

## Fajardo, Thompson lead PBA All-Star voting

MANILA – June Mar Fajardo and Scottie Thompson are currently ahead in the PBA All-Star Game voting as the first partial results have been released.

Fajardo, San Miguel's superstar center is currently number one as of Wednesday with 37,915 votes.

"Masayang-masaya ako na makasali uli ako sa (I'm so happy that I could join again in the) All-Stars," Fajardo said when asked about his thoughts on the current balloting update after the Beermen beat the Blackwater Bossing, 105-86, later in the day at the PhilSports Arena in Pasig.

On the other hand, Thompson, Ginebra's new superstar combo guard, is in close second with 37,759.

This year's All-Star Game, the first in four years, will now have the top two players in the All-Star balloting, being the captains, forming their teams through a draft where they will choose from the other 22 top vote-getters just like how it is being done in the National Basketball Association.

This means Fajardo and Thompson could become the skippers for their respective teams come the March 12 exhibition match in Passi City, Iloilo province if they remain in the lead.

However, when asked about the new

rules for forming the All-Star teams, Fajardo thinks it could lead to a letdown between friends.

"Kung pipili ako, baka magtampo yung iba (If I draft my All-Star teammates, the ones I would skip might get disappointed)," Fajardo said, although he added that the All-Star drafting is an exciting twist for him.

The other players in the Top 24 are Ginebra's Japeth Aguilar, Jamie Malonzo, Christian Standhardinger, LA Tenorio, Stanley Pringle, and Jeremiah Gray, Magnolia's Calvin Abueva, Paul Lee, and Mark Barroca, San Miguel's CJ Perez, Terrence Romeo, and Marcio Lassiter, Rain Or Shine's James Yap and Gabe Norwood, TNT's Jayson Castro, RR Pogoy, Mikey Williams, and Calvin Oftana, Meralco's Chris Newsome, NorthPort's Arvin Tolentino, and NLEX's Kevin Alas.

When asked about his draft preference, Fajardo said that he would love to bring fellow Beermen Perez, Romeo, and Lassiter to his team.

On the other hand, Gin King's Tim Cone and Elasto Painter's Yeng Guiao are on track to becoming the All-Star head coaches this year.

Cone is the runaway leader in the coaching race with 51,707, while Guiao is second with 22,705.

The All-Star captains will also get to choose who they want to coach in the traditionally mid-season classic.

However, Fajardo believes the coaches should form the teams instead of the captains. "Dapat yung coaches na lang yung pipili ng mga players (The coaches should be the one who would draft the players instead)," Fajardo said.

In a separate update, Malonzo and Gray are the top vote-getters for the Rookie-Sophomore-Junior Game.

Malonzo is number one with 41,933, while Gray is second with 35,248.

The other top vote-getters for the RSJ Game are Oftana, Tolentino, Williams, ROS's Shaun Ildefonso, Gian Mamuyac, Anton Asistio, and Mike Nieto, Phoenix's Tyler Tio and Encho Serrano, Meralco's Aaron Black, Converge's Justine Arana and Jerrick Ahanmisi, Blackwater's RK Ilagan, NLEX's Brandon Rosser and Matt Nieto, TerraFirma's Isaac Go, and NorthPort's Joshua Munzon.

PBA fans have until Feb. 15 to cast their votes online through the league's website or offline through balloting areas at the main entrance of the arenas during gameday. (PNA)

## Advisory body backs DepEd's agenda for 'job-ready' K to 12 grads

MANILA – The Private Sector Advisory Council (PSAC) last Wednesday expressed support for the Department of Education's (DepEd) plan to revise the Kinder to Grade 12 (K to 12) curriculum to produce "job-ready, active and responsible" graduates.

The commitment was made, two days after Vice President Sara Duterte, who also serves as DepEd Secretary, launched the "MATATAG" agenda, which would serve as the department's roadmap in addressing challenges in basic education.

In a statement, PSAC Job Sector lead Joey Concepcion said the private sector is giving its full support for the DepEd's "comprehensive" reforms to address systemic challenges in several aspects of the education sector.

"Under the leadership of Vice President and Secretary of Education Sara Duterte, PSAC fully supports their efforts and comprehensive plans for improving the Philippine basic education system," said Concepcion, founder of GO Negosyo and president and chief executive officer of RFM Corp..

"We believe that it will bring about positive change for students, educators and the country as a whole," he added.

Concepcion also ensured that the PSAC is ready to work with the government to improve the country's basic education system. "PSAC is

committed to working with the government and other partners to help achieve the goals DepEd has set out and to contribute to the development of a well-educated and skilled workforce," he said.

During the presentation of the Basic Education Report (BER) 2023 at Sofitel Hotel in Pasay City on Monday, Duterte identified the problems hounding various areas in the basic education sector, including curriculum, infrastructure, learners' well-being and teachers' welfare.

She also launched the "MATATAG" agenda, which stands for a four-side holistic approach to basic education.

Based on Duterte's presentation, "MATATAG" means "Make the curriculum relevant to produce job-ready, active, and responsible citizens; Take steps to accelerate the delivery of basic education services and provision facilities; Take good care of learners by promoting learner well-being, inclusiveness learning, and positive learning environment; and Give support for teachers to teach better."

Duterte also sought partnership with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and various industry partners to address the issue of skills mismatch in senior high school program.

Marcos, who graced the DepEd event, said the national government must confront issues hounding the education sector with an "open mind and compassion." Last Dec. 9, 2022, the PSAC Jobs Sector met with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., Duterte and other relevant government officials to discuss concrete plans to create more and better jobs for Filipinos.

One of the PSAC proposals made during the Dec. 9 meeting was to build skills and capabilities that would allow longer-term competitiveness. The recommendation was reflected in the first factor of DepEd's MATATAG agenda. PSAC Jobs Sector also recommended identifying specific skills for long-term competitiveness and revamping basic and higher education and workforce development to drive productivity and encourage entrepreneurship.

The specific skills identified during the recent meeting were English proficiency; science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related skills; and digital readiness.

The council also proposed that the DepEd, CHED and TESDA further integrate and work with the private sector to set standards, update curricula and design training programs that match the real skill needs of priority sectors. (PNA)

# DSWD gets P151B in 2023 for social protection programs

MANILA – The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has received over PHP151 billion under the 2023 General Appropriations Act (GAA) for its social protection programs, the Department of

Budget and Management (DBM) said Tuesday.

The DBM issued the statement, as the DSWD celebrated its 72nd founding anniversary.

"The government has allotted more than PHP151 billion to

continue the major social protection service programs of the Department of Social Welfare and Development. This is reflected in Republic Act 11936, known as the FY (fiscal year) 2023 General Appropriations Act,"

the DBM said.

The DSWD's major social protection services include the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP), the Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP), the Protective Services for Individuals and Families in Difficult

Circumstances (PSIFDC) and the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps).

The DBM noted that under the 2023 GAA, the 4Ps or the government's direct cash assistance to poor households will receive the biggest chunk of funds, which is PHP102.61 billion.

The Budget department added that about PHP36.82 billion

will go to PSIFDC, a program that looks after the condition of Filipinos in difficult circumstances, including crisis situations.

Around PHP6.46 billion will be allotted for the SLP to boost livelihood opportunities in the country, while some PHP5.2 billion will be earmarked for the SFP

(Turn to p. 2)

## Romualdez calls for closer US-PH economic ties

MANILA – House Speaker Martin Romualdez on Tuesday said the record-breaking economic growth of the country in 2022 has strengthened the resolve of the House of Representatives "to remain fully committed to supporting the Agenda for Prosperity with the necessary legislative measures."

The country's record-high Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 7.6 percent, likewise prompted Romualdez

to call for closer economic ties with the United States to capitalize on this extraordinary economic growth of the Philippines, amid a gloomy global outlook.

Romualdez aired the call when he spoke before a luncheon caucus of the US-Philippines Society – whose membership includes top US business leaders and former government officials – held Tuesday at the Manila Peninsula Hotel in Makati.

(Turn to p. 3)

## Wage hike pushed for school counselors dealing with mental health

MANILA – Senator Sherwin Gatchalian will seek a salary hike for guidance counselors to help address the alarming number of suicides and attempted suicides among students.

A public hearing last Tuesday tackled Gatchalian's Senate

Bill No. 379, or the Act Strengthening the Promotion and Delivery of Mental Health Services in Basic Education Schools, filed last year.

The measure seeks to institutionalize a mental health and well-being program, prescribe the hiring and

deployment of mental health professional, prescribe the creation of plantilla (permanent) positions of guidance associates in the Department of Education (DepEd) and increase the salary of guidance counselors from Salary Grade 11 (Turn to p.3)

## Laguna solon pledges continued support for cops' welfare

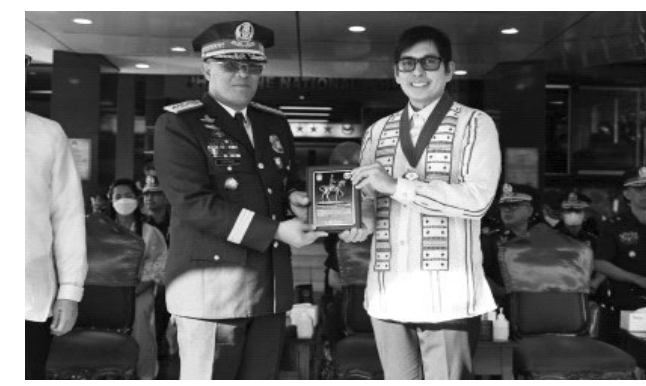
MANILA – Rep. Dan Fernandez of the lone district of Sta. Rosa City pledged continued support for initiatives aimed at upholding the welfare of the members of the Philippine National Police (PNP).

Speaking at the PNP's 32nd founding anniversary in Camp Crame on Monday, Fernandez said the House of Representatives is well aware of the needs of the police force.

He said they are committed to doing their part to ensure that needs such as free legal assistance, additional funds for the campaign against insurgency,

strengthening the recruitment, selection, and appointment process of uniformed personnel, strengthening the charter of PNP Academy, permanent disability benefits, purchase discounts, and among others are properly addressed.

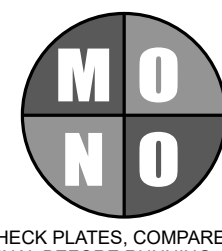
"The institution has indeed come a long way to emerge as one of the top government agencies with high trust ratings in recent years. This trust and respect of the community are no doubt hard-earned, borne from the blood, sweat, and tears of every member of the police force, some of whom we honor today,"



PNP chief Gen. Rodolfo Azurin Jr. (left) and House Committee on Public Order and Safety chairperson and Sta. Rosa City, Laguna lone district Rep. Dan Fernandez (right) (Photo courtesy of PNP Public Information Office)

said Fernandez, "I am supremely confident that the men and women of the PNP will rise and overcome these challenges and continue to be the reliable and trustworthy partner of the Filipino community in nation-building." Fernandez

(Turn to p. 2)



DSWD. . . Fr. p 1

to ensure regular feeding and milk distribution, the DBM said.

During the DSWD's 72nd founding anniversary in Quezon City, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. lauded the DSWD personnel for their "excellent" and "genuine" service.

Marcos urged the DSWD to continue calibrating the government's social protection programs, including the 4Ps.

"Recently, we recognize and take pride in this institution's stability and reliability. For over 70 years, the DSWD has remained unwavering in its mission to improve the lives of every Filipino, especially those who are in distress, those who are in danger, and those who we can see are in disadvantage," he said.

DBM Secretary Amenah Pangandaman said allocating funds for

WAGE HIKE . . . FR. P. 1

(PHP27,000) to 16 (PHP39,672).

"Halos entry level ng teachers ang kanyang sweldo pero ang requirement sa guidance counselor is master's degree. So ang request ng DepEd is taasan from salary grade 11 to 16 para mas maraming pumasok na guidance counselor (Their salary is almost like the entry level for teachers but a master's degree is required. So, the DepEd's request is to increase it from Salary Grade 11 to 16 so more guidance counselors will apply)," Gatchalian said in an interview.

To fully serve all basic education students, around 47,000 guidance counselors are needed but data showed there are only 4,000, he added

the DSWD's social protection programs is part of the government's efforts in addressing the immediate challenges confronting the Filipino people, especially those from the most vulnerable sectors.

"The mandate of President Bongbong Marcos is clear — for the government to ensure that no Filipino will be left behind," Pangandaman said.

"Alam din po namin na ang mga social assistance programs na kagaya nito ay nagsisilbing sandalan ng mga kababayan nating lubos na nangangailangan (We also know that social assistance programs like these serve as a support for our countrymen who are in dire need). And for these, the DBM will exert its utmost to make sure that these programs are funded," she added. (PNA)

For the meantime, Gatchalian proposed that teachers, both in private and public schools, should be trained on observing students who might be undergoing depression or anxiety.

For Academic Year 2021-2022, the DepEd recorded 404 students, who died of suicide and 2,147 who attempted suicide in public schools alone.

Senator Lito Lapid has also filed Senate Bill No. 1795 that seeks to put up mental health and well-being offices in every school division while Senator Jinggoy Estrada's Senate Bill No. 1508 will establish a Mental Health Office in state universities and colleges to enable students to lead fulfilling and normal

lives as they venture into adulthood. "Nakakabahalaitong pagtaas ng kasing anxiety, stress at depression hindi lang sa ating mga mag-aaral, kundi pati na rin sa ating mga teaching and non-teaching personnel (The higher cases of anxiety, stress, and depression not only in students but among teaching and non-teaching personnel is alarming)," Lapid said in a statement.

Lapid said mental health promotion and early intervention strategies may produce the greatest impact on people's health, minimizing the impact

LAGUNA. . . Fr. p 1

said.

Meanwhile, PNP chief Gen. Rodolfo Azurin Jr., in his welcome message, recognized the great courage and generosity that has propelled the police force to provide exceptional service to Filipinos for the past three decades.

"As the father of the PNP, I have been a witness to how everyone works hard, contributes, and do their shared responsibility and even in many instances went beyond the call of duty just to ensure the success of every mission," Azurin said.

Azurin also extended his gratitude to President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. and to the members of the Philippine Senate, Congress, and other state legislators as well as stakeholders from the private sectors, and provincial and local government leaders for maintaining their backing and ensuring the PNP's optimal performance.

"We cannot thank you enough for your generosity and kindness that allowed us to pursue our goal through the peace and security

of any potentially serious health condition.

A study of the World Health Organization released in 2021 showed that globally, one in seven 10 to 19-year-olds experiences a mental disorder, accounting for 13 percent of the burden of disease in the age group.

The same study said suicide is the fourth leading cause of death among the 15 to 29 age bracket.

According to the Department of Health, at least 3.6 million Filipinos faced mental health issues during the pandemic. (PNA)

framework "M+K+K=K" or "Malasakit, Kaayusan, Kapayaan tungo sa Kaunlaran" and the "KASIMBAYANAN" Program," Azurin said.

The PNP chief also paid tribute to the valiant sacrifices made by those who died while safeguarding the nation against disorder and to the frontline workers who perished while serving on the frontlines during the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.

During the celebration, 17 PNP personnel were honored for their valuable contributions and outstanding achievements.

The PNP observes its founding anniversary every year to mark its creation under Republic Act 6975 on Jan. 29, 1991.

This year's 32nd PNP Founding Anniversary is celebrated with the theme "Patuloy na serbisyong publiko, Handog ng Pambasang Kapulisan na may Malasakit, Kaayusan, At Kapayapaan tungo sa Kaunlaran ng ating bayan". (PNA)

Comelec monitors Cavite poll bets' compliance with campaign rules

MANILA – The Commission on Elections (Comelec) will be monitoring the compliance with campaign rules of the four candidates gunning the seat for the seventh legislative district of the province of Cavite.

"All four Election Officers (EOs) in the 7th District will be on standby to implement the rules on campaign material posting, and common poster areas," Comelec spokesperson John Rex Laudiangco said in a statement Wednesday.

While no campaign violations have so far been reported, Laudiangco said one gun ban offense was reported by the Philippine National Police (PNP).

"The said person was arrested at checkpoint in Amadeo with the firearm

inside the vehicle in plain view, and was promptly subjected to inquest investigation," Laudiangco said.

The special polls will be held on Feb. 25 aims to fill the post left by former Rep. Jesus Crispin Remulla who was named Justice Secretary by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.

The elections will cover the municipalities of Amadeo, Indang and Tanza and the City of Trece Martires.

The candidates in the special polls are independent bets Jose Angelito Domingo Aguinaldo, Melencio Loyola De Sagun Jr., Michael Angelo Bautista Santos and Crispin Diego Diaz Remulla.

The campaign and election period for the polls started on Jan. 26. (PNA)

CAVITE NEWS PUBLISHING WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

raquel.caviteneews@gmail.com 09974094932/09329770888

RAQUEL M. MAGTIBAY Publisher

JOMAR MENES Editor-In-Chief

JOHN JEPREE MAGTIBAY Lay-out Artist

LAURO M. MAGTIBAY Circulation Manager

ATTY. RAQUEL C. LARA Legal Counsel



MEMBER OF PRIME ALLIANCE OF PUBLISHERS, EDITORS, & REPORTERS of the Philippines Inc.

Commercial Advertising Rate: P200.00/col.cm Legal Rate P160.00/col.cm.

Solon bats for fuel tax suspension amid fluctuating pump prices

MANILA – A lawmaker last Tuesday said the temporary provision regarding the automatic fuel tax cut under the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) law should be made permanent to bring down the cost of fuel and provide instant relief to the Filipino people.

In a statement, Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Raymund Villafuerte said the TRAIN law's provisional authority to suspend the fuel excise tax whenever the USD80-price cap is breached ended in 2020.

Villafuerte said the proposed tax suspension aims to shield ordinary Filipinos from "further adversities that may be caused by unforeseen economic downturns."

"Geopolitical conflicts and other developments in world markets have been driving up the cost of petroleum products, which, in turn, have jacked up transportation expenses and food prices responsible for the seemingly unending elevated inflation that now threatens to slow the global economy and possibly even lead to recession in most parts of the world," Villafuerte said.

He cited the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) report that inflation soared to a 14-year record of 8.1 percent last December, the highest since the 9.1 percent clip in 2008 and the ninth consecutive month in 2022 that the pace of commodity price hikes breached

the target range of 2 percent to 4 percent set by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

He stressed the need to find a "surefire way" to cushion the economic impact on ordinary Filipino consumers of the fluctuating fuel prices, noting that the most feasible means to do this is through the permanent suspension of the excise tax imposed on petroleum products whenever the global rate hits the TRAIN-set threshold of USD 80 per barrel over a three-month period.

"This is the best way for Malacañan Palace and the 19th Congress to take the edge off the economic shock inflicted on our consumers by the never-ending rise in the cost of living, especially now when Filipinos are barely recovering from the almost three-year global economic and health crises caused by the Covid-19 pandemic," he said.

The excise tax is currently pegged at PHP10 per liter of regular and unleaded gasoline and PHP6 per liter of diesel, he noted.

"Add to this the VAT (value added tax) of 12 percent, and anyone could see how taxes have resulted to the hefty increase not only in the price of fuel itself but also in the cost of other goods that rely on fuel for their production and/or transportation," he said.

He said the retail cost of gasoline and diesel went up by PHP1.30 and PHP1 per liter, respectively, on Tuesday, the third successive upward adjustment in pump prices this January.

Prior to this week's round of adjustment, a monitoring report of the Department of Energy (DOE) showed that prices since the start of January already logged per liter net increases of PHP5.90 for gasoline and PHP2.05 for diesel. (PNA)

Consumer spending seen to grow to 5.5% in 2023

MANILA – Household spending in the Philippines is projected to expand by 5.5 percent this year, slower than the 8.2 percent growth forecast in 2022, the research arm of Fitch Ratings said.

In its report released Tuesday, Fitch Solutions said household income growth will support consumer expenditure in 2023, allowing Filipino households to spend despite the elevated inflation numbers.

"We expect household income growths to outpace consumer price inflation in 2023. This will ensure real income growth and greater potential for consumer spending," Fitch Solutions said.

The report said its consumer spending forecast is in line with the Philippine economic growth, which is expected to ease from 7.4 percent in

2022 to 5.9 percent this year.

"The slowdown in growth was in line with expectations, but the pace of deceleration was more modest than predicted. Elevated energy prices and tightening monetary policy will result in further deceleration during the forecast period," it added.

For the medium term, Fitch Solutions forecasted consumer spending to average 5.1 percent annually from 2024 to 2027.

It added consumer confidence, though it remained negative since 2020 amid the pandemic, has shown signs of improvement.

Consumer confidence index stood at -14.6 in the fourth quarter of 2022 from a peak of -54.5 in the third quarter of 2020.

Consumer confidence has improved in line with the economic recovery from the effects of the pandemic," Fitch Solutions added.

Employment, household income The research group said the country's strong labor market has been a major driver of consumer spending expansion last year, which is expected to

influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), started early and progressed stronger than normal in European countries this year.

Experts say weaker immune systems are related to Covid-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) lockdowns as people were not

continue this year.

"Many markets have boasted significantly strong labor markets post-Covid (coronavirus disease 2019), driven by rapid economic recoveries, both locally and globally. Additionally, governments have been very supportive of local labor markets, resulting in significantly tight markets that have pushed up nominal wages," Fitch Solutions said.

For the full year of 2023, Fitch Solutions projected the unemployment rate to settle at 5.4 percent.

"Remittances are an important source of income for many households in the Philippines, and the demand for overseas Filipino workers continues to increase globally. In particular, there is a demand for Filipino workers skilled in jobs related to medical and health services, construction and housekeeping," the report read.

However, it cited several risks to this income over the year that are mostly related to rising inflation across the world. (PNA)

exposed to some viruses during this period.

Pharmaceutical manufacturers are also unprepared for the high demand in the face of increasing infections, with the energy crisis in Europe and the rising raw material prices affecting production. (Anadolu)



### Canada seeks to conclude defense MOU with PH by June

MANILA – The Canadian government is hoping to finalize and sign a defense cooperation deal with Manila on the margins of the Shangri-La Dialogue in June, the Canadian Embassy in Manila said Wednesday.

A senior embassy official who presented Ottawa's new Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS) on condition of anonymity during a briefing in Makati, said the memorandum of understanding would serve as a framework to improve defense relations stalled by disagreements during the past administration.

"We have not had a deep defense relationship and opportunities to build that relationship were interrupted by disagreements between the two countries on issues like human rights, etc," he said.

"We have a new opportunity so we are negotiating that—both sides see an enormous potential and value," he added.

Canada, the official said, is looking for opportunities to increase its participation in exercises in the absence of a Visiting Forces Agreement or a Status of Visiting Forces Agreement similar to what Manila has with the United States or Australia.

Once finalized, the MOU would cover expanded security partnerships, possible military exercises and training and capacity building, among others.

The official said the Armed Forces of the Philippines is interested in a range of different training and

Canada is ready to evaluate this in line with the IPS, which places importance to the Philippines as a vital partner in the region.

"We're prepared to evaluate and look at that. And we were allocating resources to be able to do more in this part of the world," he said.

Aside from defense, Canada looks forward to enhancing maritime cooperation with the country.

Manila has recently proposed a maritime dialogue, which the official sees as timely given the IPS's launch in November 2022.

The official said the mechanism is being studied and would be "wide-ranging" to cover environmental protection, oil spill mitigation, maritime safety and fishery stock management.

"Increased presence" Canada plans to increase presence in the region through the 2.3 billion Canadian dollar IPS, spanning from peace and security initiatives to

DepEd... FR. p. 3

user unit," he said, referring to a 2019 procurement record.

The Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) Philippines, meanwhile, demanded an investigation into the allegations.

Earlier, Vice President and Education Secretary Sara Duterte admitted several issues in centralized procurement have been reported within the department.

Hence, the move to create a strand that

economic ties across the region.

In the said briefing, the official said Canada would also work with partners to push back against any unilateral actions that threaten status quo in the East and South China Sea, including the Taiwan Strait.

Beijing, Manila and other neighboring nations have overlapping claims over the vast and resource-rich South China Sea.

The official highlighted that Canada's approach to China would be "inseparable" from its broader IPS and it would challenge the rising power "when we ought to" and cooperate with them when they must.

"China is looking to shape the international order into a more permissive environment for interests and values that increasingly depart from ours. And China's rise as a global actor is reshaping the strategic outlook of every state in the region, including Canada," the official said. (PNA)

Canada plans to increase presence in the region through the 2.3 billion Canadian dollar IPS, spanning from peace and security initiatives to

would solely focus on procurement processes with transparency.

"The procurement practices at the Department of Education had red flags that demanded immediate actions...

Earlier, Vice President and Education Secretary Sara Duterte admitted several issues in centralized procurement have been reported within the department.

Hence, the move to create a strand that

### Cops need to coordinate with school officials on security matters

MANILA – Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Gen. Rodolfo Azurin Jr. ordered all unit commanders to coordinate with school officials in their areas to tackle public safety issues and implement necessary anti-crime programs.

This came after the Department of Education (DepEd) sought the PNP's assistance in securing schools in the wake of various incidents that threatened the safety of learners and disrupted classes.

"Inatasan po ng ating Chief PNP Gen. Rodolfo Azurin Jr. yung ating mga field commanders to directly coordinate doon sa mga eskuwelahan doon sa kani-kanilang lugar para alamin kung anong mga security concerns nila at kung paano makakatulong ang PNP para mas lalo paigtingin sa loob at labas ng mga eskuwelahan (The Chief PNP Gen.

She said the additional police deployment would reinforce the existing police assistance desks that are already set up in areas near the schools in some parts of the country, particularly the urban areas.

Police Assistance Desks (PADs) near the entrances of school campuses nationwide in coordination with the Department of Education (DepEd)

Rodolfo Azurin Jr. instructed our field commanders to directly coordinate with the schools there in their respective areas to find out what their security concerns are and how the PNP can help to further intensify inside and outside the schools premises)," PNP spokesperson Col. Jean Fajardo said in a radio interview on Tuesday.

Last week, a 12-year-old boy died after allegedly playing with the gun of his father, who is a police officer, inside a school in San Jose del Monte City, Bulacan while some schools were shocked by bomb threats that turned out to be a hoax.

Fajardo said the first step is for the police to conduct security assessments in schools.

"As to the number of policemen that would be deployed, the time that they would be deployed would be a task for local commanders," said Fajardo.

She said the additional police deployment would reinforce the existing police assistance desks that are already set up in areas near the schools in some parts of the country, particularly the urban areas.

Police Assistance Desks (PADs) near the entrances of school campuses nationwide in coordination with the Department of Education (DepEd)

officials have also been established to ensure the safety and security of the children, employees, visitors and tourists visiting schools through Tourist Police Units.

Based on the existing security measures in the vicinity of schools, the police assistance desks are manned by at least two policemen. They are reinforced by beat patrol policemen who are tasked to conduct regular patrols at the vicinity of schools.

Aside from students and teachers, the current security setup also covers assistance to the parents, especially of the preschool and elementary pupils who are usually being fetched and accompanied by their parents.

For his part, PNP public information office chief Col. Redrico Maranan said the order was cascaded down to the chiefs of police.

"Our priority is schools with a big student population like here in Metro Manila and other urban areas. The deployment of policemen in schools that need security will be as soon as possible. Our Chief PNP leaves to the discretion of the commanders on the specifics of the security coverage in coordination with the local DepEd and school officials," he added. (PNA)

ROMUALDEZ... FR. 1

"I am hoping today's dialogue will help us identify more areas of cooperation to assist us in this mission. I am confident that the long and extensive relationship between the United States and the Philippines will continue to bring economic gains that are beneficial for peoples of both countries," Romualdez said.

"The United States and the Philippines have a long history of collaboration and cooperation when it comes to global issues. From trade and investment to security and defense, our countries have shown that much can be achieved if we continue working together," he added.

Prior to his call for increased economic ties with the US, Romualdez gave a short overview of the Legislative Agenda of the Philippines' 19th Congress, and how President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s "Agenda for Prosperity" is responsible for the country's record-high Gross Domestic Product growth of 7.6%, the fastest recorded since 1976.

"Our President, Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., has an Agenda for Prosperity. This agenda has as its core mission the country's economic transformation towards inclusivity and sustainability. We in Congress join the President in this mission," Romualdez said.

He added that the House of Representatives has adopted the Marcos administration's Medium-Term Fiscal Framework (MTFF) and 8-Point Socio-Economic Agenda, which comprise the roadmap for the Agenda for Prosperity.

"We have committed to prioritizing legislative measures that support the MTFF and the 8-Point Socio-Economic Agenda because we in Congress join in the mission to steer

the economy back to its high-growth path in the near term and sustain inclusive and resilient growth through to 2028," the lawmaker from Leyte said. "For the first time, the country has a clear 6-year agenda with clearly defined goals."

This unity of purpose in government, Romualdez said, is responsible for the "sound economic plan" that came with the Agenda for Prosperity.

"It is with this solid economic plan that the Philippines is not only surviving but thriving in spite of the external or global economic challenges. Globally, the economic outlook is gloomy, following the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, stubbornly high inflation, and an abrupt slowdown in global growth from 6 percent in 2021 to 3.2 percent in 2022," he said.

"Yet against all odds, it was announced only last week that the Philippine GDP posted a growth of 7.2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2022, resulting in a 7.6 percent full-year growth in 2022."

He said this is the fastest growth recorded since 1976, and above the government's target of 6.5 to 7.5 percent.

He said these encouraging figures have kept the House of Representatives to remain fully committed to supporting the Agenda for Prosperity with the necessary legislative measures.

"We are now deliberating on current bills—and will propose more measures—aimed at opening the Philippine markets for foreign direct investments. The approval in the House of Representatives of the Maharlika Investment Fund bill is just the beginning," he said.

Romualdez told the US-Philippines Society that the two countries should further strengthen

### DepEd to look into camera purchases amid overpricing

MANILA – The Department of Education (DepEd) on Wednesday said it will look into the procurement of various digital single lens reflex cameras (DSLR) which were allegedly overpriced.

In a Viber message, DepEd spokesperson Michael Poa responded to queries after a photojournalist posted a comparison of a supposedly DepEd-purchase camera amounting to P H P 1 5 5 , 9 2 9 , significantly higher than the camera's online price at PHP21,999.

"This one I'm having checked. I can't determine what type of camera is the one with the DepEd sticker. In the Public Affairs Service here in Central Office, we don't have entry-level cameras, mostly Mark IV. So, I will have to ask the regional offices if they have these entry-level cameras procured, as shown in the Lazada photo," he said in mixed English and Filipino.

The said post, however, was deleted, but several tweets questioning other unreasona

level DSLR were also posted.

These include a quotation for a proposal request for one mirrorless DSLR camera worth PHP170,000, dated September 2022 in Agusan del Norte province.

"Based on initial communication with Caraga, that particular procurement was canceled. Those cameras were initially intended for use in broadcast/livestream," Poa said.

"Since the regional ICT was able to eventually provide three conference cameras, the procurement of said DSLRs was canceled," he added.

The DepEd also ordered the regional office to provide the basis of the approved budget.

Poa said they would also look into around half a million worth of purchase of a DSLR and a camcorder amounting to PHP270,000 and P H P 2 3 0 , 0 0 0 , respectively.

"I'm having the cameras procured checked with the end

(Turn to p. 4)

ties and commitment to working together as "friends and allies."

"Our bilateral relations are an important part of our diplomatic efforts. We have been able to make progress in areas such as climate change, economic development, and counterterrorism. This is the result of the strong bonds of friendship between our two countries," he said.

"The US-Philippine relationship is also one of

mutual respect and understanding. As friends and allies, we strive to be partners in promoting peace and stability in the region. We value the trust and confidence that come with our relationship as neighbors and partners. Let us continue to build on our bilateral relations and ensure that they remain strong and fruitful for the benefit of both of our countries," he added. (PNA)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT  
FOURTH JUDICIAL REGION  
OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF COURT  
IMUS, CAVITE

EXTRA-JUDICIAL FORECLOSURE OF  
REAL ESTATE MORTGAGE  
UNDER ACT 3135 AS AMENDED  
BY ACT 4118

FC Case No. 17677-22

BDO UNIBANK, INC.,  
Mortgagee,  
-versus-  
MARIAM DIOKNO MIMBALAWAG,  
Mortgagor,

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

Upon extra-judicial petition for sale under Act 3135 as amended by Act 4118 filed by BDO UNIBANK, INC., mortgagee, with office address at BDO Towers Valero, 8741 Pase de Roxas, Makati City, against MARIAM DIOKNO MIMBALAWAG, with residence and postal address at #3 Manalili St., Signal Village, Nichols-Mckinley, Taguig City and/or Blk. 8 Lot 06 Ph. 5, Lancaster Residences, Brgy. Alapan 2-A, Imus, Cavite, to satisfy the mortgage indebtedness which as of October 28, 2022 amounts to ONE MILLION TWO HUNDRED THIRTY SIX THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED FOURTEEN PESOS and 57/100 (P1,236,614.57) Philippine Currency, including interest and penalty charges but excluding attorney's fees, sheriff's fees and all other charges incidental to this foreclosure and sale, the undersigned Sheriff IV will sell at public auction on February 21, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. or soon thereafter at the main entrance of the Office of the Clerk of Court, RTC Multiple Sala, Bulwagan Ng Katarrungan, Aguineldo Highway, Imus, Cavite, to the highest bidder, for CASH and in Philippine Currency, the following property with all the improvements therein, to wit:

TRANSFER CERTIFICATE OF TITLE NO.  
057-2016013962

"A PARCEL OF LAND (LOT 6, BLK. 8, OF THE CONS. AND SUBD. PLAN, PCS-04-025430, BEING A PORTION OF THE CONS. OF LOTS 1629 & 1690, IMUS ESTATE, L.R.C. REC. NO. 8843) SITUATED IN THE BRGY. OF ALAPAN 2, MUN. OF IMUS, PROV. OF CAVITE, ISLAND OF LUZON, BOUNDED ON THE SE., ALONG LINE 1-2 BY LOT 5 BLK. 8, ON THE SW., ALONG LINE 2-3 BY LOT 4 BLK. 8; ON THE NW., ALONG LINE 3-4 BY ROAD LOT 10; AND ON THE NE., ALONG LINE 4-1 BY LOT 8 BLK. 8, ALL OF THE CONS. AND SUBD. PLAN, x x x CONTAINING AN AREA OF FORTY (40) SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, x x x"

All sealed bid must be submitted to the undersigned on the above stated time and date.

In the event the public auction should not take place on the said date, it shall be held on February 28, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. without prior notice.

Prospective bidders/buyers are hereby enjoined to investigate for themselves the title to the said property and encumbrances thereon if any there be.

Imus, Cavite, Philippines, November 29, 2022.

ISRAEL S. MEDINA  
Sheriff IV

APPROVED:  
ARMIE A. FRANCISCO  
Clerk of Court VI

Copy Furnished:  
BDO UNIBANK, INC.,  
BDO Towers Valero, 8741 Pase de Roxas,  
Makati City 0726

MARIAM DIOKNO MIMBALAWAG  
#3 Manalili St., Signal Village, Nichols-Mckinley,  
Taguig City and/or Blk. 8 Lot 06 Ph. 5,  
Lancaster Residences, Brgy. Alapan 2-A, Imus, Cavite

Published at: Cavite News Publishing  
Dates: January 19, 26, & February 2, 2023

