlocking economic opportunities across communities.” Among the major projects funded was the Davao City Bypass Construction Project, with an approved allocation of P288.371 million for fiscal year 2026. The release also covers critical initiatives under the DPWH’s Asset

Preservation Program, including preventive maintenance of national roads, as well as the rehabilitation and reconstruction of road networks. It likewise supports the Network Development Program, which includes road widening and off-carriageway improvements, and the Bridge Program, which focuses on the repair, retrofitting, strengthening and widening of permanent bridges. Toledo said that the funding reflects the administration's firm commitment to ensuring that vital infrastructure projects are implemented without delay. "When the documents are complete and in order, we will not hesitate to release the funds. Because every day that the project is delayed, there is a countryman who has not benefited — and that is what we do not want to happen," he said. According to DPWH, the projects funded have been thoroughly evaluated and are aligned with the president's priorities for infrastructure development and the advancement of socioeconomic growth. On April 15, the DBM approved the issuance of 158 Special Allotment Release Orders as funding for the projects.

- [Task force to 'bury' Navotas landfill](#) (2026-04-19 16:17)

(UPDATE) THE task force composed of concerned national government agencies and the Navotas City government deployed more heavy equipment to cover the abandoned landfill with soil to suppress the toxic fumes from the fire that had been initially contained. Navotas Mayor John Rey Tiangco said on Sunday he accompanied Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon and other government officials, including those from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Department of Health (DOH), in inspecting the 41-hectare facility in Barangay Tanza 2, which is situated off the coast, 2.6 kilometers from the mainland. Tiangco said Dizon has sent backhoes, bulldozers and dredgers to the site to cover the landfill with soil and extinguish the blaze completely. "We have resolved to put soil on top of the burning trash caused by methane gas underneath, otherwise it would continue to burn," Dizon said during the inspection late last week. Dizon and Tiangco said they would ask the private sector to send more heavy equipment to the site. They said the deployment of heavy equipment was slow since they were only loaded through barges which could not go near the facility during low tide. "But there is a road leading to the dumpsite that is about to be completed and which would speed up the deployment of the heavy equipment at the site in the coming days," Dizon said. Tiangco said the landfill was shut down late last year, and the DENR was studying the filing of charges or imposition of sanctions against the former operator — Philippine Ecology Systems Corp. — for apparent abandonment. "There were also no residents living in the closed facility, but our main concern here is the toxic fumes out of the rubbish fire that have been spreading and affecting many cities in Metro Manila and towns in Bulacan, particularly Obando, and as far as Bataan province," the mayor said. The Bureau of Fire Protection reported that the fire broke out on the night of April 10, when high levels of nitrogen dioxide, or NO<sub>2</sub>, at the site were confirmed by the Philippine Space Agency. "There was no doubt that the effect of the rubbish fire on air quality extended beyond the immediate area of the blaze," Tiangco said. He said the DOH has warned that the lingering haze from the fire could pose health risks. "That is why we are advising, especially those near the closed facility, to wear masks, because the haze — air polluted with

fine smoke and dust particles from fire and ash — may trigger difficulty in breathing, coughing, chest pain, eye irritation and worsening asthma, and other lung diseases,” Tiangco said. Prolonged exposure may be dangerous for vulnerable groups, including children, older persons and people with heart or lung conditions, the DOH said. The DENR also indicated that the air quality in nearby Valenzuela City has been classified as hazardous for all residents, while other Metro Manila cities — Caloocan, Malabon, Marikina and Quezon — as well as parts of Bulacan recorded levels considered unsafe for sensitive groups. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has ordered the rapid deployment of more heavy equipment at the Navotas landfill. Dizon said the plan is to suffocate the flames by covering the 30-hectare landfill with soil and sludge. Under the president’s directive, all available national government resources are being tapped, with additional equipment on standby for immediate deployment. “The message from Malacañang is unequivocal: the fire must be put out fast at all costs to protect communities and the health of residents,” added Dizon.

- [Stakeholders push policy shift as gun violence persist](#) (2026-04-19 16:16)

A RECENT roundtable discussion (RTD) on alternative approaches to curbing illegal firearms has renewed scrutiny on the continued circulation of unlicensed weapons in the country, with stakeholders warning that existing enforcement measures have not significantly reduced gun violence, particularly in conflict-affected areas in Mindanao and the Bangsamoro region. The dialogue gathered representatives from the Philippine National Police (PNP), local government units, civil society groups, international development partners, and security experts to reassess current strategies and explore new policy directions to address illicit firearms proliferation. Advocacy manager Deanne Capiral of Climate Conflict Action (CCA) said the forum aimed to deepen understanding of gun violence patterns and illegal firearms circulation, while identifying potential policy responses. Capiral outlined four key objectives: mapping the national situation on illegal firearms and gun violence; reviewing existing interventions; building consensus on solutions; and contributing to efforts addressing the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) decommissioning process under the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro. She said the discussion also sought to expose gaps in current approaches, including long-standing issues in Mindanao’s peace process, particularly the stalled MILF decommissioning program. CCA said the push for new pathways is driven by three key concerns. First, despite government efforts to recover and regulate firearms, gun violence continues to claim lives and undermine security in several regions. Second, MILF decommissioning remains stalled following what participants described as a unilateral suspension, leaving a key peace mechanism incomplete and armed actors outside the full reach of Republic Act (RA) 10591, or the Comprehensive Firearms and Ammunition Regulation Act. Third, participants noted that while legal frameworks exist, enforcement gaps and inconsistent implementation continue to limit their effectiveness. Studies cited during the discussion estimated that civilian-held firearms in the country rose from about 2.8 million in 2010 to 3.77 million in 2017. Illegal firearms were estimated at 1.9 million in 2010, increasing to about 2.04 million in 2017, indicating continued growth alongside licensed weapons. PNP data

showed over 165,000 firearms were recovered or confiscated from 2015 to 2023, though participants noted this remains a small fraction of total estimated circulation. UN Comtrade data cited in earlier research also recorded more than 292,000 firearms imported between 2000 and 2010, with volumes reportedly doubling in the following decade, raising concerns on monitoring and end-use tracking. Data presented during the RTD showed 10,936 gun-related incidents from 2022 to the first quarter of 2024, averaging about 13 incidents daily. Senate figures cited in the discussion indicated that around 99 percent of gun-related crimes involve illegal firearms, reinforcing concerns over unregistered weapons as the dominant instrument of violence. In the Bangsamoro region, conflict monitoring data showed a rise in gun-related incidents starting in 2018, with elevated levels sustained in subsequent years. Civilians accounted for the largest share of both victims and suspects, while firearms were involved in about 77 percent of conflict-related deaths in the region. Illegal firearms were identified as a major driver of fatalities in Bangsamoro conflict incidents from 2020 to 2023, alongside other causes such as drug-related violence. Speakers also cited political and electoral cycles as recurring triggers, with firearms often circulating through black markets during periods of heightened competition. Despite major milestones such as the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro and the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro, data presented showed average deaths from armed incidents between 2018 and 2023 were higher than those recorded from 2011 to 2016. Participants said this raises concerns on whether current disarmament and decommissioning mechanisms are effectively translating peace agreements into sustained reductions in violence. Incidents involving MILF-affiliated actors also reportedly increased from 2011 to 2023, with firearms consistently central to fatalities. Experts pointed to fragmentation in firearms tracking systems as a key challenge. The PNP maintains a Captured, Confiscated, Surrendered, Deposited, Abandoned and Forfeited inventory, while the Armed Forces of the Philippines rely on a Captured, Confiscated, Surrendered and Recovered system. These databases are not fully integrated, creating gaps in national-level firearms accounting. RA 10591 provides the legal framework for firearms regulation, but inconsistent reporting and lack of consolidated data were cited as weakening its implementation. Programs such as the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program also reflect partial outputs rather than complete national inventories. Local recoveries, such as surrendered firearms in parts of Mindanao, remain unlinked to a centralized system, while earlier estimates placed loose firearms in Sulu alone at around 28,000. A significant focus was placed on the MILF decommissioning process. While about 26,000 combatants have reportedly been decommissioned as of 2024, only around 4,000 firearms have been turned in, raising concerns over the gap between reintegration and weapons recovery. Participants also cited delays in firearm destruction, limited transparency in inventories and the constrained role of the PNP as the central firearms authority under RA 10591. International obligations under the UN Program of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, and the Arms Trade Treaty were also raised, particularly on tracing, recording and timely destruction of surrendered weapons. Stakeholders agreed that a single national framework for firearms data, because consolidating records of confiscated, surrendered and recovered firearms across agencies is essential to accurately assess progress and strengthen governance. Without a centralized system, government efforts will continue to

produce fragmented snapshots rather than a complete picture of the firearms problem.

- [Police, military on alert for terrorist attacks](#) (2026-04-19 16:15)

POLICE and military forces in central and western Mindanao are on heightened alert against retaliation from the remainder of the Dawlah Islamiyah-Maute Group (DI-MG) following a fierce clash in Lanao del Sur that killed 10 of its members. Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr., chief of the Philippine National Police, said commanders in Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao were directed to continue coordination with the military for follow-up operations against remaining members of the local terrorist group. Nartatez said the police are in full control in Lanao del Sur and that while the threat of retaliation exists, the heightened alert status is a proactive measure to protect civilians. He urged residents to coordinate closely with the local police on any suspicious sighting. Police earlier said the clash took place during a manhunt for suspects identified as alias “Usman,” the group’s supposed amir or leader, and alias “Muslih,” a sub-leader. As police approached the hideouts of the suspects, the group retaliated and opened fire, triggering a gunbattle. Ten DI-MG terrorists were killed, including Usman and Muslih. Police seized two M16 rifles, an M4 rifle, an M1 Garand rifle, a caliber .38 revolver, a hand grenade and several improvised explosive device (IED) components in the area. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) announced in December 2025 that the number of members of local terrorist groups, such as the Abu Sayyaf Group, DI-MG and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, have dropped significantly. Col. Francel Padilla, AFP spokesman, said that from several thousands, the LTG membership went down to just 50, a development the government credits to sustained security operations, peace building efforts and strong community engagement.

- [Group launches drive vs Japan militarization](#) (2026-04-19 16:14)

THE Asian Century Philippines Strategic Studies Institute (ACPSSI) and allied anti-war groups warned against what they described as the accelerating remilitarization of Japan, timing the warning with the 84th anniversary of the Bataan Death March. During a symposium in Manila over the weekend, the group unveiled the “Stop Japan Militarization Campaign,” citing recent defense policies, territorial posturing and what it characterized as emerging nuclear rhetoric from Tokyo. In its presentation, the ACPSSI referenced a Dec. 19, 2025, report by Asahi Shimbun quoting “an official who advises Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi” as saying Japan should possess nuclear weapons. The think tank said Japan maintains an estimated 44.4 tons of plutonium, which it claimed could be converted into as many as 5,500 nuclear bombs. On April 17, 1942, around 66,000 Filipino and American prisoners of war reached Camp O’ Donnell in Tarlac after a brutal forced march under Japanese forces during World War II. “Filipinos must be reminded of the horrors of war that imperialist powers imposed on the world in World War II,” the group said, citing atrocities such as the massacre of civilians in Intramuros and the destruction of Manila during the war. The ACPSSI also pointed to Japan’s record 8.9-trillion-yen (about \$58 billion) defense budget for 2026 — a 9.4-percent increase from the previous year — arguing that it runs contrary to Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, which renounces war as a



sovereign right and limits the maintenance of military forces with offensive capabilities. The group further cited Japan's statements on Taiwan and plans to deploy surface-to-air missile systems on Yonaguni Island, approximately 110 kilometers from Taiwan, saying these moves could escalate regional tensions. ACPSSI linked Japan's military buildup to what it described as a broader United States strategy to contain China, referencing the 2011 "Pivot to Asia" under Barack Obama and the 2025 US National Security Strategy, which it said places greater responsibility on regional allies for their own defense. The think tank noted domestic opposition within Japan, citing reports that around 30,000 Japanese citizens rallied near parliament in Tokyo on April 9, protesting proposed revisions to the pacifist constitution. As part of the campaign, organizers said they plan to conduct seminars, rallies and motorcades in key Philippine cities, while coordinating with anti-war organizations across Southeast Asia. The group said it would also oppose the presence of US military facilities in the Philippines, arguing that these violate the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality framework. ACPSSI said it has been running an information drive since 2023 against the presence of nine US military sites in the country and the deployment of what it described as offensive missile systems.

- [De Lima pushes 'Campus Press Freedom Act'](#) (2026-04-19 16:13)

MAMAMAYANG Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima is proposing House Bill (HB) 8718, or the Campus Press Freedom Act. De Lima said in the explanatory note of HB 8718 that despite the good intentions behind the crafting and passage of the law, Republic Act 7079, or the Campus Journalism Act, "has been proven to be seriously flawed and riddled with deficiencies to fully maintain the existence of campus press, and to protect the rights and welfare of student journalists." Among the law's "glaring flaws" was that it legalizes nonmandatory collection of publication fee, it does not mandate colleges and universities to have student publications, and it does not have a penalty clause, "leaving erring administrations unscathed from violations." Under the bill, which would repeal the law, all educational institutions in the elementary, secondary and tertiary levels must set up a student publication. Funding shall come from student publication fees collected by the school administration. The bill provides a fine of between P150,000 and P250,000, or imprisonment of from one year to five years for someone "who shall willfully intervene with, restrain or coerce any student publication/student journalist in the exercise of its/their functions and rights guaranteed by this Act."

- [DOLE steps up aid for displaced OFWs](#) (2026-04-19 16:12)

THE Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) is ramping up assistance for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) displaced by the Middle East crisis, rolling out jobs, emergency income and livelihood support. Repatriated OFWs directly benefited from a multilayered package of assistance during the Bayanihan Para sa Balikbayang Manggagawa spearheaded over the weekend by the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) and the DOLE at the Leyte National High School Gymnasium in Eastern Visayas. The initiative served as a comprehensive reintegration platform, enabling returning OFWs to access job opportunities, livelihood support



and social protection services in one venue, easing their transition back to local employment and community life. The OFWs accessed a one-stop hub for employment, business support and social services — cutting red tape and speeding up their transition back home. The DOLE Regional Office in Eastern Visayas opened 664 local jobs, while DMW lined up 1,904 overseas job orders, giving workers the options to stay and work locally or redeploy abroad. A total of 76 applicants registered, with five, including two OFWs, being hired on the spot. The DOLE ensured that no OFW would be left behind. A total of 54 repatriated OFWs were enrolled under the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged Workers (Tupad) Program, providing short-term emergency employment and income support as they transition to more stable work. DOLE said 12 others were processed for livelihood grants under the Kabuhayan Program, offering startup capital for small businesses. In Quezon City, over 500 OFW repatriates benefited from another reintegration fair offering jobs, financial aid, psychosocial support and skills training. The Quezon City Public Employment Service Office said eight OFWs were hired on the spot, while 39 were considered near hires. The event provided access to around 8,000 job opportunities, both local and overseas, through the participation of recruitment agencies and local companies expanding employment options for returning workers. DOLE pointed to PhilJobNet, now integrated into the eGovPH app, as a faster way for returning workers to find jobs anytime, anywhere. “Bottom line: from emergency aid to long-term opportunities, the response is aggressive, coordinated and focused on one goal — helping OFWs rebuild, earn and stay home with stability and dignity,” DOLE said.

- [Jet fuel shortage looms in Asia, Europe](#) (2026-04-19 16:11)

NEW YORK — A looming jet fuel shortage in Europe and Asia could compound the Iran war's impact on world travel within weeks if a fragile agreement to reopen the Strait of Hormuz collapses, making higher airfares and flight cancellations even more likely as the summer travel season approaches. Crude oil prices plunged Friday after Iran's foreign minister said tankers and other commercial vessels could again pass unimpeded through the narrow waterway off the country's coast that serves as a conduit for about one-fifth of the world's oil and natural gas. President Donald Trump cheered the announcement but then said the US would continue its blockade of Iranian ships entering or leaving the strait until Washington and Tehran reached a deal to end the war, which started Feb. 28 when the US and Israel attacked Iran. The oil market is expected to take months to recover from shipment disruptions, and fuel prices typically take longer to fall than prices for crude. In a sign of the conflict's ongoing repercussions for airlines and their passengers, Air Canada said Friday it was canceling service to New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport between June and October due to surging jet fuel costs. Jet fuel — a refined kerosene-based oil product — is airlines' biggest cost, making up about 30 percent of overall expenses, according to the International Air Transport Association. Jet fuel prices have roughly doubled since the war began. Shortages could start next. In an exclusive Thursday interview with The Associated Press (AP), International Energy Agency Director Fatih Birol said Europe had “maybe six weeks” of remaining jet fuel supplies. In general, some European countries hold several months' worth of jet fuel inventory at a

time, according to an IEA report released this week. Airline officials have largely reacted with caution, acknowledging potential fuel issues but working to reassure customers. Still, some carriers have already passed costs on to consumers by increasing fees for baggage and other add-ons, embedding costs into ticket prices, or raising fuel surcharges. Jet fuel is made from crude oil at refineries, which also create gasoline and diesel. Airlines generally buy jet fuel from refineries or fuel companies, similar to drivers buying gasoline from stations, but on a much larger scale. Jet fuel travels on ships and through pipelines and is stored by airlines at airports. Purchasing is handled by airlines. If fuel supplies are running out in a region, that doesn't necessarily mean there will be no flights. Some airlines might have more stored than others. But remaining flights are likely to be expensive, reflecting fuel costs. Larger airlines have advantages in regions with shortages. They have the financial means to deal with high prices, said Jacques Rousseau, managing director at financial firm Clearview Energy Partners. In Europe, a number of countries are now relying on less than 20 days of coverage in their fuel supplies, according to this week's IEA report. Supplies haven't dropped below 29 days since 2020, the report said. If that falls under 23 days, physical shortages may emerge at some airports, resulting in flight cancellations and lower demand, the report warned. "Every passing day that the Strait of Hormuz remains shut, Europe is edging closer to supply shortages," said Amaal Khan, head of European jet fuel pricing at Argus Media. "The strait accounts for around 40 percent of Europe's jet fuel imports, but no jet fuel has passed the strait since the war broke out." Which regions could feel pain? Asia-Pacific countries are the most reliant on oil and jet fuel from the Middle East, followed by Europe, Rousseau said. Most of Europe's jet fuel is produced by European refiners, but about 20-25% of its supply is missing because of the war, Rousseau said. To fill some gaps, the US increased its exports of jet fuel to Europe considerably, sending about 150,000 barrels per day in April, or about six times the normal level, Rousseau said. Availability of jet fuel is less of an issue in the US, a major oil producer, he added. "It's just going to cost more here, whereas in different parts of the world you could actually get to a point where there's just no fuel," Rousseau said. The world is losing 10 million to 15 million barrels of oil a day due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, said Pavel Molchanov, senior investment strategist at investment firm Raymond James & Associates. Even though the IEA has released 400 million barrels of oil from members' emergency reserves, that won't help in the short term, Molchanov added. "It could take until the end of the year to get all of those barrels onto the market," he said. Christopher Anderson, a professor of operations, technology and information management at Cornell University, said travelers should prepare for more than just higher airfares. "This is no longer just a fuel-price story. For airlines, it is now a network-planning story," he said. "Higher fuel costs matter, but so do longer routings, reduced scheduling flexibility and greater uncertainty about what demand will look like even a few weeks out." Travelers might see "a market with later booking patterns, more schedule volatility and fewer low-fare options if this disruption lasts into the core summer season," he said.

- [Myanmar releases 78 Filipinos detained for immigration-related offenses](#) (2026-04-19 16:10)

MYANMAR has released 78 Filipinos who were detained for immigration-related offenses, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said. The Philippine Embassy in Yangon is facilitating the repatriation of the unidentified Filipinos in coordination with Myanmar authorities, the DFA said Saturday evening. "All the Filipinos were trafficked for employment in scam centers in Myanmar and had been serving sentences for illegal entry and residency," the DFA said in a statement. The release of the unidentified Filipinos was made during the Myanmar New Year (Thingyan), which reflected the "goodwill between Myanmar and the Philippines," the Foreign Affairs department said. The Philippine government expressed its appreciation to Myanmar authorities "for this compassionate and humanitarian gesture," the DFA posted on Facebook. The DFA reaffirmed its foreign policy pillar of "protecting Filipinos overseas, in collaboration with the Department of Migrant Workers, and will continue to work with relevant law enforcement agencies toward the prosecution of illegal recruiters of Filipinos trafficked for illegal jobs abroad." The embassy in January warned Filipinos against accepting suspicious job offers in Myanmar. It said that many Filipinos "have already fallen victim to these deceptive schemes, resulting in exploitation, detention, and other serious consequences." The embassy advised Filipinos seeking overseas employment to accept only legitimate job offers duly verified by the Department of Migrant Workers prior to departure from the Philippines. "Foreign nationals found without proper documentation, overstaying, or engaging in unauthorized work may be subject to detention, fines, and deportation," it added. The embassy said Filipinos "who may have fallen victim to illegal recruitment or human trafficking and are currently in Myanmar" should seek its immediate assistance. "Beware of false job offers. Recent cases confirm that positions advertised under misleading titles such as 'Customer Service Representative' have been used as fronts for trafficking-in-persons," it said. Any suspicious recruitment activity should be reported immediately to Philippine authorities before accepting an offer or traveling abroad, the embassy said. It reminded Filipinos to "avoid unlicensed recruiters." Employment must be processed through authorized agencies, and travelers must possess complete and valid employment and immigration documents before leaving the Philippines. It also said that working abroad without proper documentation exposes individuals to heightened risks of abuse, trafficking, and detention.

- [Philippines urged to reform housing to address affordability crisis](#) (2026-04-19 16:09)

THE government must institute major reforms to ensure more effective delivery of socialized housing to underprivileged Filipinos, in light of the recent Gallup report which ranked the Philippines as the "worst" in housing affordability, housing industry leaders said on Sunday. Aside from the report of an American multinational analytics and advisory company, Gallup Inc., the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations (Creba) cited the national government's Balanced Housing Development (BHD) program, "which must be immediately recalibrated to make it more responsive to the needs of the homeless poor, without crippling the primary housing providers." Creba president Noel Cariño told The Manila Times in an interview that private developers would remain committed to government policies, especially on BHD, which imposes a "social housing production quota" on them under Republic Act

7279, or the Urban Development and Housing Act. “While we affirm our long-standing position that the social housing quota is constitutionally infirm, nonetheless, for as long as it remains in our statutes, we are committed to abide,” Cariño said. According to the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), private developers, including Creba members, are required under the BHD program to develop socialized housing equivalent to 15 percent of their subdivision project cost or 5 percent of the condominium cost. “We urge judiciousness in promulgating its implementing rules — to ensure those infirmities are not exacerbated, the social objectives are not warped, and businesses are insulated from oppressive requirements, arbitrariness and extortive or corrupt influences,” the top Creba executive said. Reiterating the need to recalibrate the BHD requirement and compliance rules, he said private developers, particularly Creba members, have been compliant with the government’s implementing rules. Since 2018, developers have contributed billions of pesos to a Housing Escrow Fund supposedly to be used for DHSUD-accredited social housing projects. Those contributions, which amount to P15 billion since 2018 based on DHSUD records, are declared by those rules to be non-recoverable and represent outright upfront losses for developers, Cariño said. “Now, the department is requiring developers to cough up an additional 75 percent of the statutory requirement — in effect forcing them to incur unrecoverable losses of up to 15 percent of project cost,” he added. Warning of a possible collapse in the housing industry, the Creba chief urged the DHSUD to consider his group’s proposed alternative formula. “Otherwise, with such substantial losses — on top of the 12-percent VAT (value-added tax), capital gains tax, real property taxes, social housing tax and all other charges imposed upon our businesses — we may no longer have a housing industry to speak of,” Cariño pointed out. “We also call on the DHSUD to seriously consider our proposed improvements to the procedural changes it recently adopted, not only to enhance efficiency, but also to seal off the corruption tunnels that compromise social housing delivery,” he added. Cariño also cited the Commission on Audit (COA) findings, which showed that “over the years, there has been failure to monitor, account for and report on the billions of pesos contributed by the developers for BHD compliance purposes.” “COA also notes that ‘reports on the establishment of the fund contributions, their utilization and remaining balances are unreliable’ — conditions that ‘exposed the funds to possible fraud,’ ” he said.

- [Group: Poverty driving Filipinos into risky, exploitative jobs](#) (2026-04-19 16:08)

THE Federation of Free Workers (FFW) has expressed alarm over an increasingly disturbing trend luring Filipinos abroad not just for legitimate work, but into war zones, trafficking rings, scam hubs and other high risk, exploitative operations. The FFW sounded the alarm on Sunday, citing mounting reports of Filipinos being recruited to work in war-torn Ukraine and in extremist-linked activities in the Middle East, alongside the continued proliferation of online scam hubs across parts of Asia. In February 2026, the Department of Foreign Affairs issued a warning about deceptive overseas job offers — many of which mask recruitment into foreign military service or illicit enterprises. FFW president Sonny Matula said that these schemes are not only dangerous but also illegal, saying that under Article 34(f) of the Labor Code,

recruitment into work that endangers health, morality, or national dignity is expressly prohibited. He said that such acts, when carried out by unlicensed recruiters, constitute outright illegal recruitment, a criminal offense that continues to prey on vulnerable Filipinos. Beyond illegal recruitment, FFW emphasized that the matter has also become a human trafficking crisis. “In times of crisis — especially with the ripple effects of the Middle East conflict — desperation deepens,” FFW said. “And when survival is at stake, even the dirtiest, most dangerous and most degrading jobs can look like salvation. Hunger has a way of disguising traps as tickets out.” The labor group argued that enforcement alone will not solve the problem. As long as poverty wages persist at home, illegal recruiters will continue to find willing victims. “This is why, this Labor Day, we are once again pushing — firmly and urgently — for a living wage,” FFW said. “We call for a P200 nationwide daily wage increase and the nationalization of wage standards so that workers in rural areas, the provinces, and even in BARMM are no longer condemned to survive on crumbs.” FFW emphasized that the uneven wage structure across regions fuels migration driven not by opportunity, but by desperation.

“When wages are too low to live on, people will take risks — any risks — just to get by. That includes walking straight into exploitation.” The group challenged the government to confront the root causes head-on — low wages, lack of quality jobs, weak rural development and systemic inequality. “If the government truly wants to protect Filipino workers, it must do more than warn them — it must give them real reasons to stay,” FFW said. “That means raising wages, creating secure and decent jobs, investing in the countryside and ensuring that economic growth reaches the most neglected communities.” FFW also pointed to the need for stronger anti-corruption measures and sustained investment in agro-industrialization and agricultural modernization, anchored on social justice, to generate stable livelihoods outside urban centers. “Filipino workers should be deployed into dignified, productive employment — not into war zones, trafficking pipelines or scam compounds,” the group stressed. “The real antidote to dangerous recruitment is not just prosecution. It is a just economy — one that pays workers fairly, protects their rights and removes the desperation that makes exploitation possible.”

- [294 gas stations temporarily closed – PNP](#) (2026-04-19 16:07)

THE Philippine National Police (PNP) on Sunday said 294 of the 14,527 gas stations nationwide have temporarily closed, while the number of reported incidents of hoarding and profiteering increased to 27. Since March 1, authorities have filed 27 cases involving fuel-related violations, including seven cases of hoarding, one case of profiteering, and 19 other offenses, including illegal storage, transport, and trading of petroleum products. In a recent operation conducted by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Agusan del Norte, operatives arrested two suspects for their alleged involvement in an oil pilferage scheme on April 17. The suspects, a truck driver and a helper, were reportedly caught in the act of illegally siphoning fuel from a tanker truck into barrels and smaller containers for unauthorized trading. The tanker truck, reportedly coming from Cagayan de Oro City, had stopped on the roadside where the unlawful transfer of fuel was carried out. Confiscated during the operation was one trailer tanker

containing petroleum products with a total estimated value of P6.6 million, including one barrel containing 180 liters of fuel. These enforcement efforts are done in coordination with the Department of Energy and the respective Local Price Monitoring Councils of local government units to ensure accurate monitoring, fair pricing, and sufficient supply at the community level. PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. vowed a balanced and firm approach as the PNP will continue to enforce the law fairly and ensure that those who violate it are held accountable. "We remain committed to working with partner agencies and local authorities to keep the situation manageable and under control. Our monitoring and coordination is ongoing to prevent any exploitation," Nartatez said. The PNP also urged the public to stay informed and vigilant, especially as global tensions are affecting oil production and distribution, with a corresponding impact on local supply. Suspicious activities such as illegal fuel storage, overpricing, and unauthorized trade must be reported to the authorities.

- [House panel eyes ending impeachment hearing on April 29](#) (2026-04-19 16:06)

THE House Committee on Justice plans to end on April 29 its hearing on the impeachment complaints against Vice President Sara Duterte. The committee is conducting the hearing to determine whether there is probable cause to impeach her. "To my knowledge, on the 29th, hopefully we will wrap up," Lanao del Sur 1st District Rep. Zia Alonto Adiong, a member of the committee, said in Filipino and English in a radio interview on Sunday. A vote of at least one-third of all the members of the House is needed to affirm or override the articles of impeachment. The committee will focus on Duterte's Statements of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth (SALN) at its next hearing on April 22 as it deliberates the charge of unexplained wealth against her. "We intend to focus for the next hearing on the allegations of unexplained wealth and that is why the Ombudsman, the SEC, and the BIR were not asked in today's hearing," Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro, the committee chairman, said in a press conference on Tuesday night. The Office of the Ombudsman submitted Duterte's SALNs to the committee that subpoenaed them. The statements cover the periods 2022 to 2025, 2007 to 2013, and 2016 to 2022, when she was mayor of Davao City. Last Tuesday, the committee decided to summon former senator Antonio Trillanes IV to its April 22 hearing. Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima, who moved for the issuance of subpoena ad testificandum and duces tecum to Trillanes, said he "was cited in the Saballa et al. complaint in relation to the specific allegation on VP Duterte's assets." The committee also issued a subpoena to the Anti-Money Laundering Council. The complaint filed by Father Joel Saballa along with other people is one of the two impeachment cases filed against Duterte that the committee is hearing. Duterte has called on the committee to dismiss the complaints. Four impeachment complaints were filed against Duterte last February.

- [PNP reviews collision incident on EDSA](#) (2026-04-19 16:05)

THE Philippine National Police (PNP) said Sunday that an administrative review is underway into a collision involving a PNP-marked vehicle on EDSA in Quezon City last Friday, a video of which went viral online. According to initial reports, the incident occurred on April 17 on EDSA



northbound near Main Avenue in Barangay Socorro involving a PNP-marked Toyota Coaster operating under the Libreng Sakay Program and a public utility bus. Authorities said the collision resulted in minor property damage, with no reported injuries. “An administrative review is ongoing to determine the full circumstances of the incident and to ensure compliance with established protocols. Appropriate actions will be taken based on the findings,” Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said in a statement. The PNP provided free rides to commuters affected by the three-day nationwide strike mounted by transport group Manibela from April 15 to 17 over staggering fuel price surges driven by ongoing tensions in the Middle East.

- [PH seeks jobs, climate finance support at G-24 meet](#) (2026-04-19 16:04)

THE Philippines called for expanded global support for job creation, financing, and climate resilience during the Intergovernmental Group of Twenty-Four (G-24) Ministers’ and Governors’ Meeting, as developing economies face mounting pressure from geopolitical tensions and climate-related risks. Finance Secretary Frederick Go said overlapping global challenges are straining countries’ capacity to respond, especially as fiscal space becomes more constrained, according to a press release Sunday. He emphasized the need for “scaled-up and more flexible financing,” including budget support and emergency funding tools, to help countries absorb external shocks while sustaining social services and development programs. Go also pushed for stronger mobilization of private capital to boost investments in infrastructure, energy transition, and digital services, sectors seen as key to generating jobs and sustaining economic growth. At the same time, he underscored the importance of supporting human capital development to ensure that economic reforms translate into quality employment and improved livelihoods. Go highlighted the urgency of enhancing climate and disaster resilience, particularly for vulnerable countries like the Philippines, through improved access to climate financing and technical assistance. “Sustaining progress requires collective resolve. We call on countries and development partners to deepen collaboration in responding to both current and emerging crises,” he said during the G-24 meeting on April 14. He urged renewed multilateral cooperation to strengthen the global financial system and ensure inclusive and sustainable development. The G-24 is a coalition of developing countries that coordinates positions on international monetary and development issues, and advocates reforms to promote financial stability and equitable growth.

- [Bill seeks to prioritize village execs for plantilla jobs](#) (2026-04-19 16:03)

A BILL filed at the House of Representatives seeks to prioritize certain barangay (village) officials applying for a plantilla position in government. The bill, House Bill 8793 or the proposed Barangay Officials Employment Transition Act, was filed last March 25 by 1Tahanan Rep. Nathaniel Oducado. “Although Civil Service Commission (CSC) Memorandum Circular No. 24, s. 2012 grants Barangay Official Eligibility for entry-level roles, no structured mechanism exists to prioritize their hiring based on grassroots expertise, leaving a critical gap in harnessing their proven capabilities for broader public service,” Oducado said in the bill’s explanatory note. He said the bill “promotes Article II, Section 26 of the 1987 Constitution on social justice



and efficient governance. It ensures continuity of public service, rewards proven leadership, and strengthens government capacity while upholding meritocracy.” The measure covers those who completed at least one full term, including punong barangay (village captain), kagawad (member of the Sangguniang Barangay or village council), chairman of the Sangguniang Kabataan (youth council), village treasurer, and village secretary, “who were appointed and served continuously for one (1) full term.” Under the bill, they qualify if they have no pending administrative or criminal case involving moral turpitude. “Such priority shall be exercised in accordance with the standards of the Civil Service Commission [or CSC], including the submission and evaluation of the Personal Data Sheet (CS Form No. 212), and other requirements on qualifications, eligibility, and competence,” it read. The bill mandates the CSC, in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Department of Budget and Management, to “develop and implement” within a year from its effectivity, “a skills matching program, including competency assessments and training modules, to facilitate the integration of qualified barangay officials into appropriate public service roles.”

- [Postponement of BSKE pushed](#) (2026-04-19 16:02)

SEN. Imee Marcos saw the necessity of postponing the 2026 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections (BSKE) to allow the government to use the P16-billion poll budget for the sectors affected by the oil crisis. The BSKE, originally scheduled for Dec. 1, 2025, had been moved to Nov. 2, 2026. The senator on Sunday said that during the hearing last year of the 2026 budget of the Commission on Elections, the poll body said the holding of the BSKE will require about P16 billion. “At a time when the country is confronted with serious economic challenges brought about by the oil crisis, prudence demands that we prioritize the allocation of limited public resources,” Marcos said in a statement. She said the fund “can be more urgently directed toward addressing the immediate needs of our people, including rising fuel costs, food security and essential public services.” “Equally important, postponement will allow our local officials to remain fully focused on governance and crisis response, rather than being drawn into the distractions of electoral politics,” Marcos said. “In times such as these, continuity of leadership at the grassroots level can help ensure stability and more efficient delivery of public services.” Comelec Chairman George Erwin Garcia earlier said that some P3 billion had already been spent for preparations for the BSKE polls. Garcia said that while Congress has the power to postpone the BSKE anew, the Constitution bars the realignment of funds outside the Comelec. Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo Lacson earlier said there is a legal way to realign the budget allocated for the holding of the 2026 BSKE to address the oil crisis. “The allocations can still be treated as savings. Comelec may opt not to spend the funds for the BSKE and declare them as savings to be returned to the [National] Treasury,” Lacson said.

- [Syria says foiled cross-border attack by Assad remnants, Hezbollah](#) (2026-04-19 14:18)

DAMASCUS, SYRIA — RECASTS on interior ministry; CHANGES dateline Syria's interior ministry said Sunday that security forces thwarted an alleged cross-border attack from the country's territory planned by remnants of ousted leader Bashar al-Assad and cells linked to Iran-backed

Hezbollah. From March 2 until a 10-day ceasefire went into force on April 17, Hezbollah was battling Israel after drawing Lebanon into the Middle East war with rocket fire aimed at Israel in support of Tehran. In a statement, the interior ministry said security forces "arrested members of a sabotage cell" linked to Hezbollah and Assad remnants. The ministry said the cell "was working to carry out an attack from inside Syrian territory on targets outside the borders" from Quneitra province, which borders Israel. Syria's official SANA news agency, quoting an interior ministry source, said Hezbollah "intended to launch missiles across the border with the aim of destabilising the country". Syrian authorities are hostile to Hezbollah as the group played a key role in Syria's civil war that ended in 2024, fighting alongside the forces of now ousted leader Bashar al-Assad. The ministry said the Quneitra incident was the latest among "several attempts to destabilise the country and undermine public security" involving remnants of the former regime and unscrupulous individuals linked to Hezbollah". Last week, Damascus accused Hezbollah of being linked to a cell that attempted to plant an explosive device in front of a house belonging to an unidentified religious figure in the Bab Tuma area of the Syrian capital. But the group denied the ministry's claims last week, saying they were "false and fabricated". Hezbollah said it has "no activity, no ties and no relationship with any party in Syria, and has no presence on Syrian soil". The group called on Syrian authorities "to conduct a thorough investigation before making accusations without evidence". It blamed "the presence of intelligence services" on Syrian soil that it said were "seeking to inflame tensions between Lebanon and Syria". In February, Syria said it had dismantled a cell responsible for recent attacks targeting Damascus's Mazzeh district, claiming the weapons came from Hezbollah, which denied any involvement. Under Assad, Syria was part of Iran's "axis of resistance" against Israel and enabled the transfer of weapons and money from Iran to Hezbollah. But since taking over, Syria's Islamist authorities have rejected Iranian influence.

- [Trump says US delegation going to Pakistan Monday for Iran negotiations](#) (2026-04-19 14:02)

WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES — President Donald Trump said US negotiators will be in Pakistan Monday to resume talks on ending the war with Iran, as he again threatened to destroy its power plants and bridges if no deal is reached. In a social media post Sunday, Trump also accused Iran of violating the countries' two-week ceasefire with attacks Saturday in the Strait of Hormuz. Trump said he was offering Iran "a reasonable deal" and if Tehran refuses, "the United States is going to knock out every single Power Plant, and every single Bridge, in Iran. NO MORE MR. NICE GUY!" In his fresh threat, made on his Truth Social platform, Trump said of Iran's bridges and power plants: "They'll come down fast, they'll come down easy and, if they don't take the DEAL, it will be my Honor to do what has to be done, which should have been done to Iran, by other Presidents, for the last 47 years." The Strait of Hormuz remained closed on Sunday amidst the stand-off. Iran on Saturday declared it shut again to shipping after it had on Friday announced it was reopening the strategic waterway. The US-Iran ceasefire is scheduled to end on Wednesday. As mediation efforts continued following high-level talks in Pakistan on April 11-12 that failed to reach a deal, Iran said it would not reopen the strait until

the United States ended its blockade of Iranian ports. Trump wrote Sunday, "Iran decided to fire bullets yesterday in the Strait of Hormuz — A Total Violation of our Ceasefire Agreement!" Three incidents Saturday demonstrated the dangers of any attempted crossing of the strait. A UK maritime security agency said Iran's Revolutionary Guards fired at one tanker, while security intelligence firm Vanguard Tech reported the force had threatened to "destroy" an empty cruise ship that was fleeing the Gulf. In the third incident, the UK agency said it received a report of a vessel "being hit by an unknown projectile, which caused damage" to shipping containers but no fire.

- [Bomb experts try to defuse WWII bomb near Paris](#) (2026-04-19 13:48)

COLOMBES, FRANCE — Authorities evacuated thousands of residents of a Paris suburb Sunday as experts sought to defuse a World War II bomb, police said. Nearly 800 police cordoned off the site in the northwest suburb of Colombes as specialists tried but failed in one bid to remove the detonator from the explosive, which was first discovered on April 10, police said. Experts now planned to detonate the bomb in a two-metre (6.5-foot) deep pit, an operation expected to take "several more hours", according to police. Residents within a 450-metre radius were told early Sunday to move to local reception centres. Authorities expect to allow them back into their homes later in the day. Local official Alexandre Brugere on Thursday had described the operation as "risky" and requiring a "high level of preparation". Unexploded World War II ordnance is still found across Europe, particularly in Germany where bombs are regularly discovered on construction sites, 80 years after the conflict ended. In 2025, the discovery of a 500-kilogramme wartime bomb halted traffic at the Paris Gare du Nord station, France's busiest railway terminus.

- [Branded pop-up events take center stage at Coachella](#) (2026-04-19 13:21)

INDIO, UNITED STATES — With a multitude of promotional events almost as long and diverse as its artist lineup, Coachella, one of the biggest music festivals in the world, is now an amusement park for influencers and a gold mine for brands. The Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival, or simply Coachella, has become the tone-setter for the US festival circuit. Tickets for this edition -- now in its second weekend with pop stars Sabrina Carpenter, Justin Bieber and reggaeton artist Karol G at the top of the bill -- sold out last year within four days of going on sale. With that, organizers were expecting around 250,000 people to come over two weekends at the Empire Polo Club in Indio, where dozens of special events with fashion, beauty, beverage, and lifestyle brands were spread out among the festival's nine stages. "I love how big it's gotten. I love how more people are open to it," 24-year-old Luz Maura told AFP at an e.l.f. Beauty station. The pastel-colored space offered lip glosses as souvenirs, slushies to ease the high desert temperatures, makeup artists to touch up glittery festival looks, and hosted multiple selfie corners. The "e.l.f.scape to Balm Desert" campaign drew a "six-figure audience," said Patrick O'Keefe, the company's vice president of integrated marketing, to AFP. Promoting a moisturizing lip balm was not just about seizing on the arid, dry desert's climate -- it was also backed by sales data. "We know that 92 percent of daily makeup users incorporate lip products into their

routines," he added. Its donut-shaped chairs and branded mirrors also serve as irresistible selfie backdrops that in turn promote the brand.

- [Insufficient oxygen: PAL plane makes emergency landing](#) (2026-04-19 11:25)

A Philippine Airlines flight bound for Manila from Dumaguete made an emergency landing at the Iloilo International Airport on Sunday afternoon after reports of insufficient oxygen supply inside the cabin. The problem was detected when the aircraft had reached its cruising altitude of 32,000 feet. Flight PR 2544 landed safely at 4:30 p.m. Authorities said some passengers needed immediate medical assistance, although no major injuries were reported.

- [Bernardo testimony in flood control case raises legal focus on state witness doctrine](#) (2026-04-19 08:57)

MANILA, Philippines — The expected testimony of former Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) undersecretary Roberto Bernardo in the alleged flood control anomaly has drawn renewed attention to the legal requirements governing the use of state witnesses in corruption cases, the legal team of former senator Ramon Revilla Jr. said. Revilla was among several persons accused in connection with an alleged ghost flood control project in Bulacan. Lawyer Rean Balisi Balisi said Bernardo's scheduled appearance before the Sandiganbayan Third Division on Thursday, April 23, brings fresh focus on the application of the state witness doctrine under Philippine law. Under the rules, a state witness must not appear to be the most guilty among those charged, and his testimony must be deemed necessary to the prosecution's case. These requirements are among those being examined in relation to Bernardo's participation in the proceedings. The cases stem from alleged irregularities in flood control projects implemented in several regions, including Central Luzon and Mindanao, involving the disbursement of public funds now under continuing court scrutiny. Earlier testimony before the Sandiganbayan indicated that some transactions may have involved coordination across multiple offices. Former DPWH Region III District Engineer Henry Alcantara, who was previously designated as a state witness, testified that he turned over approximately P1.8 billion in funds to Bernardo, although he said he had no direct knowledge of how the funds were ultimately used. Alcantara also told the court that several of his actions were based on representations attributed to Bernardo, rather than independently verified instructions or official documents. These statements were raised during hearings as the Sandiganbayan reviewed the flow of funds and supporting records. During a bail hearing, Associate Justice Ronald Moreno noted Bernardo's repeated mention in witness testimonies and raised questions on how decisions were made by officials involved in the transactions. The court raised the possibility that subordinate officials may have acted on instruction without verification. The prosecution's use of Bernardo as a state witness has likewise been the subject of legal discussion in court, as the discharge of an accused to testify is permitted under procedural rules but must meet strict legal conditions. Revilla's legal team said the ongoing proceedings highlight the need for careful judicial assessment of compliance with those requirements in complex cases involving multiple accused and large-scale financial

transactions. Court-submitted reports indicate that Bernardo has executed several affidavits since his earlier appearances in legislative inquiries, which are expected to be evaluated as part of his testimony before the Sandiganbayan. He has also reportedly committed to return about P290 million to the government in connection with his qualification as a state witness. The Sandiganbayan Third Division is expected to assess Bernardo's testimony alongside other prosecution evidence, including witness accounts and documentary submissions, as the trial proceeds. The court is hearing the bail petition filed by Revilla in connection with the malversation case arising from the alleged flood control anomalies.

• [Some areas in Metro Manila, Rizal, and Cavite to have water interruptions this week](#)  
(2026-04-19 05:24)

MANILA, Philippines—Some portions of Metro Manila, Rizal and Cavite will have water interruptions this week because of maintenance work and high demand, Manila Water Company Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc. said Sunday. Manila Water said that in Makati City, some parts of Brgy. Bel Air will have no water on April 21-22 between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. due to line maintenance activities at Jupiter cor. Planet St. In Taguig City, some areas in the villages of Central Signal and South Signal will have water interruptions on April 21-22 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of zero pressure testing activities at Damayan Luz Viz. Also, some locations in Brgy. Western Bicutan will have no water on April 23-24 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. also because of zero pressure testing activities near Veterans Habitat. In Rizal, some parts of Brgy. Dolores, Taytay will have service interruptions on April 20-21 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of step testing works along Jupiter Street Cor. L.Wood Ave. to detect possible leaks. Some places in Brgy. San Juan and Brgy. Dolores will have water interruptions on April 20-21 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of zero pressure testing activities along National Rd. In Cainta, some locations in Brgy. San Isidro will have water service interruptions on April 21-22 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of step testing works Along Brookside Hills Subdivision. In Antipolo, some areas in Brgy. Mambugan will have no water on April 21-22 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of a replacement of a line meter along Sumulong Highway. Some locations in Brgy. Dela Paz will also have water interruptions on April 22-23 between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. because of a replacement of a line meter along Taktak Road. Meanwhile, some portions of Brgy. Mambugan, Brgy. Mayamot and Brgy. Cupang will have service interruptions on April 23-24 between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. due to line replacement activities along Marcos Highway. In Rodriguez, Rizal, some areas in the villages of Manggahan, Geronimo, San Rafael and Balite will have water interruptions on April 21-22 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. due to the replacement of a line meter at Millex Road. Meanwhile, Maynilad said some areas in the villages of 313, 314, 329, 330 and 335 in Santa Cruz, Manila will have water interruptions from April 19-26 between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. because of leak exploration activities. In Tondo, several locations in the villages of 124, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 177, 179, 180, 181, and 182 will have no water on April 19-26 between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. because of leak exploration works. Also, some locations in the villages of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 74, 75, 76, 78, 81, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152,

153, 163, 168, 169, 170, 171, and 172 in Tondo will have service interruptions on April 20-26 between 12 a.m. and 3 a.m. because of leak exploration activities. In Caloocan City, some areas in the villages of 36, 39, 40, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220 and 202-A will have water interruptions on April 20-26 between 12 a.m. and 3 a.m. because of leak exploration works. In Valenzuela City, some places in the villages of Gen. T. De Leon, Karuhatan, Malinta, Marulas, Maysan, and Parada will have water service interruptions on April 20 and April 23 between 12:01 a.m. and 4 a.m. due to network maintenance activities. In Imus City, Cavite, several places in the villages of Alapan I-C, Anabu I-A, Anabu I-B, Anabu I-C, Anabu I-D, Anabu I-E, Anabu I-F, Anabu II-A, Anabu II-B, Anabu II-C, Anabu II-D, Anabu II-E, Bayan Luma I, Bayan Luma II, Bayan Luma III, Bayan Luma IV, Bayan Luma V, Bayan Luma VI, Bayan Luma VII, Bayan Luma VIII, Bayan Luma IX, Bukandala III, Bukandala IV, Bukandala V, Carsadang Bago I, Carsadang Bago II, Malagasang 1-A, Malagasang I-B, Malagasang I-C, Malagasang I-D, Malagasang I-E, Malagasang I-F, Malagasang I-G, Medicion I-B, Poblacion III-B, Poblacion IV-B, Poblacion IV-D, and Tanzang Luma VI will have no water on April 20-24 every day between 5 a.m. and 12 a.m. because of high water demand at the Patindig Araw pumping station.

• [Kowloon House warns of business collapse amid labor dispute](#) (2026-04-19 03:22)

MANILA, Philippines—The legal counsel of a popular and long-time dimsum factory and restaurant warned of a possible collapse of the business if the workers will continue their strike. Perlito Campanilla, counsel of Katipunan Food Services Inc. (KFSI), which owns Kowloon House whose factory is located in Quezon City, said the unrest is a major challenge for the company. “The company is at a critical crossroads, balancing worker demands against a harsh economic reality that has already seen several franchisees withdraw their support,” Campanilla said in a statement. Dismissing claims that management has turned a blind eye to the workers' plight, Campanilla said it has been consistently appearing before the National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB). “It is not true that we are ignoring the labor union workers, for we are continuously meeting before the NCMB to earnestly craft a win-win solution,” he said. He said the Kowloon management has already conceded to several union demands, including 17 days vacation leave, 15 days sick leave which can be converted to cash if unused, birthday leave with cash incentive, mid-year bonus, early retirement for employees with 15 years of continuous service and 180 cumulative union leave days. “Kowloon employees are enjoying these benefits on top of the 13th month pay, December bonus, free duty meals, HMO (Health Maintenance Organization) health benefits, early retirement pay, among others, comparable to the benefits employees do receive from multinational corporations,” Campanilla said. He said that despite the union members’ blocking the entrance and conducting a “premature strike,” the management still opted not to file a case to declare their strike illegal or ask for the termination of their employment. While the union was demanding ₱25 daily wage increase, the KFSI lawyer explained that the global oil crisis has severely crippled operations, causing production costs to soar while customer volume drops. ”



The ₱13 a day salary increase is the only amount sustainable for us to offer. Nonetheless, we are cutting corners to have it at most to ₱18," Campanilla said. He said that the union's 'slowdown strike' and refusal to do overtime have backfired, causing unserved orders that prompted franchisees—who account for 80 percent Kowloon's profit—to pre-terminate their contracts. "Right now, 5,000 siopaos are about to spoil because they are not letting us in. We could have it donated to charity or even some of it to them, but they are adamant," Campanilla said. Despite the escalating tension and the threat to the company's 50-year legacy, Campanilla maintained that the door remains open for a peaceful resolution. "We are very much willing to continue our talks to avert this unrest as we urge the union to consider the long-term viability of the company and the jobs," he added.

- [Task force to bury Navotas landfill to suppress toxic fumes](#) (2026-04-19 03:13)

MANILA, Philippines—The task force composed of concerned national government agencies and the Navotas City government has deployed more heavy equipment to bury the closed landfill. Mayor John Rey Tiangco said on Sunday that he accompanied Public Works and Highways Secretary Vince Dizon and officials from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Health (DOH) who inspected the 41-hectare facility in Barangay Tanza 2. The landfill is situated off the coast, 2.6 kilometers from the mainland. Tiangco said the DPWH chief ordered the deployment of backhoes, bulldozers and dredgers to completely bury the landfill in a bid to fully extinguish the blaze. "We have resolved to put soil on top of the burning trash caused by methane gas underneath, otherwise it would continue to burn," Dizon said during the inspection late last week. The landfill was closed last year. Dizon and Tiangco said they would also seek the help of the private sector for the deployment of more heavy equipment at the site. Tiangco told The Manila Times that the DENR is conducting its own probe for the possible filing of charges or imposition of sanctions against its former operator - Philippine Ecology Systems Corp. - for apparent abandonment and failure to complete the landfill's safe closure. "There were no residents living in the closed facility but our main concern here is the toxic fumes out of the rubbish fire that have been spreading and affecting many cities in Metro Manila and towns in Bulacan particularly Obando and as far as Bataan province," Tiangco said. Reports from the Bureau of Fire Protection showed that the landfill fire broke out on the night of April 10, 2026. Tiangco said the DOH has warned that the lingering haze from the landfill fire could pose health risks. "That is why, we are advising especially those near the closed facility to wear masks because the haze — air polluted with fine smoke and dust particles from fire and ash — may trigger coughing, chest pain, eye irritation, and worsen asthma and other lung diseases," he said.

- [Govt taps Prime Infra gas plants, other oil, coal assets after outages](#) (2026-04-19 02:54)

MANILA, Philippines—The government has tapped natural gas, oil, and coal-fired plants after three big producers suffered outages, triggering a yellow alert across the Luzon grid. Energy Secretary Sharon Garin directed the joint venture of San Miguel Global Power Holdings Corp., Aboitiz Power Corp. and Meralco PowerGen Corp. to immediately restore affected generation

units. Garin issued the order following the tripping of several units on Thursday, including Ilijan Blocks A and B and three units of Excellent Energy Resources Inc. Both facilities are operated by LNGPH, a consortium comprising San Miguel Global Power, Meralco PowerGen Corp., and AboitizPower. The technical failures prompted the National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP) to issue the first yellow alert of the year for the Luzon grid and the second for the Visayas grid, signaling that thin power reserves had fallen below a required safety margin. To mitigate the shortfall, the Department of Energy (DOE) mobilized major generation players including San Miguel Corp., Global Power Holdings Inc., Aboitiz Power Corp., PHINMA Energy, and ACEN Corp. to bolster supply. “At the onset of the Ilijan and EERI tripping, oil plants providing ancillary services were immediately dispatched to stabilize the grid frequency,” the office of Energy Undersecretary Rowena Guevarra said on April 17. “Starting 3 p.m., oil-based Bauang plants, First Gen’s natural gas plants (Sta. Rita, San Gabriel and Avion), coal-fired power plants (GNPD, Pagbilao and OPPL) generation were increased to fulfill the demand,” the DOE said. The natural gas plants are now operated by Prime CoreGen, a subsidiary of Prime Infrastructure Capital Inc. (Prime Infra), following its acquisition of a majority stake in the plants from First Gen in 2025. Prime CoreGen’s power facilities—the 1,000-MW Sta. Rita, 450-MW San Gabriel and 97-MW Avion—operated at about 95 percent generating capacity. The DOE also instructed the NGCP, generation companies, and system operators to expedite the return of affected units, stabilize supply and prevent further impacts on consumers. The NGCP reported on Thursday that 35 plants were on forced outage and 14 were operating at derated capacity, leaving a total of 5,137.2 MW unavailable. In an advisory Thursday, the NGCP placed the Luzon grid under a yellow alert from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. after electricity demand rose to 11,966 megawatts against an available capacity of 12,223 MW. The yellow alert was raised following the tripping of two major gas plants in Batangas, as well as the unavailability of hydroelectric power plants in Magat, Isabel. Meanwhile, Meralco said it has restored power following a brief system imbalance caused by an unexpected plant outage that lasted around 10 to 15 minutes on Thursday afternoon. A yellow alert was also issued for the Visayas grid from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., driven by the insufficient power being imported from Luzon. During the period, the grid’s available capacity stood at 2,597 MW, which was only slightly higher than the demand of 2,368 MW.

- [Parts of Metro Manila, 4 provinces to have power interruptions due to maintenance works](#) (2026-04-19 01:53)

MANILA, Philippines—Some areas in Metro Manila, Batangas, Bulacan, Cavite, and Rizal will have power interruptions this week because of maintenance works, Meralco said on Sunday. In Quezon City, some parts of Brgy. Sangandaan will have no power on April 19-20 between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. because of line reconductoring work and replacement of facilities along Marcel Drive and Reparo Road. Some parts of Filinvest 2 Subd. in Batasan Hills will also have power interruptions on April 21 between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. due to line reconductoring work along Pratt, Gandhi, Atlas and Grant Sts. in Filinvest 2 Subd. Meanwhile, some places in Brgy. Pinyahan, Quezon City will have power interruptions on April 22-23 between 11 p.m. and 11:30

p.m. and between 3:30 a.m. and 4 a.m. because of line maintenance work. Also, some areas in the villages of Holy Spirit and Pasong Tamo will have no power on April 22-23 between 11:30 p.m. and 5:30 a.m. because of line reconstruction and reconductoring work and replacement of electricity poles. In Pasig City, some areas in Brgy. Kapitolyo will have power interruptions on April 22 between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. due to the replacement of a hazardous electricity pole and line reconstruction works along Fairlane St. In Batangas, some places in Batangas City and parts of the villages of Kumintang Ilaya, Kumintang Ibaba, Alangilan, Soro Soro Karsada, Mahabang Parang, Concepcion, Bukal, Balete, Banaba Center, Banaba East, Banaba South and Balagtas will have power interruptions on April 20 between 12:01 a.m. and 5 a.m. because of the relocation of electricity facilities affected by the Balagtas Flyover construction. In Bulacan, some parts of Brgy Taal in Pulilan will have no electricity on April 23 between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. due to line conversion work and installation of electricity facilities along Caingin Road in Brgy Taal. In Cavite, several villages in Alfonso, Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, Gen. Trias City, Magallanes, Maragondon, Naic, Tanza, Ternate and Trece Martires City will have short power interruptions April 20-21 between 11:30 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. and also between 6:01 a.m. and 6:30 a.m. due to line construction works for the development of the Meralco - Osorio substation. In relation to this, some areas in Brgy. Pasong Kawayan 1 in Gen. Trias City; some parts of Brgy. Cabuco, Brgy. De Ocampo and Brgy. San Agustin in Trece Martires City; some locations in the villages of Bagong Kalsada, Bancaan, Bucana Malaki, Bucana Sasahan, Gomez-Zamora, Halang, Humbac, Ibayo Estacion, Ibayong Silangan, Kanluran, Labac, Latoria, Mabolo, Munting Mapino, Nazareno, Sabang, San Roque, Santulan, Sapa, Timalan Balsahan, Timalan Concepcion and Timalan Lontoc in Naic; and some areas in the villages of Amaya 1, Amaya 2, Amaya 3, Amaya 4, Amaya 5, Amaya 6, Amaya 7, Bagtas, Biga, Bunga, Calibuyo, Capipisa, Daang Amaya 1, Daang Amaya 2, Halayhay, Lambingan, Mulawin, Paradahan 1, Paradahan 2, Punta 1, Punta 2, Sahud Ulan, Sanja Mayor, Santol, Tanauan, Timalan Lontoc and Tres Cruces in Tanza will have short power interruptions on April 21-25 between 11:30 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. and between 6:01 a.m. and 6:30 a.m. In Antipolo, Rizal, some areas in Brgy. Inarawan will have power interruptions on April 21 between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. because of line reconductoring works.

- [Trump signs bill extending controversial surveillance powers until April 30](#) (2026-04-19 00:39)

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Saturday signed a bill extending a controversial surveillance program until April 30, a short-term renewal that sets up another showdown in Congress. The bill was approved by the Senate on Friday in a last-minute scramble to prevent the authority from expiring within a matter of days. Trump and Republican leaders have pushed for its renewal, calling it a matter of national security. Critics are concerned about its impact on civil liberties. At the center of the debate is Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which permits the CIA, National Security Agency, FBI and other agencies to collect and analyze vast amounts of overseas communications without a warrant. In doing so, they can incidentally sweep up communications involving Americans who interact with foreign targets. Extending the program has become a recurring fight. Trump and GOP leaders have been

pushing for a clean 18-month renewal, while the House Republicans on Thursday came out with a five-year extension with revisions to appease skeptics. After both of those bills collapsed, leaders pivoted to the stopgap measure. Critics want changes including a requirement for warrants before authorities can access the emails, phone calls or text messages of Americans. Trump signed the bill Saturday without any immediate comment. The authority was set to expire on Monday.

- [Life jacket worn by a passenger who survived the Titanic auctioned off for over \\$900,000](#) (2026-04-19 00:36)

LONDON — A life jacket worn by a passenger on RMS Titanic as she escaped the sinking steamship on a lifeboat sold at auction on Saturday for 670,00 pounds (\$906,000). The flotation device was worn by Laura Mabel Francatelli, a first-class passenger on the doomed ocean liner, and is signed by her and other survivors from the same lifeboat. It was the star among items in a sale of Titanic memorabilia by Henry Aldridge & Son auctioneers in Devizes, western England, and sold to an unidentified telephone bidder for well over the presale estimate of between 250,000 and 350,000 pounds. A seat cushion from one of the Titanic lifeboats sold at the same auction for 390,000 pounds (\$527,000) to the owners of two Titanic museums in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, and Branson, Missouri. The prices include an auction-house fee known as the buyer's premium. "These record-breaking prices illustrate the continuing interest in the Titanic story, and the respect for the passengers and crew whose stories are immortalized by these items of memorabilia," auctioneer Andrew Aldridge said. Billed as the world's most luxurious ocean liner and described as "practically unsinkable," the Titanic hit an iceberg off Newfoundland during its maiden voyage from England to New York. It sank within hours on April 15, 1912. Some 1,500 of the 2,200 passengers and crew died. The Titanic is still a subject of worldwide fascination, in part because of the range of passengers aboard the ship, from paupers to plutocrats. Francatelli was traveling with her employer, fashion designer Lucy Duff Gordon, and Lucy's husband Cosmo Duff Gordon. All three survived in the ship's lifeboat No. 1, which was launched carrying 12 people despite having capacity for 40. Its failure to pick up survivors from the frigid water became a source of controversy. The record auction price for a piece of Titanic memorabilia is 1.56 million pounds (almost \$2 million at the time) paid in 2024 for a gold pocket watch given to the captain of RMS Carpathia, the ship that rescued 700 Titanic survivors.

- [US Coast Guard spots overturned vessel near Saipan during search for missing ship with 6 on board](#) (2026-04-19 00:36)

HAGATNA, Guam — An airplane search crew spotted an overturned ship matching the description of a cargo vessel that went missing with six people on board near the U.S. territory of Saipan, though authorities were not able to confirm whether it was the one that was lost, the Coast Guard said Saturday. The HC-130 Hercules crew saw the vessel early in the day about 100 nautical miles (185 kilometers) northeast of the Mariana's last known position, the Coast Guard said. It was 34 nautical miles (63 kilometers) northeast of Pagan, a small island north of Saipan

in the western Pacific Ocean. The agency said in a statement that it confirmed the overturned ship matched the description of the Mariana, a 145-foot (44-meter) dry cargo vessel registered in the U.S. The Mariana suffered engine failure Wednesday as a massive typhoon bore down on Saipan and nearby islands with fierce winds and relentless rain. After the crew reported that the boat had lost its starboard engine and needed assistance, the Coast Guard set up a one-hour communication schedule with the vessel. But contact was lost Thursday. A HC-130 plane launched that morning to conduct a search, but it returned to Guam due to heavy winds. The Mariana's last known position was about 140 miles (225 kilometers) north-northwest of Saipan, which is about 3,800 miles (6,115 kilometers) west of Hawaii. Coast Guard officials in Honolulu were gathering information on the capsized ship, the agency said in a statement. The guard did not know the nationalities of the Mariana's missing crew members. A U.S. Navy Boeing P-8A Poseidon crew; a Coast Guard cutter; and a Japanese coast guard aircrew and vessel equipped with a specialized dive team were to take part in the search. Typhoon Sinlaku triggered floods, tore off roofs and overturned cars on Saipan. Officials said the storm's large size meant that the island endured roughly 48 hours of fierce winds, which delayed responders' ability to assess damage and help communities.

- [Pope Leo XIV challenges Angola's leaders while delivering a message of encouragement for its people](#) (2026-04-19 00:36)

LUANDA, Angola — Pope Leo XIV challenged Angola's leaders to break the "cycle of interests" that have plundered and exploited Africa for centuries as he arrived in the southern African country on Saturday with a message of encouragement for its long-suffering people. Leo's arrival in Angola, the oil-and-mineral rich former Portuguese colony, marked the third leg of his four-nation African voyage. En route from Cameroon, he spoke again of the ongoing back-and-forth with U.S. President Donald Trump over the Iran war. Leo, history's first U.S.-born pope, said that it was "not in my interest at all" to debate Trump, but that he would continue preaching the Gospel message of peace, justice and brotherhood in Africa. U.S. Vice President JD Vance later wrote on social media that "I am grateful to Pope Leo for saying this." Vance, a Catholic convert, suggested earlier in the week that Leo "be careful" when speaking about theology. In Angola, Leo met with President Joao Lourenco and delivered his first speech to Angolan government authorities, in which he referred repeatedly to Angola's tortured history of colonial plunder and civil war. "I desire to meet you in the spirit born of peace and to affirm that your people possess treasures that cannot be bought or stolen," he said. "There dwells within you a joy that not even the most adverse circumstances have been able to extinguish." A long-suffering people Angola, which has a population of around 38 million, gained independence from Portugal in 1975. But it still bears the scars of a devastating civil war that began straight after independence and raged on and off for 27 years before finally ending in 2002. More than a half-million people are believed to have been killed. For years, the civil war was a Cold War proxy conflict, with the United States and apartheid South Africa backing one side and the Soviet Union and Cuba backing the other. Angola is now the fourth-largest oil producer in Africa and among the world's top 20 producers, according to the International

Energy Agency. The country is also the world's No. 3 diamond producer and has significant deposits of gold and highly sought after critical minerals. But despite its varied natural resources, the World Bank estimated in 2023 that more than 30% of the population lived on less than \$2.15 a day. "You know well that all too often people have looked — and continue to look — to your lands in order to give, or, more commonly, in order to take," Leo told the Angolan authorities. The pontiff said: "It is necessary to break this cycle of interests, which reduces reality, and even life itself, to mere commodities." While in Cameroon, Leo had railed against the "chains of corruption" that were hindering development, as well as the "handful of tyrants" who were ravaging Earth with war and exploitation. He raised similar points in Angola. "How much suffering, how many deaths, how many social and environmental disasters are brought about by this logic of extractivism! At every level, we see how it sustains a model of development that discriminates and excludes, while still presuming to impose itself as the only viable option." Jose Eduardo dos Santos, the late former president who led Angola for 38 years from 1979 to 2017, was accused of diverting billions of dollars of public money to his family, largely from the country's oil revenue, as millions struggled in poverty. After Lourenco took over as president, his administration estimated that at least \$24 billion was stolen or misappropriated by dos Santos. Lourenco's administration has vowed to crack down on corruption and has worked to recover funds allegedly stolen during the dos Santos era. But critics note that Angola still has deep problems with corruption and have questioned if Lourenco's actions were more aimed at political rivals so as to consolidate his power. In his speech Saturday, Lourenco said that the Angolan government was committed to improving the lives of its people, but it was a "complex and difficult challenge." He also called for an end to the Iran war and asked the pope to continue using his "moral authority" to push for peace and understanding among people. A legacy of slavery Angola, on the southwest coast of Africa, was considered to be the epicenter of the trans-Atlantic slave trade as a Portuguese colony. More than 5 million of the roughly 12.5 million enslaved Africans were sent across the ocean on ships departing from Angola, more than any other country, though not all of them were Angolans. The highlight of Leo's visit to Angola is expected to be his visit on Sunday to Muxima, south of Luanda. It's a popular Catholic shrine in a country where around 58% of the population is Catholic. The Church of Our Lady of Muxima was built by Portuguese colonizers at the end of the 16th century as part of a fortress complex and became a hub in the slave trade. It remains a reminder of the inextricable link hundreds of years ago between Roman Catholicism and the exploitation of the African continent. Leo has Black and white ancestors who included both enslaved people and slave owners, according to genealogical research. He's going to Muxima to pray the rosary, in recognition of the site becoming a popular pilgrimage destination after believers reported an appearance by the Virgin Mary around 1833.

- [Hezbollah chief says truce can't be one-sided, vows to respond to Israel attacks](#)  
(2026-04-19 00:28)

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem said on Saturday that the ongoing 10-day truce with Israel cannot be one-sided, vowing that his fighters would respond to Israeli attacks



on Lebanon."A ceasefire means a complete cessation of all hostilities. Because we do not trust this enemy, the resistance fighters will remain in the field with their hands on the trigger, and they will respond to violations accordingly," Qassem said in a statement read out on TV."There is no ceasefire from the side of the resistance only, it must be from both sides."He also offered his first reaction since the ceasefire went into force at midnight on Thursday (2100 GMT), with the terms shared by the US State Department.Qassem called it "an insult to our country and our homeland, Lebanon, that America dictates its text and speaks on behalf of the Lebanese government".The truce came days after Lebanon and Israel's ambassadors to the US met in Washington ahead of planned direct negotiations between the two countries, the first in decades."Enough of subjecting Lebanon to these humiliations by negotiating directly with the Israeli enemy and listening to its dictates, and by the shameful spectacle in Washington," Qassem said.Tehran-backed Hezbollah drew Lebanon into the Middle East conflict on March 2 by attacking Israel to avenge the killing of Iran's supreme leader, prompting waves of Israeli airstrikes and a ground invasion in the south.Qassem expressed "gratitude" to Iran "for their support and assistance", saying the country kept the Strait of Hormuz closed until a truce was reached in Lebanon.Iran's military declared the Strait of Hormuz closed again on Saturday, after a brief reopening, in response to a US blockade of its ports.The Lebanese government has taken several unprecedented steps against Hezbollah over the past year, including vowing to disarm it and outlawing its military activities.Hezbollah has rejected these moves, but Qassem maintained his group was "open to the fullest cooperation with the Lebanese authorities, embarking on a new chapter... and utilising our strengths within a national security strategy".

- [Iran reports 3,468 dead in war with US, Israel: official](#) (2026-04-19 00:27)

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's state-run Foundation of Martyrs and Veterans Affairs said on Saturday that the war with the United States and Israel had killed more than 3,400 people in the Islamic republic.The announcement comes in the midst of a two-week ceasefire in the conflict, which erupted in late February with US-Israeli strikes on Tehran.Foundation head Ahmad Mousavi was quoted by the ISNA news agency as saying that 3,468 "martyrs... fell during the recent conflict".A previous toll from the head of the Iranian Legal Medicine Organization issued on April 12 said 3,375 people in Iran had been killed in the war.The US-based Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) said on April 7 that at least 3,636 people had been killed, including 1,701 civilians -- among them at least 254 children -- as well as 1,221 military personnel and 714 people whose status had not been classified.Due to reporting restrictions, AFP is not able to access the sites of strikes nor to independently verify tolls in Iran.