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# Game over for POGOs; high-profile fugitives fall

MANILA – At the stroke of midnight on New Year’s Day, it’s game over for Philippine offshore gaming operators (POGOs) which became a bane to society over its links to a string of criminal activities.

Pursuant to Executive Order (EO) 74 signed by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. in November, Philippine law enforcement agencies launched a crackdown against POGOs to ensure that they cease operations before the end of 2024.

This resulted in the closure of the country’s biggest POGO compound located at the former Island Cove resort in the province of Cavite on Dec. 17, led by Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla, Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Commission

(PAOCC) Executive Director Undersecretary Gilbert Cruz, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (PAGCOR) chairperson Alejandro Tengco and Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Gen. Rommel Francisco Marbil.

The Remulla family sold the resort to a real estate developer in 2017. The facility then started operations as a POGO hub in 2019.

The POGO facility on the 33-hectare property is the biggest in the country with 30,000 employees, half of whom were Filipinos.

The compound consists of 57 buildings, including employee dormitories, gaming hubs, cafés, groceries, clinics, restaurants,

*Continued on page 3...*



GAME OVER. Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla (center) and other government officials lead the formal closure of the Island Cove resort-turned Philippine offshore gaming operator facility in Kawit, Cavite on Tuesday (Dec. 17, 2024). The POGO facility, located on a 33-hectare property, is the biggest in the country. (PNA photo by Yancy Lim)

## AFP: Holiday season ends without major incidents

By Priam Nepomuceno

MANILA – The country’s celebration of the holiday season concluded without major incidents, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said January 3, 2025.

“Overall, the recently concluded Yuletide Season was generally peaceful from a security perspective. The AFP continued its internal security operations and augmented various agencies and law enforcement to ensure an orderly and safe celebration of the holiday season,” AFP spokesperson Col. Francel

Margareth Padilla said in a message to the Philippine News Agency.

Padilla said military officers were on duty during the holidays, thus the peaceful celebrations.

“(This was) made possible by the heroism and sacrifice of our soldiers, marines, airmen, and sailors, who worked tirelessly—even during the holidays -- to protect our nation,” she added.

Padilla said the military officers gave essence to service and patriotism. (PNA)

# PBBM reorganizes NSC, removes VP, ex-presidents as members

By Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos

MANILA – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. has reorganized the National Security Council (NSC), removing the Vice President and former Philippine presidents from the roster of its members.

Under Executive Order (EO) 81 inked by Marcos last Dec. 30, Marcos stressed the need to reconstitute the NSC to ensure that the council members “uphold and protect national security and sovereignty, thereby fostering an environment conducive



Photo courtesy of PNA

to effective governance and stability.”

“At present, the NSC is composed of the President as Chairperson, and 26 officials from various offices of the

Executive and Legislative branches as members,” EO 81 said.

“There is a need to further guarantee that the NSC  
*Continued on page 3...*

## Gov’t reduces hike in monthly rent for residential units

MANILA – The National Human Settlements Board (NHSB) has set a maximum 2.3 percent increase in rental for residential units with a monthly rate of PHP10,000 or less, down from last year’s 4 percent cap.

According to a news release on January 5, 2025, the maximum increase in monthly rentals for subject residential

units is effective from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2025, based on NHSB Resolution No. 2024-001.

The NHSB, as the sole policy-making body responsible for providing overall policy directions and program development to various key shelter agencies, acting upon the recommendation of the National Economic and

Development Authority (NEDA), passed the new resolution in December 2024.

Undersecretary Henry Yap signed the resolution for the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), representing Secretary and NHSB Chair Jose Rizalino Acuzar.

The rental cap is being implemented to safeguard housing tenants in lower-income brackets and other beneficiaries from excessive rent increases.

The measure was enacted pursuant to Republic Act 9653, or the Rent Control Act of 2009.

“The rental cap applies to residential units currently occupied by the same tenants as of 2024, who pay PHP10,000 or less per month, and who will continue to occupy or renew their lease in 2025. Units with rents exceeding PHP10,000 per month are exempted from this restriction,” the news release read.

Residential unit refers

to “an apartment, house and/or land on which another’s dwelling is located and used for residential purposes and shall include not only buildings, part or units thereof used solely as dwelling places, boarding houses, dormitories, rooms and bed spaces offered for rent by their owners, except motels, motel rooms, hotels, hotel rooms, but also those users for home industries, retail stores or other business purposes if the owner thereof and his or her  
*Continued on page 3...*



## Lawmaker bats for P500-M initial fund to digitalize public schools



**PUBLIC EDUCATION.** A teacher prepares her classroom for the start of classes at the Pinyahan Elementary School in Quezon City on Aug. 28, 2023. Bicol Saro Party-list Rep. Brian Raymund Yamsuan on Friday (Jan. 3, 2025) proposed an initial PHP500-million government investment to digitalize the country's public school system to improve education access, especially for marginalized communities. (PNA file photo by Joan Bondoc)

By Filane Mikee Cervantes

MANILA – A party-list lawmaker on Friday sought the passage of a measure that aims to digitalize the country's public school system.

House Bill 276, also known as the Institutionalization of Digital Technology in Public Education Act, seeks an initial PHP500 million to modernize

public schools and empower both teachers and students to leverage technology as an essential educational tool.

In a news release, Bicol Saro Party-list Rep. Brian Raymund Yamsuan said digitalizing the Philippine public school system is crucial for improving education access, especially for marginalized communities.

*"Institutionalizing the*

*use of digital technology in our public school system will help promote inclusive learning as this will increase the access of marginalized communities to quality education via the Internet. Digitalization will also ensure that our students are future-ready and globally competitive,"* Yamsuan said.

He cited a statement from the private think tank Stratbase Institute,

which described the digital transformation of public schools as an *"urgent necessity"* to elevate student learning competencies.

*"In the last pandemic, digital technology was used as a crisis management tool to ensure that most students were able to continue learning even when lockdowns and other health protocols were in place. But today, even without a crisis, digital technology has proven to be a must in facilitating learning inside and outside the classroom,"* Yamsuan said.

He pointed out that during strong typhoons, floods, and other emergencies, private school students can easily shift to online classes, while public school students often rely on makeup sessions or printed modules.

Yamsuan also referred to the Department of Education's (DepEd) revised guidelines on class suspensions, which allow only Kindergarten classes to be automatically suspended under Tropical Cyclone Wind Signal (TCWS) No. 1.

Classes from Kindergarten to Grade 10 are suspended only under TCWS No. 2, with students required to shift to online or modular distance learning, performance tasks, or makeup classes to ensure learning continuity.

Classes and work in all levels under TCWS No. 3 and above are automatically suspended.

However, most public

schools still lack the digital infrastructure and resources needed to support online and modular learning during disruptions.

*"These options should have covered the use of digital technology for all public schools to provide students with better learning outcomes. But unfortunately, not all our public schools have the necessary tools to shift to online learning,"* Yamsuan said.

*"The government needs to invest now in institutionalizing the digitalization of our public schools so that we can be prepared for whatever challenges our education system may face now, and in the future,"* he added.

HB 276 mandates the DepEd to formulate a Digital Technology Road Map for Public Schools, in collaboration with the Department of Information and Communications Technology, Department of Science and Technology, and the Commission on Higher Education.

Yamsuan added that the proposed road map would ensure the continuous upgrading of outdated technology in public schools and provide training programs for both teachers and students to enhance their digital skills.

The bill also mandates a review of the road map every five years or as needed to keep up with technological advancements. (PNA)

### Comelec...

expected to join barefoot.

Medical teams will also be on standby to attend to the needs of procession-goers.

Nationwide celebration

A prelate said the Feast of the Jesus Nazareno is no longer limited to Manila but is now a nationwide celebration.

According to Quiapo Church Rector Fr. Rufino "Jun" Sescon, the entire country will also be celebrating the annual feast as it was declared as a national liturgical feast.

*"This will be a historic celebration as this will mark the first time that this is no longer just a feast*

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*in Quiapo or in Manila but of the entire Philippines,"* he said at the press conference for the Nazareno 2025 event.

*"In every diocese and every parish in the Philippines, we can expect this to be celebrated,"* the Quiapo official added.

Sescon said the declaration of the Feast of the Jesus Nazareno as a national liturgical feast happened last year.

*"Sometime in August or September of (last) year, it was declared by liturgists that January 9 is a liturgical feast for the whole country,"* he added.

During the gathering of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) in July 2023, the bishops approved the petition to declare the Quiapo Church as a *"national shrine"*.

On the other hand, he said they expect devotees to still flock the Quiapo Church as well as the Quirino Grandstand to join the festivities.

*"We still expect that many devotees will come to Quiapo even though there will be local celebrations,"* Sescon added.

Some 6.1 million devotees attended the activities for the feast last year. (PNA)

### Application...

*from page 8*

approval, all applicants must submit the printed and signed copies of their application forms, together with the physical copies of the mandatory documentary requirements to the Office of the Bar Confidant (OBC).

Similarly, all applicants must upload digital copies and submit physical copies of the deferred documentary requirements to the BARISTA and OBC, respectively, from June 16 until Oct. 14.

New applicants who

failed to complete their Law degree, and refreshers who did not complete their refresher courses and/or take their pre-Bar review course may request to refund the application fee on or before Sept. 1.

The 2025 Bar exams, chaired by Associate Justice Amy Lazaro-Javier, will be held on Sept. 7, 10, and 14.

Oath-taking for 2024 passers

Meanwhile, the high court announced that the oath taking and roll signing ceremonies for passers of the

2024 Bar Exams shall take place on Jan. 24 at the SMX Convention Center in Pasay City.

The SC earlier said 3,962 out of 10,490 examinees passed in the 2024 Bar Exams, or a passing rate of 37.84 percent.

Kyle Christian Tutor of the University of the Philippines College of Law obtained the highest score with an overall rating of 85.7700 percent.

The SC said 130 out of 142 schools have passers in 2024. (PNA)

### DA...

*from page 8*

*successful and the people wanted it in the) select areas,"* he said.

*"We have to plan now how to roll it out and make sure we have enough stocks to use it,"* he added, citing a possible rollout next week.

In a separate interview, DA Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said the cheaper rice option will be available in existing KNP sites.

*"So, iyong 24 na pamilihan at LRT, MRT stations, doon din ilalagay muna. And then target natin nga na madagdagan pa ito (So, it will be available in the existing 24 stores and LRT, MRT stations. And then, we target to expand it),"* he said.

He said the initial

expansion will include Central Luzon and Calabarzon.

*"So, ang (the) next target outside of Metro Manila ay (are) Regions 3 and 4-A, specifically Bulacan, Pampanga, Rizal, Cavite, Laguna,"* De Mesa said.

He said the sale of Sulit rice in KNP sites may be expanded to the said areas by February or March.

Currently, other affordable rice options available at KNP sites include mixed of local and imported well-milled rice at PHP40/kg. under Rice for All; and PHP29/kg. aging but good quality stocks of rice from the National Food Authority (NFA) for the vulnerable sector. (PNA)

Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.



## Ex-SSS chief urges Palace to suspend SSS contribution hike



Social Security System, Diliman, Quezon City (PNA photo by Joan Bondoc)

By Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos

MANILA – Former Social Security System (SSS) chief Rolando Macasaet on Saturday called on Malacañang to order the temporary suspension of the implementation of higher contribution rates.

In a statement, Macasaet said the Palace has the authority to suspend the implementation of Republic Act (RA) 11199 of the Social

Security Act if there is a clamor from members for the deferment of the scheduled increase in contribution rates.

*“The increase in SSS premium contribution was provided by a law passed in 2019 stipulating premium increases in 2020, 2023 and 2025. This is prior to my term as SSS president,”* Macasaet said.

Macasaet was appointed SSS chief in May 2023, but resigned in October

2024 to run as representative of the SSS-GSIS Pensonado party-list.

*“We call on Malacañang to ask the SSS Board to temporarily suspend the implementation of any premium increases,”* he added.

Macasaet noted that the SSS had an income of over PHP80 billion in 2023 and a banner year of over PHP100 billion in income for 2024.

The SSS did not contribute a single centavo to the Maharlika Investment Fund (MIF), Macasaet added, reacting to reports that the

hike in the state pension fund’s premium contribution was meant to replenish the amount it gave to the sovereign wealth fund.

*“The temporary suspension or gradual implementation of the Social Security Act of 2018 will not burden our hard-working SSS members and will not significantly affect the fund life of the SSS,”* Macasaet said.

RA 11199 mandates the SSS to increase its contribution rate every two years, with the final increase in 2025.

In 2019, the contribution rate was set at 12 percent.

It rose to 13 percent in 2021 and to 14 percent in 2023, in accordance with RA 11199. The rate will be shared by the employer and the employee.

For the 15 percent contribution rate this year, 10 percent will be shouldered by the employer, while the employee pays the remaining 5 percent.

The higher rates are made to strengthen the SSS, according to its official website. (PNA)

### Game...

spas and beauty salons. Meanwhile, the PAOCC is intensifying the campaign against guerrilla POGO operations throughout the country.

Law enforcers would also mount inspections of special class business process outsourcing (BPO) facilities to ensure that no POGO hubs are concealing operations.

Guo, Quiboloy fall

The year 2024 also saw the downfall of two high-profile individuals linked to a string of crimes -- dismissed Bamban, Tarlac Mayor Alice Guo and Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KOJC) leader Apollo Quiboloy.

Guo was deported to the country after being arrested in Indonesia in September.

The dismissed mayor, her siblings Wesley and Shiela, and their parents were earlier ordered arrested by the Senate for their refusal to appear in its investigation into the operations of the Zun Yuan Technology Inc., the Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGO) hub in Bamban which was raided by authorities in March.

The investigation also led to questions on the nationality of the dismissed mayor, after the Philippine authorities revealed that her fingerprints matched that of a certain Chinese national identified as Guo Hua Ping.

In an Aug. 12 order, the Ombudsman dismissed Guo from the service for grave misconduct and perpetually banned her from holding public office.

This was in connection with the charges filed by the DILG against Guo for her alleged involvement in the operations of POGO.

Guo and her co-accused face charges of qualified human trafficking in connection with a June raid on a POGO hub in Bamban, Tarlac, where 800 Filipino and foreign workers were rescued.

In September, non-

from page 1

bailable criminal charges for qualified trafficking were filed before the Pasig Regional Trial Court (RTC) against dismissed Guo and 13 others.

Aside from Guo, the DOJ also charged Dennis Cunanan and 12 other executives and founders of three companies, who are allegedly Guo’s business partners.

Meanwhile, Quiboloy was arrested on Sept. 8 at the KOJC compound in Davao City after more than two weeks of operation.

Quiboloy is currently facing a non-bailable qualified human trafficking charge. He is also accused of child and sexual abuse, along with five of his aides.

Following the arrest, his lawyers immediately sought a hospital or house arrest due to his medical history, including two previous heart-related procedures.

The court denied the petition after the Philippine National Police General Hospital declared that his condition is not life-threatening.

Last November, Quiboloy was transferred to the Pasig City Jail from the Philippine Heart Center where he is confined after being granted a medical furlough.

Bloodless anti-drug drive gains

The Marcos administration’s anti-drug campaign has so far netted PHP51.14 billion worth of narcotics and arrested 119,022 drug suspects for the period of July 2022 to Oct. 31 this year, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) reported.

Records also showed that among those arrested were 7,567 high-value targets in 87,802 operations across the country.

A total of 1,217 drug dens and 2 clandestine shabu laboratories were dismantled during the same period.

Meanwhile, 29,211 out of 42,000 villages have

been declared “drug-cleared” while 6,292 are in the process of being cleared.

During his third State of the Nation Address in July, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. pledged to continue the bloodless anti-narcotics drive, emphasizing that extermination is not a part of his administration’s anti-drug campaign.

Meanwhile, the PNP Drug Enforcement Group (PDEG) seized nearly PHP2.4 billion worth of narcotics from Jan. 1 to Dec. 18, 2024.

PDEG chief Brig. Gen. Eleazar Matta said the amount includes 168 kg. of shabu, 3,866,600 fully grown marijuana plants, 1,830 kg. of dried marijuana leaves, 48.672 kg. of ketamine, 36.9 kg. of kush, 1,343 tablets of ecstasy and 90 grams of cocaine.

The illegal drugs were seized in 698 operations, including buy-busts, service of search warrants, and marijuana eradication drive which also led to the arrest of 809 drug suspects and 232 wanted persons.

Matta said efforts now focus on interdiction and that the PDEG remains proactive in executing coordinated, high-impact operations and ensuring integrity and transparency in all operations, consistently using body-worn cameras.

He said actions are documented, with airtight cases prepared to ensure the prosecution of offenders.

Matta also paid tribute to police operatives who died in the line of duty.

*“The heroism of these operatives inspires the entire force to press on, ensuring that their sacrifices were not in vain,”* Matta said.

He noted this milestone achievement underscores the PNP’s recalibrated Anti-Illegal Drug Campaign Roadmap 2024–2028 which embodies a human-rights-focused and community-driven approach to tackling the nation’s drug problem. (PNA)

### PBBM...

remains a resilient national security institution, capable of adapting to evolving challenges and opportunities both domestically and internationally,” it added.

The Vice President was also removed as member of the NSC’s executive committee, based on EO 81.

EO 81 includes the Secretary of the Presidential Communications Office as the newest member of the NSC, replacing the now-defunct presidential spokesperson who was previously listed as a member of the council.

*“All orders, rules and regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the*

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provisions of this Order are hereby repealed or modified accordingly,” the order read.

EO 81, which was made public on Friday, takes effect immediately.

The NSC was formerly known as the Council of National Defense created by Commonwealth Act 1 or the National Defense Act 1. It was later known as NSC through EO 115 issued on Dec. 24, 1986.

The NSC acts as the principal advisory body in the proper coordination and integration of plans and policies relating to or with implications on national security. (PNA)

### Gov’t...

from page 1

family actually live therein and use it principally for dwelling purposes.”

If the unit becomes vacant in 2025, the lessor may increase the rent of a new tenant beyond the set limit. This increase is permitted because the new tenant is not covered by the aforementioned resolution.

*“However, in the case of boarding houses, dormitories, rooms and bed spaces, only one rent adjustment is allowed within 2025, even if the increase limit has not been reached,”* it added.

New residential units built and/or leased out in 2025, on the other hand, may set their own rent.

A new limit of 1 percent shall apply to units occupied by the same tenants as of 2025, paying PHP10,000

or less per month, and who will continue to occupy/renew their lease in 2026.

Residential units with rents above PHP10,000 per month in 2025 are excluded from the 2026 rental cap.

The tenant is encouraged to seek alternative dispute resolution with his landlord or lessor through the Barangay Justice System’s mediation/amicable settlement process. Only if the same cannot be settled will it be adjudicated before the court.

*“Eventually, if the lessor is found guilty, he could face a fine of not less than PHP25,000 nor more than PHP50,000 or imprisonment of not less than one month and one day to not more than six months or both, depending on the court’s decision,”* the news release stated. PR (PNA)



# EDITORIAL

## Bicam's comeuppance

Subjected to a direct veto was P168.24 billion in unprogrammed appropriations that became a subject of scrutiny by budget watchdogs as these were considered as giving way to the return of the pork barrel which the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional in 2013.

Several portions of the budget that President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. vetoed were suspected pork inserted by the bicameral conference committee that produced the version transmitted to the Palace.

In his veto message, the President cited the need for prudent debt management that would support "the high-rating affirmations by different global credit rating agencies that will enable us to borrow at lower cost, providing more fiscal space to support infrastructure development and other growth-enhancing programs and projects."

The country may soon acquire its first A-credit rating that would affirm its journey towards developed nation status.

Mr. Marcos reminded the legislators that fiscal discipline would be enforced to ensure optimal budget utilization to achieve prosperity "despite the limitations."

Subjected to a direct veto was P168.24 billion in unprogrammed appropriations (UA) that became a subject of scrutiny by budget watchdogs as these were considered as giving way to the return of the pork barrel which the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional in 2013.

Unprogrammed appropriations are a conditional authority to spend for priority programs and projects, subject to the availability of revenue sources that are yet to be realized.

The inclusion of the UA and its purposes in the FY 2025 NEP resulted from meticulous consideration of the priorities and the agencies' capacity for implementation, balanced with the judicious programming of existing and anticipated resources.

Another usual source of pork insertions, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) had P26 billion worth of projects vetoed.

"The programs, projects and activities that we have programmed in the FY (fiscal year) 2025 NEP (National Expenditure Program) under the budget of the DPWH are consistent with the Build Better More infrastructure program of our government and were carefully considered taking into account urgency of need, implementation-readiness, and agency absorptive capacity," the President in his message pregnant with meaning said.

Moreover, Mr. Marcos

imposed strict conditions on the implementation of the Ayuda sa Kapos ang Kita Program (AKAP) which was widely assailed for being suspiciously geared toward the coming elections.

"To ensure that the government assistance is not merely a provisional solution to a persistent issue, I am compelled to subject the implementation thereof to the convergence of efforts by the DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development), Department of Labor and Employment, and National Economic and Development Authority, geared towards more strategic interventions leading to the long-term improvement of the lives of qualified beneficiaries, while guarding against misuse, and duplicative and fragmented benefits," the President said.

A peace process program was similarly subjected to stricter regulations.

Mr. Marcos's veto message was also full of reminders. He said the prudent stewardship of public funds is mere rhetoric if the same is not translated into effective and responsive public services.

"It is the shared fiscal responsibility of the whole government to ensure that the people's funds are utilized in accordance with their authorized purposes, and that the programs, projects, and activities are implemented in compliance with laws, policies, rules and regulations," he stated.

The President emphasized the conscientious utilization of the budget to sustain the high-growth trajectory of the economy and manage inflation "while accelerating the implementation of well-targeted social services and structural reforms geared towards achieving our medium-term goals of reducing poverty incidence, decreasing unemployment rates and achieving upper middle-income status."

A significant part of the message was the recognition by the President of "the final version of the national budget" having significant distinctions from his proposed budget.

Thus, in explaining the veto, the President said his administration "remains determined to pursue the continued implementation and innovation of reforms in public financial management, procurement, and digitalization through a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach for a more efficient and transparent public service."

Transparency and efficiency fly out the window in a bicam dissection of the budget which should, going forward, stop being held behind closed doors.



Photo courtesy of tribune.net.ph

# KAPIRASONG kritika

Ni Teo S. Marasigan

## Kontraktwalisasyon 101

### PART 3

kontraktwalisasyon sa kanyang kumpanya ay waring hudyat sa lahat ng kapitalista na pwede silang magkontraktwalisa sa ilalim ng rehimensing Aquino.

Pero sa kabilang banda, pakitang-tao lang ang naturang mga probisyon, at sa esensya'y naglililgalisa pa rin sa kontraktwalisasyon.

Datos ng gobyerno mismo ang nagpapakitang panlilinlang lang ang umano'y "regularisasyon" sa mga ahensya. Ayon sa Philippine Statistics Authority, lumundag nang 16.3 porsyento ang bilang ng kontraktwal noong 2014 mula noong 2012. Ayon dito, 30 porsyento, o 1.3 milyon, sa 4.5 milyong manggagawang inempleyo ng mga negosyong may 20 pataas na manggagawa ang kontraktwal. Inilalabas ang naturang saliksik kada dalawang taon, at tiyak na konserbatibo ang bilang na inilalabas nito.

Ayon dito, ang konsentrasyon ng mga kontraktwal ay ang konstruksyon, manupaktura, wholesale at retail trade, bagamat dumami ang hindi regular sa agrikultura, pangisdaan at paggugubat, sa financial and insurance services, at sa repair ng mga kompyuter at iba pang gamit sa bahay. Sa pag-alam sa kalakaran ng empleyo sa mga sektor na ito, madaling

masabing mas malaganap sa 30 porsyento ang kontraktwal.

Duterte. Nitong eleksiyong 2016, nauna si noo'y presidentiable Rodrigo Duterte sa pangangakong tatapusin ang kontraktwalisasyon. At hindi lang ito pangakong inanunsyo ng midya; laman ito ng mga poster niya na nakadikit sa mga komunidad. Naghahabol siya noon ng boto, at malaganap ang diskuntento sa naturang iskema ng pag-eempleyo.

Ayon kay Duterte, nagdudulot ng kahirapan at kagutuman ang iskema, at sumisira sa lakas-paggawa at sa ekonomiya ng bansa. Malinaw sa kanya na bangga ang pangako sa interes ng mga kapitalista, at palaban niyang sinabihan sila na ilipat ang suporta kung ayaw sa kanyang pangako.

Nagsunuran ang iba pang kandidato sa parehong pangako kaya para makaungos, malinaw niyang sinabi na tatapusin ang kontraktwalisasyon sa loob ng isang linggo matapos niyang manalo. Ilang beses din niyang inulit ang pangako matapos niyang manalo. Pero tiyak, igigiit ng mga maka-kapitalista sa gobyernong Duterte ang pamosong pag-iiba ni Budget Sec. Benjamin Diokno ng "Duterte bilang kandidato" at "Duterte bilang pangulo."

Gaya rin ng inaasahan, tumutol ang

malalaking kapitalista sa pangunguna ng mga organisasyon nila – pangunahin ang Employers Confederation of the Philippines o ECOP – at nagpanukala ng isang umano'y "win-win solution." Ito ang sinang-ayunan ng Department of Labor and Employment sa pamumuno ni Sek. Silvestre Bello III. Dito iniluwal ang kasalukuyang alituntunin sa kontraktwalisasyon, ang DO 168. Noong una'y DO 30 dapat ang pangalan nito, pero binago dahil tiyak na makakasama sa pangalan ni Duterte.

Nakatuntong ang DO 168 sa DO 18-A Series of 2011 at pinapalabas nitong pinapahusay nito ang sinundan. Tulad ng DO 18-A Series of 2011, itinatakda ng DO 168 ang pagreregular sa mga manggagawa sa agency. Sa DO 18-A Series of 2011, matatapos ang kontratang manggagawa-agency kapag natapos ang kontratang agency-kapitalista. Sa DO 168, magpapatuloy ang kontratang manggagawa-agency kahit matapos ang kontratang agency-kapitalista. Kapag natapos daw ang kontratang agency-kapitalista, ihanap ng agency ang manggagawa ng bagong trabaho at kung hindi makahanap ay bibigyan ang manggagawa ng separation pay.

Tulad ng DO...

ipagpapatuloy...

Ang  
**CAVITENO**  
NEWSWEEKLY

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# TOWN in FOCUS

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## Young tennis player Silvosa dreams big



*CHAMPION. Akio Silvosa (right) receives the gold medal in the Red Ball 8-under division of the Milo- Wilson-Philta Tennis 10s tournament during the awarding ceremony at Zentro Sports and Events Place in Bulacan on Dec. 30, 2024. Also in photo are (from left) International Tennis Federation Junior Tennis Initiative national coordinator for Philippines Gerhard Mamawal, coach Rovinald Puntillar and silver medalist Alameda Cacho. (Contributed photo)*

By Jean Malanum

MANILA – Even at a young age, Akio Silvosa knows what he wants: To become the country’s No. 1 tennis player.

Determined to fulfill his dream, the seven-year-old Silvosa joined a tournament in Olongapo City in April last year but failed to make the podium.

The loss did not dampen his spirit.

He spent more time on the court to improve his game and finally, bagged the gold medal in the 2024 Milo-Wilson-Philta Tennis 10s division at Malolos Sports Complex in Bulacan on Dec. 30, 2024.

“I’m so happy because the practice paid off,” Silvosa said in an interview on January 4, 2025. “My ambition is to become No. 1 in the Philippines.”

The Grade 1 student at the House of

Achievers Montessorri Inc. in Bataan hails from Lubao, Pampanga.

His elder sister, Akisha Faith, also plays tennis.

“I heard there’s an upcoming event in Olongapo this month. I may join it,” he said.

Silvosa is coached by his father, Christopher, and Glenn de Leon.

Also taking home titles from the Wilson-Philta tournament were Elythia Comia of Cavite (9-Under unisex Orange Ball) and Archelous Parungao (10-Under Green Ball).

Al Zayeed Baid and Dane Basijan were crowned champions in the 18-Under category; Jeremiah Labasano in the boys’ 16-Under; Kitlin Elem, girls’ 16-Under; Jfsky Berille, boys. 14-Under); Daniello Ramoso, boys’ 12-Under; and Cassie Briel Aquino, girls’ 12-Under. (PNA)

# CAVITEVIEW

## OVM led the Regular Flag Raising Ceremony, City of Bacoor celebrated Vice Mayor Rowena Bautista-Mendiola’s birthday

By MIS-STAFF

BACOOR CITY, January 6, 2025 – The City Government of Bacoor, led by Mayor Strike B. Revilla, celebrated the first Flag Raising Ceremony of 2025 and Vice Mayor Rowena Bautista Mendiola’s birthday with a special tribute at the Strike Gymnasium.

The event drew a large crowd of city officials, employees, and community members, showcasing

the strong leadership and dedication of Vice Mayor Mendiola.

The ceremony began with an opening prayer by the City Transportation Office, followed by the entrance of the color guard, composed of personnel from the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) Bacoor.

The Philippine National Anthem was performed by the Bacoor Unity Band, followed by the Oath of Allegiance to

the Philippine Flag, the Oath of Public Service, and the Pledge to the New Philippines.

The Quality Policy Statement was delivered by Mr. James Nelseth Espiritu, followed by a performance of “Bagong Pilipinas” by the Bacoor Unity Band.

The ceremony concluded with the rendition of the Cavite and Bacoor Hymns.

The highlight of the event was the special

birthday celebration for Vice Mayor Mendiola. An audio-visual presentation showcased birthday greetings from department and unit heads, followed by intermission numbers from the Office of the Vice Mayor, VIZAKOL Luzon (NGO), the Federation of Lesbian and Gays Association (FLAG), and the Liga ng Barangay (LnB). A special video message was played featuring greetings from Vice Mayor Mendiola’s political friends and family. Councilor Alde Pagulayan, representing Mayor Revilla, delivered a special message, emphasizing the Mayor’s

appreciation for Vice Mayor Mendiola’s dedication and partnership.

The celebration culminated with a special song dedicated to Vice Mayor Mendiola, performed by Cong. Lani Mercado Revilla.

The event was a resounding success, showcasing the strong bond between the City Government of Bacoor and its people, and demonstrating the community’s respect and admiration for Vice Mayor Rowena Bautista Mendiola. (bacoor.gov.ph)



Photo courtesy of bacoor.gov.ph



### EXTRAJUDICIAL SETTLEMENT OF THE RIGHT TO THE ESTATE OF DECEASED ABDUL GAFUR MAMA AMEROL WITH WAIVER OF RIGHTS

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ABDUL GAFUR MAMA AMEROL who died intestate on AUGUST 5, 2021 in Imus City, Cavite who left a 2018 TOYOTA FORTUNER 2.4L4 and particularly described as ENGINE NO. 2GC353404, M FILE NO. 138000001027794, PLATE NO. NCT3112, BODY TYPE WAGON, which has been extra judicially settled by his heirs with waiver of rights in favor of RASMIAH ALIM MALAYO as per Doc No. 408, Page No. 83, Book No. 108, Series of 2024, Notary Public Atty. Epifanio M. Almada.

Ang Caviteño Newsweekly  
January 6, 13 & 20, 2025

## Afghans transiting for US visa arrive; 59-day stay starts



TRANSIT. Afghan nationals transiting to process their Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs) in the Philippines arrive on Monday (Jan. 6, 2025). The Philippines will host up to 300 Afghan nationals who worked at the US mission for 59 days while they complete their SIV applications at the United States Embassy in Manila before resettling in the US. (Photo courtesy of the US Embassy in Manila)

By Joyce Ann L. Rocamora

MANILA – The Afghan nationals transiting to process their Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs) in the Philippines have arrived on Monday, a stay expected to last no longer than 59 days – visa or no visa, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) confirmed.

In total, the country will host up to 300 nationals – at least half of them minors – while they complete their SIV applications at the US Embassy in Manila before resettling in the United States.

The DFA issued the appropriate Philippine entry visa to these applicants in line with current rules and regulations, Foreign Affairs Spokesperson Ma. Teresita Daza said.

“All applicants completed extensive security vetting by Philippines national security agencies. They also underwent full medical screening prior to their arrival in the Philippines,” she said in a statement on January 6, 2025.

In an on-background briefing Dec. 20 last year, a senior Filipino official said the deal between the Philippines and the US allows the latter to finish the entire project within a 100-day period upon the arrival of the first applicant, with each Afghan national only authorized to stay in the country for a maximum of 59 days.

If an applicant fails to secure an SIV within that period, the US government will then “promptly relocate” the concerned Afghan national to “another platform or to another country.”

“So, the processing of each applicant by the US Embassy here in Manila should be completed within that 59-day period,” the official said.

“(The agreement) will cover only a group of 300 applicants, all of whom should be processed and relocated, removed in no more than 100 days from

## DILG directs LGUs to submit ‘No POGO’ certificates end of January



DILG Secretary Jonvic Remulla (PNA file photo by Robert Alfiler)

By Benjamin Pulta

MANILA – Local governments and police have been given the green light to inspect commercial buildings covered by business permits as well as residences in their jurisdiction to check for compliance with the government’s total ban on POGOs (Philippine Overseas Gaming Operations), the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said on January 3, 2025.

Speaking to reporters after meeting with Justice officials, DILG Secretary Juanito Victor “Jonvic” Remulla said local government units (LGUs) are required to submit “No POGO” certificates in

the date of arrival of the first applicants,” the official added.

The group was supposed to arrive in two batches, but last-minute changes brought it down to a single flight. The arrival was first set for Saturday and Sunday but inclement weather reset the schedule.

The Afghan nationals would be housed in a billet facility financed by the US government. They can leave the premises just once for their interview at the US Embassy.

The official reiterated that all applicants underwent “full security vetting” by both the Philippine and US governments.

Under the Philippine-US agreement, the latter will shoulder all the necessary services for the Afghans, including food, housing, medical care, security and transportation to complete visa processing.

Staff contracted by the US government will provide security in the premises, all of whom would be under the direct supervision of the Philippine National Police.

“(The Philippine side) was very clear that they don’t want, as much as possible, this to be an additional burden on other government agencies, and that’s the same reason why we’ll ask the US also to contract out the management of the platform, rather than have DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development) have the responsibility over the platform,” said the official.

Without disclosing the location, the official also clarified that the Afghans would not be housed in any of the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Arrangement sites.

Five ‘nots’

Kabul fell under Taliban rule in August 2021, prompting a chaotic pullout of American forces days before the US completed its withdrawal after a 20-year war in Afghanistan.

Thousands of Afghan nationals who worked at the US mission were left behind.

In July 2024, the Philippines and the US formally signed an agreement to temporarily house them -- a deal ratified by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. in September the same year.

A State Department official, in the same briefing, said they had asked dozens of US partners

their localities by the end of the month.

“LGUs are responsible for checking all the buildings, (and utilize) the occupancy permits, the electric permits, the fire safety permits so they would have full capacity to enter all the buildings,” Remulla explained.

Aside from commercial and residential building inspections, LGUs may also check if owners are paying correct real property taxes.

Remulla noted that POGOs operate where there is available bandwidth.

“They cannot operate in remote areas because there would be no Internet there. They have a high bandwidth requirement to be able to operate,” he said.

Remulla also clarified that special economic zone areas or SEZAs are not exempt from the ban under President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.’s Executive Order No. 74.

“It is very clear that with EO 74, CEZA, PEZA zones are not exempted. We have no boundaries. There are no walls high for us to climb. All these areas, we can inspect,” he said.

“The government’s anti-POGO campaign is an ongoing thing, (it’s) forever. We will continue to be vigilant about it,” Remulla stressed.

He added that the DILG will enforce a “zero tolerance” policy on erring local government officials in the campaign against POGOs.

“If you commit a mistake, pasensyahan tayo (you’ve been warned),” Remulla said.

Meanwhile, Remulla said the 11,000 foreign POGO workers that remained unaccounted for will be the subject of a manhunt by the Bureau of Immigration (BI), while those involved in illegal activities will be pursued by police. (PNA)

to serve as a temporary site for SIV processing and was elated that Manila agreed, given the size and capacity of the US visa center in the country.

Apart from the Philippines, the US has “platforms” or State Department Office of Coordinator for Afghan Relocation Efforts-operated (CARE) facilities in three other countries.

“These are people we know, these are people we trust, and these are people that we owe the opportunity in the US that we fell short on in their country,” the US official said.

“We’re very grateful to you, this government, you Filipino people, for helping us to fulfill our promise to them that we would give them a pathway to another opportunity and safety,” the official added.

The senior Filipino official, meanwhile, clarified that no pressure nor “any negotiating leverage” was used against the Philippines in this arrangement, describing the deal as a show of the two nations’ “shared commitment” to provide the concerned Afghan children, women, and men an opportunity to start anew and to rebuild their lives.

The official reiterated the following:

The arriving Afghans are not refugees;

It is not a permanent agreement and will terminate at the 100-day mark after the arrival of the first applicant;

It is not a US demand but a request;

It will not be a burden to nor cost the Filipino people or the Philippine Government a single peso, and;

The Afghans are not considered dangerous to Philippine society and to the communities in which they will be hosted temporarily.

The Filipino official added that the two nations’ intelligence communities are in close coordination for the project.

“This project is one more demonstration of why the partnership of our two governments and the friendship of our peoples shall always be enduring, because even in the most difficult and challenging of circumstances, we are always able to find ways to work together as sovereign equals in fighting for or pursuing our shared values,” the official said.

Meanwhile, the US Embassy assured that the program will not impact the normal processing of immigrant and nonimmigrant visas for Filipinos. (PNA)



## DA to set 'maximum SRP' system for rice before end of January

By Stephanie Sevillano

MANILA – To address the unreasonable retail prices of rice in some local markets, the Department of Agriculture (DA) is set to establish a “maximum suggested retail price (SRP) system” before the end of January.

In an interview on Monday, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said there should be no imported rice being sold at PHP60 per kg.

“We are now trying to establish ano ba ang (what's the) maximum suggested retail price. So, we will be coming up with a maximum suggested retail price system very soon,” he said.

The DA chief, however, clarified that the system will not act as a price cap on retail rice.

“It's not a suggestion, it's like we're saying na ito dapat ang maximum na presyo niyan (this should be the maximum price of that). But it's not a price cap,” Tiu Laurel said.

Moreover, a PHP60/kg.-level of retail rice may already be considered as profiteering, he added.

To hold importers and retailers liable for possible profiteering, the DA is set to meet with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), National Bureau of

Investigation (NBI), Philippine National Police (PNP), and Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

“Para ma-sort namin ang aming remedies kung paano ma-address ito. Clearly, nasa Price Act ata ang profiteering angle (To sort available remedies to address this. Clearly, the profiteering angle is in the Price Act),” Tiu Laurel said.

In terms of rice brands, he maintained DA's plans to remove “premium” and “special” labels to further prevent profiteering.

“People are very brand conscious and I know that better than anybody in this country dahil (because) I'm a brand owner, I used to be a brand owner myself,” Tiu Laurel said.

“In the label pagka sinabi mong premium or special, hindi ba mas na-a-attract ka doon at willing ka na bilhin iyon nang mas mahal. Pero actually, hindi naman siya premium o special, parehas lang siya ng mga katabi niya (when you say premium or special, you're usually attracted and more willing to spend higher for that. But actually, it's really not premium nor special compared to others in line),” he added, citing contradiction to price levels in markets only using rice types, origin, and specification percentage.

As of Jan. 3, prices of local and imported regular and well-milled rice in Metro Manila range from PHP38/kg. to PHP54/kg., according to the DA-Bantay Presyo.

Premium and special-labeled rice, both imported and local, however, range from PHP48/kg. to PHP64/kg. (PNA)

## NBI nabs 6 for 'selling' BARMM parliament seats for millions

By Benjamin Pulta

MANILA – The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on Friday announced the arrest of six individuals for allegedly “selling” positions in the Bangsamoro parliament for millions of pesos.

In a press briefing, the NBI identified the suspects as Diahn Dagohoy, Bolkisah Datadacula, Alejandro Lorino Jr., Joseph Catunao, Leomer Abon and Tita Natividad.

They were arrested in an entrapment operation at the Manila Hotel on Thursday.

NBI Director Jaime Santiago said that a complaint was filed Thursday before the office of the Special Task Force (STF) and Cybercrime Division (CCD), alleging that on Dec. 29, 2024, Dagohoy contacted the complainant and offered

him a seat as a member of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) Parliament for PHP8 million.

The complainant alleged that Dagohoy and her group claimed to be employees of the Office of the President.

After a series of conversations, the complainant and Dagohoy came to an agreement for the appointment of the former's son and nephew in the BARMM parliament for PHP15 million.

Dagohoy assured that the two positions would be reserved for them, further claiming that the “appointees” would be taking their oaths of office by Jan. 3.

A meeting was set up and the group was arrested after they received the marked money.

A certification issued by the Office of the President confirmed that the suspects are not their employees, nor in any way connected with the Palace.

The suspects are facing charges of syndicated estafa and usurpation of authority or official functions. (PNA)

## Passenger screening at NAIA to be done before immigration check

By Ma. Cristina Arayata

MANILA – Screening checkpoints at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) will soon be placed prior to Bureau of Immigration (BI) counters, an executive of the Office for Transportation and Security (OTS) said January 3, 2025.

In an interview with the Philippine News Agency, OTS spokesperson Kim Marquez said they have been receiving complaints from passengers who, when found with prohibited items, could no longer go back to the check-in counters to leave them behind as their passports have already been stamped by the BI.

“The OTS suggested that security screening should be done first. Because when they have something to check in, the Immigration does not allow them to go outside back to the airline counters,” Marquez explained.

Once the screening is done prior to Immigration, the passengers have the option to have the disallowed items checked in instead of getting confiscated, she added.

Marquez clarified that no one gets offloaded for carrying prohibited items as OTS can only confiscate.

An example is liquid container with an above-100 ml capacity, whether filled up or not. It will be confiscated at the final check.

She said interchanging the OTS and BI stations was discussed with the operator, New NAIA Infra Corp. (NNIC).

“The move is fully supported by the NNIC. There is no date yet as to when this could be implemented since this will require movement

## PH assets keeping tight watch on Chinese 'monster ship'

By Priam Nepomuceno

MANILA – Philippine naval and air assets are keeping a close watch on the China Coast Guard's “monster ship” which was detected off Manila's exclusive economic zone in the West Philippine Sea, an official of the National Security Council (NSC) said January 6, 2025.

“We have all our assets pointed at this monster ship. At the moment, may gawin itong masama, in the sense na may gawin itong provocative action, ay ito po ay magkakaroon ng karampatang aksyon naman mula sa pamahalaan (should it do something bad, in the sense that it would do provocative actions, the government is ready with an appropriate response),” NSC Assistant Director General Jonathan Malaya said in a Bagong Pilipinas Ngayon briefing.

Malaya did not elaborate on the Philippines' response measures.

As of this posting, Philippine Coast Guard ship BRP Cabra (MMRV-4409) and its aircraft, the Northern Luzon Command and other assets from the Area Task Force North and National Task Force West Philippine Sea (WPS) are keeping a tight watch on CCG 5901.

The BRP Cabra challenged the presence of the CCG 5901 off the coast of Capones Island in Zambales province on Jan. 4.

“Tuloy-tuloy ang ating radio challenge at sinisuguro natin na wala itong ginagawang masama sa loob ng ating EEZ (our radio challenges are constantly ongoing and we are ensuring that this ship will not do anything bad or illegal in our EEZ),” Malaya added.

The CCG ship 5901 was dubbed as a “monster ship” due to its massive size of 12,000 gross register tons, making it one of the largest Coast Guard ships in any fleet in the world.

Malaya said the Chinese ship's continued operation near Philippine territory is part of China's “intimidation, coercion and aggression” tactics.

“Pinapakita nila na may ganito silang barko at tinatakot 'yung ating mga mangangisda na mangisda sa WPS. Ngayon in response to this papa-igtingin pa natin 'yung presensya ng ating BFAR (Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources) at ng Coast Guard para suportahan 'yung ating mga mangangisda (They are showing that they have this type of big ship to scare our fishermen from fishing in the WPS. Now our response to this is, we will beef up the present of the BFAR and the Coast Guard to support our fishermen),” he added. (PNA)

of security screening equipment like the X-ray machines,” Marquez said.

BI spokesperson Dana Sandoval told the PNA that the move is likewise a welcome development for them.

“Any action of the airport authorities to improve the area for the convenience of the traveling public will be supported by the BI,” Sandoval said.

NAIA, the country's main gateway, catered to 50.1 million passengers in 2024. The total was 10.43 percent higher than in 2023 and 5.8 percent more than the pre-pandemic's tally in 2019.

The airport also handled 293,488 flights in 2024, which was 4.83 percent more than the flights in 2023. (PNA)

“LIFE IS LIKE THE WAVE ON THE OCEAN, IT KEEPS GOING.”



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## DA to launch 'Sulit rice' in 24 Kadiwa ng Pangulo centers, kiosks



CHEAPER RICE. Buyers line up to buy PHP40/kg. rice at the Kadiwa ng Pangulo kiosk in Malabon Central Market in Malabon City on December 5, 2024. The Department of Agriculture on Monday (Jan. 6, 2025) said Sulit rice, which will be sold for PHP38/kg., will be soon be available in 24 KNP sites in Metro Manila. (PNA photo by Yancy Lim)

### Application period for 2025 Bar Exams starts Jan. 8

By Benjamin Pulta

MANILA – The Supreme Court (SC) on Friday reminded those intending to take the 2025 Bar Examinations that the application period would be from Jan. 8 to March 17.

In a bulletin, the tribunal said all new applicants, previous takers, and refreshers, who do not have existing accounts with the Supreme Court's online platform, Bar Applicant Registration System and Tech Assistance (BARISTA), may

create an individual account at <https://portal.judicialry.gov.ph/> before they can access BARISTA.

All applicants must complete/update their respective profile, fill out the application form, upload/re-upload digital copies of the documentary requirements, and pay the PHP12,800 application fee exclusively through the modes provided in the BARISTA.

Within 10 calendar days from the notice of

*Continued on page 2...*

By Stephanie Sevillano

MANILA – The Department of Agriculture (DA) on January 6, 2025, said the "Sulit rice" will soon be available in 24 Kadiwa ng Pangulo (KNP) Centers and kiosks.

Sulit rice is 100

percent broken but white and sells at PHP36/kg.

In an interview, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said they will finalize the official rollout of the Sulit Rice program following a "positive public reception" during its

trial run in two select KNP sites in Metro Manila.

*"This week we will finalize the rollout kasi kailangan namin since successful at medyo nagustuhan ng tao doon sa (because we need it since it's*

*Continued on page 2...*

### Comelec warns bets: No campaigning during Nazareno fiesta

By Ferdinand Patinio

MANILA – The Commission on Elections (Comelec) on Friday warned candidates to ditch plans to use the Traslacion on Jan. 9 as a campaign venue.

Comelec Chairperson George Erwin Garcia said poll aspirants should not take advantage of religious activities such as the Feast of the Jesus Nazareno.

*"This should be taken as a warning. There is nothing preventing us from disqualifying these individuals,"* Garcia said in

the same presser.

*"This is just one day compared to the 90 days for the national candidates and 45 days for local candidates to campaign. Let us give this day to the devotees and not take advantage of it,"* he added.

Meanwhile, Manila Mayor Honey Lacuna urged devotees to strictly follow the rules and regulations being set by the Church and law enforcement authorities to avoid untoward incidents and ensure the safety of all the participants in the annual Traslacion.

In a statement, she

also called on those who will be joining the procession not to bring children and persons with disability to protect them from any hazards.

The lady mayor also advised attendees against wearing jewelry or bringing prohibited items.

Lacuna had directed all concerned local government units to do their routine share of work, stressing that City Engineer Moises Alcantara had reported having gone through the designated procession route to make sure no hanging electrical wires as well as potholes and open manholes as devotees are

*Continued on page 2...*



Photo courtesy of PNA