

PHILIPPINES SECURITY ANALYSIS REPORT

AI-Assisted Open Source Intelligence Assessment

Analysis Period: October 26, 2026 - November 02, 2026

This report was produced using open-source intelligence analysis. The assessment is grounded in publicly available reporting and should be cross-referenced with primary sources. RSS feed articles are listed in the annex for reference.

Executive Summary

The Philippines experienced a period of heightened security activity and diplomatic friction from October 26 to November 2, 2026. Key developments included the commencement of the large-scale Exercise Salaknib 2026 with the United States, alongside other multilateral maritime drills, underscoring Manila's deepening defense alliances. Simultaneously, a Chinese aircraft carrier group's transit near Mindanao highlighted persistent geopolitical tensions in the South China Sea, further exacerbated by diplomatic disagreements at the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) in Cebu. Domestically, authorities implemented tighter security measures for the Undas holiday, anticipating significant public movement, while a fatal military aircraft collision raised concerns about internal defense readiness. The operationalization of BrahMos anti-ship missiles signals a strategic enhancement of the Philippines' maritime defense capabilities.

Key Security Developments

- Military Activities and Exercises: Exercise Salaknib 2026 Commences

The United States Army and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) officially commenced Exercise Salaknib 2026 at Fort Magsaysay, Philippines, marking a cornerstone of the U.S.-Philippines Alliance. Over several weeks, thousands of U.S. and Philippine soldiers will train shoulder-to-shoulder in complex, multi-domain events, focusing on combat readiness, interoperability, jungle warfare, aviation operations, advanced live-fire, and comprehensive archipelagic defense concepts. The exercise also includes electronic warfare training, aiming for team integration and proficiency with both nations' equipment, and sees participation from subject matter experts and observers from the Australian Army, Japan Ground Self-Defense Force, and New Zealand Defence Force.

- Multilateral Maritime Drills in West Philippine Sea

Naval forces from the Philippines, Japan, and the United States concluded a multilateral Maritime Cooperative Activity (MCA) in the West Philippine Sea from October 19 to 24. This 22nd iteration of the MCA focused on strengthening logistics, maritime security, and emergency-response coordination, with participants conducting communications exercises, division tactics, photo exercises, deck landing qualifications, vertical replenishments, maritime domain awareness, and search and rescue serials.

• Philippines Joins Exercise Keen Sword 2026

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) participated in Exercise Keen Sword 2026 in Okinawa, Japan, from October 19 to 29. This exercise involved military forces from Japan, the United States, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and New Zealand, providing an opportunity for participants to exchange knowledge, share best practices, and strengthen professional relationships.

• Chinese Aircraft Carrier Group Transits Near Mindanao

On October 22, the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) Liaoning aircraft carrier group, comprising the carrier, two Type 055 guided-missile cruisers, and one Type 052D guided-missile destroyer, was monitored transiting through waters off Zamboanga del Norte, then through the Basilan Strait into the Celebes Sea, and subsequently moving east, south of Mindanao, towards the Philippine Sea. The AFP, Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), and Philippine Air Force (PAF) shadowed and monitored the group, which AFP spokesperson Retired Rear Admiral Roy Vincent Trinidad stated was a demonstration of China's military capabilities and potentially a simulation of isolating the Philippines or Taiwan during a conflict.

• Fatal Military Aircraft Collision

Two Philippine Air Force (PAF) SF-260 military training aircraft collided during a formation flight exercise on October 23 at 3:51 p.m. local time at Fernando Air Base in Lipa City, Batangas Province. The incident resulted in the deaths of all four pilots, and the PAF has temporarily suspended flights of its entire SF-260 fleet pending an investigation.

• Tighter Security for Undas 2026 Holiday

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ordered law enforcement units to deploy more personnel, K-9 units, and vehicles to ensure the safe, orderly, and comfortable travel of millions of Filipinos returning to their provinces for Undas 2026 (All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, observed from October 29 to November 3). The Philippine National Police (PNP) deployed over 141,000 police officers and force multipliers to secure 5,311 cemeteries, columbaria, major thoroughfares, and transport hubs nationwide. The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) also raised its alert status, expecting 1.5 million to 2 million sea passengers during this period and intensifying maritime safety and security operations.

• Diplomatic Friction at ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus)

Tensions between the Philippines and China resurfaced at the close of the two-day ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) in Cebu on October 29. China accused an unnamed Philippine politician (implied to be Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr.) of obstructing its participation by sending a late invitation on October 22, leaving fewer than five working days for preparation, and having China represented by a defense attaché rather than its defense minister. Philippine Defence Secretary

Teodoro did not directly address the obstruction allegation but stated China was given an opportunity to present its views.

- Operationalization of BrahMos Anti-Ship Missiles

The Philippine Marine Corps is actively working to fully operationalize its BrahMos supersonic anti-ship missiles, with its Coastal Defense Regiment in Western Luzon gaining proficiency in their operation. This $375 million acquisition represents the Philippines' initial foray into long-range precision strike systems, enhancing its anti-access/area denial capabilities amid ongoing tensions in the South China Sea.

- Cybersecurity Awareness and Conferences

The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) officially opened Cybersecurity Awareness Month 2026 in October, emphasizing the need to translate awareness into action for a resilient Philippine cyberspace. This was complemented by the "I AM SECURE 2026" conference on October 1 in Taguig, focusing on public-private alliances and scalable cybersecurity strategies, and the Philippine CyberCon 2026 from October 20-22 in Manila, which aimed to strengthen collaboration, develop technical capabilities, and improve incident response in line with the National Cybersecurity Plan (NCSP) 2023–2028.

- Arrest of Japanese Crime Syndicate Leader

On October 31, Philippine immigration authorities apprehended Yoshitaka Yamamoto in Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija. Yamamoto is alleged to be the No. 2 figure in the "JP Dragon" crime syndicate, which orchestrated a ¥900 million phone scam targeting elderly victims in Japan, operating out of Manila and other hubs across the Philippines.

- Progress in Bangsamoro Peace Process

President Marcos Jr. attended the inaugural session of the first elected Bangsamoro Parliament in Cotabato City on October 30, marking a significant milestone in the peace process. The President reaffirmed the national government's support for Bangsamoro autonomy, peace, and development, urging leaders to uphold unity and good governance to translate peace gains into better public services and economic opportunities in Mindanao.

Geopolitical Impact and Regional Dynamics

The period from October 26 to November 2, 2026, underscored the Philippines' pivotal role in the Indo-Pacific's evolving security architecture, particularly concerning the South China Sea. The commencement of Exercise Salaknib 2026 with the United States, alongside multilateral drills involving Japan, Australia, and New Zealand, signals a robust commitment to strengthening alliances and interoperability with like-minded nations. These exercises are a clear demonstration of collective resolve to

maintain a "free and open Indo-Pacific," directly addressing the challenges posed by China's assertive actions in disputed waters. The Philippines' active participation in these drills reinforces its strategic alignment with the US and its allies, potentially influencing regional stability by creating a stronger deterrent against unilateral actions.

However, these developments are met with escalating tensions with China. The transit of a Chinese aircraft carrier group near Mindanao on October 22, monitored by Philippine forces, was interpreted as a show of force and a potential simulation of isolating the Philippines or Taiwan. This incident, coupled with the diplomatic friction at the ADMM-Plus meeting in Cebu where China accused the Philippines of obstructing its participation, highlights the deepening distrust and communication breakdown between Manila and Beijing. The Philippines' decision to maintain the suspension of direct military-to-military communication with China further complicates de-escalation efforts, increasing the risk of miscalculation in the highly contested South China Sea.

Despite these tensions, Malacañang has affirmed the Philippines' intention to maintain diplomatic and economic relations with China, separating these from the defense of its sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea. This nuanced approach seeks to balance national security interests with economic pragmatism. The Philippines' call for an expansion of the UN Security Council to include more developing and small nations also reflects its broader diplomatic efforts to advocate for a more inclusive global governance structure, potentially garnering support from other nations facing similar geopolitical pressures. The ongoing dynamics position the Philippines as a central player in the regional contest for influence, with its actions directly impacting the strategic calculations of major powers like the US and China.

Military and Defense Analysis

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is actively pursuing a modernization program focused on enhancing its maritime defense capabilities and interoperability with key allies. The ongoing operationalization of the BrahMos supersonic anti-ship missile system by the Philippine Marine Corps Coastal Defense Regiment in Western Luzon represents a significant leap in the country's long-range precision strike capabilities. This $375 million acquisition provides a credible anti-access/area denial tool, crucial for defending the Philippines' territorial claims in the South China Sea. The training and deployment of these systems indicate a strategic shift towards a more robust external defense posture.

Force posture is being significantly bolstered through extensive joint and multilateral exercises. The commencement of Exercise Salaknib 2026 with the US Army, involving thousands of troops and focusing on multi-domain operations, jungle warfare, and

archipelagic defense, directly contributes to enhancing combat readiness and interoperability. The inclusion of electronic warfare training further indicates a commitment to modernizing capabilities against contemporary threats. Similarly, participation in the Maritime Cooperative Activity (MCA) with Japan and the US in the West Philippine Sea and Exercise Keen Sword 2026 in Okinawa with a broader coalition of nations underscores the AFP's strategy to integrate with allied forces, refine shared procedures, and strengthen collective security in the Indo-Pacific.

While external defense capabilities are being enhanced, internal security remains a focus. The successful inaugural session of the Bangsamoro Parliament in Cotabato City on October 30 is a positive development for peace and stability in Mindanao, potentially allowing military resources to be reallocated from internal counter-insurgency operations to external defense. However, the recent fatal collision of two SF-260 training aircraft at Fernando Air Base, resulting in four pilot deaths, highlights potential challenges in maintaining and modernizing the air force's training fleet and operational safety standards. This incident may prompt a review of maintenance protocols and pilot training programs, which are critical for sustaining a capable and modern military force.

Outlook and Forecast

Short-term trends (1-3 months):

In the immediate future, the Philippines will likely continue its robust engagement in joint military exercises with the United States and other regional partners. The ongoing Exercise Salaknib 2026 is expected to further deepen interoperability and tactical proficiency between the US and Philippine armies, with a focus on multi-domain operations and archipelagic defense. This period will also see continued efforts to operationalize the BrahMos missile system, with the Marine Corps Coastal Defense Regiment likely conducting more drills and deployments to enhance proficiency. Domestically, the heightened security posture for the Undas holiday will gradually de-escalate, but the focus on public safety and anti-crime measures will likely remain elevated, especially in major transport hubs and urban centers. The investigation into the fatal SF-260 aircraft collision will proceed, potentially leading to temporary grounding of similar fleets and a review of training and maintenance protocols.

Critical flashpoints and risk areas:

The South China Sea remains the primary flashpoint. The recent transit of a Chinese aircraft carrier group near Mindanao and the diplomatic spat at the ADMM-Plus meeting underscore the persistent risk of maritime confrontations and diplomatic incidents. The absence of direct military-to-military communication channels between

the Philippines and China significantly increases the risk of miscalculation or escalation during encounters in disputed waters, particularly around features like Second Thomas Shoal and Scarborough Shoal. Internally, while the Bangsamoro peace process shows positive signs, the continued presence of ISIS-linked remnants and private armed groups in parts of Mindanao still poses a terrorism threat, requiring vigilance from security forces. Cybersecurity threats, including phishing, ransomware, and data theft, will remain a persistent concern for both government and private sectors, especially given the increasing reliance on digital technologies.

Indicators to monitor:

Key indicators to monitor include the frequency and nature of Chinese maritime activities in the West Philippine Sea, particularly around Philippine-occupied features and within its Exclusive Economic Zone. Any further diplomatic exchanges or incidents at regional forums involving the Philippines and China will be crucial. The progress of the BrahMos missile system's full operational capability and any new defense acquisition announcements will indicate the pace of military modernization. Domestically, the findings and recommendations from the SF-260 investigation will be important for understanding and addressing internal defense readiness issues. Furthermore, the effectiveness of cybersecurity initiatives and the occurrence of significant cyber incidents will reflect the country's resilience in the digital domain. The stability of the Bangsamoro autonomous region and any reports of renewed insurgent activity in Mindanao should also be closely watched.

Strategic recommendations:

The Philippines should continue to diversify and strengthen its defense alliances, particularly with the US, Japan, Australia, and other like-minded partners, to enhance its collective security posture and deterrence capabilities in the South China Sea. Investing further in maritime domain awareness (MDA) capabilities and intelligence sharing with allies is crucial for monitoring and responding to assertive actions in its waters. While maintaining a firm stance on territorial sovereignty, exploring informal or back-channel communication mechanisms with China could help mitigate escalation risks in the absence of formal military hotlines. Internally, the AFP should prioritize a comprehensive review of air force safety and maintenance protocols following the recent collision, ensuring the well-being of its personnel and the reliability of its assets. Continued support for the Bangsamoro peace process and targeted counter-terrorism efforts in Mindanao are essential for long-term internal stability. Finally, accelerating the implementation of the National Cybersecurity Plan and fostering stronger public-private partnerships in cybersecurity will be vital to protect critical infrastructure and digital assets from evolving cyber threats.

Structured Assessment

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ANNEX: COLLECTED ARTICLES BY SOURCE

Source: GMA Network

• US envoy reaffirms PH alliance 'stronger than ever' after ASEAN defense meet (2026-11-02 05:16)

United States Ambassador to the Philippines Lee Lipton on Monday reaffirmed Washington"s commitment to Philippine security, describing it as “ironclad” and the two countries" alliance as “stronger than ever.”

• End of Sara Duterte impeachment trial 'possible' in November, says prosecution (2026-11-02 05:02)

The impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte could wrap up by the end of November if the defense presents its evidence within 10 full trial days, House lead prosecutor and Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro said.

• PH Red Cross attends to over 8,700 patients during Undas 2026 (2026-11-02 04:48)

The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) on Monday said it has attended to 8,721 patients nationwide since October 29 amid the observance of Undas 2026.

• PNP conducts operation vs Bantag at Ifugao poultry farm (2026-11-02 03:29)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Monday said an operation was conducted to arrest former Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) chief Gerald Bantag at a poultry farm in Barangay Pugol, Lamut, Ifugao on Sunday. However, Bantag was not found at the location during the operation.

• Bicam talks on 2027 budget to be opened to CSOs -- JV Ejercito (2026-11-02 02:31)

Senate finance committee chairperson JV Ejercito has committed to inviting civil society organizations (CSOs) to observe the bicameral conference committee deliberations on the proposed P7.2-trillion national budget for fiscal year 2027.

• Nearly 1.2 million passengers monitored at ports so far amid Undas 2026 --PCG (2026-11-02 00:03)

The Philippine Coast Guard has monitored nearly 1.2 million passengers at ports nationwide as of Monday morning, November 2, amid the influx of travelers during the Undas 2026 long weekend.

- LIVE UPDATES: Undas 2026 (Nov. 2, 2026) (2026-11-01 22:41)

Filipinos observe All Souls' Day on November 2, Monday, by going to cemeteries to remember their departed relatives. Here are the latest news and updates.

- Animal welfare group seeks nationwide probe into pet crematorium services (2026-11-01 16:04)

Animal welfare advocates have urged government agencies and organizations to investigate the operations of pet cremation services across the country.

- Some cemeteries flooded during Undas 2026 (2026-11-01 15:51)

Some cemeteries in Bulacan and Pampanga failed to escape the brunt of flooding, as parts of their grounds remain submerged during Undas this year.

- No winners of major lotto games as Ultra Lotto jackpot hits P468.9 million (2026-11-01 15:02)

There were no winners of either of the major lotto games played by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office on Sunday, November 1, 2026, with one jackpot now nearly P470 million.

- NFA: One-ton bag use cuts palay handling time from 1 hour to just 15 minutes (2026-11-01 07:39)

The National Food Authority's (NFA) pilot test on the use of one-ton flexible bags has showed significant results, slashing the handling time of palay (unhusked rice) from an hour to only 15 minutes.

- Lacson: Majority bloc backs purging 'pork' in 2027 budget (2026-11-01 07:18)

The majority bloc is supporting efforts to remove questionable allocations from the proposed 2027 budget and ensure transparency in the budget-making process, Senator Panfilo Lacson said Sunday.

- Is spiritual warfare real? Exorcist explains (2026-11-01 06:26)

There is a battle that no one can see because it takes place in the spiritual realm, a priest said on Sunday.

• VP Sara Duterte visits memorial for Super Typhoon Yolanda victims (2026-11-01 05:17)

Vice President Sara Duterte paid respects to the victims of Super Typhoon Yolanda, which hit Tacloban City in 2013, a few days before All Saints' Day.

• Marcos visits dad, sends flowers to Cory, Noynoy on Undas (2026-11-01 04:13)

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. visited the tomb of his late father and namesake as the country observes the annual Undas in remembrance of departed loved ones.

• No P20/per kilo rice for sale on All Souls' Day, November 2 (2026-11-01 03:48)

There will be no sale of the government's P20 per kilo rice on Monday, November 2 in observance of the All Souls' Day.

• Light traffic seen on NLEX, SLEX; almost 70K passengers at PITX on morning of Nov. 1 (2026-11-01 03:05)

Light traffic was seen on the North Luzon Expressway and the South Luzon Expressway on Sunday morning, November 1, as Filipinos visited the tombs of their departed loved ones in cemeteries on All Saints' Day (Undas).

• CHR urges child-centered emergency response, preparedness amid National Children's Month (2026-11-01 01:59)

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) on Sunday urged government and stakeholders to ensure that disaster preparedness and response measures are inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the needs of children.

• How to observe Undas in an eco-friendly way (2026-11-01 01:17)

As the public visits cemeteries for this year"s Undas, an environmental watchdog made an appeal to minimize waste and protect the environment while doing so.

• Filipinos flock early to cemeteries on All Saints' Day (2026-11-01 00:22)

Many Filipinos all over the country went early to visit departed loved ones in cemeteries on

Sunday morning, November 1.

• Marcos on Undas 2026: Extend devotion for the departed to helping one another (2026-10-31 23:54)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Sunday called on the public to extend the same devotion they show in remembering their late loved ones to the way they treat other people.

• Rubio says Quad leaders meeting in Manila to be announced soon (2026-10-31 22:55)

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on Saturday that a Quad leaders meeting in Manila, Philippines, will "hopefully" be announced very soon.

• LIVE UPDATES: Undas 2026 (Nov. 1, 2026) (2026-10-31 22:29)

Filipinos traditionally visit the tombs of their departed loved ones on November 1, All Saints' Day (Undas). Here are the latest news and features on the observance of Undas today, Sunday, November 1, 2026.

• PCSO Lotto Results: Lotto 6/42 bettor wins P10-M jackpot (2026-10-31 14:44)

A Lotto 6/42 bettor from Quezon province clinched the P10-million jackpot in Saturday night's draw, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said.

• Undas 2026: Flooding hits Iloilo cemetery; flower prices surge in Cotabato (2026-10-31 11:44)

A day before All Saints" Day, Filipinos have begun visiting cemeteries across the country to pay their respects to departed loved ones, with some areas reporting flooding and higher flower prices ahead of the Undas observance.

• PH, Germany sign climate resilience agreement (2026-10-31 10:46)

The Philippines and Germany have signed an agreement for a project that focused on bolstering cooperation for climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and low-carbon development.

• Quiboloy counsel says Cendaña went beyond 'permitted commentary' (2026-10-31 08:34)

The counsel of detained preacher Apollo Quiboloy thumbed down Akbayan party-list Representative Percival "Perci" Cendaña's free speech defense against the libel and cyber libel complaint that the religious leader filed against the lawmaker.

• Undas 2026: PCG logs over 60K outbound, 54K inbound travelers on Saturday morning (2026-10-31 06:53)

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) reported 60,411 outbound passengers and 54,291 inbound passengers across all ports nationwide on Saturday morning ahead of All Saint's Day 2026.

• VP Sara, Velasco camps deny allegations of alias Chris (2026-10-31 05:59)

The camps of Vice President Sara Duterte and former House speaker Lord Allan Velasco have separately denied new allegations of cash deliveries.

• DA: Nearly 1M Filipinos benefited from P20/kg rice in Sept. 2026 (2026-10-31 05:46)

The Department of Agriculture (DA) on Saturday said almost 1 million Filipinos benefited from the Marcos administration's rice-for-all initiative last September.

• NTC lauds mobile networks' readiness for Undas 2026 (2026-10-31 04:40)

The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) on Saturday lauded readiness of the country's three major mobile network operators (MNOs) --DITO Telecommunity Corporation, Globe Telecoms Inc, and Smart Communications Inc.-- to provide reliable services during Undas 2026.

• Nearly 9,000 visitors flock to Manila North Cemetery on Saturday morning for Undas 2026 (2026-10-31 04:39)

Almost 9,000 people have already visited the Manila North Cemetery as of 10 a.m. on Saturday for Undas 2026, the Philippine National Police said.

• PDP LABAN urges SC to swiftly resolve Duterte, Bato cases (2026-10-31 04:03)

Partido Demokratiko Pilipino Lakas ng Bayan (PDP LABAN) on Saturday issued an open letter to the Supreme Court of the Philippines, urging the high tribunal to immediately resolve the cases involving former President Rodrigo Duterte and Senator Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa.

• LOOK: Flowers laid for public personalities in Manila North Cemetery for Undas 2026 (2026-10-31 02:28)

The Manila City government has laid flowers for several popular personalities, including former presidents of the Philippines, at the Manila North Cemetery for Undas 2026.

• LIVE UPDATES: Undas 2026 (Oct. 31, 2026) (2026-10-30 22:36)

Here are the latest news and features as Filipinos prepare on Saturday, October 31, 2026, for the observance of All Saints' Day on November 1.

• Truth Commission: Probe doctors who signed drug war death certificates (2026-10-30 18:27)

The Truth Commission wants five doctors who signed drug war death certificates investigated after alleged inconsistencies -- some bodies with gunshot wounds were deemed to have died from natural illnesses.

• Rodrigo Duterte won't attend fifth ICC status conference ahead of trial (2026-10-30 17:25)

Former President Rodrigo Duterte will not attend the fifth status conference before the start of his crimes against humanity trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC) on November 30.

• EXPLAINER: What happens when Rodrigo Duterte's ICC trial opens on Nov. 30? (2026-10-30 17:19)

The International Criminal Court"s (ICC) trial of former President Rodrigo Duterte for crimes against humanity will open on November 30, with judges first asking him whether he admits guilt or pleads not guilty.

• PITX: Bicol-bound bus trips continue despite Mayon eruption (2026-10-30 16:51)

Despite Mayon Volcano's eruption on Friday morning, bus trips bound for Bicol from the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) remain uninterrupted.

• Akbayan's Cendaña invokes free speech in seeking dismissal of Quiboloy libel complaint (2026-10-30 15:07)

Akbayan party-list Representative Percy Cendaña on Friday asked the Pasig Office of the City Prosecutor to dismiss the libel and cyber libel complaint filed against him by detained religious leader Apollo Quiboloy.

• Who counts as a victim in Rodrigo Duterte trial? ICC Registry asks Trial Chamber's guidance (2026-10-30 15:05)

The Victims Participation and Reparation Section (VPRS) of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Registry is asking Trial Chamber III for guidance on reassessing the applications of drug war

victims, following the approved scope of the case against former President Rodrigo Duterte.

• Over 436K passengers pass through NAIA ahead of Undas weekend (2026-10-30 14:11)

More than 436,000 passengers have passed through the Ninoy Aquino International Airport from Oct. 27 to Oct. 29 ahead of the long weekend for Undas, or the Philippines' observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day on Sunday and Monday.

• Fewer households biking in 2026 --SWS (2026-10-30 13:53)

The Social Weather Stations (SWS) found that the number of households that used bicycles has declined to 26% in 2026.

• Ombudsman suspends Bulacan DPWH engineers over P188M flood control projects (2026-10-30 13:35)

The Office of the Ombudsman has ordered the preventive suspension of five engineers of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Bulacan First District Engineering Office for six months.

• MIAA vows turnover of CCTV to NNIC in November after Dizon rebuke (2026-10-30 09:32)

The Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) on Friday promised to complete the turnover of the CCTV surveillance system to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport's (NAIA) private management by November 2026.

• Undas 2026: Latest News, Traffic Updates, Guides, and Everything You Need to Know (2026-10-30 09:20)

Undas is the Filipino term for the observance of All Saints" Day on November 1 and All Souls" Day on November 2, when families remember and honor deceased loved ones.

• UNDAS 2026: When no one bids the dead goodbye (2026-10-30 09:06)

Historically, cultures all around the world have different ceremonies to commemorate their dead. These days, people typically bury their loved ones or cremate them, giving them final respects. But what happens when someone dies and there is no one left to claim their body, let alone bid them goodbye?

• Marcos to new Bangsamoro MPs: Serve with humility, good governance (2026-10-30 09:06)

President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. on Friday called on the newly elected members of the Bangsamoro parliament to serve the people with humility and honor those who fought for peace through good governance.

• Ombudsman suspends 2 QC brgy. execs over P22.28M unsettled disallowances, ghost projects (2026-10-30 08:12)

The Office of the Ombudsman has slapped a six-month preventive suspension against Quezon City Quirino 3B (Claro) Punong Barangay Ronald Tagle and Barangay Treasurer Richelle Ann Santillan over alleged unsettled audit disallowances and non-existent projects.

• PH Army division calls out AI image falsely showing troops' support for Bato dela Rosa (2026-10-30 07:43)

The Philippine Army's 10th Infantry Division (10ID) on Friday warned the public against an AI-generated image circulating on social media that falsely portrays its troops expressing support for Senator Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa.

• NAPOLCOM probes Samar cop who allegedly kicked pregnant partner, causing miscarriage (2026-10-30 06:40)

The National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) on Friday said it is investigating allegations of physical abuse against a police officer after his former live-in partner filed a complaint.

• Dizon fumes at airport officials for not handing CCTV control to NNIC (2026-10-30 06:14)

Transportation Secretary Vince Dizon on Friday scolded Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) officials for failing to pass control over CCTV cameras to the new private management of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA).

• Men can also be victims of sexual violence, Supreme Court says (2026-10-30 04:55)

Men can also be victims of sexual violence, Supreme Court says

• LIVE UPDATES: Mayon Volcano eruption (Oct. 30, 2026) (2026-10-30 04:36)

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) on Friday reported a moderately explosive eruption of Mayon Volcano in Albay, prompting the raising of Alert Level 3. Here's the latest news and updates on Mayon.

• Ex-DA chief Montemayor's indictment for cyberlibel not persecution --PPI (2026-10-30 04:20)

The Planters Products Inc. (PPI) said the indictment of former Agriculture secretary Leonardo Montemayor for cyberlibel is not a persecution.

• PNP now on full alert for Undas 2026 (2026-10-30 04:06)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has placed all its units nationwide on full alert status starting Friday as authorities prepare for expected influx of people visiting cemeteries and traveling during Undas 2026.

• LIVE UPDATES: Undas 2026 (Oct. 30, 2026) (2026-10-30 03:59)

Government agencies have intensified preparations for the expected influx of passengers traveling to their home provinces for Undas 2026. Here are the latest news and updates related to this year's Undas on Friday, October 30, 2026.

• PNP: Bato dela Rosa still in PH, manhunt intensifies (2026-10-30 03:48)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) said Friday its manhunt for Senator Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa would be intensified following the expiration of the deadline for his voluntary surrender.

• Tiangco bares details of House-approved ₱2.2-B proposed budget for Navotas (2026-10-30 03:31)

At least P2.28 billion of infrastructure projects under the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) have been allocated to the lone district of Navotas under the House-approved P7.2 trillion proposed national budget for 2027, Navotas Rep. Tobias Tiangco said.

• Marcos assures gov't readiness for 'safe, orderly' Undas 2026 exodus (2026-10-30 03:18)

President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. on Friday said the government is making the necessary preparations to ensure the safe and orderly trip for Filipinos who will head to their respective provinces or travel elsewhere for this year"s Undas.

• PH braces for Undas 2026 rush (2026-10-30 01:44)

Government agencies have intensified preparations for the expected influx of passengers traveling to their home provinces for Undas 2026.

• PCSO Lotto Results: Lone Lotto 6/42 bettor wins over P21M jackpot on October 29, 2026 (2026-10-29 19:27)

A Lotto 6/42 bettor won more than P21 million in the draw on Thursday, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) announced.

• Foreign Affairs Secretary Lazaro conducts humanitarian mission in Myanmar (2026-10-29 14:47)

Foreign Affairs Secretary Theresa Lazaro on Thursday conducted a humanitarian mission in Myanmar and with Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Tin Maung Swe discussed expanding assistance delivered to affected and hard-to-reach areas.

• Who will be Bangsamoro's first elected Chief Minister? (2026-10-29 14:15)

Abdulraof Macacua and Ahod Balawag Ebrahim, the present and former interim chief ministers of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, have emerged as the top contenders for the post as first elected chief minister when members of the Bangsamoro parliament vote on Friday, October 30. Who will be BARMM's first elected chief minister?

• Safe access sought for PWDs in cemeteries during Undas (2026-10-29 14:05)

The National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA) urged local government units (LGU) to ensure that persons with disabilities (PWD) have safe access to cemeteries during the Undas season.

• PCG probes object aboard vessel in Bajo de Masinloc (2026-10-29 14:04)

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) is investigating the capabilities and purpose of unidentified equipment aboard a vessel spotted inside the lagoon of Bajo de Masinloc in the West Philippine Sea.

• Survey period didn't cover hearings on alleged unexplained wealth, says prosecutor (2026-10-29 12:56)

The House prosecution panel has no reason to be demoralized amid the latest Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey showing that 35% of Filipinos are dissatisfied with the prosecution of the impeachment case against Vice President Sara Duterte, House prosecution panel spokesperson Zia Adiong of Lanao del Sur said Thursday.

• Southeast Asian defense ministers aim for proactive engagement amid security threats --Teodoro (2026-10-29 12:00)

Southeast Asian defense ministers have agreed to be more proactive in engaging as security threats become more unpredictable, said Department of National Defense (DND) Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. on Thursday.

• 'More than courteous' for PH usec to meet China defense attache --Teodoro (2026-10-29 11:48)

DND Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. said it"s “more than courteous” that another department executive has welcomed China"s defense attache during the ADMM-Plus meeting in Cebu.

• Sandro's budget insertions? Palace says public funds must be utilized properly (2026-10-29 10:47)

The Palace emphasized that all of the projects to be funded by the 2027 national budget should have the proper details, saying that President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. will look at everything properly with no exception--including those linked to his son, House Majority Leader Sandro Marcos.

• SWS survey reflects Senate impeachment court's fair procedure --Tongol (2026-10-29 10:22)

The Senate impeachment court on Thursday committed to continue having a “transparent, rules-based impartiality” in the impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte.

• Bernardo's ex-aide says he saw Jinggoy Estrada during delivery of boxes (2026-10-29 09:22)

A prosecution witness on Thursday said that he saw Senator Jinggoy Estrada when he delivered 12 boxes to him.

• UNDAS 2026: NLEX expects passenger surge on Friday, Oct. 30, 2026 (2026-10-29 09:14)

The North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) is expecting a surge in passengers starting Friday afternoon, October 30 as Filipinos go on exodus in observance of All Saints" Day and All Souls" Day this weekend.

• Bato dela Rosa's world getting smaller as authorities step up manhunt ops --Palace (2026-10-29 08:44)

Malacañang on Thursday defended anew the P50 million bounty set on Senator Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa"s head, saying that his world has gotten smaller as authorities have stepped

up efforts to arrest him.

• PNP reiterates call for Bato dela Rosa's surrender as deadline nears (2026-10-29 08:21)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Thursday reiterated its appeal for Senator Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa to surrender as the deadline set by the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) nears.

• EJK victims' families hold Mass for Undas 2026 (2026-10-29 08:16)

Families of the victims of extrajudicial killings during the Duterte administration gathered for a Mass in Quezon City on Thursday ahead of the Undas.

• DENR launches restoration program for wetlands, rivers amid El Niño (2026-10-29 07:38)

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) launched a nationwide program to restore critical wetlands, rivers, and coral reefs to mitigate the impact of drought brought by the strong El Niño.

• Teodoro urges ASEAN, partner countries to uphold UNCLOS, reject use of force (2026-10-29 07:12)

Philippine Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. on Thursday called on ASEAN member states and partner countries to uphold the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and reject threat or use of force.

• JBC submits shortlist of chief justice, associate justice candidates to Marcos (2026-10-29 07:02)

The Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) on Thursday submitted to President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. its shortlist of nominees for the position of Supreme Court (SC) chief justice and associate justice.

• HPG issues road safety reminders for motorists ahead of Undas 2026 (2026-10-29 06:53)

HPG issues road safety reminders for motorists ahead of Undas 2026

• Philippine island fights rising seas with nature, not concrete (2026-10-29 06:40)

For years, residents of a flood-prone Philippine island north of Manila have elevated their homes atop layer upon layer of concrete, only to see floodwaters threaten them again.

• Prices of farm goods likely to increase due to weaker peso -- DA (2026-10-29 06:22)

The Department of Agriculture (DA) said Thursday prices of farm goods are likely to increase as the Philippine peso reached a new historic low against the US dollar.

• SC orders Senate, House to comment on impeachment voting threshold petition (2026-10-29 05:15)

The Supreme Court has directed the Senate impeachment court and the House of Representatives to comment on a petition filed by Senators Robin Padilla and Bong Go seeking to declare null the ruling on the voting threshold for Vice President Sara Duterte"s conviction.

• LTO vows lawful license revocation for drunk drivers (2026-10-29 04:51)

The Land Transportation Office (LTO) on Thursday vowed proper implementation of license revocation for drivers caught driving under the influence of alcohol.

• Bernardo says Martin Romualdez did not ask him for DPWH projects, kickbacks (2026-10-29 04:38)

State witness and former Public Works undersecretary Roberto Bernardo on Thursday said that Leyte Rep. Ferdinand Martin Romualdez did not ask him for a list of infrastructure projects in exchange of commitments or kickbacks.

• Business, advocacy groups call for removal of 'insertions' in proposed P7.2-T nat'l budget (2026-10-29 04:35)

Business and advocacy groups on Thursday called on Congress to remove alleged congressional insertions from the proposed P7.2-trillion national budget for 2027.

• Bato dela Rosa 'wanted' poster? PNP says no need for now (2026-10-29 04:20)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has yet to issue a wanted poster for Senator Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa, saying it does not see the need to do so at this time amid ongoing efforts to locate and arrest him.

• NAPOLCOM eyes motu proprio complaint vs 3 cops over alleged media violence (2026-10-29 04:04)

The National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) is preparing to file a motu proprio administrative

complaint against three police officers over alleged violence against media personnel covering a farmers" protest in Quezon City on October 19.

• Marcos: NLEX-C5 Northlink segment toll-free until year end (2026-10-29 03:28)

President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. on Thursday announced that the toll at the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) C5 Northlink Segment 8.2 Section 1A, which connects Quezon City and Valenzuela City, will be waived until the end of the year.

• Ex-BARMM MP Rimbang to appear before PDEA probe into Laos drug shipment on Nov. 5 (2026-10-29 03:26)

Former Bangsamoro parliament member Edrieza Hadji Nasser Rimbang is expected to appear before the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) on November 5, the agency said Thursday.

• Talks to replace VP Sara Duterte amid impeachment trial 'premature' -spox (2026-10-29 01:28)

Discussions on possible replacements for Vice President Sara Duterte are premature and a distraction from serious issues surrounding the impeachment trial, her spokesperson said Thursday.

• US War Secretary Hegseth announces increased funding for AFP modernization (2026-10-29 00:03)

United States Secretary of War Pete Hegseth on Wednesday announced an increase in the US Department of War's security cooperation funds to accelerate the modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

• PH, Japan eye transfer of first Abukuma-class destroyer 'at the earliest possible date' (2026-10-28 23:38)

PH, Japan eye transfer of first Abukuma-class destroyer 'at the earliest possible date"

• MTRCB reminds bus operators to screen only age-appropriate content for Undas (2026-10-28 23:16)

The Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) has started inspecting transport terminals across Metro Manila ahead of the expected surge of travelers heading to the provinces for All Saints" Day, reminding bus operators to screen only age-appropriate

content.

• SWS: Sara Duterte's defense gets higher net satisfaction than prosecution (2026-10-28 17:30)

Thirty-five percent of adult Filipinos are dissatisfied, while 30 percent are satisfied "that the prosecution of the impeachment case against Vice President Sara Duterte is being done in a just manner," according to a Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey released on Wednesday.

• Luistro to look into P1.3 billion worth of insertions in her district (2026-10-28 15:44)

Batangas 2nd District Representative Gerville Luistro said that she will look into the details of the reported P1.3 billion budget insertion made to her district in the House-approved 2027 budget.

• Philip Lustre seeks transfer of cyber libel case from Davao City (2026-10-28 14:23)

The camp of veteran journalist Philip Lustre Jr., on Wednesday said they will ask that the cyber libel case against him be transferred from Davao City.

• Mans Carpio is 'aggrieved party' in cyber libel case vs. Philip Lustre, says spokesman (2026-10-28 14:18)

Atty. Manases Carpio is the aggrieved party in the case against veteran journalist Philip Lustre Jr., the former"s spokesperson said on Tuesday.

• President Marcos bids farewell to outgoing Sri Lankan envoy (2026-10-28 13:49)

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. bid farewell to Sri Lankan Ambassador to the Philippines, who concludes his tour of duty on Saturday, October 31, 2026.

• EXPLAINER: What is the Free Funeral Services Act? (2026-10-28 13:05)

On September 28, 2025, Republic Act No. 12309, or the “Free Funeral Services Act,” lapsed into law after 30 days without President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s signature. This law institutionalized the Department of Social Welfare and Development"s (DSWD) funeral assistance initiative through its Aid to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) program.

• Comelec to resume voter registration for 2028 polls on Nov. 10 (2026-10-28 12:40)

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) will resume voter registration on November 10 ahead

of the 2028 national and local elections, Chairperson George Garcia said on Wednesday.

• Toxics watchdog urges parents to avoid unauthorized squishy toys for safety (2026-10-28 12:34)

A Toxics Watchdog has issued a reminder to parents and consumers on Tuesday to refrain from purchasing unauthorized squishy toys to reduce the risk of toxic exposure among children.

• DepEd welcomes parents helping secure schools (2026-10-28 10:39)

The Department of Education (DepEd) on Wednesday welcomed proposals for parents to help patrol schools as authorities step up security measures following a series of school shootings in recent months.

• Vapes and cigarettes? Cop denies knowledge of Laos drug shipment try (2026-10-28 10:11)

The policewoman who was reportedly linked with the attempted smuggling of P3.5 billion worth of shabu from Laos to the Philippines said she had no knowledge that the shipment contained illegal drugs.

• Bernardo on saying Jinggoy got P573 million in kickbacks: It's hard to implicate a friend (2026-10-28 09:46)

State witness Roberto Bernardo said it wasn"t easy for him to implicate Senator Jinggoy Estrada, whom he accused of receiving P573 million worth of “commitments” or kickbacks.

• DepEd: Classes suspended once heat index hits 42 degrees Celsius, but coordination with LGU needed (2026-10-28 09:18)

The Department of Education (DepEd) said a school can suspend both physical and online classes once the local temperature hits 42 degrees Celsius, upon coordination with the concerned local government unit (LGU).

• Mao Aplasca files counter-affidavit over May 13 Senate shooting (2026-10-28 08:41)

Retired police major general Mao Aplasca, former acting Senate sergeant-at-arms, on Wednesday filed his counter-affidavit with the Department of Justice (DOJ) in connection with a direct assault complaint over the May 13 Senate shooting incident.

• US War Secretary Pete Hegseth proposes US-ASEAN defense cooperation framework (2026-10-28 08:30)

United States Secretary of War Pete Hegseth on Wednesday proposed developing a framework for defense cooperation between America and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) ahead of the 50th anniversary of relations between Washington and the regional bloc in 2027.

• Manila DRRM council on red alert for Undas 2026 (2026-10-28 08:11)

The Manila City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Department on Wednesday said that it has raised a red alert in preparation for the observance of the All Saints' Day on November 1 and All Souls' Day on November 2.

• Over 141,000 personnel to be deployed for Undas 2026 (2026-10-28 06:58)

More than 141,000 personnel from the Philippine National Police (PNP) and partner agencies will be deployed nationwide for security and public safety operations during Undas 2026.

• PNP: 3 persons of interest in Laos-PH drug smuggling have yet to appear to authorities (2026-10-28 06:54)

Three persons of interest in the investigation into an alleged drug smuggling operation involving Laos and the Philippines have yet to appear before authorities, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Wednesday.

• Dizon warns erring motorists: Driver's license not a right (2026-10-28 06:48)

Now back at the helm of the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Secretary Vince Dizon on Wednesday warned motorists against violating traffic rules, stressing that a driver's license is a privilege, not a right.

• Raffy Tulfo warns Lalamove of contempt over repeated hearing absences (2026-10-28 06:36)

Senator Raffy Tulfo on Wednesday warned delivery and logistics platform Lalamove that it could be cited for contempt after repeatedly failing to attend Senate hearings on road safety concerns.

• Fuel surcharge rises to Level 17 for November 1-15, 2026 flights (2026-10-28 06:12)

Air travelers should brace for higher airfares for flights booked between November 1 and 15, 2026 as the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) raised the fuel surcharge level.

• DPWH to scrutinize flagged insertions in 2027 budget (2026-10-28 06:04)

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) will scrutinize alleged insertions of infrastructure projects in the House of Representatives-approved 2027 budget to determine whether they are justified, newly installed Secretary Giovanni “Banoy” Lopez said.

• Bato dela Rosa's camp asks SC anew to issue TRO amid P50-M bounty (2026-10-28 05:50)

Senator Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa"s camp has asked the Supreme Court (SC) anew to issue a temporary restraining order (TRO) against his International Criminal Court (ICC) warrant, noting that the government has raised a P50-million reward for his arrest.

• PNP opens hotlines for tips on Bato dela Rosa amid P50M reward (2026-10-28 05:21)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has opened hotlines for information on the whereabouts of Senator Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa as authorities offer a P50-million reward for information leading to his arrest.

• LTO to start revoking drunk drivers' licenses by November 15 (2026-10-28 05:08)

The Land Transportation Office (LTO) will start revoking the licenses of drunk drivers beginning November 15, the agency said Wednesday.

• Luistro: P1.31-B infra budget for my district was proposed by DPWH (2026-10-28 04:32)

Batangas second district representative and House justice committee chair Gerville Luistro on Wednesday said the P1.31 billion worth of infrastructure projects allocated for her district under the House-approved 2027 national budget is around the same amount proposed by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

• Pasig cop apologizes for gun-pointing incident as NAPOLCOM probes case (2026-10-28 04:27)

A police officer in Pasig City on Wednesday apologized after a viral video showed him allegedly pointing a gun at people while intoxicated.

• Marcos says 'don't panic' amid weakening peso (2026-10-28 04:04)

President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. on Wednesday allayed concerns as the Philippine peso hit a new historic low, breaching the P64:$1 level.

• Clarita Carlos files cyberlibel complaint vs. Tarriela, Logico (2026-10-28 03:39)

Former national security adviser Clarita Carlos has filed a cyberlibel complaint with the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) against Rear Admiral Jay Tarriela, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) spokesperson for the West Philippine Sea, and Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Superintendent Lieutenant General Michael Logico.

• Ex-Sara Duterte aide Jefry Tupas accuses NBI of harassment over recommendation of charges (2026-10-28 02:40)

Former Davao City chief information officer Jefry Tupas on Wednesday accused the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) of harassment.

• ICC victims ask Chamber to admit witness testimony vs Rodrigo Duterte (2026-10-28 01:50)

The Common Legal Representatives of Victims (CLRV) has asked the International Criminal Court (ICC) Trial Chamber III to grant the Prosecution"s request to admit the previously recorded testimonies of three witnesses in the crimes against humanity case of former President Rodrigo Duterte.

• WATCH: US War chief Hegseth arrives in PH for ASEAN defense meeting (2026-10-28 01:05)

United States Secretary of War Pete Hegseth arrived in the Philippines on Tuesday night to attend the ASEAN Defense Ministers" Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus).

• Chinese ships seen near Bajo de Masinloc amid fuel aid mission for Filipino fishers (2026-10-28 00:36)

Chinese Coast Guard and People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) ships were seen near Bajo de Masinloc during a Philippine government mission to deliver fuel assistance to Filipino fishermen on Tuesday, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) said Wednesday.

• ICC prosecution seeks admission of testimonies on Bato, drug war target lists (2026-10-27 16:21)

PRAGUE, Czech Republic - International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutors are asking Trial Chamber III to admit yet another batch of recorded testimonies--this time, of two witnesses who allegedly provided evidence on Senator Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa"s role in the Duterte administration"s drug war.

• Palace to Bato dela Rosa: If conscience is clear, there should be no fear of facing ICC case (2026-10-27 15:43)

Palace Press Officer Undersecretary Claire Castro shot back at remarks calling efforts to arrest Senator Bato Dela as "persecution."

• Revilla defends Sandigan judge Moreno amid Ombudsman's inhibition bid (2026-10-27 12:31)

Former senator Ramon Bong Revilla, Jr. defended Sandiganbayan Associate Justice Ronald Moreno against the Ombudsman"s call for Moreno to inhibit himself from Revilla's trial.

• What are the powers of the Supreme Court, responsibilities of the chief justice? (2026-10-27 11:28)

The Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) has concluded its interviews for the position of Supreme Court (SC) chief justice, which will be vacated by Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo in November.

• LOOK: Marcos receives credentials of Fiji, Burundi envoys (2026-10-27 11:25)

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. received the credentials of His Excellency Ratu Inoke S. Delamisa Tikoca, Non-Resident Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Fiji to the Philippines, at Malacañan Palace, the Presidential Communications Office (PCO) announced.

• Lazaro as ASEAN envoy to visit Myanmar Wednesday --Thai FM (2026-10-27 11:17)

DFA Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro, who also currently serves as ASEAN's special envoy for Myanmar, will visit Naypyidaw on Wednesday and Thursday, her Thai counterpart said.

• SP Gatchalian to focus on impeachment trial amid call to reject VP post (2026-10-27 10:55)

Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian said he would remain focused on the impeachment trial amid the call of Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano to reject offers to succeed Vice President Sara Duterte should she be convicted.

• Laguna mayor dismissed for grave misconduct -- DILG (2026-10-27 10:52)

The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) on Tuesday said Mayor Jomapher Uy Alvarez of Luisiana, Laguna has been dismissed from service.

• Employees cannot be forced to retire early without consent, Supreme Court says (2026-10-27 10:05)

The Supreme Court (SC) has ruled that employees cannot be retired before the compulsory retirement age of 65 without their clear and voluntary consent.

• Malacañang: Nothing wrong with budget insertions as long as used properly (2026-10-27 09:59)

Malacañang responded to a watchdog's finding that Ilocos Norte 1st district had the highest public work insertions in the proposed 2027 budget.

• Midas Marquez eyes to tap PDLs for SC's digitalization efforts (2026-10-27 09:32)

Supreme Court (SC) Associate Justice Midas Marquez is eyeing to tap persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) in the court's efforts to digitalize its non-sensitive records as part of their reformation and reintegration program.

• Bar examinees should excel in English, analytical skills --Dimaampao (2026-10-27 09:26)

Aside from knowledge of the law, Associate Justice Japar Dimaampao on Monday said he wants Bar examinees to possess a good command of the English language as well as analytical ability.

• NTC to monitor telco services, emergency radio groups during 'Undas' (2026-10-27 09:24)

The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) on Tuesday said it will monitor telecommunications services and emergency radio groups during the Undas period from Oct. 31 to Nov. 2 as cemeteries and memorial parks prepare for increased public activity.

• Solidum says no need to hoard water as supply sufficient amid El Niño (2026-10-27 08:53)

There is no need to hoard water amid the El Niño phenomenon as supply remains sufficient in the next several months, Department of Science and Technology Secretary Renato Solidum Jr. said.

• Woman files abuse complaint vs live-in partner cop (2026-10-27 08:52)

A woman from Mindanao on Tuesday filed an administrative complaint against her live-in partner, a police officer, over alleged abuse for nearly nine years, the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) said.

• China's Liaoning aircraft carrier group in PH waters 'no cause for alarm' --AFP (2026-10-27 08:29)

The passage of China's Liaoning aircraft carrier group through Philippine waters is “no cause for alarm,” the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said Tuesday.

• US War chief Hegseth to visit PH; China invited to ASEAN defense meeting --DND (2026-10-27 08:05)

United States Secretary of War Pete Hegseth is expected to visit the Philippines on Wednesday for the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) - Plus, the Department of National Defense (DND) said Tuesday.

• AFP willing to help Bato dela Rosa's arrest if requested (2026-10-27 08:03)

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Tuesday said it is willing to assist the Philippine National Police (PNP) in the possible arrest of Senator Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa if requested.

• Palace: Alan Cayetano's call to reject VP post premature (2026-10-27 05:55)

Malacañang on Tuesday said it was premature for Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano to urge his fellow senators to reject offers to become vice president should Vice President Sara Duterte be convicted in her impeachment trial.

• Malacañang to Bato dela Rosa: Don't set an example for fugitives (2026-10-27 05:17)

Malacañang on Tuesday renewed its call for Senator Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa to surrender, urging him not to set an example for other fugitives by going into hiding.

• More heads will roll in DPWH despite Dizon, Lopez swap (2026-10-27 04:59)

Outgoing Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon handed over a list of alleged corrupt DPWH officials to incoming chief Giovanni Lopez on Tuesday, urging his successor to purge the agency of "rotten apples."

• Zalameda: Chief justice must lead through service, accountability (2026-10-27 04:42)

Supreme Court Associate Justice Rodil Zalameda said the next chief justice must lead through service and accountability, foster a supportive work environment and ensure that the Judiciary remains responsive to the needs of the public and its personnel.

• Chinese vessels in WPS rise to 54 in past week -- AFP (2026-10-27 03:48)

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Tuesday reported that 54 Chinese vessels were monitored in several West Philippine Sea (WPS) features from Oct. 20 to 26, up from 31 in the previous week.

• JBC concludes interviews for chief justice post (2026-10-27 03:43)

The Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) on Monday concluded its interviews for the position of Supreme Court (SC) chief justice.

• Bonoan: Jinggoy requested inclusion of P1-B projects in 2025 budget via Bernardo (2026-10-27 03:26)

Senator Jinggoy Estrada, through then Public Works and Highways undersecretary Roberto Bernardo, requested for P1 billion worth of projects for inclusion in the 2025 national budget, former DPWH secretary Manuel Bonoan said Tuesday.

• Alleged bomb threat reported at UST --NCRPO (2026-10-27 02:59)

Alleged bomb threat reported at UST --NCRPO

• PNP: Still no surrender feelers from Bato dela Rosa (2026-10-27 00:53)

The Philippine National Police said it has not received any surrender feelers from Senator Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa, according to a report on GMA News" Unang Balita on Tuesday.

• Rodrigo Duterte camp opposes use of 2 witnesses' recorded testimonies at ICC trial (2026-10-27 00:17)

Former president Rodrigo Duterte"s defense team has opposed the prosecution"s request to admit the previously recorded testimonies of two witnesses at the International Criminal Court without requiring them to testify in court.

• Bato dela Rosa's wife Nancy thanks supporters, says he is not enemy (2026-10-26 23:04)

Nancy dela Rosa, wife of Senator Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa, on Monday thanked her husband's supporters and said he is not the enemy of his friends and of the country.

• Britain's minimum wage to rise nearly 4%, Times reports (2026-10-26 21:06)

British finance minister John Healey will announce on Wednesday plans to increase the minimum wage by nearly 4%, the Times reported on Monday.

• EXPLAINER: What is Human Immunodeficiency Virus or HIV? (2026-10-26 18:07)

In recent years, the Philippines has recorded a growing number of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) cases, according to the AIDS Society of the Philippines (ASP).

• Tagle visits hometown, leads celebration of a new parish in Imus, Cavite (2026-10-26 17:55)

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle made his first trip home after being selected as the Dean of the College of Cardinals and he led the Thanksgiving Mass of a new parish in Imus, Cavite, GMA News' Mariz Umali reported on "24 Oras."

• Identity theft cannot be traced to BIR seal QR code alone, says privacy body (2026-10-26 17:33)

The National Privacy Commission (NPC) said Monday that identity theft and other online abuses result from a combination of a person's online activities and cannot be carried out solely using information contained in the QR code of the Bureau of Internal Revenue's (BIR) registration seal.

• Drug, roadworthiness tests at bus terminals as PH readies for Undas 2026 (2026-10-26 16:56)

Authorities carried out drug and alcohol tests on provincial bus drivers and tested buses for roadworthiness at several terminals in Metro Manila ahead of Undas 2026.

• PCSO Lotto Results: No winner of P305M Grand Lotto prize in Oct.26 draw (2026-10-26 14:25)

No bettors took home the Grand Lotto 6/55 prize of over P305 million after no winners were announced in any of the major lotto jackpot draws on October 26, 2026, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said Monday.

• HIV infections among young people expected to increase by 2030, says AIDS society (2026-10-26 14:00)

By the year 2030, more young people aged 15 to 24 are projected to be diagnosed with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), the AIDS Society of the Philippines (ASP) reported Monday.

• UP Diliman grad tops metallurgical engineers licensure exam (2026-10-26 13:18)

A graduate of UP Diliman was the top scorer in the computer-based licensure examination for metallurgical engineers, the Professional Regulation Commission said.

• Japan gives passport to 90-year-old PH-born woman separated from dad after WWII (2026-10-26 13:06)

The Embassy of Japan has issued a Japanese passport to Adelaida Kakazu, a 90-year-old Japanese descendant who remained in the Philippines after World War II.

• Prenup won't dispute VP Sara and husband's undeclared assets, says Ridon (2026-10-26 12:54)

A prenup between Vice President Sara Duterte and her husband Manases Carpio won"t change the fact that the couple had over P800 million worth of undeclared assets, Rep. Terry Ridon said.

• Sara Duterte's husband Mans Carpio is complainant in cyberlibel case, says Lustre lawyer (2026-10-26 12:36)

The lawyer of journalist Philip Lustre Jr., who was arrested over the weekend for a cyberlibel complaint, said that Vice President Sara Duterte's husband, Manases Carpio, was the complainant in the case, as shown by a document filed with the Davao City Regional Trial Court.

• Lustre denied due process in cyberlibel case -- Fadullon (2026-10-26 11:02)

Prosecutor General Richard Fadullon on Monday said veteran journalist Philip Lustre Jr. was denied due process because he was not given the opportunity to respond to the complaint before an arrest warrant was issued against him.

• JBC releases shortlist for Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon (2026-10-26 10:48)

The Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) on Monday released the shortlist of nominees for the position of Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon.

• Bill filed establishing ecozone for Pax Silica ops, other critical industries (2026-10-26 10:23)

The House of Representatives has proposed establishing an Advanced Industries Zone in New Clark City, Capas, Tarlac, saying it will create jobs and attract investments, including those from the US-led Pax Silica initiative, which involves developing artificial intelligence (AID) systems, critical minerals, and more.

• NBI seeks transfer of Paolo Duterte's cyber libel complaint from Davao City (2026-10-26 09:54)

NBI Director Melvin Matibag said he will ask Justice Secretary Fredderick Vida for the transfer of the venue of the complaint from Davao to the DOJ-National Prosecution Service.

• Sandiganbayan rejects bid to oust Justice Moreno in Bong Revilla trial (2026-10-26 09:42)

The Sandiganbayan Third Division has denied for lack of merit the Office of the Ombudsman"s motion seeking the inhibition of Associate Justice Ronald Moreno from hearing the P92.8-million malversation case against former Sen. Ramon “Bong” Revilla Jr. and six others over an alleged anomalous flood control project in Bulacan.

• Ridon calls out PNP for double standard in arrest of journalist Lustre (2026-10-26 08:49)

Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry Ridon on Monday called out the Philippine National Police (PNP) for an alleged double standard in the arrest of veteran journalist Philip Lustre when the police never attempted to arrest Vice President Sara Duterte on grave threat charges.

• NAIA braces for 1.25M Undas travelers; Oct. 30 seen as busiest day (2026-10-26 08:44)

Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) is preparing for an estimated 1.25 million passengers during the Undas travel period from Oct. 27 to Nov. 4, with airport authorities projecting Oct. 30 to be the busiest day.

• Alan Cayetano urges senators to reject offers for vice presidency if Sara Duterte is convicted (2026-10-26 08:22)

Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano on Monday called on his fellow senators to declare that they will decline offers for the vice presidency should Vice President Sara Duterte get convicted in her impeachment trial.

• NBI files cyberlibel, obstruction of justice referral vs. ex-Sara Duterte aide Jefry Tupas (2026-10-26 07:59)

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on Monday filed a referral with the Department of Justice (DOJ) against former Davao City chief information officer Jefry Tupas.

• House leaders defend 2027 budget amendments amid questions over project details (2026-10-26 07:58)

House leaders on Monday defended the amendments made by the chamber to the proposed P7.2-trillion national budget for 2027, saying these were purportedly based on agency proposals and had been made on valid grounds.

- Who is Giovanni Lopez, Marcos' new DPWH chief? (2026-10-26 06:26)

Atty. Giovanni “Banoy” Lopez will take the helm of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), a year after serving as secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOTr).

- Who is Vince Dizon, the returning DOTr chief? (2026-10-26 05:31)

Malacañang announced Monday that Vince Dizon will once again lead the Department of Transportation, a little over a year after he left the office to serve at the Department of Public Works and Highways.

- Ombudsman to create budget watch team, study SC ruling on 2024, 2025 budgets (2026-10-26 05:28)

Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla on Monday said he will create a team to look into current budget proceedings as well as the Supreme Court"s (SC) ruling that declared as unconstitutional the General Approrpations Act (GAA) for 2024 and 2025.

- JSCC, Ombudsman team up to intensify fight vs. corruption (2026-10-26 05:22)

The Justice Sector Coordinating Council (JSCC) and the Office of the Ombudsman on Monday signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to strengthen interagency cooperation and address systemic delays in the fight against corruption.

- Thorough, objective probe into fatal PAF plane crash ongoing --DND (2026-10-26 03:48)

The Department of National Defense said Monday that a thorough and objective investigation is being conducted into the fatal crash that resulted in the death of four pilots during a training flight over Fernando Air Base in Lipa City, Batangas.

- Sandiganbayan allows 2 DOH officials to testify in Duque, Lao graft case (2026-10-26 03:20)

The Sandiganbayan on Monday allowed two Department of Health (DOH) officials to testify in the graft case against former Health Secretary Francisco Duque III and former Budget Undersecretary Lloyd Christopher Lao over the alleged illegal transfer of P41 billion in DOH funds to the Procurement Service of the Department of Budget and Management (PS-DBM)

during the COVID-19 pandemic.

• Vince Dizon back as DOTr chief, Lopez goes to DPWH (2026-10-26 02:46)

Secretaries Vince Dizon and Giovanni Lopez will switch roles as heads of the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), respectively.

• DFA rejects Ombudsman Remulla's call to outsource visa processing (2026-10-26 02:35)

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) on Monday pushed back against Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla"s call to strip the agency of its visa-issuance functions, rejecting his allegation that it had turned the process into a business.

• NGCP: Visayas grid under yellow alert on Monday, Oct. 26, 2026 (2026-10-26 00:35)

The Visayas power grid will be placed under yellow alert on Monday due to thin reserves resulting from the unavailability of several power plants.

Source: PhilStar Global

• Inventory of seized, recovered vehicles ordered (2026-11-01 16:00)

The National Capital Region Police Office has ordered an inventory of all vehicles seized or recovered by the NCRPO amid reports that some of these are being used by lawmen for personal purposes.

• BOC holds export summit (2026-11-01 16:00)

The Bureau of Customs recently held its first-ever Export Summit to help exporters better understand customs procedures and navigate processes when transacting with the BOC.

• Taiwanese, Malaysian held for detaining 3 Philippine workers (2026-11-01 16:00)

Two foreign nationals have been arrested after allegedly illegally detaining three Filipino workers at a condominium in Malate, Manila where the three were made to memorize scripts for a suspected love scam and offshore gaming operations.

• Thai woman gets life for drug smuggling (2026-11-01 16:00)

A Pasay court has sentenced a Thai woman to life in prison for smuggling 13.16 kilos of cannabis worth P18.43 million in 2024.

• PNP: Undas generally peaceful (2026-11-01 16:00)

Police units should remain on heightened alert today despite the generally peaceful observance of All Saints' Day, according to the Philippine National Police.

• Over 1.4 million visit Manila cemeteries (2026-11-01 16:00)

More than 1.4 million people visited the two major cemeteries in Manila to remember their dead yesterday.

• Laguna governor's security men reduced (2026-11-01 16:00)

The number of police personnel assigned to protect and ensure the safety of Laguna Gov. Sol Aragones has been reduced, allegedly after a verbal directive from a top Philippine National Police official at Camp Crame.

• Cavite pet crematorium ordered closed (2026-11-01 16:00)

A pet crematorium was ordered closed by the Bacoor City government following the discovery of the remains of 29 pets in plastic bags dumped along a roadside in San Jose del Monte City in Bulacan.

• VP Sara visits mass grave of Ormoc flash flood victims (2026-11-01 16:00)

As the 35th anniversary of the Ormoc flash floods nears, Vice President Sara Duterte yesterday visited the city public cemetery mass grave memorial in Leyte where the victims of the 1991 tragedy were buried.

• Bantag eludes arrest anew in All Saints' Day operation (2026-11-01 16:00)

Former Bureau of Corrections chief Gerald Bantag once again eluded arrest, with a joint police operation failing to find him at a poultry farm in Barangay Pugol here yesterday.

• 6th ID troops, reservists train in emergency medical response (2026-11-01 08:41)

The training culminated in a simulation involving a Black Hawk helicopter for casualty evacuation.

• C5 flyover repairs, road crashes disrupt Undas traffic (2026-11-01 05:54)

Several early-morning incidents occupied lanes along C5 as motorists marked All Saints' Day.

• 2 vessels barred from sailing after Cagayan, Bohol mishaps (2026-11-01 05:21)

M/B Rose Marie 1 and MV Ocean Jet 788 are barred from operating pending safety inspections and technical assessments.

• BARMM stakeholders lauded for successful polls (2026-11-01 05:00)

A Catholic bishop has lauded all stakeholders for the peaceful and democratic election of Bangsamoro's first chief minister and other BARMM officials under its regular parliamentary government.

• 8 crew rescued after banca partially submerges off Cagayan (2026-11-01 04:04)

All crew members were brought to safety after their banca partially submerged.

• Rainy All Saints' Day expected in parts of Luzon (2026-11-01 01:38)

Parts of Northern Luzon may see scattered rains and isolated thunderstorms on All Saints' Day.

• Batangas property declared part of special eco-zone (2026-10-31 16:00)

President Marcos has declared some property in Tanauan, Batangas as part of an existing special economic zone.

• Army welcomes 445 new recruits (2026-10-31 16:00)

The Philippine Army, the largest major service command of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in terms of active service personnel, has 445 new recruits.

• Senior citizen killed in Pampanga gun attack (2026-10-31 16:00)

A senior citizen was killed while a minor was wounded in an attack by unidentified gunmen in Arayat, Pampanga on Thursday.

• Special holidays declared in 8 areas (2026-10-31 16:00)

Malacañang has declared special non-working days in eight areas of the country for the celebration of local festivals and founding anniversaries.

• Mayon eruption affects 785 schools (2026-10-31 16:00)

Up to 785 public and private schools in Albay were affected by the moderately explosive eruption that occurred at Mayon Volcano shortly before noon on Friday.

• 810,828 Undas travelers flock to seaports (2026-10-31 16:00)

Up to 810,828 people flocked to various seaports in the past three days to travel to the provinces for the observance of All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day, according to the Philippine Coast Guard.

• San Juan wins DILG award (2026-10-31 16:00)

For implementing locally funded infrastructure projects, San Juan was recognized as a top-performing city in the 2026 National Capital Region Subaybayani Awards of the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

• NPC probes data breach (2026-10-31 16:00)

The National Privacy Commission is investigating a report that 69 gigabytes of database backups of overseas employment systems were illegally copied, NPC spokesperson Roren Chin said.

• American, 62, nabbed for P17 million kush at NAIA (2026-10-31 16:00)

A 62-year-old American was arrested at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 for attempting to smuggle into the country 17.46 kilos of marijuana kush on Thursday.

• MNLF veterans, non-Moro governors supports new BARMM parliament (2026-10-31 10:02)

Two Christian governors and a big group of now elderly members of the Moro National Liberation Front on Saturday, October 31, took turns assuring support for the peacebuilding initiatives of the now duly-mandated 80-seat Bangsamoro parliament.

• Police, military cited for securing inaugural BARMM parliament session (2026-10-31 09:55)

Local executives and regional officials lauded on Saturday, October 31, the Army's 6th Infantry Division and the Police Regional Office-Bangsamoro Autonomous Region for together ensuring tranquility in this city during the first-ever session of the newly elected members of the Bangsamoro parliament.

• Mayon Volcano eruption displaces over 2,000 residents in Albay (2026-10-31 06:18)

A total of 2,041 people have been evacuated from parts of Albay following the moderately explosive eruption of Mayon Volcano on October 30, the provincial government said.

• Mayon Volcano emits ash plume; Alert Level 3 remains (2026-10-31 04:19)

Mayon Volcano emitted an ash plume that rose 200 meters above its summit crater early Saturday, October 31, as the volcano continued to show signs of heightened activity.

• Go turns over Super Health Center in Davao City (2026-10-30 16:00)

The opening of a Super Health Center in Barangay Tibungco marked a milestone in bringing accessible healthcare closer to residents of Davao City, according to Sen. Bong Go.

• 5 engineers suspended over Bulacan flood projects (2026-10-30 16:00)

The Office of the Ombudsman has suspended five engineers of the Department of Public Works and Highways-Bulacan in connection with alleged anomalous flood control projects worth P188.9 million.

• Moderately explosive eruption occurs in Mayon (2026-10-30 16:00)

A moderately explosive eruption occurred at Mayon Volcano in Albay shortly before noon yesterday, producing a grayish ash plume that rose 3,000 meters above the crater, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs).

• PNP to deploy 16,823 security personnel for Asean Summit (2026-10-30 16:00)

The Philippine National Police (PNP) is deploying 16,823 police officers and force multipliers to secure world leaders and delegates to the 49th Association of Southeast Asian Nations Summit and Related ASEAN Summits in November.

• 58 rescued as roro vessel tilts off Quezon (2026-10-30 16:00)

Fifty-eight people including passengers and crewmembers were rescued when a roll-on roll-off vessel tilted near a port in this town shortly after midnight yesterday.

• Dead whale shark beached in Bacolod (2026-10-30 16:00)

A dead whale shark measuring between six to seven meters and weighing about four tons was found along the shore in this city yesterday morning.

• Vatican elevates 412-year-old Malabon church into minor basilica (2026-10-30 16:00)

The Vatican has elevated a 412-year-old church in Malabon as a minor basilica, the first in the Diocese of Kalookan to receive the designation.

• Isko to elderly: Visit cemeteries on off-peak days (2026-10-30 16:00)

With more than a million visitors anticipated for Undas at the Manila North Cemetery (MNC), Mayor Isko Moreno is advising senior citizens to consider coming on off-peak days to avoid health risks amid large crowds.

• Bettors seek NBI probe over unpaid online gambling pots (2026-10-30 16:00)

Five bettors in online gambling have asked the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) to investigate an online gaming platform over what they claimed as unpaid jackpot winnings worth P5 billion.

• 2 preschoolers drown in South Cotabato irrigation ditch (2026-10-30 09:11)

Two preschool children drowned in an irrigation dike in Barangay San Vicente in Banga, South Cotabato on Thursday afternoon, October 29.

• PAGASA eyes installation of 22 Doppler radars (2026-10-29 16:00)

Twenty-two Doppler radars capable of providing faster and more precise weather information are being eyed for installation by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

• Be prayerful when visiting cemeteries, Catholics urged (2026-10-29 16:00)

Catholics have been urged to be prayerful and observe peace when visiting cemeteries on All Saints and All Souls' Days.

• Comelec resumes voter registration for 2028 elections (2026-10-29 16:00)

Voter registration for the 2028 general elections will resume on Nov. 10, according to the Commission on Elections.

• Cebu City mayor fined over night market operation (2026-10-29 16:00)

The Office of the Ombudsman has fined Cebu City Mayor Nestor Archival Jr. over irregularities in the operation of the Colon Street Night Market last year.

• 60 groomers in Tacloban school shooting identified (2026-10-29 16:00)

The National Bureau of Investigation has identified at least 60 people including minors and foreigners behind the online grooming of children in connection with the Tacloban school shooting.

• Journalist seeks transfer of cyberlibel case to Metro Manila (2026-10-29 16:00)

Citing safety concerns, journalist Philip Lustre wants his cyberlibel case transferred from Davao City to Metro Manila.

• PNP: Undas secured; travelers nearing 2 million (2026-10-29 16:00)

With over 141,000 police personnel and force multipliers deployed to cemeteries, major thoroughfares and places of convergence, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said yesterday security measures are in place for All Saints' and All Souls' Days.

• Rimbang to appear at PDEA over Laos drug haul (2026-10-29 16:00)

Former Bangsamoro parliament member Edrieza Hadji Nasser Rimbang, the alleged financier and mastermind in the aborted shipment of 521 kilos of shabu worth P3.54 billion from Laos to the Philippines, is expected to submit his sworn statement next week.

• Marcos opens NLEX-C5 link (2026-10-29 16:00)

As the government braces for the Undas travel surge, President Marcos yesterday opened a section of the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) linking Quirino Highway in Quezon City to the Mindanao toll plaza in Valenzuela.

• BARMM parliament opening raises security concerns (2026-10-29 10:39)

All is set for the inaugural session of the 80-seat parliament of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao on Friday, October 30, in BARMM's capitol here, now guarded by no fewer than a thousand policemen and soldiers.

• Drug den shut down, 5 shabu traffickers arrested in Mindanao (2026-10-29 10:33)

Agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency arrested five shabu peddlers, four of them together operating a drug den, in separate entrapment operations in this city and in Libungan town in Cotabato province on Tuesday, October 27.

• 2 soldiers arrested after shooting motorist in Cotabato (2026-10-29 10:22)

Two soldiers landed in jail after one of them had shot and wounded a motorcycle-riding civilian in a gun attack before dawn Thursday, October 29, in Barangay South Manuangan in Pigcawayan town in Cotabato province.

• ASEAN Summit in Metro Manila: Road closures, flight changes (2026-10-29 06:48)

What commuters and travelers need to know for ASEAN Summit

• NTC regional offices mobilized for Undas public assistance ops (2026-10-29 06:43)

The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) on Thursday directed the mobilization of all its regional offices nationwide to coordinate with relevant government agencies and key private sector stakeholders in support of public assistance operations for the country's upcoming observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, or Undas 2026, from October 31 to November 2, 2026.

• Stricter validation ordered for multiple SIMs under one user (2026-10-29 06:33)

The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) is directing mobile network operators (MNOs) to intensify its post validation of SIMs registered in unusually large numbers under a single individual.

• New NLEX C5 Northlink section toll-free until year-end (2026-10-29 03:14)

Marcos announces free passage on the newly opened NLEX C5 Northlink section through 2026.

• Lopez reshuffles DPWH officials (2026-10-28 16:00)

Newly appointed Department of Public Works and Highways Secretary Giovanni Lopez has initiated a revamp of the DPWH's executive leadership, placing key regional and operations posts under new officers-in-charge.

• Bus operators warned over dilapidated amenities (2026-10-28 16:00)

Transportation Secretary Vince Dizon yesterday warned bus operators over dilapidated amenities ahead of the Undas break.

• Marcos Jr.: Fast-track release of qualified inmates (2026-10-28 16:00)

President Marcos yesterday emphasized the need to avoid delays in processing the release of qualified inmates, saying those who faced accountability deserve a chance to start anew.

• Aplasca files reply to direct assault rap (2026-10-28 16:00)

Former Senate sergeant-at-arms Mao Aplasca has filed his counter-affidavit on the direct assault complaint filed against him over the May 13 Senate shooting.

• 14 hospitalized after eating tuba-tuba fruit (2026-10-28 16:00)

Thirteen minors and an adult were hospitalized after eating the fruit of a tuba-tuba plant in Koronadal, South Cotabato on Monday.

• Quake aftershock jolts Davao, Sarangani (2026-10-28 16:00)

An aftershock of powerful earthquakes that struck Davao Occidental and Sarangani four months ago jolted the two provinces yesterday morning, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

• More cloud seeding needed as El Niño threatens Negros farms (2026-10-28 16:00)

Amid threats posed by the dry spell, the Department of Agriculture (DA) is looking at conducting at least three more cloud seeding operations in Negros Occidental to help farmers cope with the effects of a super El Niño.

• 6 shortlisted for Luzon deputy ombudsman post (2026-10-28 16:00)

The Judicial and Bar Council has recommended to President Marcos six candidates for the post of deputy ombudsman for Luzon.

• Vessels inspected ahead of Undas travel surge (2026-10-28 16:00)

With the expected surge of sea travelers who will observe All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day in the provinces, the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) inspected vessels at the port of Batangas on Tuesday to ensure the safety of the riding public.

• Teacher forces students to drink soda with saliva (2026-10-28 16:00)

A public elementary school teacher in Mapandan, Pangasinan is under investigation for allegedly forcing two students to drink soda laced with saliva of their classmates.

• 10-year-old girl raped, killed in Maguindanao del Sur (2026-10-28 10:28)

The mayor of South Upi, Maguindanao del Sur has offered a P50,000 cash reward to anyone who can help identify the person who raped a 10-year-old ethnic Teduray girl.

• 13 kids, woman hospitalized after eating 'tuba-tuba' fruits (2026-10-28 09:46)

Thirteen school children and an adult were confined to a hospital after feasting on ripe "tuba-tuba" fruits, resembling the edible lanzones, in Barangay Topland in Koronadal City in South Cotabato on Monday.

• Higher Cavitex toll starts (2026-10-27 16:00)

Motorists passing though the Manila-Cavite Expressway will have to pay higher toll starting today after the government approved the increase to cover the second tranche of a delayed adjustment.

• Delivery truck rolls over; 3 injured (2026-10-27 16:00)

A delivery truck loaded with flowers and vegetables rolled over in this town yesterday, injuring the driver and his two helpers.

• '48% of Davao students struggle in reading' (2026-10-27 16:00)

Almost half of the total number of students in Davao region including Davao City were classified as struggling readers at the start of school year (SY) 2026-2027, according to the Second Congressional Commission on Education.

- DOH warns vs scammers posing as health chief (2026-10-27 16:00)

The Department of Health yesterday warned the public against unscrupulous people posing as DOH Secretary Edwin Mercado to ask for donations.

- FBI joins investigation of Thomas Markle (2026-10-27 16:00)

The US Federal Bureau of Investigation has joined the probe into allegations that Thomas Markle, father of Meghan, duchess of Sussex, possessed images of child sexual abuse materials found at his former house in Cebu, the Philippine National Police said yesterday.

- 383 OFWs repatriated from Saudi Arabia (2026-10-27 16:00)

Over 380 overseas Filipino workers affected by the continuing tension in Saudi Arabia have been repatriated by the government.

- UST declared safe after bomb threat (2026-10-27 16:00)

Authorities declared the University of Santo Tomas in Manila safe following another bomb threat yesterday.

- Pasig cop arrested for gun-toting (2026-10-27 16:00)

MANILA, Philippines — A police officer was arrested and disarmed after allegedly threatening with a gun the passengers of a van at a gas station in Barangay Pinagbuhatan, Pasig on Sunday night. The Eastern Police District (EPD) said the incident occurred along Sandoval Road when the police officer, who was allegedly drunk, pointed a gun at the victims and appeared poised to fire. He reportedly cited family problems as the reason for his behavior. The policeman was taken into custody pending inquest proceedings. EPD director Brig. Gen. Roman Arugay condemned the alleged misconduct, saying the police officer would face criminal and administrative charges if found liable. The lawman could also be dismissed from the police service, depending on the outcome of the probe. Fake cop nabbed In Quezon City, a 31-year-old man who posed as a police officer was arrested yesterday for allegedly harassing a businessman in a hotel. Ralph Christian Villegas is facing complaints for usurpation of authority and illegal use of uniform or insignia. Villegas introduced himself as a member of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group assigned at Camp Crame. He was arrested in a hotel in Barangay San Martin de Porres. Metro Manila police officer-in-charge Brig. Gen. Christopher Abrahano said Villegas was in police uniform bearing the rank insignia of an executive master sergeant and a Taguig police station patch when he was arrested. The 54-year-old businessman complained that the suspect grabbed him by the neck and declared, “You’ re under arrest.” Abrahano urged the public to report people pretending to be police officers to the Unified 911 system.

• Man, child crushed to death by truck (2026-10-27 16:00)

A man and his 11-month-old child died while his partner was injured after they were hit and pinned down by a truck in Quezon City yesterday.

• Philippines, Japan, US join Keen Sword exercise (2026-10-27 16:00)

The Philippines is participating in training exercises with the military forces of Japan, the United States and six other nations in Okinawa.

• UST campus declared safe after another bomb threat (2026-10-27 05:40)

UST's Manila campus was declared safe Tuesday after another online threat involving explosives.

• Albay bridge stalled for over 15 years to open before Undas (2026-10-27 01:30)

The first two lanes of the Kilicao-Binitayan Bridge in Daraga, Albay will open on Friday, October 30, nearly five months after Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon ordered the completion of the project that had been stalled for more than 15 years.

• BOC auctions 11 luxury cars (2026-10-26 16:00)

Eleven luxury vehicles with combined floor prices of P226.86 million, including a 2022 Ferrari SF90 Stradale and a 2021 McLaren Senna, are up for auction at the Port of Manila (POM), the Bureau of Customs said yesterday.

• PNP boosts ties with South Korean police (2026-10-26 16:00)

The Philippine National Police has strengthened ties with South Korean law enforcement authorities to modernize the PNP’s frontline field operations, upgrade tactical communications and curb transnational crime networks.

• LTFRB to bus operators: Follow fare discounts (2026-10-26 16:00)

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) will strengthen its monitoring of bus operators during the Undas exodus to ensure that drivers and conductors will comply with the 20-percent discount given to students, senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

• NBI endorses charges vs VP Sara’s ex-aide (2026-10-26 16:00)

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has endorsed to the Department of Justice (DOJ) possible charges against Jeffrey Tupas, former information officer of Vice President Sara Duterte.

• 8-month-old twins, sold twice, rescued (2026-10-26 16:00)

The Southern Police District rescued twin boys, just eight months old, after they were sold twice this month, the SPD announced yesterday.

• President Marcos orders heightened security for Undas (2026-10-26 16:00)

Anticipating the surge of people heading to the provinces for Undas, Malacañang yesterday directed agencies to intensify security measures and provide assistance to stranded passengers during All Saints' and All Souls' Days.

• Zamboanga braces for arrival of 10,000 deportees from Malaysia (2026-10-26 16:00)

The city government is mobilizing an inter-agency unit to assist 10,000 arriving Filipino deportees, as Malaysia began their repatriation on Friday.

• President Marcos inaugurates 2 irrigation projects (2026-10-26 16:00)

President Marcos yesterday inaugurated two irrigation projects in northern Luzon, as the government moves to ease the impact of the super El Niño.

• 4 men killed in Maguindanao del Sur ambush (2026-10-26 16:00)

Four men were killed in an ambush yesterday along a road in Barangay Tulunan in Datu Anggal Midtimbang, Maguindanao del Sur, police said.

• 2 nabbed in murder of Lipa student (2026-10-26 16:00)

The alleged mastermind and the killer of a 20-year-old National University architecture student were arrested in Lipa City, Batangas on Sunday, police said.

• 4 men killed in Maguindanao del Sur ambush (2026-10-26 10:52)

Four men traveling together in a silver car were killed in an ambush on Monday afternoon, October 26, along a highway in an interior area of Barangay Tulunan, Datu Anggal Midtimbang, Maguindanao del Sur.

• 5 killed in gun attacks across BARMM towns in 36 hours (2026-10-26 10:43)

Gunmen killed a barangay councilor and four others in separate attacks across the adjoining provinces of Maguindanao del Sur and Maguindanao del Norte, as well as the Bangsamoro region's Special Geographic Area (SGA) within a span of just 36 hours.

• P7.04-M worth of shabu seized in 3 PDEA-9 operations (2026-10-26 10:19)

Anti-narcotics agents seized a total of P7.04 million worth of shab in separate operations targeting three suspected peddlers, one of whom was from Tawi-Tawi in the Bangsamoro region and had reportedly eluded four attempts to entrap him in the island province.

• Army unit receives new facilities for peacebuilding efforts in Davao del Sur (2026-10-26 09:54)

Officials inaugurated new infrastructure facilities at a military headquarters in Matanao, Davao del Sur, on Saturday, October 24. The facilities will serve as venues for multi-sector dialogues aimed at maintaining peace in the municipality, which was recently declared free of the

presence of the New People's Army.

• Diesel up P1.20, gasoline down P0.30 starting Oct. 27 (2026-10-26 07:18)

Motorists will see mixed fuel price changes starting October 27.

Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer

• Legislator denies pushing 'shoot-to-kill' resolution vs Bato Dela Rosa (2026-11-02 14:00)

MANILA, Philippines — Cagayan de Oro Rep. Loran Suan has denied calling for a resolution that would urge a shoot-to-kill order against Senator Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa should he fail to properly surrender to authorities, saying such claims were fabricated. In a statement on Monday, Suan said he had neither threatened to call a House committee

• Aquino family, visitors remember Ninoy, Cory, Noynoy on All Souls' Day (2026-11-02 13:39)

MANILA, Philippines — Members of the Aquino family and other Filipinos visited the Aquino family mausoleum at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque City on Monday, All Souls' Day. Civil society leader Kiko Aquino Dee, with his parents, Viel Aquino Dee and Richard Dee, lit yellow candles and offered prayers at the mausoleum to remember

• 5,825 Bilibid inmates receive vegetables donated through Pangilinan (2026-11-02 13:21)

MANILA, Philippines — More than 5,800 persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) at the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) received fresh vegetables from Nueva Vizcaya through a donation facilitated by Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan, according to the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor). In a statement on Sunday, BuCor said the NBP received 144 bags of assorted vegetables on

• Despite economic problems, Undas flower vendors strive to survive (2026-11-02 13:09)

MANILA, Philippines — For some vendors outside the Manila South Cemetery, selling flowers for the departed during Undas has been part of their livelihood for years already. And despite problems with the economy, for them, this year's profit is enough to make ends meet. With arranged flowers lined up in the sidewalk, Bryan Amoyan is

• Pangilinan: Intensify crackdown on hoarders, profiteers amid El Niño (2026-11-02 13:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan on Monday urged the government to intensify its crackdown on hoarders, profiteers, and cartels as the country braces for the impact of a strong El Niño on food production and prices. He also called on the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Agriculture (DA), Price Coordinating

• Manila North Cemetery logs nearly 1.4M Undas visitors (2026-11-02 12:48)

MANILA, Philippines — The number of visitors at Manila North Cemetery reached nearly 1.4 million on Nov. 1 as All Saints' Day fell on a weekend, the Manila Police District (MPD) said on Monday. MPD spokesperson Maj. Philipp Ines said the figure covered visitors recorded from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. "We expect that because

• Old man drowns after falling into Quezon river (2026-11-02 12:34)

LUCENA CITY — A 71-year-old fisherman drowned after falling into a river in the town of Tagkawayan, Quezon, on Sunday evening, Nov. 1, police said. The victim, who was allegedly under the influence of alcohol, was walking along Aloneros Bridge in Barangay Cabugwang at around 6:30 p.m. when he accidentally fell into the river, according

• Fire destroys 13 houses in Samar; cemetery incidents reported in Leyte (2026-11-02 12:33)

TACLOBAN CITY — A fire that destroyed 13 houses and displaced 19 families in Catbalogan City, Samar along with a smaller cemetery fire in Tanauan and a structurally damaged mausoleum in Jaro, both in Leyte, were among the incidents reported in Eastern Visayas during the observance of Undas. In Catbalogan City, a fire hit Barangay

• Undas 2026: Rising fares, port fees deter travelers to Oriental Mindoro (2026-11-02 12:29)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Higher transportation costs and increased terminal fees at the Batangas International Port have been cited as reasons for the drop in vacationers visiting the province for All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day this year. Montenegro Shipping Lines, Inc. reported that passenger volumes this year were significantly lower than in

• Marcos recounts eerie childhood experiences at Baguio's The Mansion (2026-11-02 12:18)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has recalled sensing an unexplained presence during his childhood visits to the Baguio Mansion House. Also known as the official summer residence of the Philippine president, the mansion is shrouded in eerie tales of unexplained encounters shared by visitors and its caretakers. READ: Mansion House in Baguio City

• PNP vows to continue manhunt for ex-BuCor chief Bantag (2026-11-02 12:09)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) vowed to continue its pursuit of former Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) chief Gerald Bantag following an unsuccessful operation to arrest him in Ifugao. "We will not allow the passage of time or repeated attempts to evade arrest to weaken our resolve," PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez

• Nearly 4,000 remains still unclaimed at Tacloban's El Reposo Cemetery (2026-11-02 11:54)

TACLOBAN CITY — Nearly 4,000 human remains at the city's public Catholic cemetery, El Reposo, have yet to be retrieved by their families despite appeals by the local Catholic Church

and the city government to transfer them to other burial grounds ahead of the cemetery's planned rehabilitation. The city government and the local Catholic Church

• PITX logs nearly 1.5 million passengers during Undas week (2026-11-02 11:33)

MANILA, Philippines — Over 1.4 million passengers have passed through the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) during the Undas week, the terminal said on Monday. PITX recorded a total of 1,499,454 passengers from Oct. 25 to Nov. 1. The termina is anticipating another 180,000 passengers on All Souls' Day, as the Undas winds down. As

• 18 receive medical aid during Undas observance in Iloilo City (2026-11-02 11:27)

ILOILO CITY — At least 18 people, including elderly cemetery visitors, received medical assistance during the observance of Undas, or All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, in Iloilo City. In a situational report released at 8 a.m. on Monday, Nov. 2, the Iloilo City Emergency Operations Center (EOC) said medical teams deployed to cemeteries

• Caraga police seize P448,249 worth of shabu in region-wide sweep (2026-11-02 11:05)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Seven drug suspects were arrested after police seized nearly half a million pesos worth of suspected shabu in anti-narcotics operations across the Caraga region on Oct. 31. Brig. Gen. Rolindo Suguilon, Police Regional Office 13 (PRO-13) director, said the operations conducted by city and municipal police units yielded a total

• Lanao del Sur to hold town halls for families of Marawi siege victims (2026-11-02 11:05)

MARAWI CITY — The provincial government of Lanao del Sur is gearing up to hold town hall meetings in three Mindanao cities to help families of victims who went missing during the 2017 Marawi siege obtain information and assistance in identifying their loved ones. The preparations were discussed during the 10th meeting of the Technical

• LOOK: Manila South Cemetery crowd reaches 2,200 on All Souls' Day (2026-11-02 10:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Despite the hot and humid weather, visitors continued to flock to the Manila South Cemetery on Monday, All Souls' Day. The Manila Police District recorded over 2,200 visitors inside the cemetery as of 10 a.m. on Monday, significantly lower than the 22,000 visitors recorded on Nov. 1. READ: LIVE UPDATES: Undas 2026

• Undas 2026: Valencia City braces for 20 tons of cemetery waste (2026-11-02 10:51)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — Environmental authorities in Valencia City urged cemetery-goers to practice proper waste management as cleanup crews brace for an estimated 20 tons of mixed garbage across local burial sites during the All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day holidays, or Undas. Julius Parian, head of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office,

• Wanted man arrested at Rizal cemetery during Undas (2026-11-02 10:41)

LUCENA CITY — Police arrested a 26-year-old fugitive at a public cemetery in the Rizal town of Angono on Sunday night, Nov. 1. The suspect, who was on the most wanted persons list of the Rizal Police Provincial Office, was apprehended at the cemetery in Barangay Kalayaan. READ: Wanted persons for kidnapping nabbed in Cainta,

• 2 motorcycle riders killed, back rider hurt in Pangasinan road crash (2026-11-02 10:33)

CALASIAO, Pangasinan — Two motorcycle riders were killed while a back rider was injured in a head-on collision along the Manila North Road in Urdaneta City at around 6 p.m. on Sunday. A 55-year-old motorcycle rider from Nueva Ecija was piloting a Suzuki Raider 150, with a 35-year-old female canteen helper from San Manuel, Pangasinan,

• Gatchalian to CSOs, LGUs: Rally behind new BARMM administration (2026-11-02 10:32)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian has urged political blocs, civil society organizations and local government units to support the newly elected Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) administration to ensure stability and inclusive development in the region. In a statement on Monday, Gatchalian also expressed optimism that BARMM is now well on

• WATCH: Flooding hampers cemetery visits in Pampanga (2026-11-02 10:05)

MANILA, Philippines — Some families had difficulty visiting the graves of their departed loved ones at Holy Spirit Memorial Park in Masantol, Pampanga, during Undas 2026 due to persistent flooding in the area. Floodwaters continued to submerge portions of the cemetery, forcing visitors to navigate flooded pathways and making some graves difficult to reach. /dp

• PCG: Over 23,000 passengers at ports by All Souls' Day midnight (2026-11-02 10:02)

MANILA, Philippines – The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) logged more than 23,000 passengers at ports nationwide by Monday midnight, as thousands traveled for the annual observance of All Souls' Day. The PCG said it monitored 12,108 outbound passengers and 11,414 inbound passengers between midnight and 6 a.m. Monday. The Coast Guard District Western Visayas recorded

• Top 5 most wanted murder suspect in Caraga arrested in Agusan del Sur (2026-11-02 09:50)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Operatives arrested on Sunday Caraga region's fifth most wanted person, who is facing a murder charge, in Agusan del Sur. Police Col. Romeo Villalobos Jr., Agusan del Sur police provincial director, identified the suspect only by his alias, "Lando." He is 44 and a farmer residing in Barangay Bunawan

• Lanao del Sur farmers get climate-resilient rice farming training (2026-11-02 09:20)

MARAWI CITY — Around 200 rice farmers from Maguing and Poona Bayabao in Lanao del Sur received fertilizer assistance after participating in a training program on improving rice

production and adapting to climate change, particularly the effects of El Niño. The ProvincialGovernment of Lanao del Sur, through its Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPAg),

• 15-year-old boy admits killing mother with hammer in Bohol (2026-11-02 09:12)

TAGBILARAN CITY — A 15-year-old boy has admitted killing his 46-year-old mother with a hammer following an argument at their home in Panglao, Bohol, before dragging her body to an abandoned septic tank, police said Sunday, Nov. 1. Police Major Joseph Lopena, spokesperson for the Bohol Police Provincial Office (BPPO), said Panglao police initiated contact

• Manila North Cemetery logs over 1.3 million visitors on All Saints' Day (2026-11-02 08:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The Manila North Cemetery recorded more than 1.3 million visitors on Sunday, All Saints' Day. Based on the cemetery's crowd monitoring update, an estimated 1,326,800 people visited their departed loved ones before it closed for the day on Nov. 1. This was despite the high heat and a sudden downpour around noon.

• Rillo open to dropping cyber libel, but PGMN host Hirro won't apologize (2026-11-02 08:47)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Quezon City Rep. Marvin Rillo said he is willing to drop the seven counts of cyber libel he filed against Peanut Gallery Media Network (PGMN) host CJ Hirro if she apologizes, but the accused said she has no intention of saying sorry. This came after the Quezon City Regional Trial Court

• Private vehicles get temporary busway access from Nepa Q-Mart to Boni (2026-11-02 08:43)

MANILA, Philippines — Private vehicles will be temporarily allowed to pass through the Edsa Busway from Nepa Q-Mart to Boni Avenue stations starting Monday, Nov. 2, Transportation Sec. Vince Dizon announced. Dizon said the arrangement would remain in effect for about two weeks, or until the road resurfacing along the stations under Phase 2 of

• MMDA: Light traffic on major NCR roads on All Souls' Day morning (2026-11-02 07:49)

MANILA, Philippines — Major roads across Metro Manila are experiencing light traffic as of 7 a.m. on Monday, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) said. The update came as Filipinos observe All Souls' Day on Nov. 2, with families visiting cemeteries to pay their respects to departed loved ones. In its Metrobase traffic update, the

• Amihan to bring rain to Extreme Northern Luzon on All Souls' Day (2026-11-02 07:42)

MANILA, Philippines — The northeast monsoon, locally known as amihan, is forecast to bring rain showers to Extreme Northern Luzon on All Souls' Day, Nov. 2, the state weather bureau reported. According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), the amihan is expected to bring partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated

• Lacson cautions vs airing updates on Dela Rosa hunt (2026-11-02 05:35)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Panfilo “Ping” Lacson has cautioned authorities against publicly disclosing operational details in the intensified search for Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa, saying secrecy is essential when law enforcers pursue a high-profile target. “SSSHHH… : When pursuing a high-profile target or handling a sensitive live case, secrecy discipline is key, unless disinformation

• Truth body to assist in legal action on drug war autopsies (2026-11-02 05:33)

MANILA, Philippines — The Truth Commission will assist families of drug war victims if they take legal action against the doctors who allegedly violated their profession’s code of ethics when they signed off death certificates with dubious causes of deaths. A lawyer for the families of the drug war victims said, however, that there are

• Prosecution sees VP trial wrap by end-November (2026-11-02 05:31)

MANILA, Philippines — The impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte could wrap up by end-November, the House’s lead prosecutor said on Sunday, which could mark the end of a months-long proceeding that has exposed alleged misconduct by the early presidential favorite. In a statement, Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro, the chief prosecutor in the impeachment

• Philip Juico, former DAR Secretary; 78 (2026-11-02 05:29)

MANILA, Philippines — Philip “Popoy” Juico, former Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) secretary and a prominent figure in the country’s sports administration who headed the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) and the national athletics federation, died on Oct. 31. He was 78. His son Vincent announced his death in a Facebook post on Sunday, saying Juico

• Missing UP student found alive in Laguna – PNP (2026-11-02 05:27)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police stressed the need for mental health support on Sunday after rescuing a missing student from the University of the Philippines (UP) Los Baños who allegedly attempted suicide twice during her six-day disappearance. The fourth-year student, whose identity was withheld, was found in San Pablo City, Laguna, on Friday

• PAWS to pet owners: Sue firm for estafa (2026-11-02 05:25)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) urged the owners of the 25 deceased dogs and cats that were dumped at a vacant lot in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan, to sue the pet crematorium for estafa by means of deceit. “Pet parents paid for a service that was supposed to provide their

• PNP probes link between Pangasinan, Cebu ‘child abuses’ (2026-11-02 05:19)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police has intensified intelligence operations nationwide to determine whether separate child exploitation cases in Pangasinan and Cebu

involve a common network of perpetrators. Authorities in Pangasinan are investigating allegedexploitation activities in Urdaneta City, while a French national was arrested in Cebu overalleged sexual offenses against minors. Intelligence

• Bohol's smoke ritual caps cemetery visits (2026-11-02 05:17)

TAGBILARAN CITY, BOHOL, Philippines — Before heading home after paying tribute to their departed loved ones on All Saints' Day, some cemetery visitors in Barangay Taloto here make one final stop: passing through a cloud of smoke believed to drive away evil spirits and negative energy. The practice, known as "palina," remains an enduring tradition

• Duyog Bangsamoro welcomes first regular BARMM parliament (2026-11-02 05:15)

COTABATO CITY, BARMM, Philippines — Duyog Bangsamoro, a national multisectoral coalition supporting the Bangsamoro peace process, welcomed on Sunday the assumption of the first elected parliament in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). In a statement, the coalition of 15 civil society organizations said the convening of the first-ever elected 80-member Bangsamoro Parliament

• Baguio council seeks report on P225-M Camp John Hay claim vs BCDA (2026-11-02 00:00)

BAGUIO CITY, Philippines — The city council is seeking a detailed accounting of Camp John Hay's business tax collections and the city's estimated P225-million claim for unpaid rentals and revenue shares from the property. In a statement Sunday (Nov. 1), the city council discussed the matter during its recent regular session, when Councilor Leandro Yangot

• 3 marijuana plantations destroyed in Benguet (2026-11-01 23:21)

BAGUIO CITY, Philippines — Police discovered three marijuana plantations in the towns of Kapangan and Kibungan in Benguet, and seized plants and seedlings with an estimated street value of P270,000 during eradication operations on Friday, Oct. 30. In a statement, the Police Regional Office-Cordillera (PRO-CAR) said the plantations were found in Barangay Sagubo in Kapangan

• Robredo, Salceda families remember departed loved ones on All Saints' Day (2026-11-01 22:42)

LEGAZPI CITY, ALBAY, Philippines — The families of Naga City Mayor Leni Robredo and Presidential Legislative Liaison Office (PLLO) Secretary Joey Salceda visited the graves of their departed loved ones in Camarines Sur and Albay on Sunday, Nov. 1, in observance of All Saints' Day. Salceda visited the Garden of Faith in Barangay Sugcad, Polangui,

• Ex-Abucay mayor Liberato 'Pambato' Santiago Jr. dies at 89 (2026-11-01 22:11)

ABUCAY, BATAAN — Former Abucay Mayor Liberato "Pambato" Santiago Jr. died Sunday afternoon (Nov. 1) at the age of 89, according to his son-in-law, incumbent Mayor Erik Martel, who announced the news on social media. The cause of Santiago's death was not publicly

disclosed. Santiago was a successful businessman before entering politics. He first became

• Ultra Lotto 6/58, Super Lotto 6/49 draw results on Sunday, Nov. 1, 2026 (2026-11-01 22:01)

MANILA, Philippines — No ticket holder won the Ultra Lotto 6/58 or the Super Lotto 6/49 jackpot in the draws on Sunday, November 1, 2026, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. Ultra Lotto 6/58 draw result: 14-34-54-18-05-46. Jackpot prize: ₱468.92 million Super Lotto 6/49 draw result: 44-16-40-19-27-32. Jackpot prize: ₱78.61 million. Minor games The

• Bataan groups hold candle vigil to mourn felled trees (2026-11-01 21:46)

LIMAY, Bataan — Members of youth group Young Bataeños for Environmental Advocacy Network (YoungBean) and advocacy group Nuclear-Free Bataan Movement (NFBM) lit candles in Limay town to mourn the trees cut down along Roman Highway and other parts of Bataan. In a statement on Sunday, Eric Beren, YoungBean secretary general, said the activity was part

• Gatchalian calls for tighter monitoring of pet service providers (2026-11-01 20:26)

MANILA, Philippines – Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian on Sunday urged local government units and agencies concerned across the country, such as the Bureau of Animal Industry, to inspect and audit all operating pet service providers, including crematoriums. He said LGUs and concerned agencies must ensure that such businesses are licensed, environmentally compliant, and observe clear standards

• OPAPRU identifies best practices, lessons learned in BARMM polls assessment (2026-11-01 19:51)

COTABATO CITY — The Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (OPAPRU) has conducted a post-assessment workshop to learn more about the lessons learned during the historic Bangsamoro parliamentary elections. In a statement on Sunday, the OPAPRU said the government peace mechanisms in the peace process with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front

• Over P500,000 suspected marijuana intercepted at Zambo Sur delivery hub (2026-11-01 19:45)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur – Anti-narcotics agents intercepted a parcel containing over four kilograms of suspected dried marijuana leaves worth over P500,000 during an interdiction operation at a local delivery hub in Labangan, Zamboanga del Sur on Saturday. The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency-9 (PDEA-9) – Zamboanga del Sur Provincial Office (ZDSPO) reported that operatives,

• Ebrahim vows to continue pushing for Bangsamoro reforms, development (2026-11-01 19:35)

COTABATO CITY – Former Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) interim chief minister Ahod “Al Haj Murad” Ebrahim has vowed to continue advancing genuine reforms, moral governance, peace, and meaningful development for the Bangsamoro people. Ebrahim, chair of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), and MP Mohagher Iqbal, MILF vice chairman, failed to get

- ‘Secrecy discipline’ is key in hunting down Bato dela Rosa, says Lacson (2026-11-01 19:01)

MANILA, Philippines – Sen. Panfilo Lacson reminded authorities on Sunday to be cautious in publicizing information about their next move in hunting down Sen. Ronald “Bato” Dela Rosa, warning that it could compromise their operations. “SSSHHH… : When pursuing a high-profile target or handling a sensitive live case, secrecy discipline is key, unless disinformation is

- Public school principal, 4 others nabbed in Dinagat drug bust (2026-11-01 18:24)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur – A 56-year-old public elementary school principal was arrested alongside four alleged street-level pushers during an early morning buy-bust operation in San Jose, Dinagat Islands on Friday. Operatives from the Regional Drug Enforcement Unit-13 (RDEU-13) and the Regional Intelligence Division-13 (RID-13), backed by the San Jose Municipal Police Station and

- Ex-PSC chair Philip ‘Popoy’ Juico dies at 78 (2026-11-01 18:10)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) chairperson Philip “Popoy” Juico passed away on Saturday, October 31. He was 78. Juico’s son, Vincent, confirmed this in a Facebook post on Sunday. “It is with deep sadness that I share the passing of my father, Philip “Popoy” Juico, who passed away yesterday evening at 8:18

- De Lima urges lawmakers to pass tougher animal welfare bill (2026-11-01 18:05)

MANILA, Philippines – Congress should tighten national animal welfare laws following the illegal dumping of 25 dead pets in Bulacan, Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima said on Sunday. On Friday, animal welfare group Luna and Furry Siblings sparked widespread outrage after it exposed on social media how the remains of several dogs and cats

- Marcos family makes private Undas visit to patriarch’s tomb (2026-11-01 18:02)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. and his family avoided the usual Undas crowd when they visited the tomb of his father, former President Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig City. The Presidential Communications Office (PCO) on Sunday said Marcos made a private visit to his father’s

- Over 166,000 personnel deployed for Undas security, public assistance (2026-11-01 17:49)

MANILA, Philippines—A total of 166,365 police and other government personnel, and civilian volunteers were deployed nationwide on Sunday for security and assistance as crowds flocked

to cemeteries and memorial parks for All Saints' Day. In a statement on Sunday, the PhilippineNational Police (PNP) said the deployment consists of 78,952 police personnel, 20,837personnel from

• DPWH: Pasig Blvd-C5 Flyover, C5 Boni Serrano Flyover to be reopened ahead of schedule (2026-11-01 17:21)

MANILA, Philippines — Motorists can already access the Pasig Boulevard-C5 Flyover and C5 Boni Serrano Flyover earlier than their originally scheduled completion, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) announced on Sunday. In a statement, the DPWH said the northbound lane of the Pasig Blvd-C5 Flyover will be passable early on Monday evening, November

• No fully booked trips up to Nov. 3 so far at PITX (2026-11-01 17:09)

MANILA, Philippines — No trips at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) have been fully booked yet in select routes across the country until November 3, terminal management said on Sunday. In its 4 p.m. Sunday update, PITX said that for November 1, Sunday, the following routes logged the following booking status: 32.56 percent for

• Ex-GPH peace panel chair warns of 'tyranny of the majority' in BARMM Parliament (2026-11-01 17:00)

COTABATO CITY — Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, former chair of the Government of the Philippines (GPH) peace panel that signed the 2014 Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), has warned that the new Bangsamoro Parliament could become "a tyranny of the majority" if its ruling bloc treats itself as the

• PPA logs over 1M passengers amid Undas exodus (2026-11-01 16:49)

MANILA, Philippines — Over one million passengers flocked to different ports across the country amid the Undas exodus this year, according to the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) on Sunday. In its latest passenger traffic update, the PPA said that 36,753 passengers were monitored as of 8 a.m. on Sunday, which also falls on All Saints'

• Farmer wanted for rape nabbed in Surigao cemetery (2026-11-01 16:40)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur— As thousands visited the gravesites of their departed loved ones on All Saints' Day, law enforcers tracked down and arrested Caraga region's eighth most wanted person inside a public cemetery in Tagbina, Surigao del Sur Sunday morning. Joint police operatives apprehended the 45-year-old farmer around 10:05 a.m. at the Tagbina

• LOOK: Manila North Cemetery gravesites of heroes, leaders and icons (2026-11-01 16:30)

MANILA, Philippines – Spanning 54 hectares, the Manila North Cemetery (Cimetière del Norte) not only functions as a necropolis but can also be considered an open-air museum, preserving the legacies of statesmen, revolutionary figures, literary icons, educators, and national heroes. A

walkthrough of these historical plots offers a glimpse into the architectural reverence dedicated to

• Lacson: Majority bloc united in getting rid of ‘pork’ from 2027 budget bill (2026-11-01 16:23)

MANILA, Philippines – Sen. Panfilo Lacson on Sunday said the majority bloc supports Senate finance committee chair Sen. JV Ejercito’s efforts to remove “unwarranted, whimsical, and corruption-prone items” from the proposed 2027 national budget. “The majority of senators are rallying behind Senate Finance Committee Chairman JV Ejercito’s efforts to cleanse the 2027 budget…,” Lacson said

• More MRT-3 trains on Monday, November 2 – DOTr (2026-11-01 16:07)

MANILA, Philippines — More trains will be deployed at the Metro Rail Transit Line 3 (MRT-3) on Monday, November 2, in anticipation of the volume of passengers returning to Metro Manila after the Undas weekend, according to the Department of Transportation (DOTr). In a statement on Sunday, the DOTr said 19 trains would be deployed

• Hataman calls for unity, good governance as BARMM Parliament convenes (2026-11-01 15:54)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur – Basilan Governor Mujiv Hataman called for unity and good governance following the installation of the first regular Bangsamoro Parliament and the election of Member of Parliament Abdulraof Macacua as chief minister. In a statement on Sunday, Hataman noted that government success must be measured by tangible improvements in the

• No sign of ex-BuCor chief Bantag in Ifugao poultry police operation (2026-11-01 15:14)

BAGUIO CITY — Former Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) chief Gerald Bantag eluded arrest after police failed to find him at a poultry farm in Barangay Pugol, Lamut, Ifugao, during an operation early Sunday. Bantag is wanted in connection with the 2022 killings of broadcaster Percival “Percy Lapid” Mabasa and New Bilibid Prison inmate Cristito “Jun”

• Bacolod mayor orders burial of 3-ton whale shark; cause of death unknown (2026-11-01 15:13)

BACOLOD CITY — Mayor Greg Gasataya has ordered the burial of a whale shark weighing an estimated three to four tons after it was found stranded and dead along the shoreline of Barangay 35 on Friday, with authorities yet to determine the cause of its death. A joint on-site assessment by the City Agriculture Office

• Over 1M Manila North Cemetery visitors expected on All Saints’ Day (2026-11-01 15:01)

MANILA, Philippines — More than 1 million visitors are expected to visit their loved ones’ graves at the Manila North Cemetery this All Saints’ Day alone, the cemetery director said

Sunday. Ngayon aabot po ng milyon ito, more than one million. Tingin ko mas marami ngayonkasi kahapon konti lang e, naka 150,000 lang tayo

• Moderate to heavy rain expected over parts of Metro Manila, nearby provinces (2026-11-01 14:54)

MANILA, Philippines — Moderate to heavy rain showers are expected to persist over some parts of Metro Manila and nearby provinces on Sunday, coinciding with All Saints' Day, according to the state weather bureau. In a thunderstorm advisory issued at 1:50 p.m., the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said moderate to heavy

• Undas passenger volume decline noted at QC bus terminal (2026-11-01 14:39)

MANILA, Philippines — Fewer passengers traveled from a bus terminal in Quezon City during this year's Undas break, with rising fares cited as one possible reason. At the Solid North bus terminal in Cubao, there were more vacant seats in the waiting area than those already occupied by passengers around 9:20 a.m. on Sunday, which also falls

• Ilocos Sur town promotes zero-waste practices in cemeteries (2026-11-01 14:03)

SAN ILDEFONSO, Ilocos Sur — Cemetery visitors in nearby Magsingal town are being urged to bring reusable items, avoid single-use plastics and properly dispose of their trash as the local government promotes a zero-waste observance of Undas 2026. The zero-waste campaign seeks to reduce garbage generated during the annual influx of people visiting cemeteries and

• Cavite pet crematorium may have falsely claimed past cremations (2026-11-01 13:59)

MANILA, Philippines — Two animal welfare groups have reported that Ahjay Paws Aftercare Pet Crematorium had previously dumped deceased pets that were supposed to be cremated, following the discovery of 29 dogs and cats at a vacant lot in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. The remains were dumped in Barangay Minuyan Proper early Thursday, Oct. 29.

• Bohol gov raises reward to P150,000 for information to solve Panglao woman's killing (2026-11-01 13:35)

TAGBILARAN CITY — Bohol Gov. Erico Aristotle Aumentado has increased the reward money to P150,000 for anyone who can provide information leading to the identification and arrest of the person responsible for the killing of a 45-year-old woman in Panglao town. The reward was raised from the initial P100,000 following the discovery of the body

• Undas 2026: Crowds brave the heat at Manila cemeteries (2026-11-01 12:47)

MANILA, Philippines — Thousands of Filipinos braved the sweltering heat to visit their departed loved ones at the Manila North and South Cemeteries on Sunday as crowds gathered for All Saints' Day. At the cemeteries, visitors sought relief from the heat by staying under trees, using umbrellas, fanning themselves or covering their heads with towels.

• PAWS urges estafa complaint vs. crematorium over 29 dumped pets (2026-11-01 12:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) has urged owners of 29 pets dumped in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan, to pursue legal action against the pet crematorium, saying the incident may constitute estafa by means of deceit. In a statement on Saturday, PAWS said affected pet parents were led to believe that

• Tight security, traffic schemes ensure orderly Undas in Caraga (2026-11-01 12:17)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Thousands flocked to public cemeteries and memorial parks across Caraga starting Oct. 31, as local governments mobilized security forces, medical teams, and maritime enforcers to maintain order during Undas 2026. In Butuan City, families began arriving early on Sunday at Uraya Memorial Gardens in Barangay Bancasi to light candles

• Gatchalian tells DepEd: Don’t let El Niño worsen learning loss (2026-11-01 12:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian has urged the Department of Education (DepEd) to ensure that its protocols for the looming super El Niño protect students without worsening learning loss, stressing the need for localized rather than blanket class suspensions. “El Niño not only threatens the safety of students, but also their ability to

• Undas 2026: PITX logs over 1.38 million passengers as of Nov. 1 (2026-11-01 11:53)

MANILA, Philippines — The Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) has recorded more than 1.385 million passengers so far during this year’s Undas exodus. Based on data released as of 11 a.m. on Sunday, a total of 1,385,816 passengers were recorded at the terminal from Oct. 25 to Nov. 1. The highest number was recorded on

• Cavite pet crematorium faces raps over dumping of remains in Bulacan (2026-11-01 11:47)

CITY OF SAN JOSE DEL MONTE, Bulacan — The owners and employees of a pet crematorium in Cavite are facing charges for allegedly dumping the remains of 25 animals in a village in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. The alleged act violated Republic Act No. 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000,

• All dead pets dumped in Bulacan claimed by owners – rescue group (2026-11-01 11:38)

MANILA, Philippines — All 29 dogs and cats dumped in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan, have been claimed by their respective owners, according to an animal rescue group. The deceased pets were reportedly brought to the Ahjay Paws Aftercare Pet Crematorium in Bacoor City, Cavite, but were later found inside sacks dumped in a vacant

• BOC seeks to ease export hurdles for Filipino businesses (2026-11-01 11:22)

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Customs (BOC) is seeking to simplify export procedures and help Filipino businesses overcome regulatory and customs hurdles in accessing international markets. The bureau discussed customs processes, free trade agreements, and

government support programs during its first-ever Export Summit held on Oct. 26 and 27,according to a BOC statement on

• BFAR Bicol cemetery honors 14 stranded marine mammals (2026-11-01 10:52)

LEGAZPI CITY — Fourteen whales and dolphins have found their final resting place at a cemetery in Bula, Camarines Sur, maintained by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in Bicol. Established in 2013, the BFAR-5 Cetacean Cemetery is located within the agency's regional office compound in Barangay Fabrica. It serves as a burial

• Marina grounds OceanJet 788 after Bohol docking mishap (2026-11-01 10:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) has suspended the Passenger Ship Safety Certificate (PSSC) of MV OceanJet 788 after the vessel ran aground at the loading dock of Tagbilaran Port in Bohol on Saturday, Oct. 31. The suspension prevents the vessel from operating until it passes a safety inspection and Marina determines that

• Marina grounds 2 vessels after Cagayan, Bohol mishaps (2026-11-01 10:47)

MANILA, Philippines — The Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) suspended the Passenger Ship Safety Certificates (PSSCs) of two vessels involved in separate maritime incidents in Cagayan and Bohol on Saturday. In a statement on Sunday, Marina said it ordered the immediate suspension of the safety certificates of motor banca (MBca) Rose Marie 1 and passenger vessel

• Undas 2026: Bulacan dogs get Halloween pampering (2026-11-01 10:37)

CITY OF MALOLOS, Bulacan — The Halloween weekend gave dog owners in the province extra time to pamper their pets, with some bringing them to grooming shops where staff members joined in the Halloween fun by wearing spooky costumes. At Top-Notch Pet Grooming Shop along MacArthur Highway in Barangay Sta. Isabel, all five groomers and

• PDEA intercepts suspected marijuana shipment at Laguna courier hub (2026-11-01 10:32)

LUCENA CITY — The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) seized suspected marijuana products during a K9-assisted inspection at a courier hub in San Pablo City, Laguna, on Friday night, Oct. 30. In a report on Saturday, PDEA Region IV-A said agents from its Seaport Interdiction Unit-Batangas conducted the inspection at 8:30 p.m. in Barangay San

• Undas 2026: Cut flower prices surge in Bukidnon (2026-11-01 10:28)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — Prices of fresh-cut flowers in local markets in Valencia City, Bukidnon, surged on Sunday, Nov. 1, driven by higher farmgate costs and increased holiday demand for All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. Bing Lipat, owner of Valencia Nose Flower Shop, told the Inquirer that higher prices from wholesale suppliers forced

• Bacoor mayor orders probe into pet crematorium over dumped remains (2026-11-01 10:21)

LUCENA CITY — Bacoor City Mayor Strike Revilla has ordered a probe into the operations of Ahjay Paws Aftercare Pet Crematorium, following the discovery of 29 dead pets allegedly dumped in San Jose del Monte City, Bulacan, on Oct. 30. “We will not stop until the full truth is established and anyone found responsible is

• CIDG seizes P1.7-M ‘smuggled’ cigarettes in Zamboanga Sibugay (2026-11-01 10:13)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur — At least P1.7 million worth of alleged smuggled cigarettes were seized from two suspects during a joint law enforcement operation in Barangay Poblacion, Ipil, Zamboanga Sibugay, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group – Region 9 (CIDG-9) said Sunday. Operatives from the CIDG Zamboanga Sibugay and the Ipil Municipal Police

• Fair weather in Metro Manila, other parts of PH on All Saints’ Day (2026-11-01 10:03)

MANILA, Philippines — Fair weather with chances of thunderstorms are expected to persist in Metro Manila and other parts of the country on All Saints’ Day, Nov. 1, according to the weather bureau. In its morning weather forecast, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said the northeast monsoon, or amihan, and the

• Palawan cops seize P1.6M worth of illegally traded cigarettes (2026-11-01 09:55)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Police seized 1,710 reams of suspected illegally traded cigarettes worth P1.615 million in separate operations in Bataraza and Narra, Palawan, on Oct. 30 and 31. Three individuals, including a minor, were apprehended, the Palawan Police Provincial Office (PalPPO) reported. During the first operation in Bataraza, a 30-year-old fisherman identified only

• Undas tradition: ‘Biko’ endures in Bukidnon (2026-11-01 09:48)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — Despite economic pressures, traditional Filipino delicacies remain central to All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day observances across Bukidnon, with families preserving generations-old culinary customs before heading to cemeteries. For 55-year-old Mario, a resident of Barangay Batangan, preparing biko—a sweet native delicacy made from glutinous rice (pilit), fresh coconut milk and

• Undas 2026: 1,500 passengers make last-minute trips at QC bus terminal (2026-11-01 09:44)

MANILA, Philippines — Even on All Saints’ Day, several passengers flocked to a bus terminal in Quezon City to make the most of the holiday and spend time with their loved ones. According to Victory Liner, approximately 1,500 passengers had arrived at the terminal as of 8 a.m. Terminal coordinator Arnel Macaspac said the figure

• Senior citizen nabbed with P7.4-M shabu in Zamboanga City (2026-11-01 09:36)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur — A 68-year-old widow was arrested with P7.4 million worth of suspected shabu in Zamboanga City in one of the locality's biggest drug seizures involving a senior citizen, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency-Region 9 (PDEA-9) said on Sunday. Operatives nabbed alias "Sitti" during a buy-bust operation in Barangay Talon-Talon on

• Hagonoy's dead once more submerged by Undas floods (2026-11-01 09:29)

HAGONOY, Bulacan — In this coastal municipality where high tides are a daily occurrence, even the dead are not spared from flooding during this year's All Saints' Day weekend. On Friday, Oct. 30, major cemeteries in Hagonoy's poblacion remained submerged after floodwaters rose to 4.36 feet at 11:34 p.m. on Oct. 29, driven by high

• Undas 2026: Checkpoint in Quezon nets motorcyclist with unlicensed gun (2026-11-01 09:08)

LUCENA CITY — Police seized an unlicensed firearm and several rounds of ammunition from a motorcycle rider intercepted at a checkpoint in Lopez, Quezon, on Friday, Oct. 30. In a report on Saturday, the Police Regional Office-Calabarzon (PRO-4A) said officers manning an Undas security checkpoint flagged down a lone motorcycle rider in Barangay Bacungan on

• Bukidnon deploys 1,100 personnel as crowds flock to cemeteries (2026-11-01 08:58)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — At least 1,100 security personnel were deployed across Bukidnon on Sunday, Nov. 1, to enforce safety guidelines and El Niño fire prevention measures as crowds flocked to cemeteries for Undas 2026. Personnel from the Bukidnon Police Provincial Office, the Bureau of Fire Protection, the provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office (DRRMO),

• Missing fisherman rescued off Mauban, Quezon (2026-11-01 08:38)

LUCENA CITY — A fisherman who went missing while fishing off Infanta, Quezon, on Oct. 29, was rescued off Mauban on Saturday morning. Mauban Mayor Erwin Pastrana said in a Facebook post that the fisherman was rescued off Barangay Cagsiay III and immediately assisted by local residents. Pastrana identified the rescued fisherman as an Infanta

• 8 rescued after cargo boat partially sinks off Cagayan (2026-11-01 08:11)

TUGUEGARAO CITY — Eight crew members of a cargo boat were rescued after it partially sank off Dalupiri Island in Calayan, Cagayan, on Saturday, Oct. 31, according to the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and local disaster response teams. The M/B Rose Marie 1 reportedly experienced engine trouble and took in water, causing it to partially

• Marcos urges Filipinos to turn Undas spirit into acts of kindness (2026-11-01 07:29)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Sunday called on Filipinos to extend the spirit of remembrance during All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day to acts of compassion, particularly toward people who are struggling. In his message for Undas, Marcos said the

devotion Filipinos show in honoring their departed loved ones should also

• JV, Lacson: Budget ‘bicam’ open to all, sparing none (2026-11-01 05:34)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate finance committee chair Sen. JV Ejercito and vice chair Sen. Panfilo “Ping” Lacson promised that they would spare no one, including the son of President Marcos, from scrutiny during deliberations by the bicameral conference committee on the P7.2-trillion national budget, which is alleged to be filled with insertions akin to pork.

• At 90, sis of WWII soldier visits his grave after decades long search (2026-11-01 05:32)

MANILA, Philippines — For only the second time in eight decades, Adelaida Samonte, 90, traveled from Batangas to Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig City on Saturday, to visit the grave of her older brother, a World War II soldier. It was only last year when her family discovered where Victor Samonte, who died of

• A buoy for the spirit in flood-weary Marikina (2026-11-01 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Dave Dela Cruz, dazed and knocked flat, woke up drenched on a chapel floor in Marikina City. He had slipped and bashed his head the previous night, when floods from Super Typhoon Carina (international name: Gaemi) refused to spare even the holiest of places. But unlike his neighbors hauling appliances to higher

• Edcom: Learning gap can be fixed even before Grade 1 (2026-11-01 05:28)

MANILA, Philippines — The Second Congressional Commission on Education (Edcom 2) has called on the Department of Education (DepEd) to strengthen early childhood and primary education curricula to address the growing number of “struggling readers” among Grade 1 students. Edcom 2 made the call after the DepEd’s Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment for the start of

• DOE on ‘Undas’ energy supply alert (2026-11-01 05:26)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Energy (DOE) said it is monitoring the country’s electricity and fuel supply amid the expected increase in travel and public activity during the “Undas” or All Saints’ Day holiday. The agency said it is closely working with power generation firms, the National Grid Corp. of the Philippines and distribution

• 800 deportees arrive in Zamboanga from Sabah (2026-11-01 05:24)

PAGADIAN CITY, ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR, Philippines — Some 800 deportees from Sabah, Malaysia, arrived in Zamboanga City on Friday night aboard passenger vessel MV Antonia 1, the Zamboanga Peninsula regional field office of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) said on Saturday. Of the 800 deportees, 589 are adult males, 89 are adult

• ‘Newspaper of the Year’: Inquirer bags 2026 ALTA media award (2026-11-01 05:22)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI) was among the 66 media honorees recognized at the 7th Alta Media Icon Awards 2026, an honor conferred by the University of Perpetual Help System Dalta (UPHSD). The Inquirer received the award as Newspaper of the Year. Inquirer Foundation executive director Connie Kalagayan accepted the trophy on

• Bamboo takes center stage in Unesco geopark (2026-11-01 05:20)

BOHOL, Philippines — Bohol province is embracing bamboo, a traditional material used in construction and handicrafts, as part of efforts to promote sustainable tourism and improve local livelihoods. In 2023, the island province was designated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) as its first Global Geopark in the Philippines, in recognition

• Sagada's 'Panag-aapoy' lights up a hill to honor the dead (2026-11-01 05:17)

BAGUIO CITY, Philippines — I was at the early stages of graduate school thesis work at the University of the Philippines Baguio in 2007 when I was told by photographer Tommy Hafalla that the ritual "Begnas" of Sagada town in Mountain Province was to be held in the days leading up to All Saints' Day.

• This week's milestones: Nov. 1 to Nov. 7 (2026-11-01 05:15)

Nov. 4, 1999 Tuguegarao was converted from a municipality to a component city of Cagayan province through the approval of Republic Act No. 8755. A plebiscite was later held on Dec. 18, 1999, to ratify the conversion. Designated as the capital city of Cagayan and the regional center of Cagayan Valley, Tuguegarao is bounded by

• Spooky mall frights, cemetery bazaar mark Bukidnon Halloween (2026-11-01 03:36)

VALENCIA CITY, BUKIDNON, Philippines — Holiday shoppers and cemetery visitors here experienced a mix of fright and festival energy on Saturday as local businesses and city organizers rolled out Halloween-themed attractions alongside the annual All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day exodus. Inside one of the city's premier shopping malls, retail employees transformed into iconic

• Faith traditions that shape how Filipinos observe All Souls' Day (2026-11-01 01:19)

ILIGAN CITY, Philippines — For Donna Montebon, a Catholic mother of three, All Souls' Day is more than an annual visit to the cemetery. It is a family tradition that keeps the memories of departed relatives alive and allows younger generations to learn about those who came before them. Every Nov. 1 and 2, her

• Iligan mayor asks cemetery visitors to observe proper waste disposal (2026-11-01 01:01)

ILIGAN CITY, Philippines — To help maintain cleanliness in cemeteries during this year's observance of "Undas," Iligan City Mayor Frederick Siao had asked cemetery visitors to bring their own trash bags so they can properly dispose of their waste. "It would be better if the

public brought their own trash bags when visiting cemeteries so

• 22 PUV drivers in Zamboanga test positive for drugs in ‘Oplan Harabas’ (2026-11-01 00:39)

PAGADIAN CITY, ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR, Philippines — A total of 22 public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers across the Zamboanga Peninsula region tested positive for illegal drug use during a surprise drug testing operation conducted at various transport terminals in time for the observance of Undas on Thursday, Oct. 29. The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency Regional

• Negros Occidental gov calls for ‘compassionate’ pricing of sugar (2026-10-31 23:56)

BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL — Negros Occidental Gov. Eugenio Jose Lacson said he hopes the buying price of sugar hits P3,000 per 50-kilogram bag (Lkg) to enable farmers to survive. “We cannot compel the traders to buy at the price we want [but] we are hoping they understand the situation and are more compassionate,” he

• Planters group welcome SRA’s cloud seeding fund in Negros, Panay (2026-10-31 23:39)

BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, Philippines — The Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) is allocating P30 million for cloud seeding operations in the Visayas to mitigate the effects of the super El Niño, Manuel Lamata, president of the United Sugar Producers Federation, said Friday, Oct. 30. Lamata, in a press statement, said he received a letter from

• Bishop calls for accountability, RE shift amid Visayas power crisis (2026-10-31 23:05)

BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, Philippines — San Carlos Bishop Gerardo Alminaza, president of Caritas Philippines, called for strict accountability and an urgent transition to distributed renewable energy (RE) following recurring power outages that have disrupted lives and local economies across the Visayas region. Addressing the ongoing grid instability, Alminaza cited findings from a recent report

• Civil society groups urge BARMM parliament to shun traditional politics (2026-10-31 22:45)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY, Philippines — As the first elected Parliament of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) opened its inaugural session Friday, civil society leaders, peacebuilders, and rights advocates warned against trading a revolutionary legacy for the transactional spoils of traditional politics. Rights advocacy group Katungod Bangsamoro framed the assembly not merely

• CDO authorities advise early cemetery visits to beat the heat (2026-10-31 22:23)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY, Philippines — With tens of thousands expected to flock to usually congested cemeteries, local authorities here have laid down strict guidelines for this year’s “Undas” or “Kalag-Kalag” observance, banning overnight stays, liquor, and smoking while urging the public to dodge the peak daytime heat. Visiting hours across all private and public

• Lone player bags Lotto 6/42 jackpot on Saturday, Oct. 31, 2026 (2026-10-31 21:51)

MANILA, Philippines—One ticket holder won the ₱10 million Lotto 6/42 jackpot on Saturday, October 31, 2026, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. No winner hit the jackpot in Grand Lotto 6/55 draw also on Saturday. Lotto 6/42 draw result: 16-40-07-18-41-03. Jackpot prize: P10 million Grand Lotto 6/55 draw result: 42-30-21-17-20-01. Jackpot prize: ₱319.54 million.

• Iloilo City gears up Tigkaralag; Cemetery visitors brave floods (2026-10-31 21:43)

ILOILO CITY — The Iloilo City Operations Center (OpCen) has been placed on blue alert for this year’s observance of All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day, locally known as Tigkaralag. Under Executive Order / Memorandum Order No. 409 signed by Mayor Raisa Treñas, the blue alert took effect at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, October

• Yolanda fatalities’ kin welcome results of NBI’s DNA tests (2026-10-31 21:31)

TACLOBAN CITY — More than a decade after Super Typhoon Yolanda devastated this city, families of victims buried in a mass grave at the Holy Cross Memorial Cemetery are hopeful they will finally know the exact resting places of their loved ones through DNA testing conducted by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI). While welcoming

• Planters, labor groups renew call for higher millgate sugar prices (2026-10-31 21:19)

BACOLOD CITY – Sugarcane growers and labor unions in Negros Occidental renewed their call for fairer farmgate sugar prices on Saturday, pointing out that recent price increases remain insufficient to cover high production costs and sustain small-scale planters. Recent raw sugar bidding results showed gains across major mills in the province, with Hawaiian-Philippine Co. reaching

• Proper hygiene urged as Tacloban schools record 704 cases of sore eyes (2026-10-31 21:18)

TACLOBAN CITY, LEYTE, Philippines — At least 704 cases of sore eyes, or conjunctivitis, were recorded in nine schools in Tacloban City from Oct. 1 to 15, prompting health officials and school administrators to remind students and teachers to observe proper hygiene and avoid spreading the infection. Data from the City Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit

• Animal protection, care bill pushed after dead pets dumped in Bulacan (2026-10-31 21:00)

MANILA, Philippines — Akbayan party-list Rep. Percival Cendaña has called for the passage of their bill which seeks stronger protection of animals, after reports on the dumping of 29 dead pets’ remains in the City of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. In a statement on Saturday, Cendaña called for the passage of House Bill (HB)

• Lightning strike kills 19-year-old hiker in Bukidnon (2026-10-31 20:52)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — What was meant to be a scenic mountain getaway ended in tragedy on Friday afternoon, Oct. 30, after a 19-year-old male hiker died from a lightning strike at a popular nature spot on Mt. Kilagas in Barangay Kiliog, Libona town. The victim, a resident of Macanahan, Cagayan de Oro City, had

• LOOK: Iligan City's holy, non-spooky Halloween (2026-10-31 20:42)

ILIGAN CITY – Halloween, traditionally observed through scary stories and images. need not be spooky. This is the message put across by the Catholic diocese here on Saturday, as the nation prepares to observe All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day on Sunday and Monday, respectively. As a counter-event, the diocese held its own version

• Marcos greets INC leader Eduardo Manalo on his 71st birthday (2026-10-31 20:33)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Saturday greeted Iglesia ni Cristo (INC) Executive Minister Eduardo Manalo on his 71st birthday, expressing support for their shared goal of a peaceful and united Philippines. "Maligayang kaarawan po kay Kapatid na Eduardo V. Manalo, Tagapamahalang Pangkalahatan ng Iglesia ni Cristo!" Marcos said in a Facebook

• Suspected NPA leader slain in South Cotabato encounter (2026-10-31 19:55)

COTABATO CITY -– A suspected leader of the Regional Instructors Bureau of the communist New People's Army (NPA) was killed in an encounter with the military and police in Polomolok, South Cotabato Friday evening. Brig. Gen. Edgar Catu, commander of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, identified the fatality as Noel Pamaong, also known by the

• Ejercito opens 2027 budget bicam hearings to civil society groups (2026-10-31 19:17)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate finance committee chairman Jose Victor "JV" Ejercito said that the Senate will open the bicameral conference committee to the civil society organizations (CSOs) for a more transparent 2027 General Appropriations Bill (GAB). The Senate will resume its plenary sessions on Nov. 9, where the senators will deliberate the P7.2 trillion budget

• 2 dead, 1 hurt in Quezon road mishaps (2026-10-31 19:05)

LUCENA CITY —A pedestrian and aa motorcyclist died while another pedestrian was injured in separate road accidents in Quezon province on Friday, according to the police. In Tagkawayan town, two pedestrians walking along Quirino Highway in Barangay Sta. Cecilia were struck by a passing Bicol-bound truck at 9:50 a.m., according to a Quezon police report.

• Edcom 2: Boost early childhood, primary education curricula (2026-10-31 18:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Amid the numbers of "struggling readers" among Grade 1 students, the Second Congressional Commission on Education (Edcom 2) urged the Department of Education (DepEd) to strengthen the curriculum in early childhood and primary education. This, as 75 percent of Grade 1 learners have been found to be "struggling readers", based on

DepEd’s

• Agusan del Sur upland flower growers enjoy brisk Undas sales (2026-10-31 18:17)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur—Freshly harvested blooms from an upland farming village here saw brisk sales on Saturday as consumers and travelers snapped up locally grown arrangements ahead of All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day (Undas). Members of the Pinagalaan Cutflower Farmers Association set up stalls near the city rotunda, drawing steady crowds of

• Over 1,400 Albay folk still in evacuation centers after Mayon eruption (2026-10-31 18:08)

LEGAZPI CITY — At least 1,477 residents in Albay remained in evacuation centers on Saturday (Oct. 31), a day after Mayon Volcano had a moderately explosive eruption that prompted authorities to enforce mandatory evacuation. The evacuees, who were living within the volcano’s six-kilometer permanent danger zone (PDZ), were moved to safer areas after the Philippine

• 4 rescued after being swept by strong current in La Union (2026-10-31 18:00)

SAN ILDEFONSO, Ilocos Sur—The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), with assistance from four fishermen, rescued four persons who were swept away by a strong waves while swimming off Barangay San Francisco, San Fernando City, La Union, on Friday. In a statement, the PCG said its Coast Guard Station La Union Baywatch Team responded to the incident

• No exceptions in Senate’s review of 2027 budget – Lacson (2026-10-31 17:34)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Panfilo Lacson said there will be no exceptions as the Senate goes “gung-ho” in scrutinizing questionable allocations in the House-approved version of the 2027 General Appropriations Bill (GAB). Lacson said that the Senate majority backs Senate finance committee chairman Jose Victor “JV” Ejercito’s move to address suspected red flags in the

• 14,000 Ilocandia security, emergency personnel all set for Undas 2026 (2026-10-31 17:17)

CALASIAO, Pangasinan—Around 14,000 security and emergency personnel will be deployed across the Ilocos region to strengthen public safety and road security during the observance of All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day on Nov. 1 and 2. Police Maj. Cherry Tolentino, chief of the Police Regional Office I public information office, said the deployment would

• Mayor Zamora inspects San Juan City Cemetery ahead of Undas (2026-10-31 16:53)

MANILA, Philippines —San Juan City Mayor Francis Zamora inspected the San Juan City Cemetery as early as Thursday, Oct. 22, as part of the city government’s preparations for the upcoming observance of All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day, collectively known as Undas. The inspection focused on the cemetery’s readiness to accommodate the expected influx

• Undas sea travelers swell to over 114,000 Saturday afternoon – PCG (2026-10-31 16:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The number of passengers in seaports across the country swelled to more than 114,000 by Saturday afternoon, ahead of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, or undas. The Philippine Coast Guard monitored 60,411 outbound passengers and 54,291 inbound passengers, as of 12:34 p.m. The tally was covered in its noon to

- Remains of fallen Air Force pilot back home in Urdaneta (2026-10-31 16:22)

CALASIAO, Pangasinan, Philippines—The remains of Air Force Capt. Raymart Cabangcala, one of four pilots killed in a midair collision involving two military trainer aircraft, were brought home to Urdaneta City on Friday, Oct. 30. A helicopter carrying his remains landed at the Urdaneta National High School oval, accompanied by his mother, Myrna, and sister Mayross,

- Undas liquor ban in and around Magsingal, Ilocos Sur public cemeteries (2026-10-31 16:12)

SAN ILDEFONSO, Ilocos Sur — The municipal government of Magsingal has imposed a two-day liquor ban in all public cemeteries and within a 300-meter radius of their boundaries on Nov. 1 and 2 to maintain peace and order during the observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. Under Executive Order No. 69, Series

- OPAPRU hails, encourages Bangsamoro Parliament (2026-10-31 15:59)

COTABATO CITY — The Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (Opapru) on Saturday urged members of the newly constituted Bangsamoro Parliament to bridge diverse perspectives and work together as the region begins its first regular parliamentary government. In a statement, Secretary Mel Senen S. Sarmiento, Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and

- Looking back at rich-poor divide history of Bulakan, Bulacan cemetery (2026-10-31 15:49)

BULAKAN, Bulacan—Centuries-old arches that once symbolized the divide between the rich and the poor, even in death, remain standing at a Roman Catholic cemetery in this town, the former capital of Bulacan province. At the municipal cemetery behind the Nuestra Señora de la Asunción Church, at least two old arches still stand as reminders of

- Fire hits 4 houses in Laoag City (2026-10-31 15:15)

SAN ILDEFONSO, Ilocos Sur – Fire struck four houses in Barangay Nalbo in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte on Friday. No casualties reported, local authorities said. According to Laoag City Vice Mayor Carlos Fariñas, the fire was reported to him at 6:52 a.m. via a Facebook Messenger call from a resident in the area. Fariñas said

- P9-M 'smuggled' cigarettes seized in Surigao del Sur; 2 arrested (2026-10-31 15:08)

LIANGA, Surigao del Sur — Police seized around P9 million worth of suspected smuggled cigarettes and arrested two individuals during an anti-smuggling operation in Barangay Saint Christine here Friday morning. Operatives from the 1st Surigao del Sur Provincial Mobile Force

Company (PMFC), led by acting force commander Maj. Magdalino G. Pimentel Jr., interceptedthe contraband

• Catholic bishop lauds election of BARMM Chief Minister Macacua (2026-10-31 15:00)

COTABATO CITY — The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) Episcopal Commission on Inter-religious Dialogue (ECID) welcomed the election of Abdulraof "Sammy Gambar" Macacua as chief minister of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). "A historic step for the peace process. Mr. Macacua is the first to hold this office in the

• Iligan City holds Alimyon Flower Festival in time for Undas (2026-10-31 14:40)

ILIGAN CITY – In the run-up to All Souls' Day here, business is brisk for merchants flowers and candles, two of the most common items Filipinos bring when visiting cemeteries during the annual observance. At the Alimyon Festival in Barangay Poblacion, flower vendors gather in stalls provided by the local government, creating a central marketplace

• Undas brings seasonal work, extra income to Iligan City youth (2026-10-31 14:17)

ILIGAN CITY — While families visit cemeteries to remember their departed loved ones, a group of young Iligan residents sees the annual observance of All Souls' Day as an opportunity to earn extra income for their households. For Arjay Cabanlit and his friend Paul Kennerth Zalsos, the days leading to Nov. 2 mean spending long

• MMDA suspends road works ahead of Christmas season (2026-10-31 12:25)

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has temporarily suspended all road excavations in national and city roads in Metro Manila. The suspension is meant to avoid worsening the expected heavy traffic congestion to be brought by the Christmas season. In an advisory on Saturday (October 31), the MMDA said that the temporary

• Flower prices go up in Bohol ahead of Undas (2026-10-31 12:14)

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol — Flower prices in Tagbilaran City, Bohol, have increased by around P10 to P30 ahead of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, or Undas, prompting vendors to offer bundled arrangements as more affordable options for customers. A bundle that previously cost P75 now sells for P100, while a P100 bundle has

• No illegal items seized in Manila North Cemetery so far – police (2026-10-31 12:13)

MANILA, Philippines — No illegal items like guns and knives have been confiscated in Manila North Cemetery on the eve of Undas (All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day), according to the police. Police Major Philipp Ines, public information office chief of the Manila Police District, attributed this to the law enforment's effective information dissemination.

• Cops destroy P108.8-M marijuana plants in Tinglayan, Kalinga (2026-10-31 12:00)

BAGUIO CITY—Police eradicated 544,000 fully grown marijuana plants worth an estimated P108.8 million during an anti-illegal drug operation in Tinglayan, Kalinga, this week. In a statement on Thursday, Oct. 29, the Kalinga Police Provincial Office (PPO) said the operation covered seven marijuana plantation sites spanning 48,500 square meters in Barangay Loccong. The operation, conducted on

• PNP deploys 19,972 personnel, volunteers for Undas in Eastern Visayas (2026-10-31 11:52)

TACLOBAN CITY — Nearly 20,000 police personnel, members of partner agencies, and civilian volunteers have been deployed across Eastern Visayas to ensure public safety during the observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day or Undas. The Police Regional Office 8 (PRO-8) said it mobilized 19,972 personnel and force multipliers from Oct. 29 to

• Afternoon rains, high heat index forecast for 'Undas' in Mindanao (2026-10-31 11:47)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — Cemetery visitors joining the annual exodus on All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day on November 1 and 2 are advised to adjust their schedules. The recommendation is due to the expected afternoon rains and high heat indices forecast across Mindanao. Justine Navarro, a specialist at the state weather bureau's Mindanao

• Undas 2026: Over 30,000 passengers flock to ports amid travel rush – PCG (2026-10-31 11:41)

MANILA, Philippines — More than 30,000 passengers passed through ports nationwide on Saturday morning, Oct. 31, as Filipinos traveled to their home provinces for Undas, the annual observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, according to the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG). In its latest tally as of 7:45 a.m., the PCG recorded 18,717

• Pangasinan gov't, cops probe alleged child exploitation in Urdaneta City (2026-10-31 11:23)

CALASIAO, Pangasinan — The provincial government of Pangasinan iw appealing to the public to give information on a reported child exploitation, abuse and other unlawful activities in a house in this city. In a statement on Friday (Oct. 30), the provincial government said it was communicating with the Department of the Interior and Local Government

• 100 koi released into Burnham Lake in Baguio to control algae growth (2026-10-31 11:03)

BAGUIO CITY—Around 100 koi were released into Burnham Lake recently as part of the city's efforts to control algae growth and improve water quality. According to the Baguio City Public Information Office on Friday (Oct. 30), local volunteer and recreational development consultant Rafael Serrano and Baguio City Jail Male Dormitory warden Atty. Dexter Ngipol led

• Quezon imposes 4-day liquor ban in cemeteries for 'Undas' (2026-10-31 10:47)

LUCENA CITY — The Quezon provincial government imposed a four-day liquor ban in all public and private cemeteries across the province for a safe, peaceful and solemn observance of ‘Undas’ (All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day). According to Executive Order (EO) No. DHT-30, “bringing, drinking, distributing and selling liquor and other alcoholic beverages inside

• Rains expected in parts of PH on Oct. 31 (2026-10-31 10:38)

MANILA, Philippines — The low-pressure area (LPA) and two other weather systems are expected to bring scattered rains and thunderstorms to parts of the country on Saturday, Oct. 30, the state weather bureau said. In its weather advisory on Saturday morning, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said the trough of the

• Apayao village becomes a sanctuary for threatened, endemic birds (2026-10-31 10:36)

MANILA, Philippines — In the rivers and wetlands of Barangay Sta. Filomena in Calanasan, Apayao, hundreds of birds have found a refuge, including species threatened with extinction and others found nowhere else in the world but the Philippines. A three-day wildlife survey conducted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Cordillera Administrative Region

• Ilocos Norte logs 65 new dengue cases (2026-10-31 10:30)

SAN ILDEFONSO, Ilocos Sur — Ilocos Norte recorded 65 new dengue cases during morbidity week 42, or from October 11 to 17. This update brings the total to 2,777 cases and four deaths from January to October 2026, according to the Provincial Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit (PESU). The latest data cover morbidity weeks 1 to

• Jeepney driver tests positive for drugs ahead of Undas in La Union (2026-10-31 10:18)

SAN ILDEFONSO, Ilocos Sur — A jeepney driver in La Union tested positive for illegal drug use during a surprise screening of public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers and conductors in the Ilocos Region on Thursday, Oct. 29. The screening covered 111 transport workers as authorities intensified road safety measures ahead of Undas. The Philippine Drug

• No flowers, no visitors: The forgotten graves of Undas (2026-10-31 09:27)

MANILA, Philippines — The observance of All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day, or Undas, in the Philippines is not traditionally quiet. It is nearly a weeklong commemoration of deceased loved ones, with many people willing to travel from north to south and vice versa just to pay tribute to the dead. Undas is also

• Taal Volcano sulfur dioxide emissions drop as number of volcanic quakes rise (2026-10-31 09:16)

LUCENA CITY — Taal Volcano in Batangas recorded a sharp decline in sulfur dioxide emissions and an increase in volcanic earthquakes over the past 24 hours. The information comes from

the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs). In its Saturday morning (Oct.31) bulletin, Phivolcs reported sulfur dioxide emissions of 217 metric tons during

• Calabarzon cops on full alert for Undas; 12,000 personnel deployed (2026-10-31 08:57)

LUCENA CITY — The Police Regional Office-Calabarzon (PRO-4A) has deployed more than 12,000 (12,297) personnel across the region. This action is for public safety during this year's observance of 'Undas' (All Saints' Day on Nov. 1 and All Souls' Day on Nov. 2). PRO-4A said police forces across Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon were

• Missing 35-year-old man found dead in Occidental Mindoro village (2026-10-31 08:36)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — A 35-year-old man who had been reported missing was found dead in a village in Santa Cruz, Occidental Mindoro on Friday morning, Oct. 30, police said. The victim's body was discovered at around 9:30 a.m. in Sitio Amnay, Barangay Barahan, after a farmer reportedly spotted his white Honda XRM 125

• Sara Duterte camp rejects new cash delivery claim (2026-10-31 05:48)

MANILA, Philippines — The camp of Vice President Sara Duterte on Friday dismissed as "another tanim (planted) witness" the allegations of a man identified only by the alias "Chris" that he had twice delivered suitcases of money to Duterte. In a statement, Duterte's spokesperson Salvador Paolo Panelo Jr. denied the allegations by Chris and said

• Ashes of deceased don't belong at home, bishop reminds flock (2026-10-31 05:46)

MANILA, Philippines — A reminder from the Catholic Church in this season honoring the dead: urns containing ashes of the deceased should be laid to rest in a sacred place, such as a cemetery or columbarium. "A cemetery or columbarium also gives family and community a shared place to pray for and remember the deceased,"

• Marcos vows orderly Undas travel (2026-10-31 05:40)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday said the government has taken steps to ensure a "safe, orderly and convenient" travel in this year's "Undas" or the All Saints' Day holidays. Mr. Marcos made this assurance as passenger count at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) topped 1 million that day while passenger

• Marcos to BARMM's new MPs: Sustain the gains of peace (2026-10-31 05:34)

COTABATO CITY — President Marcos urged the first elected leaders of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) to be bearers of hope for the Moro people whose aspirations for self-governance took a historic turn on Friday with the inaugural session of the 80-member regional parliament. "After decades of struggle, we have reached this

• Bato dela Rosa ignores PNP deadline; manhunt to intensify (2026-10-31 05:32)

MANILA, Philippines — A senior Philippine National Police official said they would intensify the manhunt for Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa after the former national police chief ignored a deadline to surrender on Friday. The senator has a warrant of arrest from the International Criminal Court (ICC) in connection with the war on drugs. Dela

- ‘Drug war’ truth body questions doctors’ reports (2026-10-31 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The country’s leading forensic pathologist and member of the Truth Commission that is looking into the brutal drug war on Friday called on the Philippine Medical Association (PMA) and the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) to investigate at least five doctors for their alleged “miscertification” of the cause of death of some of

- Mayon blast forces evacuation in Albay (2026-10-31 05:06)

LEGAZPI CITY — Residents living within the 6-kilometer permanent danger zone (PDZ) of Mt. Mayon evacuated from their homes on Friday following the volcano’s explosive eruption, with local authorities rushing to move families to safer grounds. Some residents described the explosion as sounding like a bomb blast, prompting them to seek shelter in evacuation centers

- Cebu prelate to faithful: ‘Reclaim’ Halloween meaning (2026-10-31 05:04)

TAGBILARAN CITY—As Christendom prepares to observe All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day, the prelate of the country’s oldest Catholic community called on the faithful to go back to the real meaning of these holy days. Cebu Archbishop Alberto Uy has called on the faithful to reclaim Halloween’s Christian meaning by celebrating holiness and honoring

- Negros Occidental posts P42M in crop losses from dry spell (2026-10-31 05:02)

BACOLOD CITY — Negros Occidental has posted P42.41 million in crop losses amid the dry conditions brought about by the El Niño phenomenon in some parts of the province, records from the provincial government showed. READ: Negros Occidental, Bacolod, other LGUs declare state of calamity A report submitted by acting provincial agriculturist Dina Genzola to

- Cops intercept P17.65-M illegal cigarettes in Zamboanga City (2026-10-31 00:19)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur – Police operations across the Zamboanga Peninsula netted some P17.65 million worth of suspected smuggled cigarettes in separate interdictions Wednesday, Oct. 28, the Police Regional Office 9 (PRO-9) reported. Police Lt. Col. Shellamie Chang, chief of the PRO 9 Regional Public Information Office, said the anti-smuggling drive yielded a total

- Newborn found abandoned in Bohol town (2026-10-31 00:15)

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol — A newborn baby boy was found early Friday morning, Oct. 30, abandoned inside a residential property in Panglao, Bohol, just four days after another was discovered near a school. The newborn was found at around 3 a.m. on top of a small table outside the house of 53-year-old Myrna Ayup in Purok

• Cargo van with illegal mineral ore seized in Zamboanga del Norte (2026-10-30 23:53)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur – – Authorities confiscated a wing van loaded with some 481 sacks of illegally sourced mineral ore during a joint operation by the Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office (MENRO)-Sindangan, Office of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer (OPENRO), and the Sindangan Municipal Police Station on Thursday, Oct. 29.

• P800,000 worth of cigarettes found inside rescue vehicle in Iligan (2026-10-30 23:47)

ILIGAN CITY — A vehicle reportedly being used for barangay rescue operations was found transporting around P800,000 worth of suspected smuggled cigarettes when police intercepted it at a checkpoint along Macapagal Highway in Barangay Suarez here on Thursday afternoon, October 29. Police said personnel of the Iligan City Mobile Force Company (ICMFC), led by Lt.

• NLEX readies counterflow as Undas traffic builds (2026-10-30 22:39)

MANILA, Philippines — North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) Corp. is preparing to implement counterflow operations as more motorists head north for Undas, with traffic expected to build from Friday afternoon, Oct. 30, through Saturday, Oct. 31. To manage the expected influx of motorists, NLEX is prepared to implement counterflow when needed, assistant vice president for traffic

• Solon seeks sustainable tourism development at 4 Albay sites (2026-10-30 22:38)

LEGAZPI CITY, Albay — Four natural and historical sites in Albay province are being eyed for development as sustainable tourism destinations under bills sponsored by Rep. Raymond Adrian Salceda. The proposed measures seek to generate jobs, protect the environment and preserve local heritage while promoting tourism beyond the province’s main attraction, Mayon Volcano. Salceda sponsored

• New BARMM chief minister offers reconciliation, vows to serve all (2026-10-30 22:30)

COTABATO CITY — Newly elected Bangsamoro Chief Minister Abdulraof Macacua on Friday called on all political leaders, including his opponents, to work with his administration in serving the Bangsamoro people. In his inaugural speech following his election over MP Ahod “Al Haj Murad” Ebrahim, chair of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and his former

• Ombudsman suspends 5 DPWH engineers over anomalous Bulacan projects (2026-10-30 22:16)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the Ombudsman on Friday said it ordered the preventive suspension of five project engineers of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) amid its ongoing investigation involving three flood control projects in Bulacan. In a statement, the ombudsman identified the five engineers as Irene Ontingco, Kevin Geronimo, John

• Ultra Lotto 6/58, Mega Lotto 6/45 draw results on Friday, Oct. 30 (2026-10-30 21:58)

MANILA, Philippines—No bettor won the ₱460.91 million Ultra Lotto 6/58 jackpot or the ₱15 million Mega Lotto 6/45 jackpot on Friday, Oct. 30, 2026, according to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. Ultra Lotto 6/58 draw result: 51-57-35-54-29-45. Jackpot prize: ₱460.91 million Mega Lotto 6/45 draw result: 09-37-34-18-27-44 Jackpot prize: ₱15 million Minor games The results

- PNP chief inspects transpo terminals, major cemetery ahead of Undas (2026-10-30 21:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Gen. Jose Melencio C. Nartatez Jr. inspected bus terminals in Cubao, Quezon City and the Manila North Cemetery on Friday, as the nation prepares for the Undas break. Nartatez assessed the security measures, as well as the conditions of the terminals in anticipation of the surge of

- INQToday: Cubao bus terminal vendors hit by poor sales despite travel rush (2026-10-30 21:43)

MANILA, Philippines — Here are INQToday's stories for Friday, Oct. 30, 2026, as of 6 p.m. Cubao bus terminal vendors hit by poor sales despite travel rush Despite the influx of passengers at a Cubao bus terminal in Quezon City, food vendors noted that the increase in foot traffic had yet to translate into higher

- Prosecution on SWS survey: 70% want explanation from Sara Duterte (2026-10-30 21:41)

MANILA, Philippines — While it is easy to conclude that the recent Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey indicated that the prosecution is losing in the court of public opinion, a panel member has stressed that it also showed a huge clamor for Vice President Sara Duterte to explain herself before the impeachment court. In an online

- Caap to airmen: Avoid flying near Mayon following eruption (2026-10-30 21:31)

MANILA, Philippines — The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (Caap) on Friday issued a Notice to Airmen (Notam) for flights near Mayon Volcano in Albay. This came after Mayon recorded a moderately explosive eruption earlier this Friday, sending a grayish ash plume 3,000 meters above the volcano. READ: Mayon Volcano erupts, sends ash plume

- Manila Water shares practical ways to get ready for El Niño (2026-10-30 20:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Responsible preparation begins with what households can do today, while water service remains normal. A strong to very strong El Niño is present in the tropical Pacific and may peak before the end of 2026, according to PAGASA. It may continue through the first half of 2027, increasing the likelihood of below-normal

- SC: Male victims suffer equal trauma from sexual violence (2026-10-30 20:45)

MANILA, Philippines – Behind closed doors, in an air conditioned bedroom where an 11-year-old boy fell asleep during a family visit, a quiet violation eventually haunted him. Overwhelmed by fear of an older relative, the little boy complied when his 25-year-old paternal

aunt ordered him to undress. He remained silent at first—bound by youth, curiosity,

• Cendaña reiterates: Nothing libelous with what I said about Quiboloy (2026-10-30 20:41)

MANILA, Philippines — Akbayan party-list Rep. Percival Cendaña has maintained that there is nothing libelous in the statements he made about Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KOJC) founder Apollo Quiboloy. Cendaña made the statement as the lawmaker filed his counter-affidavit to the cases against him. In an ambush interview on Friday, the lawmaker said that part of

• San Juan City recognized at 2026 NCR Subaybayani Awards (2026-10-30 20:30)

MANILA, Philippines — San Juan City was recognized as one of the awardees under the Top Performing City category during the Department of the Interior and Local Government's (DILG) 2026 NCR Subaybayani Awards, in recognition of its accomplishments in implementing locally funded infrastructure projects and strengthening local project monitoring mechanisms. Mayor Francis Zamora was represented

• Ombudsman suspends 2 QC barangay execs for 'undocumented' transactions (2026-10-30 19:46)

MANILA, Philippines—The Office of the Ombudsman on Friday ordered the preventive suspension of a barangay captain and barangay treasurer in Quezon City. The directive comes after it was found that numerous transactions involving millions of public funds lacked the supporting documents. In a statement, the ombudsman said it suspended barangay captain Ronald Noga Tagle and

• Senate leaders vow removal of budget items not supported by documents (2026-10-30 19:39)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian and Senator JV Ejercito have vowed to remove items in the 2027 proposed budget that do not have supporting documents from local government units (LGUs) and national agencies that will prove the necessity of the project. In a statement shared to reporters on Friday, Gatchalian said that the Senate

• Liza Marcos, Angara launch nationwide school hydroponics project (2026-10-30 19:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The first lady, Louise "Liza" Araneta-Marcos, and Education Secretary Sonny Angara, together with the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), launched a nationwide school-based hydroponics project at Las Piñas National High School and Parañaque National High School. According to a DepEd statement on Thursday, the project, part of the Agri Tayo, Lab for All program,

• DepEd wins praise from Harvard education dean for PISA gains (2026-10-30 19:13)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Education (DepEd) has gained international recognition for its performance improvements in the 2025 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). According to a DepEd statement on Friday, Dean Nonie Lesaux of

the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) praised the country's educational trajectory during a forum organized by the Harvard Club

• DPWH to close EDSA southbound lanes for repairs on Undas weekend (2026-10-30 18:52)

MANILA, Philippines—Motorists traveling along EDSA southbound will encounter temporary lane closures from Friday night, Oct. 30. This situation will happen as the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) goes on the second phase of the highway's rehabilitation. The repair works will cover three sections – near the NEPA Q-Mart Bus Station, past the EDSA

• PH, Abu Dhabi firm eyeing strategic petroleum reserves partnership (2026-10-30 18:51)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) are exploring a strategic petroleum reserves partnership to reduce the country's vulnerability to disruptions in the global oil supply. In a social media post on Friday, Senate Energy Committee Chairperson Sen. Erwin Tulfo said he conducted an on-site observation and consultation at ADNOC headquarters

• Ejercito, DPWH agree to drop noncompliant projects from 2027 budget (2026-10-30 18:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. JV Ejercito has secured the commitment of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to remove infrastructure projects with incomplete documentary requirements from the proposed 2027 national budget. Ejercito, chair of the Senate Committee on Finance, met on Friday with newly appointed Public Works Secretary Giovanni Lopez and the latter's

• Palace tells business groups it's hoping for passage of clean 2027 budget too (2026-10-30 18:23)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Friday said the Marcos administration shares the business groups' calls to prevent the misuse of funds in the proposed 2027 national budget. The statement came after more than 30 business and civil society organizations urged Congress to make sure that no budget insertions that lack technical justifications will be allowed in

• Cubao bus terminal vendors hit by poor sales despite travel rush (2026-10-30 17:59)

Food Vendor Yolanda Reynoso struggles to cash in despite the surge of passenger traffic this Undas -(INQUIRER.net / Noy Morcoso) MANILA, Philippines — As more passengers flock to transport terminals on Friday ahead of the Undas break, Yolanda Reynoso and other food vendors also work long hours as they try to at least break even.

• Seniors urged to schedule cemetery visit after Undas (2026-10-30 17:28)

MANILA, Philippines — Senior citizens and those with underlying health conditions were advised on Friday to consider postponing their cemetery visits until after Undas, or the observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, as large crowds and hot weather brought by the Super El Niño are expected to pose health risks. Manila Mayor

• Over 99,000 Undas visitors expected at Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig (2026-10-30 17:27)

MANILA, Philippines—Those who wish to visit their departed loved ones at Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig City for Undas will have to prepare for a large crowd from Saturday (October 31) until All Saints' Day on Sunday (November 1). The management of this cemetery is expecting more than 99,000 visitors. "We expect that the

• Documents vs VP in impeachment trial came from her camp, says prosec (2026-10-30 17:11)

MANILA, Philippines — Batangas Rep. Gerville Luistro has reminded the public that the evidence gathered and presented by the prosecution against Vice President Sara Duterte — particularly the bank and tax records under Article II — are documents that came from her camp. Luistro said this on Friday after a recent Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey

• Legarda seeks full restitution of PDIC and PhilHealth funds in 2027 budget (2026-10-30 17:00)

MANILA, Philippines—Sen. Loren Legarda has renewed her push for the full restitution and proper allocation of funds "legally intended" for the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth). The call comes as Congress deliberates on the proposed P7.2-trillion budget for 2027. "Our national budget must reflect our responsibility to protect

• Probe into questionable drug war death certificates pushed (2026-10-30 16:55)

MANILA, Philippines—A former spokesperson of the Supreme Court (SC) on Friday called for a clear documentation system on the process of issuing and correcting death certificates as an independent body looking into drug war killings flag at least five physicians who declared questionable deaths. In a press conference on Friday with the Truth Commission, human

• Mayon ashfall descends over communities in Albay (2026-10-30 16:52)

ALBAY — Residents near the slopes of Mayon Volcano were sent to evacuation centers on Friday after a thin layer of ashfall began affecting nearby towns following a "moderate explosive eruption" before noon. Oscar Robert Cristobal, chief of the Albay Public Safety and Emergency Management Office (Apsemo), said they expect to evacuate 1,131 families from

• Too early to seek SC view on impeachment voting, says prosecution (2026-10-30 16:38)

MANILA, Philippines — While they will adhere to the Supreme Court (SC) order asking them to comment on a petition against the impeachment court's decision allowing a lower minimum number of votes for conviction, two prosecutors believe such talks are premature due to the lack of a justiciable issue. In separate online interviews on Friday, lead public

• MV Peñafrancia's safety certificate suspended after listing in Quezon (2026-10-30 16:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) has suspended the Passenger Ship Safety Certificate of the vessel MV Virgen de Peñafrancia II. The suspension comes after the passenger boat capsized onto its right side at the Port of Real in Quezon earlier on Friday that resulted in the injury of three passengers. Marina's order

• Undas 2026: PCG logs over 8,400 passengers in Southern Tagalog ports (2026-10-30 16:28)

CALAPAN CITY — The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) monitored 8,480 passengers traveling in Southern Tagalog ports during six hours on Friday as authorities intensified security measures for the All Saints' Day weekend rush. The Coast Guard District Southern Tagalog recorded 4,107 outbound passengers and 4,373 inbound passengers from midnight to 6 a.m. on Friday, according

• Cordillera town church given historical marker (2026-10-30 16:18)

BAGUIO CITY — The municipality of Besao in Mountain Province received its first historical marker recognizing the heritage significance of St. Benedict Episcopal Church. The marker recognizes the church's role in the growth of the Episcopal Church in the Cordillera and its contribution to community life in Besao. St. Benedict Episcopal Church traces its origins

• Cooperatives urged to expand solar financing in Oriental Mindoro (2026-10-30 16:13)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Renewable energy advocates have urged Oriental Mindoro cooperatives to expand solar financing programs to make clean, affordable electricity more accessible to households, farmers, fisherfolk, and small businesses. They made the call during the Provincial Cooperatives' Summit on Renewable Energy held in Calapan City on Friday, which encouraged cooperatives to use

• Marcos on Bangsamoro Parliament inaugural session: We won't desert you (2026-10-30 16:09)

MANILA, Philippines —President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. pledged the national government's support for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) Parliament as it convened its first session on Friday. During the session, 79 of the 80 elected members of Parliament elected Abdulraof Macacua as chief minister, who will lead the regional government and oversee its

• Gulgol: An Ilocano post-burial ritual for grief, cleansing and healing (2026-10-30 15:46)

For Ilocano communities across Northern and Central Luzon, mourning does not end with burial. A day after accompanying their departed loved one to their final resting place, bereaved families make their way to a river or the sea to take part in an age-old ritual known as gulgol. "From the provinces of the Ilocos Region

• Ex-MILF military chief elected first BARMM Chief Minister (2026-10-30 15:42)

COTABATO CITY — Member of Parliament (MP) Abdulraof “Sammy Gambar” Macacua was elected the first Chief Minister of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) on Friday during the regional legislature’s inaugural session at the Shariff Kabunsuan Cultural Center. Macacua, who heads the Bangsamoro Federalist Party, was nominated by MP Kitem Kadatuan and was in contention

• Still no Interpol red notice vs Bato dela Rosa, lawyer says (2026-10-30 15:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The camp of Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa claimed that the Philippine National Police (PNP) has no basis for its manhunt operations as the senator is not listed in the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) red notice. Lawyer Israelito Torreon, the senator’s legal counsel, insisted that, based on information they received, there

• Lingayen Airport to be temporarily closed for Undas – Caap (2026-10-30 15:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The Lingayen Airport in Pangasinan will be temporarily closed from October 31 to November 1 due to the observance of Undas (All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day). The announcement comes from the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (Caap) on Friday. In a statement, Caap said the Notice to Airmen will

• Taytay records 44.79°C heat index despite start of cold weather (2026-10-30 15:21)

LUCENA CITY — Taytay, Rizal recorded a heat index of 44.79 degrees Celsius on Friday, placing it in the danger category despite the onset of cool winds brought by the “amihan.” The local government’s Public Information Office (PIO) warned residents about health risks from prolonged exposure to extreme heat. The office urged residents to stay

• 14 Palawan offshore oil, gas deals threaten marine biodiversity (2026-10-30 15:11)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Fourteen of the country’s 22 active petroleum service contracts (PSCs) are located in waters surrounding Palawan, raising concerns over potential threats to marine biodiversity, protected areas and coastal communities, an environmental group said. The Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED) raised the alarm on Friday in its report, “Don’t

• Don’t keep cremated remains at home – Archdiocese of Manila (2026-10-30 15:03)

MANILA, Philippines—As families prepare to remember their departed loved ones this Undas, the Archdiocese of Manila has reminded Catholics that cremated remains should be laid to rest in a grave, mausoleum or columbarium. In an Oct. 24 circular released on Friday, the archdiocese cited the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines’ Liturgical Guidelines on Cremation.

• Leachon decries alleged harassment, vows to testify on Dengvaxia (2026-10-30 14:55)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro – Health reform advocate Dr. Anthony “Tony” Leachon has denounced continuing attempts to silence him as a vital witness in pending criminal cases

involving the state-sponsored Dengvaxia vaccinations now being heard by a Quezon City Regional Trial Court. In a statement on Wednesday, Leachon, a resident doctor at Manila Doctors Hospital, confirmed

• Undas 2026: Key reminders for a safe, clean cemetery visit (2026-10-30 14:29)

MANILA, Philippines — As Filipinos visit cemeteries this Undas to remember their departed loved ones, environmental advocates are urging them to reduce waste, while authorities are reminding families to keep children safe, observe fire precautions and prepare for changing weather. From bringing reusable food containers and disposing of trash properly to keeping pathways clear and

• Isko Moreno gives reminders for Manila North Cemetery Undas visitors (2026-10-30 14:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Ahead of Undas, or the All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day holidays, Manila Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso on Friday issued reminders to the public, who intend to visit the Manila North Cemetery. During an inspection led by the mayor at the cemetery, Domagoso told potential visitors what not to bring

• Bangsamoro parliament convenes with 79 members present (2026-10-30 14:13)

COTABATO CITY — The first elected Bangsamoro Parliament convened in the regional legislature's plenary hall at the Bangsamoro Government Center here on Friday with 79 of 80 members present. Sheikh Muslim Guiamaden, Bangsamoro wali or ceremonial head, struck the gong, which symbolizes the opening of the session. Director Jaime Ayub, the highest-ranking officer of the

• Undas 2026: Passengers flock to terminals; cemeteries begin to draw crowds (2026-10-30 14:03)

While Filipinos begin to observe Undas 2026, passenger volume at transport terminals has picked up as travelers head to their respective provinces to visit their departed loved ones. The cemeteries have also started drawing crowds ahead of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day while authorities have deployed additional personnel at major transport hubs and

• Manila Memorial Park in Sucat logs over 16,000 visitors ahead of Undas (2026-10-30 13:47)

MANILA, Philippines – More than 16,000 visitors were recorded at Manila Memorial Park in Sucat on Friday, exceeding the cemetery's expected count of 15,000. According to cemetery authorities, security personnel recorded 16,183 visitors as of 12 noon, two days ahead of All Saints' Day. READ: LIVE UPDATES: Undas 2026 | Oct. 30 It was the

• Mla North Cemetery Undas operating hours' extension to be assessed (2026-10-30 13:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Whether or not the operating hours of the Manila North Cemetery during Undas—or the observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day—will be extended will have to be evaluated by the local government of Manila. Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno"

Domagoso gave this view on Friday (October 30). As of now, Manila

• Albay suspends classes after Mayon's explosive eruption (2026-10-30 13:17)

LEGAZPI CITY — Following Mayon Volcano's explosive eruption, classes at all levels in public and private schools across Albay were suspended Friday afternoon. Gov. Noel Rosal announced the suspension in a Facebook post, saying classes would remain suspended until further notice. "Classes in all levels in Albay, private/public, suspended this afternoon until lifted," Rosal said.

• PNP to Bato dela Rosa: Surrender to prevent harm to uniformed personnel (2026-10-30 13:14)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) appealed to Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa, a former nationalpolicechief, to voluntarily surrender to prevent harm to uniformed personnel. "Kung sa puso niya ay gayun pa ang kanyang pagiging tatay ng Philippine National Police, alam ko hindi niya hahayaan na mayroon isa o dalawa o 10 members

• Mayon Volcano's alert level raised to 3 after eruption (2026-10-30 13:08)

LEGAZPI CITY — The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) on Friday raised Mayon Volcano's alert status from Level 2 to Level 3 following a moderately explosive eruption that sent an ash plume 3,000 meters above its summit. The eruption occurred at 11:53 a.m. on Oct. 30, producing a dense, rapidly rising ash column

• BARMM lawmakers arrive for inaugural session amid tight security (2026-10-30 12:07)

COTABATO CITY — Elected members of the Bangsamoro Parliament began arriving at the Bangsamoro Government Center (BGC) on Friday morning for its inaugural session on the afternoon. At around 10 a.m., luxury vehicles were seen at the BGC's main gate as light rain continued to fall. Among the early birds were Moro Islamic Liberation Front

• Poor even in death: The high cost of dying in the Philippines (2026-10-30 12:05)

MANILA, Philippines — In a country where millions live in poverty and struggle to make ends meet, the cost of holding a wake and burying a loved one can be overwhelming, especially for families still burdened by hospital bills and debts after prolonged medical treatment. Government data showed that 9.7% of the Philippine population, or

• BREAKING: Mayon Volcano erupts, sends ash plume 3,000 meters high (2026-10-30 12:04)

(2ND UPDATE) MANILA, Philippines — Mayon Volcano recorded a moderately explosive eruption on Friday, Oct. 30, sending a grayish ash plume 3,000 meters above the volcano, the state volcanology agency said. The eruption began at 11:53 a.m. and ended at 11:59 a.m., lasting nearly six minutes, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology

• PITX logs over 1 million passengers ahead of Undas 2026 weekend (2026-10-30 11:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Passenger count at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) reached past one million as more Filipinos gear up early for their annual journey back to their home provinces in time for Undas 2026 commemmoration, or the celebration of All Souls' Day and All Saints' Day. Based on data released by PITX as

- WATCH: Flower sales still normal but prices expected to go up on weekend (2026-10-30 11:40)

Sales of flowers at Dangwa Flower Market remain normal, with no significant surge in demand yet. However, prices of flowers are expected to increase slightly as Undas approaches and more Filipinos traditionally buy flowers to offer at their loved ones' graves.

- Dengue hits all villages of Agusan del Sur town; 2 dead (2026-10-30 11:40)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Dengue has swept through all 27 villages of this town, a commercial hub of Agusan del Sur province, infecting 432 residents and claiming two lives as of Wednesday, according to the Municipal Health Office (MHO). The surge mirrors a wider health crisis across Agusan del Sur, which was placed

- 58 passengers rescued from distressed sea vessel off Real, Quezon (2026-10-30 11:28)

LUCENA CITY — The Philippine Coast Guard rescued 58 passengers from a roll-on/roll-off vessel that tilted to its right side about 10 meters from the port of Real, Quezon before daybreak on Friday. The MV Virgen de Peñafrancia II had just arrived from Polillo Island and was preparing to dock at the port in Barangay

- Romblon capitol rolls out reproductive health policy for workers (2026-10-30 11:16)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Romblon has enacted a comprehensive reproductive health and wellness program for all provincial government employees, according to its social media post on Thursday. Enacted on October 9 during the board's 35th Regular Session, Provincial Ordinance No. 24, Series of 2026 mandates institutional access to reproductive health

- Marcos assures safe, convenient travel as PH gears up for Undas 2026 (2026-10-30 11:16)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday said the government is beefing up transport, security, and emergency response preparations to ensure safe and convenient travel for Filipinos observing Undas 2026. In a video statement, Marcos said the Department of Transportation and other government agencies are conducting extensive inspections at airports, seaports, and bus terminals.

- 5,000 security troops fielded for Undas in Zamboanga Peninsula (2026-10-30 10:55)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur — The Police Regional Office 9 (PRO-9) has deployed over 5,000 security personnel and force multipliers across the Zamboanga Peninsula and Sulu province to ensure a peaceful, orderly observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day

(Undas 2026). Police Brig. Gen. Elmer Ragay, PRO-9 Director, directed the region's police

• Dizon inspects Naia T1 ahead of Undas 2026 travel rush (2026-10-30 10:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Transportation Secretary Vince Dizon inspected Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 1 on Friday as the country's main gateway prepares to handle around 1.2 million travelers during the Undas travel period. "Nandito po tayo ngayon sa Naia Terminal 1 kasi nga direktiba ng Pangulo na siguraduhin natin na maging safe and comfortable

• PNP stands firm on arresting Bato dela Rosa as ultimatum expires (2026-10-30 10:34)

MANILA, Philippines —The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Friday reaffirmed that it would not back down and remained ready to take appropriate measures to arrest Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa as his one-week ultimatum expired on Oct. 30. "Let me declare, hindi tayo uurong sa ating tungkulin," Lt. Gen. Wilson Joseph Lopez, PNP deputy chief

• Batac inaugurates first automated weather station in Ilocos Norte (2026-10-30 10:20)

SAN ILDEFONSO, Ilocos Sur— The Batac city government inaugurated Ilocos Norte's first Automated Weather Station (AWS) on Wednesday at Sitio Capaoayan in Barangay Tabug. The facility aims to provide timely, localized weather information to help farmers make informed decisions about planting schedules, irrigation management, and the application of fertilizers and pesticides. The station's weather data can

• Flooded graves, fading traditions: Undas in Hagonoy (2026-10-30 09:25)

MANILA, Philippines — The water reaches past the ankles, swallowing the narrow paths between tombs at the Hagonoy Catholic Cemetery in Bulacan. Into it, families step carefully in rubber boots, carrying candles and flowers for loved ones they have come to remember. It is a scene far removed from the Undas gatherings residents once knew

• MMDA: Light to moderate traffic Friday morning ahead of Undas break (2026-10-30 09:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Light to moderate traffic was reported in several parts of Metro Manila on Friday morning as travelers headed to their home provinces in time for the Undas 2026 weekend. Below is the traffic situation along major roads as of 8 a.m., according to the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA): READ: Rain, cloudy skies

• LOOK: Aquino family tomb draws visitors ahead of Undas (2026-10-30 09:09)

MANILA, Philippines — Flower arrangements were seen at the Aquino family mausoleum at Manila Memorial Park-Sucat in Parañaque City on Friday, ahead of the Undas holidays. The tomb serves as the final resting place of prominent members of the Aquino family, particularly former President Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, former President Corazon "Cory" Aquino, and former

• Labor group disputes claims of high sugarcane labor costs (2026-10-30 09:05)

MANILA, Philippines — The Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (UMA) has challenged the Sugar Council's characterization of sugarcane labor as costly, citing low wages, long working hours without overtime pay and hundreds of thousands of field workers who reportedly did not receive seasonal cash bonuses. In a statement, UMA chairperson Ariel Casilao said most

• Search underway for missing fisherman in Quezon (2026-10-30 08:46)

LUCENA CITY — The Philippine Coast Guard has launched a search and rescue operation for a 57-year-old fisherman who went missing after leaving home to fish off the coast of Infanta town in Quezon on early Thursday (Oct. 29). The fisherman left home in Barangay Dinahican at around 3 a.m. aboard a white-and-orange wooden boat

• VP camp dismisses fresh cash suitcase claims as another 'tanim witness' (2026-10-30 08:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The camp of Vice President Sara Duterte on Friday dismissed as "another tanim witness" the allegations of a man identified only by the alias "Chris" that he had twice delivered suitcases of money to the vice president. In a statement, Duterte spokesperson Salvador Paolo Panelo Jr. denied the allegations and said that the

• Dipolog City suspends classes for kindergarten, elementary due to rains (2026-10-30 08:00)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur – The City Government of Dipolog in Zamboanga del Norte province announced the suspension of classes in both public and private schools, from kindergarten to elementary levels on Friday, October 30, amid bad weather. The class suspension was ordered through an official city advisory as continuous heavy rains affected the

• Rain, cloudy skies may affect Undas travelers on Friday (2026-10-30 07:48)

MANILA, Philippines — Partly cloudy skies and rain brought by several weather systems may affect travelers on Friday ahead of Undas 2026, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said. In its 4 a.m. forecast, the state weather bureau warned of cloudy skies with scattered rains and isolated thunderstorms over Cagayan, Isabela, Quirino, Nueva

• DHSUD turns over 190 housing units for disaster-hit families in Ilocos (2026-10-30 06:47)

SAN ILDEFONSO, Ilocos Sur — The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) turned over 190 housing units to the local government of Caoayan in Ilocos Sur, providing permanent shelter for families displaced by the earthquake and successive typhoons that struck the province in 2022. Some of the beneficiaries received their units during a

• 500 IPs from 30 tribes avail of government services in Iriga (2026-10-30 06:38)

LEGAZPI CITY — About 500 members of 30 Agta indigenous tribes gathered at the Iriga City Sports Center on Thursday (Oct. 29), for the city's Indigenous Peoples Day celebration, where they accessed government services and took part in cultural activities. The event featured competitions in poetry, singing and dancing, traditional games, storytelling, indigenous music and

• Puerto Galera honors Asian Games medalist Victoria Atienza Bossong (2026-10-30 06:29)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The municipal government of Puerto Galera has honored Filipino runner Victoria Atienza Bossong for winning a bronze medal in the women's 800-meter run at the 2026 Asian Games, citing her achievement as a source of pride for the country and her maternal hometown. The Sangguniang Bayan, led by Vice Mayor

• Who wouldn't recognize Bato dela Rosa? PNP defers 'wanted' poster (2026-10-30 05:54)

MANILA, Philippines — There may be no need for a "wanted" poster on someone as recognizable as Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa, according to the spokesperson of the Philippine National Police. Police Col. Allen Rae Co gave this view on Thursday, with the manhunt for the lawmaker expected to enter a new phase because of

• Different case, different witness, same '25%' kickback rate bared (2026-10-30 05:52)

MANILA, Philippines — A former regional director of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) on Thursday said 25 percent of the funds allocated for infrastructure projects in the 2025 national budget were given as "commitments"—or kickbacks—to the project proponents, including senators. At the continuation of the bail hearing in the plunder case against

• Ex-DPWH usec: Can't recall Romualdez pushing for infra projects (2026-10-30 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Public Works Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo on Thursday denied having any dealings with former Speaker Martin Romualdez, telling the Sandiganbayan he could not recall identifying the Leyte lawmaker as a proponent of infrastructure projects in the alleged P7.44-billion kickback scheme. "There is nothing like that," Bernardo said under cross-examination by Romualdez's lawyer

• Bulacan island fights rising seas with nature, not concrete (2026-10-30 05:48)

MANILA, Philippines — For years, residents of a flood-prone Philippine island north of Manila have elevated their homes atop layer upon layer of concrete, only to see floodwaters threaten them again. Burdened by strong storm surges, land subsidence, and rising seas exacerbated by climate change, the 3,000 residents of tiny Pamarawan Island in Malolos City,

• DA eyeing approval of 4 more ASF vaccines in 2027 (2026-10-30 05:44)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) is looking to approve at least four more vaccines against African swine fever (ASF) until next year, as it ramps up efforts to contain the disease and rebuild the country's swine population. Agriculture Undersecretary for Livestock Constante Palabrica said the DA was targeting the approval of a

• Current, ex-Cebu City mayors slapped fines (2026-10-30 05:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the Ombudsman has separately sanctioned Cebu City Mayor Nestor Dionson Archival Sr. and his predecessor, Raymond Alvin Neri Garcia, over a night market on Colon Street and unauthorized "sabong" or cockfights held in a hotel, respectively. Archival was fined a month's pay by the Office of the Ombudsman which

• SC downgrades charges vs ex-public school principal in tree-cutting case (2026-10-30 05:38)

MANILA, Philippines — The Supreme Court, citing the lack of proof such as a paper trail, has downgraded the charges and subsequent penalties meted out against a former public school principal in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, who ordered the cutting of trees on public property. In a decision dated June 2 but released only on

• Inquirer: Lustre not employed in company (2026-10-30 05:34)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Daily Inquirer said on Thursday that veteran journalist Philip Lustre is not an employee, after lawyer Manases Carpio, husband of Vice President Sara Duterte, placed the company's Makati office as Lustre's "last known address." Lustre was arrested last Saturday on a cyberlibel charge without having received a complaint beforehand because

• Marcos faces crucial choice: 5 shortlisted as next SC chief justice (2026-10-30 05:32)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will soon decide who will lead a Supreme Court dominated by appointees of his predecessor, Rodrigo Duterte, after the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) shortlisted five candidates for chief justice, including two senior magistrates who have repeatedly taken opposing positions on major constitutional and political issues. The choice

• Respect Sagada's tradition for the dead, tourists told (2026-10-30 05:02)

MANILA, Philippines — The municipal tourism office of Sagada in Mountain Province has reminded both residents and visitors to observe "panag-apoy" with humility and respect, and allow the town's clans to remember their departed using "long-standing practices." Tourists usually flock to Sagada cemeteries on Nov. 1 and Nov. 2 to witness families gather around the

• PDEA agents dismantle alleged drug den in Bacoor City; 5 arrested (2026-10-29 23:23)

LUCENA CITY, Quezon – Agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) dismantled an alleged drug den and arrested five men during an anti-illegal drug operation in Bacoor City,

Cavite. In a belated report Thursday, PDEA Calabarzon said its Cavite provincial office conducteda buy-bust operation that led to the raid of the suspected drug

• Body found near Olongapo solar farm; police probe awaited (2026-10-29 23:21)

OLONGAPO CITY — A body was found near a solar farm in Old Cabalan, Olongapo City, on Thursday, Oct. 29, prompting a coordinated retrieval operation involving local disaster responders and police. In a statement, the City Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office said a phone call reporting the discovery was received on Thursday. READ: Olongapo City

• Ex-Cebu City mayor challenges Ombudsman ruling over cockfighting events (2026-10-29 22:43)

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol — Former Cebu City Mayor Raymond Alvin Garcia has filed a motion for reconsideration challenging an Ombudsman ruling that found him administratively liable for failing to object to unauthorized cockfighting events at the NUSTAR Resort and Casino Convention Center in 2024. In a statement posted on social media, Garcia said he disagreed

• Prosec: P463-M in VP’s wealth unexplained even sans firm assets (2026-10-29 22:42)

MANILA, Philippines —Vice President Sara Z. Duterte must still account for more than P463 million in alleged unexplained wealth even after removing amounts linked to companies associated with her and her husband, Rep. Zia Alonto Adiong, House prosecution spokesman, said on Thursday. In a press briefing, Alonto Adiong said the prosecution’s findings remained substantial even

• Peaceful inaugural session of BARMM parliament assured (2026-10-29 22:38)

COTABATO CITY — Presidential Peace Adviser Mel Senen Sarmiento on Thursday met with key security officials to finalize security preparations for the inaugural session of the Bangsamoro Parliament on Friday, Oct. 30, following the successful regional elections. To ensure the orderly transition, Sarmiento met with Brig. Gen. Edgar L. Catu, commander of the Army’s 6th Infantry Division,

• Man dead in Bataan blaze (2026-10-29 22:33)

PILAR, Bataan — A 29- year old man died when he failed to escape from his burning house in Barangay Wakas, at Pilar town in Bataan province on Thursday noon (Oct. 29). Police said the victim’s 69-year-old father who is also a person with a disability was lucky enough to rush out of the burning

• Church holds Mass for EJK victims ahead of Undas (2026-10-29 22:32)

MANILA, Philippines—Families of victims of extrajudicial killings (EJK) gathered for a Mass ahead of Undas on Oct. 29 to honor their departed loved ones and pray for justice. The Mass was held at the Diocesan Shrine of Jesus the Divine Word–Christ the King Mission Seminary and led by Fr. Flaviano “Flavie” Villanueva, a priest who

• Prosec raises possible tax evasion in VP Duterte's income gap (2026-10-29 22:28)

MANILA, Philippines — v citing an alleged P111.85-million gap between her declared income and bank deposits examined during her Senate impeachment trial. In a press briefing, Alonto Adiong said the discrepancy raised questions not only about Duterte's alleged unexplained wealth but also about whether she had properly declared her income and paid the correct taxes. He

• Undas: Bus driver tests positive in 'Oplan Harabas' in South Cotabato (2026-10-29 22:23)

KORONADAL CITY — A bus driver tested positive in an initial drug screening of 200 transport workers at three terminals in Koronadal City and General Santos City ahead of Undas, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency in Region 12 (PDEA-12) said. Asnawi Salik, PDEA-12 Assistant regional director, said the annual Oplan Harabas aims to ensure that

• Adiong: VP Duterte's best defense would've been to state wealth in SALN (2026-10-29 22:20)

MANILA, Philippines — The best defense that Vice President Sara Duterte could have come up for the unexplained wealth allegations against her was to declare all assets and business interests in her Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth (SALN), Lanao del Sur Rep. Zia Alonto Adiong claimed on Thursday. In a press briefing at the

• Iligan institutionalizes P1.3-M 'second chance' program for PDLs (2026-10-29 22:17)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY — A person's past should not dictate their future. This principle took center stage in Iligan City on Thursday, October 29, as local officials and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) launched a P1.34-million comprehensive reintegration program to help former Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) successfully rejoin society. Dubbed

• PCG logs over 80,000 passengers at ports nationwide ahead of Undas (2026-10-29 22:09)

MANILA, Philippines — More than 80,000 passengers passed through ports nationwide on Thursday, as Filipinos traveled ahead of the observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) reported. In its latest tally covering noon to 6 p.m., the PCG recorded 40,503 outbound passengers and 43,593 inbound passengers. READ: Naia

• PH Red Cross to deploy over 1,800 personnel for Undas (2026-10-29 21:56)

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) will deploy 1,848 personnel for its Undas Operation 2026, including 248 staff members and 1,600 volunteers. The agency will also deploy 314 first aid stations, 149 welfare desks, 103 mobile units, 104 foot patrol teams, 65 ambulances and 19 emergency vehicles. These resources will be stationed at cemeteries, bus

• LIST: Road closures near Manila North Cemetery Friday, Oct. 30 (2026-10-29 21:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Several roads near or leading to Manila North Cemetery in Santa Cruz, Manila will be closed starting Friday, Oct. 30, ahead of the observance of All Souls' Day and Saints' Day. In an advisory, the Manila Public Information Office (MPIO) said the closures would take effect at midnight on Oct. 30 and

• Lotto 6/42 ticket wins ₱21.69M jackpot on Oct. 29 (2026-10-29 21:52)

MANILA, Philippines—A lone bettor won the ₱21.69 million Lotto 6/42 jackpot in the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) draw on Thursday, Oct. 29, 2026. According to the PCSO results, the winning combination was 34-15-19-37-25-38, which carried a jackpot prize of ₱21,694,699.03. Meanwhile, no bettor won the ₱74.93 million Super Lotto 6/49 jackpot. The winning combination

• Zambo del Sur seeks tighter watch on firm's gold shipments, tax obligations (2026-10-29 21:48)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur — The Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Zamboanga del Sur is investigating the mining operations of company called TVI Resource Development Philippines Inc. (TVIRD) in Bayog town. It is zeroing in on the firm's environmental compliance, tax liabilities, and mineral transport transparency. The provincial board's Ad Hoc Committee, chaired by 2nd District

• Palace dismisses VP replacement talks, says Marcos focused on governance (2026-10-29 21:32)

MANOLO FORTICH, Bukidnon — Malacañang on Thursday dismissed speculations regarding potential replacements for Vice President Sara Duterte, saying "it is premature to discuss her successor" while the impeachment trial is still ongoing. Speaking at a press briefing at the Northern Bukidnon State College (NBSC) here, during the Presidential Communications Office's (PCO) "Usap Tayo, Bayan Muna"

• WALANG PASOK: Class suspensions in several areas on Oct. 30 (2026-10-29 21:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Several local governments have suspended face-to-face classes or shifted to asynchronous learning on Friday, Oct. 30, ahead of the observance of All Souls' Day and Saints' Day and other events. Below are the following areas with class suspensions: READ: Undas 2026: PNP on full alert starting Oct. 30 Tuguegarao, Cagayan – suspension

• Former DPWH Usec Bernardo says he had no dealings with Romualdez (2026-10-29 20:58)

MANILA, Philippines — State witness Roberto Bernardo, former Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) undersecretary, said on Thursday that he never had any dealings with former Speaker Martin Romualdez. Bernardo said this in his testimony before the Sandiganbayan Third Division during the bail hearing of Romualdez for plunder over alleged kickbacks worth P7.44 billion. Romualdez's

• Marcos eyes better transport links to boost food tourism (2026-10-29 20:48)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has vowed to improve infrastructure and air and sea connectivity to make more destinations accessible as the country seeks to capitalize on growing international interest in Filipino cuisine. Marcos made the commitment Thursday during the awarding of MICHELIN Stars and Bib Gourmand distinctions at the MICHELIN Guide Ceremony of

• INQToday: Teodoro rejects China’s claim of abuse of Asean chairmanship (2026-10-29 20:17)

MANILA, Philippines — Here are the stories for INQToday, Thursday, Oct. 29, 2026, as of 6 p.m. Teodoro rejects China’s claim of abuse of Asean chairmanship Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. rejected on Thursday China’s accusation that the Philippines abused its chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) defense meetings to obstruct Beijing’s

• Dizon vows crackdown on erring shipping firms after Palawan ferry fire (2026-10-29 20:12)

MANILA, Philippines — Transportation Secretary Vince Dizon on Thursday vowed to crack down on shipping companies that violate maritime safety rules following the Sept. 9 ferry fire in Palawan that killed 77 people. Dizon said he would discuss stricter enforcement measures with key officials of the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and its attached agencies during

• Ex-BARMM official to appear before PDEA on Nov. 5 over Laos drug probe (2026-10-29 19:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Bangsamoro parliament member Edrieza Hadji Nasser Rimbang, whom authorities have identified as the alleged financier of the Laos drug shipment, is expected to appear before the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) on Nov. 5. PDEA spokesperson Joseph Frederick Calulut said Rimbang’s lawyers had committed to bringing him to the agency’s office

• LPA trough to bring rains to parts of Visayas, Mindanao on Oct. 30 (2026-10-29 19:30)

MANILA, Philippines — The trough of a low-pressure area (LPA) inside the Philippine area of responsibility (PAR) is expected to bring scattered rains and thunderstorms to parts of the Visayas and Mindanao on Friday, Oct. 30, the state weather bureau said. In its 4 p.m. weather advisory on Thursday, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical

• DENR starts restoring wetlands, rivers critical for El Niño (2026-10-29 19:15)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) launched a nationwide ecosystem restoration program focusing on critical wetlands, rivers, and coral reefs to protect communities against the impacts of extreme dry heat expected from the onset of a very strong El Niño. “We are ensuring that our ecosystems remain functional buffers against

• SC acquits woman who killed husband after 11 years of being abused (2026-10-29 19:03)

MANILA, Philippines — A woman chose prison over an abusive home — after 11 years of enduring escalating physical and psychological abuse from her husband, a police officer. Court records showed she was beaten about four times a week, starting after she caught him in bed with another woman. When she threatened to leave, he

• Parents team up with teachers, tutors to help kids love math again (2026-10-29 18:49)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Education (DepEd) is mobilizing teachers, tutors, and parents nationwide to strengthen mathematics learning recovery through the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Mathematics Program. Under DepEd Memorandum No. 060, s. 2026, ARAL Mathematics will be implemented in public elementary and secondary schools for grades 1 through 10 beginning in

• Poll favoring defense team done before VP financial evidence shown (2026-10-29 18:15)

MANILA, Philippines — A recent survey showing more Filipinos favoring Vice President Sara Duterte's defense team for the impeachment trial rather than the prosecution panel was conducted before financial evidence against her was revealed, Lanao del Sur Rep. Zia Alonto Adiong stressed on Thursday. In a press briefing, Alonto Adiong said this is the reason

• QC receives complaint in farmers-led rally commotion (2026-10-29 18:13)

MANILA, Philippines — The Quezon City government said that it received an administrative complaint in connection with the commotion that transpired outside the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) in Quezon City. The Quezon City People's Law Enforcement Board (QC PLEB) said that it obtained the complaint from an organization representing the affected individuals for the

• Velasco's 'ex-driver' tells NBI: I delivered cash suitcases to Duterte (2026-10-29 17:08)

MANILA, Philippines — An alleged former driver of ex-House Speaker Lord Allan Velasco on Thursday appeared before the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) to testify that he allegedly delivered suitcases of money twice to Vice President Sara Duterte. These movements reportedly happened in Davao from 2021 to 2022 upon Velasco's instruction. The alleged former driver

• Calapan bishop mourns death of SVD missionary priest (2026-10-29 17:06)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Calapan Bishop Moises M. Cuevas is mourning the death of Society of the Divine Word (SVD) missionary priest Rudolf Holzgartner, who spent more than five decades helping form generations of Filipino priests at Saint Augustine Seminary here. Cuevas described Holzgartner, who passed in Germany on Wednesday, as a model of

• Impeach court hails survey showing 51% of Filipinos will accept its ruling (2026-10-29 17:05)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate impeachment court expressed satisfaction on Thursday after a survey showed that 51 percent of Filipinos are ready to accept its verdict on Vice President Sara Duterte's impeachment trial. This pertains to a Social Weather Stations survey conducted from Sept. 21 to 27, 2026. The survey also found that 26 percent

• Bicol jails prepare for El Niño, heat risks (2026-10-29 17:02)

LEGAZPI CITY — The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) in Bicol is tightening water conservation and heat prevention measures at detention facilities ahead of the anticipated effects of a strong El Niño. Jail Senior Superintendent Jose Gemelo C. Taol, BJMP Bicol regional director, said the preparations followed directives from BJMP chief Jail Director

• Grandma stays whole night outside North Port due to lack of 24/7 ticketing staff (2026-10-29 16:46)

MANILA, Philippines — A 59-year-old passenger spent the night outside the Manila North Port in Tondo, Manila last Tuesday because she could not immediately secure the earliest trip to Bacolod. She then spent the next two days in the area waiting for her ship to depart on Thursday evening. Speaking to reporters, Leonila Castillanes said

• Classes suspended in Surigao Sur town after magnitude 5.9 earthquake (2026-10-29 16:38)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Classes at all levels in public and private schools in Lingig, Surigao del Sur were suspended Thursday at noon after a series of earthquakes, including a magnitude 5.9 tremor, jolted off its coast. Lingig Mayor Elmer Evangelio issued Memorandum No. 15 halting classes until further notice as a precautionary

• Gov't releases allowances of MILF peacekeepers (2026-10-29 16:30)

COTABATO CITY — On Wednesday, the national government began releasing the monthly allowances of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) members serving in the Joint Peace and Security Teams (JPSTs), a security mechanism under the Bangsamoro peace agreement. The Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (OPAPRU) said 362 MILF members are deployed

• 'The world of dela Rosa is getting smaller' – Castro (2026-10-29 16:25)

MANILA, Philippines — The world of fugitive Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa is getting smaller following the government's offer of a P50-million reward for his capture. This is what Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said on Thursday. At a briefing in Bukidnon, Castro said operations to capture dela Rosa are ongoing, but she could not disclose

• Agusan farmer projects P882K income from 6-hectare hybrid rice farm (2026-10-29 16:15)

PROSPERIDAD, Agusan del Sur — While thousands of farmers across the province watched their fields parched from the prolonged dry spell, Roger Villegas stood beside stacks of freshly harvested palay on Wednesday, looking at an estimated P882,000 payoff. Initial crop-cut

sampling conducted by Department of Agriculture (DA) Caraga technicians during a localharvest festival showed

• Police seize P3.7-M ‘smuggled’ cigarettes at BARMM checkpoint (2026-10-29 16:02)

COTABATO CITY — Police seized suspected smuggled cigarettes worth P3.7 million from a closed van at a checkpoint in the Special Geographic Area (SGA) of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) on Wednesday evening, October 28. The Police Regional Office-Bangsamoro Autonomous Region (PRO-BAR) said personnel from the 1405th Maneuver Company of the Regional

• Caraga cop named top prober of women, children’s protection cases (2026-10-29 15:44)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur – A non-commissioned police officer stationed in Surigao del Sur was named the country’s top investigator for women and children’s protection cases during a national summit in Zamboanga City, regional police officials said on Thursday. Chief Master Sergeant Christine Intano of the Carrascal Municipal Police Station received the Outstanding Senior

• Ballistics tie Albay broadcaster slay to past shooting (2026-10-29 15:18)

LEGAZPI CITY — Ballistics tests have linked evidence recovered from the killing of broadcaster Adrian Loterte in Daraga, Albay, to a .45-caliber handgun associated with an earlier shooting investigation, the Bicol police said on Wednesday. The PNP Forensic Group’s Firearms Identification Section established the match after examining bullet slugs and cartridge cases recovered from the

• Bernardo tells Sandiganbayan: Binay, Poe also received alleged kickbacks (2026-10-29 15:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Senators Nancy Binay and Grace Poe have also allegedly received “commitments” or kickbacks from flood control projects. State witness and former Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo gave this testimony to the Sandiganbayan Third Division on Thursday. READ: Bernardo: All of DPWH projects nationwide have alleged kickbacks Bernardo

• Caap places all airports on heightened alert for Undas 2026 (2026-10-29 15:08)

MANILA, Philippines — The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (Caap) has placed all airports nationwide on heightened alert status due to the expected surge of passengers during Undas. According to Caap, the alert status will take effect starting Thursday, Oct. 29 to Nov. 3, Tuesday, as part of the Department of Transportation’s ‘Oplan Byaheng

• 13 arrested, P12-M equipment seized in Iligan anti-POGO raid (2026-10-29 14:40)

ILIGAN CITY — Police arrested 13 people and seized P12 million worth of equipment during an operation against an alleged Philippines Offshore Gaming Operators (POGO) hub here late

Wednesday evening, the Iligan City Police Office (ICPO) said Thursday. Maj. Sandrex Panolong,ICPO public information officer, said investigators spent five months developing the case beforecarrying

• Agusan del Sur employs climate-smart tools vs El Niño onslaught (2026-10-29 14:28)

PROSPERIDAD, Agusan del Sur — Weeks after severe dry spells and erratic weather prompted a provincial state of calamity, farmers and fisherfolk across Agusan del Sur are shifting from emergency response to active defense, applying new weather-informed techniques to safeguard their livelihoods. After P3.5 billion in agricultural losses from the prolonged El Niño dry spell,

• Caritas Philippines supports Lobo in fight vs. LPG terminal project (2026-10-29 14:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Caritas Philippines has expressed support for Batangas Archbishop Emeritus Ramon Arguelles and residents of Lobo who have raised concerns over a proposed liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) terminal and refilling plant. San Carlos Bishop and Caritas Philippines President Gerardo Alminaza said “this is not simply about one project,” stressing that the issue touches

• DENR probes possible causes of tarsier deaths in Samar (2026-10-29 14:16)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has directed continuous wildlife monitoring along the Cacaransan-Saputan Road in Calbayog City following a series of Philippine tarsier deaths. “Immediately following the reports, DENR personnel from the Calbayog Pan-as-Hayiban Protected Landscape conducted an on-site investigation, verified the reported locations, gathered information from witnesses and

• Transport security office to Undas travelers: Don’t bring banned items (2026-10-29 14:12)

MANILA, Philippines — As the influx of travelers begins ahead of Undas 2026, the Office for Transportation Security (OTS) on Thursday reminded passengers to remove prohibited items from their belongings to avoid trip delays. The reminder came as the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) administration reported confiscating a total of 260 banned objects from Oct.

• Tinio: Marcos feigning control as analysts say peso to slide further (2026-10-29 14:11)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s defensive stance regarding the highest-ever dollar-peso exchange rate is mere posturing, ACT Teachers party-list Rep. Antonio Tinio said on Thursday, warning that financial analysts believe the peso will slide further in the coming months. In a statement, Tinio slammed Marcos for his “Don’t panic” remark, saying it comes as

• Witness: 25% of infra project budget given as ‘proponents’ commitment’ (2026-10-29 14:10)

MANILA, Philippines—A former Public Works and Highways official on Thursday said 25 percent of the budget allocated for infrastructure projects in the 2025 General Appropriations Act (GAA) are given as “commitments” to certain proponents, including senators. This was according to former Public Works and Highways Regional Director Gerard Opulencia, who testified as a prosecution witness

• Davao de Oro military ready to help police hunt Bato dela Rosa (2026-10-29 14:09)

CAYAN DE ORO CITY — The Philippine Army’s 10th Infantry Division (10ID) said on Thursday it is ready to help police arrest Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa, whose one-week ultimatum to surrender ends on Friday. The former national police chief is wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for alleged crimes against humanity during the

• Marcos urges firms to invest in PH electric vehicle industry (2026-10-29 14:07)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday urged foreign manufacturers to invest in the Philippines’ electric vehicle (EV) industry as the government aims to have EVs account for 50% of the country’s vehicle fleet by 2040. He made the call during a visit to the manufacturing and assembly plant of Sazgar Philippines Inc. in

• LGU employee killed, child bystander wounded in Pampanga ambush (2026-10-29 13:42)

MABALACAT CITY — A 54-year-old male employee of the Arayat municipal government died while a 10-year-old bystander was wounded in an early morning ambush at the town’s Gatiawin village on Wednesday. The municipal government employee was riding a motorcycle when a still unidentified assailant shot him several times at 7:20 a.m., the Pampanga police said.

• WATCH: Hegseth-Teodoro talks, Undas 2026 updates top INQToday newscast (2026-10-29 13:39)

MANILA, Philippines — Here are INQToday’s top stories this afternoon. The United States will increase its security cooperation funding to help speed up the modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), following talks between US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth and Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. in Cebu. Meanwhile, Vice President Sara Duterte’s

• SC clears ex-principal of grave misconduct for cutting trees: No proof (2026-10-29 13:37)

MANILA, Philippines—The Supreme Court has reduced the offense and the penalty meted on a former public school principal in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro over an unauthorized cutting of trees. The high tribunal, in a decision on June 2 released only on Thursday, partially granted the petition sought by Melencio Corpuz. Corpuz was found guilty of

• Dad nabbed in Pampanga for allegedly taking ex-partner’s 2 kids (2026-10-29 13:32)

MABALACAT CITY — Police arrested a 37-year-old man for allegedly taking his former partner’s two children without her consent in Pasay City and bringing them to San Fernando City in Pampanga. In a statement, the Philippine National Police Public Information Office

(PNP-PIO) said the children, aged 11 and three, were taken without their mother knowing

• Laoag launches Dulang Festival to promote Ilocano cuisine (2026-10-29 13:10)

SAN ILDEFONSO, Ilocos Sur — The Laoag City government had launched the first Dulang Festival to promote Ilocano cuisine and boost food tourism by showcasing the city's traditional dishes and local food industry. The two-day festival, which ends on Thursday, brought together city officials, the Liga ng mga Barangay, residents, and food businesses to celebrate

• Truck helper dies, driver hurt in Quezon road collision (2026-10-29 12:59)

LUCENA CITY — A 42-year-old truck helper died while the driver was injured when their vehicle collided with an Isuzu refrigerated van on Wednesday night in Atimonan, Quezon. The truck was negotiating a descending, curved section of the diversion road in Barangay Malinao Ilaya at 8:15 p.m. when the driver reportedly lost control due to

• 'Tamban' closed fishing season in Tayabas Bay begins (2026-10-29 12:52)

LUCENA CITY — The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in Calabarzon has launched a closed fishing season for Bali Sardinella, locally known as "tamban," in Tayabas Bay to protect the fish population during its spawning period. "The measure aims to give tamban the opportunity to reproduce and replenish their population, helping maintain an

• No need for wanted posters for Bato dela Rosa for now, says PNP (2026-10-29 12:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Thursday said it has yet to see the need to issue wanted posters for Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa. This is despite an outstanding arrest warrant against him and a P50-million reward for anyone who can provide information on his whereabouts. READ: PNP opens hotlines for

• JBC submits 5 names to Malacañang for next chief justice (2026-10-29 12:42)

MANILA, Philippines – The Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) on Thursday decided to send the names of five candidates aspiring for the chief justice post to Malacañang after extensive deliberation. The names, which will be transmitted directly to the Office of the President, comes ahead of the mandatory retirement of incumbent Chief Justice Alexander G.

• LOOK: OTS conducts security inspection at PITX ahead of Undas 2026 (2026-10-29 12:37)

MANILA, Philippines—The Office for Transportation Security (OTS) conducted a security check at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) on Thursday, Oct. 29, in anticipation of the influx of passengers for Undas 2026. During the inspection, OTS officials did a walk-through, checked in on the security personnel on standby, and distributed emergency go bags to some passengers

• Lilia Cuntapay Horror Fest back in Ilocos Norte with 11 short films (2026-10-29 12:32)

SAN ILDEFONSO, Ilocos Sur— Eleven short horror films by local filmmakers will be shown at the 15th Lilia Cuntapay Short Horror Film Festival on Oct. 30 at the La Paz Sand Dunes in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte. The screening, scheduled for 8 p.m., will showcase Ilokano storytelling through horror films inspired by the filmography of

- PNP tells dela Rosa to surrender anew: 'End this with dignity on your part' (2026-10-29 12:27)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) once again appealed to Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa on Thursday to surrender. The police said turning himself in will avoid any untoward incident that could result from his arrest. PNP spokesperson P/Col. Allen Rae Co reiterated their call to the senator in a press conference, a

- Bernardo: All of DPWH projects nationwide have alleged kickbacks (2026-10-29 12:24)

MANILA, Philippines — All Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) projects nationwide allegedly have kickbacks, its former Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo told the Sandiganbayan Third Division on Thursday. Bernardo, a career DPWH official of four decades, made this bombshell revelation when he testified during the former House Speaker Martin Romualdez's bail hearing for a plunder

- Carpio's camp: Inquirer address given in good faith in Lustre's warrant (2026-10-29 12:24)

MANILA, Philippines – Atty. Manases Carpio, husband of Vice President Sara Duterte, provided the Philippine Daily Inquirer's office address as Philip Lustre's last known address in "good faith," Carpio's spokesperson, Atty. Neil Abayon, said on Thursday. Lustre, a veteran journalist, was arrested last Saturday on a cyberlibel charge without having received a complaint beforehand because

- MMDA suspends coding scheme on Monday, Nov. 2 (2026-10-29 12:07)

MANILA, Philippines — The implementation of the expanded number coding scheme will be suspended on Monday, November 2, according to the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA). The MMDA noted that it automatically suspends its number coding scheme during regular and special non-working holidays. READ: PITX records over 700,000 passengers ahead of Undas 2026 break "Awtomatikong

- 580 Leyte students screened for free eyeglasses (2026-10-29 12:00)

TACLOBAN CITY — A charitable program screened more than 580 public school students in the towns of Alangalang and MacArthur in Leyte to address eyesight problems that hinder academic success, with qualified learners set to receive free prescription eyeglasses in December. The initiative, led by the Mabuhay Deseret Foundation (MDF), seeks to help students who struggle

- Balicucha-making highlights Ilocos Sur's culinary heritage (2026-10-29 11:30)

SAN ILDEFONSO, Ilocos Sur — The balicucha-making industry in Sta. Maria town in Ilocos Norte was among the local enterprises featured in the Raniag: Region 1 Creative Tour, highlighting efforts to promote homegrown products and introduce traditional food-making to a wider audience. Held in Barangay Maynganay, the activity gave visitors firsthand experience in making balicucha,

• Marcos inaugurates NLEX link cutting travel time to 5 minutes (2026-10-29 11:24)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday inaugurated a two-kilometer section of the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) that will connect Mindanao Avenue in Valenzuela City to Quirino Highway in Quezon City, reducing travel time between the two points to just five minutes. Called NLEX C5 Northlink Segment 8.2 Section 1A, Marcos said the segment

• Army kills 2 NPA rebels, seizes arms in separate Eastern Visayas ops (2026-10-29 10:57)

TACLOBAN CITY — Two suspected New People's Army (NPA) members were killed in a military operation in Dolores, Eastern Samar, while a separate operation in Northern Samar led to the recovery of firearms and an anti-personnel mine, the military reported. The 52nd Infantry Battalion said troops encountered NPA members in the hinterlands of Barangay Jicontol,

• MTRCB reminds bus operators to screen family-friendly shows only (2026-10-29 10:52)

MANILA, Philippines – In a series of transport hub inspections, the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) has reminded transport terminals and bus operators to screen content appropriate for families and children. Ahead of the All Saints' Day travel rush, the MTRCB began inspections on Tuesday, covering bus terminals and transport hubs in

• Tacloban City adopts 4-day workweek to cut energy use amid El Niño (2026-10-29 10:41)

TACLOBAN CITY — The city government will implement a four-day compressed workweek for most offices starting Nov. 3 as part of its energy conservation measures in anticipation of the effects of El Niño. Mayor Alfred Romualdez issued Memorandum Order No. 2026-10-435, dated Oct. 27, directing city government offices to operate from Monday to Thursday, from

• Pagasa monitors LPA inside PAR on Thursday morning (2026-10-29 10:29)

MANILA, Philippines – A low pressure area (LPA) was being monitored inside the country on Thursday morning, according to the state weather bureau. in its tropical cyclone formation outlook issued at 10 a.m., the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said that the LPA was last estimated 915 kilometers (km) east of Eastern

• MRT-3 releases adjusted operating schedule for Undas 2026 break (2026-10-29 10:21)

MANILA, Philippines — Are you planning to take the Metro Rail Transit Line 3 (MRT-3) this Undas season? The train line has released its adjusted operating schedule for October 29 (Thursday) to November 2 (Monday). According to the Department of Transportation, the MRT-3

is under heightened alert during this period, with 700 security personnel deployed

• Visayas grid still on red, yellow alert on Thursday, Oct. 29 (2026-10-29 10:13)

MANILA, Philippines — The Visayas Grid will still be on red and yellow alerts on Thursday, Oct. 29, said the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP). In an advisory, the NGCP said the Visayas Grid will be placed under red alert from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. READ: NGCP: Mindanao reserves may run out

• 2 Army soldiers arrested over North Cotabato shooting (2026-10-29 10:00)

KORONADAL CITY — Two Philippine Army soldiers were arrested after allegedly shooting a 23-year-old man traveling from Davao City to Cotabato City in Pigcawayan, North Cotabato, before dawn Thursday, police said. The suspects, both members of the Army's 7th Infantry Battalion and residents of Midsayap, North Cotabato, were arrested following a pursuit operation shortly after

• SC asks Senate, House to comment on Sara Duterte impeachment vote rule (2026-10-29 09:53)

MANILA, Philippines — The Supreme Court (SC) directed the Senate impeachment court and the House of Representatives to comment on a petition filed by Sens. Robinhood Padilla and Christopher "Bong" Go, questioning a ruling that lowered the number of votes required in the impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte. Padilla disclosed this in a

• Undas 2026 in Manila: Grave finders, visiting hours, traffic advisories (2026-10-29 09:52)

MANILA, Philippines—As Undas approaches, large crowds are expected at two of Metro Manila's major cemeteries, Manila North Cemetery and Manila South Cemetery. Visitors are advised to plan their trips ahead, including by using the cemeteries' online grave finders and interactive maps to locate their departed loved ones' burial sites before arriving. The two cemeteries have

• Naia logs almost 300,000 passengers ahead of Undas 2026 (2026-10-29 09:42)

MANILA, Philippines — Close to 300,000 passengers have already been recorded to have passed through Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) since Tuesday ahead of the observance of Undas or the All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day holidays. According to the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA), a total of 290,844 passengers were recorded from Oct.

• PITX records over 700,000 passengers ahead of Undas 2026 break (2026-10-29 09:05)

MANILA, Philippines — Foot traffic at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) has already surpassed 700,000ahead ofUndas, or the All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day holidays. Based on data released by PITX as of 8 a.m. of Thursday, a total of 745,769 passengers have already moved through the station from Sunday, Oct. 25 to

• Police seize P2.5-M ‘smuggled’ cigarettes in Sultan Kudarat (2026-10-29 09:01)

KORONADAL CITY — Police seized nearly P2.5 million worth of suspected smuggled cigarettes in two separate operations along two coastal towns in Sultan Kudarat province in the past two days. The Police Regional Office 12 (PRO 12) reported recovering a total of 2,974 reams of cigarettes valued at P2,544,792.22 during the operations in Kalamansig and

• Taal Volcano continues to shake, logs 8 earthquakes (2026-10-29 08:53)

LUCENA CITY — Taal Volcano in Batangas province continued to record volcanic earthquakes, logging eight in the past 24 hours, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) reported on Thursday (October 29). The latest volcanic earthquakes was lower in number from 13 the previous day, Phivolcs said in its morning bulletin. READ: Taal Volcano

• Sara Duterte’s camp calls replacement talks ‘premature,’ a ‘distraction’ (2026-10-29 08:21)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte’s camp on Thursday dismissed discussions about her possible replacement as “premature” and called them a “distraction” from the “serious issues” surrounding her impeachment. Duterte’s camp made the statement after several senators raised the issue, including Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano, who recently urged his colleagues to reject any

• Amihan, sheer line to bring rain to parts of Luzon Thursday (2026-10-29 07:42)

MANILA, Philippines – Overcast skies and rain are expected to persist over several parts of Luzon on Thursday due to the effects of the northeast monsoon (amihan) and the shear line, the state weather bureau said. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said the shear line will bring cloudy skies and rain

• DOT eyes new diving tourism spot in Misamis Oriental (2026-10-29 07:20)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY – The Department of Tourism in Northern Mindanao (DOT-10) has identified Initao, Misamis Oriental, as a potential new diving destination after underwater exploration reportedly uncovered a rare marine species believed to be uncommon in the Philippines. In an interview Tuesday, Ivy Guantero, DOT-10 promotion head, said the discovery will be revealed

• NCR hospitals, emergency teams on alert for ‘Undas’ (2026-10-29 05:48)

MANILA, Philippines — Hospitals and emergency response teams across Metro Manila will be on Code White Alert from Oct. 31 to Nov. 2 to prepare for a possible increase in patients needing immediate medical attention during the “Undas” break. The Department of Health-Metro Manila Center for Health Development (DOH-MMCHD) said the alert is intended to

• DA eyes tighter pork import rules after corn quota hike (2026-10-29 05:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) is moving to tighten pork import rules after the government raised the country's corn import quota, as it seeks to bring down livestock production costs and protect local hog raisers from declining farm-gate prices. Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the department was pursuing higher tariffs

• Hike in school bomb threats prompts PNP review of response protocols (2026-10-29 05:44)

MANILA, Philippines — After a string of bomb threats against several schools and universities in Metro Manila that led to the suspension of classes, the Philippine National Police on Wednesday ordered a review of its explosives-related threat response protocols. "We must ensure that our bomb threat protocols evolve with the threats we face," PNP chief

• Journo sued by VP's husband wants Davao case moved to Manila (2026-10-29 05:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The 72-year-old journalist recently sued for cyberlibel by the husband of Vice President Sara Duterte will ask that the case be transferred to Metro Manila instead of being tried in Davao City, where the complaint was filed, citing fears for his safety. But still, Philip Lustre Jr. on Wednesday said the charges

• Farmers' group defends Montemayor vs libel raps (2026-10-29 05:38)

MANILA, Philippines — The Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) on Wednesday called for the dismissal of a cyberlibel complaint filed against its chair, former Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor, over his criticism of a company's legal personality to import rice. Montemayor surrendered on Monday to the Makati City Regional Trial Court, which issued a warrant for

• PNP opens hotlines for tips on Dela Rosa's whereabouts (2026-10-29 05:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police on Wednesday launched round-the-clock hotlines for tips on the whereabouts of Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa, as the lawmaker's lawyers renewed their plea for the Supreme Court to block his arrest and possible transfer to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Netherlands. The developments came amid mounting

• 'Don't panic,' Marcos says after peso's historic lows (2026-10-29 05:30)

MANILA, Philippines — President Marcos asked the public not to panic over the Philippine peso's volatility, as the currency slightly recovered to close at P64.025 on Wednesday. This showed that the peso gained 14.5 centavos against the greenback after opening at P64.08, ending a seven-session streak of record-low closing levels. Experts said the Bangko Sentral

• Senate seeks explanation from Lalamove founder (2026-10-29 05:10)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate committee on public services will issue a show-cause order to Lalamove founder and CEO Shing Chow, who failed to attend, for the third straight time, the ongoing hearing on operational regulations for digital labor platforms. "Send a show-cause order for why they shouldn't be cited in contempt because this is

• Planters, labor groups decry low sugar prices (2026-10-29 05:06)

BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, Philippines — The Sugar Council and labor groups in Negros are calling on the Department of Agriculture and the Sugar Regulatory Administration to urgently address low mill-gate prices of sugar, warning that current market rates are threatening the survival of local farmers. The council—composed of the Confederation of Sugar Producers Associations,

• Mindanao on track to build more clean energy sources (2026-10-29 05:02)

GENERAL SANTOS CITY, Philippines — Mindanao is on track to achieve a balance between renewable energy (RE) and “dirty” and expensive fossil fuels—mostly coal—by 2030, with the Department of Energy (DOE) announcing the potential delivery of at least 1,000 megawatts (MW) of clean energy within the next three years. Speaking during the 4th Mindanao Clean

• Authorities seize P2.2M in contraband cigarettes in Sultan Kudarat town (2026-10-29 01:36)

COTABATO CITY, Philippines — Police authorities in Sultan Kudarat province seized a haul of suspected smuggled cigarettes during a joint seaborne patrol at around 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 27, in the waters off Kalamansig town. The team of police and Coast Guard personnel conducted the patrol to verify information regarding an abandoned unregistered motorized banca

• SC Associate Justice Zalameda receives UE’s honorary degree (2026-10-29 01:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Supreme Court (SC) Associate Justice Rodil Vaquilar Zalameda received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of the East (UE) in Manila on Tuesday. According to the UE, Zalameda—who was also recognized twice before as one of the university’s outstanding alumni—is the 36th person the university has awarded the honorary

• NMP invests P261M to upgrade seafarer training facilities in Tacloban (2026-10-28 22:57)

TACLOBAN CITY, LEYTE, Philippines — Filipino seafarers training in Eastern Visayas are expected to benefit from improved accommodation and upgraded safety training facilities as the National Maritime Polytechnic (NMP) rolls out P261 million worth of infrastructure projects at its Tacloban complex. The projects, unveiled on Tuesday, Oct. 27, form part of the government agency’s modernization

• Pre-shaded ballots found beyond Maluso in BARMM polls – watchdog (2026-10-28 22:56)

MANILA, Philippines — Pre-shaded ballots were observed in three precincts outside the high-profile incident in Maluso, Basilan, during the first parliamentary elections in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), an election watchdog said on Wednesday. The findings suggest that the ballot irregularities were not confined to Maluso, where more than 16,000 ballots were

• More Filipinos favor VP’s defense team in Senate trial – survey (2026-10-28 22:15)

MANILA, Philippines — More Filipinos were satisfied with Vice President Sara Duterte's defense team than the House prosecution during her Senate impeachment trial, a survey from the Social Weather Stations (SWS) said on Wednesday. The survey was fielded among 1,500 Filipino adults, aged 18 and above, nationwide using face-to-face interviews. It found that 47 percent

• PCSO lotto results Oct. 28: ₱312.1M jackpot not won (2026-10-28 21:51)

MANILA, Philippines — No bettor won the ₱312.1 million Grand Lotto 6/55 jackpot or the ₱15 million Mega Lotto 6/45 jackpot in the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) draws on Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2026. The Grand Lotto 6/55 draw produced the winning combination 36-21-16-26-49-13, with a jackpot prize of ₱312.1 million. No ticket matched all

• Consumers group backs call to penalize power firms over Visayas outages (2026-10-28 21:47)

BACOLOD CITY — The Alliance of Concerned Consumers in Electricity and Social Services (Access) has backed Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian's call for the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) to penalize power firms responsible for recurring and prolonged outages across the Visayas Grid. Access President Wennie Sancho said on Wednesday that

• Ombudsman fines Cebu City mayor over night market operations (2026-10-28 21:31)

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol — The Office of the Ombudsman has ordered Cebu City Mayor Nestor Dionson Archival Sr. to pay a fine equivalent to one month's basic salary after finding him administratively liable for simple neglect of duty over lapses in the operation of the 2025 Colon Street Night Market. The Ombudsman on Wednesday said

• Farmers group seeks dismissal of cyber libel case vs ex-DA chief (2026-10-28 21:07)

MANILA, Philippines — The Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) urged the dismissal of the cyber libel suit filed against former Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor over his statements questioning Planters Products Inc.'s (PPI) rice imports. "We call for the dismissal of this cyber libel suit, and for protection of advocates who defend farmers. Let us debate

• De Lima filing bill to decriminalize libel: Laws must not be weaponized (2026-10-28 20:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Mamamayang Liberal party-list Rep. Leila de Lima said on Wednesday that she and other lawmakers are set to file a bill that will decriminalize libel, to prevent the use of such laws to attack journalists and stifle press freedom. In a statement on Wednesday, de Lima said they support the call to decriminalize

• INQToday: Don't panic, says Marcos as peso hits record low (2026-10-28 20:12)

MANILA, Philippines — Here are the top stories in INQToday on Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2026, as of 6 p.m. Marcos urges public not to panic as peso hits record low President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

urged the public on Wednesday not to panic over the Philippine peso's continued slide to arecord low of 64 to

• Mans Carpio's spox to Philip Lustre: Don't play the victim (2026-10-28 20:06)

MANILA, Philippines — The spokesman of Atty. Manases "Mans" Carpio, husband of Vice President Sara Duterte, told journalist Philip Lustre not to play the victim, saying he would not be facing a cyberlibel case if he had not made "malicious" and "baseless" remarks against the Duterte family. "If he hadn't posted something malicious and baseless,

• CJ candidate Caguioa pitches high-performance court initiative (2026-10-28 19:54)

MANILA, Philippines — Supreme Court Associate Justice Alfredo Benjamin Caguioa, a chief justice aspirant, proposed a high-performance court (HPC) initiative to improve trial court operations through data-driven management rather than numerical comparisons among judges. "The position never makes the man. The man justifies the position," Caguioa told members of the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC)

• Bernardo on testimony vs Estrada: 'Ang hirap ipahamak ng kaibigan' (2026-10-28 19:52)

MANILA, Philippines — State witness and former Public Works and Highways Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo on Wednesday called Sen. Jinggoy Estrada a "friend." He uttered this description when he testified during the senator's bail hearing for a plunder case before the Sandiganbayan Fifth Division. Bernardo made this remark as Estrada attended for the first time his

• Cops seize P2.2-M meth in CDO drug sting (2026-10-28 19:46)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY — Police seized an estimated P2.24 million worth of suspected crystal meth, locally known as shabu, from a "high-value" suspect during an afternoon buy-bust operation in Barangay Indahag here on Wednesday. Joint operatives from the City Drug Enforcement Unit and the City Mobile Force Company arrested the 34-year-old suspect, identified by

• Safety model: Angara inspects zero-incident school in Manila (2026-10-28 19:39)

MANILA, Philippines — Education Secretary Sonny Angara got firsthand insight into how a large urban campus can maintain a zero-incident safety record on Wednesday as he inspected the Lakan Dula High School in Tondo, Manila. The inspection is part of the Department of Education's (DepEd) ongoing school audits to enhance safety measures across all schools

• Chief justice candidate Japar Dimaampao: The law belongs to all (2026-10-28 19:38)

MANILA, Philippines — Supreme Court Associate Justice Japar Dimaampao, one of five candidates vying to succeed Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo, vowed to pursue equal access to justice and a more humane judiciary during his public interview before the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC). Dimaampao, the second Muslim appointed to the SC, said that his candidacy

• Ecotourism development along BuDa highway triggers Bukidnon town growth (2026-10-28 19:31)

KITAOTAO, Bukidnon — Driven by a surge in ecotourism development along the Bukidnon-Davao (BuDa) highway, local tax collections in this southern Bukidnon town have tripled over the past decade, reaching P16 million this year compared to just P5 million previously. Engr. Winnie Angit, Municipal Planning and Development Office (MPDO) coordinator, told the Inquirer on Wednesday

• Bernardo: Jinggoy Estrada asked my ‘help’ to get P1-B ‘leadership fund’ (2026-10-28 19:25)

MANILA, Philippines — State witness and former Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo on Wednesday said Sen. Jinggoy Estrada supposedly approached him first to get an alleged P1 billion allocation for the so-called “leadership fund.” Bernardo made this revelation when he took the witness stand before the Sandiganbayan Fifth Division to testify

• Manila Water Philippine Ventures boosts N. Luzon supply for El Niño (2026-10-28 19:09)

MANILA, Philippines — Manila Water Philippine Ventures (MWPV), the Non-East Zone subsidiary of Manila Water, continues to strengthen water supply resilience in North Luzon through proactive investments and operational measures undertaken by its operating units, Calasiao Water in Pangasinan and Metro Ilagan Water in Isabela. Pagasa has identified both provinces as vulnerable to dry conditions

• CJ aspirant pushes for cyber defense, lifestyle checks in the judiciary (2026-10-28 18:48)

MANILA, Philippines — Empowering the newly reorganized Judicial Integrity Office (JIO) to be able to conduct mandatory lifestyle checks, as well as calling for the deployment of specialized cyber threat units under the Office of the Judiciary Marshals (OJM) to safeguard the judiciary is among the priorities of Supreme Court Associate Justice Jose Midas Marquez

• DOH: Flu-like cases in PH rise 35% (2026-10-28 18:32)

MANILA, Philippines—Cases of influenza-like illness (ILI) nationwide rose by 35 percent, following the usual seasonal pattern during the rainy months, the Department of Health (DOH) said. The DOH recorded 13,321 cases from Sept. 24 to Oct. 7, up from 9,896 cases reported from Sept. 10 to 23, according to its latest Ulat ng Ahensya report.

• Dizon ignores Piston’s criticism of his return to DOTr: I’ll just do my job (2026-10-28 18:09)

MANILA, Philippines — New Transport chief Vince Dizon on Wednesday shrugged off transport group Piston’s criticism of his reappointment as head of the Department of Transportation (DOTr). Dizon said that he was tasked to ensure the welfare of passengers, drivers and

operators. On the sidelines of his inspection of bus terminals, the secretary was asked

• Napolcom to pursue charges vs Pasig City cop who pulled gun on vehicle (2026-10-28 18:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Police Commission (Napolcom) will pursue administrative charges against a Pasig City police officer who allegedly pointed his service firearm at a vehicle while intoxicated at a gasoline station on Oct. 25. In a statement on Wednesday, Napolcom Commissioner Rafael Vicente Calinisan said that a formal complaint was already filed against

• Parts of Commonwealth Ave to be briefly closed for MRT-7 construction (2026-10-28 17:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The Quezon City government announces that the temporary lane closure along westbound Commonwealth Avenue will take effect until Thursday, Oct. 29. In an advisory, the local government said that it implemented a temporary closure to make way for the unloading and lifting of elevator and escalator for the Metro Railway Transit Line

• PDEA conducts random drug tests for Cotabato drivers, conductors (2026-10-28 17:43)

COTABATO CITY – The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency in the Bangsamoro Region in Muslim Mindanao (PDEA-BARMM) conducted surprise drug tests on public transport workers on Tuesday, Oct. 27, to ensure safety as commuters head to the provinces for Undas 2026. “Oplan Harabas” or “Drug Test Muna Bago Pasada” is a nationwide operation led by the

• Female bookkeeper nabbed, P183K ‘shabu’ seized in Pagadian (2026-10-28 17:37)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur — Anti-narcotics operatives arrested a 47-year-old bookkeeper after seizing nearly P184,000 worth of illegal drugs and live ammunition. The apprehension and the seizure happened during an entrapment operation in Barangay Tiguma, Pagadian City, Tuesday night, October 27. The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency Regional Office 9 – Zamboanga del Sur Provincial

• Oriental Mindoro farmers gain new outlet in QC market (2026-10-28 17:33)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Farmers from Oriental Mindoro now have an additional outlet to sell their agricultural produce to Metro Manila consumers through a newly opened Kadiwa retail store managed by a local cooperative. The Jubilee Oriental Mindoro Consumer Cooperative operates the store at Phase 1, Jubilee East Ville, Barangay Bagong Silangan in Quezon City. The

• Pangasinan City tightens regulations on junk shop operations (2026-10-28 17:03)

ALAMINOS CITY, Pangasinan — The city government has imposed stricter regulations on junk shop operations, requiring them to meet environmental, sanitation, and safety standards. It also prescribed fines of up to P5,000 for various violations. Sangguniang Panlungsod passed City Ordinance No. 2026-12 on August 11, which Mayor Arth Bryan C. Celeste approved on Oct. 21.

• DOJ probe into Aplasca, 2 others over Senate shooting nears end (2026-10-28 16:57)

MANILA, Philippines—Former Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Mao Ranada Aplasca on Wednesday submitted his counter-affidavit to the direct assault complaint before the Department of Justice (DOJ) in connection with the May 13 incident that led to gunshots being fired in the chamber. DOJ spokesperson Polo Martinez confirmed that Aplasca filed his counter-affidavit as one of three respondents in

• Laguna Lake water level keeps falling (2026-10-28 16:49)

LUCENA CITY — Laguna de Bay's water level fell further to 11.99 meters on Wednesday, remaining below the critical-high threshold, according to the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA). The lake's water level stood at 11.99 meters as of 11 a.m., down from 12.03 meters recorded the previous day, LLDA said in an advisory. The agency

• 10 Calabarzon PUV drivers test positive in LTO drug tests (2026-10-28 16:43)

LUCENA CITY — At least 10 public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers in the Calabarzon region tested positive for illegal drugs during surprise drug tests conducted by the Land Transportation Office (LTO) at public transport terminals ahead of the Undas travel rush. In a report on Wednesday (October 28), the LTO in Region IV-A said one

• Undas 2026: Bus driver tests positive in PITX drug screening (2026-10-28 16:37)

MANILA, Philippines—A bus driver initially tested positive in a drug screening at the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX) on Wednesday as authorities stepped up safety measures ahead of the All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day holidays. The driver, assigned to a bus bound for Bicol, was referred for confirmatory testing in accordance with screening

• Quezon launches survey for provincial cancer patient registry (2026-10-28 16:32)

LUCENA CITY — The Quezon provincial government is conducting a province-wide cancer patient registry, which requires an assessment survey to determine the number and status of cancer patients and identify their healthcare needs. The initiative, launched by Gov. Angelina "Doktora Helen" Tan, a physician, is being carried out through the Provincial Health Office (PHO). "The

• Villar Foundation marks 31 years of environmental action (2026-10-28 16:28)

MANILA, Philippines — From transforming household waste into fertilizers and school chairs to turning discarded coconut husks and waterlilies into livelihood opportunities, the Villar Foundation has spent more than three decades promoting community-based solutions to environmental problems. Established in 1995 by former Senate President Manny Villar and former Sen. Cynthia Villar, the foundation's environmental initiatives demonstrate

• From Local Solutions to Global Recognition: Villar Foundation Marks More Than Two Decades of Environmental Action (2026-10-28 16:28)

MANILA, Philippines — From transforming household waste into fertilizers and school chairs to turning discarded coconut husks and waterlilies into livelihood opportunities, the Villar Foundation has spent more than three decades promoting community-based solutions to environmental problems. Established by former Senate President Manny Villar and former Sen. Cynthia Villar, the foundation's environmental initiatives demonstrate how proper

• PNP raises Undas security deployment to over 73,000 personnel (2026-10-28 16:27)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police has increased its security deployment to 73,034 personnel, up from the initial 72,501, to secure the observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, or Undas, as many Filipinos head to cemeteries, terminals, and home provinces. "Security deployments for large-scale operations like Undas are continuously assessed and

• PH research spending among lowest in Southeast Asia (2026-10-28 16:24)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines, which has been classified as an upper-middle-income economy this year, spends less than one-third of 1 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on research and development, a data scientist said. Dr. Alicor Panao, an associate professor at the University of the Philippines, said in his analysis of data from

• Agusan del Sur town readies Baterbonia's gravesite for Undas (2026-10-28 16:24)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Municipal officials in Talacogon, Agusan del Sur are stepping in to ensure an orderly, peaceful visit to the gravesite of the late basketball standout Rene Clert "Bobet" Baterbonia during the Undas or All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day celebrations on Nov. 1 and 2. Talacogon Mayor Pauline Marie

• Cloudy skies, rains expected to prevail during Undas (2026-10-28 16:23)

MANILA, Philippines — Cloudy skies with occasional isolated rains are expected to prevail over some parts of the country during Undas (November 1 – All Saints' Day and November 2 – All Souls' Day). These conditions are due to the northeast monsoon, or 'amihan,' and two other weather systems, the state weather bureau said. The

• PNP reviews bomb threat response protocols amid university incidents (2026-10-28 16:15)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) has ordered a review of its bomb threat response protocols following threats targeting schools and universities. "We must ensure that our bomb threat protocols evolve with the threats we face," PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said on Wednesday. "Our response must be swift, our personnel

• Caraga supporters believe Sara Duterte 'will be vindicated' (2026-10-28 16:09)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Confident that Vice President Sara Duterte will overcome efforts to unseat her from office, loyalists across the Caraga region have launched an extensive recruitment campaign to consolidate grassroots support for her presidential run in 2028. The

regional push is spearheaded by the Volunteer Protectors of Sara Duterte (VPSD), whose

• Jefry Tupas calls NBI's raps referral 'harassment' (2026-10-28 16:02)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Davao City chief information officer Jefry Tupas has described the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI)'s referral of obstruction of justice, cyber libel, and publication of false news complaints to the Department of Justice (DOJ) against him as "harassment." In a statement on Wednesday, Tupas said he had earlier presented the NBI

• No one hurt in 2 firecracker factory explosions in Bulacan (2026-10-28 15:54)

CAMP GEN. ALEJO SANTOS, Bulacan – Explosions rocked two firecracker factories in Bocaue and Baliwag City, Bulacan, on Tuesday, but no one was hurt. Three workers managed to flee to safety when a shanty that has been serving as a firecracker factory exploded at past 10 a.m. in Sitio Caculisan, Barangay Bambang in Bocaue, according

• Ridon wants libel laws reviewed after Lustre's sudden arrest (2026-10-28 15:43)

MANILA, Philippines — Congress must review the country's laws on libel after the sudden arrest of veteran journalist Philip Lustre Jr. so that there will be a balance between protecting reputations and press freedom. This view came from Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry Ridon on Wednesday. Ridon said that while he agrees with the need to

• CDO holds over half of bank deposits in Northern Mindanao —PDIC data (2026-10-28 15:36)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY —Domestic bank deposits in Cagayan de Oro, the seat of Northern Mindanao, climbed to P180 billion as of December 31 last year, underscoring the city's status as a rapidly expanding economic hub. According to data from the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC), the city ranked 15th among the top cities in the

• Ex-OVP aide slams NBI obstruction charge recommendation (2026-10-28 15:27)

DAVAO CITY — A former official at the Office of the Vice President (OVP) on Wednesday denounced the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) for recommending charges against her regarding accusations by dismissed policeman Rodolfo Gracioso Jr. about cash deliveries to the Dutertes. "I denounce the NBI's recommendation to file charges against me before the Department

• WALANG PASOK: In-person class suspensions until Saturday, Oct. 31 (2026-10-28 15:21)

MANILA, Philippines — Face-to-face classes were suspended in several areas on Thursday, Oct. 29, until Saturday, Oct. 31, ahead of Undas and other events. Below are the areas with class suspensions: Baguio City – in-person class suspension, all levels in private and public schools; work in government offices starting Friday afternoon, Oct. 30, 12 p.m.,

• Journalist Lustre on Carpio's cyberlibel case: 'I don't let fear immobilize me' (2026-10-28 14:53)

MANILA, Philippines — Veteran journalist Philip Lustre admitted that he felt scared following the cyberlibel case filed by Vice President Sara Duterte's husband, Atty. Manases Carpio. However, he pointed out, "I don't let fear immobilize me." Lustre, 72, was arrested in Quezon City on Saturday by virtue of a warrant of arrest for cyberlibel issued

• Maguindanao del Sur mayor lauds arrest of RPG ambush suspect (2026-10-28 14:47)

COTABATO CITY – Mayor Akmad Mitra Ampatuan Jr. of Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao del Sur, has lauded the arrest of one of the suspects in the rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) ambush against him last January 25. Mayor Ampatuan commended the police for arresting Toraipe Lusod on Saturday, October 24, in Barangay Meta, Datu Unsay, Maguindanao del Sur.

• Fear lingers as twin quakes jolt Davao Occidental, Soccsksargen (2026-10-28 14:34)

KORONADAL CITY — Residents of Davao Occidental and Sarangani rushed out of their homes or shops as two earthquakes jolted Regions 11 (Davao) and 12 (Soccsksargen) Wednesday morning, reviving fears months after a major tremor. A magnitude 5.5 quake first struck at 7:43 a.m. on Wednesday, followed by a magnitude 5.4 tremor at 9:11 a.m.,

• Marcos hit over 'don't panic' remark on Philippine peso breaching 64:1$ (2026-10-28 14:28)

MANILA, Philippines —The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) coalition on Wednesday blasted President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. over his remarks on the continued depreciation of the Philippine peso. The group accused the president and his administration of lack of plans in handling this worsening crisis. Bayan's view came after Marcos earlier told the public not to panic

• Legazpi Diocese holds pontifical coronation of Marian image (2026-10-28 14:19)

LEGAZPI CITY — The Diocese of Legazpi held a pontifical coronation of the image of Nuestra Señora de Salvación during a Mass on Wednesday to mark the 75th anniversary of its canonical establishment. More than 6,000 faithful and hundreds of priests attended the celebration at Saint Gregory the Great Cathedral, presided over by Luis Antonio

• DOTr to summon 2 bus terminals to retrofit facilities — Dizon (2026-10-28 14:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Two bus terminals in Manila will be summoned by the Department of Transportation (DOTr) to fix their facilities and improve the passenger experience, new Transport chief Vince Dizon said on Wednesday. Dizon inspected Ohayami Trans, Florida Bus Terminal, and Victory Liner in Sampaloc, Manila ahead of the expected influx of passengers for

• PNP taps AMLC to probe finances tied to Laos drug shipment (2026-10-28 14:14)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) has tapped the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) to investigate the finances linked to the 521-kilogram shabu (methamphetamine) shipment intercepted in Laos, amid indications that some Philippine officials may be involved. At a press conference on Wednesday, PNP public information chief Col. Allen Rae Co said the agency

• Prosecution rests its case in one of Rep. Jojo Ang's graft cases (2026-10-28 13:51)

MANILA, Philippines — The prosecution rested its case Wednesday, wrapping up its presentation of evidence in the trial of one of 14 graft cases filed against Uswag Ilonggo party-list Rep. Jojo Ang before the Sandiganbayan Sixth Division. According to special prosecutors, Ang allegedly had a stake in a construction firm that won P214 million worth

• Bato dela Rosa seeks urgent SC action on bid to block looming arrest (2026-10-28 13:41)

MANILA, Philippines – The lawyers of Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa have again knocked on the doors of the Supreme Court, seeking to reverse its earlier ruling and grant the lawmaker protection against any attempt to arrest and surrender him to the International Criminal Court (ICC). Atty. Israelito Torreon's law firm submitted a manifestation dated

• INQToday: Duterte drug war victims' lawyers back bid to admit testimonies (2026-10-28 13:35)

MANILA, Philippines — Here are INQToday's top stories this afternoon: Lawyers representing victims of former President Rodrigo Duterte's drug war have backed prosecutors' bid to admit three testimonies in the crimes against humanity case before the International Criminal Court. In Cebu City, defense ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations are gathering for their

• Lanao Norte town turns over loose firearms to boost peace, dev't (2026-10-28 13:05)

ILIGAN CITY — The municipal government of Poona-Piagapo in Lanao del Norte turned over nine high-powered loose firearms to the Philippine Army as part of its efforts to strengthen peace and security and pave the way for a more progressive municipality. The turnover was held on Monday at the headquarters of the Army's 44th Infantry

• 14 wanted persons arrested across Caraga (2026-10-28 12:55)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Police arrested 14 persons wanted by the law, including two listed as most wanted at the city and municipal levels, in a series of coordinated manhunt operations across the Caraga region on Monday. Brig. Gen. Rolindo Suguilon, Police Regional Office 13 (PRO-13) director, said the operations led to the

• PNP opens hotlines for tips on Bato dela Rosa's whereabouts (2026-10-28 12:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Wednesday launched hotlines for the public to report verifiable information on the whereabouts of Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela

Rosa, who has been wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) since November last year.The move followed Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla's announcement last Friday of aP50-million

• Marcos urges public not to panic as peso hits record low (2026-10-28 12:36)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday urged the public not to panic over the Philippine peso's continued slide to a record low of 64 to the US dollar, saying the government is doing everything it can to prevent further depreciation. Marcos' statement came after the peso breached another record low of 64.17

• Dizon willing to testify again in future trials vs Zaldy Co, others (2026-10-28 12:26)

MANILA, Philippines — New Transportation Secretary Vince Dizon on Wednesday expressed his willingness to testify once again in future trials of former lawmaker Zaldy Co and other personalities implicated in flood control scandal. Dizon was asked if he would still take the witness stand before the Sandiganbayan if he is asked to do so even

• Mindanao can cut 'dirty' fuel use by 50% by 2030 – green groups (2026-10-28 12:04)

GENERAL SANTOS CITY– Renewable (RE) energy advocates have expressed confidence that Mindanao can be weaned away from its reliance on dirty, expensive fossil fuels to power its homes and industries by 50 percent by 2030, earlier than the rest of the country. Under the country's nationally determined contribution to reducing global greenhouse gas emissions, Mindanao

• Philip Lustre feels unsafe in Davao; seeks transfer of cyberlibel case (2026-10-28 11:19)

MANILA, Philippines — Veteran journalist Philip Lustre, who is the subject of a cyberlibel case filed by Manases Carpio, husband of Vice President Sara Duterte, is seeking to transfer the case from Davao City to Metro Manila. Lustre's lawyer, Dino De Leon, said Wednesday that the motion, which they said was filed due to safety

• Bukidnon showcases resilient harvests amid El Niño (2026-10-28 11:11)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — Bukidnon's agricultural hub remains resilient even in the shadow of a developing Super El Niño. Last Tuesday, tables overflowed with freshly harvested fruits, crisp vegetables, root crops, and other local delicacies at the city government multi-purpose covered court. The vibrant display launched Valencia City's 16th Farmers' Month Celebration, bringing together hundreds

• Estrada to personally attend plunder bail hearing as Bernardo testifies (2026-10-28 10:43)

MANILA, Philippines — For the first time, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada will personally attend Wednesday afternoon's bail hearing in his plunder case before the Sandiganbayan Fifth Division, according to his office. Previously, Estrada attended hearings on his bail plea in the case via videoconference. The case stemmed from alleged kickbacks that special prosecutors said were

included

• Mimaropa drug bust in Palawan yields ₱51,884 worth of ‘shabu’ (2026-10-28 10:27)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — A joint anti-narcotics operation in Coron, Palawan, led to the arrest of a high-profile drug suspect and the seizure of 7.63 grams of suspected shabu valued at ₱51,884, the Mimaropa police reported. Authorities carried out the operation at 10:40 a.m. on Tuesday at Lambingan Bridge in Barangay Poblacion 2. They served a search warrant issued

• Philippine cobra rescued at Tayabas City school (2026-10-28 10:19)

LUCENA CITY — Authorities safely captured a venomous Philippine cobra found on the premises of a public high school in Tayabas City, Quezon, on Tuesday afternoon. The snake was captured at 1:17 p.m. at the Buenaventura Alandy National High School, the Tayabas City Environment and Natural Resources Office (ENRO) said in a Wednesday report. The

• Visayas grid on red, yellow alert anew on Wed, Oct. 28 (2026-10-28 10:13)

MANILA, Philippines — The Visayas grid will again be placed on red and yellow alerts on Wednesday, Oct. 28, said the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP). In an advisory, the NGCP said the Visayas grid will be placed under red alert from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. READ: NGCP: Mindanao reserves may run

• Sarangani suspends classes, gov’t work after magnitude 5.5 quake (2026-10-28 09:59)

KORONADAL CITY — Face-to-face classes at all levels and work in government offices across Sarangani province were suspended on Wednesday after a magnitude 5.5 earthquake that struck at around 7:43 a.m. In a social media advisory from the Sarangani Provincial Information Office, the provincial government ordered the suspension to allow authorities to conduct post-earthquake safety

• Iligan allocates P5 million annually for IP cultural preservation (2026-10-28 09:46)

ILIGAN CITY — The Iligan City government has allocated P5 million starting next year to support Indigenous Peoples’ culture and traditions. City Ordinance No. 26-7875 allocated the money to the Kaamulan Ta Bayug Iligan City Festival as a permanent platform for celebrating and preserving the cultural heritage of the city’s Indigenous communities. Bae Marecil Timbangan,

• Group urges Senate to restore education budget cuts (2026-10-28 09:39)

MANILA, Philippines — A national coalition has urged the Senate to restore funding cuts to essential education programs in the proposed 2027 national budget and increase investments in underserved communities. In a statement on Wednesday, E-Net Coalition called for changes to the 2027 General Appropriations Bill following a Senate panel hearing with civil society organizations

• 3 nabbed, P1.3 M in ‘shabu’ seized in Lanao del Sur buy-bust (2026-10-28 09:32)

COTABATO CITY — Police authorities arrested three drug suspects and seized P1.3 million worth of suspected shabu in Lanao del Sur on Tuesday. Brig. Gen. Christopher Abecia, Police Regional Office-Bangsamoro Autonomous Region (PRO-BAR) regional director, said police conducted the buy-bust operation in Barangay Matling, Malabang town. It led to the arrest of alleged big-time drug

• Mindanao advocates reject mining as ‘solution’ to climate crisis (2026-10-28 09:25)

BALINGASAG, Misamis Oriental — Can you save the planet by tearing it apart? Mindanao’s environmental coalition and indigenous defenders are asking this question as they reject the narrative that aggressive mining is a “necessary evil” for the global transition to clean energy. Panalipod People’s Coalition (PPC) issued a sharp pushback on Monday against recent claims by

• DOH places Metro Manila hospitals on alert status for Undas (2026-10-28 09:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Hospitals and emergency response teams across Metro Manila will be placed under code white alert from Oct. 31 to Nov. 2 in preparation for a possible increase in patients requiring immediate medical attention during the Undas break. The Department of Health-Metro Manila Center for Health Development (DOH-MMCHD) said the alert aims to

• Magnitude 5.5 earthquake jolts Davao Occidental (2026-10-28 08:39)

KORONADAL CITY — A magnitude 5.5 earthquake struck off Sarangani town in Davao Occidental at 7:43 a.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 28, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said. Data from Phivolcs showed that the tectonic earthquake was recorded nine kilometers (km) southwest of Balut Island in the municipality of Sarangani, at a depth

• Oriental Mindoro power grid placed on red alert (2026-10-28 08:08)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The Oriental Mindoro power grid was placed under red alert by the National Transmission Corporation Small Island Grid System Operator (TransCo SIGSO) on Wednesday (October 28) from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and again from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., as available capacity fell short of demand amid multiple energy challenges facing the province. According to an

• Mimaropa police account for 216 loose firearms ahead of Undas (2026-10-28 08:02)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The police in Mimaropa have accounted for 216 loose firearms since May as the regional police chief ordered intensified operations against illegal gun possession and gun-related violence ahead of the Undas observance. Police Brig. Gen. Christopher R. Dela Cruz, Mimaropa regional police director, issued the directive during an October 27

• AHF calls for responsible, stigma-free HIV reporting (2026-10-28 08:01)

MANILA, Philippines — The AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) Philippines is calling for more accurate, stigma-free reporting on HIV as national surveillance data show gaps in diagnosis, treatment and monitoring among people living with the virus. The Department of Health's second-quarter 2026 HIV and AIDS Surveillance of the Philippines (HASP) report estimated that 288,000 people were

• Baguio move to raise legal drinking age to 21 draws nightlife concerns (2026-10-28 07:47)

BAGUIO CITY — The summer capital is moving closer to raising the minimum legal drinking age from 18 to 21 to curb alcohol-related harm among young people despite concerns from bar operators over the proposed restriction's impact on the city's nightlife industry. The city council last week approved on second reading the proposed Alcohol Harm

• Occidental Mindoro lifts ban on entry of live pigs for slaughter (2026-10-28 07:39)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The provincial government of Occidental Mindoro has lifted its temporary ban on the entry of live pigs from provinces that were designated animal disease risk zones, while maintaining strict controls on incoming pork and pork products. Gov. Eduardo B. Gadiano signed Executive Order No. 75, series of 2026, on Oct.

• Shear line, amihan to bring rain over parts of Luzon on Wednesday (2026-10-28 07:34)

MANILA, Philippines — A shear line and the northeast monsoon, or amihan, are expected to bring cloudy skies and rain to parts of Luzon on Wednesday, according to the state weather bureau. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said the shear line will bring cloudy skies with scattered rains and thunderstorms over

• Man arrested for claiming P18.7M ketamine parcel at Clark (2026-10-28 07:33)

MABALACAT CITY, Pampanga — A 26-year-old man was arrested after claiming a parcel containing ketamine worth P18.725 million at the Port of Clark inside the Clark Freeport Zone on Tuesday, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) said. The suspect, a resident of Rodriguez, Rizal, was arrested at 12:20 p.m., according to a report from PDEA

• PDEA nabs man after claiming parcel with P18.7-M ketamine in Clark (2026-10-28 07:32)

MABALACAT CITY, Pampanga – A man has been arrested after retrieving a parcel containing ketamine worth P18,725,000 at the Port of Clark inside the Clark Freeport Zone on Tuesday (October 27). No other details were disclosed about the suspect who was described as a 26-year-old resident of Rodriguez town in Rizal, according to a report

• PNP beefs up road safety ops, info drive as Undas travel peaks (2026-10-28 07:24)

MANILA, Philippines – The Philippine National Police (PNP) has stepped up road safety operations ahead of the Undas exodus, directing police commanders nationwide to prevent road accidents and help ensure that families reach their destinations and return home safely. In

a statement, PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio C. Nartatez Jr. ordered regional and local police

• Dizon hands Lopez 'next' DPWH corruption cases (2026-10-28 05:55)

MANILA, Philippines — Outgoing Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon on Tuesday handed his successor, Giovanni "Banoy" Lopez, a thick pile of documents naming more Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) personnel implicated in alleged anomalies, telling him it was now his turn to remove the agency's "rotten apples." Dizon said the purge must continue

• Why time rice imports with local harvest season? Pangilinan smells 'modus' (2026-10-28 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Filipino farmers face the prospect of selling their harvest at a loss as imported rice and other agricultural products enter the country during the local harvest season, Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan said on Tuesday, prompting him to question the government's enforcement of safeguards meant to protect local producers. Pangilinan, chair of the

• P5B in 'kickbacks' taken from DPWH project funds, witness tells court (2026-10-28 05:45)

MANILA, Philippines — A former staff member of dismissed Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) official Henry Alcantara said the latter had collected at least P5 billion in kickbacks on behalf of certain lawmakers and other officials who served as "proponents" of flood control projects. Carlo Rivera testified before the Sandiganbayan on Tuesday as

• Senate, IBC launch Senate TV channel (2026-10-28 05:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate and state-owned Intercontinental Broadcasting Corp. (IBC 13) on Tuesday launched Senate TV, a high-definition channel that proponents say will offer more focused and in-depth content on the chamber's proceedings. As a channel leased by the Senate, Senate TV will be available on IBC Digital TV Channel, which owns and operates

• Palace to Dela Rosa: Don't set an example for fugitives (2026-10-28 05:35)

MANILA, Philippines — "Don't be a role model for fugitives,'' Palace press officer Claire Castro said on Tuesday as she urged Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa to surrender and face charges for crimes against humanity before the International Criminal Court (ICC). The government has offered a P50-million bounty for the arrest of Dela Rosa, who

• DOE seeks solutions as weaker peso may hike electricity rates (2026-10-28 05:30)

SINGAPORE — Filipinos should brace for higher electricity prices as the peso continues to lose ground against the US dollar, Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said on Tuesday. According to her, the weaker Philippine peso will drive up the import costs of coal, diesel and liquefied natural gas. "So P64 is probably the highest we have

• PAF: Training planes in fatal crash not yet that old (2026-10-28 05:20)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Air Force (PAF) on Tuesday sought to dispel speculation that the aircraft involved in last week's crash that killed four pilots during training were already aging or had virtually become "flying coffins." The PAF said its SF-260 training aircraft remained within their prescribed operating limits despite being more than a

• Employees can't be forced to retire before 65, says SC ruling (2026-10-28 05:15)

MANILA, Philippines — Employees cannot be forced to retire before the compulsory retirement age of 65 without giving clear and voluntary consent to their employers, according to the Supreme Court. In a decision promulgated June 29 and released on Tuesday, the SC's 1st Division partly granted the petition of Rodolfo Ondevilla, 67, against Colegio de

• Public warned vs scammers posing as DOH chief (2026-10-28 04:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Health (DOH) on Tuesday warned the public against individuals posing as Health Secretary Edwin Mercado and soliciting donations. "The DOH wants to clarify that any messages or calls for donations or transactions using the name of the Secretary are not official and false," it said in a statement. READ:

• Tollway operators all set for heavier traffic for 'Undas' (2026-10-28 04:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The country's two largest tollway operators are bracing for heavier traffic across major expressways during "Undas," when millions of Filipinos are expected to travel to their hometowns to visit departed loved ones. Ramon Ang-led SMC Infrastructure said it expects vehicle traffic across its tollway network to increase by 10 percent, while Manuel

• Bangsamoro's next step: From peace to prosperity (2026-10-28 04:40)

COTABATO CITY, BARMM, Philippines — The leader of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) on Tuesday invited business leaders and development partners to invest in the region, saying the gains of the peace process must now translate into jobs, better incomes, growing enterprises, and safe and secure communities. "The Bangsamoro is ready to

• Negros town shuts trails to protect Mt. Talinis (2026-10-28 04:35)

DUMAGUETE CITY, NEGROS ORIENTAL — The municipal government of Valencia in Negros Oriental province has ordered the temporary closure of trails leading to Mt. Talinis starting on Nov. 1, to give the mountain's ecosystem time to recover from environmental damage caused by increasing human activities. The measure, contained in Executive Order No. 45 signed by

• P1.3-M reward up for info on Albay broadcaster slay (2026-10-28 04:30)

LEGAZPI CITY, ALBAY, Philippines — A P1.3-million reward has been put up for information leading to the identification and arrest of suspects in the Oct. 12 murder of broadcaster Adrian Loterte in Daraga, Albay. Loterte, an anchor of RBN News Television's online program "Rabas

Cun Rabas” and a freelance broadcaster for dwIZ FM, was tending

• Sexual abuse suspect in Negros arrested in Nueva Ecija (2026-10-28 02:04)

BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, Philippines — Operatives of the Police Regional Office Negros Island Region (PRO NIR) arrested the region’s fourth most wanted person in Nueva Ecija on Tuesday, Oct. 27, for allegedly sexually abusing his minor stepdaughter. The suspect, identified only by the alias “Sid,” 46, of Sitio Tan-ayan, Barangay Nangka, Bayawan City, was

• PAL’s first Airbus A330 lands at Bohol-Panglao International Airport (2026-10-28 01:49)

TAGBILARAN CITY, BOHOL, Philippines — The Bohol-Panglao International Airport (BPIA) welcomed Philippine Airlines’ (PAL) first Airbus A330 flight to Bohol on Tuesday, Oct. 27, marking a milestone in the province’s growing air connectivity and tourism development. The wide-body aircraft arrived at 6:25 a.m. on flight PR1771 from Manila, carrying 150 passengers. It received a water

• Leyte’s most wanted man arrested in Caloocan City (2026-10-28 01:36)

TACLOBAN CITY, LEYTE, Philippines — Police arrested in Caloocan City on Monday, Oct. 26, a man listed as Leyte’s most wanted person charged with murder, the Police Regional Office 8 (PRO-8) reported. The suspect, identified only as alias “Robin,” 29, of Quezon City, was arrested by personnel of the Dagami Municipal Police Station (MPS) under a warrant

• 11 former extremists yield to Army, turn in rifles in Maguindanao Sur (2026-10-28 01:27)

COTABATO CITY, BARMM, Philippines — Eleven former members of extremist groups have surrendered to the military and were presented to the commander of the Army’s 601st Infantry Brigade during a ceremony at the headquarters of the 38th Infantry Battalion (38IB) in Datu Piang, Maguindanao del Sur, on Tuesday, Oct. 27. Lt. Col. Mark Anthony P.

• DA seeks P30M more for cloudseeding as Negros crop damage hits P41.9M (2026-10-28 01:12)

BACOLOD CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture in the Negros Island Region (DA-NIR) is seeking an additional P30 million for cloud seeding operations before the year ends, DA Regional Director Albert Barrogo said on Tuesday, Oct. 27. Crop damage in Negros Occidental due to moisture stress caused by dry conditions has reached P41.9

• CBCP president urges scrutiny of P190B in House budget insertions (2026-10-27 23:00)

MANILA, Philippines — The president of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) has called on the House to explain the nearly 7,000 infrastructure projects worth P190 billion that were added to the proposed 2027 national budget without publicly available supporting documents. In a statement on Monday, Oct. 26, CBCP president Bishop Pablo Virgilio

• Father, 11-month-old child dies after dump truck tips over motorcycle (2026-10-27 22:49)

MANILA, Philippines — A 42-year-old driver and his 11-month-old child died after a dump truck crashed onto their motorcycle on Tuesday morning, Oct. 27, the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) confirmed. Based on initial investigations, a dump truck was travelling along Congressional Avenue toward Luzon Avenue in Quezon City when it tipped over onto the

• Socratic method vs core skills? CJ contenders weigh bar exam reforms (2026-10-27 22:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Two candidates for chief justice have outlined contrasting yet complementary perspectives on the bar examination, considered one of the country's most grueling licensure tests. During the public interview with members of the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC), Senior Associate Justice Marvic Leonen called for a comprehensive review of bar admission and criticized

• House bill vs narco-terrorism filed to fight int'l drug syndicates (2026-10-27 22:23)

MANILA, Philippines — A bill that seeks to empower the government with the legal framework to counter transnational drug syndicates involved in narco-terrorism has been filed in the House of Representatives. In a statement on Tuesday, Las Piñas Rep. Mark Anthony Santos, chairperson of the House committee on dangerous drugs, said that he has filed

• COA flags BOC over record mismatch including P1.2-B seized vehicles (2026-10-27 22:15)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Audit (COA) has flagged the Bureau of Customs (BOC) over a mismatch in records of confiscated assets, including 52 seized vehicles in Port of Manila (POM) worth over a billion pesos. In its 2025 audit report for BOC uploaded to COA website on Oct. 21, the state auditor said

• Maynilad upgrades La Mesa facilities to brace for El Niño (2026-10-27 22:12)

MANILA, Philippines — Maynilad Water Services Inc. (Maynilad) upgrades its La Mesa water treatment facilities to strengthen its preparations for the strong El Niño phenomenon in the coming months and reduce its reliance on the Angat-Ipo Dam, its primary source of raw water. The upgrades are designed to help the company manage changes in raw

• Checkmate? Barbers says evidence vs VP Sara hard to counter (2026-10-27 22:08)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte has been checkmated in her impeachment trial as the evidence presented against her is hard to debunk and dispute, prosecution panel spokesperson Robert Ace Barbers said on Tuesday. Barbers, in a press briefing, said it is hard to fathom how the documents and testimonies from government officials will

• Dizon acknowledges 'turo' criticisms, looks forward to more inspections (2026-10-27 22:05)

MANILA, Philippines — It seems that the public will be seeing more project inspections from the heads of Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and Department of Transportation,

as DOTr Sec. Vince Dizon acknowledged the criticisms he got for doing so. As Dizon bids farewellto the DPWH and returns to DOTr, he said

• Oct. 27 lotto results: ₱449.84M jackpot unwon (2026-10-27 21:54)

MANILA, Philippines—No ticket holder won the ₱449.84 million Ultra Lotto 6/58 jackpot in the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) draw on Tuesday, Oct. 27, 2026. According to the PCSO results, the winning combination for Ultra Lotto 6/58 was 55-12-48-22-38-40. No bettor matched all six numbers to claim the ₱449.84 million jackpot. The Super Lotto 6/49

• Prosecution presents review of VP Duterte's financial records (2026-10-27 21:14)

MANILA, Philippines — The House prosecution expects Vice President Sara Duterte to explain, through her defense team, the items, both cash and properties, that are not in her statements of assets, liabilities, and net worth (SALNs) when her impeachment trial resumes on Nov. 9. In a press conference on Tuesday, former Rep. Robert Ace Barbers,

• PhilHealth partners with drugstore chain to expand free medicines (2026-10-27 21:11)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) has partnered with Southstar Drug to expand access to free medicines and educate Filipinos on the proper use of generic drugs. The "Kasama sa Pag-Galing" campaign, launched last month, aims to educate communities about generic medicines, prescription reading, proper over-the-counter medication use, and refill planning. READ:

• Palace to Bato dela Rosa's wife: His possible arrest is not persecution (2026-10-27 20:59)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Tuesday rejected claims by fugitive Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa's wife that he was being persecuted, saying he should not hide if his conscience was clear. Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said the senator's possible arrest was not an act of persecution, noting that complaints against him had been pending

• Dizon vows to prioritize overhauling LTO as he returns to DOTr (2026-10-27 20:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Returning Transport Secretary Vince Dizon on Tuesday vowed to implement reforms in the Land Transportation Office (LTO), as well as prioritize the commuters' welfare and road safety to improve the public transportation system. Dizon made this commitment a day after the latest Cabinet revamp where he was reappointed as the Transport secretary

• P62.8M suspected illegal drugs seized in one-day haul (2026-10-27 20:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Tuesday said that it seized P62.8 million worth of suspected illegal drugs and arrested five individuals in three separate operations. Its joint operation with Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency and National Bureau of Investigation blocked alleged major drug shipments in Lanao del Sur, Pasay City and Pampanga

• Barbers: What's the exact extent of VP Duterte's business interests? (2026-10-27 20:37)

MANILA, Philippines — What are the value and extent of Vice President Sara Duterte's business interests, and did she disclose all of these in her statements of assets, liabilities, and net worth? Former Rep. Robert Ace Barbers asked this question in a press conference on Tuesday, pointing out that the records presented during Duterte's impeachment

• South Cotabato tilapia festival seeks bigger markets for fish farmers (2026-10-27 20:15)

KORONADAL CITY — South Cotabato is looking to expand markets for its tilapia industry as it launched its first five-day Tilapia Festival on Monday, Oct. 26, to help fish farmers reach more buyers and boost their livelihoods. Running until Oct. 30, the festival features a product expo, aquaculture training, lake cleanups, bamboo planting, cooking contests,

• New Tagbilaran bishop vows transparency, urges sustainable development (2026-10-27 19:51)

TAGBILARAN CITY, Bohol — Bishop Crispin "Bai" Barrete Varquez pledged transparency and accountability in managing the Church's resources as he was formally installed as the eighth bishop of the Diocese of Tagbilaran on Tuesday, Oct. 27, at the St. Joseph the Worker Cathedral-Shrine. "Let us continue to become transparent and accountable in our management of

• Angara welcomes DBM nod to 3,627 new DepEd Sulu positions (2026-10-27 19:46)

MANILA, Philippines — Education Secretary Sonny Angara welcomed on Monday the Department of Budget and Management's approval of the creation of 3,627 teaching and teaching-related positions for the newly established Schools Division Office (SDO) of Sulu. — a major development for public school teachers and personnel across Sulu, "We know that there's some worry about

• Caap suspends flights at Iloilo airport to give way to emergency drills (2026-10-27 19:29)

MANILA, Philippines — Flight operations at the Iloilo International Airport in Cabatuan town, Iloilo province were temporarily suspended on Wednesday, Oct. 28. The suspension comes as the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (Caap) is set to conduct emergency drills. In an advisory, the Caap said that the Notice to Airmen will take effect from

• Estrada's camp refutes Bonoan's P7-B insertion claim anew (2026-10-27 19:25)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Jinggoy Estrada's legal team on Tuesday reiterated that the lawmaker did not have insertions in the 2025 national budget. Earlier in the day, former Public Works and Highways secretary Manuel Bonoan told the Sandiganbayan Fifth Division in a written testimony that Estrada had over P7 billion in "congressional initiatives." "Senator Estrada

• Bomb threat triggers class suspension at Koronadal university (2026-10-27 19:18)

KORONADAL CITY — Classes were suspended Tuesday afternoon at Notre Dame of Marbel University (NDMU) here due to a bomb threat that prompted police to cordon off and inspect the campus. Lt. Col. Harold Cornel, Koronadal City police chief, said two pieces of vellum paper bearing threatening messages about alleged improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were

• INQToday: Peso closes beyond 64 (2026-10-27 19:11)

MANILA, Philippines — Here are our top stories for today, Tuesday, Oct. 27, 2026, as of 6 p.m. Peso closes beyond 64 The Philippine peso weakened past 64 per dollar for the first time on Tuesday, hitting another record low as economic uncertainty and external pressures weighed on the local unit. Palace to Bato dela

• Cebu eases anti-ASF controls for lechon production (2026-10-27 18:57)

CEBU CITY — The Cebu provincial government has allowed the shipment of live hogs intended for lechon production, subject to protocols and biosecurity requirements. Gov. Pamela Baricuatro issued Executive Order (EO) No. 55 on Oct. 26, allowing the entry of pigs intended for lechon production. The policy allows lechon producers to source live hogs from

• Barbers: Prenup or not, evidence vs Sara Duterte enough to convict her (2026-10-27 18:49)

MANILA, Philippines — Whether or not there is a prenuptial agreement between Vice President Sara Duterte and her husband Manases Carpio, the evidence presented during her impeachment trial is enough to merit a conviction. This statement came from impeachment prosecution panel spokesperson Robert Ace Barbers on Tuesday in a press briefing briefing at the Batasang Pambansa.

• SC: Retirement before 65 requires voluntary employee consent (2026-10-27 18:43)

MANILA, Philippines — The Supreme Court (SC) has ruled that employees cannot be forced to retire before the compulsory retirement age of 65 without them giving clear and voluntary consent to their respective companies. In a decision promulgated on June 29, the SC’s First Division partly granted the petition of Rodolfo Ondevilla against Colegio de

• Chief justice contender Zalameda defends gov’t officials on budget hike (2026-10-27 18:39)

MANILA, Philippines—Supreme Court Associate Justice Rodil Zalameda, a contender for the chief justice post, said public officials responsible for increasing unprogrammed appropriations under the national budget should be presumed to have acted in good faith. During his interview Monday before the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC), Zalameda said unprogrammed appropriations are constitutional and that official

• Dole orders safety measures for riders amid extreme heat (2026-10-27 18:10)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Labor and Employment (Dole) on Tuesday issued guidelines requiring delivery platforms to implement safety measures as heat levels rise,

including limiting or suspending deliveries under dangerous conditions. Labor Advisory No. 20,Series of 2026, signed by Labor Secretary Francis Tolentino on Oct. 27, sets safety protocols foremployers and

• Engineer: Martin Romualdez not among kickback recipients (2026-10-27 17:57)

MANILA, Philippines — A public works engineer who admitted to collecting and counting alleged kickbacks from Bulacan flood control projects said on Tuesday that former House Speaker Martin Romualdez was not among the recipients. Engineer John Carlo Rivera, who worked under former Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) District Engineer Henry Alcantara, testified to this

• Cooler days seen as Pagasa declares onset of ‘amihan’ season (2026-10-27 17:51)

MANILA, Philippines — The state weather bureau on Tuesday officially declared the onset of the northeast monsoon or “amihan” season, which is expected to cause cooler weather, episodes of cold surges, and rough sea conditions. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said that the “amihan” will become the dominant weather system affecting

• NCRPO warns public vs fake priests in cemeteries soliciting money on Undas (2026-10-27 17:38)

MANILA, Philippines—The National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) warned the public against individuals posing as priests to solicit money for religious services during All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day (Undas). The NCRPO issued the advisory as thousands of families are expected to visit cemeteries, memorial parks and columbaria across Metro Manila for the observance.

• Hontiveros calls for hydration facilities amid Super El Niño (2026-10-27 17:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Risa Hontiveros on Tuesday urged local government units (LGUs) and the private sector to set up hydration stations and cooling centers in public spaces amid Super El Niño. Hontiveros, head of the Senate Committee on Health and Demography, said reporting the day’s heat index alone was not enough and that people

• Carlos files cyberlibel complaint vs. Tarriela, Logico (2026-10-27 17:07)

MANILA, Philippines — Former National Security Adviser Clarita Carlos has filed a cyberlibel complaint before the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) against Philippine Coast Guard spokesperson for the West Philippine Sea (WPS) Rear Adm. Jay Tarriela and Philippine Military Academy Superintendent Lt. Gen. Michael Logico, NBI director Melvin Matibag confirmed. Matibag confirmed the development when

• Dizon tells new DPWH chief Lopez: ‘Pay close attention to Bulacan’ (2026-10-27 16:44)

MANILA, Philippines — Former Public Works and Highways Secretary Vince Dizon on Tuesday asked Secretary Giovanni Lopez to closely monitor flood control projects and other developments in Bulacan as the latter assumes leadership of the agency. During a turnover ceremony of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Dizon presented several unfinished flood control and

- Cloudy skies, rain showers expected in parts of Luzon due to 'amihan' (2026-10-27 16:44)

(Satellite image from Pagasa) MANILA, Philippines — The northeast monsoon 'amihan' is forecast to affect several parts of Northern Luzon until Wednesday, according to state weather bureau. READ: 'Amihan' season expected to begin between Oct. 22 – 30, says Pagasa Pagasa previously said that the amihan season, which brings cooler and drier air, may begin

- Castro dubs fake news peddlers 'gremlins' that keep multiplying (2026-10-27 16:36)

MANILA, Philippines — Palace Press Officer Claire Castro on Tuesday likened fake news peddlers to "gremlins" that multiply, even when it is not raining. This playful comparison came as Castro vowed a fiercer fight against fake news that she believes are meant to bring down the administration and President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. READ: Claire Castro stays;

- School violence prevention must begin at home – study (2026-10-27 16:35)

MANILA, Philippines — The findings of a new international study challenge the familiar belief that corporal punishment produces more disciplined children, with the lead researcher in the Philippines pointing out that preventing school violence depends on addressing children's relationships at home and in school. Dr. Liane Peña Alampay of Ateneo de Manila University said in

- Caraga seafood prices vary sharply between coastal, inland towns (2026-10-27 16:33)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — How much consumers pay for seafood in the Caraga region depends heavily on whether they live by the sea or deep inland, regional market data showed. A price monitoring report by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) Caraga revealed a stark economic divide during the second week

- Four arrested in anti-illegal fuel operation in Batangas (2026-10-27 16:23)

LUCENA CITY — Four men were arrested for allegedly engaging in the unauthorized transfer and trading of petroleum products during an anti-illegal fuel operation in the Batangas town of Bauan on Tuesday (Oct. 27), police said. The operation stemmed from a tip received by the Batangas Police Provincial Office (BPPO) Intelligence Unit regarding the illicit

- Marcos raises corn import quota to 500,000 MT (2026-10-27 16:22)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has issued Executive Order No. 129, increasing the Minimum Access Volume (MAV) for corn this year from 220,000 metric tons (MT)

to 500,000 MT. Executive Secretary Ralph Recto signed the order by authority of Marcos on Oct.26, Monday, and made it public on Tuesday. READ: Lower rice,

• AFP ready to assist in dela Rosa manhunt if tapped (2026-10-27 15:56)

MANILA, Philippines — The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is ready to assist police in the manhunt for Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa if requested, its spokesperson said on Tuesday. AFP spokesperson Col. Francel Margareth Padilla said the Philippine National Police (PNP) will lead any law enforcement operation involving dela Rosa. "This is a law

• Malacañang condoles with families of Air Force pilots killed in crash (2026-10-27 15:54)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Monday extended its condolences to the families of four Philippine Air Force pilots who died in a midair collision during a training flight in Batangas, assuring them of the government's support as they mourned their loss. The pilots died on Oct. 23 in a midair collision involving two aircraft during

• Napolcom: Teacher files complaint vs. police partner over years of abuse (2026-10-27 15:52)

MANILA, Philippines—A teacher from Mindanao has filed an administrative complaint against her live-in partner, a police corporal assigned to Camp Crame, accusing him of repeatedly abusing her over nearly nine years, the National Police Commission (Napolcom) said Tuesday. The teacher, identified only by the alias "Ma'am," filed the complaint against the cop at the Napolcom

• Lopez vows to continue, boost DPWH reforms (2026-10-27 15:42)

MANILA, Philippines — Newly appointed Public Works and Highways Secretary Giovanni Lopez on Tuesday vowed to continue and strengthen the reforms in the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). Lopez made the commitment a day after the latest Cabinet revamp, where he was appointed to lead the DPWH, replacing Secretary Vince Dizon in turn

• Nearly 3,000 police to secure Mimaropa during Undas (2026-10-27 15:34)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Nearly 3,000 police officers will be deployed across Mimaropa to secure cemeteries, transport hubs and other public areas during All Saints' Day (November 1) and All Souls' Day (November 2). The MIMAROPA police are implementing security measures in more than 200 cemeteries, memorial parks and columbaria, as well as churches,

• Castro on supposed 'appointment' as SC associate justice: 'I didn't apply' (2026-10-27 15:33)

MANILA, Philippines — Palace Press Officer Claire Castro on Tuesday debunked a circulating report that she could be appointed as next associate justice of the Supreme Court (SC). The unconfirmed report also said President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. was eyeing Associate Justice Rodil

Zalameda to succeed Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo, who will retire on Nov. 6. The

• Calamba City sizzles as heat index hits 43°C (2026-10-27 15:28)

LUCENA CITY — Calamba City in Laguna recorded a heat index of 43°C on Tuesday, placing the city under the “danger” category and prompting local authorities to warn residents against prolonged exposure to extreme heat. The City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO) said in an advisory that the heat index reached 43°C at

• PAF on Batangas mid-air collision: Aircraft capability not based on age (2026-10-27 15:25)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Air Force (PAF) on Tuesday defended the condition of its SF-260 training aircraft following a midair collision in Batangas that killed four pilots, saying the planes remained within their prescribed operating hours despite being more than a decade old. PAF spokesperson Col. Alvin Jay Capinguian said the aircraft, acquired brand-new

• WALANG PASOK: In-person class suspensions on Wednesday, Oct. 28 (2026-10-27 15:24)

MANILA, Philippines — Several areas suspended face-to-face classes on Wednesday, Oct. 28, due to health concerns and preparations for the first Bangsamoro Parliament session and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) meetings. Below are the following areas with in-person class suspensions: Lapu-Lapu City – shift to asynchronous learning modes until Oct. 30 in schools in

• Undas expressway surge to hit over 750,000 a day (2026-10-27 15:20)

CITY OF MALOLOS—Expressway managers advised motorists to plan their Undas travel as they project vehicles to reach more than 750,000 each day across major superhighways bound for different destinations in Northern, Central, and Southern Luzon. The Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC) projects an average vehicular increase of 12 percent during the peak travel days of

• Staff: Alcantara got at least P5 billion ‘kickbacks’ for delivery to ‘proponents’ (2026-10-27 15:03)

MANILA, Philippines — State witness and former Public Works and Highways-Bulacan District Engineer Henry Alcantara received at least P5 billion worth of alleged kickbacks from contractors, intended to be delivered to project proponents. Alcantara’s former staff Carlo Rivera made the revelation on Tuesday before the Sandiganbayan Third Division’s bail hearing of former House Speaker Martin

• Surigao Sur solon’s face on hospital referrals stirs controversy (2026-10-27 14:46)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — Does an indigent patient need a congressman’s face on a piece of paper to get treatment? A Surigao del Sur lawyer is demanding answers from health and state audit officials over referral slips carrying the portrait and name of 1st District Rep. Romeo Momo Sr.—documents the lawmaker claims his

• Palace says talks of Sara Duterte replacement ‘too premature’ (2026-10-27 14:44)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Tuesday said it was “too premature” to discuss who would succeed Vice President Sara Duterte if she were convicted in the impeachment trial. Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano urged fellow senators to reject any offer from Malacañang to take over the country’s second-highest post if Duterte is convicted. READ: Senators still

• DOH warns vs scammers posing as Health Secretary Edwin Mercado (2026-10-27 14:33)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Health (DOH) on Tuesday warned the public against individuals posing as Health Secretary Edwin Mercado to solicit donations. The DOH said it received reports of messages from people introducing themselves as Mercado. READ: DOH warns public vs counterfeit medicines, vaccines “DOH clarifies that any messages or calls requesting donations

• Undas 2026: 7,200 cops on full alert in Northern Mindanao (2026-10-27 14:30)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY — To secure the hundreds of thousands expected to pour into congested graveyards and sprawling memorial parks this week, Northern Mindanao’s police force will deploy over 7,200 officers and volunteers starting Saturday, October 31. The Police Regional Office-10 (PRO-10) will go on full alert for the traditional observance of All Saints’

• College student dies in motorcycle-bus collision in Quezon (2026-10-27 14:18)

LUCENA CITY — A 20-year-old college student died after his motorcycle collided with a passenger bus along the Maharlika Highway in Gumaca, Quezon, early Tuesday morning. Quezon police said the victim, a resident of Gumaca, was riding along the highway in Barangay Panikihan when the Bicol-bound bus struck his motorcycle at 12:35 a.m. The motorcycle

• Remains of Cagayan pilot killed in Batangas training brought home (2026-10-27 14:12)

TUGUEGARAO CITY – The flag-draped coffin of 1st Lt. Angeleo Adrian Peñaflor, who perished along with three other pilots in the October 23 Lipa City midair collision in Batangas, arrived in a Philippine Air Force C-130 transport plane at the Tuguegarao Airport on Tuesday, with family and friends waiting at the tarmac in abject grief.

• EVs pushed for greener public transit in Bacolod City (2026-10-27 13:59)

BACOLOD CITY — Deputy House Speaker and Bacolod Rep. Alfredo Abelardo Benitez has endorsed a shift to electric vehicles as part of efforts to reduce the country’s dependence on petroleum, improve local air quality, and lower long-term operating and maintenance costs for transport operators. Benitez stressed this in a video message at the 2026 Bacolod

• Palace to Bato dela Rosa: Surrender, don’t be a role model for fugitives (2026-10-27 13:59)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Tuesday told Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa not to set an example for other fugitives, as it once again urged the senator to surrender. The call came after Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla said last week that dela Rosa was considered “armed and dangerous” and that a P50-million bounty had been offered

• INQToday: Bato dela Rosa’s wife appeals to ‘powerful few’ (2026-10-27 13:47)

MANILA, Philippines — Here are INQToday’s top stories this afternoon. The defense team of former President Rodrigo Duterte has opposed the prosecution’s bid to have two witness testimonies admitted as evidence in his crimes against humanity case before the International Criminal Court. The defense is challenging the move as proceedings continue in The Hague. Meanwhile,

• Iriga City gives metal detectors to 51 public schools (2026-10-27 13:33)

LEGAZPI CITY — The Iriga City government distributed metal detectors to 51 public schools on Monday to strengthen security and prevent prohibited or potentially dangerous items on school campuses. Mayor Wilfredo Rex Cuba Oliva led the distribution during the Department of Education (DepEd) Iriga City Division Management Committee meeting. Oliva turned over the devices to

• ₱677.8-M aid released for 66,000 Negros sugarcane farmers, workers (2026-10-27 13:23)

BACOLOD CITY — The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has disbursed P677.8 million so far under its Uplift Disaster Assistance Program to assist small sugarcane farmers and laborers across the Negros Island Region (NIR) affected by the red-stripe soft-scale insect infestation. DSWD-NIR Regional Director Arwin Razo said the agency’s Disaster Response Operations Monitoring and Information

• Dizon to Lopez: Your turn to get rid of corrupt DPWH personnel (2026-10-27 13:21)

MANILA, Philippines —Former Department of Public Works and Highways chief Vince Dizon on Tuesday turned over to his successor documents of DPWH personnel linked to corruption. Dizon on Monday was reassigned as transportation secretary, replacing Giovanni Lopez, who in turn took over Dizon’s DPWH top post. During the DPWH turnover ceremony, Dizon handed Lopez a

• Pangasinan improves in food, health, other UN development goals (2026-10-27 13:08)

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan – By implementing programs and projects aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Pangasinan provincial government raised its SDG score from 50 in 2019 to 89 in 2024, out of a targeted score of 102. This was the main finding of the Pangasinan SDGs Report, a study conducted by researchers

• Senate, IBC-13 launch Senate TV channel (2026-10-27 12:29)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate of the Philippines and the Intercontinental Broadcasting Corporation (IBC-13) on Tuesday launched Senate TV, a channel dedicated to broadcasting the upper chamber's proceedings. In a speech during the channel's launch, Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian said that Senate TV will give Filipinos better access to information about Senate affairs. READ: Senate

• Undas 2026: 6,400 security personnel to secure Caraga (2026-10-27 12:25)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — At least 6,400 police officers, security forces, and civilian volunteers will be deployed across Caraga (Region 13) to ensure public safety during the observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, or Undas 2026, a top official said. Brig. Gen. Rolindo Suguilon, Police Regional Office 13 (PRO-13) director,

• Mangyan artisans urge protection of crafts, cultural heritage (2026-10-27 12:15)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Mangyan artisans and educators called for stronger protection of their indigenous crafts, traditional knowledge, and cultural identity, stressing that preserving their heritage also means protecting ancestral lands and sustaining community livelihoods. They made the call during the fourth Agkatipon Pagkaruwan Mangyan: Indigenous Peoples' Summit 2026 held at the Divine Word

• Bong Go asks for prayers for Duterte's return during Bukidnon visit (2026-10-27 11:46)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — Sen. Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go has appealed anew to supporters of ex-President Rodrigo Duterte to pray for his health and eventual return to the country. Duterte has been detained by the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, Netherlands, on charges of alleged crimes against humanity in connection with his administration's,

• Bonoan: Estrada has over P7 billion 'initiatives' in 2025 budget (2026-10-27 11:27)

MANILA, Philippines —Sen. Jinggoy Estrada has over P7 billion in "congressional initiatives" in the 2025 budget, former Public Works Secretary Manuel Bonoan said in written testimony submitted to the Sandiganbayan Fifth Division Tuesday. The anti-graft court is currently conducting a hearing on Estrada's bail petition where Bonoan stands as a witness. READ: Jinggoy declines to enter

• Visayas grid to be placed under red, yellow alerts anew (2026-10-27 11:19)

MANILA, Philippines — The Visayas grid will once again be placed under red and yellow alerts on Tuesday, Oct. 27, due to insufficient power supply, the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) said. In an advisory, the NGCP said the red alert would be in effect from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m., while yellow

• Red tide hits Carigara Bay; shellfish ban stays in 2 Samar bays (2026-10-27 11:16)

TACLOBAN CITY — The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has warned the public against the gathering, selling, and eating of shellfish from Carigara Bay in Leyte after seawater samples tested positive for a red tide-causing organism, while a shellfish ban remains in effect in two other bays in Samar and Eastern Samar. In

• Senators still free to decide on VP post – Cayetano (2026-10-27 10:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano clarified on Tuesday that his colleagues in the upper chamber remain free to make their own decisions should they be offered the role of vice president. This comes after Sen. Panfilo Lacson criticized Cayetano's call for their colleagues to reject any nomination to replace Vice President

• Cavitex R1 Extension toll rates rise Oct. 28; rebates offered to PUVs (2026-10-27 10:36)

MANILA, Philippines — Motorists using the seven-kilometer Cavitex R1 Extension (Zapote to Kawit) will be charged higher toll rates starting Wednesday, Oct. 28. The Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) approved the collection of the second-tranche toll rates following petitions filed by Cavitex Infrastructure Corp. (CIC) and the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA). The petition covers the toll

• 13 children hospitalized after eating tuba-tuba fruit in Koronadal (2026-10-27 10:31)

KORONADAL CITY — Thirteen children here were hospitalized after experiencing vomiting, dizziness, and stomach pain several hours after eating the fruit of a tuba-tuba plant (Jatropha curcas) in Barangay Topland, Koronadal City, on Monday night. The children, all from Sitio Kolondafok, were taken to the South Cotabato Provincial Hospital for medical treatment. Barangay Topland chairperson

• OIL PRICE WATCH as of Oct. 27, 2026 (2026-10-27 10:07)

MANILA, Philippines — Oil prices at local pumps will have a mixed adjustment Tuesday, with diesel and kerosene prices rising while gasoline prices drop amid continued volatility in the global oil market. The Department of Energy (DOE) said gasoline prices would decrease by 30 centavos per liter, while diesel prices would increase by P1.20 per

• Barangay councilor nabbed after 'shabu' found at Leyte checkpoint (2026-10-27 10:06)

TACLOBAN CITY — Police arrested a 59-year-old barangay councilor from Barugo, Leyte, after officers discovered two sachets of suspected "shabu" (crystal meth) during a checkpoint operation in Barangay Cayare, San Miguel, Leyte, on Monday. Police stopped the suspect, identified only by the alias "Aldo," for allegedly riding a motorcycle without a helmet, according to the

• 10-year-old Indigenous girl found dead, tied to tree in Maguindanao (2026-10-27 09:56)

COTABATO CITY – A 10-year-old Indigenous girl was found dead, naked, with her hands and feet bound and tied to a tree in a remote village in South Upi, Maguindanao del Sur, police said

Tuesday. Capt. Steffi Salanguit, spokesperson for Police Regional Office-Bangsamoro Autonomous Region (PRO-BAR), identified the victim only as alias “Cyll,” a Grade 5

• Kidapawan Diocese mourns desecration of parish church (2026-10-27 09:27)

KIDAPAWAN CITY —The Diocese of Kidapawan has mourned the desecration of a parish church in M’lang town, after unidentified thieves robbed its tabernacle and dishonored the Blessed Sacrament. In a decree issued on Monday, Kidapawan Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo directed the suspension of Masses and other sacramental celebrations at the Sta. Teresita del Niño Jesus

• DOT urges establishment owners to step up water conservation amid El Niño (2026-10-27 09:16)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — The Department of Tourism (DOT) in Mimaropa encouraged all tourism establishments in the provinces of Occidental and Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, and Palawan to implement water-saving measures and protect guests and personnel from extreme heat as the El Niño phenomenon threatens water supplies and normal operations. In Advisory No. 2026-10-004,

• Dela Rosa’s wife to ‘powerful few’: He needs help, not persecution (2026-10-27 09:04)

MANILA, Philippines – Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa’s wife, Nancy dela Rosa, has pleaded to the “powerful few” not to use her husband for their personal agenda, stressing the senator needs help, not persecution. She also thanked dela Rosa’s supporters, saying they have helped her realize “that there are millions who still believe and support”

• Missing boy found dead in Batangas river (2026-10-27 08:12)

LUCENA CITY — The body of a missing 9-year-old boy was recovered from the Pansipit River near the municipal boundaries of Agoncillo and Lemery in Batangas on Monday afternoon (Oct. 26), a day after his disappearance was reported. The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Batangas said the boy’s body was found near Palanas Bridge in Lemery

• Northeasterly winds to bring light rain to northern Luzon Tuesday (2026-10-27 07:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Overcast skies and light rain are expected in parts of northern Luzon on Tuesday due to northeasterly wind flow, the state weather bureau said. According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), a strengthening northeasterly wind flow signals the approaching amihan season, or northeast monsoon. READ: PH Weather Updates

• Dizon, Lopez swap posts in latest Cabinet revamp (2026-10-27 05:55)

President Marcos on Monday swapped the chiefs of the country’s two major infrastructure agencies, returning Vince Dizon to the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and transferring Giovanni “Banoy” Lopez to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to accelerate reforms in commuting and infrastructure. Dizon headed the DOTr from February to

September 2025 before moving

• Lawyer tags VP husband in cyberlibel rap vs journo (2026-10-27 05:50)

The lawyer of Philip Lustre Jr. on Monday identified Manases Carpio, the husband of Vice President Sara Duterte, as the private complainant in the cyberlibel case filed against the 72-year-old veteran journalist who was arrested over the weekend. “We will confront this case properly and we reserve our client’s right to file the appropriate counter-charges,”

• Palace: Marcos had no hand in P50-M bounty for Bato dela Rosa (2026-10-27 05:45)

Malacañang on Monday distanced President Marcos from the P50-million bounty for the arrest of Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa, saying the reward was ordered solely by Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla and the Philippine National Police leadership. Palace press officer Claire Castro stressed that the President did not personally authorize the bounty, which would be funded

• Remulla: Ombudsman to pin down those who ‘gamed’ budget (2026-10-27 05:40)

Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla on Monday said he would order the antigraft body to form a study group in a bid to pin down those who “gamed” the budget in the past few years. Remulla made this remark after the Supreme Court declared “unconstitutional” certain provisions of the 2024 and 2025 national budgets, as well

• NBI chief wants Davao head prosecutor out of Pulong Duterte’s libel case (2026-10-27 05:20)

National Bureau of Investigation Director Melvin Matibag on Monday sought the inhibition of the Davao City head prosecutor from the libel and cyberlibel case filed against him last week by Davao City Rep. Paolo “Pulong” Duterte, citing the “closeness of her relationship with the complainant.” In an interview before he filed his urgent motion for

• Flower prices expected to increase as ‘Undas’ nears (2026-10-27 05:05)

Less than a week before “Undas,” prices of flowers at the Dangwa Market in the City of Manila remain at P450 to P1,500 per bundle. But vendors expect the flower prices to rise further by Wednesday. As of Monday, a bundle of local white roses costs P450, while Korean roses are priced at P650 per

• Ejercito: Premature to talk about Sara Duterte’s removal (2026-10-27 05:00)

Discussions about Vice President Sara Duterte’s possible removal from office while her impeachment trial is ongoing are “uncalled for” and “premature,” some senators said on Monday. “It’s as if there’s already a certainty of a guilty verdict,’’ said Sen. JV Ejercito, who welcomed Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano’s post urging his colleagues to follow

• Duque’s bid to bar 2 witnesses denied (2026-10-27 04:55)

The Sandiganbayan's First Division on Monday denied the move of former Health Secretary Francisco Duque III to bar Department of Health (DOH) Administrative Officers Dawnavi Lae Lacsado and Abegail Conchada, from testifying in his graft case. Special prosecutors also noted that the DOH, as the procuring entity, had the authority to directly negotiate or purchase

• Negros traders, labor groups assail wage increase (2026-10-27 04:40)

BACOLOD CITY—Labor and business leaders in Negros Occidental have expressed dissatisfaction with the daily minimum wage increase of P40 to P45 for private-sector workers in Western Visayas, with labor groups calling the adjustment inadequate and employers warning of higher operating costs and possible price increases. The wage adjustment, approved by the Regional Tripartite Wages and

• Villegas urges Palace to stand firm on West Philippine Sea (2026-10-27 04:35)

DAGUPAN CITY—Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Socrates Villegas urged the Marcos administration to remain "firm and unyielding" in defending the country's sovereignty over the West Philippine Sea (WPS), "without provoking hostilities but without cowering in the face of threat." In a pastoral message issued on Sunday, Villegas said he was lending his voice to fisherfolk in Pangasinan and

• 'Undas' sideline sustains Koronadal families (2026-10-27 04:30)

KORONADAL CITY—For as little as P5 per grave, youths and adults living beside Koronadal City Public Cemetery earn extra money by cleaning tombs and lighting candles for visitors ahead of "Undas" (All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day). The annual influx of cemetery visitors offers these residents a chance to earn money for their families'

• PCSO lotto results Oct. 26: ₱305.12M jackpot unwon (2026-10-26 21:52)

MANILA, Philippines — No bettor won the ₱305.12 million Grand Lotto 6/55 jackpot or the ₱15 million MegaLotto 6/45 jackpot in the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) draws on Monday, Oct. 26, 2026. According to the PCSO results provided, the Grand Lotto 6/55 draw produced the winning combination 27-38-44-51-20-47, with a jackpot prize of ₱305.12

• 5 most-wanted persons in Cordillera nabbed (2026-10-26 21:34)

BAGUIO CITY— Police arrested all five regional-level most wanted persons in the Cordillera Administrative Region during manhunt operations conducted across the region in October, the Police Regional Office-Cordillera (PRO-CAR) said. In a report on Monday, Oct. 26, PRO-CAR said the five suspects, listed as the region's top most wanted persons for the fourth quarter of

• Marcos admin urged to adopt industrial policy, alternative mining (2026-10-26 21:13)

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro — Environmental and human rights advocates on Monday urged the Marcos administration to adopt a national industrial policy and enact an alternative minerals management law, warning that current mining policies could promote destructive

extraction without ensuring Filipinos benefit from mineral resources. At the Oct. 26 launch ofMining Hell Week, Alyansa

• WATCH: Manila North Cemetery starts Undas 2026 preparations (2026-10-26 21:00)

MANILA, Philippines — As early as Monday, Oct. 26, the Manila North Cemetery has started its preparations for Undas — the Filipino term encompassing All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, which are commemorated on Nov. 1 and 2, respectively. According to Daniel Tan, the cemetery director, some 2 million people are expected to visit

• DSWD releases P677.8M in aid to over 66,000 Negros sugar workers (2026-10-26 20:58)

BACOLOD CITY — The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has disbursed P677.8 million in assistance to more than 66,000 small sugarcane farmers and laborers affected by the red-striped soft scale insect infestation across the Negros Island Region, DSWD-NIR Regional Director Arwin Razo said Monday, Oct. 26. Data from the DSWD Disaster Response Operations

• Bong Go calls out Bukidnon electric co-op over brownout (2026-10-26 20:52)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — Senator Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go called out the First Bukidnon Electric Cooperative Inc. (FIBECO) after an unscheduled power outage hit the city during the turnover of a P12-million Department of Health (DOH) Super Health Center in Barangay Laligan here on Monday, October 26. The brownout forced Go to rely on a

• MMDA: 2 bus drivers test positive for drugs ahead of Undas (2026-10-26 20:39)

MANILA, Philippines — Two bus drivers tested positive in initial drug screenings conducted at transport terminals in Parañaque and Cubao as authorities stepped up safety inspections ahead of the Undas long weekend, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) said Monday. At the Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange (PITX), one of the 32 drivers screened tested positive,

• The Medical City Clark vows compliance with Anti-Hospital Deposit Law (2026-10-26 20:31)

CLARK FREEPORT ZONE — The Medical City Clark (TMC Clark) has reaffirmed its commitment to comply with the Anti-Hospital Deposit Law, which prohibits hospitals from requiring deposits before providing basic emergency care to patients in emergency or serious condition. TMC Clark serves as the official medical facility and emergency trauma response hub for the Clark

• Magalong urges COA, ombudsman to probe voided national budgets (2026-10-26 20:22)

BAGUIO CITY — Baguio City Mayor Benjamin Magalong on Monday called on the Commission on Audit (COA) to audit government appropriations following the Supreme Court's ruling declaring provisions of the 2024, 2025, and 2026 national budgets unconstitutional. Magalong also urged the Office of the Ombudsman to conduct an independent investigation to determine whether government officials

• Napolcom pushes criminology reforms, stricter police screening (2026-10-26 20:04)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Police Commission (Napolcom) is pushing for reforms in criminology education and stricter screening of aspiring police officers amid concerns over the character of future law enforcers. Napolcom Commissioner Rafael Vicente Calinisan made the call on Monday during a press briefing following an incident involving a criminology intern who was photographed

• Ridon to VP Duterte: Explain over P100-M in assets not in SALN (2026-10-26 20:01)

MANILA, Philippines – Rep. Terry L. Ridon, a House prosecutor, challenged Vice President Sara Duterte on Monday to explain why more than P100 million in bank deposits, investments, and insurance holdings allegedly did not appear in her 2023 statement of assets, liabilities, and net worth (SALN). In a press briefing on Monday, Ridon said the

• Prosecution eyes VP Duterte mansions in Nov. 9 cross-exam (2026-10-26 19:46)

MANILA, Philippines — The House prosecution intends to question defense witnesses about mansions and other properties allegedly linked to Vice President Sara Z. Duterte and her family when her impeachment trial resumes Nov. 9. In a statement issued on Monday, House prosecutor Terry L. Ridon said the properties could become an issue during cross-examination as the

• 2027 budget: House execs say issues can be settled at bicam (2026-10-26 19:34)

MANILA, Philippines — Two leaders of the House of Representatives have appeared lukewarm toward a push to recall the 2027 budget bill recently passed by the chamber, saying any issues can be addressed at the bicameral conference committee. At a press briefing on Monday, Deputy Speaker Ronaldo Puno and Bataan Rep. Albert Garcia said they

• Cotabato church suspends Masses after break-in, desecration of hosts (2026-10-26 19:31)

MANILA, Philippines – A parish in M’lang, Cotabato, has suspended all Masses and sacramental celebrations inside its main church after a break-in that resulted in the desecration of the Blessed Sacrament that is kept in the tabernacle. The Sta. Teresita del Niño Jesus Parish, in an announcement, expressed profound sorrow over the incident, saying the

• Lacson says 2027 budget hearing with CSOs is ‘a big paradox’ (2026-10-26 19:04)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Panfilo Lacson on Monday described the 2027 budget consultation with civil society organization (CSO) representatives as “a big paradox.” “After hearing all the grievances and problems, you can’t help but ask, ‘Is there still hope for this country?” Lacson said. “On the other hand, after hearing their passion and their respective

• Classes at Bukidnon high school suspended due to online threat (2026-10-26 18:49)

MALAYBALAY CITY, Bukidnon — Classes were suspended Monday at the Bukidnon National High School-Senior High School (BNHS-SHS) campus here due to an alleged violent online threat. Police authorities and education officials placed the BNHS-SHS on high alert following the threat sent by an unidentified user sent to a group chat on Sunday, October 25, threatening

• Outgoing DOTr chief Lopez says commuters' welfare to remain a priority (2026-10-26 18:46)

MANILA, Philippines – Endless "thank yous" reverberated at the Department of Transportation's (DOTr) office on Monday, Oct. 26, as outgoing Transportation Secretary Giovanni "Banoy" Lopez bid goodbye to the agency he has led since September last year. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. appointed Lopez as the new chief of the Department of Public Works and Highways

• Chief prosecutor warns giving false addresses in complaints is perjury (2026-10-26 18:22)

MANILA, Philippines — Veteran journalist Philip Lustre was deprived of due process when he was indicted and arrested without receiving a copy of the complaint or a chance to defend himself because the complainant provided the wrong address, the chief government prosecutor said Monday. "I would have to agree with them that they were not

• IP youths donate learning materials to remote Iligan community (2026-10-26 18:07)

ILIGAN CITY — College student volunteers from the Higaonon ethnic group in the city brought school supplies, books, clothes, and basic health services to children in remote Sitio Limunsudan, Barangay Rogongon, on Oct. 24, in celebration of Indigenous Peoples' (IP) Month. The outreach activity gathered young people from different communities, including Muslims and Christians, in

• Senate told: Over P1 trillion in proposed 2027 budget is 'pork' (2026-10-26 17:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Over P1 trillion of the allocations for the 2027 national budget are red flags or suspected "pork," the People's Budget Coalition (PBC) told the Senate on Monday. The PBC shared its analysis of the National Expenditure Program (NEP) and the House General Appropriations Bill (HGAB) during the Senate finance committee's consultation with

• ITCZ to bring rain, thunderstorms to parts of Mindanao Tuesday (2026-10-26 17:42)

MANILA, Philippines — Parts of Mindanao may experience scattered rain showers and thunderstorms on Tuesday, Oct. 27, due to the intertropical convergence zone (ITCZ), the state weather bureau said. In its 24-hour public weather forecast issued at 4 p.m. on Monday, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said cloudy skies with scattered

• Manila Water leverages Calawis WTP, boosts El Niño preparedness (2026-10-26 17:40)

MANILA, Philippines — As Manila Water prepares for the looming strong El Niño conditions that may extend into the first semester of 2027, the company continues to strengthen its water supply resilience by leveraging the capacity of its 80-million-liter-per-day (MLD) Calawis Water Treatment Plant (WTP) in Antipolo City. The facility serves as a critical additional water

• LTFRB suspends bus after Ilocos Norte crash injures 20 passengers (2026-10-26 17:40)

SAN ILDEFONSO, Ilocos Sur — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) ordered the preventive suspension of a passenger bus that overturned after colliding with a pickup truck in Bangui, Ilocos Norte, on Oct. 24, leaving 20 passengers injured. The LTFRB in the Ilocos Region said the suspension took effect on the same day

• Court junks Ombudsman move vs justice who grants Revilla's bail (2026-10-26 17:18)

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan Third Division on Monday said it junked the move of special prosecutors to ask its member, Associate Justice Ronald Moreno, to voluntarily inhibit from the malversation case trial of former Sen. Bong Revilla over alleged bias. Revilla faces a malversation of public funds case for being an alleged co-conspirator in

• LTO urges PUV drivers, operators to ensure roadworthiness before Undas (2026-10-26 17:02)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Office (LTO) on Monday reminded drivers and operators of public utility vehicles (PUVs) to ensure their units are roadworthy and comply with regulatory requirements ahead of the expected influx of passengers during All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, or Undas. The LTO conducted roadworthiness inspections at terminals in

• Laguna de Bay water level continues to fall amid El Niño (2026-10-26 16:58)

LUCENA CITY — Laguna de Bay's water level continues to decline due to prevailing dry conditions associated with El Niño, falling to 12.08 meters on Monday, according to the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA). In an advisory, the LLDA said the lake's water level was down from 12.18 meters recorded on Oct. 21. The agency

• Bulacan agri sector needs P500M to prepare for Super El Niño (2026-10-26 16:51)

CITY OF MALOLOS—Bulacan's agriculture sector needs P500 million to mitigate the effects and anticipated damages of a Super El Niño on the province's farmlands, according to Bulacan experts in a report. Gloria Carillo, Bulacan agriculture officer, asked for the allotment of P511,909,400 to cushion the brunt of El Niño on rice production, high-value crops

• Isabela State U-Echague bans vaping inside campus (2026-10-26 16:43)

MANILA, Philippines – The Isabela State University (ISU) – Echague reminded its constituents that vaping inside the campus is strictly prohibited. "Violations of this policy are classified as major offenses and may result in disciplinary actions as outlined in the University Student Manual," the Office of Student Affairs and Services said. It pointed out in

• Claire Castro vows to be bolder in fight vs fake news, destabilizers (2026-10-26 16:17)

MANILA, Philippines — Palace press officer Claire Castro on Monday said she will become bolder in defending the Marcos administration from fake news peddlers and destabilizers. She made the remarks following Presidential Communications Office Acting Secretary Lino Cayeteno's support of her "combative style" in defending the administration and countering attacks against President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. READ: Claire

• Palace: P50M bounty vs Dela Rosa not from Marcos (2026-10-26 16:09)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. did not order the P50-million bounty for the arrest of Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa, which the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) issued under their mandates, the Palace said Monday. According to Palace Press Officer Claire Castro, Interior Secretary

• 4H framework: DepEd issues proactive Super El Niño protocols (2026-10-26 16:05)

MANILA, Philippines — Education Secretary Sonny Angara has issued comprehensive proactive guidelines to help schools prepare for a strong to very strong El Niño, which the state weather service predicts will persist through mid-2027. "We cannot afford to wait until extreme heat hits before we act. Our plan this year is proactive, deliberate, and organized,"

• DTI: No price hikes on basic necessities until Dec. 31 (2026-10-26 15:56)

MANILA, Philippines — As Filipino consumers prepare for Undas and the Christmas and New Year holidays, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) said prices of 190 monitored basic necessities and prime commodities will not increase until Dec. 31, 2026, assuring the public that supplies of the listed products remain sufficient nationwide. In a statement

• AFP ends Territorial defense drill off eastern Mindanao seaboard (2026-10-26 15:49)

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur — The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Eastern Mindanao Command (EastMinCom) wrapped up a four-day joint inter-agency defense exercise on Sunday across Surigao City, the Dinagat Islands, and key maritime corridors along the country's eastern seaboard. Dubbed "Exercise Surigao Sentinel 01-2026," the Oct. 22–25 maneuvers culminated with the 82nd

• NBI readies arrest of Bato dela Rosa; warns of possible 'encounter' (2026-10-26 15:45)

MANILA, Philippines — National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Director Melvin Matibag said on Monday that the bureau will arrest Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa with the least possible violence, noting that an "encounter" may happen in locating him. In an interview, Matibag noted dela Rosa's background as a former chief of the Philippine National Police

• Dutertes harassed media before, we won't allow it this time – Ridon (2026-10-26 15:42)

MANILA, Philippines — Bicol Saro party-list Rep. Terry Ridon has called out members of the Duterte family for the cyber libel cases filed against members of the media, saying that if they were able to do it before, lawmakers will not allow it to happen again. In an interview on Monday at the Batasang Pambansa

• DLSU Manila suspends classes from 1 pm to 6 pm on Oct. 26 (2026-10-26 15:32)

MANILA, Philippines – De La Salle University (DLSU) Manila has suspended in-person and online classes from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 26. The La Sallian, DLSU's official student publication, said the announcement came from the Office of the Provost, but it has not disclosed the reasons. Classes from 6:00 p.m. onward will

• Flower prices expected to increase as Undas nears (2026-10-26 15:20)

MANILA, Philippines — Less than a week before Undas, flower prices at Dangwa Market in Manila remain at P450 to P1,500 per bundle, but vendors expect prices to rise by Wednesday, Oct. 28. One vendor told INQUIRER.net that a bundle of local white roses costs P450, while Korean roses are priced at P650. Meanwhile, a

• Undas 2026: 4,790 police personnel to be deployed in Soccsksargen (2026-10-26 15:19)

KORONADAL CITY — The Police Regional Office 12 (PRO-12) will deploy 4,790 personnel across Soccsksargen (Region 12) to help ensure public safety and maintain peace and order during the observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day 2026 (Undas 2026). The PRO-12 Regional Public Information said the deployment will cover cemeteries, memorial parks, columbaria,

• Agusan del Sur slashes poverty to 13.9% (2026-10-26 15:06)

PROSPERIDAD, Agusan del Sur — Family poverty in Agusan del Sur has dropped sharply from 23.4% in 2023 to 13.9%, putting the province ahead of schedule on its medium-term development roadmap, Gov. Santiago B. Cane Jr. announced during his annual State of the Province Address (SOPA) on Friday. Delivering the address under the banner "A

• Lacson: Cayetano's call for senators to reject VP post uncalled for (2026-10-26 15:05)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Panfilo Lacson said it was uncalled for to preempt President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and limit his choices for a possible replacement for Vice President Sara Duterte should she be removed from office. Lacson was reacting to Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano's call for all senator-judges in Duterte's impeachment trial to

• NUP solons seek body to manage advanced industries like Pax Silica (2026-10-26 15:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Several House of Representatives lawmakers from the National Unity Party (NUP) are pushing for a bill that seeks to create a body that would manage advanced industries in the country, like the proposed Pax Silica hub in Luzon, to provide a legal framework for such industries. During a press briefing on Monday, NUP

• Police rescue 8-month-old twins in Pampanga after being sold twice (2026-10-26 14:58)

MABALACAT CITY — Police officers from Taguig City rescued on Sunday eight-month-old twin boys who were sold for P71,000 to a couple in the Pampanga town of Candaba. The mother of the twins sold her babies for P30,000 sometime last August to a woman who was supposed to adopt them as her own children, Police

• WALANG PASOK: In-person class suspensions for Tuesday, Oct. 27 (2026-10-26 14:56)

MANILA, Philippines — Face-to-face classes are suspended in several schools in Luzon and Visayas on Tuesday, October 27, due to various reasons. The Philippine Science High School (PSHS) – Main Campus in Quezon City suspended its classes on October 26 and 27, 2026 "due to increasing reports of illness among students." The main campus said

• Dizon-Lopez swap won't affect DOTr, DPWH budgets, says Ejercito (2026-10-26 14:41)

MANILA, Philippines — Sec. Vince Dizon swapping posts with Sec. Giovanni "Banoy" Lopez won't affect the 2027 budget of the two concerned agencies, according to Sen. JV Ejercito on Monday. Dizon will return to the helm of the Department of Transportation (DOTr), where he was head from Feb. 21 to Sept. 1, 2025, while Lopez

• 5 female green sea turtles rescued from fish corrals in Aurora (2026-10-26 14:40)

OLONGAPO CITY — Five female green sea turtles were accidentally caught in fish corrals and were rescued, tagged, and released into Casiguran Bay in Aurora Province after local fisherfolk reported the incidents to environmental authorities, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said on Monday. The turtles were found along the coasts of Barangays

• Manila logs 2,692 flu-like cases this year amid 8% national rise (2026-10-26 14:30)

MANILA, Philippines — Manila recorded nine new cases of influenza-like illness (ILI) on Monday, Oct. 26, bringing the city's total to 2,692 since the start of the year, amid a reported increase in flu-like illnesses nationwide. In an interview with Super Radyo dzBB, Health Secretary Edwin Mercado said the DOH recorded 11,137 ILI cases in

• Marcos: Ifugao pump irrigation project to benefit 1,315 farmers (2026-10-26 14:29)

ALFONSO LISTA, Ifugao – President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday announced that 1,315 farmers would benefit from the P1.49-billion Alfonso Lista Pump Irrigation System (ALPIS), which he inaugurated in Barangay Sto. Domingo in this town. Marcos said his administration had prioritized irrigation for farmers when he assumed office in 2022. "Alam po naman natin na

• Ejercito files 'Bantay Budget' bill to give CSOs say in budget prep (2026-10-26 14:25)

MANILA, Philippines — A bill seeking the participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the preparation of the national budget was filed at the Senate on Monday. Senate finance committee chairperson, Sen. JV Ejercito, filed Senate Bill No. 2576, or the "Bantay Budget

Act,” as the panel sought a consultation with several CSOs for the

• Piston denounces Dizon’s reappointment as DOTr chief (2026-10-26 14:21)

MANILA, Philippines — The national president of transport group Piston, on Monday, denounced the reappointment of Vince Dizon as Department of Transportation (DOTr) secretary, saying the leadership reshuffle aims to push programs that will worsen the public transport system. In a statement, Mody Floranda said that there is nothing worth celebrating about Dizon’s leadership reassignment.

• Remulla, Gesmundo push for concrete anti-corruption outcomes (2026-10-26 14:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Top justice officials on Monday vowed to turn inter-agency cooperation into concrete action against graft and corruption, warning that agreements must lead to results. The Justice Sector Coordinating Council (JSCC) and the Office of the Ombudsman signed a memorandum of understanding on Monday to strengthen cooperation in administering justice, promoting public accountability

• Sara Duterte’s husband Mans Carpio behind cyberlibel case vs Lustre (2026-10-26 13:49)

MANILA, Philippines— Lawyer Manases Carpio, husband of Vice President Sara Duterte, was the complainant in the cyberlibel case that led to the arrest of veteran journalist Philip Lustre Jr. over the weekend. The case stemmed from a Facebook post published on March 6, 2026, through an account named “Philip Jr Lustre,” according to a court

• NBI recommends obstruction of justice raps vs Jefry Tupas (2026-10-26 13:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) will recommend to the Department of Justice (DOJ) the filing of obstruction of justice, cyber libel, and publication of false news complaints against former Davao City chief information officer Jefry Tupas. In an interview on Monday, NBI Director Melvin Matibag said the complaint referral came after

• Tagbilaran Diocese to hold simple installation of new bishop (2026-10-26 13:39)

TAGBILARAN CITY — A simple celebration will mark the installation of Bishop Crispin “Bai” Barrete Varquez as the eighth bishop of the Diocese of Tagbilaran at 9 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 27, at the St. Joseph the Worker Cathedral-Shrine. Varquez, 65, requested a low-key ceremony without elaborate displays, including decorative flags along the streets. A native

• OWWA assists family of Pangasinan OFW killed in Saudi drone attack (2026-10-26 13:22)

SAN ILDEFONSO, Ilocos Sur — The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) has extended assistance to the family of a Filipino migrant worker from Pangasinan who died in an October 21 drone attack at Saudi Aramco’s Shaybah oilfield in Saudi Arabia. The identity of the Filipino victim has not been made public, as officials of the

• Marcos orders tighter security, aid for stranded Undas travelers (2026-10-26 13:04)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has ordered government agencies to strengthen security at transport terminals and prepare emergency assistance for stranded passengers during Undas, as millions of Filipinos are expected to travel to their home provinces to visit departed loved ones. In a statement on Monday, Executive Secretary Ralph Recto said the directive includes

• PDEA nabs drug suspect with P102,000 in shabu in Zamboanga Sibugay (2026-10-26 13:04)

PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur — Anti-narcotics agents arrested a 41-year-old man after seizing from him around 15 grams of suspected shabu during a buy-bust operation in Barangay Siloh, Diay, Zamboanga Sibugay, Sunday morning. In a statement, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency Regional Office – Region 9 (PDEA-9) identified the suspect as “Jumar,” a

• Caloocan mayor reminds public to ensure order, cleanliness during Undas (2026-10-26 12:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Caloocan City Mayor Dale “Along” Malapitan on Monday called on the public to observe cleanliness and order during their visit to their loved ones’ graves ahead of Undas—or All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day. Malapitan made his call after leading an inspection at the Tala and Bagbaguin Cemetery as part of

• Matibag seeks to remove prosecutor from handling Paolo Duterte case (2026-10-26 12:56)

MANILA, Philippines — National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Director Melvin Matibag will file a motion for inhibition on Monday against the Davao City prosecutor handling the libel and cyberlibel complaints recently filed by Davao City First District Rep. Paolo Duterte. In an interview on Monday, Matibag said they had learned that the prosecutor is a

• Ombudsman vows to pin down those who ‘gamed’ budget after SC decision (2026-10-26 12:49)

MANILA, Philippines — Ombudsman Jesus Crispin “Boying” Remulla on Monday said he will order the anti-graft body to form a study group in a bid to pin down those who “gamed” the budget in the past few years. Remulla made this remark as the Supreme Court declared “unconstitutional” certain provisions of the 2024 and 2025

• Inquirer Group chair opens 6th Asian Media Leaders Summit in Singapore (2026-10-26 12:47)

SINGAPORE — Inquirer Group of Companies chair Ms Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, who is also Asia-Pacific chair of the World Association of News Publishers (WAN-IFRA), formally opened the 6th Asian Media Leaders Summit (AMLS) here yesterday with a call to collaborate and innovate to meet the unprecedented challenges facing the news media industry. More than 200 media

• In South Cotabato highlands: Tilapia ice cream, anyone? (2026-10-26 12:45)

LAKE SEBU, South Cotabato — Most households in this South Cotabato town typically serve tilapia grilled, fried, or cooked, but at this resort, the fish is served cold and creamy as ice cream. The unusual dessert gives one of Lake Sebu's best-known products a new twist, turning a familiar food into something visitors may not

• Albay bridge to open Friday after 15-year construction delay (2026-10-26 12:41)

MANILA, Philippines — The Kilicao-Binitayan bridge in Daraga, Albay will be open to the public on Friday, October 30, after its construction was stalled for 15 years, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) said on Monday. The DPWH made this announcement as DPWH Secretary Vince Dizon once again inspected the bridge on Monday,

• Northern Samar hospital exceeds bed capacity, halts admissions (2026-10-26 12:01)

TACLOBAN CITY— The Northern Samar Provincial Hospital (NSPH) in Catarman, Northern Samar, has exceeded its maximum bed capacity, prompting the facility to suspend additional admissions and urge patients to seek treatment at other hospitals with available services. In a public advisory issued on Saturday, Oct. 24, the hospital reported 363 admitted patients as of 11

• Marcos: Solar irrigation in Cagayan to cut monthly costs by P300,000 (2026-10-26 11:59)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday said the new solar pump irrigation project (SPIP) in Pamplona, Cagayan, could reduce monthly irrigation costs from P400,000 to as low as P50,000. Marcos made the remarks during the inauguration of the Pamplona SPIP in Barangay Gattu, which is designed to irrigate 602 hectares of farmland and

• DND launches probe into Batangas crash that killed 4 PAF pilots (2026-10-26 11:45)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of National Defense (DND) on Monday said an investigation had been launched following an aircraft incident in Batangas that killed four Philippine Air Force (PAF) pilots. The PAF earlier said the fatal incident occurred last Friday when two SF-260 aircraft crashed during a training flight. The military described it as

• Sandiganbayan denies Duque's bid to block testimony of 2 witnesses (2026-10-26 11:39)

MANILA, Philippines — The Sandiganbayan First Division on Monday denied a motion filed by the camp of Francisco Duque III to disqualify two Department of Health (DOH) officials from testifying in his graft case. Duque and former Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Undersecretary Christopher Lloyd Lao face charges over alleged anomalies in the transfer

• Lacson: I'm willing to give Tesda chief the benefit of the doubt (2026-10-26 11:29)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson said he is willing to give Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) Director-General Jose Francisco "Kiko" Benitez the benefit of the doubt that he did not know about the supposed P5 million allocation offered to him. His statement came Monday as Benitez, over the weekend, denied authorizing

• Dizon, Lopez swap agencies in latest Cabinet revamp (2026-10-26 10:18)

MANILA, Philippines — President Marcos has reassigned Vince Dizon to head the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and appointed Giovanni “Banoy” Lopez as secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Presidential Communications Office Acting Secretary Lino Cayetano announced on Monday. The agency swap marks the latest shake-up in Marcos’ Cabinet. READ: New PCO

• Fire razes 30 ukay-ukay stalls in General Santos City (2026-10-26 09:57)

KORONADAL CITY — A fire that hit an ukay-ukay (used clothes) market in General Santos City late Sunday night destroyed at least 30 stalls and about two dozen houses, causing an estimated P1.75 million in damage, the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) said. The fire broke out around 11:25 p.m. on Sunday at Purok Islam

• Cayetano to peers: Declare to reject VP post if Sara Duterte convicted (2026-10-26 09:47)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano on Monday urged his fellow senator-judges to declare that they would refuse the vice presidency should Vice President Sara Duterte be removed from office. In a Facebook post, Cayetano expressed support for Sen. Francis “Chiz” Escudero’s statement that he would reject any offer to assume the

• Visayas grid on yellow alert on Monday, Oct. 26 (2026-10-26 09:19)

MANILA, Philippines — The Visayas grid will be placed under a yellow alert on Monday, Oct. 26, the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) said. In an advisory, the NGCP said the yellow alert would be in effect from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. READ: NGCP: Mindanao reserves may run out by 2028 “A

• Army boosts readiness with new Davao del Sur facilities (2026-10-26 09:02)

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY — In a bid to bolster its operational readiness and territorial defense capabilities, the Army’s 39th Infantry Battalion (39IB) has opened its newly constructed command facilities in the erstwhile conflict-torn town of Matanao in Davao del Sur. Maj. Gen. Alvin Luzon, commander of the 10th Infantry Division, and Davao del Sur

• INQUIRER.net leads PH news websites in first 9 months of 2026 — Similarweb (2026-10-26 09:00)

MANILA, Philippines — INQUIRER.net remained the most visited Philippine news website in the first nine months of 2026, recording 76.87 million visits from January to September, according to data from web traffic analytics firm Similarweb. The data showed that INQUIRER.net maintained its lead over other major local news websites, including GMA Network, ABS-CBN, Philstar Online

• LIST: Water interruptions in Metro Manila, Rizal this week (2026-10-26 08:55)

MANILA, Philippines — Parts of Metro Manila and Rizal will experience water interruptions starting Oct. 26, due to maintenance activities. According to Maynilad Water Services Inc., the maintenance work will affect parts of Caloocan and Quezon City as the company seeks to keep the water distribution system “safe, reliable and in good condition.” READ: Approval

• ITCZ to bring rain to parts of Mindanao until Wednesday (2026-10-26 07:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Overcast skies and rain are forecast over the western parts of Mindanao on Monday due to the intertropical convergence zone (ITCZ), the state weather bureau said. According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), the ITCZ is expected to affect the area until Wednesday. READ: PH Weather Updates Today:

• Jonvic Remulla on Bato dela Rosa arrest: Enough talk, surrender (2026-10-26 05:55)

MANILA, Philippines — Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla issued a fresh ultimatum on Sunday to Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa to surrender or face an intensified manhunt. “We’ve been talking for a year. Enough talk. Surrender or face the music,” Remulla told the Inquirer in a Viber message. He warned that authorities would pursue Dela Rosa

• Journalist says arrest, libel case a ‘special operation’ (2026-10-26 05:50)

MANILA, Philippines — Veteran journalist Philip Lustre Jr. said his arrest over the weekend had a procedural flaw and was an operation that specifically targeted him. The arrest has led lawyers to warn that it could create a climate of fear among the press as they called anew to decriminalize libel. “It was definitely a special

• Senate to tackle Tesda ‘offer’ to Lacson (2026-10-26 05:45)

The Senate will tackle with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) the P5-million “allocation fund” that the agency allegedly offered to Sen. Panfilo Lacson. “We’ll clarify it with Tesda during budget deliberation,” Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian said on Sunday in an interview with dzBB. Lacson, in a series of posts on X on

• House urged to recall 2027 proposed budget to fix flaws (2026-10-26 05:40)

ACT Teachers Rep. Antonio Tinio on Sunday insisted that the House of Representatives recall its version of the 2027 P7.2-trillion spending measure to fix provisions similar to past ones in previous budgets that were struck down by the Supreme Court. “Rather than leaving it to the Senate or the bicameral conference committee, it is essential

• Police to coordinate closely with schools after bomb threats (2026-10-26 05:35)

The National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) on Sunday ordered all its units to intensify bomb threat awareness campaigns in Metro Manila schools, emphasizing coordinated responses, prompt threat assessments and proper emergency procedures to protect students, teachers and school personnel while minimizing class disruptions. The directive follows a bomb

threat reported on Oct. 23 at

• Activists honor slain community journo (2026-10-26 05:05)

“Bagani,” a Hiligaynon term for “hero,” was how those who knew slain community journalist RJ Nichole Ledesma would describe him for his work in defending the environment. “Hakus bagani, that’s RJ. A hero’s embrace. A hero’s hug,” San Carlos Bishop Gerardo Alminaza said on Saturday as he received the “Natatanging Gawad” on behalf of Ledesma

• Pagasa reports hike in water levels of 5 dams (2026-10-26 05:00)

A slight increase was monitored in the water levels of five out of nine dams in the past 24 hours, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said in an advisory on Sunday. It identified these as La Mesa, Ambuklao, Binga, Pantabangan and Caliraya. The biggest increase was noted in Binga Dam in

• Intramuros eases rules for professional cameras (2026-10-26 04:55)

Photographers and camera enthusiasts can now use their professional cameras in Intramuros, Manila without the need to first secure a permit, the Department of Tourism (DOT) said on Sunday. “The historic Walled City of Intramuros is welcoming photographers, camera enthusiasts, and hobbyists alike to capture its centuries-old beauty through a new policy allowing the use

• Hometowns honor PAF pilots killed in Batangas collision (2026-10-26 04:45)

URDANETA CITY—Residents of Barangay Catablan here are mourning Capt. Raymart Cabangcala, their village’s first Philippine Military Academy graduate, who was among four Philippine Air Force (PAF) pilots killed in a midair collision in Batangas on Oct. 23. Cabangcala’s mother, Myrna, 66, told the Inquirer that her son had big dreams for his family and community.

• Hybrid rice seeds bring bumper harvests for Agusan del Sur farmers (2026-10-26 04:40)

STA. JOSEFA, AGUSAN DEL SUR—For many years, farmer Nilo Dalid had resigned himself to modest returns from his 1.2-hectare (ha) farm in Barangay Concepcion in this town, usually hauling in an average of 76 bags of palay each cropping season. This cropping cycle, however, shattered that ceiling. On Oct. 23, Dalid took in a record

• Northern Samar develops ready-to-eat ‘champorado’ (2026-10-26 04:35)

TACLOBAN CITY—The provincial government of Northern Samar is developing a coconut-based, ready-to-eat “champorado” (chocolate rice porridge) that could provide a convenient food option for families affected by typhoons, floods and other disasters that disrupt transportation, electricity and access to cooking facilities. Since the province is frequently exposed to tropical cyclones, flooding and other natural hazards

• 5 dead in Sorsogon market fire; over 400 vendors displaced (2026-10-26 04:30)

SORSOGON CITY—Five people died in a fire that gutted the Sorsogon City Public Market late Saturday night, as authorities worked to identify the victims and the provincial government prepared a temporary trading area for displaced vendors. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in Bicol provided P10,000 in cash assistance to each of the

• La Union town seeks, gains landowners' help in easing highway flooding (2026-10-26 01:18)

BAUANG, La Union — The municipal government is seeking the cooperation of private landowners and business establishments to improve drainage systems and restore waterways in flood-prone areas along the national highway, particularly in Barangays Bakwitsur and Bakwit Norte. Recurring flooding, aggravated by prolonged rains in August and September, has submerged portions of the highway and

• Albay town councilor arrested over in fatal hit-and-run incident (2026-10-26 01:05)

LEGAZPI CITY — A municipal councilor of Oas, Albay, was arrested following a hit-and-run incident in neighboring Libon town on Saturday afternoon that resulted in the death of a 13-year-old cyclist and injuries to three other persons, according to the police. The unnamed suspect was driving a car when it allegedly struck a motorcycle and

• El Niño gripping agri sector in Iloilo, other parts of Western Visayas (2026-10-26 00:50)

ILOILO CITY, Philippines — Iloilo and other parts of Western Visayas are among the agricultural areas affected by the ongoing El Niño phenomenon, which has resulted in P8.57 billion in nationwide agricultural losses and affected more than 288,000 farmers, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA). In its second El Niño situation report issued on

• Bukidnon murder suspect arrested in CDO (2026-10-26 00:34)

VALENCIA CITY, Bukidnon — The police captured one of Bukidnon's most wanted murder suspects during a targeted operation in Cagayan de Oro City on Sunday afternoon. Police identified the suspect as 56-year-old Grego Minangga, also known as Rodrigo Minangga Guyon, listed as most wanted person in the municipality of Talakag and third 3 at the

• Suspension of Estrada, Marcoleta on hold pending MR (2026-10-26 00:28)

MANILA, Philippines – The suspension order issued by the Sandiganbayan against Senators Rodante Marcoleta and Jinggoy Estrada will be held in abeyance pending the final resolution of their motions for reconsideration, according to Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian. Gatchalian confirmed that the Senate has already received the suspension orders from the anti-graft court. "We also received

• Bill pushed to help ex-inmates rebuild lives (2026-10-26 00:21)

MANILA, PHILIPPINES — Senate President Pro Tempore Vicente Sotto III is pushing for a more comprehensive and coordinated government approach to help former inmates rebuild their

lives. Senate Bill No. 2281, or the proposed National Reintegration Act seeks to establish a national framework for the reintegration of Persons Restored of Liberty (PRLs) into society through

Source: The Manila Times

- PH, US ties stronger than ever — ambassador (2026-11-02 05:35)

MANILA, Philippines — United States Ambassador to Manila Lee Lipton said the recent visit of Secretary of War Pete Hegseth underscored the "genuine importance" the US places on Southeast Asia and on its "extraordinary alliance" with the Philippines.Hegseth attended the 13th Association of Southeast Asian Nations Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus in Cebu on October 29."Our commitment to Philippine security is ironclad," Lipton said on Monday, adding that Washington and Manila pursue a shared vision for a peaceful, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific."As we mark 75 years of the US-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty, our message is clear: our alliance is stronger than ever," the ambassador said."We stand firmly with the Filipino people in defending sovereignty, protecting territorial integrity, and upholding the freedom of navigation on which we all rely for vibrant global commerce," Lipton stressed."With President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., the United States and the Philippines have built a powerful partnership grounded in shared principles, mutual respect, and an unwavering commitment to regional stability," Lipton said."That partnership is demonstrated every year through hundreds of joint exercises and training events, hundreds of millions of dollars in US security assistance, expanded maritime cooperative activities, disaster response support, public health assistance, and frequent engagements between our senior defense and security leaders. We're in this for the long-term," he said.

- MNLF denies sheltering Bato (2026-11-02 05:01)

MANILA, Philippines — The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) has denied sheltering Sen. Ronald dela Rosa, dismissing as speculation claims that the fugitive lawmaker may have sought refuge with an armed group in Mindanao.In a statement, the MNLF said it had no relationship with dela Rosa.The group said dela Rosa's public references to the MNLF stemmed mainly from his experiences during the Marawi conflict and his support for peace-building programs benefiting former combatants and their children.It also cited the senator's advocacy for the faster integration of qualified MNLF and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) members into the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), saying this reflected policy-level engagement rather than personal or organizational ties.The MNLF acknowledged that its founder, Nur Misuari, was known to be a friend of dela Rosa's political patron, former president Rodrigo Duterte. It also noted reports that Misuari and dela Rosa personally knew each other.However, the organization stressed that these connections did not establish that dela Rosa was an MNLF member, an operational ally or someone currently under its protection.It said claims that the MNLF was protecting the senator remained speculative,

adding that the organization was fragmented and it was uncertain whether Misuari's faction would be willing or able to shield him from arrest.The statement came amid speculation over dela Rosa's whereabouts and possible links to an armed group in Mindanao.

- On All Saints' Day, Philippine town honors dead with fire (2026-11-02 02:55)

SAGADA Philippines — Tiny pinewood bonfires burned through the night at a mountain cemetery as the largely Christian Philippines remembered its dead, turning the fog-shrouded hilltop into a vast, fragrant altar of light.The eerie Panag-aapoy ("to light a fire") ceremony in the tourist town of Sagada has marked All Saints' Day for the past 122 years, said Winston Garlejo Menong, director of the Episcopal Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, which owns the cemetery.As night crept in and darkness blanketed the four-hectare burial ground, the hum of activity and thick smoke gave way to a sepulchral glow as fires burned for its more than 2,000 dead.The Cordillera mountain region's animist residents adopted Christianity only after Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States in 1898, four centuries after Spanish friars had converted the people of the coasts to Catholicism.US Protestant missionaries encouraged Sagada's residents to bury their dead and light candles on their graves, he said."In our Biblical context, Christ is the light," Menong said.Be it with candles or the pine sticks preferred in Sagada, lighting a flame is " inviting the presence of Christ with us, having fellowship with our departed loved ones", he said.Respecting boundariesSagada's first Christians burned pinewood because candles were expensive and their flames were easily snuffed out by wind -- unlike the brisk burn of the aromatic, sap-rich pines that cover the Cordilleras, Sagada tourism officer Maria Teresa Abad said.The practice echoes the burning of incense in Buddhist rituals, though pine's sharp natural scent makes it stand out from the aromatic powders used in joss sticks.Cybil Domoguen returned to Sagada this year with her father and a bundle of 20-inch (51 centimetre) pine sticks to honour the grandparents who had raised her there."It's very unusual that people actually come here to watch. Usually one comes to the cemetery to pray for a dead relative," the 31-year-old teacher told AFP."If a grave does not have any visitors, people make sure to light some sticks for them."Like others participating in the ceremony, she has conflicted feelings about the growing tourist presence."Last year, there were tourists who were taking pictures of us, which was uncomfortable," she added."We have no problem with strangers as long as they respect boundaries."Hanging coffinsThe people of Sagada did not always light flames over their dead, or even bury them.Before the missionaries arrived, the preferred practice was to hang coffins from the walls of cliffs or wedge them into the mouths of caves, a custom that only fully died out in 2010, Abad, the tourism officer, said.Some of the "hanging coffins" can still be seen on nearby Sagada cliffs."Traditional burial beliefs associate caves and elevated burial places with the spirit's passage toward the ancestral realm", something burial would hinder, she said.It also had the practical benefit of keeping remains safe from wild animals and flooding.Over time, as Sagada's mild climate and abundant waterfalls turned it into a popular refuge from the tropical heat, the Panag-aapoy -- and the hanging coffins -- became massive tourist draws in themselves, to the chagrin of residents.The church and local government have since taken steps to protect the region's cultural heritage. AFP

• Police deny Bantag escaped arrest in Ifugao (2026-11-02 02:21)

MANILA, Philippines — The Police Regional Office Cordillera Administrative Region (PROCOR) on Monday denied reports that former Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) chief Gerald Bantag escaped arrest during a police operation in Lamut, Ifugao.PROCOR clarified that no arrest was made during the operation, meaning Bantag remains at large.It said the Ifugao Police Provincial Office and the 15th Special Action Company of the 1st Regional Mobile Force Battalion conducted an operation in Sitio Alupapan, Barangay Pugol to verify information about Bantag's whereabouts.However, the former corrections chief was not found at the location.Lamut Mayor Mariano Bayawagan Jr. earlier claimed that Bantag escaped during the police operation.According to the mayor, police received information that Bantag was hiding at a poultry farm in Barangay Pugol and allegedly posing as a worker there.Bantag faces murder charges over the October 2022 killings of broadcaster Percival “Percy Lapid” Mabasa and New Bilibid Prison inmate Cristito “Jun” Villamor Palaña, the alleged middleman in the journalist’s murder.The Department of Justice (DOJ) indicted Bantag and his former deputy, Ricardo Zulueta, in March 2023 for the two killings.Lapid was shot dead by motorcycle-riding gunmen near his residence in Las Piñas City on Oct. 3, 2022.Villamor, who was allegedly involved in arranging the killing, died inside the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa City on Oct. 18, 2022, shortly after the suspected gunman, Joel Escorial, surrendered to authorities and admitted his role in the broadcaster’s killing.A forensic examination found that Villamor died of asphyxia due to plastic-bag suffocation, prompting a separate murder investigation.Prosecutors alleged that Bantag masterminded Lapid’s killing and that Villamor was killed to prevent him from revealing details of the plot.Bantag and Zulueta denied the allegations. Arrest warrants were issued against them in 2023.Zulueta died in March 2024.

• Lacson: Senate majority to strip 2027 budget of ‘pork' (2026-11-02 01:41)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate majority bloc is united in stripping the proposed P7.2 trillion 2027 national budget of questionable and corruption-prone allocations, including projects inserted by lawmakers without proper vetting, Sen. Panfilo Lacson said.Lacson said on Monday the majority, including himself, backed efforts to weed out unwarranted allocations and ensure transparency at every stage of the budget-making process. “The majority of senators are rallying behind Senate Finance Committee Chairman JV Ejercito’s efforts to cleanse the 2027 budget of unwarranted, whimsical, and corruption-prone items. — ALL MEANS ALL!” Lacson said in a social media post.Over the weekend, Ejercito secured a commitment from the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to remove infrastructure projects without complete supporting documents from the House-approved budget bill before plenary debates, unless the agency submits the required documents by Nov. 3.Budget advocacy groups earlier cited the lack of supporting documents as one of the red flags in the House version of the proposed spending measure, warning that projects without clear documentation and proper justification could become vehicles for questionable spending.A Senate review found that the number of DPWH projects had increased from 11,420 in the National Expenditure Program, the executive branch's original spending proposal, to 16,244 in the House-transmitted General

Appropriations Bill.Of these, 6,271 projects were introduced by lawmakers without prior vetting by the executive branch, raising questions about how the additional infrastructure allocations were selected, evaluated and justified.Ejercito also announced that civil society organizations would be invited to observe the bicameral conference committee deliberations on the budget, where the Senate and House of Representatives reconcile their respective versions of the spending measure. The proceedings would also be livestreamed to allow the public to monitor discussions and proposed changes.The transparency measures are part of broader efforts to prevent the return of questionable budget practices, particularly the insertion of projects and allocations outside the regular planning and evaluation process.

- Gatchalian seeks crackdown on pet crematoriums (2026-11-02 01:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian has called for a nationwide inspection of pet crematoriums and other animal aftercare businesses after 29 dead animals were found in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan.Gatchalian said pet owners who paid for what they expected to be a dignified final farewell for their beloved companions were instead left with the distressing discovery that the animals had been discarded like garbage.He denounced the incident as a “clear case of fraud.” “Those responsible for such an offense must be held accountable,” he said.The pet dumping was linked to Ahjay Paws Aftercare Pet Crematorium in Bacoor City, Cavite.Bacoor City Mayor Strike Revilla ordered the crematorium closed after its owner failed to present sufficient documentation and CCTV footage proving that the cremations had actually been carried out. The owner reportedly said some animals had been brought to another facility in Caloocan City for cremation but could not provide adequate proof of the procedures.Gatchalian urged local government units (LGUs) nationwide and concerned government agencies, particularly the Bureau of Animal Industry, to conduct inspections and audits of all operating pet service providers, including crematoriums.He said authorities must verify whether these establishments are properly licensed, comply with environmental and sanitation regulations, and observe clear standards of integrity in handling deceased animals.He stressed that businesses offering pet cremation and aftercare services must be “licensed, environmentally compliant, and held to clear standards of integrity” to ensure that no other family experiences similar treatment.Gatchalian also expressed dismay over the incident, saying he could relate to the grief of pet owners who consider their animals members of the family.“As a pet parent myself, it is heartbreaking and alarming to hear about our beloved pets being treated this way when we consider them members of our family,” he said.

- Govt urged to extend soft loans to MSMEs, farmers (2026-11-01 22:16)

SENATE President Sherwin Gatchalian called on the government to make available urgent financing assistance, including soft loans, to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and the agriculture sector as the economy faces mounting risks of slower growth.In a statement, Gatchalian said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas’ (BSP) recent 50-basis-point interest rate hike could make borrowing more expensive and further restrict access to credit at a time when businesses need support to stay afloat.“Economic growth is already slowing, and now interest

rates have gone up. We do not want more Filipinos to lose their jobs and the unemployment rate to rise further," he said.The Monetary Board raised the BSP's target reverse repurchase rate to 5.5 percent on Oct. 22, its fourth consecutive rate increase this year and its first 50-basis-point hike since February 2023.The overnight deposit and lending facility rates were also raised to 5 percent and 6 percent, respectively.The central bank said it decided on a larger rate adjustment to address broadening price pressures and rising inflation risks. It warned that inflation could accelerate further in the coming months and remain elevated through 2027, with higher global oil prices, transportation fare increases and the potential effects of El Niño on agricultural production and food prices contributing to the outlook.The BSP also raised its 2027 inflation forecast to 6 percent from its previous projection of 5.4 percent, while keeping its 2026 forecast at 6.1 percent.It said the rate adjustment was intended to contain the wider effects of price increases and keep inflation expectations anchored.Gatchalian said the government should be ready to offer concessional loans to MSMEs and agricultural producers to help them manage higher financing costs, sustain operations and avoid layoffs.MSMEs account for the vast majority of businesses in the Philippines and provide a significant share of employment, making access to affordable credit important to business continuity and livelihood protection.Farmers, meanwhile, need financing for seeds, fertilizer, fuel and other production expenses, particularly as climate-related risks and volatile oil prices threaten agricultural output and incomes.While the BSP's rate increases are aimed at curbing inflation, higher policy rates can also translate into more expensive borrowing for businesses and consumers, depending on how banks adjust their lending rates.Gatchalian also cited other downside risks, including elevated inflation driven by rising petroleum prices amid continuing tensions in the Middle East, the threat of an extreme El Niño, and weak investor confidence amid corruption issues in government. "These challenges are piling up at a time when our economy is already facing difficulties. We must ensure that businesses, particularly MSMEs and those in the agriculture sector, have access to the financing they need," he said.Higher fuel prices could increase transportation, production and logistics costs, while prolonged dry conditions could affect farm output and drive up agricultural production expenses. Together with tighter credit conditions, these pressures could weigh on business activity, household purchasing power and employment.Gatchalian said timely government assistance would be crucial in helping businesses weather the economic headwinds and preventing further job losses. "We cannot afford to abandon the private sector, especially at a time when economic growth is slowing. The government must take the lead in providing support," he added. CATHERINE VALENTE

- BOC holds first Export Summit for Filipino businesses (2026-11-01 22:14)

THE Bureau of Customs (BOC) said that Filipino products boast world-class quality but still struggle to break into foreign markets.Customs Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno said the BOC is stepping up efforts to help Filipino businesses penetrate international markets by bringing exporters face-to-face with government agencies at its first-ever Export Summit over the week to address trade barriers and simplify export procedures.Nepomuceno said the BOC wants to make exporting easier and more predictable so Filipino entrepreneurs can concentrate on

growing their businesses and reaching more customers abroad. “The quality of Filipino products is already there. What we need are more opportunities for them to reach more markets,” he said. “Our job at the Bureau of Customs is to make the process simpler and more efficient so our exporters can focus on growing their businesses,” he added.Organized under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Agaton Teodoro Uvero of the Assessment and Operations Coordinating Group in coordination with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Agriculture (DA), the summit focused on customs procedures, free trade agreements, regulatory requirements and government support programs.The initiative comes as the government seeks to expand the country’s export footprint, with many Filipino businesses still struggling to navigate complex customs rules, comply with changing regulations, and maximize opportunities under existing trade agreements.Port Operations Service Director Melon Carlo Santiago said government agencies must remain responsive to exporters’ concerns and ensure policies and services keep pace with industry demands.Participants received updates on customs processes, Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), export assistance programs, and developments involving the Asean Single Window. They also had the opportunity to raise operational concerns directly with government representatives.For Kayrel P. Buenafe, chief of the BOC Export Coordination Division, the summit was an opportunity to strengthen trust between government and the private sector. “Every shipment leaving our ports carries more than goods. It carries the hard work of our producers, the aspirations of our workers, and the promise of a stronger Philippine economy,” Buenafe said.Beyond facilitating shipments, the BOC also helps local producers compete internationally, opening opportunities for business expansion, increased export earnings, and wider access to foreign markets.The export summit is part of BOC’s trade facilitation reforms aligned with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.‘s directive to improve the country’s competitiveness and expand opportunities for Philippine-made products in the global marketplace.

- ‘No sacred cows in budget review’ (2026-11-01 16:20)

NO LAWMAKER will be spared scrutiny in the Senate's review of the proposed 2027 national budget, as senators correct questionable allocations and budget insertions, Sen. Panfilo Lacson said.Lacson said he and fellow members in the Senate majority bloc fully support Senate Finance Committee Chairman Sen. JV Ejercito in raising red flags in the House-approved version of the proposed General Appropriations Act (GAA). “Our attitude now is to go gung-ho. If anyone gets hit, so be it,” he said in an interview with One News.Asked whether the scrutiny would cover the biggest net increase in public works allocations for the congressional district of presidential son and Ilocos Norte Rep. Sandro Marcos in the House-approved budget, Lacson replied: “Yes, absolutely.” “If we make exceptions, many will ask for exceptions, and we won't succeed because there will be plea bargaining,” he said.The Senate is scheduled to resume plenary sessions on Nov. 9, when debates on the proposed 2027 budget will begin.Lacson said he had submitted his subcommittee reports on the proposed budgets of government agencies assigned to him, which are now being reviewed by the Legislative Budget Research and Monitoring Office (LBRMO). “Once the plenary sessions resume, the LBRMO

would have finished its review, and we can introduce amendments to restore the changes the House made to its version of the General Appropriations Bill," he said.Lacson expressed confidence that questionable insertions would not find their way into the Senate version of the budget, citing the sentiments of his colleagues in the majority bloc. "In the Senate, I don't know if someone sneaked in funds for pet projects, but I don't think so. When we in the majority bloc chat, I can feel my colleagues' sentiments," he said.The Senate may invite civil society organizations (CSOs), particularly budget advocacy groups, to observe the bicameral conference committee proceedings and expose lawmakers who attempt to insert questionable allocations, he said.He said he had challenged budget watchdogs to be prepared to sit through lengthy deliberations so they could witness the proceedings firsthand. "We must not just be vigilant. We may have to resort to shaming because there are those who are shameless in making insertions, and we are still reeling from the flood control scandal," Lacson said.The country, he added, needs a fundamental overhaul of its budget process to curb political patronage and ensure that government allocations reflect the actual needs and priorities of local government units (LGUs).He lamented that political affiliations appeared to influence budget allocations, with administration allies receiving larger funding while lawmakers in the minority were given little or nothing.He cited instances when contractors for infrastructure projects appeared to have been predetermined even before the contracts were awarded. "In Taguig, for example, before the contract is awarded, the contractor is already known. This is a matter of record. The evidence is with the Ombudsman," he said.Lacson likewise raised concerns over the continued issuance of guarantee letters (GLs), despite provisions in the 2026 GAA banning it. "We need a re-engineering of the budget. We cannot have more of the same. Up to now there are guarantee letters even if the 2026 GAA banned them. These may be residues of past budgets. But I know congressmen who still offer GLs," he said.He said reforms should begin with the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC), which prepares the government's proposed spending program, to prevent questionable insertions from entering the National Expenditure Program (NEP) even before it reaches Congress.The proposed 2027 budget amounts to P7.2 trillion, about P407 billion or 6 percent higher than the 2026 budget.The House of Representatives approved its version of the General Appropriations Bill on third and final reading on Oct. 12, incorporating about P116 billion in amendments.The Senate is conducting its own review before the two chambers reconcile their respective versions in the bicameral conference committee.The bicameral stage is critical because lawmakers from both chambers settle differences in their respective budget proposals before submitting the final version for ratification and presidential approval.Ejercito said opening the bicameral proceedings to public observation would build on the transparency measures adopted by the Senate Finance Committee throughout its budget review. "All Senate Finance Committee budget hearings were livestreamed, which allowed the public to follow agency deliberations in real time," he said.The committee held a dedicated hearing for CSOs on Oct. 26.Ejercito welcomed the groups' calls to remove budget insertions without technical justification and restore funding cuts to foreign-assisted infrastructure projects, disaster preparedness and preventive health programs.The push for closer scrutiny comes amid concerns raised by budget watchdogs over the details and locations of some proposed projects.The House Appropriations Committee has

said the bicameral conference could still address reported discrepancies in farm-to-market road project coordinates, including locations allegedly pointing to bodies of water.Ejercito said public participation should extend beyond congressional hearings to citizens' access to budget information and tools for scrutinizing government spending.The committee has incorporated digital tools developed by civil society groups, including independent research organization BetterGov.ph, into the Senate's budget transparency portal (https://budget-transparency-portal.senate.gov.ph).Through the portal, citizens can review agency budget documents, submit position papers and flag allocations they consider questionable. "Transparency is not just a policy statement; it is an active mechanism. These tools were built by watchdogs themselves, and we are glad to give them a home on the Senate website so ordinary citizens can scrutinize where public funds are going," Ejercito said.

- What to expect at Duterte's ICC trial (2026-11-01 16:09)

FORMER president Rodrigo Duterte's trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC) will open on Nov. 30, with judges set to read the charges, ask him to enter a plea, and hear opening statements before the prosecution begins presenting its evidence.The proceedings, scheduled to start at 10 a.m. in The Hague (5 p.m. Manila time) will examine allegations that Duterte committed crimes against humanity of murder and attempted murder in the Philippines between Nov. 1, 2011, and March 16, 2019.The charges have been confirmed for trial. Prosecutors must prove the charges beyond reasonable doubt, and the defense will have the chance to challenge the evidence and present its own case.Here is how the trial is expected to proceed.Opening dayThe three-judge Trial Chamber III will first verify that Duterte understands the nature of the charges against him. The judges will then ask whether he admits guilt or pleads not guilty.The court will read the charges previously confirmed by the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber.The prosecution will deliver its opening statement first, followed by the Common Legal Representatives of Victims (CLRVs).The defense may also deliver an opening statement at the start of the trial or immediately before presenting its evidence.The prosecution has six hours to present its opening statement, while the victims' representatives have three hours. The judges have yet to determine how much time to give to the defense.Duterte faces three counts of crimes against humanity involving alleged killings during his time as Davao City mayor and president.The first count concerns alleged murders in Davao City during his mayoral period, from 2013 to June 2016.The second concerns the killings of people described as "high-value targets" during his presidency, from around July 2016 to July 2017.The third involves alleged murders and attempted murders during barangay clearing operations across the country from July 2016 to September 2018.Prosecutors allege that the crimes were committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack against a civilian population.The charges relate to crimes committed between November 2011 and March 2019. Duterte has not been convicted of these charges.The prosecution's caseAfter the opening statements, the prosecution will call its first witness. It will also present testimony and documentary, digital or physical evidence against Duterte.The judges have asked the prosecution for a detailed trial brief, which is intended to identify the principal facts the prosecution seeks to establish, the

witnesses who will testify, relevant exhibits and the legal arguments.The prosecution must establish the accused’s guilt to the standard required by the ICC.The party calling a witness will generally question that witness first. The victims’ legal representatives may ask questions, followed by the prosecution.The defense can challenge prosecution witnesses by questioning their credibility and the reliability of their testimony.Not all testimony or evidence will necessarily be presented in the same way. Under the court’s rules, certain previously recorded testimony may be submitted through procedures that do not require the witness to physically testify.The victims' representatives Victims will participate through the Common Legal Representatives of Victims, who can present their views and concerns and make submissions on matters affecting their personal interests.Their role is distinct from that of the prosecution, which carries the burden of proving the charges.The chamber’s directions allow for a possible presentation of evidence by the representatives.The ICC intends, insofar as possible, to hear witness testimony in public.However, some portions of the proceedings may take place in private or closed session when necessary, including to protect sensitive information or witnesses.The court’s directions require the parties to respect protective measures ordered for witnesses and to limit private or closed sessions to what is strictly necessary.After the prosecution completes its presentation, the victims’ legal representatives may submit observations and, if authorized by the judges, present evidence.The defense will then present its case and call witnesses. It may challenge the prosecution’s evidence and offer its own evidence in response to the charges.The chamber has directed the defense to identify the principal factual or legal issues it disputes with the prosecution and outline the general nature of its defense.The court has also clarified that this does not prevent the defense from raising additional issues later if they emerge during the trial or its investigations.Trial Chamber III, composed of Presiding Judge Joanna Korner and Judges Keebong Paek and Nicolas Guillou, will examine the arguments and evidence presented during the trial before delivering a judgment. They may convict Duterte only if they are satisfied that the charges have been proved beyond reasonable doubt.If the prosecution fails to meet that standard, the court cannot convict him.

- Secrecy key in hunting fugitives – LacsonSecrecy key in hunting fugitives – Lacson (2026-11-01 16:08)

SEN. Panfilo Lacson on Sunday stressed the importance of keeping sensitive information confidential when pursuing high-profile fugitives.Lacson made the remark as authorities intensified the hunt for Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa, whose one-week deadline to surrender had lapsed. “SSSHHH... When pursuing a high-profile target or handling a sensitive live case, secrecy discipline is key — unless disinformation is necessary to flush the quarry into the open,” Lacson said on a social media post.He said disclosing sensitive information ahead of an operation should be done only as a tactic to draw a wanted person out of hiding.Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla announced a P50-million reward for information leading to dela Rosa’s arrest.Dela Rosa is the subject of an arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court in connection with the administration of former president Rodrigo Duterte’s campaign against drugs. He has not attended Senate sessions since late last year.He briefly resurfaced on

May 11 to vote for Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano as Senate president but was sneaked out of the Senate premises during a shooting incident two days later.Sen. JV Ejercito urged authorities to ensure a peaceful resolution to the manhunt for dela Rosa, stressing that the senator must be treated fairly and accorded due process.Ejercito’s appeal followed a plea from dela Rosa’s wife, Nancy, who called on her husband’s influential former allies to help him rather than persecute him.In a DWIZ radio interview, Ejercito said he hopes “the situation involving Senator dela Rosa can be resolved peacefully. After all, he is a former chief of the Philippine National Police.” Dela Rosa’s wife, Nancy, made her appeal in a Facebook post addressed to what she described as the “powerful few” who were once her husband’s friends. “Please do not use him for your personal agenda. He has helped you in countless ways, and he has done you no wrong personally. He needs your help, not your persecution,” she said.

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- China denies ex-ambassador’s claim in column (2026-11-01 16:07)

THE Chinese Embassy in Manila described as “utterly wrong” the claim that China avoids conflict in the South China Sea because of the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Philippines.The embassy objected to what retired ambassador Jaime Yambao wrote in his The Manila Times column titled “Concerning the loose tongue of an

ambassador.” It said the column was “filled with serious historical falsehoods, blatant bias, and unprofessional judgment.” Yambao wrote that “if China has not attacked the Philippines, it is not for love of peace, it is the deterrent effect of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the two countries.” “China’s consistent commitment to peace, dialogue, and regional stability stems from its independent foreign policy and sincere respect for regional peace, not external military deterrence,” the embassy said in a statement. “China chooses restraint out of goodwill for its neighbors, not fear of any alliance,” it added.Yambao said that if the Chinese truly love peace, they would abide by the United Nations (UN) Charter of solving disputes by peaceful means. “They would have followed the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea on disputes settlement.” “They would have considered as settled the dispute it has with the Philippines by the conclusions of the arbitral tribunal of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague,” he said.The PCA in July 2016 invalidated China’s claim in the South China Sea, which encroached on the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone (EEZ).The embassy stressed that the arbitral award “is legally invalid, politically biased, and lacks any binding force.” “China has never recognized this unlawful ruling, and no country can legitimately rely on it to make policy judgments or provoke maritime tensions,” it said.Yambao also mentioned calls from lawmakers and some sectors to declare Ambassador Jing Quan persona non grata for saying that “if we want to use force, we may easily win” — which was viewed as a “veiled threat against the Philippines. “It is quite likely that China would take the side of its ambassador and retaliate by declaring our innocent ambassador (Jaime FlorCruz) in Beijing persona non grata,” Yambao said.The embassy replied that “openly attacking another country’s political system in a public commentary demonstrates a severe lack of basic diplomatic courtesy and sovereign respect.” “Regrettably, the author Jaime Yambao, though a retired Philippine ambassador, shows none of the professionalism expected of a seasoned diplomat,” it said. “If a senior retired Philippine diplomat cannot objectively and accurately understand China’s consistent stance of promoting stable and peaceful China-Philippines relations, it reflects either poor cognitive judgment or regrettable diplomatic incompetence,” it said. “Such biased, confrontational, and factually erroneous remarks are truly unfortunate,” the embassy said.It also described as “entirely misleading and factually wrong” Yambao’s account of the Yultong Battle during the Korean War. “No official US or Chinese military archives support the exaggerated claim that 900 Filipino troops defeated 40,000 Chinese soldiers. In reality, Filipino forces retreated on US orders after the engagement, and Chinese troops secured full control of the battlefield,” it said.

- House prosecution: Defense could shorten impeach trial (2026-11-01 16:06)

THE impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte could be over before the end of November if the defense team limits its presentation of evidence to 10 trial days, House lead prosecutor and Batangas 2nd District Rep. Gerville Luistro said Sunday.Luistro said the prosecution expects a shorter defense presentation following the withdrawal of three of the four impeachment articles.The defense originally requested 30 trial days to present evidence on all four articles.Luistro said the prosecution expects the defense to seek only 10 full trial days

for the remaining charge.The Senate impeachment court has scheduled hearings on Nov. 9 to 13, 19, 20 and 23, with some sessions extending into the evening.Completing the defense presentation within November, however, would depend on additional hearing dates or adjustments to the calendar.Luistro warned that the proceedings could extend into December if the defense requires more than 10 trial days to present its witnesses and documentary evidence. “Nevertheless, we are all hoping and praying that this impeachment trial will be over before Christmas so we can have closure and move on,” she said in Filipino.The withdrawal of the articles involving confidential funds, bribery and grave threats was approved on Oct. 13, leaving Article II, which accuses Duterte of amassed unexplained wealth, financial declarations, and maintaining income and business interests while serving as vice president.The impeachment proceedings stem from allegations against Duterte that have been the subject of congressional investigations since 2024.The senator-judges will decide the case after the presentation of evidence by both sides.Meanwhile, Luistro reiterated that officials of the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Office of the Vice President (OVP) implicated in the alleged misuse of confidential funds and bribery could still face criminal or civil proceedings despite the withdrawal of three articles.Separate investigations by the Office of the Ombudsman cover allegations involving personnel of both agencies, while the prosecution remains prepared to provide evidence gathered during congressional hearings and the impeachment proceedings. “As a matter of fact, as early as 2024, the issue of confidential funds and bribery — involving officials from the Department of Education and the Office of the Vice President — has already been under investigation by the Ombudsman,” Luistro said.The House Committee on Good Government and Public Accountability had investigated P612.5 million in confidential funds allocated to the Office of the Vice President and the Department of Education during Duterte’s tenure, including questions involving liquidation records, acknowledgment receipts and the disbursement of public funds.The committee transmitted its findings to the Ombudsman in 2024, while investigators have continued examining whether the financial transactions and supporting documents warrant further proceedings against Duterte or other responsible officials.Ombudsman Jesus Crispin “Boying” Remulla has said his office was gathering and evaluating evidence, including documents presented during the Senate impeachment trial, to determine whether there were sufficient grounds to file cases over the alleged misuse of confidential funds.The grave threats allegations are also subject to separate proceedings before the Quezon City Regional Trial Court, following the filing of criminal charges over Duterte’s November 2024 statements concerning President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., first lady Liza Marcos, and former speaker Martin Romuladez.

- Don’t let El Niño worsen learning loss (2026-11-01 16:05)

SENATE President Sherwin Gatchalian urged the Department of Education (DepEd) to adopt localized class suspension measures during El Niño, warning that blanket cancellations could put students’ learning further at risk.In a statement on Sunday, Gatchalian said the agency’s protocols must protect students from extreme heat without worsening learning loss and deepening the country’s education crisis.He stressed that class suspensions should be based

on actual weather and heat conditions in specific communities, rather than imposed across entire cities, provinces or regions.Gatchalian urged DepEd to ensure that its response to extreme heat does not unnecessarily interrupt instruction, particularly for elementary pupils who depend heavily on classroom teaching to develop foundational reading and literacy skills.A policy note by the Second Congressional Commission on Education (Edcom 2), released in September, highlighted the learning costs of widespread class suspensions.The study found that a typical public elementary school lost approximately 20 teaching days during the previous school year because of class suspensions prompted by various hazards, equivalent to about one in every 10 days in the official school calendar.It also found that every suspended school day was associated with the loss of approximately 1.4 days of reading progress among early-grade learners, underscoring the long-term consequences of disruptions to classroom instruction.The findings were based on preliminary estimates from an ongoing study covering more than 37,000 public elementary schools.Edcom 2 emphasized that while suspensions are necessary when students face actual danger, blanket orders could unnecessarily deprive schools in unaffected areas of learning time.The commission has called for more granular, evidence-based decisions that allow school heads and local authorities to suspend or resume classes depending on actual conditions in their communities.The Philippines is bracing for a potential super El Niño, which the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration expects to persist through the first half of 2027, peaking before the end of 2026.Aside from extreme heat, it could bring prolonged dry spells and water shortages, potentially affecting school operations, students' health and the delivery of education services.To address these risks, DepEd has introduced its four-level Hayo, Hinay, Hinga and Hinto (4H) framework, which allows schools to adjust learning arrangements according to local heat conditions and water availability.Under the guidelines, schools may continue face-to-face classes with appropriate precautions during manageable conditions, including scheduled water breaks and adjustments to outdoor activities.As heat stress increases, school heads may shorten class hours or shift to hybrid and home-based learning.When conditions become more severe, academic requirements may be reduced, with learning materials and other alternative delivery methods used to maintain continuity.All physical and home-based learning activities will be suspended when temperatures reach the danger threshold of 42 degrees Celsius or higher.

- Tulfo pushes oil hub deal with UAE (2026-11-01 16:04)

THE Philippines is pursuing a partnership with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to build a strategic oil storage hub that could help protect consumers from global price shocks and fuel supply disruptions.Sen. Erwin Tulfo, chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy, led a Philippine delegation in talks with UAE officials on Oct. 29 on the proposed project, following an earlier meeting involving Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian, Tulfo and Abu Dhabi National Oil Co. (Adnoc) representatives.The initial meeting, held at the Senate, was attended by UAE Ambassador Mohamed Obaid Alqataam Alzaabi and Adnoc officials.Gatchalian described the discussions as meaningful.During the Oct. 29 discussions, Tulfo said he has been pushing for the oil hub "because we see how beneficial it would be for Filipinos who are experiencing price

shocks from high oil prices because we lack access to it.” The Philippine delegation included Ambassador to the UAE Alfonso Ver and Special Envoy to the UAE for Trade and Investment Kathryna Yu-Pimentel.The UAE delegation, led by Adnoc Chairman Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, expressed willingness to pursue the partnership.Adnoc supplies Petron Corp. with about 40,000 barrels of oil a day, and UAE officials said the proposed hub could help increase supply volumes.The UAE team also proposed sharing an existing storage contract framework for Philippine review as discussions move forward.The proposed partnership gained further backing from Gatchalian, who, on Oct. 26, urged the state-owned Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC) to move quickly on the opportunity.Gatchalian said Adnoc was prepared to shoulder the cost of storage tanks and oil inventory, provided PNOC made suitable land available for the facility.He also said Adnoc wanted an arrangement granting the Philippines the right of first refusal to purchase the stored oil when needed. “PNOC should not dilly-dally because Adnoc is ready,” Gatchalian said.The parties identified the second quarter of 2027 as a target for the project’s rollout, subject to further agreements on the site, infrastructure responsibilities, commercial terms and implementation schedule.The hub would anchor a broader energy partnership covering crude oil supply, refinery investments, fuel retail networks, renewable energy and gas-to-power development.Tulfo said such a partnership had yet to be finalized but vowed to lead follow-up discussions to move the project forward.

- CFO joins in celebrating the lives of saints (2026-11-01 16:03)

THE Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) joined the faithful in celebrating the lives of saints, including St. Lorenzo Ruiz, the first Filipino saint and patron saint of overseas Filipino workers and migrants.The Asian Catholic Initiative said Ruiz, of Chinese-Filipino parentage, became the Philippines’ protomartyr after his execution by the Tokugawa Shogunate during its persecution of Japanese Christians in the 17th century.St. Pedro Calungsod, a young catechist from Visayas, is the second Filipino saint. He joined Spanish Jesuit missionaries in Guam to catechize the native Chamorros. He was killed when someone spread a rumor that the baptismal water used by missionaries was poisonous. “On this All Saints’ Day, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas joins the faithful in celebrating the lives of saints whose faith, courage, and devotion continue to inspire people across generations,” the CFO said on Sunday. “Their examples remind us of the enduring values of compassion, perseverance, and service that guide us in our daily lives,” it added.Senate leaders urged Filipinos to draw inspiration from the saints, strengthen their faith, and cherish the memories of departed loved ones as the country observes All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day.Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian called on Filipinos to remain steadfast in doing what is right. “May the saints serve as our inspiration to have strong faith and the conviction to do what is right,” Gatchalian said in his message on Sunday.Marking All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day on Nov. 2 is a longstanding Filipino tradition when families gather in cemeteries to offer prayers, flowers and candles in remembrance of their departed loved ones.Sen. Francis Escudero said it was an opportunity to honor the memories of loved ones whose influence and lessons continue to shape the lives of those they left behind. “Through our prayers and the light of every candle we

light, the memories of our loved ones who helped shape who we are remain alive," Escudero said.He added that the observance reminds Filipinos that relationships do not end with death but continue to live in the hearts and memories of those left behind.Sen. JV Ejercito also urged Filipinos to look to the saints for guidance in choosing the right path in life and to offer sincere prayers for their departed loved ones.Sen. Panfilo Lacson said the teachings and examples of the saints should inspire Filipinos to live with love and concern for others.Sen. Camille Villar honored the saints for their faith, devotion and selfless service, saying their legacy should encourage people to practice kindness and compassion.Sen. Bam Aquino said the love, lessons and happy memories left by those who had passed away continued to provide strength and hope to grieving families.

- DPWH activates 24/7 hotlines (2026-11-01 16:02)

THE Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has institutionalized a nationwide 24/7 motorist assistance hotline that connects motorists directly with regional and district engineering offices. This extends beyond the observance of All Saints' Day to enhance public safety and improve infrastructure responsiveness for all travelers.Public Works Secretary Giovanni Lopez said motorists heading to the provinces or visiting cemeteries during and after the All Souls' Day break can now seek immediate assistance from the DPWH for road-related emergencies.He said the initiative is part of the agency's Lakbay-Alalay 2026 program.Lakbay Alalay is the agency's annual motorist assistance initiative that deploys personnel and equipment to help travelers experiencing vehicle trouble or other roadside emergencies.According to the DPWH chief, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ordered the activation of hotlines so travelers can access DPWH assistance when they encounter incidents, including damaged roads and other hazards during their trip.Lopez ordered all DPWH Regional and District Engineering Offices "to keep their contact numbers open 24 hours a day, seven days a week" to ensure a prompt response to motorists' concerns.He added that DPWH teams maintain around-the-clock shifts to provide emergency assistance and keep major thoroughfares free from obstructions.The initiative strengthens government efforts to make roads safer and travel more convenient during one of the country's busiest travel periods, when highways leading to provinces, transport hubs, and cemeteries typically experience unusual traffic flow.The DPWH is coordinating with other government entities, such as the Land Transportation Office, the Philippine National Police, and local government units.

- Cayetano renews push for PDL rehab, reintegration (2026-11-01 16:01)

SENATE Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano reaffirmed his commitment to rehabilitate and reintegrate persons deprived of liberty (PDLs), urging inmates to embrace change and work toward a better life.Cayetano made the pledge during a visit to the Taguig City Jail, where he distributed food and hygiene supplies to thousands of inmates as part of his annual birthday outreach. "We want to do more because we know that God is not yet finished with your lives," Cayetano told the inmates during his Oct. 31 visit.The senator urged the inmates not to let setbacks discourage them from pursuing personal transformation, stressing that changing their

lives requires determination and a willingness to persevere. “He who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus,” Cayetano said, quoting Philippians 1:6. “Even if we make mistakes, the Bible says that He will complete the work He has begun. But we must first have the desire to change,” he added.Cayetano’s appeal for individual change comes amid efforts by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) to strengthen rehabilitation programs that prepare inmates for their eventual return to their families and communities.These programs include education through the Alternative Learning System, livelihood projects, vocational and skills training, health services, religious and spiritual activities, and behavioral management. The bureau also provides referrals for aftercare services, including employment assistance, educational opportunities, and medical and psychological interventions for PDLs preparing for release.The BJMP’s rehabilitation efforts are anchored on the principle that jail management goes beyond safekeeping of inmates and includes providing opportunities for personal development and successful reintegration into society.

- Pagasa sees fair weather Monday (2026-11-01 12:43)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said fair weather was expected in most of Luzon on Monday but extreme northern Luzon will have light rains."Because of the effect of the northeast monsoon, we will still experience light rains or drizzles in extreme northern Luzon," Pagasa weather specialist Daniel James Villamil said on Sunday."But for the rest of Luzon including Metro Manila, we expect generally fair weather with a chance of localized thunderstorms in the afternoon to evening," Villamil said.Palawan, Visayas, and Mindanao will also have fair weather but thunderstorms are possible in the afternoon or evening, he said.No gale warning was issued but Villamil cautioned those who would go out to sea because of gusts of winds and huge waves.

- Marcos joins Filipinos in honoring their dead (2026-11-01 09:32)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. joined the Catholic faithful and the entire nation in remembering their dearly departed on November 1.The president visited the tomb of his father, former president Ferdinand Marcos Sr., at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig City on Friday, ahead of the observance of All Saints’ Day.The president was accompanied by his mother, former first lady Imelda Romualdez Marcos, his sister Irene Marcos-Araneta, and close family and friends.The family offered prayers and paid their respects during the private visit.In his message, the president invited Filipinos to extend the same devotion they show in remembering the departed to the way they treat one another, making time to listen to those who struggle and showing concern for their fellow Filipinos."As we observe All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day, we remember our departed loved ones and the lives and legacies they have left behind," Marcos said."Though they are no longer with us, the memories we shared and the values they taught us continue to bring our families closer together," he said."May we also draw inspiration from the saints, whose lives of selfless service and devotion remind us to show greater kindness and compassion toward one another,"

Marcos said.He asked Filipinos to "honor those who have passed not only through our prayers, but also through the way we care for those who remain.""May these solemn days bring peace to those who mourn and remind us to cherish the people we hold dear," the president said.

- Bishop lauds peaceful election of BARMM officials (2026-11-01 09:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Kidapawan Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo lauded all stakeholders for the peaceful and democratic election of the first chief minister and other officials of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).Abdulraof Macacua was elected chief minister with 51 votes against former chief minister Ahod Ebrahim. The members of the first regular BARMM parliament elected the chief minister during their first session on Oct. 30. One abstained and another was absent.Bagaforo, the chairman of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines-Episcopal Commission on Interreligious Dialogue (CBCP-ECID) welcomed Macacua's election and described it as "a historic step for the peace process."The bishop lauded the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and its leaders led by Ahod Ebrahim and Vice Chairman Mohagher Iqbal for the peaceful and democratic transition from the transitional administration.Previously, the BARMM was administered by the Bangsamoro Transition Authority.The CBCP-ECID also recognized the role of the MILF in the peaceful and orderly leadership transition."On behalf of the CBCP-ECID, we express our support and solidarity with the new Bangsamoro government and parliament," Bagaforo said."The Church will continue to walk with our Muslim brothers and sisters, with Indigenous Peoples, and with all communities in the region in dialogue, friendship, and the common work of building a just and lasting peace," he said.The bishop expressed hope that the new administration would pursue open and just governance.The peaceful election of BARMM leaders reflected the message of President Ferdinan Marcos Jr. during the inaugural session which he described as a milestone in the peace process.The President called on the new parliamentary coalition to uphold unity, statesmanship and cooperation, stressing that the political arrangement is measured by their capacity to translate the gains of peace into responsive governance, economic opportunities and better public service. “It means ensuring that the dividends of peace are felt in the daily lives of every Bangsamoro family,” Marcos said.He reaffirmed the government’s support for Bangsamoro autonomy and its democratic institutions. “Your success is the success of the country,” the President said.

- Be vigilant in cemeteries, public urged (2026-11-01 08:22)

MANILA, Philippines — National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) Officer-in-Charge Brig. Gen Christopher Abrahano reiterated his call for the public to remain vigilant while visiting cemeteries and memorial parks as large crowds present opportunities for criminals to prey on unsuspecting visitors.With hundreds of thousands expected to flock to cemeteries in Metro Manila, Abrahano reminded the public not to be complacent and to remain mindful of their personal belongings.He stressed the importance of keeping wallets, mobile phones, and other valuables secured, avoid the display of expensive jewelry, and never leaving bags or personal belongings unattended. Parents and guardians were likewise reminded to keep children and

elderly family members within sight, especially in congested areas.The NCRPO chief also cautioned visitors against individuals who may exploit the occasion through fraudulent activities, including those posing as religious ministers offering unauthorized prayers or blessings in exchange for money. “Do not let your guard down just because you are in a place of remembrance and prayer. Criminals can take advantage of even a moment of distraction. Stay alert, secure your belongings, and look after your family members. We want everyone to fulfill this meaningful tradition without becoming victims of crime,” he said.Visitors to the Manila's north and south cemeteries reached 997,550 as of Sunday afternoon.Manila Mayor Isko Moreno Domagoso said on Facebook that about 811,200 people visited the Manila North Cemetery as of 2 p.m.He said that about 186,350 people visited the Manila South Cemetery as of 2 p.m. on Nov. 1.

- De Lima seeks tougher animal welfare laws (2026-11-01 07:16)

MANILA, Philippines — House Senior Deputy Minority Leader and Mamamayang Liberal Party-list Rep. Leila de Lima on Sunday called for stricter animal welfare laws and accountability following the recent discovery of 29 dead dogs and cats dumped in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan.In a statement, De Lima condemned the incident as an act of cruelty, saying the animals were not garbage and that their deaths had caused grief among families who considered them members of their households. “What was done to the 29 furbabies found in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan, is absolutely despicable,” she said in Filipino. “How could they have committed such an evil act against innocent souls and the families who are grieving the loss of their loved ones? THEY ARE NOT TRASH TO BE JUST THROWN AWAY!” she added.The lawmaker called for the identification and prosecution of those responsible, including others who may be involved in similar acts of animal cruelty. “This kind of violence should never be tolerated. It will not be the last unless we implement comprehensive and stricter laws to promote and protect animal rights and welfare,” De Lima said. “We call upon our fellow lawmakers: Let us also make it a priority to enact our proposed Animal Welfare Enforcement Act and the Revised Animal Welfare Act, in order to put an end to violence and foster a better understanding of the proper and humane treatment of animals,” she added.Bacoor City Mayor Strike Revilla ordered the closure of Ahjay Paws Aftercare Crematorium following complaints from pet owners.

- Ejercito seeks fair treatment, due process for Dela Rosa (2026-11-01 05:08)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. JV Ejercito called on authorities to ensure fair treatment and due process for Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa following the latter’s wife’s appeal for help, urging them to resolve the situation peacefully.Ejercito said that Dela Rosa, a former chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and his former Senate colleague, deserves the same legal protections as anyone else. “As much as possible, I hope the situation involving Senator Dela Rosa can be resolved peacefully. After all, he is a former chief of the Philippine National Police. Everyone deserves to be given due process,” Ejercito said in an interview with DWIZ radio on Saturday. “I hope everything will be handled properly and peacefully. Senator Dela Rosa has

also served our country. He was our colleague in the Senate and served as PNP chief," he added.Ejercito appealed to all parties concerned to avoid confrontation and work toward a peaceful resolution. "I am calling on both sides, on everyone, to resolve this peacefully. I hope he will be treated fairly and given due process," he said.Asked about Dela Rosa's wife's appeal for assistance, Ejercito said, "That is what I am also saying. I hope he is given due process and treated fairly."

- FBI: Saipan child sex abuse suspect fled to PH (2026-11-01 04:23)

SAIPAN, Northern Mariana Islands — A Filipino accused of sexually abusing a 13-year-old girl in Saipan fled to the Philippines in May 2024, prompting federal authorities to seek his arrest.The case against Rommel Bacani was disclosed in an FBI affidavit filed in the US District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands in May 2025 but only unsealed recently.Based on the affidavit, Bacani departed Saipan for the Philippines on May 10, 2024 following a police investigation into allegations that he sexually abused a minor with her mother's knowledge.FBI special agent Richard J. Bauer said Bacani was charged in the CNMI Superior Court on May 12, 2025 with first-and second-degree sexual abuse of a minor and disturbing the peace.The affidavit said that sexual abuse of a minor carries a possible prison sentence of up to 30 years.The case stems from a March 7, 2024 investigation by the Department of Public Safety after officials at Francisco M. Sablan Middle School raised concerns about a 13-year-old student who had been frequently absent from classes.The girl's relatives told police that she had an adult boyfriend and had moved with her mother and two younger siblings into his apartment.The boyfriend was later identified as Bacani.The girl's special education teacher told investigators that the student disclosed her mother had forced her into the relationship.During a forensic interview on March 12, 2024, the girl claimed that Bacani sexually assaulted her on several occasions.The affidavit also detailed allegations that Bacani sexually abused the girl's younger sister, who was 8 years old at the time.Investigators said the children's mother knew about the relationship and allowed her daughter to sleep in the same bed as Bacani.In a Jan. 8, 2025, interview with the FBI, the mother reportedly admitted witnessing Bacani having sex with her daughter on four or five occasions.She also told investigators that Bacani became nervous after being questioned by DPS detectives in March 2024 because he feared getting into trouble over his relationship with the minor.The mother subsequently moved out of Bacani's apartment and lost contact with him.Federal authorities determined through database checks that Bacani left Saipan for the Philippines on May 10, 2024.Bauer said there was probable cause to believe Bacani traveled outside the CNMI with the intent to avoid prosecution, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1073.The federal offense carries a possible prison sentence of up to five years, a fine, or both.The affidavit was sworn before US District Court Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona on May 22, 2025.

- EDSA southbound section from Boni to Guadalupe to reopen Monday (2026-11-01 03:29)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) is set to reopen the rehabilitated southbound section of Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (EDSA) from Boni Avenue

to Guadalupe at 5 a.m. on Monday, November 2.Public Works Secretary Giovanni Lopez said on Sunday that he will conduct an overnight inspection of the completed section prior to its reopening.The reopening marks another milestone in the second phase of the EDSA rehabilitation project, which aims to improve the condition of the capital's busiest thoroughfare, provide a smoother ride for motorists and make the highway more commuter-friendly.The latest round of repairs covered three southbound sections, including the stretch from the NEPA Q-Mart Bus Station, past the EDSA Kamuning Flyover, the EDSA Shaw underpass to Boni Avenue; and Boni Avenue to Guadalupe.The DPWH scheduled the work from October 30 to November 2, with activities including breaking up damaged pavement, debris hauling, base preparation, installation of reinforcing steel bars, concrete pouring, sealant application and curing.Temporary lane closures were implemented during construction, while the remaining lanes were kept open to motorists.

- Parts of Metro Manila, Rizal, Cavite to have water interruptions this week (2026-11-01 03:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Some areas in Metro Manila, Rizal and Cavite will have water interruptions this week because of maintenance works, Manila Water Company Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc. said on Sunday.Manila Water said some areas in the villages of Nangka and Concepcion Uno in Marikina City will have water interruptions on November 3-4 between 10 p.m. and 4 p.m. because of line declogging activities.Some locations in the villages of Concepcion Uno, Concepcion Dos and Marikina Heights will have no water on November 4-5 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of line declogging works near the Our Lady of Perpetual Succor College.Also, some areas in the villages of San Roque and Sta. Elena will have water service interruptions on November 4-5 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. due to line maintenance works at Shoe Ave. cor. H. Roxas St.Some parts of Brgy. Parang will have service interruptions on November 5-6 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of line declogging activities at Dahlia St.Some portions of Brgy. Bagumbuhay in Quezon City will have water interruptions on November 3-4 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. due to line maintenance works at F. Castillo St. cor. A. Luna.Some places in Brgy. UP Campus will have service interruptions on November 5-6 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of pipe maintenance activities.In Rizal province, some sections of Brgy. San Jose in Rodriguez will have no water on November 3-4 between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of mainline interconnection works at Kasiglahan Village Phase 1K, and Phase 1K1 to Phase 1K2.Maynilad meanwhile announced that some areas in the villages of 168 and 169 in Caloocan City and some sections in the villages of Kaligayahan, Nova Proper, San Agustin and Sta. Monica in Quezon City will have water interruptions on November 4-5 between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. because of network diagnostics activities at Quirino Highway to detect possible leaks.Several locations in the villages of Alabang, Bayanan, Poblacion, Putatan and Tunasan in Muntinlupa City will have water service interruptions on November 5-6 between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. due to facility maintenance activities at Putatan Water Treatment Plant 2.In Cavite, various areas in the villages of Alapan I-C, Anabu I-A, Anabu I-B, Anabu I-C, Anabu I-D, Anabu I-E, Anabu I-F, Anabu II-A, Anabu II- B, Anabu II-C, Anabu II-D, Anabu II-E, Bayan Luma I,

Bayan Luma II, Bayan Luma III, Bayan Luma IV, Bayan Luma V, Bayan Luma VI, Bayan Luma VII, Bayan Luma VIII, Bayan Luma IX, Bukandala III, Bukandala IV, Bukandala V, Carsadang Bago I, Carsadang Bago II, Malagasang 1-A, Malagasang I-B, Malagasang I-C, Malagasang I-D, Malagasang I-E, Malagasang I-F, Malagasang I-G, Medicion I-B, Poblacion III-B, Poblacion IV-B, Poblacion IV-D, and Tanzang Luma VI in Imus City will have water service interruptions everyday on November 2-8 between 5 a.m. and 11:59 p.m. because of network and facility limitations of the Patindig Araw pumping station.

- No room for shady insertions: Ejercito says watchdogs allowed to join budget bicam proceedings (2026-11-01 02:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate Finance Committee Chairman JV Ejercito said that civil society organizations (CSOs) will participate in the bicameral deliberations on the proposed 2027 national budget, saying more public scrutiny is needed to catch unvetted projects and prevent last-minute insertions.Ejercito said the move responds to calls from business coalitions, civic groups and budget watchdogs for greater transparency and accountability in the budget process. He also confirmed that the bicameral proceedings would be livestreamed. “We are continuing to build on our best practices. This year, we will be inviting CSOs to sit in and observe the bicameral proceedings. Having more eyes on the budget will help us spot any unvetted projects or last-minute insertions that may be introduced during the bicam,” he said in a statement.Ejercito said the planned public access to the deliberations would extend the transparency measures adopted by the Senate Finance Committee throughout its review. “All Senate Finance Committee budget hearings were livestreamed, which allowed the public to follow agency deliberations in real time,” he said.The committee also held a dedicated hearing for CSOs on Oct. 26, giving participating groups an opportunity to present recommendations and raise concerns about proposed allocations.Ejercito welcomed the groups’ call to remove budget insertions without technical justification and restore funding cuts to foreign-assisted infrastructure projects, disaster preparedness and preventive health programs.He said public participation should extend beyond congressional hearings to citizens' access to budget information and tools for scrutinizing government spending.The committee has incorporated digital tools developed by civil society groups, including independent research organization BetterGov.ph, into the Senate’s budget transparency portal (https://budget-transparency-portal.senate.gov.ph).Through the portal, citizens can examine agency budget documents, submit position papers and flag allocations they consider questionable. “Transparency is not just a policy statement; it is an active mechanism. These tools were built by watchdogs themselves, and we are glad to give them a home on the Senate website so ordinary citizens can scrutinize where public funds are going,” Ejercito said.

- No sacred cows in Senate budget review — Lacson (2026-11-01 02:05)

MANILA, Philippines — No lawmaker will be spared scrutiny in the Senate's review of the proposed 2027 national budget as senators take a “gung-ho” approach in correcting questionable allocations and budget insertions, Sen. Panfilo Lacson said.Lacson said he and

fellow members of the Senate majority bloc fully support Senate Finance Committee chairman Sen. JV Ejercito in addressing red flags in the House-approved version of the proposed General Appropriations Act. “Our attitude now is to go gung-ho. If anyone gets hit, so be it. There will be no exceptions, otherwise the exception could become the general rule,” Lacson said in an interview with One News.Asked whether the scrutiny would also cover the biggest net increase in public works allocations for the congressional district of presidential son and Ilocos Norte Rep. Sandro Marcos in the House-approved budget, Lacson replied: “Yes, absolutely.” “If we make exceptions, many will ask for exceptions and we won't succeed because there will be plea bargaining,” he said.The Senate is scheduled to resume plenary sessions on Nov. 9, when debates on the proposed 2027 budget will begin.Lacson said he already submitted his subcommittee reports on the proposed budgets of government agencies assigned to him, which are now being reviewed by the Legislative Budget Research and Monitoring Office (LBRMO). “Once the plenary sessions resume, the LBRMO would have finished its review and we can introduce amendments to restore the changes the House made to its version of the General Appropriations Bill,” he said.Lacson expressed confidence that questionable insertions would not find their way into the Senate version of the budget. “In the Senate, I don't know if someone sneaked in funds for pet projects, but I don't think so. When we in the majority bloc chat, I can feel my colleagues' sentiments,” he said.

- Some areas in Metro Manila, four provinces to have power interruptions due to maintenance works (2026-11-01 01:56)

MANILA, Philippines — Some areas in Metro Manila and the provinces of Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal will have power interruptions this week due to maintenance works, Meralco said on Sunday.Some parts of Marikina Heights in Marikina City and some sections of Brgy. Cupang in Antipolo City, Rizal will have power interruptions on November 4 between 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. because of the retirement of electricity facilities and line reconstruction works along Rumbler St. and Villa Grande St. in Villa Grande Subd.Some locations in the villages of Malibong Bata and Malibong Matanda in Pandi, Bulacan will have no electricity on November 3-4 between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m. because of the replacement and installation of electricity facilities and line reconductoring works along Malibong Matanda Road.Some portions of Gateway Business Park in Brgy. Javalera, General Trias in Cavite will have no power on November 2 between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. because of line reconstruction works.Several places in the villages of Barandal, Batino, Mayapa, Paciano Rizal, and Punta in Calamba City, Laguna will have power service interruptions on November 2-3 between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. because of the relocation of electricity facilities affected by a road widening project along Batino Road.Some places in Brgy. Mayamot, Antipolo City, Rizal will have no electricity on November 4 between 10 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. because of line reconstruction works along Kaimito Ave. and Mahogany Ave.

- Thousands join zombie-themed fun run in Manila (2026-11-01 01:49)

MANILA, Philippines — Three thousand people participated in the 5-kilometer, zombie-themed Run For Your Life early on Sunday, Nov. 1, 2026.The route started and ended at Magallanes

Drive in Intramuros.Participants passed historic sites in Manila as the route traversed Padre Burgos Avenue which gave a view of the lit Manila City Hall before taking them to Victoria Street, beside Intramuros' walls at Muralla, Anda which runs along the Memorare Manila 1945 monument as well as the former site of what is now Ateneo de Manila University, Sta. Lucia where the Cuartel de Santa Lucia ruins are, Muralla, a part of General Luna, back to Padre Burgos, then Bonifacio Drive, and Soriano Avenue from which one can see the Manila Cathedral, Ayuntamiento, and Aduana.A halloween street party will be held today under the Intramuros Administration's Intramumu program.

- Pet crematorium in Bacoor shut down (2026-11-01 01:44)

MANILA, Philippines — Bacoor, Cavite Mayor Strike Revilla said the city has shut down the pet crematorium that was linked online to the alleged dumping of dead animals in Bulacan.In a Facebook post on Saturday night, Revilla said that Ahjay Paws Aftercare Pet Crematorium was ordered closed in response to several complaints.The closure came amid the discovery of 29 deceased dogs and cats at a vacant lot in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan late on Friday. "In response to the complaints we received from our fellow citizens, we immediately directed the City Legal Office and the Business Permit and Licensing Department (BPLD), together with our police force and other concerned offices, to conduct an investigation. We have officially implemented a closure order against the establishment in question," Revilla wrote in Filipino. "The investigation is ongoing to establish the full truth and ensure that anyone found to have violated the law is held accountable," he added.He also met with representatives of the crematorium and 30 pet owners.Revilla said the establishment had two cremation machines in Bacoor and in Caloocan City. "The owner admitted that some pets were brought to Caloocan for cremation. However, there is still insufficient documentation or evidence to prove that the cremations were actually carried out," the mayor said.He added that the columbarium owner could not confirm whether or not the animals that were dumped in Bulacan were among those entrusted to them.Whose ashes?Rose Ann dela Peña said she lost her dog Blue, also known as B2, on May 29.She told The Manila Times in a message early on Sunday that while B2 was not among the animals discovered in Bulacan, she was concerned about whether or not she got the ashes of her pet. "We entrusted B2 to Ahjay's, believing that we would receive her ashes and nothing else. But with everything that has come to light, how can we be sure? We deserve the truth, transparency, and proper answers from Ahjay's. We just want to make sure that the ashes we received truly belong to our beloved B2," dela Peña said. "We trusted them during one of the most painful moments of our lives. Knowing that something like this allegedly happened makes us question whether our pets were truly handled with the care, respect, and dignity they deserved… As fur parents, our pets are family. They deserve respect even after they pass away, and we deserve peace of mind knowing that they were treated properly," she added.While dela Peña welcomed the closure of the pet columbarium, she called for a thorough investigation. "We want clear answers, accountability from those responsible, and assurance that this will never happen again. I also hope the authorities will strengthen the monitoring and regulation of pet crematoriums to protect other fur parents from experiencing this kind of pain

and uncertainty," she said. "We are not just talking about animals; we are talking about beloved family members entrusted to their care. Every fur parent deserves the truth, and every pet deserves a dignified farewell," she added.The Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) has called on owners of pets that were deceived to come forward and pursue legal action. "The images of the dumped bodies of the dogs and cats were shocking, although not directly a violation of the Animal Welfare Act if the animals were already deceased when they were turned over to the crematorium," PAWS said on Saturday.They pointed out that these actions constitute a grave betrayal of public trust. "Pet parents paid for a service that was supposed to provide their beloved companions with a dignified farewell. Instead, their remains were reportedly dumped like garbage in a vacant lot. This is not merely a failure to deliver a service but constitutes Estafa by means of deceit," the group said. "We urge affected pet parents to preserve their receipts, cremation certificates, communications, photographs, and other evidence, and to seek legal assistance in filing the appropriate complaint," PAWS said. "The emotional harm suffered by these pet parents must not be dismissed. They entrusted the remains of beloved family members for a dignified farewell, only to be deprived of that farewell at a particularly vulnerable moment of grief. The bond between a person and a companion animal does not end with death. The dignity with which a beloved animal is laid to rest matters deeply to those who loved and cared for them."

- American 'yields' P17.46M worth of marijuana at NAIA (2026-10-31 19:01)

MANILA, Philippines — An American passenger was arrested after the Bureau of Customs (BOC) intercepted about P17.46 million worth of marijuana kush allegedly concealed in his luggage at Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 3.BOC Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno said on Saturday that the foreigner, who arrived from Bangkok, Thailand, was caught on Oct. 29 by the bureau personnel in coordination with the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) and NAIA Inter-Agency Drug Interdiction Task Group (NAIA-IADITG). "He was said to be carrying two pieces of luggage containing food packages in which the suspected illegal drugs were hidden," Nepomuceno said.Reports showed that the contraband was discovered after the two checked-in luggage items showed suspicious images during X-ray screening. Customs personnel immediately conducted a physical inspection after his luggage items were subjected to K9 inspection, during which the drug-sniffing dog gave a positive indication of the possible presence of illegal drugs. The inspection yielded 15 vacuum-sealed packages of suspected marijuana kush hidden in food packets. Five packages weighing a total of 5,122 grams and valued at approximately P5.12 million were recovered from the first luggage, while 10 packages weighing 12,342 grams and worth P12.34 million were found in the second.The American passenger was subsequently arrested for allegedly bringing prohibited drugs into the country, according to BOC.Three days before the operation, the joint team also intercepted on Oct. 26 some 7,335 grams of suspected marijuana kush worth P7.33 million from unclaimed luggage at NAIA Terminal 3. The luggage also came from Bangkok, Thailand, and the suspected illegal drugs were found concealed in aluminum food pouches and sealed transparent plastic bags.In just four days, a total of 24.8 kilograms of suspected

marijuana kush valued at P24.79 million were seized in two separate operations, according to BOC-NAIA District Collector Yasmin Obillos-Mapa.The successive seizures were made possible by the strict vigilance of Customs personnel and swift coordination with partner agencies to strengthen security at the airport, Obillos-Mapa said.Commending the BOC, PDEA, and NAIA-IADITG personnel for their swift and coordinated action, Nepomuceno stressed the importance of maintaining strict vigilance and coordination to prevent attempts to smuggle illegal drugs into the country.

- Chinese research ship stirs security concerns (2026-10-31 16:20)

A NATIONAL security advocate on Saturday warned that civilian scientific research could be used to conceal activities that threaten Philippine security, as a Chinese vessel carrying unidentified equipment was spotted inside Bajo de Masinloc (Scarborough Shoal), while China deployed military aircraft and naval forces around the disputed feature.Jose Antonio Goitia, chairman emeritus of the Filipinos Do Not Yield Movement, said Beijing should not be allowed to use claims of scientific research to conceal potentially military activities, stressing the Philippines' right to protect its maritime interests and demand transparency from foreign vessels operating in its maritime domain.The warning came after The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) said it was investigating the capabilities and purpose of unidentified equipment aboard a Chinese vessel spotted inside the lagoon of Bajo de Masinloc (Scarborough Shoal), including whether the equipment could be used for underwater operations.According to the PCG, the blue-and-white vessel was first monitored on Oct. 3 and had changed its configuration several times since then.During a maritime domain awareness flight on Thursday, Oct. 29, Philippine personnel observed the vessel towing a smaller boat and carrying an orange, boat-shaped object fitted with sensors and antennas on its rear deck.The PCG cautioned against identifying the vessel as a Chinese research ship, saying its bow number and International Maritime Organization number did not match those of known Chinese research vessels.The Coast Guard sought to determine the capabilities of the equipment and whether the vessel was supporting Chinese government operations in the area.The agency was particularly examining whether the orange object was a submersible or equipment intended for underwater operations.The PCG noted that China had previously used remotely operated vehicles to conduct seabed research and said underwater drones could also be involved.However, the PCG has not established the equipment's actual function or confirmed that it was being used for surveillance.The sighting coincided with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Southern Theater Command's announcement on Friday that Chinese naval and air forces had conducted combat-readiness patrols in the waters and airspace around Huangyan Dao, Beijing's name for Bajo de Masinloc.The PLA said it had strengthened patrols around the shoal since early October to tighten control over the surrounding waters and airspace, describing the latest operations as a response to what it called Philippine rights violations and provocative acts.Footage aired by Chinese state broadcaster CCTV-7's Junshi Baodao (Military Report) on Oct. 30 showed military aircraft and a naval vessel operating around the shoal, including scenes depicting Chinese forces monitoring a Philippine aircraft and issuing radio warnings.The broadcast did not independently establish

when the encounters occurred or verify Beijing's claim that the Philippine aircraft had entered Chinese territorial airspace.Separately, the China Coast Guard said it conducted law enforcement patrols around the shoal on Friday, also citing alleged Philippine provocations.Goitia expressed concern over reports that Chinese maritime platforms described as "ghost research ships" could be used to deploy underwater drones to map submarine transit routes and collect information with potential military applications, including anti-submarine warfare.Available information, however, does not establish that the vessel spotted inside the shoal's lagoon carried out such activities."China must stop treating our waters as though they are its own. Filipinos have endured enough intimidation and harassment in our maritime domain. We have every right to know what foreign vessels are doing in our waters, and we will not accept activities that threaten our security or disregard our sovereign rights," said Goitia, who is also chairman emeritus of several civic society groups, including Alyansa ng Bantay sa Kapayapaan at Demokrasya (ABKD), and People’s Alliance for Democracy and Reforms (Pader).He cited the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos), particularly Article 246, which generally requires coastal state consent for marine scientific research in a country's exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, subject to the convention's provisions.Article 240 requires marine scientific research to be conducted exclusively for peaceful purposes.The latest developments add to tensions around Bajo de Masinloc, a longstanding flashpoint in the maritime dispute between the Philippines and China.The shoal lies about 124 nautical miles west of Zambales, within the Philippines' 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone.China has maintained control over access to the shoal since a 2012 standoff with the Philippines.In 2016, an arbitral tribunal ruled that Filipino fishermen had traditional fishing rights there and that China had unlawfully prevented them from exercising those rights.The tribunal also rejected China's claims to historic rights over resources within its so-called nine-dash line to the extent that they exceeded the maritime entitlements allowed under Unclos.Beijing rejects the ruling and continues to assert sovereignty over the shoal.

- Duterte to skip ICC hearing; co-conspirators’ fate unclear (2026-10-31 16:19)

FORMER president Rodrigo Duterte has waived his right to attend a Nov. 2 status conference in his crimes against humanity case before the International Criminal Court (ICC), as questions remain over why Sen. Ronald dela Rosa is the only one among eight alleged co-perpetrators publicly confirmed to face an arrest warrant.Duterte’s defense team submitted his signed waiver to ICC Trial Chamber III in a filing dated Oct. 30, complying with the chamber’s directive to formally place the document on record.The defense said Duterte notified the chamber on Oct. 28 of his decision to waive his right to attend the fifth status conference.The chamber granted his request the following day and directed his lawyers to submit a signed waiver.Duterte also instructed his lawyers to address the procedural matters on the conference agenda and any other issues that may arise during the hearing.The conference will take place before Trial Chamber III, composed of Presiding Judge Joanna Korner and Judges Keebong Paek and Nicolas Guillou, ahead of Duterte’s scheduled Nov. 30 trial.Meanwhile, the ICC has not publicly explained whether arrest warrants have been issued against the seven other officials

whom prosecutors identified alongside Duterte and dela Rosa as alleged co-perpetrators in the former president's anti-drug campaign.Aside from dela Rosa, the officials named in the prosecution's updated trial brief include Sen. Christopher Lawrence Go; former Philippine National Police chiefs Vicente Danao, Oscar Albayalde and the late Camilo Cascolan; former justice secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II; former National Bureau of Investigation director Dante Gierran; and former Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency chief Isidro Lapeña.Prosecutors allege that Duterte and the eight officials shared a "common plan" to neutralize people suspected of criminal activity through violent acts, including murder, from November 2011 to March 2019.However, being named in the prosecution's account does not automatically mean that an individual faces a separate charge or an arrest warrant. The ICC has not publicly confirmed warrants against the seven other officials.The ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber I issued an arrest warrant against dela Rosa under seal on Nov. 6, 2025, following a prosecution application filed three days earlier. The warrant was unsealed on May 11, 2026.The chamber found reasonable grounds to believe that dela Rosa was responsible as an indirect co-perpetrator for the crime against humanity of murder, alongside Duterte and other alleged co-perpetrators.The warrant covers killings committed between at least July 3, 2016, and the end of April 2018, when at least 32 people were killed. Dela Rosa served as PNP chief from July 1, 2016, to April 19, 2018.The chamber said the killings cited in the warrant represented a sample of a potentially broader pattern of conduct, leaving prosecutors the possibility of seeking to add other alleged criminal incidents later.Before the warrant was unsealed, an ICC spokesperson said no public arrest warrants had been issued in connection with the Philippines situation.The court later confirmed that dela Rosa's warrant had been issued confidentially before being made public.The disclosure showed that the absence of a publicly announced warrant does not necessarily mean that no sealed warrant exists.The ICC has not said whether similar warrants have been issued against other individuals named in the prosecution's account.ICC-accredited counsel Ross Tugade said in February that the identification of alleged co-perpetrators raised the possibility that the court was considering arrest warrants against them.In its April confirmation-of-charges decision, however, the Pre-Trial Chamber clarified that references to the alleged co-perpetrators did not constitute a determination of their criminal responsibility.

- Image of soldiers backing dela Rosa fake, Army says (2026-10-31 16:18)

THE Philippine Army's 10th Infantry Division has denounced an AI-generated image falsely portraying its troops endorsing the fugitive senator Ronald dela Rosa, warning that the fabricated image misrepresents the military's political neutrality.In a "Fake News Alert" issued over the weekend, the 10th Infantry (Agila) Division said the image circulating on social media falsely depicted its personnel expressing political support for dela Rosa.The division said the manipulated image could mislead the public and undermine the professionalism and political neutrality of military personnel.The image showed armed soldiers posing on an armored vehicle in front of the division's main gate while holding a banner bearing the words, "We support Senator Bato dela Rosa." The circulating social media card carried a post attributed to the "1st Infantry Tabak Division Philippine Army" page and posted by a user

identified as Regis Paller Enrique. Its caption read, “good job we salute 10ID troopers.” The 10ID urged the public to verify information through official sources before sharing unverified posts, stressing that its official positions and statements are communicated only through authorized channels.It also reiterated its commitment to serving Filipinos without political affiliation or preference and condemned the misuse of artificial intelligence to misrepresent its personnel.Dela Rosa, in hiding since November 2025, is wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for crimes against humanity, in relation to his role as police chief during the Duterte administration’s bloody war on drugs, in which thousands of suspects were killed. Former president Rodrigo Duterte is already in The Hague, awaiting trial.

- 29 dead pets found dumped in Bulacan (2026-10-31 16:17)

TWENTY-SIX dogs and three cats were found dumped in a vacant lot in San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan, inside individual plastic bags that had names and weight specifications labeled on them, an animal welfare group said over the weekend.Luna and Furry Siblings, on a Facebook post late Friday, said the 29 pets were “thrown away like trash” in the vacant lot.The animals are identified as Sakura, Sweet, Brandon, Dara, Red, Dos, Ivy, Jedy, Crunch, Akira, and Jennifer, who are all dogs, while the cats’ names are Ira, Lucky, and Chelsea. Two dogs shared the name Brandon.The group also posted several live videos and, on Saturday, returned to the vacant lot where they discovered the animals, saying the owners of an unnamed pet crematorium admitted that they handled these animals. “We are waiting, just to make sure that’s in writing and as soon as it’s done, we’re going to release the name and hopefully retrieve these pets. We will update everybody on this and let you guys know what’s happening,” the group said in a live video on Saturday.The animal rescue service also said the dogs and cats will be reburied in another location.The Manila Times has tried reaching out to the animal rescue service but has not returned calls as of press time.A pet crematorium based in Cavite was named as the one behind the dumping of the animals, and has since deactivated its Facebook and Instagram pages following the discovery of the pets.The Manila Times also tried reaching the pet crematorium on Saturday.Luna and Furry Siblings, along with the Animal Kingdom Foundation, called on pet owners who recently lost their pets to check the records.The animal rescue service tapped an animal clinic to lend them a microchip scanner to find a registration chip on the animals but said none of them had one. “Did you trust a clinic, handler, or aftercare provider with a pet matching one of these names and weights? If you paid a business to handle your pet’s remains with dignity, they may have defrauded you and dumped them in a vacant lot instead,” Luna and Furry Siblings wrote. “Please check your vet records and receipts. If you recognize your pet’s name and weight, message us privately right now. Your paperwork will be the smoking gun we need to nail the exact establishment responsible for this heartless, illegal act... We cannot rest. We need the power of the internet to find the owners of Sakura, Brandon, Chelsea, and the rest of these babies,” they added.Youth organization Angat Kabataang San Joseño called on the local government of San Jose del Monte and other appropriate authorities to conduct a thorough investigation and identify those responsible. “We hope that available CCTV footage, witness accounts, and other pieces of

evidence will be properly examined to establish what truly happened. We also urge the authorities to take the necessary steps to prevent similar incidents from happening again," the group said on Friday night."We believe that animal welfare should not be taken lightly. This incident deserves proper attention, and those found responsible must be held accountable in accordance with the law," they added.Animal Kingdom Foundation on Saturday called on the public to search for the pets' owners and to trace those responsible for dumping the 29 dogs and cats."We are appealing to pet owners who recently lost a pet or availed cremation and aftercare services in SJDM and nearby areas to check their records and receipts," the foundation said on Saturday."Someone entrusted these animals' remains to a service provider. They deserved dignity, not to be dumped like garbage," they added.Not the first timeThe foundation also said that it was not the first time a case of animal dumping happened this year alone."Similar reports of animal dumping surfaced as early as May, when only two dogs were identified. Now, another disturbing incident involving 29 dogs has been reported in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan," Animal Kingdom Foundation said on Saturday."The pattern is alarming. These animals were not simply abandoned; they were discarded, as if their lives meant nothing," it added.

- Leo XIV is 1st pope to vote in a US poll (2026-10-31 16:16)

VATICAN CITY — Pope Leo XIV has become the first pontiff to vote in a US general election, casting a mail-in ballot in a contest that will decide America's political future as the Trump era slowly comes to an end.The Vatican confirmed Friday that the Chicago-born pontiff had submitted a mail-in ballot in the city ahead of the Nov. 3 midterm elections, citing his long-standing belief in civic participation.Leo, formerly Robert Prevost, "has exercised his right to vote as a United States citizen," as he has done "whenever he was eligible to do so," the Holy See press office said.The statement said he had also voted while living in Peru, where he lived as a missionary priest and bishop for over 20 years."The Holy Father expresses his belief in the right and the duty of citizens to participate in democratic processes," it added.Leo holds US and Peruvian citizenship, and is also the head of state of a foreign country, the Holy See. The city-state is an absolute monarchy with no political elections.US federal law allows citizens living abroad, even those working for foreign governments, to vote via absentee ballot. Americans working for foreign governments aren't automatically at risk of forfeiting their US citizenship, though the US State Department says on its website that it may "actively review" the citizenship status of Americans who "serve as a foreign head of state, foreign head of government, or foreign minister."This election, Illinois voters are deciding whether to elect Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker to his third term, and they're also filling an open US Senate seat after longtime Catholic Democrat Dick Durbin's retirement. There are no statewide issues on the Illinois ballot.President Donald Trump is not on the ballot, but he has campaigned hard to try to preserve Republican control of the US House and Senate for the final two years of his second term.The pope, registered at a New Lenox, Illinois, address, requested a mail-in ballot on Oct. 3, said Kim Fladhammer, chief of staff to the Will County clerk, on Friday. The Chicago Sun-Times first reported the request.The request was made just 10 days before Leo underwent surgery to

remove a cancerous tumor from his right lung. Leo has been slowly resuming his activities at the Vatican after being released from the hospital on Oct. 17.It is unclear how Leo returned the ballot. The pope's older brother, John Prevost, was in Rome this week accompanying parishioners from St. Jude’s, an Augustinian-run parish in New Lenox, Illinois. The elder Prevost attends Mass there, and Leo gave a talk at the parish in 2024 while still a cardinal.Prevost's past votes have gone Democratic and Republican.Since 2000, Robert Prevost has voted in five primary elections, requesting Democratic ballots twice and Republican ballots three times, according to records held by the Illinois State Board of Elections.The records do not show which candidates he supported. Illinois voters must declare a party preference to receive a primary ballot. No such declaration is required in general elections.While registered in heavily Democratic Cook County, Prevost requested Democratic primary ballots in 2008 and 2010. After moving to the more conservative suburban Will County, he requested Republican primary ballots in 2012, 2014 and 2016.The records also show that he submitted ballots in every general election since 2000 except those in 2020 and 2022.Clashes with TrumpSince becoming pope, Leo has drawn criticism from Trump for repeatedly condemning the US-Israeli war in Iran and calling for dignified treatment of immigrants, following the Trump administration’s crackdown and mass deportation program.Earlier this year, Trump called Leo “weak” and captive to the “radical left,” kicking off a remarkable back-and-forth public argument that dominated Leo's April trip to Africa.Responding to Trump, Leo told reporters en route to Algeria: “I’m not afraid of the Trump administration or of speaking out loudly about the message of the Gospel, which is what the church works for.” The public dispute has subsided in recent months. “We try to let things pass if there are misunderstandings,” the Vatican foreign minister, Archbishop Richard Paul Gallagher, told reporters this week. "With anybody, we would be looking to approach it and say, ‘OK, there may be a misunderstanding, let’s move on and try to rebuild trust and confidence.’” Leo and Trump have not spoken by phone since the pope's May 2025 election. Last week, however, Leo spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy about the humanitarian crisis in the Ukrainian city of Oleshky.Asked why Trump and Leo haven't spoken, Gallagher said the Holy See has found a capable conduit in the US ambassador to the Holy See, Brian Burch, and hadn't needed to elevate any issue higher.A pope who follows US politics closelyLeo has made clear on several occasions that he follows local and national US politics closely and is not afraid to intervene.Recently, Leo reiterated official church teaching declaring the death penalty “inadmissible.” He made the pronouncement in a social media post on the World Day Against the Death Penalty, which came as the US announced plans to livestream an execution by firing squad. The plans were later scrapped.In 2025, Leo intervened in a debate over abortion, after Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich announced plans to give a lifetime achievement award to Sen. Dick Durbin. The plans drew objection from some conservative US bishops given the powerful Democratic senator’s support for abortion rights.Leo called for respect for both sides, but he also pointed out the contradiction between people who call themselves “pro-life” but also support the death penalty.Also in 2025, Leo said he was “very disappointed” that his home state of Illinois approved a law allowing medically assisted dying, which is condemned by the Catholic Church.The US Conference of Catholic Bishops, in a note commenting on the

confirmation of Leo's midterm vote, urged Catholics to put "our faith before our politics" and uphold human dignity and the common good. "As Catholics and Americans, we are blessed to be able to participate in our nation's political and public life," said the conference's director of public affairs, Chieko Noguchi. "In voting, our Holy Father sets the example that encourages each citizen to exercise their civic responsibility."

- Senate chief assures business community (2026-10-31 16:15)

SENATE President Sherwin Gatchalian on Saturday assured the country's business sector that senators will rigorously vet the proposed P7.2-trillion 2027 national budget, promising to strip away all politically driven, technically baseless congressional insertions.The statement comes in direct response to a joint manifesto issued by major business groups on Oct. 29, 2026, which raised grave concerns over P180 billion in realignments introduced by the House of Representatives under House Bill 10858.Gatchalian welcomed the private sector's vigilance and maintained that a clean budget can be delivered without delaying its timely passage.Projects to be purgedGatchalian said a formal recall of the House-approved General Appropriations Bill is unnecessary.Instead, the Senate will address the discrepancies through its own rigorous committee and plenary review processes."The Senate Committee on Finance will remove from the General Appropriations Bill all projects lacking supporting documents, such as feasibility studies, programs of work, resolutions from the LGUs (local government units), and other required documents," Gatchalian said.To ensure public oversight, the Senate leader also committed to deep transparency reforms."We will continue the transparency reforms by uploading all relevant information to the Senate Transparency Portal," he added.Furthermore, Gatchalian asserted that the Senate will remove unconstitutional and lump-sum provisions previously flagged by the Supreme Court — specifically tightening safeguards on unprogrammed appropriations — while keeping final spending strictly within the president's recommended ceiling in the National Expenditure Program (NEP).Massive realignmentThe business community's joint call exposed a massive realignment by the House Budget Amendments and Review Subcommittee (Barsc), which added over P180 billion to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) allocation.The adjustments reportedly inflated the DPWH project registry by 6,212 items — bringing the total to 16,270 projects — many of which are classified as vague lump-sum entries for multi-purpose buildings and bypass roads, lacking named proponents or published project lists.Of greater concern to the business sector was the source of the funding. The House reportedly carved out P130 billion from rigorously prepared, foreign-assisted infrastructure projects, P9.5 billion from calamity funds, P4.9 billion from vital health care programs, and P1.76 billion from the EDSA Busway project."Raiding calamity funds in a country that is exposed to disasters is indefensible," the business groups said in their manifesto, warning that cutting foreign-assisted projects delays high-impact infrastructure needed to reduce logistics costs and attract capital.The sector noted that past unvetted insertions between 2023 and 2025 resulted in "ghost and substandard flood control projects" that wasted public funds.Signatories to the manifesto were the Makati Business Club, Management Association of the Philippines, Philippine Chamber of Commerce

and Industry, Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines, Federation of Philippine Industries, Foundation for Economic Freedom, Judicial Reform Initiative, Cebu Business Club, Cebu Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Alyansa Agrikultura, and the Move As One Coalition.Not an election fundIn response to fears that the allocations could be weaponized ahead of upcoming political cycles, Gatchalian firmly rejected the label of an "election budget."He emphasized that the final 2027 appropriations will be a growth and resilience budget explicitly mapped out to address inflation, job creation, food security, health care and disaster readiness.The Senate is scheduled to begin its plenary deliberations on Nov. 9, 2026. Both the Senate leadership and the business community agree that eliminating baseless insertions can be achieved comfortably within the current legislative calendar, thereby averting the economic risks of a reenacted budget."Investors, at home and abroad, read the national budget as a statement of how seriously a government takes integrity and value for money," the business sector statement read, adding that they will closely monitor the legislative process through to its final enactment.

- Road Crash Victims Day guidelines issued (2026-10-31 16:15)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. signed Memorandum Circular 139 on Oct. 26, providing guidelines for this year’s observance of the National Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims, Survivors and Their Families on Nov. 15.” The 2026 National Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims, Survivors and Their Families will be observed on the third Sunday of November with the theme, ‘Remember. Reflect. Act. Save Lives,’ and its successful observance will require the active participation of all concerned government agencies and instrumentalities, as well as the support of local government units and the private sector,” the memorandum read.Republic Act 11468, also known as the National Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims, Survivors and Their Families Act, is a Philippine law approved on Jan. 23, 2020, during the administration of former president Rodrigo Duterte.Its main purpose is to honor people who lost their lives in road crashes, recognize survivors and their families, and promote road safety awareness throughout the country.The law promotes better support for road crash victims, survivors and their families. It recognizes that road crashes do not only affect the individuals involved. They also affect families, communities and society.The Department of Transportation was tasked to provide guidelines for all programs and activities, while the Presidential Communications Office will promote public awareness of the event.

- Lopez orders completion of stalled DPWH projects (2026-10-31 16:14)

PUBLIC Works Secretary Giovanni Lopez said he has ordered the completion of all projects under the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).Lopez issued the statement during the reopening of a road in Tuba, Benguet, on Fridaay.” If you recall, Secretary Vince Dizon visited this site in May 2026, and iThe nstructed the regional director and district engineering officials to address the problem here,” Lopez said.President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. recently ordered a Cabinet reshuffle where Dizon and Lopez swapped places. Dizon returned to head the Department of Transportation to address mass transit and daily commuter issues,

while Lopez assumed leadership of the DPWH to institutionalize ongoing anti-corruption and transparency reforms.The road in Benguet, Lopez said, had been operating on a one-way basis since 2025, causing inconvenience to residents and motorists.Lopez said the concerned DPWH officials were ordered to complete the work in five months.” We will hold them to their commitment,” he said.Lopez added that President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. wants the road opened for the All Saints’ Day travel rush.” The President’s instruction is that whatever commitments Secretary Vince made and whatever projects were delayed must be continued,” he said.” That commitment is not just to the President or to Secretary Vince. Above all, it is a commitment to the Filipino people,” Lopez added.

- Govt favors public-private partnerships for airports (2026-10-31 16:12)

TRANSPORTATION Secretary Vince Dizon said on Saturday that the government is determined to pursue more public-private partnerships (PPPs) to improve airports around the country.The order of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., Dizon said, is to pursue PPP arrangements for as many airports as possible.” Clearly, we can see the difference in security, comfort and shorter queues,” Dizon said, comparing airports operated under PPP arrangements with those still managed by the government.He cited Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Clark International Airport and Mactan-Cebu International Airport as examples.” There’s a huge difference when we compare these airports with those that have not yet been placed under PPP arrangements,” Dizon said, noting such joint ventures would help accelerate the improvement of passenger services.” We still have a lot to improve, but things have gotten much better and travel has become more convenient. We can make these improvements faster and more efficiently through public-private partnerships because the government alone cannot do it,” he said.This comes as the government prepares to host the upcoming Asean Summit.Dizon said the Department of Transportation is in coordination with the Asean Organizing Committee on how the summit could impact flight schedules.

- Strait of Hormuz attack prompts heightened alert (2026-10-31 16:11)

THE Department of Migrant Workers and the Philippine Embassy in Muscat said strict monitoring of vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz was being implemented due to the high number of Filipino seafarers navigating these high-risk waters.This comes after official reports from the Omani Maritime Security Center and regional maritime agencies confirmed that 25 sailors were safely evacuated and provided medical care after their vessel was attacked off Musandam Governorate on Oct. 30.Authorities have not yet released the crew manifest of those aboard.The incident happened during a sharp surge in maritime hostilities across the vital shipping corridor. Reports from regional monitors and Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps cited a wave of tanker interceptions, hull explosions from attached explosive devices and alleged naval mine strikes affecting commercial traffic.The recurring security threats in the region prompted Philippine labor authorities to enforce protective measures for Filipino maritime workers.Under these official protocols, mariners retain the right to refuse deployment into designated high-risk or warlike zones, while those continuing transit are entitled to double

compensation and immediate repatriation if their vessels are targeted.

• Ordanes pushes national artist category for culinary arts (2026-10-31 16:10)

SENIOR Citizens Party-list Rep. Rodolfo Ordanes on Saturday urged the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) to establish a national artist category for culinary arts.This comes as Philippine restaurants gain more Michelin recognition, an award bestowed upon a restaurant by the Michelin Guide, one of the world's oldest, most prestigious and influential fine-dining evaluation systems.Culinary arts are not currently recognized as a separate category under the Order of National Artists, a gap he said deserves serious consideration by the two cultural institutions."As Philippine cuisine gains wider international recognition, we must also honor the leading practitioners who have preserved, developed and elevated our country's culinary traditions," Ordanes said in a statement."The culinary arts are not yet recognized as a separate category under the Order of National Artists. This deserves serious consideration by the NCCA and CCP," he added.He called on leading Philippine universities to conduct scholarly research documenting the foundations, diversity and distinct traditions of the country's cuisines.Ordanes emphasized the use of "Philippine cuisines" in the plural, saying the country's culinary heritage extends beyond well-known dishes such as adobo, sinigang, kare-kare, lechon and sisig."Establishing a National Artist category for Culinary Arts would bring greater national and international attention to Filipino culinary excellence," Ordanes said."It would also shine a spotlight on the many chefs, cooks, food service workers, farmers, fisherfolk and livestock raisers who sustain our rich food traditions," he added.Establishing a new national artist category, he said, would also pave the way for the recognition of the communities, traditions and people behind the food that makes the Philippines proud.In its second Philippine edition, the Michelin Guide recognized 19 new food establishments across Manila, Cebu, Pampanga and Cavite, bringing the total number of honorees this year to 127.Among the new Bib Gourmand awardees are Apag Marangle and Tito Boy in Pampanga; Balay Dako and Bawai's Vietnamese Kitchen in Cavite; Azela in Manila; Tatang's Lechon and Kalipay in Cebu; and C.H.E. Bacolod Chicken House Express in Makati.

• Marcos approves climate change event guidelines (2026-10-31 16:09)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has approved the guidelines for the observance of the Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week on Nov. 19 to 25.Released through Executive Secretary Ralph Recto, Memorandum Circular 140 orders government bodies, government-owned and -controlled corporations, and state universities and colleges to participate in the event."The 2026 Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week will be celebrated nationwide from 19 to 25 November 2026, to be led by the Climate Change Commission (CCC) under the theme, 'Komunidad, Kooperasyon at Koordinasyon para sa Klima,' and its successful celebration will require the active participation of all concerned government agencies and instrumentalities, as well as the support of local government units, educational institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector," the memorandum

read.The CCC is the government's primary policymaking agency on climate issues under Republic Act 9729 and its amendment, Republic Act 10174.The funding for the initiative will come from each agency's existing budget, following standard budget, accounting and auditing rules. The Presidential Communications Office, meanwhile, was instructed to raise public awareness on the event.

- Network anchor posts bail over cyber libel charges (2026-10-31 16:07)

CJ Hirro, known as an anchor of the Peanut Gallery Media Network (PGMN), appeared on Friday at the Regional Trial Court Branch 90 in Quezon City and posted bail of over P300,000 after a warrant of arrest was issued against her for seven counts of cyber libel by former congressman Marvin Rillo.Hirro posted bail of P336,000 in cash and was granted provisional liberty.In a statement on her Facebook page late Friday, Hirro said she respects the court's authority and thanked her legal team and colleagues. "I respect the authority of the Court and wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Court and its personnel for the prompt, orderly and efficient processing of my bail, particularly given the limited court hours preceding the long weekend. I am equally grateful to my legal team and colleagues at Peanut Gallery Media Network for their efforts to ensure that I could promptly comply with the Court's requirements," Hirro wrote. "The P336,000 bail is a substantial amount, particularly for private citizens who must rely on their own resources and the support of people willing to help. Unlike public officials whose salaries, allowances and official expenses are funded by taxpayers, ordinary citizens bear the financial consequences of defending themselves in court. It is a distinction worth keeping in mind when publicly discussing the financial burden of legal proceedings," she added.Hirro said that the cyber libel case stemmed from her reporting on the former lawmaker. "My reporting concerning the P71-million Carlos L. Albert High School gymnasium project was recognized as fair comment based on official government documents. A separate video questioning where public funds had gone was likewise found to concern a legitimate matter of public interest, resulting in the dismissal of that portion of the complaint. The complaints against PGMN's officers, including its President and CEO, Franco Mabanta, were also dismissed," she wrote. "These findings are particularly significant given the evidence underlying my reporting. Official bidding documents for the P71-million gymnasium project included roofing, floor tiles, doors and windows, but more than a year after the project was promised, the site had little more than foundations and posts to show for it. Mr. Rillo's camp claimed that this was only the first phase of construction, despite the absence of any indication in the original project documents that it was intended to be implemented in phases, or any identified funding for subsequent phases. Even assuming that explanation were true, it does not account for the glaring disparity between the P71-million allocation and the construction actually delivered. The public deserves an answer to that discrepancy. Mr. Rillo has had every opportunity to explain it. He chose to file a case against the journalist instead," Hirro added.The online anchor said the warrant of arrest against her is "a preliminary finding of probable cause, not a vindication of Mr. Rillo's allegations," and she was not surprised by that. "I welcome the opportunity to present the evidence supporting my investigative reports

and the findings I discussed in my episodes. My reporting concerned matters of legitimate public interest, particularly the conduct of an elected official, the use of public resources and representations made to the electorate. I stand by my work and am prepared to defend its factual and evidentiary foundations before the Court," Hirro stated. "I have no intention of apologizing for doing my job as a journalist. I have no intention of retracting findings that I believe are supported by evidence. And I certainly have no intention of abandoning my responsibility to scrutinize public officials and how they exercise the authority entrusted to them by the Filipino people," she added.PGMN is known as an online news and commentary platform established by Franco Mabanta in 2024, while a former host at TV networks such as PTV-4 and Net-25.

- Police, medical responders monitor Manila cemeteries (2026-10-31 16:06)

AT least 10,500 people visited Manila North Cemetery as of 12 noon on Saturday, according to the Manila Police District (MPD), as police personnel continued to ensure the safety of visitors paying respects to their deceased loved ones.Meanwhile, the Manila City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Department (MCDRRMD) deployed its Emergency Medical Services team to different areas of Manila North Cemetery to provide immediate medical assistance to visitors.Volunteers also assisted medical responders in providing services to the public.Members of the Incident Management Team also visited the cemetery to inspect the readiness and condition of responders stationed in the area.The MCDRRMD also deployed its Emergency Medical Services team at Manila South Cemetery to provide immediate medical assistance to visitors, with volunteers assisting the responders.Manila City Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso earlier said the city government had completed its preparations for Undas 2026 after 10 days of coordination among various offices and agencies, including the MPD and MCDRRMD. He also said vendors would not be allowd inside cemeteries, with designated selling areas provided outside their perimeters.Security deploymentAt least 270 police officers have been deployed at the Manila North Cemetery to maintain peace and order as thousands of Filipinos visit their departed loved ones for All Saints' Day on Nov. 1 and All Souls' Day on Nov. 2.Police Lt. Col. Jolliet Soriano, MPD Station 3 commander and ground commander of the cemetery's security deployment, said officers have been stationed at strategic points, including gates and passageways, to manage the expected influx of visitors and ensure public safety.The deployment is part of a wider security operation of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO), which deployed 12,848 personnel across Metro Manila as of 6 a.m. on Saturday, with nearly 1,000 more scheduled to reinforce security through Nov. 2.Police Lt. Col. Hazel Asilo, NCRPO spokesman, said no untoward incidents had been monitored at cemeteries and transport terminals as of Saturday morning.The Philippine National Police (PNP) placed all its units nationwide on full alert from Oct. 30 until Nov. 3, mobilizing about 141,000 police personnel and augmentation forces to secure cemeteries, transportation hubs and other areas expected to draw large crowds.In Metro Manila, about 25,000 personnel are available for Undas security operations, with around 7,000 assigned to priority areas, including cemeteries, major roads and transport hubs, NCRPO regional director

Brig. Gen. Christopher Nortez Abrahano said.More than 3,600 police officers have also been assigned to patrol communities to deter criminal activity while residents visit cemeteries or travel to their home provinces.Mobile patrols will cover major roads, while foot patrols, in coordination with barangay officials and other force multipliers, will monitor residential areas where houses may be left unattended.Police are also monitoring commercial establishments and other areas to prevent crimes during the holiday period.The security preparations at Manila North Cemetery followed an Oct. 30 inspection by PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr., Abrahano and MPD director Brig. Gen. Arnold Santiago, who assessed the cemetery's readiness ahead of the observance.More than 1,000 people had visited Manila North Cemetery as of Oct. 30, according to police figures. The NCRPO recorded about 1.8 million cemetery visitors across Metro Manila during last year's observance.Asilo clarified that cemetery administrators and their designated personnel are responsible for inspecting bags and screening visitors at entrances, while police provide secondary security and assistance when needed.Police officers are also authorized to patrol inside cemeteries to prevent incidents and respond to requests for assistance.Authorities are enforcing cemetery rules and local ordinances, including restrictions on bladed weapons and other prohibited items. Police assistance desks have been set up at transport terminals, where officers are also making public-address announcements, reminding passengers to stay vigilant.Asilo urged cemetery visitors to safeguard their belongings against pickpockets and other thieves, particularly as crowds increase.She also encouraged victims of theft to file formal complaints against suspects to facilitate appropriate legal action.The NCRPO said it would continue to assess security requirements and adjust deployments based on crowd movement and other developments during the observance, including the possible return of travelers from the provinces after the holidays.Cemetery securityThe NCRPO is enforcing existing cemetery rules and local ordinances, including restrictions on bladed weapons and other prohibited items.Asilo urged cemetery visitors to guard their belongings against pickpockets and other thieves, particularly as crowds grow during the observance.She encouraged victims of theft to file formal complaints against suspects to ensure that appropriate legal action can be taken.The NCRPO also advised residents to remain alert to possible criminal activity in crowded areas and to avoid leaving their mobile phones and other valuables unattended.Asilo said police will continue to monitor the situation and adjust deployments based on security assessments and the movement of people during the All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day period.

- Govt officials visit injured OFWs in Saudi attack (2026-10-31 16:05)

PHILIPPINE Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Raymond Balatbat and Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac visited overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who survived the Oct. 10 terrorist attacks at the King Khalid International Airport.Also present during the visit on Oct. 27 were Migrant Workers Undersecretary Jainal Rasul Jr., and labor officials Dominador Salanga, Solaiman Mutia and Geraldine Mendez.The Oct. 10 incident marked the third and deadliest attack targeting the prominent Riyadh aviation hub within a single week. The Saudi General Authority of Civil Aviation reported that the projectile strikes — claimed by

Yemen-based Houthi forces using a combination of drones, cruise missiles and ballistic missiles — killed at least 13 individuals and wounded over 300 others.Among the fatalities were citizens from the United States, Egypt, Bangladesh, Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Sudan and Pakistan.Despite the threat, Cacdac said that the government is not considering a deployment ban to Saudi Arabia, noting the country's strong commitment to protecting foreign nationals.The Philippine Embassy has issued a stern reminder to all Filipinos in Saudi Arabia to maintain heightened vigilance and strictly avoid military installations, oil refineries and crowded public sectors.

- Coalition seeks justice for slain labor leaders (2026-10-31 16:04)

THE Nagkaisa labor coalition on Saturday called for justice for slain workers and protection for laborers' rights.As the nation remembers All Saints' Day, it said the government should hear the cry for justice for the families of slain labor leaders like Emmanuel "Manny" Asuncion, Leonides "Dennis" Sequeña and Orlando "Ka Lando" Abangan."While travel arrangements are being made for those visiting graves, ensure that justice also moves forward for those laid to rest and that the families they left behind have a means of livelihood," the coalition said in a statement issued by its convenors Sonny Matula, Judy Ann Chan Miranda and Josua Mata."Bury the dead, but do not bury their cases," it added.The coalition reiterated its call for the lifting of the injunction issued by the Pasig Regional Trial Court Branch 152 against a wage increase in the National Capital Region. The Office of the Solicitor General, it said, should submit its required comment on the case without seeking another extension."What should be increased is wages, not extensions of time. Families' meals cannot be put on hold while paperwork is delayed," Nagkaisa said."A just wage recognizes the contribution of labor to the economy. Workers need it now as they work every day to provide for their families and the country," it added.

- Malabon opens new crematory, interment building (2026-10-31 16:03)

Malabon Mayor Jeannie Sandoval led the inauguration of the city's new crematory and interment building at Tugatog Public Cemetery, expanding its funeral, cremation, and interment services.The inauguration was followed by the blessing of 51 urns and the cremation of 20 remains under the city government's free cremation program, Sandoval told The Manila Times on Saturday.She said families attended the ceremony to offer prayers and honor the memory of their departed loved ones ahead of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day collectively called 'Undas.'Built on a 417.50-square-meter lot, the new facility has two main structures: the administrative building and the crematory and interment place; both are dedicated to providing spaces for administrative operations and funeral-related services for families in need of assistance, City Administrator Alex Rosete said in a separate Viber interview.The administrative building houses an office, a conference area, storage space, a pantry, restrooms, and a porch and waiting area for visitors—facilities that support day-to-day operations and serve both personnel and the public, Rosete said.The crematory and interment building contains a crematory and service area, two chapels with a transition area, and a waiting area, giving families designated areas for cremation-related services and gatherings where they can pay

their last respects."We continue to improve our facilities to meet the needs of our fellow residents. Proper preparation and coordination are important to ensure that the services provided by our city government are appropriate, orderly, and delivered with care for every ‘Malabueño’ household," Sandoval said.The inauguration comes nearly a year after the October 21, 2025 opening of the first phase of The Risen Christ Hall, a multi-storey, apartment-style tomb facility with 360 niches where families can lay their departed loved ones to rest. “That facility was also inaugurated ahead of the Undas observance to add interment spaces for residents,” the city officials said.Residents and visitors were urged to follow cemetery rules, dispose of garbage properly, secure their belongings, and observe traffic advisories and instructions of personnel deployed to assist the public, according to Rosete.

- Lending your vehicle for Undas? Here’s how to avoid being flagged as colorum (2026-10-31 16:02)

AS government agencies ramp up their anti-colorum campaign this holiday season, and during the observance of All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day (Undas), a transport group reminded private vehicle owners of their rights and responsibilities when lending out their cars.The reminder came after the Department of Transportation, along with its attached agencies — the Land Transportation Office and Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), and Highway Patrol Group — tightened flagging down of suspected colorum vehicles. “But what exactly constitutes colorum and when is a private vehicle simply on a legitimate private trip?” asked lawyer Ariel Inton, founder of Lawyers for Commuters Safety and Protection (LCSP).He explained that a vehicle is considered colorum if it is a private unit used for hire without a franchise or with an expired one; a vehicle that has a franchise but is used under a different denomination — for example, a school bus franchise operating as a UV (utility vehicle) Express; and a vehicle that is operating out of line, such as a unit with a Cubao-to-Antipolo route but plying Cavite. “Even ’ vans for hire advertised on Facebook are considered colorum if they operate without a franchise,” Inton told The Manila Times via Viber interview.But the issue becomes murky during the holiday season, particularly Undas, when families typically travel together, he said. What happens if a private vehicle owner lends his van to a friend or relative for a family outing — and enforcers flag the vehicle down on suspicion of being colorum?The LCSP founder said that if the vehicle was merely borrowed and no rent was paid, it is not colorum.But law enforcers may still pressure the driver and passengers based on “reasonable suspicion.” “They would insist that a private vehicle must be for private trips and not for public use,” Inton said.To avoid being wrongly flagged, the LCSP head said drivers and the passengers should bring identification cards (IDs) to prove their familial relationship.Bring an authorization letter indicating the destination and the relationship between the owner and the borrower, such as child or sibling, and always keep the official receipt, certificate of registration and other supporting documents for presentation to enforcers, said Inton, a former Quezon City councilor and an LTFRB official. “Pick up passengers at one meeting place. If you pick up passengers, especially in areas where for-hire vehicles pass, and enforcers are watching, you may be suspected of operating as a public utility vehicle,” he said. “Talk calmly with enforcers.

Maintain a respectful tone when dealing with the authorities who flagged you down," he added.Expressing its full support for the government's campaign, the LCSP said authorities should focus on going after colorum syndicates — groups that are genuinely making a living out of illegal transport operations.Inton said his group was also concerned that some colorum operators may have informants and are paying off officials, which is why they continue to operate openly to this day.

• Marcos urges Filipinos to honor departed loved ones through kindness (2026-10-31 16:01)

MANILA, Philippines — As the country observes All Saints' Day, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. implored Filipinos to honor their departed loved ones through acts of compassion and service."I join the Catholic faithful and the entire Filipino nation in the solemn observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day," Marcos said in his message.Many Filipinos are expected to visit the grave of their departed loved ones to honor their memory.As they travel to visit their departed loved ones, Marcos said honoring their lives is what keeps the nation strong."Even in their absence, those we have lost continue to bring us closer together, keeping alive the bonds that have made the Filipino family and the whole nation resilient and strong through challenges," he said.The Chief Executive also highlighted the Filipino's strong devotion to saints, which he said inspires the nation to "find lasting purpose in every kindness we give and every burden we help carry for others." "If we can make time to revere those who have passed, we can also make room to listen to those who struggle, and let that same concern guide our society and the work of government," he said."May these solemn days bring peace to those who mourn and remind us to cherish those who remain," Marcos added.

• Research or spy ship? Maritime expert sees presence of Chinese vessel inside disputed Bajo de Masinloc 'threat to PH security' (2026-10-31 08:29)

MANILA, Philippines — A Chinese "scientific research vessel," escorted by China's military aircraft and naval forces, was spotted inside Bajo de Masinloc or Scarborough Shoal carrying unidentified equipment, which could be used to conceal activities that could threaten national security, according to an expert on Saturday.Jose Antonio Goitia said Beijing should not be allowed to use claims of scientific research to conceal potential military activities, stressing the Philippines' right to protect its maritime interests and demand transparency from foreign vessels operating in its maritime domain.The warning came after the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) reported the presence of an unidentified orange, boat-shaped object fitted with sensors and antennas aboard a Chinese vessel seen inside the shoal's lagoon on Oct. 30.The PCG has yet to determine the equipment's intended function or establish whether the vessel conducted underwater surveillance or deployed autonomous underwater vehicles.The sighting coincided with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Southern Theater Command's announcement on Friday that Chinese naval and air forces had conducted combat-readiness patrols in the waters and airspace around Huangyan Dao, Beijing's name for Bajo de Masinloc.The PLA said it had strengthened patrols around the shoal since early October to tighten control over the surrounding waters and airspace, describing the latest operations as a response to what it

called Philippine rights violations and provocative acts.Footage aired by Chinese state broadcaster CCTV-7's Junshi Baodao (Military Report) on Oct. 30 showed military aircraft and a naval vessel operating around the shoal, including scenes depicting Chinese forces monitoring a Philippine aircraft and issuing radio warnings.The broadcast did not independently establish when the encounters occurred or verify Beijing's claim that the Philippine aircraft had entered Chinese territorial airspace.Separately, the China Coast Guard said it conducted law-enforcement patrols around the shoal on Friday, also citing alleged Philippine provocations.Goitia expressed concern over reports that Chinese maritime platforms described as "ghost research ships" could be used to deploy underwater drones to map submarine transit routes and collect information with potential military applications, including anti-submarine warfare.Available information, however, does not establish that the vessel spotted inside the shoal's lagoon carried out such activities."China must stop treating our waters as though they are its own. Filipinos have endured enough intimidation and harassment in our maritime domain. We have every right to know what foreign vessels are doing in our waters, and we will not accept activities that threaten our security or disregard our sovereign rights," Goitia said.He cited the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos), particularly Article 246, which generally requires coastal state consent for marine scientific research in a country's exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, subject to the convention's provisions.Article 240 requires marine scientific research to be conducted exclusively for peaceful purposes.The latest developments add to tensions around Bajo de Masinloc, a longstanding flashpoint in the maritime dispute between the Philippines and China.The shoal lies about 124 nautical miles west of Zambales, within the Philippines' 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone.China has maintained control over access to the shoal since a 2012 standoff with the Philippines. In 2016, an arbitral tribunal ruled that Filipino fishermen had traditional fishing rights there and that China had unlawfully prevented them from exercising those rights.The tribunal also rejected China's claims to historic rights over resources within its so-called nine-dash line to the extent that they exceeded the maritime entitlements allowed under Unclos.Beijing rejects the ruling and continues to assert sovereignty over the shoal.

- Public-private partnerships pushed for more PH airports (2026-10-31 04:51)

MANILA, Philippines -- Transportation Secretary Vince Dizon said on Saturday that the government would pursue more public-private partnerships (PPPs) for airports nationwide, citing improvements in security, passenger comfort and queue management at facilities already turned over to private operators.Dizon said President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. had directed the Department of Transportation (DOTr) to pursue PPP arrangements for as many airports as possible, with announcements on additional projects expected in the coming days. “Clearly, we can see the difference in security, comfort and shorter queues,” Dizon said, comparing airports operated under PPP arrangements with those still managed by the government.He cited the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA), Clark International Airport and Mactan-Cebu International Airport as examples of airports under private-sector participation. “There's a huge difference when we compare these airports with those that have

not yet been placed under PPP arrangements,” according to the DOTr chief.Acknowledging that improvements at the country's airports remained a work in progress, Dizon stressed that the private-sector participation would help accelerate upgrades and improve passenger services. “We still have a lot to improve, but things have gotten much better and travel has become more convenient. We can make these improvements faster and more efficiently through public-private partnerships because the government alone cannot do it,” he said.Dizon’s remarks came as the government prepared for the upcoming Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summit, which will bring regional leaders and delegates to the Philippines.The DOTr was still coordinating with the Asean Organizing Committee to determine the summit's impact on flight schedules, including possible cancellations and adjustments to the arrivals and departures of heads of state and other delegates, the top transportation agency official said.

- Duterte waives appearance at ICC status conference (2026-10-31 04:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Former president Rodrigo Duterte has waived his right to attend the fifth status conference in his crimes against humanity case before the International Criminal Court (ICC) on Nov. 2, 2026, allowing his lawyers to handle procedural matters on his behalf.In a filing dated Oct. 30, Duterte's defense team submitted his signed waiver to the ICC Trial Chamber III, complying with the chamber's directive to formally place the document on record.The defense said Duterte had notified the chamber on Oct. 28 that he wished to waive his right to attend the scheduled conference.On Oct. 29, the chamber granted the request and ordered the defense to submit a signed waiver, according to the filing.Duterte also instructed his lawyers to address the procedural matters listed on the conference agenda, as well as any other matters that may arise during the hearing.The fifth status conference is scheduled for Nov. 2 before Trial Chamber III, composed of Presiding Judge Joanna Korner and Judges Keebong Paek and Nicolas Guillou.The status conference is a procedural hearing in the case of the prosecution against Duterte over alleged crimes against humanity in connection with his administration's anti-drug campaign.

- 4 injured after lights, audio trusses collapse at San Juan event venue (2026-10-31 04:07)

MANILA, Philippines — Four people were injured after lights and audio trusses collapsed during preparations for an event at the Filoil Centre in San Juan City on Friday, according to the city government.The four injured individuals were taken to Cardinal Santos Medical Center for treatment. “Based on initial reports from the San Juan City Police Station, three victims sustained minor injuries and have already been cleared for discharge, while one remains hospitalized for further medical evaluation and treatment,” the city government said in a statement on Friday.The incident occurred during ingress for an event by a private organizer renting the Filoil Centre, which is independently managed and operated by HOME Inc.The city government identified the event organizer’s technical supplier as having set up the lights and audio trusses. The supplier has no ties or contractual relationship with the local government, the statement added. “We have formally reached out to the event organizer and are awaiting

their full report," the city government said.The city government and the San Juan City Police Station are investigating the incident. "Alongside the San Juan City Police Station, we are conducting a rigorous investigation into the incident to establish the facts and ensure full accountability," the statement read.

• Lopez orders resumption of work on delayed road projects (2026-10-31 03:12)

MANILA, Philippines—Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Secretary Giovanni Lopez has ordered regional and district engineering officials to continue delayed infrastructure projects, saying the agency will honor commitments under the previous leadership.Lopez, who personally led the reopening of a road in Tuba, Benguet on Friday, said the administration would ensure the completion of projects previously committed to by his predecessor and now Department of Transportation (DOTr) Secretary Vince Dizon, stressing that these were obligations to the public. "If you recall, Secretary Vince Dizon visited this site in May 2026 and instructed the regional director and district engineering officials to address the problem here," Lopez said.The road had been operating one way since 2025, inconveniencing residents and motorists, he said.Lopez said the concerned local DPWH officials were directed to resolve the problem, with regional and district engineering personnel committing to complete the necessary work within five months. "We will hold them to their commitment," Lopez said.He added that President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. had ordered the reopening of the road, so motorists and residents could use it during the Undas holiday period.The President had also directed the DPWH to complete urgent major road repairs by Oct. 30, 2026 to ease travel during the annual observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, Lopez said.Despite changes in leadership at DPWH and DOTr, Lopez said the administration would continue projects initiated under Dizon. "The President's instruction is that whatever commitments Secretary Vince made and whatever projects were delayed must be continued," he said. "That commitment is not just to the President or to Secretary Vince. Above all, it is a commitment to the Filipino people," Lopez added.He then instructed DPWH regional directors and district engineers to ensure that ongoing projects proceeded without further delays, saying there was no sufficient reason to allow the work to be held up any longer.The top DPWH official said he would continue monitoring infrastructure projects to ensure that commitments made by the government were fulfilled.

• Marcos signs order requiring agencies to join climate change commemoration (2026-10-31 02:28)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. urged all government agencies to support the initiative as the nation commemorates the Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week on Nov. 19 to 25, 2026.Marcos—through Executive Secretary Ralph Recto—signed Memorandum Circular 140, which orders government bodies, government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs), and state universities and colleges (SUCs) to participate in the commemoration led by the Climate Change Commission (CCC). "The 2026 Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week will be celebrated nationwide

from 19 to 25 November 2026, to be led by the Climate Change Commission (CCC) under the theme, "Komunidad, Kooperasyon at Koordinasyon para sa Klima," and its successful celebration will require the active participation of all concerned government agencies and instrumentalities, as well as the support of local government units (LGUs), educational institutions, civil society organizations, and the private sector,” the memorandum reads.

• LPA to bring rains to parts of PH on 'Undas' (2026-10-31 02:06)

MANILA, Philippines — A lowp ressure area (LPA) is expected to bring scattered rains and thunderstorms over parts of the Visayas, Mindanao, Mimaropa and Bicol Region on Saturday, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).In its live weather forecast, Pagasa weather earlier in the day, specialist Obet Badrina said the LPA was last spotted 320 kilometers east of Borongan City, Eastern Samar.“It may move westward and possibly pass through Eastern Visayas and parts of the Visayas,” Badrina said.Meanwhile, the shear line is expected to bring scattered rains over Cagayan, Isabela, Aurora and Quezon.Metro Manila, Central Luzon and the rest of Luzon may experience isolated rain showers and thunderstorms from afternoon to evening, according to the weather bureau.Badrina advised those visiting cemeteries for Undas to bring umbrellas.

• Senate to scrutinize P7.2T budget after businessmen raise alarm over House insertions — Gatchalian (2026-10-31 01:27)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate President Sherwin “Win” Gatchalian on Saturday assured the country’s business sector that the Senate would vet the proposed P7.2 trillion 2027 national budget, promising to strip away all politically driven, technically baseless congressional insertions.The statement comes in direct response to a joint manifesto issued by major business groups on Oct. 29, 2026, which raised concerns over P180 billion in realignments introduced by the House of Representatives under House Bill 10858. Gatchalian welcomed the private sector’s vigilance and maintained that a clean budget can be delivered without delaying its timely passage.Senate to purge document-deficient projectsReassuring investors and the public of the Senate's commitment to fiscal discipline, Gatchalian said that a formal recall of the House-approved General Appropriations Bill was unnecessary. Instead, the Senate will address the discrepancies through its own committee and plenary review processes."The Senate Committee on Finance will remove from the General Appropriations Bill all projects lacking supporting documents, such as feasibility studies, programs of work, resolutions from the LGUs, and other required documents," Gatchalian said.To ensure public oversight, the Senate leader also committed to deep transparency reforms. "We will continue the transparency reforms by uploading all relevant information to the Senate Transparency Portal," he added.Furthermore, Gatchalian asserted that the upper chamber will actively remove unconstitutional and lump-sum provisions previously flagged by the Supreme Court—specifically tightening safeguards on unprogrammed appropriations—while keeping final spending strictly within the president’s recommended ceiling in the National Expenditure Program (NEP).Business sector flag 'deeply troubling' realignmentThe business community’s

joint call exposed a massive realignment by the House Budget Amendments and Review Subcommittee (BARSC), which added over P180 billion to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) allocation. The adjustments reportedly inflated the DPWH project registry by 6,212 items—bringing the total to 16,270 projects—many of which are classified as vague lump sums for multi-purpose buildings and bypass roads lacking named proponents or published project lists.Of greater concern to the business sector was the source of the funding. The House reportedly carved out P130 billion from rigorously prepared, foreign-assisted infrastructure projects, P9.5 billion from calamity funds, P4.9 billion from vital healthcare programs, and P1.76 billion from the EDSA Busway project."Raiding calamity funds in a country that is exposed to disasters is indefensible," the business groups stated in its manifesto, warning that cutting foreign-assisted projects delays high-impact infrastructure needed to reduce logistics costs and attract capital. The sector noted that past unvetted insertions between 2023 and 2025 resulted in "ghost and substandard flood control projects" that wasted public funds.A growth budget, not an election fundIn response to fears that the allocations could be weaponized ahead of upcoming political cycles, Gatchalian firmly rejected the label of an "election budget." He emphasized that the final 2027 appropriations would be a growth and resilience budget explicitly mapped out to address inflation, job creation, food security, healthcare, and disaster readiness.

- Ombudsman suspends 5 Bulacan DPWH engineers over P188.9-M flood control projects (2026-10-30 18:21)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the Ombudsman on Friday has ordered the preventive suspension without pay of five Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) engineers in Bulacan over alleged falsification of documents involving three flood control projects worth P188.9 million in Baliuag.The five engineers — Irene D. Ontingco, Kevin A. Geronimo, John Michael E. Ramos, Bernardo P. Villafuerte and Michelle C. Cruz — will remain suspended for up to six months while administrative cases against them are being investigated.They face charges of grave misconduct, serious dishonesty and gross neglect of duty over the 2024 projects involving the construction of reinforced concrete slope revetments in Barangays Piel, San Roque and Sulivan.The Ombudsman’s investigation stemmed from allegations that the engineers falsified documents covering project implementation, inspection, acceptance, billing and payment to make it appear that contractual and legal requirements had been met. “To facilitate the implementation of the contracts and the disbursement of public funds, complainant maintains that respondents falsified documents relating to contract implementation, inspection, acceptance, billing and payment to create the false impression that the contractual and legal prerequisites had been satisfied,” the Ombudsman’s order read.Investigators also alleged that project documents were manipulated to facilitate the award of the contracts to a joint venture that supposedly failed to comply with applicable laws and regulations.The Ombudsman said the allegations were supported by strong evidence at this stage and that allowing the engineers to remain in office could jeopardize the investigation because they might access or tamper with relevant records.The three projects had a combined

contract value of P188,891,898.23.Other respondents in the administrative complaint include former Bulacan First District engineering officials and personnel who have since left government service, been detained or retired. Their preventive suspension was deemed moot.Two Commission on Audit auditors named as co-respondents were not suspended because the Ombudsman found no indication that their continued presence in office could lead to evidence tampering or obstruct the investigation.The respondents also face separate criminal complaints before the Ombudsman.

- China boosts patrols around disputed shoal (2026-10-30 16:19)

CHINA’s military said on Friday its naval and air forces conducted combat readiness patrols around Bajo de Masinloc, also known as Scarborough Shoal, which has long been a flash point in tensions between Beijing and Manila in the South China Sea (SCS).The People’s Liberation Army Southern Theater Command, in a statement, said the patrols were “necessary countermeasures in response to the Philippines’ rights violation and provocative acts,” and it has strengthened such patrols this month.The Philippine Embassy in Beijing and the Philippine military did not immediately respond to a request for comment.Tensions between China and the Philippines resurfaced at the close of a two-day Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) defense gathering on Thursday, with Beijing accusing an unnamed Philippine politician of obstructing its participation in the event. Manila said China had been given an opportunity at the meeting to state its position.China claims sovereignty over almost the entire SCS via a nine-dash line on its maps that cuts into parts of the exclusive economic zones of Malaysia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei and Indonesia. An international arbitral tribunal ruled in 2016 that China’s sweeping claims have no basis under international law, a decision Beijing rejects. “Such patrols are aimed at further enhancing control and management over relevant waters and airspace, and serve as an effective countermeasure to cope with all sorts of rights violation and provocative acts,” the Chinese military said.Separately, the China Coast Guard also conducted law-enforcement patrols in the waters around the shoal on Friday, calling the activities “necessary countermeasure in response to the Philippines’ rights violation and provocative acts.” Neither the Chinese military nor the China Coast Guard gave details on which Philippine actions they were referring to.Warning that the international community is approaching a geopolitical “precipice,” Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro defended the rule of law, declaring that maritime security in the Indo-Pacific has become an indivisible global responsibility.Speaking at the 17th Festival della Diplomazia in Rome on Oct. 26, Lazaro addressed European diplomats and academics on the theme “What’s Next? Running on the Edge.” Lazaro focused on the 10th anniversary of the 2016 arbitral award, saying that the ruling remains final and binding, and serves as a shield for smaller nations against superpowers. “The award demonstrates that even amid profound asymmetries of power, international law offers nations a peaceful means to defend their rights,” Lazaro said.Despite facing continued coercion and harassment in Philippine waters, Lazaro emphasized that Manila’s diplomatic restraint should not be misinterpreted. “Restraint is not surrender. Dialogue is not acquiescence,” she said. “The Philippines seeks no confrontation. Neither will

we relinquish our lawful rights.” She warned European leaders that ignoring violations in Asia undermines global security, stating that if international law is disregarded in the SCS, “its authority is weakened in the Mediterranean, the Adriatic and everywhere else.” Turning to regional strategy, Lazaro outlined Manila’s priorities for its 2026 Asean chairmanship under the theme “Navigating Our Future, Together.” She said the regional bloc must move past mere anniversaries to secure concrete resolutions, particularly a legally binding Code of Conduct in the SCS that respects Unclos (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea) and an inclusive solution to the ongoing crisis in Myanmar.

- Full hunt on for dela Rosa as surrender deadline ends (2026-10-30 16:18)

AN all-out police manhunt has been launched for Sen. Ronald dela Rosa after the deadline for his surrender lapsed on Friday.The Philippine National Police (PNP) has formed tracker teams in all regions to arrest the fugitive lawmaker, Lt. Gen. Wilson Lopez, chief of the PNP’s Directorate for Intelligence, told in a press briefing at Camp Crame.Lopez also said the PNP’s hotlines have been swamped with information on dela Rosa’s supposed whereabouts since the government offered P50 million for his arrest. He said each piece of information will be evaluated.Lopez also said the PNP is still validating reports that dela Rosa is under the protection of a private armed group in Mindanao.He said the senator has never sent surrender feelers to the government.Lopez said the PNP’s latest information is that dela Rosa is still in the country, debunking reports that he has escaped through the country’s southern backdoor.Dela Rosa is the subject of an arrest warrant from the International Criminal Court (ICC) that alleges he is a co-perpetrator in the Duterte administration’s controversial crackdown on drugs.Malacañang on Thursday said dela Rosa’s world is “shrinking.” Lopez agreed. “Alam niyo kapag may binigay na bounty na P50 million the possibility maraming tao ang pwedeng tumawag ang posibleng lokasyon (When a P50 million bounty is offered, there’s a strong possibility that many people might call in with potential locations),” he said.In a related development, the ICC has transmitted applications involving 100 individuals seeking to participate as victims in the trial of former president Rodrigo Duterte.In separate documents dated Oct. 28, the ICC Registry transmitted 46 applications covering 96 applicants classified under Group A and four applications classified under Group C to Trial Chamber III, which is hearing the case against Duterte.The Group A applicants were assessed as clearly qualifying as victims under the court’s procedures, while the four Group C applications involve applicants whose eligibility the Registry could not clearly determine.The transmissions were made pursuant to an oral instruction issued by the chamber during a status conference on May 27, 2026, and follow the ICC’s A-B-C approach to processing applications for victim participation.The Registry’s classification assesses the applicants’ eligibility and does not, by itself, constitute a final judicial determination on every application.Under the A-B-C approach, Group A covers applicants who clearly qualify as victims, Group B those who clearly do not qualify and Group C those whose eligibility cannot be clearly determined.The system allows the court to distinguish applications that can be assessed more readily from those requiring further consideration.The Registry classified the annexes accompanying the 46 Group A applications as

confidential and available only to the Registry.The four Group C applications were transmitted with annexes in a confidential version available only to the Registry and a confidential redacted version.The Registry said two of the four applications contained forms completed in Tagalog, with English translations.Because it lacked the capacity to apply word-for-word redactions to the Tagalog text in each application, the Registry redacted in full the portions completed in that language.The public documents did not identify the applicants or disclose details of the incidents underlying their applications.The Registry's assessment of the Group C applications leaves their eligibility for victim participation subject to further consideration under the court's procedures.The victims' participation in a trial is a feature of ICC proceedings that allows them to present their views and concerns through legal representatives.Victims who are allowed to participate are not automatically prosecution witnesses.Duterte faces charges of crimes against humanity in connection with killings linked to his administration's antidrug campaign and alleged killings in Davao during the period covered by the case. He denies the allegations.The ICC has scheduled the start of Duterte's trial for Nov. 30 in The Hague, the Netherlands, where he has been detained since his arrest in March 2025.On Friday, the Truth Commission investigating the killings during Duterte's war on drugs called on the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and the Philippine Medical Association (PMA) to look into the "mis-certification" by medical doctors of the death certificates of several drug war victims. "A death certificate is the official record of how a life ended. When it names the wrong cause, it can hide the violence and skew the country's death statistics. It can also block a family's search for the truth," the commission said in a statement.The victims' families provided death certificates issued by five doctors, citing that the victims died of illness.The commission said that the death certificates of at least 13 drug war cases cited either pneumonia or heart attack, despite forensic findings attributing their death to gunshot wounds.It said the "mis-certifications" could just be the tip of the iceberg. "These questionable certificates blame illness for at least 13 deaths but forensic findings in every one of these cases show the victims had been shot," the commission said.The commission is also asking the authorities "to correct the erroneous certificates so that families have an accurate record of how their relatives died." The panel has reviewed 13 cases from Caloocan City and Quezon City, which recorded 11 deaths in 2016 and two in 2018. "The death certificates list pneumonia as the cause of death in six cases and heart attack in four. Of the remaining three, one cites sepsis and another high blood pressure. The last records a stroke with bleeding, along with high blood pressure," the commission said.Forensic pathologist Dr. Raquel Fortun, who also serves in the commission, said there were gunshot wounds in every case. "Families deserve accurate death certificates, and the public deserves an honest account of how these men and women died," commission chairman Raul Pangalangan said.The doctors named by the commission included Caloocan Health Department medical officer Dr. Amadea Cruz, private physician Dr. Kathleen Timogan, Dr. Arnold Montero, Dr. Ramil Razon and Torres-Bugallon Health Center medical officer Dr. Leonilo Aquino.The commission said naming these doctors is a call for investigation and not a finding of guilt. "Given that these documents were produced during the 'drug war,' the commission is also cognizant of the possibility that the doctors may have been forced to fabricate information in the certificates, making them, in effect, victims of the 'drug

war' themselves," it said.However, the commission said that the fact that they signed the questionable documents "warrants scrutiny and discipline based on due process." The commission called for the correcting of certificates by the Philippine Statistics Authority, the investigation of the doctors and the certification process by the PRC Board of Medicine and the PMA's ethics committee on who is responsible, and protecting the evidence and checking of other cases.The commission was established last May by civil society organizations and church groups.

- Govt mobilizes to ensure safe travel during Undas (2026-10-30 16:16)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said on Friday government measures are in place to safeguard the safety of millions of Filipinos who will be traveling during the long All Saints' Day weekend.In a video message, Marcos said he has ordered the inspection of bus terminals and airports, as well as road repairs to ensure that the journey to the provinces or visiting cemeteries is "safe, orderly and comfortable." The president said the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has issued over 1,000 special permits for provincial buses during Undas, or All Saints' Day, celebration, while maritime authorities have relaxed rules and additional sea schedules from Oct. 29 to Nov. 3.At international airports, immigration counters will maintain full staffing from Oct. 30 to Nov. 3, supplemented by e-gates to streamline passenger queues. Round-the-clock help desks will likewise operate across major terminals.Beyond transit hubs, security and health protocols have been tightened across public spaces, churches and columbaria, with local police and the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) placed on standby for rapid response. Hospital and health emergency teams are also on high alert.The president advised motorists to plan trips ahead, purchase tickets online to avoid long queues, and utilize official government hotlines and channels for emergency assistance.The LTFRB said it has set up more than 80 help desks at bus stations and other public land transport hubs for Undas.The help desks will provide not only basic information on travel schedules but also all necessary assistance, particularly for senior citizens and persons with disabilities, acting LTFRB Chairman Greg Pua Jr. said.The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said close to 283,000 barangay tanods, or village watchmen, in the country's 42,010 barangay (villages) and more than 111,000 police personnel will be deployed during All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day.The DILG said the watchmen would serve as force multipliers for the police in maintaining peace and order at cemeteries, columbariums and memorial parks.Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian has called on national law enforcement agencies to enforce strict safety and security protocols nationwide during the extended weekend.Gatchalian emphasized that a proactive, highly synchronized strategy between municipal executives and police units is critical to mitigating criminal activities, managing severe traffic gridlocks on major tollways, and ensuring crowd control at cemeteries and major transport hubs. "The commemoration of our departed loved ones will be more meaningful if everyone's journey is smooth and safe," he said.He also highlighted the importance of discipline, patience and road courtesy among motorists. "We already know that many people will be traveling during this period; let's avoid getting hot-headed and remain respectful toward our fellow motorists," he said.In response to

the expected exodus of commuters to provincial destinations, Philippine National Police chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. announced that the police force has been placed on full alert.Over 72,000 police personnel will be deployed at critical arterial roads, terminal entry points and memorial sites, with reinforcements from the Armed Forces of the Philippines, BFP and the Philippine Coast Guard.The Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange estimates a heavy volume of 1.9 million passengers, mirroring peak numbers anticipated across maritime provincial ports during Undas.The Ninoy Aquino International Airport is also scaling up operations to accommodate approximately 1.2 million travelers.The environmental advocacy group EcoWaste Coalition appealed to the public to observe eco-friendly and zero waste practices during the All Saints' Day weekend. "Every year, we see the aftermath of thousands flocking to cemeteries during Undas season — heaps of trash scattered along sidewalks, overflowing bins, food wrappers and containers left behind on tombstones — and every year, we continue to forward this campaign to reduce trash and make Undas completely waste-free," Ochie Tolentino, EcoWaste's Zero Waste campaigner, said in a statement.EcoWaste also held a candle-lighting ceremony as a way to enjoin everyone in respecting not just their departed loved ones, but also the environment. Each candle signified a solemn vow to "do away with ecologically harmful practices and promote a more waste-free All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day."

- SSS streamlines cash aid for low-income members (2026-10-30 16:15)

QUALIFIED Social Security System (SSS) members can now get financial aid under the government's Uplift (Unified Package for Livelihoods, Industry, Food and Transport) assistance program without filing an application form, accessing portal links, or waiting in long queues.Uplift, according to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), identifies and selects beneficiaries automatically, setting it apart from other government assistance schemes that require applicants to line up and submit paperwork.The SSS said that a member need only to meet all of the criteria like the monthly salary credit (MSC) that must be P20,000 or below, with expanded coverage focusing heavily on those earning an MSC of P10,000 or below.The cash assistance program will be given in four tranches of P2,000 each, to be credited directly to the member's registered SSS disbursement account.The state pension fund said a member must have paid at least one SSS contribution in 2025 or 2026 and his or her name must appear in the Philippine Statistics Authority's 2024 Community-Based Monitoring System database as part of a low-income or near-poor household.The assistance is limited to one beneficiary per household. If several SSS members live under one roof, only the oldest member qualifies.Once selected, a beneficiary need not lift a finger to claim the aid. There is no registration form, online portal link or walk-in application form to accomplish. The P8,000 is automatically credited directly to the member's registered SSS disbursement account.The only requirement on the member's end is ensuring that the receiving account — whether a bank account, e-wallet or Philippine Identification System (PhilSys) account — is properly enrolled through the SSS Disbursement Account Enrollment Module (DAEM).To confirm their eligibility on the program, members can verify their status through their My.SSS Portal in three steps:

logging in to the portal, checking the inbox or official notifications for messages about Uplift eligibility and MSC bracket, and confirming that disbursement account details are active and updated under DAEM, if a notification arrived but no funds have posted yet.Since not everyone can receive funds digitally, the assistance can also be received through a manual payout route.Beneficiaries will wait for scheduled announcements from their local government unit or check the official DSWD Field Office social media accounts for their barangay's designated date and location.During manual payout schedules, government personnel and representatives from local financial service providers — such as LandBank, GCash or Maya — are typically stationed on-site.They can assist beneficiaries in registering their details into the official DSWD Uplift G2P Portal, ensuring that succeeding tranches can be claimed digitally and sparing them from having to fall in line again.For members who receive an official eligibility notification via email or My.SSS but have no access to electronic banking, an SSS branch with tellering facilities serves as a fallback.There, e-Center or help desk personnel can guide members through registration or coordinate with the DSWD for manual processing options.Those claiming through a manual on-site payout must bring two valid government-issued identification cards, specifically an SSS UMID (Unified Multi-Purpose ID) card and PhilSys National, along with photocopies and printed or screenshot copy of the notification.

- 'Star Trek,' 'X-Men' icon Patrick Stewart dies (2026-10-30 16:14)

PATRICK Stewart, the classically trained actor who added Shakespearean gravitas to the "Star Trek" and "X-Men" franchises, has died. He was 86.Stewart died on Wednesday in Los Angeles, following "a brief and poignant journey" with Alzheimer's disease and Lewy Body Dementia, spokesman Kelly Bush Novak said. Stewart's diagnoses had not been previously disclosed."We lost one of the greats of stage and screen today," Hugh Jackman, a frequent Stewart co-star in the "X-Men" universe, said on social media. "And, in my book, a tremendous friend and man. I learned so much from him. I will miss you, Patrick Stewart, all of my days."While best known as Professor Charles Xavier and Captain Jean-Luc Picard from the "X-Men" and "Star Trek: The Next Generation" series and films, respectively, Stewart spent more of his career onstage than in the X-Mansion or on the USS Enterprise.Besides playing everyone from Claudius to Macbeth, he often performed a one-man rendition of "A Christmas Carol" and did West End and Broadway runs of Harold Pinter's "No Man's Land," and Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot" in repertory with buddy Ian McKellen."He wore his heart on his sleeve, which made him a man to rely on, to admire and in my case, love," McKellen posted on social media.He won three Olivier Awards, including one for playing Claudius in "Hamlet" opposite David Tennant. And he had a Grammy — in 1996 for best spoken word album for his recording of "Peter and the Wolf."He achieved some of the best reviews of his career when he finally tackled Macbeth for the first time. The production, under the direction of Rupert Goold, debuted in May 2007 at England's Chichester Festival Theater, switched to London's West End and then moved to the Brooklyn Academy of Music before transferring to Broadway in 2008.Stewart's performance earned him his sole Tony Award nomination. The Times of London said his Macbeth was "an enthralling creation of frailty,

appetite, egotism and grim humor.” The Daily Telegraph said he had turned in “a truly great performance,” and The New York Times said it was “a must-see.” “Nearly 50 years I’ve waited,” Stewart told the Associated Press in 2008. “I learned it when I was 14. I memorized all the soliloquies just because I thought they were great. And they stuck, so I didn’t have to learn those bits of the play, which is a blessing, because learning lines has now become the one curse of this job.”Raised in Mirfield in Yorkshire, a working-class corner of northern England, the future 24th-century commander of a starship grew up without a bathroom in his house.Stewart joined an amateur drama group at 12 and memorized Shakespeare for fun as a teen. He won a scholarship to the Bristol Old Vic Theater School, launching a career as a character actor.He had been bald since he was 19 — alopecia runs in his family.His father, a former regimental sergeant major in the British Army, was prone to outbursts of “repeated violence against my mother,” as Stewart wrote in a newspaper piece. “Violence is always a choice a man makes, and he alone is responsible for it.”In his memoir, “Making It So,” Stewart wrote about how he and his older brother Trevor braced for the nights when their dad came home drunk and angry, and attacked their mother. “Sometimes it was with an open hand, other times a closed fist. Always he aimed for her head.”The son would later become a patron for Refuge, an organization that provides shelter for domestic abuse victims.“The stage would prove to be a safe space, a refuge from real life in which I could inhabit another person, living in another place and time,” he would write.Stewart was accepted into the Royal Shakespeare Company and stayed for 14 years, playing everything from Mark Antony to Henry IV to Shylock to Oberon. “People who were not in the company would say to me, ‘Give it a break. Why don’t you go somewhere else?’ And I would say, ‘To do what?’” he told the Associated Press (AP). “Telly?”Stewart eventually left to look for more varied work, including the 1981 film “Excalibur.” He had just done a production of “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?” in 1987 when an interesting offer came along. “I found myself in Hollywood shooting a syndicated science fiction series, which I was assured would fail.”It didn’t, of course. Thanks to Stewart’s rich baritone and noble bearing, the “Star Trek” franchise ran for seven years, 178 episodes and produced four feature films. He was known for his slogan “Make it so.”His adoration for Shakespeare would serve him well when he began to play Jean-Luc Picard, a 24th-century starship commander.“There is a formality to the way they speak and comport themselves that remind me of numerous Shakespearean situations I’d been in onstage. I should play Jean Luc, I realized, as if he were a character in ‘Henry IV,’ which is about brave men,” Stewart wrote in his memoir.Despite the Borg and Klingons, Stewart still managed to make room for blank verse. He established the Paramount Shakespeare Company, a workshop on Saturday and Sunday mornings for any actor interested. (Stewart revisited Picard in the TV series “Star Trek: Picard.”)Stewart died just a few days after Walter Koenig, another “Star Trek” icon, who played Ensign Pavel Chekov on the original NBC TV show from 1966 to 1969.“What a heartbreaking week it has been,” William Shatner, who played Captain James T. Kirk in the franchise, wrote on Instagram. “Sir Patrick Stewart was a friend, a colleague and a magnificent actor. From the stage to the bridge of the Enterprise, he brought intelligence, grace and a deep sense of humanity to everything he did.” “Star Trek: The Next Generation” gave him higher visibility, which led to more work, including roles in the films

“Conspiracy Theory,” “L.A. Story” and on Broadway, where he starred in “The Tempest,” “The Caretaker” and David Mamet’s “A Life in the Theater.” He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in June 2010. Stewart was also an ambassador for the International Rescue Committee.In July 1992, he and supermodel Cindy Crawford were on the cover of TV Guide’s “Top Turn-Ons,” based on a readers’ poll. In his memoir, Stewart wrote: “Absurd.”Stewart was first introduced as the character Xavier in the original X-Men trilogy, appearing in three films from 2000 to 2006. He later returned in four more movies before Professor X’s death in 2017’s “Logan.” He reappeared in “Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness” in 2022 and reprised the role in the upcoming “Avengers: Doomsday.”He also showed off his comedic chops aboard Seth MacFarlane’s Starz show “Blunt Talk” for two series and voiced Poop in “The Emoji Movie.” He made appearances on “Robot Chicken,” “Futurama” and “The Simpsons” (in one episode, Homer loses his hair, and Stewart tells him it’s great to be bald.) One of his last credits was with Jackman in 2026’s “The Sheep Detectives.”Later in life, he proved internet-savvy and found new fans with his humor, posing in a bath in a lobster suit and triggering memes when he posted a photo of him picking apples. When he was mistakenly outed as gay by a British newspaper, he said it was a nice change. “At least I didn’t wake up to the internet telling me I was dead again,” he tweeted.He married Brooklyn songwriter and singer Sunny Ozell in 2013, with the actor’s “X-Men” co-star McKellen officiating. Stewart later tweeted a photo of the newlyweds in a ball pit.He is also survived by two children, a daughter, Sophia, and a son, Daniel.The death of Patrick Stewart led to a slew of tributes, including from acting colleagues.British actor Ian McKellen paid tribute to his longtime friend Patrick Stewart, remembering their five-decade friendship and the bond they strengthened while playing rivals in the X-Men film franchise.In a tribute dated Oct. 29, McKellen recalled first meeting Stewart as ambitious young actors at the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-upon-Avon about half a century ago, although they were not performing in the same productions. “My first strong memory was a few years later, meeting him in the street in central London,” McKellen wrote, recalling their encounter when Stewart told him about an offer to take over a leading role in Star Trek.McKellen said he had warned his friend about the possible consequences for his British stage career. “But Patrick, think of your stage career in the UK. Do you really want to risk — getting lost in Hollywood for years and years?” he recalled telling Stewart.Stewart nevertheless accepted the role of Captain Picard.Their friendship grew closer when they reunited for the first X-Men film, released in 2000. McKellen portrayed his ideological adversary, Erik Lehnsherr, better known as Magneto. “What a heartbreaking week it has been,” another Star Trek alum, William Shatner, said. “Sir Patrick Stewart was a friend, a colleague and a magnificent actor. From the stage to the bridge of the Enterprise, he brought intelligence, grace and a deep sense of humanity to everything he did. Captain Picard stood for the best of us, and so did the man who played him. I was filled with affection and admiration for him and his work.” “We lost one of the greats of stage and screen today. And, in my book, a tremendous friend and man. I learned so much from him. I will miss you, Patrick Stewart, all of my days.” Hugh Jackman, Stewart’s “X-Men” co-star, posted on Instagram.George Takei, Stewart’s fellow “Star Trek” star, said on social media: “Fans across the world mourn the passing of a true and irreplaceable legend.

As Captain Jean-Luc Picard, Patrick Stewart took the starship Enterprise to places it had never gone before. He inspired a whole next generation of star-gazers who looked longingly ahead to a brighter future for all humanity. Our hearts are heavy, indeed. Rest in the heavens, Captain."

- Marcos: Pinoy food could lure tourists (2026-10-30 16:13)

CONFIDENT that Filipino cuisine can drive up tourism, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. vowed to improve transport infrastructure to encourage travelers to explore the country's rich gastronomy.During his speech at the Michelin Guide Restaurant Ceremony for Manila and Environs & Cebu 2027 on Thursday, Marcos highlighted how food — which he said is a "language everyone can appreciate" — can generate tourists and create value chains that empower domestic food producers. "Our country is known for our beautiful islands, our rich history and a vibrant culture. Now, our cuisine can become another reason for travelers to visit, explore our regions and to stay longer," he said.Reflecting on the international recognition of local establishments — including Bib Gourmand honorees and Michelin-starred restaurants — Marcos noted that food offers a universal medium to share Filipino culture and values with the world. "When we launched the Guide last year, our goal was to promote gastronomy and tourism," the president said. "We wanted to express who we are as a nation, as a people and as a culture in a language everyone can appreciate: food." Marcos underscored how a higher demand for Filipino cuisines can help empower local food producers. Citing establishments like Gallery by Chele, which features Indigenous Cordillera rice varieties, Marcos stressed how global exposure benefits micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). "Greater interest in Filipino cuisine can mean more opportunities for our farmers, our fisherfolk, food producers and our MSMEs," he said.To sustain growth in culinary tourism beyond major urban hubs like Manila and Cebu, Marcos committed to improving transport infrastructure and expanding connectivity across the archipelago.He also pledged continued support for culinary education and skills development to help aspiring chefs and hospitality professionals compete on the global stage.

- Filipino injured in Spain train crash that killed 69 (2026-10-30 16:12)

A FILIPINO sustained minor injuries, and an entire family of Filipino tourists required emergency consular intervention in the high-speed train collision in Toledo, Spain, last Wednesday.At least 69 people were killed and 100 were injured in the incident.The Philippine Embassy in Madrid said the injured Filipino was immediately transported to a local hospital and is recovering. The Filipino's identity or medical status were withheld by the embassy on the family's request.Department of Foreign Affairs spokesman Analyn Ratonel separately announced that embassy personnel had located and provided immediate assistance to a family of Filipino tourists who were pulled out from the wreckage.As of Friday, no other Filipino casualties have been reported, and no further requests for assistance from nationals have been logged.According to Spain's Ministry for Transport, a Renfe AVE train with 397 passengers rear-ended a stationary Iryo train with 146 passengers near the town of Urda, 150 kilometers south of Madrid.Initial findings from Spanish investigators reveal that a malfunction in the

safety system forced the Iryo train to come to a complete stop due to a signal failure. Preliminary reports point to human error in the manual signaling backup operations, where the incoming Renfe train was erroneously authorized to proceed.Traveling at speeds approaching 200 kilometers per hour, the Renfe train struck the Iryo train, derailing four carriages and sending a mass of twisted metal down an embankment.The incident marks Europe's worst rail disaster this century and is the third deadly train crash in Spain in 2026 alone, fueling heavy political criticism ahead of Spain's snap elections scheduled for late November. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has declared three days of national mourning.The Madrid Embassy said it remains in close coordination with Castilla-La Mancha's civil protection services and rail operators.Filipino communities across Spain have been urged to account for their members and report anyone who might have been traveling on the Madrid-Andalusia line at the time of the crash.The embassy released contact numbers for relatives in the Philippines and Spain seeking information on missing loved ones:– Philippine Embassy 24/7 Hotline: +34 616 491 861– Renfe Family Assistance Helpline: +34 900 101 020– Consular Reporting Channel: Affected individuals or families can submit details directly via the embassy's Official Incident Registration Portal.

- Court rules men can be victims of sexual abuse (2026-10-30 16:10)

THE Supreme Court said that men can also be victims of sexual violence, and that the law renders justice to all victims of abuse regardless of gender.In an en banc decision penned by Senior Associate Justice Marvic Leonen, a woman was declared guilty of committing acts of lasciviousness against her 11-year-old nephew.Court records showed that the child, during a visit to his father's relatives, was asleep when the woman woke him up, ordered him to remove his clothes, and made him lie on her bed. She then engaged in sexual intercourse with him.Unable to understand the experience because of his young age, the boy secretly suffered from shame and later considered ending his life.He was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder resulting from the sexual abuse and was advised to undergo psychotherapy.The woman was found guilty of acts of lasciviousness in relation to Republic Act (RA) 7610 or the Special Protection of Children against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act by both the Regional Trial Court and the Court of Appeals.The woman had argued that the child had consented to the sexual act, but the high court disagreed.It said that at the time of the incident in 2018, the age of sexual consent was 12 years old. Because the child was only 11, he was deemed legally incapable of giving consent. The age of sexual consent has since been increased to under 16 years old following the enactment of RA 11648 in 2022.Leonen said that the proper offense is statutory acts of lasciviousness under Article 336 of the Revised Penal Code, not RA 7610.Citing jurisprudence, the Supreme Court said that RA 7610 applies when a minor appears to consent to sexual activity due to the coercion or influence of an adult. It does not apply when a minor is entirely unaware, unconscious, or unable to give legal consent, as in the case.The woman was charged with statutory acts of lasciviousness because, at the time of the offense, her acts did not fall within the legal definition of rape under Article 266-A of the RPC, the ruling said.The law then limited the act of rape to a man inserting his penis into a woman's vagina, as well as the insertion of a penis or any object into another person's genital, it said.However,

the high tribunal said RA 11648, enacted in 2022, expanded the definition of rape, now stating that it may be committed by any person who has carnal knowledge of another person under the circumstances specified by law.The use of the term “person” in the law instead of specifying the perpetrator’s gender allows for the commission of rape even by women, the high court said.Despite this amendment, the Court noted that some rulings continue to describe rape as a crime committed by men against women. It traced this view to older, patriarchal rape laws that were originally designed not to protect women from violence, but to punish men for taking women — who were considered the property of their fathers or husbands — through rape.“These beliefs about rape are not only sexist, but also exclude male victims who suffer the same trauma. The failure to recognize that they can be victims of rape can also make it harder for them to realize that they were violated,” Leonen said.“Thus, while there must be recognition of the historical injustice women have suffered, the law, as well as its interpretation, must be resilient enough to provide equal protection to all victims and guard against stereotypes that all women are victims and all men are perpetrators. When laws are not gender-neutral, male victims suffer twice: once at the hands of their abuser and second through the judicial system,” he added.The Court said that the sexual violence suffered by the child caused him intense shame and guilt and left him traumatized. The woman also made him believe that he had agreed to and enjoyed what was done to him.If the genders had been reversed, the incident would have been considered rape. However, as it stands, the acts penalized do not fall within the legal definition of rape as provided by law at the time of the crime, it said.As a result, the woman was sentenced to prison for nine to 16 years and ordered to pay damages.

- Duterte camp: New NBI witness ‘planted’ (2026-10-30 16:09)

VICE President Sara Duterte’s spokesman Salvador Paolo Panelo Jr. said Friday that alias “Chris,” an alleged former driver of ex-House speaker Lord Allan Velasco who claimed to have helped deliver suitcases of grease money for the vice president, is another planted witness.“Another day, another planted witness. They can keep manufacturing allegations, but they cannot fabricate the truth,” Panelo said in a statement.Panelo said Duterte would dismantle the allegations with evidence “at the proper time,” challenging media organizations to go beyond reporting the claims.“We invite the media not merely to report, but to independently test and verify these claims,” he said, accusing unnamed parties of weaponizing the media for “relentless, but ultimately ineffective, black propaganda” against Duterte.The new witness appeared before the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on Thursday and submitted a three-page sworn affidavit detailing his alleged involvement in deliveries of suitcases of grease money to Davao City in 2021 and 2022.He claimed to have worked for Velasco from 2020 to 2022, noting he was among those instructed to transport the suitcases of cash. He identified Velasco’s head driver, Victor Sioco, as the person who allegedly told him the suitcases contained a “small gift” for Duterte.He, however, admitted not really knowing the contents of the suitcases, and not personally witnessing Duterte receiving them.He presented photographs of vehicles and screenshots of his social media posts, including one

bearing the words “OTW DAVAO,” to support his account.

• Tiangco bares P2.28B budget, wants disclosures (2026-10-30 16:08)

NAVOTAS Rep. Toby Tiangco on Thursday made public P2.282 billion worth of proposed infrastructure projects for his district, challenging fellow lawmakers to disclose their own allocations after the House of Representatives rejected proposals to make budget transparency mandatory. “If they do not want to make transparency mandatory, I will start with my own district. There is no reason to hide from the public where their money goes,” Tiangco said in a Facebook Live broadcast.The lawmaker said he would publish the projects and their corresponding allocations on his official Facebook page so Navotas residents could scrutinize how the proposed funds would be spent.His disclosure follows the House’s rejection of two amendments he introduced on Oct. 7 seeking mandatory publication of the chamber’s budget utilization, including allocations and expenditures for each legislator, and DPWH projects in every congressional district.The P2.282 billion covers 39 proposed infrastructure projects for Navotas under the House version of the 2027 General Appropriations Bill, according to Tiangco.He said 75 projects worth P4.537 billion were approved by the Regional Development Council and civil society organizations for the city, but only 28 projects amounting to P1.609 billion were included in the National Expenditure Program.After consultations with DPWH officials and the Navotas City Engineering Office, 18 urgent projects worth P804.75 million were for prioritization, and 11 for deferment.Four additional DPWH-proposed projects worth P673 million brought the district’s proposed allocation to P2.282 billion.Tiangco urged his colleagues to adopt the same practice, saying constituents should know not only how much money is allocated to their districts but also which projects would receive funding and why they were selected. “If we can show the people of Navotas how much the budget is, where it will be spent, and why these projects were chosen, I hope all congressmen will do the same. Every Filipino has the right to know how their money is being spent,” he said. “Transparency cannot apply only when we are talking about the budgets of other agencies. It must start with us in Congress. The budget belongs to the people, not politicians,” he added.He said transparency should become a standard across government rather than depend on individual lawmakers’ willingness to disclose their allocations. “Transparency should not be optional. It should be the standard for everyone in government. And that standard must begin with us,” Tiangco said.

• Marcos: NLEx C5 Northlink 1A toll-free until yearend (2026-10-30 16:07)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. announced that the newly opened NLEx (North Luzon Expressway) C5 Northlink Segment 8.2 Section 1A, which connects Quezon City and Valenzuela City, would be toll-free until the end of 2026.Department of Transportation (DOTr) Secretary Vince Dizon, who joined the president along with Public Works and Highways Secretary Giovanni Lopez during the opening to motorists, said on Friday that the two-kilometer elevated expressway links the NLEx Mindanao Avenue toll plaza to Quirino Highway, spanning Barangay Talipapa in Quezon City and Barangay Ugong in Valenzuela City.Dizon said the president is thankful for the support of the project proponent and concessionaire, NLEX Corp., for not

collecting toll fees right away. “As with other newly opened roads, they are extending this accommodation while they still can — so passage here remains free until the end of the year,” the chief executive said in Filipino.Open to all vehicle classes, the newly opened road section has an estimated capacity of 11,000 vehicles per day, and the usual travel time of about 40 minutes would be cut down to roughly five minutes, according to DOTr.It said Section 1A is only a portion of the broader 11.3-kilometer Segment 8.2 project, designed to eventually connect Mindanao Avenue to C.P. Garcia Avenue (C-5) near Katipunan, also in Quezon City.Brothers Valenzuela Mayor Wes Gatchalian and District 1 Rep. Kenneth Gatchalian, who were with the president and Dizon along with NLEX Corp. executives, hailed the opening of the road section, which would benefit their constituents and largely contribute to the economic development of the two neighboring cities.

- Gasoline prices to spike, diesel to fall next week (2026-10-30 16:06)

GASOLINE prices are expected to increase next week, while diesel prices are expected to roll back, due to recent developments in the Middle East and oil-related regional events, local oil industry sources said on Friday.They said gasoline prices are estimated to spike by about P2.90 and P3.20 per liter, while diesel prices are expected to slip by about P0.40 and P0.60 per liter.The prices do not yet include freight-related costs, as sources said they are still unavailable.The price estimates are based on the four-day trading of Mean of Platts Singapore, the pricing basis of refined goods in Southeast Asia. “Diesel and gasoline prices closely followed the movement of crude oil this week, as they remained elevated amid concerns about energy supply disruptions in the Middle East due to continuing regional attacks and worries that the US could strike Iran after next week’s US midterm elections. “However, prices stopped increasing further due to a possible breakthrough in diplomatic efforts to end the eight-month-long conflict,” a source said. “Furthermore, other improving fuel supply prospects helped diesel and gasoline increases from going up further after China issued a fourth batch of fuel export quotas for gasoline, diesel and jet fuel. Other factors included South Korea easing its diesel export restrictions, and Ukrainian refinery strikes temporarily stopping,” the source added.This week, based on available price adjustment bulletins, gasoline prices slightly decreased by P0.30 per liter, while diesel prices went up by P1.20 per liter.

- Nov 5 hearing set for ex-BARMM exec, says PDEA (2026-10-30 16:05)

AFTER ignoring his initial subpoena, former Bangsamoro Transition Authority parliament member Edrieza Nasser Rimbang, accused of being the financier of the multibillion botched Laos drug shipment, is set to appear for an investigation before the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) on Nov. 5.PDEA spokesman Joseph Frederick Calulut confirmed that three of Rimbang’s lawyers visited the PDEA office on Oct. 27 to attest that their client will show up on Nov. 5 to submit his sworn statement.Rimbang’s team came to the PDEA office after the subpoena was sent to the ex-Bangsamoro official for allegedly financing the chartered 986 Learjet 55B that attempted to transport the 521-kilo shabu shipment to the Philippines but was intercepted by Laos authorities at Luang Prabang International Airport on Oct. 1. “Based

on the evidence on hand, he appears to be the mastermind, not just a financier. We are waiting for him to give his statement so his defense isn't just on social media. It's better if it is in an affidavit," Calulut told reporters in a phone interview on Thursday.A Filipino national identified as Fahad Mulok Dibarosan was arrested during the foiled smuggling attempt.Calulut noted that two other persons of interest (POIs) linked to the case have yet to appear before the PDEA.Depending on Rimbang's affidavit, Calulut said more POIs will be identified "as the case progresses." "Wala naman palugit, but we have a date doon sa mga subpoena na pina-receive natin sa kanila. So, na sa kanila 'yan kung lulutang sila, pero mas maganda humarap na lang sila since POIs naman sila (There's no extra grace period, but we have a set date on the subpoenas we had them receive. So it's up to them if they'll show up, but it's better if they just face it since they're POIs anyway)," he said. "Kapag sinabing POI, hindi naman agad-agad ay suspect eh. It could be possible na ikaw ay isang witness din (When we say POI, they are not automatically treated as suspects)," said Calulut.Calulut emphasized that PDEA holds documentary evidence proving Rimbang bankrolled the operation. "We have documents, we have evidence na nagsasabi si Rimbang ang nagbigay ng pera," he said.Calulut stated that the PDEA is keenly verifying the possible involvement of Rimbang in previous illegal drug transactions. "Well, looking at his history, kung taga-saan ba si Rimbang, doon sa lugar na matagal nang known na maraming drug personalities, so hindi naman, dahil sinasabi niya na wala siyang kinalaman (sa illegal drugs), wala raw siyang kinita, ay we are going to believe it as gospel truth. So marami tayong tinitsek na mga anggulo pa (Well, looking at his history and considering where Rimbang hails from, a place known to have numerous drug personalities, we are not going to believe it as gospel truth just because he claimed his innocence and not earning from the drug deals. So we are still checking a lot of angles)," Calulut said.He also rejected Rimbang's claims of absolute innocence, noting the suspect's background in an area known for drug personalities. "Just because he says he has no involvement doesn't mean we are going to believe it as the gospel truth. We are checking many other angles," Calulut added.Rimbang is among three POIs who have yet to face PDEA, which includes a consignee, identified as Abdulkarim Macalatas, and other unnamed individuals.Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla identified 11 persons of interest in the case, including former Bangsamoro Transition Authority parliament member Edriezan Hadji Nasser Rimbang, whom he identified as the alleged financier of the operation.The PDEA is also coordinating with foreign counterparts and awaiting additional documents and information from Malaysia in connection with the investigation.The PDEA is also awaiting information from Laotian authorities regarding Fahad.

- Metro Manila cities ready for Undas 2026 (2026-10-30 16:04)

METRO Manila cities have stepped up traffic management, cemetery maintenance, and security preparations for the 2026 All Souls' Day and All Saints' Day (collectively Undas) tradition.In the city of Manila, Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso said Friday they have completed preparations for Undas, with several offices and agencies coordinating to ensure an orderly observance of the Christian tradition.In a chance interview, Domagoso said preparations

involved the Philippine National Police, particularly the Manila Police District (MPD), the Manila City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Department (MCDRRMD), the Manila Health Department, the Department of Engineering and Public Services (DEPS), the City Electrician, the City Engineering, and the Manila Traffic and Parking Bureau. “For 10 days now, we’ ve been preparing — the PNP, specifically the men and women of the Manila Police District, the MCDRRMD, the Manila Health Department, DEPS, City Electrician, City Engineering, and Manila Traffic and Parking Bureau. We are ready,” Domagoso told the reporters.The mayor urged the public to observe Undas as a solemn occasion for families to gather, remember their departed loved ones, and pray for their souls.The MCDRRMD delivered 100 portable toilets for the city’ s two public cemeteries, with 60 assigned to Manila North Cemetery and 40 to Manila South Cemetery. “Our intention as a city is to make this occasion solemn, where families come together, visit the remains of our departed loved ones, and pray for the peace of their souls,” he said in Filipino.Domagoso also said vendors would not be allowed inside cemeteries. Designated selling areas would instead be provided outside cemetery perimeters to allow vendors to sell without disrupting visitors.Road closures Road closures near the Manila North Cemetery will run from 12 a.m. on Oct. 30 until 11:59 p.m. on Nov. 1, the Manila Public Information Office said. Affected areas include parts of Blumentritt, Dimasalang, and Maceda streets, the northbound lane of Dimasalang Bridge, and intersections along Aurora Boulevard and Blumentritt Road.Motorists were advised to follow designated rerouting schemes. Parking areas are available along P. Guevarra, Felix Huertas, and Oroquieta streets, from Blumentritt Road to Aurora Boulevard.Affected roads include Blumentritt Street from A. Bonifacio Avenue to Aurora Boulevard; Dimasalang Street to Retiro Street from Retiro Street to Calavite Street; Maceda Street from Makiling Street to Dimasalang Street; the northbound lane of Dimasalang Bridge; Aurora Boulevard corner Leonor Rivera Street; and Blumentritt Road corner Leonor Rivera Street.Motorists coming from Dimasalang Road and heading to Blumentritt Road should turn right on Simoun Street, while those coming from Quezon City via A. Bonifacio Avenue should turn left on Labo Street.Vehicles from Maceda Street intending to use Dimasalang or Retiro streets should turn right on Simoun Street. Those from Aurora Boulevard heading to Dimasalang Street should turn right on Leonor Rivera Street, while motorists from Blumentritt Road heading to Aurora Boulevard should also turn right on Leonor Rivera Street.Designated parking areas are along P. Guevarra, Felix Huertas, and Oroquieta streets, from Blumentritt Road to Aurora Boulevard.The city government advised motorists to plan their trips and use alternate routes to avoid delays.Marikina City, meanwhile, will implement a one-way eastbound traffic scheme on A. Bonifacio Avenue and Sumulong Highway from 6 a.m. on Oct. 31 until 12:01 a.m. on Nov. 2. Motorists heading to Loyola Memorial Park and Marikina City proper were advised to follow designated routes and traffic signs.Mayor Maan Teodoro said that the city had conducted clearing operations and fogging at cemeteries, established command posts for police, social workers and medical teams, and deployed an animal rescue team to vaccinate stray dogs and cats. Personnel will monitor traffic and security around the clock from Oct. 31 to Nov. 2.At Barangka Cemetery, the city is coordinating with families affected by the planned four-story ossuary and columbarium. Forms will be distributed to update records and help track remains, particularly those without updated information for more than five years.Peace and

order measuresDomagoso said the city had coordinated with police, health and disaster response offices, engineering units and traffic personnel to prepare for Undas. Vendors will not be allowed inside cemeteries but may sell in designated areas outside their perimeters. He reminded visitors that liquor, sharp objects, firearms, and karaoke are prohibited inside the cemetery.Makati City held its final coordination meeting for Oplan Undas 2026, led by Public Safety Officer BGen. Rodelio Jocson and the city's Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office. Participants included police, fire personnel, barangay officials, city departments, private-sector representatives, and officials from Manila, including representatives of Manila South Cemetery and the Manila DRRMO.In Pasig, the city government conducted clearing, concreting, asphalting, repainting, trimming, and repair work at the Pasig City Public Cemetery, also known as Barracks. The city said its crematorium and columbarium are operational, and a roof has been placed on the columbarium's roof deck.Pasay Mayor Emi Calixto-Rubiano inspected the city cemetery to check clearing and cleaning work, particularly the removal of obstructions along pathways. She also visited bus and public transport terminals along Buendia-Taft, reminding operators to park properly and traffic enforcers to prevent illegal terminals that could cause congestion.Marikina has also prohibited bladed weapons, alcohol, smoking and vaping, littering, excessive noise, climbing on tombs, and other activities inside cemeteries, including the use of plastic and Styrofoam.In San Juan, Mayor Francis Zamora said additional security personnel, traffic enforcers, sanitation teams, and emergency responders would be deployed during Undas. "So our expected visitors on Nov. 1 will be somewhere between 35,000 and 40,000," Zamora told reporters during a visit to the San Juan City Cemetery on Oct. 23.The cemetery's visiting hours are from 6 a.m. to midnight. Firearms, bladed weapons, alcohol, and illegal drugs are prohibited, while gambling and entry by bicycles and motorcycles are not allowed. Vendors may operate only in designated areas.Taguig City continued cleaning its cemeteries and setting up tents for help desks and command posts to assist visitors and maintain peace and order. The city reminded the public to follow cemetery rules, dispose of trash properly, secure their belongings, and cooperate with personnel.Not to be outdone, the Eastern Police District (EPD) assured the public that enforcement of security, traffic management, emergency response, and public safety measures will be synchronized ahead of the influx of cemetery visitors and travelers during Undas.In its Inter-Agency Coordinating Meeting in Preparation for a Safe and Secure Undas 2026 in Metro East Area conducted the other day, EPD director BGen. Roman Arugay said that through the concerted efforts of the police and partner agencies, the EPD seeks to maintain peace and order, ensure smooth traffic flow, provide prompt emergency assistance, and safeguard the public throughout the observance.Arugay stressed that the activity underscored the EPD's commitment to proactive planning, operational readiness, and strengthened inter-agency cooperation in ensuring a safe, orderly, and secure Undas 2026 for residents and visitors across the Metro East Area.WITH A REPORT FROM FRANCISCO TUYAY

- CHEd to review nonpayment allegation (2026-10-30 16:03)

THE Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) said it would review a claim by Amianan PH that the agency had not paid for souvenir items it ordered for Asean-related activities.Amianan PH alleged that CHEd, as well as the Department of Energy (DOE), had not released payment nor made a down payment for products it ordered."CHED hasn't paid in 9 months, and DOE is about to pass the 1-month mark. How could you let this happen?" Amianan PH said in Filipino and English in a Facebook post on Thursday."We support so many communities; what is going to happen to them this Christmas? We cannot move forward when our money is just sleeping in your hands," it added.CHEd said the allegation was about a small-value procurement handled by its Regional Office 4. “As this involves a small-value procurement undertaken at the regional level, the transaction does not ordinarily pass through the Office of the Chairperson,” CHEd said in a statement on Friday.It added that the Office of the Chairperson would gather information from the concerned regional office and review the circumstances surrounding the matter. “Nevertheless, the Office of the Chairperson will personally ensure that the necessary information is gathered from CHEDRO IV, the circumstances are properly reviewed, and any issues identified are promptly and appropriately addressed,” CHEd said, noting the concern would be handled with transparency and accountability.

- CFO aims for more overseas aid for grassroots communities (2026-10-30 16:02)

THE Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) has signed a memorandum of understanding with Angat Pinas Inc., a nonprofit organization widely known as Angat Buhay, to boost philanthropic endeavors of the global Filipino diaspora in the Philippines.CFO Secretary Dante Ang II and Angat Buhay Executive Director Raphael Martin Magno formalized the agreement.Through the partnership, the CFO will utilize its long-standing Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino (Linkapil) Program to channel financial resources, networks, and technical expertise from nonresident Filipinos (NRFs) and overseas organizations directly into Angat Buhay's targeted grassroots interventions. The collaborative framework will prioritize critical development areas, including public education, food security, public health, disaster risk reduction, housing, and climate resilience. “The continuing engagement of our NRFs can help translate migration experience into concrete opportunities for families, communities, and local development,” Ang said, emphasizing that the initiative aligns with the national policy of treating overseas Filipinos as indispensable partners in nation-building.Established in 1989, the CFO's Linkapil program has long served as a structural mechanism to funnel overseas assistance into local high-impact projects. Under the new agreement, the CFO will actively promote Angat Buhay's core anti-poverty initiatives to overseas networks and endorse community project proposals for direct diaspora funding.The partnership aims to engage second- and third-generation overseas Filipino youth in local civic action and volunteerism through CFO's Youth Leaders in the Diaspora program.By creating an institutional bridge between global donors and local communities, both entities aim to institutionalize the traditional spirit of bayanihan (volunteerism) for long-term development gains.

- Fil-American faces 20 years in CNMI fraud, bribery case (2026-10-30 16:01)

SAIPAN, Northern Mariana Islands — A Filipino-American former government official in the US Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands has pleaded guilty to federal theft and bribery charges in a multimillion-dollar fraud scheme that could land her in prison for up to 20 years.The case against Maribel Loste, former director of the Child Care and Development Fund, is connected to a separate federal fraud case involving Filipino mother and daughter Clarissa Adlawan and Giselle Butalid, who were sentenced earlier this year for defrauding the CNMI Public School System.Loste's lawyer, Robert Torres, confirmed the connection in an interview on Thursday. “Yes, there's a tie-in to that, and the plea speaks to that,” Torres said.Torres also confirmed that Loste had accepted responsibility for her criminal conduct and was scheduled for sentencing on Jan. 8, 2027, before US District Court Chief Judge Ramona Manglona. “She took responsibility for this case, for her conduct, and therefore pled guilty,” he said.Under a plea agreement filed June 25 in the US District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands and unsealed Thursday, Loste agreed to plead guilty to aiding and abetting theft concerning a program receiving federal funds and bribery concerning a program receiving federal funds.Each felony carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a $250,000 fine, for a combined statutory maximum of 20 years and $500,000 in fines.Loste also agreed to forfeit at least $105,000 obtained through the bribery scheme, with the final amount to be determined at sentencing.According to the plea agreement, Loste used her authority as CCDF director under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs to approve contracts involving Evergreen Learning Inc. and Dice LLC despite knowing their proposals contained false information, including grossly inflated costs.The scheme began around July 2021 and involved two unnamed individuals living in Kenmore, Washington. One was Loste's longtime friend who co-owned Evergreen and Dice and operated Language and Literacy Education and Professional Services, or Leaps, in Washington state.Both individuals were identified as unindicted co-conspirators.Federal prosecutors and Loste stipulated that the reasonably foreseeable financial loss from the theft offense exceeded $3.5 million but was less than $9.5 million.The bribery charge involved One Legacy LLC, which received approximately $1.41 million in CCDF contract payments between 2022 and 2024.Loste admitted accepting payments from an unnamed co-owner of One Legacy in exchange for approving and processing the company's contracts.One Legacy was also used by Adlawan and Butalid in a separate procurement fraud and money laundering scheme involving PSS.Adlawan, a US permanent resident originally from the Philippines, and Butalid, a naturalized US citizen also originally from the Philippines, were sentenced on May 6, 2026, to 48 months and 18 months in federal prison, respectively.According to the US Department of Justice, the women used One Legacy to conceal conflicts of interest and obtain payments for educational materials that PSS never ordered.They were ordered jointly to pay $548,788 in restitution, while two properties they owned in the Philippines were ordered forfeited.Federal prosecutors said some of the money obtained through the fraud was used to construct a nine-room house in the Philippines. The women also traveled to the country, stayed in luxury hotels and withdrew substantial amounts of cash.Loste's plea agreement does not identify Butalid or Adlawan by name or establish that they participated in her charged offenses.Loste had served as CCDF director since 2008, according to her professional background. Before that, she worked as an infant and toddler

education specialist at the CNMI Public School System from 2006 to 2008.She holds a Master of Arts in Education, specializing in early childhood education and teaching, from California State University, Sacramento.Torres said Loste's guilty plea reflected her willingness to accept responsibility rather than proceed to trial. “It's not about remorse, it's about accountability and accepting responsibility when you've done wrong,” he said.He said Loste's sentence would depend on several factors, including the seriousness of the offenses, her personal background, deterrence and appropriate punishment.The US Probation Office will prepare a presentence investigation report, while the amount of restitution Loste may be required to pay remains undetermined.Federal prosecutors have agreed to recommend a sentence at the low end of the applicable sentencing guidelines, but the final decision rests with Manglona.

- Red cross deploys 1,890 personnel, volunteers for Undas (2026-10-30 15:20)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) is deploying 1,890 staff and trained volunteers nationwide from Oct. 30 to Nov. 3 to provide emergency assistance to travelers during Undas 2026.The PRC said its 102 chapters have established 322 first aid stations in high-density areas across the country, supported by 69 ambulances and 19 emergency response vehicles.The deployment includes 89 combined first aid and ambulance stations, 233 first aid stations, 158 welfare desks, 107 mobile units and 107 on-foot patrol teams.PRC responders will cover 247 cemeteries, eight seaports, eight highway and gas station posts, seven bus terminals, two airports and other public transit areas and chapter bases.PRC Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Richard J. Gordon urged travelers to prepare for their trips and consider the agency’s SafeCard program, which provides access to emergency ambulance services and blood supply support in case of road accidents, as well as financial coverage for accidental death, disablement and medical reimbursement during travel. “Undas is a sacred time for Filipino families to gather and remember their loved ones. While our emergency teams and ambulances are on the ground nationwide, true safety begins with preparation,” Gordon said in a statement on Friday.

- Dizon loses cool over 2-year CCTV handover delay at NAIA inspection (2026-10-30 11:43)

MANILA, Philippines — Transportation Secretary Vince Dizon on Friday lost his temper during a surprise inspection at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 1 amid mounting controversies over unmaintained security systems and high-profile passenger thefts.Dizon could not hide his frustration after learning that the transfer of NAIA's closed-circuit television (CCTV) operations from the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) to the New NAIA Infra Corp. (NNIC) has been stalled for nearly two years.He recalled issuing the order more than a year and half ago before he was moved to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) but the transfer was not completed.As a result, Dizon gave the MIAA until November to turn over control of the CCTV system to NNIC as he warned that those responsible for further delays would be dismissed.He expressed frustration over the delay and the finger-pointing among officials instead of taking responsibility for the failure of the CCTV system to clearly capture theft incidents. “I would be happier, and our countrymen would be happier, if you took

responsibility instead of asking me who else you could point to," Dizon said. "That is why we are in government — to take responsibility," he added.Dizon warned that he would dismiss the officials concerned "if they stil haven't transferred it by then."Dizon also directed the NNIC to install more CCTV cameras at the airport to improve surveillance and deter theft.He cited an incident in which a CCTV camera was positioned too far from the area to clearly capture what happened.Dizon said airports in other countries have cameras installed at nearly every corner, making it more difficult for criminals to operate undetected.CCTV cameras serve not only as tools for law enforcement but also as a deterrent to crime, he said.Dizon's inspection came on the heels of a heated Senate Committee on Public Services hearing led by Senator Raffy Tulfo.Lawmakers called out airport officials after French national Anthony Claude Boukhors lost P18 million worth of luxury watches to a thief at the Terminal 1 Grab pick-up area.When authorities moved to track the suspect, they found that the entire pick-up zone had 'zero camera' coverage due to broken or missing units—prompting Tulfo to give airport officials 48 hours to fix the system.The systemic failure of the CCTV infrastructure compounds a string of embarrassing thefts at NAIA checkpoints.In September 2023, an Office for Transportation Security (OTS) personnel was caught attempting to pocket and physically swallow $300 in cash stolen from a Chinese passenger.There was also an incident wherein security screening officers were caught on camera stealing a luxury watch from a Chinese and extorting yen from a Thai tourist.Dizon publicly apologized to the victims of these high-value terminal thefts and pushed for systemic reforms, including the immediate handover of backend technology and the elimination of "blind spots"t o protect travelers passing through the country's main gateway.

- SC: Men can also be victims of sexual violence (2026-10-30 05:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Men can also be victims of sexual violence, stressing that the law must protect all victims of abuse regardless of gender, the Supreme Court ruled.In an en banc decision penned by Senior Associate Justice Marvic Leonen, the high tribunal found a woman guilty of committing acts of lasciviousness against her 11-year-old nephew.Court records indicated that the child, who visited his father's relatives, was asleep when the woman woke him up, ordered him to remove his clothes, and made him lie on her bed. She then engaged in sexual intercourse with him.Curious about what was happening, the child did not protest at first but after the incident, he felt ashamed and considered ending his life.The child was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder resulting from the sexual abuse as indicated by a psychological debriefing and supportive psychotherapy, the high tribunal said.The woman, same records showed, was found guilty of acts of lasciviousness in relation to Republic Act 7610 or the Special Protection of Children against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act by both the Regional Trial Court and the Court of Appeals.The woman had argued that the child had consented to the sexual act but the high court disagreed.It explained that at the time of the incident in 2018, the age of sexual consent was 12 years old. Because the child was only 11, he was deemed legally incapable of giving consent. (This has since been increased to under 16 years old following the enactment of RA 11648 in 2022.)Leonen in the same ruling clarified, however, that the proper offense was statutory acts of lasciviousness under Article 336 of the

Revised Penal Code (RPC), not RA 7610.Citing a jurisprudence, the Court explained that RA 7610 applies when a minor appears to consent to sexual activity due to the coercion or influence of an adult. It does not apply when a minor is entirely unaware, unconscious, or unable to give legal consent, as in this case.The woman was charged with statutory acts of lasciviousness because, at the time of the offense, her acts did not fall within the legal definition of rape under Article 266-A of the RPC, the ruling said.The law then limited the act of rape to a man inserting his penis into a woman's vagina, as well as the insertion of a penis or any object into another person's genital, it stressed.However, the high tribunal said RA 11648, enacted in 2022, expanded the definition of rape, now stating that it may be committed by any person who has carnal knowledge of another person under the circumstances specified by law.The use of the term "person" in the law instead of specifying the perpetrator's gender allows for the commission of rape even by women, the high court said.Despite this amendment, the Court noted that some rulings continue to describe rape as a crime committed by men against women. It traced this view to older, patriarchal rape laws that were originally designed not to protect women from violence, but to punish men for taking women—who were considered the property of their fathers or husbands—through rape. “These beliefs about rape are not only sexist, but also exclude male victims who suffer the same trauma. The failure to recognize that they can be victims of rape can also make it harder for them to realize that they were violated,” Leonen said."Thus, while there must be recognition of the historical injustice women have suffered, the law, as well as its interpretation, must be resilient enough to provide equal protection to all victims and guard against stereotypes that all women are victims and all men are perpetrators. When laws are not gender-neutral, male victims suffer twice: once at the hands of their abuser and second through the judicial system," he added.The Court reiterated that the sexual violence suffered by the child caused him intense shame and guilt and left him traumatized. The woman also made him believe that he had agreed to and enjoyed what was done to him.If the genders had been reversed, the incident would have been considered rape. However, as it stands, the acts penalized do not fall within the legal definition of rape as provided by law at the time of the crime, it explained.As a result, the woman was sentenced to prison for nine to 16 years and ordered to pay damages.

- Mayon erupts, sends 3-km ash plume above crater (2026-10-30 04:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Mayon Volcano had a moderately explosive eruption on Friday, sending an ash plume 3 kilometers above its crater, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs).The eruption started at 11:53 a.m. and ended at 11:59 a.m., with the grayish ash plume drifting west-southwest.Mayon Volcano is now under Alert Level 3.Phivolcs posted a timelapse video of the volcano’s eruption on its Facebook page.Alert Level 3, according to Phivolcs, means there is a "high level of volcanic unrest.""Sustained increases in the levels of volcanic earthquakes, some may be perceptible. Occurrence of low-frequency earthquakes, volcanic tremor, rumbling sounds," Phivolcs said on its website."Forceful and voluminous steam/ash ejections. Sustained increases in sulfur dioxide emission rates, ground deformation/swelling of the edifice. Activity at the summit may involve dome growth and/or

lava flow, resultant rockfall," it added,

• ICC recognizes 96 victims seeking participation in Duterte trial (2026-10-30 04:03)

MANILA, Philippines — The International Criminal Court (ICC) has transmitted 46 applications covering 96 applicants assessed as qualifying victims, along with four other applications whose eligibility remains unclear, for consideration in the trial of former president Rodrigo Duterte.In separate documents dated Oct. 28, 2026, the ICC Registry transmitted the 46 applications classified under Group A and four applications classified under Group C to Trial Chamber III, which is hearing the case against Duterte.The Group A applicants were assessed as clearly qualifying as victims under the court's procedures, while the Group C applicants are those whose eligibility could not be clearly determined by the Registry.The transmissions followed an oral instruction issued by the chamber during a status conference on May 27, 2026, and were made under the ICC's A-B-C classification system for victim participation.Under the system, Group A covers applicants who clearly qualify as victims, Group B those who clearly do not qualify, and Group C those for whom the Registry could not make a clear determination.The Registry said the annexes accompanying the 46 Group A applications were classified as confidential and available only to the Registry.For the four Group C applications, the Registry said two contained forms completed in Tagalog, together with English translations. Because it lacked the capacity to apply word-for-word redactions to the Tagalog text, it redacted in full the portions completed in that language.The documents did not identify the applicants or provide details of the incidents underlying their applications.The transmission of the applications does not, by itself, establish the final participation status of the applicants in the proceedings.

• PDEA: Alleged financier in Laos drug shipment to appear on Nov 5 (2026-10-30 03:45)

MANILA, Philippines – The alleged financier of the multibillion-peso drug shipment from Laos will appear before the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) on Nov. 5, 2026, a spokesman said.Lawyers of former Bangsamoro Transition Authority Parliament member Edrieza Nasser Rimbang came to the office on Oct. 27 to assure authorities that their client would appear to submit his sworn affidavit, said PDEA Spokesman Joseph Frederick Calulut.Rimbang’s team came to the PDEA office following the subpoena sent to the ex-Bangsamoro official for allegedly financing the chartered 986 Learjet 55B that attempted to transport the 521-kilo shabu shipment to the Philippines but was intercepted by Laos authorities at Luang Prabang International Airport on Oct. 1. "Based on the evidence on hand, he appears to be the mastermind, not just a financier. We are waiting for him to give his statement so his defense isn't just on social media. It’s better if it is in an affidavit," Calulut told reporters in a phone interview on Thursday. A Filipino identified as Fahad Mulok Dibarosan was arrested during the foiled smuggling of the shipment. Calulut noted that two other persons of interest (POI) linked to the case have yet to appear before the PDEA.Depending on Rimbang’s affidavit, Calulut said more POIs wpuld be identified “as the case progresses.” Calulut emphasized that PDEA held documentary evidence proving Rimbang bankrolled the operation. “We have documents, we have evidence na nagsasabi si Rimbang ang nagbigay ng

pera,” he said. Calulut stated that the PDEA was ĺkeenly verifying the possible involvement of Rimbang in previous illegal drug transactions.He also rejected Rimbang's claims of absolute innocence, noting the suspect's background in an area known for drug personalities.Rimbang is among three persons of interest (POIs) who have yet to face PDEA, which includes a consignee, identified as Abdulkarim Macalatas, and other unnamed individuals. Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Juanito Victor “Jonvic’’ Remulla identified 11 persons of interest in the case, including Rimbang.The PDEA is also coordinating with foreign counterparts and awaiting additional documents and information from Malaysia in connection with the investigation.The PDEA is also awaiting information from Laotian authorities regarding Fahad.

- PH Embassy in Madrid says injured Filipino in train collision in Spain recovering, others assisted by consulate (2026-10-30 02:40)

MANILA, Philippines — The Filipino who sustained minor injuries in a high-speed train collision in Spain last Oct. 28, 2026 is confined at a local hospital while other Filipino tourists were provided emergency consular intervention following the accident that claimed the lives of 69 people.The Philippine Embassy in Madrid did not disclose the victim's identity or specific medical status, citing privacy protocols requested by the family. Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Spokesmann Analyn Ratonel announced that embassy personnel had successfully tracked down and extended immediate assistance to a family of Filipino tourists caught in the wreckage.As of Friday, no other Filipino casualties have been reported, and no further requests for assistance have been logged. A system failure at 200 kph The tragedy unfolded at approximately 8:54 a.m. CET along the busy Madrid–Seville high-speed rail line. According to Spain’s Ministry for Transport, a Renfe AVE train carrying 397 passengers rear-ended a stationary Iryo train carrying 146 passengers near the town of Urda, located 150 kilometers south of Madrid. Initial findings from Spanish investigators reveal that a malfunction in the LZB train safety system forced the Iryo train to come to a complete standstill due to a signal failure. Preliminary reports point to human error in the manual signaling backup operations, where the incoming Renfe express was erroneously authorized to proceed. Traveling at speeds approaching 200 kilometers per hour, the Renfe unit struck the stopped train, violently derailing four carriages and sending a mass of twisted metal down an embankment. The incident marks Europe’s worst rail disaster this century and is the third deadly train crash in Spain in 2026 alone, fueling heavy political criticism ahead of Spain's snap elections scheduled for late November. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has since declared three days of national mourning. Consular Advisory and Crisis Hotlines The Philippine Embassy in Madrid stated that it remained in tight coordination with Castilla-La Mancha's civil protection services and rail operators. Filipino communities across Spain have been urged to account for their members and report anyone who might have been traveling on the Madrid-Andalusia line during the time of the crash.

- Manhunt on for Dela Rosa as clock ticks on deadline for surrender (2026-10-30 02:22)

(UPDATE) MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa was a no show on Friday, as the clock ticks on the deadline for his surrender.The Philippine National Police (PNP) said information on the senator have flooded designated hotlines.Lt. Gen. Wilson Joseph Lopez, Philippine National Police (PNP) deputy chief for Administration appealed anew to Dela Rosa to surrender to prevent casualties.Lopez called on Dela Rosa to remember his former role as the "father of the PNP," saying he should not allow police officers, whom he once led, to be placed in danger. He added that the police were simply performing their duty.Dela Rosa is the subject of an International Criminal Court arrest warrant over alleged killings inked to former president Rodrigo Duterte's war on drugs.The government has also offered a P50 million bounty for information leading to his arrest.

- Part of NLEX C5 Northlink toll-free until end of 2026 — DOTR (2026-10-30 01:50)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has announced that the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) C5 Northlink that connects Quezon City and Valenzuela City would be toll-free until end of 2026.Department of Transportation (DOTr) Secretary Vince Dizon, who joined the president, along with Public Works and Highways Secretary Giovanni Lopez, during said on Friday that Segment 8.2 Section 1A, a two-kilometer elevated expressway, linked the NLEx Mindanao Avenue toll plaza to Quirino Highway, frombBarangay Talipapa in Quezon City to Barangay Ugong in Valenzuela City.Dizon said the president was thankful for the support of the project's proponent and concessionaire - the NLEx Corp.- for not collecting toll fees right away."As with other newly opened roads, they are extending this accommodation while they still can—so passage here remains free until the end of the year," the chief executive said in Filipino.Open to all vehicle classes, the newly-opened road section has an estimated capacity of 11, 000 vehicles per day and the 40-minute travel time would be cut down to roughly five minutes, according to DOTr.It said that Section 1A was only a portion of the broader 11.3-kilometer Segment 8.2 project, designed to eventually connect Mindanao Avenue all the way to C.P. Garcia Avenue (C-5) near Katipunan, also in Quezon City.

- Marcos sees Filipino cuisine boosting tourism, attracting more foreign travelers (2026-10-30 01:33)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. highlighted how Filipino cuisine can drive up tourism, vowing to improve transport infrastructure to encourage travelers to explore the country's rich gastronomy.During his speech at the "Michelin Guide Restaurant Ceremony for Manila and Environs and Cebu 2027" on Thursday, Marcos highlighted how food was a "language everyone can appreciate"—can attract tourists and create value chains that empower domestic food producers."Our country is known for our beautiful islands, our rich history, and a vibrant culture. Now, our cuisine can become another reason for travelers to visit, explore our regions, and to stay longer," Marcos said.

- Yellow, red alerts up for Visayas grid on Friday as some power plants remain unavailable (2026-10-30 00:54)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) issued yellow and red alerts for the Visayas grid on Friday due to outages from major power plants amid high consumption.In its 8 a.m. advisory, the yellow alert will be between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m., and 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. The red alert will be in effect between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. as peak demand is estimated to reach 2,536 megawatts (MW) against an available capacity of only 2,359 MW.The transmission firm said that 22 plants were on forced outage and 20 were running on derated capacities for a total of 782.2 MW unavailable to the grid.The continued unavailability of the Therma Visayas Inc.1, Therma Visayas Inc. 2, and KEPCO SPC Power Corporation Unit 1 and the limited power imports from Mindanao due to the outages of some power plants there have prompted the NGCP to raise the alerts.A yellow alert is issued when the operating margin is insufficient to meet the transmission grid’s contingency requirement.A red alert is issued when power supply is insufficient to meet consumer demand and the transmission grid’s regulating requirement.

- PH says maritime security a global responsibility, pushes Code of Conduct in South China Sea (2026-10-30 00:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa P. Lazaro said that maritime security in the Indo-Pacific has become an indivisible global responsibility. Speaking to European diplomats and the academe at the 17th Festival della Diplomazia on Oct. 26, 2026, Lazaro focused on the 10th anniversary of the 2016 South China Sea Arbitral Award, which nullified Beijing’s expansive maritime claims under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos). She affirmed that the legal victory remained final and binding, serving as a shield for smaller nations against superpowers."The Award demonstrates that even amid profound asymmetries of power, international law offers nations a peaceful means to defend their rights," Lazaro said in her speech on the theme “What’s Next? Running on the Edge.” Despite facing continued coercion and harassment in Philippine waters, Lazaro emphasized that Manila's diplomatic restraint should not be misinterpreted."Restraint is not surrender. Dialogue is not acquiescence," she told the assembly. "The Philippines seeks no confrontation. Neither will we relinquish our lawful rights." She warned European leaders that ignoring violations in Asia undermines global security, stating that if international law is disregarded in the South China Sea, "its authority is weakened in the Mediterranean, the Adriatic, and everywhere else." Turning to regional strategy, Lazaro outlined Manila's priorities for its 2026 Asean Chairmanship under the theme “Navigating Our Future, Together.” She noted that Asean must move past mere anniversaries to secure concrete resolutions, particularly a legally binding Code of Conduct in the South China Sea that respects Unclos, and an inclusive solution to the ongoing crisis in Myanmar.

- Pangilinan seeks disclosure of lump-sum funds in the 2027 budget (2026-10-29 21:53)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Francis “Kiko” Pangilinan urged lawmakers to disclose the details and supporting documents for lump-sum unprogrammed appropriations in the proposed P7.2-trillion 2027 national budget before its approval, warning against leaving crucial spending

information until the bicameral conference committee negotiations.He also pushed for greater public participation in budget deliberations and the livestreaming of bicameral proceedings, saying Filipinos must be able to scrutinize how lawmakers allocate taxpayers' money.Pangilinan said the Senate must ensure that the proposed spending plan prioritizes programs and services that address the needs of ordinary Filipinos, particularly in food security, agriculture, education, health and disaster preparedness.He highlighted the role of civil society organizations, including the People's Budget Coalition, in scrutinizing allocations and helping flag potential irregularities in the proposed 2027 National Expenditure Program (NEP). "We will make sure that we come up with our own version, and you are right that the People's Budget Coalition is working with the Senate Committee on Finance in scrutinizing the budget. Public participation is important," Pangilinan said in an interview with Bilyonaryo News Channel. "We are very thankful that they are there," the senator added.As chair of Subcommittee G of the Senate Committee on Finance for the deliberations on the 2027 General Appropriations Act (GAA), Pangilinan said the Supreme Court's ruling declaring certain unprogrammed appropriations in the 2024 and 2025 national budgets unconstitutional would guide the Senate's review of the proposed allocations.He said lawmakers must closely examine the conditions for releasing unprogrammed funds and ensure that the requirements for their use are clearly defined and supported by proper documentation.Pangilinan questioned the prospect of details for lump-sum allocations being submitted only at a later stage of the budget process, saying the supporting documents should ideally be complete before the budget is approved. "To be fair, we will give them the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps they are still completing the documentation, but ideally, everything should have been documented before the budget was approved," he said. "Perhaps, for one reason or another, some of them are saying they will include the details during the bicameral conference committee proceedings," he added, referring to negotiations between the Senate and the House of Representatives to reconcile their respective versions of the budget.Pangilinan called for the livestreaming of bicameral conference committee proceedings, as was done during previous budget deliberations, to allow the public to follow how lawmakers resolve differences in their spending proposals.He also urged lawmakers to disclose agreements reached during closed-door discussions to strengthen transparency and accountability in the final stages of the budget process. "The public and people's organizations must be involved in scrutinizing the budget to ensure transparency. We should not make the process opaque, where the public cannot see what is happening or how decisions are being made," Pangilinan said.

- MMDA suspends number coding on All Souls' Day (2026-10-29 21:27)

MANILA, Philippines — The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) on Thursday announced the suspension of the expanded number coding scheme on Nov. 2, in observance of All Souls' Day. "ADVISORY: The implementation of the Expanded Number Coding Scheme is suspended on Monday, November 2, 2026, a special non-working day, in observance of All Souls' Day," MMDA said. "Number coding is automatically suspended during regular and special non-working holidays," the agency added.MMDA also reminded commuters and

motorists to plan their trips and follow traffic rules. “Reminder: Plan your trips carefully to avoid any trouble on the road. Obey traffic laws and drive safely,” MMDA said.For traffic-related concerns, the public may contact the MMDA hotline at 136.

• Tinio slams Marcos’ ‘don’t panic’ remark amid peso’s continued slide (2026-10-29 19:24)

HOUSE deputy minority leader and ACT Teachers party-list Rep. Antonio Tinio on Thursday criticized President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s call for the public not to panic over economic conditions, saying the administration was projecting control despite forecasts of further peso depreciation through the next year. “Don’t panic, you say? He is posturing as if the administration is in control of the situation, when analysts say the peso’s decline will likely continue until 2027, potentially reaching P65 to P66 against the dollar,” Tinio said in Filipino in a statement.He warned that further depreciation would worsen the burden of high prices on ordinary Filipinos, as a weaker peso could increase the cost of imported goods and other commodities. “The suffering caused by high prices, which the majority of Filipinos will endure, will only worsen,” he lamented.The lawmaker cited investors’ lack of confidence in the economy under the Marcos administration as a significant factor behind the peso’s weakness.Tinio blamed the economy’s woes on the lack of industrialization and a developed agricultural sector, saying these reflected the Marcos administration’s failure to implement an effective economic plan.Marcos on Wednesday urged Filipinos not to panic after the peso hit a record intraday low of P64.18 against the US dollar, citing rising global oil prices and fuel costs as factors behind the currency’s weakness.The chief executive also assured the public that the government had the means to defend the peso.

• Public opinion won't sway Sara Duterte verdict — Senate court (2026-10-29 18:35)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate impeachment court on Thursday vowed to decide Vice President Sara Duterte’s fate based on "law and admissible evidence," not public opinion, as a new survey found that 32 percent of Filipinos remain undecided on the outcome of her impeachment trial.Impeachment court spokesman Regie Tongol said the latest Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey reflected strong public interest in the proceedings but stressed that senator-judges must remain impartial as the trial resumes on Nov. 9. “Survey metrics measure public sentiment, whereas the Senator-judges are bound by oath to render judgment strictly on the basis of law and admissible evidence,” Tongol said in a statement.He said the court viewed the survey results with “quiet confidence in its even-handed procedure and a sober resolve to earn the trust of a cautious public.” The SWS survey, conducted from Sept. 21 to 27, found that 28 percent of respondents had “much trust” in the Senate’s final vote, while 35 percent expressed “little trust.” Another 32 percent remained undecided.The survey also found that 50 percent of respondents believed the Senate “has the right consideration for both sides.” Meanwhile, 17 percent perceived the court as favoring the prosecution, while 18 percent believed it favored the defense.Tongol said the court took the undecided respondents seriously, recognizing that many Filipinos were withholding judgment until the defense had presented its

case and the trial was completed.He said the figures, alongside the nearly equal perceptions of bias, reinforced the court's commitment to impartial proceedings.The results were also consistent with the August 2026 National Momentum Survey, which recorded a 36.1 percent to 34.2 percent split in perceptions of the court's fairness, he said.The latest SWS survey further found that 51 percent of Filipinos said they would accept the Senate's final verdict, which Tongol described as a measure of the court's institutional legitimacy. "The Court is fortified by SWS's finding that 51 percent of Filipinos (+25 net) commit to accepting the Senate's final verdict," Tongol said.He also cited the earlier National Momentum Survey, which found that 53.5 percent of respondents trusted the impeachment court, 65.8 percent approved of Presiding Officer Francis "Chiz" Escudero, and 38.6 percent preferred a verdict based on hard evidence over public opinion, at 30.8 percent.Despite these findings, Tongol said the court would not treat the numbers as grounds for complacency. "Rather than treating these numbers with complacency, the Impeachment Court views the remaining undecided and skeptical segments of the public as a continuing challenge to demonstrate transparent, rules-based impartiality," he said.The trial is scheduled to resume on Nov. 9, when Duterte's defense is expected to begin presenting evidence on Article II of the impeachment complaint.The remaining article concerns allegations involving unexplained wealth, inaccuracies in statements of assets, liabilities and net worth, and prohibited business interests. The prosecution earlier withdrew three other articles of impeachment, leaving Article II as the sole remaining charge.Tongol said the court would continue to enforce the rules of evidence and accord both sides full due process. "As the proceedings resume on November 9, 2026, for the presentation of the Respondent's evidence on Article II, the Senate Impeachment Court will continue to enforce the rules of evidence and accord full due process to both sides," he said.He added that the court aimed to ensure that its final constitutional judgment would "command the respect of the entire nation."

- Palace: Dela Rosa's world is shrinking (2026-10-29 16:32)

MALACAÑANG on Thursday said Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa's world is "shrinking" as the Philippine National Police (PNP) steps up its operation to arrest him and acts on credible leads as to his whereabouts.The PNP appealed to dela Rosa "to voluntary surrender to the proper authorities and submit himself to the legal process with dignity." Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro said the PNP's efforts to apprehend dela Rosa have limited the fugitive senator's movements. "It is true that Senator Bato [dela Rosa]'s world is shrinking because anyone who might see him will immediately provide information to the PNP and other law enforcement agencies," Castro said in Filipino in a press briefing.The Palace press officer also said that National Bureau of Investigation Director Melvin Matibag is also receiving information regarding the whereabouts of the fugitive senator.The PNP said that following the announcement of a P50-million bounty for information leading to the apprehension of dela Rosa, the PNP, in close coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and other concerned agencies, has significantly stepped up its efforts to arrest him. "The combined effect of heightened police operations increased

public awareness, and the bounty announcement has substantially narrowed the senator's ability to move freely without drawing attention," the PNP said in a statement.However, the PNP declined to discuss specific intelligence information and operational details regarding the manhunt. "What we can assure the public is that information received is being carefully and thoroughly assessed, and credible leads are being acted upon without delay," the PNP said.While earlier reports said the deadline for dela Rosa to surrender was Thursday, Oct. 29, the PNP has said it expires between Oct. 26 and Oct. 27.The PNP has countered the claim of dela Rosa that the P50-million bounty on his head placed his life in danger.As the one-week ultimatum on dela Rosa ticks to its lapse on Friday, Oct. 30, the senator's lawyer, Israelito Torreon, asked the Supreme Court anew to reverse its May 2026 denial to stop the International Criminal Court from arresting the senator.In the 15-page petition, Torreon cited recent developments, specifically Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla's announcement of the P50 million and the tagging of him as "armed and dangerous" influences vigilante actions and "invites people to take law into their hands." The PNP slammed this position and clarified that the multimillion-peso bounty is only for information on the senator's whereabouts and never meant to hand over law enforcement function to the civilian community. "It was very clearly stated that the P50 million reward is for pointing or giving tips as to the location or any information that would be given to us that will lead to the arrest of the senator," Co said. "It didn't say anything there about taking him yourself or arresting him yourself — we didn't say anything like that," he added.Remulla repeatedly said dela Rosa is in Mindanao but not in Davao City and is being coddled by a moneyed, armed group who the government negotiated with for the senator's peaceful surrender.He said 10,000 people could perish if forces go hard on dela Rosa — a former PNP chief and a graduate of the Philippine Military Academy. Hence, the government's decision to negotiate rather than risk losing lives just for the arrest of one man.The DILG and the PNP refused to say the results of the negotiations, hence the announcement of the bounty for information leading to his successful arrest. "You cannot expect especially a wanted person to remain static in one place, but we see that with this intensified manhunt operations as well as the offering of the reward his scope will be severely restricted," Co said.The PNP also stood firm on the "armed and dangerous" tag as the senator, despite surrendering 26 out of his 117 registered firearms, still has 91 guns. "He is armed, he has more than 90 firearms," Co said, adding that dela Rosa had "a propensity" to evade arrest.Still, the PNP said it does not see the need to release wanted posters for dela Rosa.The senator, Co said, is recognizable.

- SC orders Senate, House to answer petition (2026-10-29 16:31)

THE Supreme Court has ordered the Senate, sitting as an impeachment court, and the House of Representatives to comment within five days on a petition seeking to halt the impeachment proceedings against Vice President Sara Duterte.In a resolution dated Oct. 14, the Supreme Court en banc required the respondents to answer the petition for certiorari and prohibition filed by Sen. Robinhood Padilla, Sen. Bong Go and several other petitioners.The court also directed the respondents to comment on the petitioners' urgent applications for a status quo

ante order, a temporary restraining order and a writ of preliminary injunction.The five-day period is non-extendible.The petition named the Senate, represented by Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian, and Sen. Francis Escudero, in his capacity as presiding officer of the Senate sitting as an impeachment court, as respondents.It also named the House of Representatives, represented by Speaker Faustino Dy III, and its prosecution panel led by Rep. Gerville Luistro.Other petitioners include the Partido Demokratiko Pilipino-Lakas ng Bayan (PDP-Laban), represented by chairman Alfonso Cusi, and lawyers Israelito Torreon, James Patrick Bondoc, Ferdinand Topacio and Raul Lambino, as well as Philip Salvador and Resci Angelli Rizada-Nolasco.The petitioners asked the Court to intervene in the impeachment proceedings and issue orders that would restrain the respondents from proceeding with the case.However, the Supreme Court has not yet granted the petition or issued the requested restraining orders.Instead, the court resolved to require the respondents to submit their comments without giving due course to the petition.The resolution was issued by the Supreme Court en banc on Oct. 14 and signed by Clerk of Court Marife Domibao-Cuevas on behalf of the court.The respondents' comments will allow the high court to consider their positions before determining how to proceed with the petition.Duterte's unexplained wealthMeanwhile, the House prosecution team spokesman Zia Alonto Adiong said Duterte still has P463 million in alleged unexplained wealth to account for even if financial interests tied to companies linked to her and her husband are excluded.At a press briefing, the Lanao del Sur first district representative said the prosecution's case did not depend on treating corporate assets as Duterte's personal wealth. "Just to be fair, let us set aside the corporate veil theory. Let us set aside the corporations and their corporate income. There is still P463 million," Adiong said.He said the P463,046,459 was part of the P817.87 million in alleged undeclared assets and unexplained wealth identified by forensic accounting expert Alexander Cabrera for 2022 to 2025.According to Cabrera's findings presented by the prosecution, the amount included P207.70 million in allegedly undeclared bank balances, P143.50 million in other assets and properties, and P111.85 million in allegedly undeclared income.Adiong said the remaining P354.83 million involved financial interests attributed to Metro City Chow Foods Corp., GenCorp Industries Inc. and Cale88 Foods Corp., which were excluded from the reduced amount.To question the figures against Duterte's declared wealth, Adiong cited records presented during the impeachment trial showing that her net worth increased from P7.25 million in 2007 to P98.66 million in 2025, a rise of P91.41 million.He also cited Bureau of Internal Revenue records showing that Duterte and her husband, lawyer Manases Carpio, had a combined net income after taxes of P85.34 million from 2007 to 2025.Adiong further pointed to Duterte's statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALNs), in which she declared zero cash on hand and in banks from 2019 to 2025. He said Cabrera identified bank balances of P60.21 million in 2022, P80.70 million in 2023, P23.17 million in 2024 and P43.61 million in 2025 that were allegedly not declared.Adiong also raised possible tax evasion, citing Cabrera's findings of an alleged P111.85-million gap between Duterte's reported income of P63.11 million and bank inflows of P174.96 million from 2022 to 2025. "This is not just an issue of nondisclosure or unexplained wealth. This is also an issue of tax evasion," Adiong said.He challenged Duterte to explain the source of the funds and whether the proper taxes had been paid. "Madam Vice

President, where did this income that you did not declare in your SALN come from? Where did it come from? How were you able to accumulate this amount of money?" Adiong asked.PrematureDuterte's camp on Thursday called discussions about possible replacements for her premature and a distraction from questions over the fairness and legality of her impeachment trial. "These issues raise grave doubts as to whether a conviction by the Senate impeachment court, and any consequent attempt to install a replacement, would rest on any solid legal and moral foundation," the camp said in a statement issued by spokesman Salvador Paolo Panelo Jr.The camp questioned the impartiality of senators sitting as impeachment court members who face or are threatened with plunder and other criminal charges, as well as the constitutionality of lowering the threshold for conviction.

- 'Income status upgrade must mean better lives for Pinoys' (2026-10-29 16:30)

THE government cannot consider itself economically successful simply by moving the country into a higher income bracket if millions of Filipinos are still struggling, Budget Secretary Kim Robert de Leon said on Thursday. "The real question is not simply whether our economy can move into a higher income bracket, it is whether Filipino families can move into a better quality of life," de Leon said during The Manila Times economic forum on Thursday. "Growth must be more than just a headline, it must become a real experience," he added.The Philippines moved to what the World Bank defines as upper-middle-income country category on July 1 after gross national income per capita reached $4,850 in 2025, above the $4,636 threshold.It was an important milestone for a country that had stayed in the lower-middle-income bracket since 1987.De Leon, however, argued that "it is not a medal we can wear while millions of Filipinos are still waiting to feel the progress." "A higher income classification should mean better jobs, stronger purchasing power, more reliable services and greater opportunity," he said.The Budget chief said they seek to sustain the country's economic progress amid global conflicts and local uncertainties. "We meet amid real economic headwinds, global conflicts, fuel and supply pressures, climate risks," de Leon said. "The daily cost of living continues to test households and businesses alike," he added.The government is targeting economic growth of 3.5 to 4.5 percent in 2026, according to the Development Budget Coordination Committee.De Leon cautioned that these projections would not automatically translate into stronger economic performance, saying they required sound policies, disciplined implementation and a willingness to address problems that could hinder development. "These are projections, not promises that will fulfill themselves," he said. "We demand sound policy, disciplined execution and the confidence to confront what is not working."Sustaining growthMeanwhile, World Bank Division Director for the Philippines Zafer Mustafaoglu said the country has already shown that it can achieve high growth. However, sustaining it would be the next challenge.Gross domestic product (GDP) growth markedly slowed to 2.3 percent in the second quarter of this year due to the lingering impact of last year's corruption scandal and the Middle East war, which started in March of this year. "The real test of the next decade is not whether the Philippines retains an income classification," Mustafaoglu said. "It is whether more Filipino families can confidently call themselves middle class, withstand the shocks that life brings and believe that their children

will have greater opportunities than they did." Mustafaoglu said that the country still has some ways to go before Filipinos can move into the middle class and stay there. "Although meaningful poverty reduction has occurred, many families remain close to the poverty line and vulnerable to economic, climate, health and food price shocks," he said.The country's poverty picture has improved, with the rate having fallen from 15.5 percent in 2023 to 9.7 percent in 2025 and the government targeting a further reduction to 8.0 to 9.0 percent by 2028.But the gains have not been evenly distributed. About 13 percent of Filipinos continue to experience overlapping deprivations in areas including education, health, housing, water and sanitation, and employment.Mustafaoglu said that continued fast growth is not a given as it has "slowed amid weaker investment, policy uncertainty and rising energy prices." He argued that the government must "create more and better jobs, help firms enter and grow, and connect the country to global markets." "In short, we must shift from a growth model driven by accumulation to one driven by productivity and sophistication," Mustafaoglu said.P7.2T budgetThe Budget chief said the proposed P7.2-trillion national budget for next year would support the government's goal of achieving inclusive and resilient economic growth. This is equivalent to 21.7 percent of GDP.De Leon said that they received nearly P12 trillion worth of budget proposals from government agencies. "That is a very long wish list. Unfortunately, the Treasury does not come with an unlimited credit limit," de Leon said. "And unlike an ordinary wish list, every item here is paid for by the Filipino people, so we reviewed priorities, implementation readiness and expected public benefits," he added.De Leon said they directed resources toward education, health, social protection, infrastructure, food security and other essential services. "We are also working to reduce duplication, improve targeting, strengthen infrastructure oversight and make government operations more efficient," de Leon said.

- AMLC secures forfeiture of P3.12M in bribe case (2026-10-29 16:29)

THE Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) has secured the forfeiture of P3.12 million linked to alleged corruption involving an attempt to prevent a lawmaker from investigating government projects.In a statement on Thursday, AMLC said the money was allegedly offered to a lawmaker in exchange for refraining from pursuing investigations into the projects. "The respondent, a government officer, allegedly attempted to dissuade the lawmaker from pursuing the investigation by offering him the money," AMLC said. "The lawmaker refused the offer and sought police assistance, resulting in the respondent's arrest," it added.AMLC said that a complaint was filed against the respondent for corruption of public officials and violation of Republic Act 3019, or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.The recovered funds were allegedly sourced from a contractor and intended as an initial payment to the lawmaker.The Regional Trial Court of Batangas, in a decision dated Oct. 9, found sufficient basis to conclude that the money was related to an unlawful activity, justifying its forfeiture in favor of the government, the AMLC said.However, the decision has yet to attain finality and remains subject to appeal.The AMLC pursued the civil forfeiture case through the Office of the Solicitor General, seeking the recovery of funds linked to the alleged unlawful activity.Civil forfeiture proceedings allow the government to seek the recovery of assets connected to unlawful activities. "The

successful forfeiture underscores the importance of sustained interagency coordination in tracing, preserving and recovering proceeds linked to corruption and other unlawful activities," AMLC said. "The AMLC assures the public that it will continue to work closely with law enforcement agencies, government institutions and other partner agencies to prevent the misuse of the financial system, recover illicit proceeds, promote accountability in public service and strengthen public trust in government institutions," it added.

- 'ASEAN, NOT CHINA, SETS AGENDA FOR BLOC' (2026-10-29 16:28)

LAPU-LAPU CITY — Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. on Thursday asserted Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) member states' authority over the bloc's processes after China accused the Philippines of undermining the regional grouping. "So far as Asean is concerned, I do not believe our Asean member countries feel that way. If not, they would have let me know. So it is China's position, it is not Asean's position," Teodoro said at a press briefing after the 13th Asean Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) in Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu.He was responding to a question about a Chinese defense ministry statement accusing the Philippines of undermining Asean's spirit and China's legitimate rights as a dialogue partner.He said China had been allowed to present its position on regional and international security, including maritime issues, but emphasized that Asean member states, not its dialogue partners, determine the bloc's processes. "No country has the right to characterize Asean processes except Asean member countries," Teodoro said.He added that China's remarks largely repeated positions it had expressed previously.China was represented at Thursday's ADMM-Plus by Senior Capt. Yang Lei, its defense attaché in the Philippines. Asked why he did not receive the Chinese representative, Teodoro said there should be parity in rank and stature, adding that an undersecretary receiving an attaché was more than courteous.Teodoro also defended the Philippines' military modernization and security partnerships with treaty allies and other countries, saying Manila had the right to strengthen its defenses against threats to its sovereignty and territorial integrity.He was responding to a separate question about whether the Philippines' defense arrangements with external powers, including its hosting of the Typhon missile system, could undermine Asean's regional security architecture.Teodoro said Asean member states had not publicly raised such concerns and described the country's defense buildup as an internal matter. He cited the 2016 arbitral award on the South China Sea and rejected China's maritime claims over areas the Philippines considers part of its maritime domain.While stressing that Asean unity and solidarity remained central to the ADMM, Teodoro said the Philippines would continue to use its defense partnerships to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity.During Wednesday's 20th ADMM, participating defense ministers adopted five initiatives.These include promoting exchanges among emerging defense and military leaders, and strengthening individual and collective resilience against chemical, biological and radiological threats.The ministers also agreed to improve coordination between the ADMM-Plus and the Asean Regional Forum, and develop a comprehensive guide to ADMM and ADMM-Plus practices and protocols.The Philippines and India will co-host the Maritime Security Resilience Amid Emerging Technologies Conference in 2027.The ministers also adopted

a joint statement commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia. They issued the Manila Joint Declaration marking the ADMM's 20th anniversary, titled "Navigating Our Future Together." On Thursday, defense ministers exchanged views on regional and international security and adopted a joint statement on youth, security and peace. The statement complements a program to develop emerging defense and military leaders from Asean member states and dialogue partners.The Philippines also hosted informal meetings between Asean defense ministers and United States Secretary of War Pete Hegseth and Japanese Defense Minister Shinjiro Koizumi on Wednesday.Teodoro described the discussions as open, candid and productive, saying Asean members had called for greater and more robust engagement by Washington and Tokyo in the region.The meetings also covered practical defense cooperation, including cybersecurity, artificial intelligence in defense, future warfare, military operations, intelligence and military medicine.In his opening remarks at Thursday's ADMM-Plus, Teodoro urged Asean members and their dialogue partners to uphold international law, sustain defense cooperation, and address disruptions to food and energy security.He emphasized adherence to the United Nations Charter and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, peaceful settlement of disputes and rejection of the threat or use of force.Teodoro also called for stronger protection of migrant workers and seafarers affected by overseas conflicts, citing their contributions to the global economy.

- PH, Australia eye joint purchase of HIV drugs (2026-10-29 16:27)

HEALTH Secretary Edwin Mercado and Australian Ambassador Marc Innes-Brown discussed the possible use of pooled procurement for HIV medicines and medical supplies, the Department of Health (DOH) said.In a statement on Thursday, the DOH said the strategy aims to ensure an efficient supply chain and stockpiling of medical commodities and medicines for HIV.Australia supports regional HIV initiatives through its partnership with UNAIDS and Health Equity Matters, which includes the Philippines, and focuses on strengthening HIV responses and sustaining access to essential services.Mercado also discussed the administration's health priorities under the Unified National Agenda for Health, including bringing Yakap (Yaman ng Kalusugan Program) to schools, workplaces and local communities.The two officials also discussed efforts to finalize and sign a bilateral memorandum of understanding on health cooperation.Australia also provides capacity-building programs for health workers in the Philippines, according to the DOH.The DOH Epidemiology Bureau recorded 2,994 newly confirmed HIV cases nationwide from April to June 2026, averaging 33 cases per day, according to its second-quarter HIV and AIDS Surveillance of the Philippines report.

- Pre-positioning relief supplies ahead of El Niño pushed (2026-10-29 16:26)

SEN. Francis Pangilinan urged the government to pre-position relief supplies and mobilize emergency response teams ahead of a strong El Niño, warning that delayed action could leave vulnerable families, farmers and fisherfolk facing water shortages, rising food prices and mounting agricultural losses.In a statement, Pangilinan said authorities must act before the

effects of prolonged dry spells worsen, stressing that early intervention is critical to protecting livelihoods and ensuring food security. “Prevention is better than cure, right? Instead of pointing fingers and blaming one another when the problem hits, why don’t we prepare now? We know that super El Niño is coming, and farmers, fisherfolk and low-income households will certainly be among the first to be affected,” he said.El Niño has already caused billions of pesos in agricultural damage, with the Department of Agriculture (DA) reporting losses of P6.87 billion as of Sept. 26, affecting 223,214 farmers and 249,028 hectares of agricultural land.The DA raised its estimate to P8.57 billion during a Senate budget hearing on Oct. 21, with 288,058 farmers affected across 14 regions.Pangilinan has also warned that palay (unmilled rice) production could decline by about 700,000 metric tons in the second half of 2027 because of El Niño and other weather-related shocks. He said the potential shortfall could affect the annual rice requirements of about 3.6 million Filipinos.He called on the executive department to consider declaring a national state of calamity to mobilize additional resources and strengthen assistance for affected farming and fishing communities.The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) has warned that El Niño could peak before the end of 2026, with its effects potentially continuing through the first half of 2027.El Niño, a climate phenomenon associated with warmer-than-normal sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern Pacific, increases the likelihood of below-normal rainfall in the Philippines. This can lead to dry spells, drought and water shortages, threatening crops, livestock, fisheries and agricultural livelihoods.As chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform, Pangilinan proposed an eight-point action plan to mitigate the weather phenomenon’s impact on vulnerable communities, agricultural production and the country’s food supply.He cited Section 9 of Republic Act 12287, or the Declaration of State of Imminent Disaster Act, which allows national, regional and local disaster risk reduction and management councils to undertake preventive actions when a disaster is highly probable and its projected impacts are severe.Pangilinan’s eight-point action plan also calls for appropriate disaster declarations, identification of available funds, protection of farms and water systems, enforcement of applicable price controls, measures against profiteering and hoarding, livelihood assistance and a public accountability system to monitor government interventions.Another senator, Bam Aquino, on Thursday renewed his call for sweeping tax reform measures to shield Filipino families from a weakening peso, high interest rates and the devastation of a “super El Niño.” Aquino, who chairs the Senate Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship, cautioned that the peso’s continued slide, paired with slow economic growth, threatens to drive up the cost of food, electricity and petroleum products. “Families feel that they are bringing home less food for the same budget. Their earnings need to keep pace with the rising prices of goods,” Aquino said. “A larger portion of their salary should remain so that they have enough to buy food, rice and other basic necessities.” At the center of his legislative push is Senate Bill 267, which seeks to raise the annual personal income tax exemption cap from the current P250,000 to P480,000.Aquino noted that the current exemption levels under Republic Act 10963, or the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion Law, have been heavily eroded by persistent inflation. The proposed P480,000 baseline translates to a monthly tax-free income of P40,000, which he described as an

ideal monthly living wage for a family of four or five.The Department of Finance said it was open to Aquino's proposal, signaling it would back the higher tax exemption cap provided that equivalent, alternative revenue sources are identified to offset the resulting fiscal impact on government coffers.

- US backs AFP modernization (2026-10-29 16:25)

THE United States will increase its security cooperation funding to accelerate the modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) as Manila faces a multibillion-peso shortfall in its proposed military modernization budget.US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth made the announcement during a meeting with Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. in Cebu on Wednesday on the sidelines of the 20th Asean Defense Ministers' Meeting and the 13th Asean Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus.The US Department of War did not disclose the amount of additional funding or when it would be released.The additional funds aim to accelerate AFP modernization and improve interoperability between Philippine and American forces along the First Island Chain, a strategically important arc of islands stretching from Japan through Taiwan to the Philippines.Hegseth and Teodoro agreed to launch an Alliance Command and Control Modernization Sprint to improve real-time coordination between the two countries' armed forces and strengthen the resilience of their alliance.They welcomed progress in operationalizing facilities under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), including investments in critical infrastructure and storage facilities across the Philippines.The announcement comes as the Department of National Defense (DND) seeks substantially more funding to upgrade the military's capabilities for territorial defense and maritime security.The proposed 2027 national budget allocates P50 billion for the Revised AFP Modernization Program, up from P40 billion in regular funds for 2026.The allocation, however, falls P76.97 billion short of the P126.97 billion the DND said it needed for modernization requirements, according to figures presented to the House of Representatives in August.The newly announced increase is separate from Foreign Military Financing (FMF) grants authorized by the US Congress for the Philippines.The 2026 US National Defense Authorization Act allows up to $500 million annually in FMF grants for the Philippines from 2026 through 2030, as well as up to $1 billion in direct loans.For 2026, Congress appropriated at least $100 million in FMF grants for the Philippines, according to the Congressional Research Service. The authorization ceiling does not guarantee that the Philippines will receive the maximum amount each year.The AFP modernization program operates under Republic Act 10349, which amended the original AFP Modernization Act in 2012 and provided for a 15-year implementation period.

- 'China military buildup creating pressure in SE Asia' (2026-10-29 16:24)

CEBU, Philippines — Australian Defense Minister Richard Marles said Thursday that China's military build-up was creating a "condition of pressure" in Southeast Asia, and urged allies and partners to deepen cooperation.Beijing deploys hundreds of coast guard, navy and other vessels to patrol disputed areas of the South China Sea, which it claims almost entirely despite an international ruling that its position has no legal basis.In July, Australia protested China's

test of a nuclear-capable missile in the South Pacific, calling the launch “destabilizing.” “We’re obviously seeing the biggest conventional military build-up that the world has seen since the end of the Second World War from China,” Marles told reporters Thursday on the sidelines of a meeting of Southeast Asian defense ministers in the Philippines. “There’s not an explanation from China as to why it’s doing this, and all of that is creating the condition of pressure.” Beijing’s growing assertiveness was “providing challenges” for Canberra, he added, saying Australia relied on maintaining the existing rules-based order. “We need to be ensuring that how we understand the rules of the road continue to apply, because for a middle power like Australia, it is actually the rules which give us agency,” he saidChina’s growing assertiveness and militarization of artificial islands in the South China Sea have spurred Canberra, as well as Washington, to deepen defense cooperation with some Southeast Asian countries.Marles said Thursday that he met with the “Squad,” an informal defense and security group composed of Australia, Japan, the United States and the Philippines, where they committed to greater defense policy coordination. “I think the challenges that are being faced in this part of the world and the pressures that are being experienced are well understood by all four countries,” he said. “Now is a time to double down on friends and to double down on neighbors and to be working more closely together to provide for our collective security,” he added.The Philippines, a close security partner of Australia, has been engaged in years of confrontations with China in the South China Sea.China’s military and coast guard presence in contested areas of the critical waterway nearly doubled in September, Manila said earlier this month.

- DepEd to lease classrooms (2026-10-29 16:22)

THE Department of Education (DepEd) said it "is turning to innovative property leasing agreements" in addressing classroom shortages.The department said in a statement on Thursday that the initiative was part of its "broader multi-pronged infrastructure strategy, which works alongside Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH)-led construction, local government unit (LGU) partnerships, Public-Private Partnerships," DepEd Learning Continuity Spaces, and collaborations with public and private organizations."We cannot rely solely on traditional construction timelines when our children need classrooms today. Leasing is one of DepEd's vital channels to accelerate classroom delivery alongside our partnerships with the DPWH, LGUs, government partners, and the private sector" Education Secretary Sonny Angara said."By partnering with private institutions that have ready-to-use facilities, we cut down waiting times significantly, decongest our public campuses, and ensure our learners are sitting comfortably in classrooms rather than makeshift spaces," Angara said.DepEd said the leasing program "targets highly congested public campuses across key cities and regions." It cited the capacity expansion by the Pinagbarilan Integrated School in Baliwag by leasing Gardenersfield School Inc. facilities. The DepEd said that from June 8, 2026, about 189 learners transferred into nine "leased classrooms located less than 10 meters from the main campus." The DepEd also said that leasing seven classrooms at the Covenant Children Academy, the Kapitan Moy Elementary School in Marikina City opened an extension campus on Oct. 1. The facility now

serves 632 Grade 5 and 6 learners, “significantly easing the shift load and overcrowding on the main campus." It said regional and division offices were evaluating additional campus leases.

- Majority favor gov’t cooperation with ICC (2026-10-29 16:21)

A MAJORITY of Filipinos favor the government’s cooperation with the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the arrest of Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa and other alleged co-perpetrators in former president Rodrigo Duterte’s war on drugs, a survey by Momentum Research showed.The survey, conducted from Oct. 16 to 19, found that 58.1 percent of respondents considered it important for the government to coordinate with the ICC to arrest dela Rosa, while 52.2 percent favored government assistance in arresting other alleged drug war co-perpetrators, including Sen. Christopher “Bong” Go and former Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Oscar Albayalde.The survey showed that 33.2 percent considered government coordination with the ICC over dela Rosa’s arrest unimportant. Another 5.9 percent were unsure, while 2.8 percent declined to answer.On the arrest of other alleged co-perpetrators, 38.6 percent opposed government assistance, while 6.8 percent were unsure and 2.3 percent refused to answer.The findings showed sharp regional differences, with Mindanao standing out as the only region where a majority opposed cooperation with the ICC in arresting dela Rosa.In Mindanao, 57.5 percent of respondents said it was unimportant for the government to coordinate with the ICC in arresting the senator, who has been in hiding. Another 54.5 percent opposed government assistance.By comparison, 71.6 percent of respondents in Metro Manila considered government coordination with the ICC over dela Rosa’s arrest important. The figure was 69.7 percent in the rest of Luzon and 56.2 percent in the Visayas.A majority in Metro Manila (62.4 percent), the rest of Luzon (58.9 percent) and the Visayas (52.5 percent) also favored government assistance in apprehending other alleged co-perpetrators.Support for cooperation with the ICC also varied according to political affiliation.Among respondents identifying with the opposition, 79.4 percent considered government coordination with the ICC over dela Rosa’s arrest important. The figure was 74.5 percent among supporters of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and 64 percent among independents.Duterte supporters were the least likely to favor cooperation, with 53.2 percent saying it was unimportant for the government to coordinate with the ICC in dela Rosa’s arrest.The same pattern emerged regarding other alleged co-perpetrators. Support for government assistance in the arrests reached 70 percent among opposition-aligned respondents, 66.7 percent among Marcos supporters and 56.3 percent among independents.Across generations, Gen Z respondents were the most likely to consider government coordination with the ICC over dela Rosa’s arrest important, at 64.3 percent, followed by Gen X at 60.5 percent, Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation at 56.3 percent, and millennials at 51.3 percent.Views on assisting in the arrest of other alleged co-perpetrators were less uniform. Support stood at 61 percent among Gen Z respondents and 55.2 percent among Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation. Millennials were divided, with 44.5 percent favoring assistance and 47.2 percent opposing itThe ICC issued an arrest warrant for dela Rosa on Nov. 6, 2025, which was unsealed on May 11, 2026. The warrant accuses him of crimes against humanity of murder as an indirect co-perpetrator in the killings of at least 32

people during the height of Duterte’s anti-drug campaign.Dela Rosa resurfaced on May 11, the day the warrant was unsealed, to cast the crucial 13th vote that briefly made Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano Senate president. He was placed under Senate protective custody that day but slipped out of the Senate complex on May 14 during a gunfire incident.He has since been in hiding, and the government has offered a P50 million reward for information leading to his arrest.The noncommissioned survey involved face-to-face interviews with 1,401 Filipino adults and had a national margin of error of plus or minus 2.6 percentage points at a 95-percent confidence level.

- Filipinos among injured in Spain bus accident (2026-10-29 16:20)

THE Philippine Consulate General in Barcelona has confirmed that Filipinos were among those injured in the bus accident in Fogars de Montclús on Oct. 25.A bus with over 80 passengers collided with a car and plunged down a 20-meter embankment.The consulate did not say how many Filipinos were injured but added it already established contact with them.It was also not clear whether the affected Filipinos are tourists or workers living in Barcelona.It said it remains in close coordination with local hospitals and police authorities to monitor the injured Filipinos’ condition and determine if the consulate could assist them. “The cause and circumstances of the accident remain under investigation by Spanish authorities and further updates will be provided as information is confirmed, with due regard for the privacy and welfare of those involved,” it added.It remains in close coordination with local hospitals and police authorities to monitor their condition and determine their consular assistance needs."Representatives of the consulate have also visited Filipino nationals who remain admitted to hospitals to personally check on their condition, extend support, and assess any assistance they may require," the consulate said in a statement on Wednesday."The cause and circumstances of the accident remain under investigation by Spanish authorities and further updates will be provided as information is confirmed, with due regard for the privacy abd welfare of those involved," it added.The consulate expresssed its sympathy to all those affected and wished the injured a full and speedy recovery.It remains committed to providing necessary consular assistance and will continue to coordinate with the relevant authorities.

- JBC shortlists all 5 chief justice aspirants (2026-10-29 16:19)

THE Supreme Court will have two vacancies for the chief justice and associate justice positions just 10 days apart, requiring the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) to submit separate lists of nominees to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.All five applicants seeking to become the next chief justice have made the shortlist of nominees, while the JBC is finalizing the shortlist for the associate justice post to be vacated by Associate Justice Amy Lazaro-Javier.Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo will retire on Nov. 6, and Lazaro-Javier on Nov. 16. Both will reach the mandatory retirement age of 70 on those dates.The five candidates for chief justice are Senior Associate Justice Marvic Leonen and Associate Justices Alfredo Benjamin Caguioa, Rodil Zalameda, Japar Dimaampao and Jose Midas Marquez.The JBC completed its public interviews of the five aspirants on Oct. 26, after interviewing Leonen and Caguioa on Oct. 22 and Zalameda, Dimaampao and Marquez on Oct. 26.The council is narrowing the field for

Lazaro-Javier’s replacement. The applicants vying for the position include Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Geraldine Faith A. Econg, Bureau of Immigration Deputy Commissioner Aldwin F. Alegre, Legal Education Board chairman Jason R. Barlis, Court of Appeals Associate Justice Lily Biton, Commission on Audit Chairman Gamaliel A. Cordoba, Commission on Elections Commissioner Ernesto Perez Maceda Jr., Government Corporate Counsel Solomon Mateo Hermosura, private lawyer German Quintos, Lichauco 2nd, Solicitor General Darlene Marie Berberabe, former CA presiding justice Fernanda Lampas Peralta, CA Associate Justice Nina Antonio-Valenzuela, CA Associate Justice Ramon Bato. Jr., CA Associate Justice Ramon Cruz, CA Associate Justice Maria Elisa Sempio Diy, CA Associate Justice Myra Garcia-Fernandez, CA Associate Justice Ronaldo Roberto Martin, CA Associate Justice Walter Ong, Sandiganbayan Associate Justice Karl Miranda, and Court of Tax Appeals Associate Justice Maria Rowena San Pedro.The JBC acts as the main screening mechanism to ensure that candidates for the bench embody the standards of competence, integrity, probity, and independence.Under Article VIII, Section 8 of the Constitution, the council is composed of the chief justice as ex officio chairman, the justice secretary, a representative of Congress, and regular members representing the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, the legal academe, retired Supreme Court justices and the private sector.The search process generally begins with the publication of a vacancy and an invitation for qualified applicants or nominees to submit their credentials. The JBC then evaluates the applicants’ qualifications, professional records and other relevant information, including any comments or opposition submitted against them.For Supreme Court vacancies, the council conducts public interviews to assess the candidates’ legal competence, judicial philosophy, integrity, independence and capacity to perform the duties of the office. The interviews also allow the public to scrutinize the candidates and their positions on issues affecting the judiciary.After the interviews and evaluation, the JBC deliberates and votes on the candidates to be included in its list of nominees. Its rules govern the screening and voting process, while the Constitution requires a list of at least three nominees for every vacancy.The JBC will submit its list of nominees to President Marcos, who then chooses the next head of the Supreme Court. Seniority is not a deciding factor, since the President is free to select any candidate from the shortlist.

- DOLE HEIGHTENS SAFETY CHECKS (2026-10-29 16:17)

THE Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) said Thursday it had intensified nationwide inspections of occupational safety standards in preparation for the influx of travelers on All Saints’ Day.The review also covers wage payments, working conditions and workplace safety requirements.DOLE said inspections had been completed at bus terminals in Baguio City and Pasay City, as well as maritime vessels in Batangas. “DOLE must also conduct thorough inspections of ships to ensure they have the necessary equipment. Our sea vessels must be in proper condition,” Labor Secretary Francis Tolentino said in a statement.Public construction projects in Basco, Mahatao, Uyugan, Ivana and Sabtang were also evaluated for compliance with occupational safety and health regulations.In Bicol, DOLE conducted monitoring and inspection visits in three tourism establishments under its “Safe Work, Safe Tourism:

Compliance as a Brand" campaign.Inspection teams checked the facilities, spoke with employees and reviewed operational documents to assess workplace compliance.DOLE held an inter-agency coordination meeting in Central Visayas to strengthen compliance with general labor standards and occupational safety and health standards in the transport and maritime sectors.The meeting focused on coordinating actions among agencies to counter El Niño's impact on operational safety.

- Lopez vows to continue anti-corruption drive (2026-10-29 16:16)

PUBLIC Works Secretary Giovanni Lopez said anti-corruption reforms would continue under his watch to restore public confidence in the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).Lopez said he would make sure the reforms initiated by Vince Dizon were institutionalized.President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. recently ordered a Cabinet reshuffle where Dizon and Lopez swapped places. Dizon returned to head the Department of Transportation to address mass transit and daily commuter issues, while Lopez assumed leadership of the DPWH to institutionalize ongoing anti-corruption and transparency reforms.Lopez said it would take a strong political will to implement reforms at the DPWH, noting he would focus on changing the system and culture of the department.He said culture change means transforming the mindset, daily habits and sense of accountability of both rank-and-file employees and officials. This, he said, would ensure that anti-corruption and transparency norms would continue in future administrations.He said reform programs must encompass the entire project cycle from budget preparation and procurement up to implementation.During Tuesday's press conference, Dizon handed over to Lopez documents on erring DPWH officials and personnel.Dizon reported that over 80 DPWH personnel were dismissed while 29 contractors were either blacklisted or suspended under his watch.

- Govt ready for any crisis – Palace (2026-10-29 16:15)

MALACAÑANG on Thursday assured Filipinos that the government was ready to address any crisis as some countries had advised their citizens to prepare for "sudden emergencies" such as armed conflict.Some countries are preparing for a range of possible emergencies, including military conflict, cyberattacks, sabotage, natural disasters and prolonged power outages. "That is exactly what the government is doing — prepare," Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro said in a press briefing. "So, you can expect the government to be ready for whatever might happen; the government is ready," Castro said in Filipino.The government has advised households to prepare an emergency "go bag," which should include basic items such as medicines, sufficient water, flashlights, a whistle and simple food items (like easy-to-open canned goods) to sustain one person for at least 72 hours.The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), through the Cybersecurity Bureau – National Computer Emergency Response Team (NCERT), on Wednesday advised all government agencies and critical information infrastructure (CII) operators to strengthen cybersecurity preparedness.CII operators were advised to maintain heightened monitoring "in anticipation of potential cyber threat activity surrounding Nov. 5, 2026." Previous monitoring

recorded 38 security incidents on Nov. 5, 2025, with Denial-of-Service (DoS/DDoS) attacks and system compromises accounting for a significant portion of observed activity.Recent threat intelligence has also highlighted critical PHP vulnerabilities, which have reportedly been exploited globally.PHP is a widely used, open-source server-side programming language that powers roughly 70 percent of the world's websites, including platforms like WordPress, Drupal, Joomla, and Wikipedia.All concerned entities were urged to review internet-facing systems, apply relevant security patches, strengthen DDoS defenses, monitor suspicious network and system activity, verify incident response readiness, and ensure the integrity of critical backups.Organizations should also assess their PHP-based applications for exposure and promptly report suspected cybersecurity incidents to DICT-NCERT.

• Gatchalian backs higher military spending (2026-10-29 16:14)

SENATE President Sherwin Gatchalian said he was pushing for legislative support to boost the 2027 funding of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).Speaking at a Senate Committee on Finance hearing on the proposed P324.632-billion budget for the Department of National Defense and its attached agencies, Gatchalian underscored the urgency of fortifying the country's multi-domain defense mechanisms."Our geopolitical situation — both in the region and globally — is changing very rapidly. We see various conflicts unfolding in the Middle East and Eastern Europe. Given this, it is crucial to remain prepared and to continue modernizing and strengthening our armed forces, including their capabilities in cyber warfare," he said.While the Department of Budget and Management raised the AFP Modernization Program fund to P50 billion for 2027 (up from P40 billion in 2026), defense officials said a P20-billion funding gap must be addressed to fully support long-term military infrastructure and existing multiyear procurement contracts under Horizon 2 and 3. Gatchalian identified cyber defense as a critical sector requiring aggressive funding, calling digital warfare an active reality in modern tactical defense strategy.Beyond external and electronic defense, funding is heavily targeted toward the AFP's search and rescue operational readiness. During acute environmental crises, the military operates as a core humanitarian unit. Reflecting this dual mandate, the AFP currently maintains an active inventory of 3,312 land assets, 120 sea assets and 40 air assets ready for deployment nationwide during natural disasters."Our armed forces do not merely serve as defenders; they also respond to calamities that strike our country, such as powerful typhoons and other types of disasters we experience," Gatchalian said.

• How to get started with AI agents, and which are best for specific tasks (2026-10-29 16:13)

Agentic artificial intelligence is gaining popularity far beyond tech circles, with Meta, OpenAI, Anthropic and other companies going head-to-head in the surging market for consumer-friendly AI agents.While the leading AI labs have offered tools with agentic capabilities for years, agents that are designed to work proactively on a user's behalf for tasks from buying groceries to managing to-do lists have taken off this year.For anyone getting started, it can be overwhelming to understand the differences between the companies' various offerings and which agents might be best suited for specific tasks.Here are some

pointers on where to begin if you’re looking to leverage agents in your personal or professional life — or both.Don’t just use one agent; opt for a ‘stack’ Many people in the tech world turn to multiple agents from different AI labs for both their work and home lives. Why? Because “there’s not one holy grail-like agent right now that could do everything,” said Jose Artigas, a business consultant working on AI strategy.Artigas and many others who use AI agents regularly rely on a “stack” of them, a term that refers to a combination of many tools and technologies.Each company’s consumer-facing agent has a slightly different target function, and they vary in accessibility. Some are free, some require a monthly subscription and others are still in testing modes or otherwise not available to everyone. There are also restrictions on their availability in countries outside of the US.Experts say it’s best not to rely solely on one agent if you’re looking to maximize their output and productivity. “What I like to do is to have this system of checks and balances in place where one agent does the work and then I let the other one critique and criticize it, and that way, they find mistakes, correct themselves and become better,” said Clara Gigling, founder of Oudae Labs, a research lab building bespoke tools for agents.Capitalize on each agent’s strengths and weaknesses Each of the major AI companies markets their consumer-facing agents in slightly different ways, often focusing on its ability to help manage either a busy work life or a busy personal life.Anthropic said it built Claude Duet for “professionals and small business owners with more on their plates than they can track.” In contrast, Meta said Muse can help with tasks from “saving money and improving your health to smart shopping and helping you strengthen your relationships.” Claude Duet, OpenAI’s Dots and xAI’s Grok Bot have each been described as aiming to be like a colleague, or even a chief of staff, whereas Muse and Instinct, from the startup Spear Street Technology, have been described as more like personal assistants. But that’s not to say any of them are incapable of helping with tasks outside those realms.Artigas said he’d recommend looking at Claude Duet as key for someone working on a side hustle or launching a new business, Dots as a debugger and problem solver if they’re engaging in any specialized technical work, and Instinct for help with things like sending tedious emails or booking reservations and travel plans.Those are the three consumer-facing agents he uses most often, but Artigas said Muse would be a good place to start for a novice because it’s “very user-friendly,” with many prompts early on to give people ideas of how they can use it.Trial and error is part of the process Your preferences for how you want to interact with an agent, how your agent communicates, and your own assessment of the quality of its work should all factor into which agents you’d like to use — and which tasks you’d like to assign to an agent.Experts recommend testing out agents you’re curious about to help in reaching those determinations.To begin this testing, Gigling said it can be helpful to think about tasks you consistently do and then choose some to delegate to agents. It is important to be specific — giving the agent a detailed goal and the required context and tools to achieve it, she said. “Start with one annoying, repeated thing that you keep putting off,” Artigas said, with the caveat that it has to be an online task. An agent can’t handle the pile of laundry you’ve been meaning to fold or the junk drawer that needs organizing. A long email you don’t want to write or a flight you’ve been slow to book are good jumping off points. “You just have to experience the different agents and see what works best” for you, Artigas said.Determine your comfort level

with sharing personal information For an agent to most effectively handle routine tasks or act like a proactive assistant, it needs to have access to a slew of information about you.Your inbox, your calendar, your personal identification information and even your credit card number and bank account are all par for the course if you want an agent to sort through your deluge of emails, book your flight or do some holiday shopping.This has raised significant privacy concerns for some. “Curiosity is always a great starting point, just trying and playing around with it,” Gigling said, but it’s also important to “be mindful” when sharing private information.Many companies offering consumer-facing personal agents have worked to address those concerns, with privacy policies that outline how agents operate on their own dedicated cloud computers and how users can control their memory retention.

- Marcos bares Bocaue elevated road project (2026-10-29 16:12)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday announced a proposed P120-billion elevated road project linking Balintawak in Quezon City to Bocaue, Bulacan to improve traffic flow.The president made the revelation during the opening of NLEX-C5 (North Luzon Expressway) Northlink Segment 8.2 Section 1A in Valenzuela City.The opening of NLEX-C5 Northlink section will cut travel time along the route from 40 minutes to just five, allowing motorists to reach their destinations faster while saving on fuel.Marcos described the P120-billion investment as good news for commuters since the elevated road would provide an alternative route alongside the existing highway.The project also aims to cut travel time and transport costs, generate jobs, and spur economic development through expanded infrastructure investments. “[We have] good news. The MVP Group will be making an investment worth P120 billion. They will build an elevated expressway from Balintawak to Bocaue. It will reach all the way to Bocaue,” the president said. “And this is a very big deal because they will route it through NLEX-Meycauayan, where they will now build an elevated structure. This is the coming together of two groups, the MVP and SMC Group, joining forces,” Marcos said. “This is very good news for our continuing construction to improve the flow of traffic for us, speeding up and lowering transport costs, and making travel more comfortable for our workers,” he added.The president said the MVP Group would undertake the project in coordination with the SMC Group, following his call for them to collaborate to expand the country’s road network, provide commuters with alternative routes, and improve travel conditions.He welcomed the investment as another development in the administration’s continuing efforts to improve the country’s transportation system and reduce the time workers spend on the road. The president said NLEX management opened ahead of schedule to help motorists travel faster and more conveniently and ease traffic congestion.This two-kilometer section of Segment 8.2 connects Quirino Highway in Quezon City to NLEX Mindanao Toll Plaza in Valenzuela City.The new section is part of the government’s continuing efforts to improve the country’s road network, ease traffic congestion, and facilitate the movement of people and goods.With the new section, motorists from Quirino Highway can now directly access the NLEX Connector for trips to Manila, the university belt, and nearby cities, offering an alternative route to EDSA.

- Villar seeks discounts, fee waivers for indigent jobseekers (2026-10-29 16:11)

SEN. Mark Villar has filed a bill seeking to reduce the cost of securing employment by granting indigent jobseekers discounts and fee exemptions on essential government documents and other preemployment requirements.Senate Bill (SB) 1272, or the proposed Kabalikat sa Hanapbuhay Act, seeks to ease the financial burden on low-income Filipinos applying for jobs locally or abroad. “A lack of funds should not be a barrier for Filipinos seeking employment,” Villar said.Applicants should be able to focus on finding work and building a livelihood rather than struggle with the cost of obtaining required documents, he said.Villar said the proposal stemmed from his interactions with job applicants during the monthly MARKAbuhayan Job Caravan.Under SB 1272, indigent applicants will receive a 20-percent discount on fees for barangay clearances, National Bureau of Investigation clearances, National Police Clearances, medical certificates, Philippine Statistics Authority birth and marriage certificates, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) National Certificates, and Certificates of Competency, Civil Service Commission certificates of eligibility and other approved government-issued employment documents.The measure also proposes waiving fees for tax identification numbers issued by the Bureau of Internal Revenue, as well as transcripts of records, transfer credentials, authenticated diploma copies and certificates of good moral character issued by state universities and colleges, and local universities and colleges.Applicants would qualify as indigent if they have no visible means of income, earn below the official poverty threshold or cannot consistently meet their minimum basic needs.A certificate of indigency would be issued free of charge by the appropriate local social welfare office. Members of households enrolled in the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) would automatically qualify.The proposed benefits could be availed of only once every six months from each government agency, except by first-time jobseekers already covered by Republic Act 11261, or the First Time Jobseekers Assistance Act.The bill also provides for beneficiary monitoring through Public Employment Service Offices and the Department of Labor and Employment’s PhilJobnet platform, penalties for unlawfully denying benefits or falsifying documents and interagency coordination and congressional oversight to ensure proper implementation.

- First lady, Angara launch school hydroponics project (2026-10-29 16:10)

FIRST lady Liza Araneta-Marcos and Education Secretary Sonny Angara launched a nationwide school-based hydroponics project with the Philippine Reclamation Authority at the Las Piñas National High School and Parañaque National High School.The initiative is part of the “Agri Tayo, Lab for All” program. “The hydroponics project is a big contribution to make vegetable gardening in our schools more advanced and efficient. Not all schools have adequate space or fertile soil. So this initiative is important because the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program becomes possible even if space is limited,” Angara said in Filipino and English. “This is also excellent for saving water. Hydroponics uses 90 percent less water than traditional farming, making it a critical buffer against climate extremes like Super El Niño. More than this, we can expand the knowledge of the community about modern farming,” he added.The two schools received two hydroponics greenhouse facilities to maximize learner reach and community engagement.The

project was initiated through the Social Environmental Fund generated from reclamation projects. The first phase aims to establish hydroponics greenhouse facilities in 200 schools nationwide, scaling up to 700 units overall to tackle spatial and agricultural challenges in urban and coastal communities.During the initial phase, beneficiary schools in Metro Manila and various provinces including Cavite, Cagayan, Pangasinan, Pampanga and Masbate will each receive a hydroponics greenhouse facility. “Aside from supplementing the School-Based Feeding Program with freshly harvested vegetables, the greenhouse facilities are designed to serve as hands-on living laboratories. Through experiential learning, learners can directly observe plant growth, nutrient management, water utilization, and photosynthesis, thereby integrating real-world science into their lessons,” the Department of Education (DepEd) said.The DepEd added that the project “supports Agri-Fishery Arts and agro-entrepreneurship electives under the strengthened Senior High School curriculum, helping learners cultivate practical livelihood and technical-vocational skills.” “DepEd and its partners look forward to expanding the collaboration to more institutions, ensuring that more Filipino learners gain practical agricultural skills while contributing to community food security,” it said.

- ‘Harness e-trikes to save on gas’ (2026-10-29 16:09)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said Thursday electric tricycles (e-trikes) could be instrumental in reducing gasoline expenses, as the government aims to expand local electric vehicle manufacturing. “Lower gasoline expenses mean more to take home for our families,” the president said in Filipino during a visit to the manufacturing and assembly plant of Sazgar Philippines Inc. in Biñan, Laguna.Marcos said that tricycles typically travel about 90 kilometers a day in urban areas and 110 to 120 kilometers in the provinces.He said Sazgar’s electric three-wheelers can travel 100 to 210 kilometers on a single six- to eight-hour charge, potentially covering tricycle drivers’ daily routes in both urban and provincial areas.The Sazgar facility in Barangay Mamplasan has an annual assembly capacity of about 12,000 three-wheeled vehicles, including electric and internal combustion engine models.The president said the investment could generate jobs, strengthen domestic manufacturing and create opportunities for Filipino suppliers of vehicle parts and components.Sazgar Philippines, which is 60 percent Filipino-owned, operates the company’s first manufacturing facility outside Pakistan. The plant is also envisioned as its manufacturing hub for Southeast Asia.Transportation Secretary Vince Dizon, Pakistani Ambassador to the Philippines Asima Rabbani, Sazgar Philippines President Muhammad Fahim and other government and company officials joined the president on his visit to the facility.Marcos urged the company to source more components from local manufacturers to expand opportunities for Filipino businesses and workers.The investment comes as the government pursues its target of achieving a 50 percent electric vehicle share in the country’s vehicle fleet by 2040 under its comprehensive roadmap for the electric vehicle industry.

- 2 bus firms face sanctions (2026-10-29 16:08)

TRANSPORTATION Secretary Vince Dizon issued show-cause orders to two bus companies over compliance issues in their facilities.Dizon said the terminals of Ohayami Transit and Victory Liner in Sampaloc, Manila, were found to have insufficient seating and electric fans in waiting areas and dirty restrooms with no water supply. “I have also observed inadequate cashless ticket-selling options, which was contrary to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s directive to ensure passenger comfort and safety,” Dizon said on his first day of work after returning as Department of Transportation (DOTr) head. “Just imagine, these are only minimum requirements for the bus companies to comply for the operation of their terminals for the comfort and safety of the commuting public, and yet they failed,” Dizon added.Marcos recently ordered a Cabinet reshuffle where Dizon and Giovanni Lopez swapped roles. Dizon returned to head the DOTr to address mass transit and daily commuter issues, while Lopez assumed leadership of the Department of Public Works and Highways to institutionalize ongoing anti-corruption and transparency reforms.The DOTr has been intensifying safety compliance inspections ahead of the observance of All Saints’ Day.

• Valenzuela City receives 2026 Galing Pook Award for hubs (2026-10-29 16:07)

VALENZUELA City received the “Galing Pook Award” for its “Building Spaces in a Spaceless City” initiative. “Striking a balance between industry and livability, the city has transformed empty or underutilized spaces into vibrant hubs for community-building, recreation, and physical wellness,” said Mayor Wes Gatchalian after accepting the award in a ceremony at Malacañang Palace on Thursday.Organized by the Galing Pook Foundation in partnership with government agencies, the Galing Pook Awards recognize best practices and outstanding local governance programs.Valenzuela City has 31 public parks and open spaces. The most popular among these is the Valenzuela City People’s Park.The city government has repurposed empty spaces beneath the NLEx (North Luzon Expressway) Harbor Link into public recreational spaces. “Through a partnership with NLEX Corporation, these areas were transformed into recreational zones known as the Skate Park and Paw Park — the former dedicated to cycling, skateboarding, and physical recreation, while the latter serves as an activity area where families can bond with their beloved pets,” Gatchalian said.

• UE confers honorary doctorate on Supreme Court’s Zalameda (2026-10-29 16:06)

THE University of the East (UE) on Tuesday conferred an honorary Doctor of Laws degree on Supreme Court Associate Justice Rodil Zalameda in recognition of his public service and commitment to the rule of law. “The law must therefore be understood not only as a body of rules, but as an instrument of justice,” Zalameda said during a ceremony at the UE Theater in Manila. The event was part of the university’s 80th founding anniversary.Zalameda said judicial authority must serve ordinary Filipinos seeking justice, and that judicial office requires restraint, independence, humility and careful decision-making.Zalameda credited UE with instilling the core values that guided his career. He said the judicial reforms he intends to pursue would reflect those values and acknowledged the teachers, mentors, colleagues, family members and institutions that supported him.UE President and Chief Academic Officer Zosimo

Battad praised Zalameda’s legal excellence and integrity in public service, describing him as a defender of the rule of law whose career reflects honor, commitment and service to the nation.Zalameda is the 36th recipient of an honorary doctorate from UE since the university began conferring the distinction in 1957. He was recognized twice as one of UE’s Outstanding Alumni.He completed high school at UE Caloocan in 1979 and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from UE Manila in 1983. He obtained his Bachelor of Laws degree from Ateneo de Manila University in 1987 and was admitted to the Philippine Bar in 1988.

- NTC mobilizes regional offices for Undas public assistance (2026-10-29 16:05)

THE National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) has directed its regional offices nationwide to coordinate with government agencies, emergency responders and telecommunications providers to support public assistance operations during from Oct. 31 to Nov. 2.NTC Commissioner Ella Blanca Lopez said effective communication and inter-agency cooperation were important in helping ensure public safety and providing timely assistance to Filipinos visiting cemeteries and memorial parks to honor their departed loved ones.Under a memorandum, all NTC regional directors were instructed to coordinate with local government units, law enforcement agencies, disaster risk reduction and management offices, emergency response units and other concerned authorities in their respective areas.The regional offices were also directed to monitor civic action groups and amateur radio groups participating in public service operations for All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day.They must keep track of the groups' assigned routes, personnel locations, assistance posts and radio base station sites throughout the observance.The NTC will also coordinate with telecommunications service providers, as necessary, to address reported service concerns and help maintain reliable communications, particularly in areas expected to experience increased public activity and mobile network traffic.The commission advised the public to follow safety advisories, take note of local emergency numbers, keep mobile phones fully charged and maintain contact with family members.It also urged the public to use available communication channels responsibly, particularly when seeking emergency assistance.

- NCDA warns content creators vs exploitation of PWDs (2026-10-29 16:04)

THE National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA) has expressed concern regarding content produced by digital personality Setzu featuring Boss Atan, who lives with Crouzon syndrome, which allegedly portrayed physical harm, public ridicule, and degrading portrayals. “The portrayal of harmful or violent scenarios is particularly troubling given that sports, especially basketball, are a source of inspiration and pride for Filipino youth,” the NCDA said. “Content that normalizes or sensationalizes such behavior does not foster sportsmanship; instead, it sends a damaging message to young audiences,” it added.Crouzon syndrome is a rare genetic condition characterized by the premature fusion of certain skull bones.The NCDA reminded content creators and the public that exploiting persons with disabilities for entertainment, pranks, or profit, or subjecting them to public ridicule or vilification, violates Republic Act 9442, or the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons. “Persons with disabilities deserve respect, protection,

and equal treatment in society, not online bullying, dangerous pranks, or exploitation in the name of entertainment," it said.

• Caloocan to provide free rides (2026-10-29 16:03)

THE Caloocan City government said it would provide free bus rides along routes near cemeteries in North and South Caloocan on All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day.Mayor Dale Gonzalo Malapitan said the initiative would be implemented under the city's Public Safety and Traffic Management Department.Meanwhile, the City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Department, City Health Department, Environmental Management Department, City Police Station and Bureau of Fire Protection will coordinate to maintain order, safety, and cleanliness in the cemeteries."We aim to make the observance of Undas safe and convenient for our fellow citizens. Through free rides and other services, we seek to ensure the well-being of every Batang Kankaloo (Caloocan Kid)," Malapitan said.

• US defense commitment to Sierra Madre questioned (2026-10-29 16:02)

A GEOPOLITICAL analyst has questioned whether the United States is obligated to defend the Philippines if China used force in removing the BRP Sierra Madre from Ayungin Shoal, citing a 1975 US diplomatic communication that distinguished territorial defense from support for Philippine military deployments in disputed areas.Adolfo Quizon Paglinawan, a former diplomat, said in an interview that the historical US position raised questions about the scope of Washington's commitments under the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT), despite more recent American assurances of support for the Philippines in its maritime dispute with China in the South China Sea.His remarks followed Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr.'s warning on Oct. 23 that any use of force by China to tow away the grounded Philippine Navy vessel would constitute an act of war against the Philippines.Teodoro said the Sierra Madre is a ship of the Republic of the Philippines, and that "if anything is attempted against it, or anything happens to it through the use of force, that is an act of war against the Republic of the Philippines." Teodoro also said the possibility of invoking the MDT remained open, but stressed that the decision would ultimately rest with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.Paglinawan cited a June 9, 1975, diplomatic communication from then-US secretary of state Henry Kissinger discussing the treaty's application to Philippine military garrisons in the Spratly Islands.According to excerpts reproduced by Paglinawan, Kissinger said the MDT did not obligate Washington to support Philippine deployments intended to establish sovereignty over openly disputed territory.The communication distinguished between defending territory covered by the treaty and supporting military deployments aimed at advancing territorial claims in disputed areas. Kissinger also expressed doubts that the US Congress and American public would support intervention in the Spratly dispute.Paglinawan argued that this historical position cast doubt on whether an attack on the Sierra Madre would necessarily compel US military intervention.The World War II-era landing ship was deliberately grounded at Ayungin in 1999 and now serves as a Philippine military outpost in the West Philippine Sea.Filipino troops stationed aboard it have been at the center of repeated confrontations with Chinese coast guard and other vessels.The MDT, signed

in 1951, provides that the Philippines and the US act to meet common dangers in the event of an armed attack in the Pacific against either party's metropolitan territory, island territories under its jurisdiction in the Pacific, or armed forces, public vessels or aircraft.The US has repeatedly affirmed that an armed attack on Philippine armed forces, public vessels or aircraft in the South China Sea would trigger its mutual defense commitments.The 1975 communication cited by Paglinawan addressed Philippine deployments in the Spratlys and reflects a historical US interpretation of the treaty. It does not, by itself, establish how Washington would respond to a present-day attack on the Sierra Madre.Paglinawan, vice president for internal affairs of the Asian Century Philippines Strategic Studies Institute, has also questioned the legal implications of the vessel's deteriorating condition and its location at Ayungin Shoal.

• Complaint vs Lustre sent to Inquirer (2026-10-29 16:01)

THE camp of lawyer Manases Carpio, husband of Vice President Sara Duterte, said on Thursday the notice on the cyber libel complaint against veteran journalist Philip Lustre Jr. was delivered to the Philippine Daily Inquirer, his last-known professional address.It added that under Rule IV, Section 10(e) of the 2024 Department of Justice-National Prosecution Service Rules, the notice can be delivered to the respondent's last-known professional address when his residence cannot be established.It said articles published by the Inquirer identifying Lustre as their author provided an objective basis for associating him with the newspaper's business address."Where the respondent's residential address cannot be ascertained despite diligent efforts, the complainant may reasonably rely on a publicly ascertainable professional address supported by verifiable information connecting the respondent to that location," Carpio's camp said in a statement.The 72-year-old Lustre, author of the book "Kill, Kill, Kill," about the bloody drug war of former president Rodrigo Duterte, was arrested at Dapo Restaurant while attending the Saturday News Forum hosted by fellow journalists on Oct. 28. He was released on P48,000 bail on the same day.Lustre's lawyer, Dino de Leon, earlier questioned whether the journalist had been deprived of due process because he was not notified of the complaint before the warrant was issued.The case stemmed from a March 2026 Facebook post that allegedly linked Carpio to a P300-million payment involving 18 self-described former Marines who claimed to have acted as bagmen in a flood control kickback scheme.In relation to Lustre's case, the opposition-led August Twenty-One Movement (ATOM) on Thursday called for the decriminalization of cyber libel in the country."We, the August Twenty-One Movement, are adding our voice to the calls to decriminalize cyber libel in our country. Instead, let us further define and strengthen our civil case laws against those who will abuse their freedom of expression, especially if it leads to the destruction of democracies," ATOM said.

• Quezon's poker cards in exhibit show his hand in rescue of Jews (2026-10-29 13:10)

MANILA, Philippines — Poker cards of the late president Manuel Quezon are on display in an exhibit showing his hand in the rescue of over a thousand European Jews from the Holocaust.The exhibit, called Artifact in 360: Gamble of Compassion, was opened at the National Historical Commission of the Philippines' (NHCP) Quezon Memorial Shrine in Quezon

City on Thursday by the NHCP Metro Manila cluster of Historical Museums."For the uninitiated, the exhibit may simply showcase the collection of poker cards...of former president Manuel L. Quezon. However, if you dig deeper, the featured artifacts showcase his so-called open door policy," Foreign Affairs Assistant Secretary Indhira Bañares said at the exhibit's opening.Quezon " made a massive political and diplomatic gamble when he allowed European Jews fleeing the Holocaust to find a safe haven in the Philippines...when the country was still under American occupation," she said.There was opposition from certain foreigners and locals.Bañares said that despite this, he argued "that by permitting the refugees to come to the country, the Philippines is showing the world the kind of people who we really are: hospitable, just, and humane."Information displayed in the exhibit states that the idea of the rescue was conceived while Quezon, then-United States (US) High Commissioner Paul McNutt, and then-Colonel Dwight Eisenhower who later became US president, and the Frieder brothers "were gathered around a poker table.""Around 1,300 European Jews who sought refuge in Manila benefited from his humanitarian policy," Bañares said, adding that this policy "would eventually shape the Philippines' human-centric and...human rights-based diplomacy towards refugees and other forcibly displaced people."She said that since then, the Philippines "has provided asylum and protection to" republicans who fled after the Spanish Civil War, refugees following the Vietnam War, Palestinians, and other people."The government of the Philippines continues to uphold the humanitarian tradition across all international and multilateral platforms," she said."Amidst these volatile and turbulent times, the Philippines shall not waiver from its commitment to protecting refugees and advancing durable solutions for refugees and other forcibly displaced populations. Filipino diplomats will continue to champion a world that respects the rights and dignity of every individual regardless of nationality or legal status, guarded by the conviction that our common humanity transcends borders," she said.The cards are on display until year-end at the shrine which is open Tuesdays to Sundays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Entrance is free.Bañares quoted Quezon as saying, "It is my hope, and indeed my expectation, that the people of the Philippines will have in the future every reason to be glad that when the time of need came, their country was willing to extend a hand of welcome.""The current and future generations of Filipinos should be inspired by Quezon's legacy of defending human rights whenever they are threatened, confronting all forms of hatred and ending the vicious cycles of violence and persecution...," she said."May this legacy continue to remind us that offering refuge is not merely an act of compassion but an affirmation of our shared humanity," she said.

- ‘Housing developers' tie-up with govt offers ray of light for real estate sector' (2026-10-29 10:51)

MANILA, Philippines — The partnership between the government and property developers in promoting housing programs has created a way to revitalize housing sales and made affordable homeownership more available even as the real estate industry weathers a prolonged slump in condominium demand, according to Colliers Philippines.The major developers’ move to collaborate with the government in its housing initiatives was a positive development—one that could help clear unsold condominium inventory while advancing efforts to give more Filipinos

access to homeownership, Joey Roi Bondoc, research director of Colliers Philippines, said."To somehow make the unsold inventory move, it's a good thing that major developers in the country joined the government housing projects of the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) and Pag-IBIG Fund's Expanded 4PH (Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino), so that the industry keeps moving," Bondoc said.The partnerships channel private-sector housing inventory into the government's 4PH program while opening housing financing to qualified Pag-IBIG members who are seeking more affordable homeownership opportunities.So far, five major property developers have signed memorandums of understanding with Pag-IBIG in support of 4PH program — Megawide Construction Corp.; Ayala Land Inc., through its housing brands Amaia and Avida; SM Development Corp.; Filinvest Land Inc.; and Robinsons Land Corp. The participating developers have agreed to extend preferential rates and other incentives on housing units in selected projects to qualified Pag-IBIG members covered by 4PH.Pag-IBIG has likewise raised its maximum loanable amount to P10 million, significantly widening financing options for qualified borrowers, although actual loan approval and affordability will still hinge on the applicable lending requirements and the borrower's capacity to pay.Describing the government-private sector collaboration as a step in the right direction, Bondoc said that long-term demand for condominium units must be considered in gauging how much the partnerships can truly help the market."It's a step in the right direction. It's a good program between the government and private developers," he said.With the growing demand for house-and-lot developments outside Metro Manila, developers, Bondoc said, will need to factor in shifting buyer preferences as they determine which housing products and locations present the strongest market opportunities.He stressed that the potential benefits of the partnerships unfold against a difficult backdrop for the condominium sector where declining take-up, elevated financing costs, and a sizable stock of unsold completed units continue to weigh on market activity.Acquisitions of pre-selling condominium units—properties purchased before construction is completed—had fallen by an estimated 67 percent to 70 percent year on year, making the current period the weakest since Colliers began monitoring the market, according to Bondoc.With approximately 3,000 acquisitions during the first nine months of the year against 13,000 launches and 10,000 take-ups recorded in 2025, the figures, he explained, reflect different market measures and periods, citing the sharp deterioration in pre-selling activity as reported by Colliers. Roughly 32,000 completed condominium units remained unsold or idle, illustrating the challenge developers face in matching existing supply with effective demand, Bondoc said.The slowdown was attributed to elevated mortgage rates, higher prices of goods, subdued consumer spending, economic uncertainty, geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and political developments.Bondoc said mortgage rates around 7.7 percent to 7.8 percent have made financing more expensive, adding to the upfront costs buyers must shoulder when purchasing condominium units through bank financing. For units priced between P3.6 million and P7 million, he said the financial requirements could be out of reach for some prospective buyers—particularly those earning below P60,000 to P70,000 a month.He also pointed to higher monthly down payment requirements, which could prompt some buyers to withdraw from purchases or fail to qualify for bank loans.With pre-selling activity under pressure and completed units still unsold, the expanded 4PH partnerships offer developers

another potential route to reach qualified homebuyers. Yet Bondoc said the program's longer-term contribution will depend in part on sustained demand for the housing products on offer.

• Beijing bickers over 'obstacles' to Asean attendance (2026-10-29 09:16)

BEIJING — Beijing accused Manila on Thursday of "erecting multiple obstacles" to its attendance at an Asean meeting in the Philippines this week, where China will be represented by an embassy attache.While several countries, including the United States, Japan and Australia, are sending their defense chiefs, China opted to send its Manila embassy defense attache."The Philippine side has allowed certain politicians to use public office for private ends and erected multiple obstacles to obstruct China's participation in the Asean Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus," a spokesperson for the Chinese defense ministry told a news conference."This has seriously undermined the Asean principle of consensus, gravely contravened the spirit of openness and inclusiveness" of the summit, the spokesperson added.Asked about Beijing's comments, the Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro told an Asean news conference that others in the regional bloc did not share that position."It is China's position; it is not Asean's position," Gilberto Teodoro told reporters."They were given an opportunity to articulate their position, which is not any different from what they have been articulating before," he added.The two-day summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations concludes in Cebu on Thursday.US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth used the gathering to propose on Wednesday the creation of an "ambitious" US-Asean defense framework, as his country aims to build up partnerships in the region.US ally the Philippines has been engaged in years of confrontations with China over disputed areas of the South China Sea.

• AMLC secures forfeiture of P3.12M 'bribe' for lawmaker investigating govt projects (2026-10-29 08:29)

MANILA, Philippines — The Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) has secured the forfeiture of P3.12 million linked to alleged corruption involving an attempt to prevent a lawmaker from investigating government projects.In a statement on Thursday, AMLC said the money was allegedly offered to a lawmaker in exchange for refraining from pursuing investigations into the projects. “The respondent, a government officer, allegedly attempted to dissuade the lawmaker from pursuing the investigation by offering him the money,” AMLC said. “The lawmaker refused the offer and sought police assistance, resulting in the respondent’s arrest,” it added.

• Malacañang: Dela Rosa's world is 'shrinking' (2026-10-29 06:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Thursday said Sen. Ronald Dela Rosa's world is " shrinking" as the Philippine National Police (PNP) has stepped up its operation to arrest him and acted on credible leads as to his whereabouts.The PNP appealed to Dela Rosa "to surrender to the proper authorities and submit himself to the legal process with dignity."Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro said PNP efforts to apprehend Dela Rosa have limited the fugitive senator's movements."It is true that Senator Bato [Dela Rosa]'s world is

shrinking because anyone who might see him will immediately provide information to the PNP and other law enforcement agencies," Castro said in Filipino in a press briefing.The Palace press officer also said that National Bureau of Investigation Director Matibag "is also receiving information regarding the whereabouts of Senator Bato Dela Rosa."The PNP said that following the announcement of P50 million bounty for information leading to the apprehension of Dela Rosa, the PNP in close coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and other concerned agencies has significantly stepped up its efforts to arrest him."The combined effect of heightened police operations increased public awareness and the bounty announcement has substantially narrowed the senator's ability to move freely without drawing attention," the PNP said in a statement.However, the PNP declined to discuss specific intelligence information and operational details regarding the manhunt on Dela Rosa."Doing so could expose information sources, comprised the validation of leads, alert the subject to police efforts or endanger the personnel involved," it added."What we can assure the public is that information received is being carefully and throughly assessed and credible leads are being acted upon without delay," the PNP stressed.The PNP also "ensures seamless coordination among all concerned agencies to guarantee that all relevant piece of information is properly validated and acted upon."

- PNP: No need for 'wanted' poster on Dela Rosa (2026-10-29 06:01)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Thursday said that there is no need for "wanted" posters of him in public. “As of now we have not yet released a wanted poster and we will have to evaluate if the need arises at maglalabas ho tayo (we will have one),” Col. Allen Rae Co, PNP spokesman said in a press briefing at Camp Crame on Thursday. “If we will see it will help us in our manhunt operations then that’s the time that we will come up with the wanted poster,” he added. A wanted poster is a public notice distributed by law enforcement or government authorities to inform citizens that a fugitive or suspect is being sought for a crime. The senator, Co said, isn’t someone who is not recognizable. “We do not see any need for now kasi unang una sino ba hindi nakakakilala sa itsura ni Sen. Bato (first of all, who doesn't recognize Sen. Bato),” he said. “It’s not about not being able to do it but we do not see the need as of now and further evaluation so in the future if we will be able to evaluate that it will help us in looking for or arresting Sen. Bato then that’s time we will come out with a wanted poster,” he said.A P50 million bounty has been offered for information that will lead to the arrest of dela Rosa who was also given until Friday to surrender.

- Asean, daialogue partners urged to boost security cooperation, uphold intl law, protect migrant workers (2026-10-29 03:52)

LAPU-LAPU CITY — Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. on Thursday urged Asean member states and their dialogue partners to strengthen regional security cooperation, uphold international law and protect migrant workers and seafarers caught in overseas conflicts.Opening the 13th Asean Defense Ministers’ Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) in Lapu-Lapu

City, Cebu, Teodoro outlined three priorities for regional defense cooperation.These include adherence to international law, continued progress in joint security initiatives, and collective responses to disruptions affecting food and energy security. “Our functional cooperation must remain rooted in mutual respect and adherence to international law, including the United Nations Charter and the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea,” Teodoro said.He stressed the importance of respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity, avoiding interference in internal affairs, settling disputes peacefully and renouncing the threat or use of force.Teodoro also urged delegates to sustain progress under the ADMM-Plus framework and cited participating countries for supporting the Philippines and Japan as co-chairs of the experts working group on maritime security.He highlighted cooperation on maritime security, the protection of critical underwater infrastructure and people-to-people exchanges.This particularly among young people who can build trust and cooperation before assuming future leadership roles.The defense chief called for stronger cooperation on food and energy security as supply chain challenges and overseas conflicts threaten regional stability.He also urged participating countries to protect migrant workers and seafarers, particularly those from smaller countries, including ASEAN members, who have been caught in crossfire. “The international order must have a special obligation to protect migrant workers and seafarers in recognition of their vital contributions to the global economy and the way of life of the countries wherein they serve,” he said.Teodoro cited two outcome documents that Asean defense ministers signed on Wednesday: a joint statement commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia and the Manila Joint Declaration marking the ADMM’s 20th anniversary, titled “Navigating Our Future Together.” The documents reaffirmed the participating countries’ commitment to shared principles, Asean unity and Asean centrality in relations with dialogue partners.Teodoro also welcomed South Korean Defense Minister Kang Shin-chul, who attended the ADMM-Plus for the first time.The Philippine delegation included Senior Undersecretary Irineo Espino; undersecretaries Ignacio Madriaga, Salvador Melchor Mison and Fabian Pedregosa; assistant secretaries Marita I. Yoro, Arsenio R. Andolong, Romeo De La Cruz and Simplicius Adicer; and Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff General Antonio Nafarrete.The ADMM-Plus brings together 11 Asean member states and eight dialogue partners — Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia and the United States — for regional defense dialogue and practical security cooperation.The Philippines hosted the meetings on Oct. 28 and 29 as part of its 2026 Asean chairmanship.

- 2 bus firms under fire for dirty toilets, uncomfortable seats in terminals (2026-10-29 03:37)

MANILA, Philippines — On his first day back at the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Secretary Vince Dizon started inspecting bus terminals as more people are expected to travel in connection with the observance of All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day or "Undas."As a result, Dizon said on Thursday that he issued show cause orders (SCOs) against two bus companies — the Ohayami Transit and Victory Liner for violations of the required facilities at their terminals in Sampaloc, Manila.Dizon, who swapped his Cabinet post with ex-DOTr chief and now

Department of Public Works and Highways Secretary Giovanni Lopez, said that during his inspection, he found insufficient seats and electric fans in the waiting areas and dirty restrooms with no water. “I have also observed inadequate cashless ticket-selling options which was contrary to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s directive to ensure passenger comfort and safety,” Dizon said.According to the DOTr, the two bus firms were ordered to explain why their respective certificate of public convenience (CPC) would not be suspended, cancelled or revoked.For Ohayami Transit, Dizon personally discovered during his inspection its non-compliant restrooms, insufficient space and inadequate ventilation in the passenger waiting areas, lack of adequate seating with backrests, absence of designated resting area for drivers and conductors and insufficient roofing or covered areas.The DOTr said inadequate water supply in its comfort rooms and also insufficient space and the absence of backrests in its seats in the passengers’ waiting areas were observed at the Victory Liner’s terminal. “Just imagine, these are only minimum requirements for the bus companies to comply for the operation of their terminals for the comfort and safety of the commuting public and yet they failed,” Dizon said.Worse, Dizon said, he found out that the passengers were made to pay to be able to enter the terminal restrooms. “That is prohibited,” he said.

- US boosts security funding for AFP modernization (2026-10-29 03:17)

MANILA, Philippines — The United States will increase its security cooperation funding to accelerate the modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), although Washington has yet to disclose the amount of the additional assistance.US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth announced the increase during a meeting with Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. in Cebu on Wednesday, according to a readout released by the US Department of War.The additional funding aims to accelerate AFP modernization and improve interoperability between Philippine and American forces along the First Island Chain, a strategically important chain of islands in the western Pacific that includes the Philippines.The US statement did not specify the amount of the increase, when the additional funds would become available or which modernization projects would receive support.Hegseth and Teodoro also agreed to launch an Alliance Command and Control Modernization Sprint to improve real-time coordination between the two countries' armed forces and strengthen the resilience of their alliance.They welcomed progress in operationalizing facilities under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), including investments in critical infrastructure and storage facilities across the Philippines.The announcement comes as the Philippines seeks to strengthen its military capabilities amid growing regional security challenges, particularly in the South China Sea.Separately, the Marcos administration has proposed increasing the AFP modernization allocation in the 2027 national budget to P50 billion, from P40 billion in 2026.The proposed P10 billion increase represents a 25 percent rise in Philippine government funding for the modernization program and is separate from the additional US security cooperation funds announced by Hegseth.The Philippines and the United States have been strengthening their defense partnership through joint military exercises, expanded access to strategic facilities and efforts to improve coordination between their armed forces.The latest funding announcement

signals Washington's continued support for Philippine defense modernization.

• Filipinos injured in bus accident in Spain — PH consulate in Barcelona (2026-10-29 02:02)

MANILA, Philippines -— The Phil Consulate General in Barcelona haa confirmed that Filipinos were among those injured in the bus accident in Fogars de Montclús on Oct. 25, 2026.The accident occurred when a Sagalés bus -- with over 80 passengers -- collided with a car and plunged down an embankment of about 20 meters.The consulate did not say how many Filipinos were involved in the accident but it had established contact with them.It was also not clear whether the affected Filipinos were tourists or workers living in Spain.It remains in close coordination with local hospitals and police authorities to monitor their condition and determine their consular assistance needs."Representatives of the consulate have also visited Filipino nationals who remain admitted to hospitals to personally check on their condition, extend support, and assess any assistance they may require," the consulate said in a statement on Wednesday."The cause and circumstances of the accident remain under investigation by Spanish authorities and further updates will be provided as information is confirmed, with due regard for the privacy abd welfare of those involved," it added.The consulate expresssed its sympathy to all those affected and wished the injured a full and speedy recovery.It remains committed to providing necessary consular assistance and will continue to coordinate with the relevant authorities.

• Lopez vows to cement anti-corruption reforms, restore public confidence after flood control scandal (2026-10-29 01:48)

MANILA, Philippines — Public Works Secretary Giovanni Lopez on Thursday pledged to cement anti-corruption reforms by institutionalizing them and restoring public confidence in the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).Lopez, at his first briefing with key agency officials, cited his goal was to make the reforms, pushed by his predecessor and now Department of Transportation (DOTr) Secretary Vince Dizon, permanent at DPWH “no matter who heads the department or sits in Malacañang.” Reiterating that the reforms were actually initiated by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and carried forward by the ex-DPWH chief, Lopez stressed that it would take “strong political will” to implement reforms at the public works department.He vowed to focus on the systems and cultural changes, being the two vital elements needed to make the reforms stick. The first entails preserving and institutionalizing the systems Dizon had introduced; the second requires a shift in how government officials and even employees carry out their duties.For Lopez, cultural change means transforming the mindset, daily habits and sense of accountability of the department's rank-and-file employees and officials—not merely its top leadership.Combined with the systems change, Lopez emphasized that cultural change would ensure that habits of anti-corruption and transparency outlast any single administration.Urging the entire DPWH officials and employees to strictly follow proper procedures, the ex-DOTr chief believed that the agency must carry forward reforms in transparency, accountability and employee promotions.After all, he said, rebuilding public trust will take the whole of government—not just officials or individual workers.The

reform programs must encompass the entire project cycle from budget preparation and procurement up to the implementation, Lopez said.The transition at DPWH came on the heels of a clean-up campaign targeting ghost projects and kickbacks, requiring employees and officials as well as contractors to embrace a zero-tolerance stance against impunity and corruption.Dizon, on Tuesday's joint press conference with Lopez, turned over several documents that appeared to be involving more erring agency officials and personnel.Dizon also revealed during the same media briefing that over 80 DPWH personnel were removed from their positions while 29 contractors were either blacklisted or suspended under his watch since he assumed the post more than a year ago.

• Duterte camp hits talk of VP replacement as premature, distraction from impeachment trial (2026-10-29 01:26)

MANILA, Philippines — Vice President Sara Duterte's camp on Thursday called discussions about possible replacements for her premature and a distraction from questions over the fairness and legality of her impeachment trial. "These issues raise grave doubts as to whether a conviction by the Senate Impeachment Court, and any consequent attempt to install a replacement, would rest on any solid legal and moral foundation," the camp said in a statement issued by spokesman Salvador Paolo A. Panelo Jr.The camp questioned the impartiality of senators sitting as impeachment court members who face or are threatened with plunder and other criminal charges, as well as the constitutionality of lowering the threshold for conviction.It also accused the court of violating due process by denying Duterte a fair opportunity to refute Articles I and IV before prosecutors withdrew them, and criticized the Senate majority for its lack of outrage over what it described as a waste of time and public funds.Panelo cited a Social Weather Stations survey showing that only 28 percent of Filipinos trusted the Senate Impeachment Court to render a fair judgment, with a net trust rating of -7 percent.He argued that replacing Duterte would not address the country's pressing concerns, citing inflation, the worsening Super El Niño threat to food security, economic growth slowing to 2.3 percent and the peso's decline to record lows. "The impeachment has only made clear how this administration and its allies prioritize political maneuvering over the issues that matter most to ordinary Filipinos," Panelo said.

• Estrada hits back as Bernardo implicates more personalities (2026-10-28 19:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Detained Sen. Jinggoy Estrada hit back at state witness former DPWH undersecretary Roberto Bernardo on Wednesday as he attended in person for the first time the Sandiganbayan Fifth Division hearing on his bail petition in a P573-million plunder case involving alleged kickbacks from flood control projects. "He has already implicated so many people," Estrada retorted after Bernardo told the court that he had found it difficult to implicate the senator because they were friends.Bernardo faced questions from the anti-graft court justices and Estrada's lawyer, Laurence Arroyo, about why he did not name the senator in his September 2025 affidavit. He later accused Estrada of receiving kickbacks in November 2025, with his latest judicial affidavit, dated October 26, 2026, putting the alleged amount at

P573 million. “During my first affidavit, I had no confirmation or solid evidence to prove his involvement. I already had him in mind as a proponent of projects, but I had to confirm it first,” Bernardo testified. “It is difficult to implicate a friend. I could not bring myself to do that. There had to be evidence,” he added.Bernardo said his earlier affidavit reserved his right to submit a supplemental affidavit if warranted, given the complexity of the case.In his testimony, Bernardo alleged that the P573-million in kickbacks was delivered to Estrada in four installments from November 2024 to June 2025. He said he personally delivered money to the senator only in June 2025, accompanied by his driver. “It was June of 2025 when I delivered it with my driver,” Bernardo said.He also testified that the payments came in sealed boxes containing amounts in multiples of P20 million, citing information from fellow state witness Gerard Opulencia, a former DPWH regional director.Bernardo further alleged that Estrada sought P1 billion in infrastructure allocations under the Senate leadership fund to cover election-related expenses. He told the court that the request was made over the phone, quoting the senator as saying, “Please help me with this because I still have many people to help during the elections.”Outside the courtroom after the hearing, Estrada questioned Bernardo’s credibility and rejected the allegation that the witness had delivered money to him. “I’m satisfied with the cross-examination by our lawyers. The witness has a lot of inconsistencies,” Estrada told reporters. “He did not bring money to me,” he added.Bernardo was originally Estrada’s co-accused in the case before the Sandiganbayan Fifth Division allowed prosecutors to discharge him so he could testify for the Office of the Ombudsman.The hearing followed Tuesday’s testimony by former DPWH chief Manuel Bonoan, who said Bernardo had told him Estrada sought a P1-billion allocation from the leadership fund in the 2025 national budget. Bonoan also placed Estrada’s “congressional initiatives” at P7.4 billion.Under questioning by Estrada’s lawyer, Bonoan acknowledged that Estrada had not personally approached him about the additional funding request and that the list of proposed projects did not bear the senator’s signature.Estrada’s legal team earlier cited a March letter from the Senate’s Legislative Budget Research and Monitoring Office to the Ombudsman, which it said found no legislative records or official documents indicating that the senator had made insertions or amendments to the 2025 national budget concerning the DPWH.

- Tulfo presses for tighter security as Undas travel rush nears (2026-10-28 18:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Raffy Tulfo on Wednesday called for tighter airport security ahead of the Undas travel rush, questioning gaps in passenger protection after the reported theft of luxury watches at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) and the interception abroad of a multibillion-peso drug shipment aboard a private jet bound for Manila.With an estimated 1.25 million passengers expected to pass through NAIA during Undas 2026, Tulfo said authorities must strengthen security measures to protect travelers and prevent illegal drugs from entering the country. “An estimated 1.25 million passengers are expected to pass through NAIA this Undas 2026. That is why we must ensure that adequate security measures are in place,” Tulfo said in his opening statement as chairman of the Senate Committee on Public Services.He cited

the reported theft of luggage containing three luxury watches worth more than P15 million from French national Anthony Boukhors at the pickup area of NAIA Terminal 1. “If notorious thieves can operate within airport premises, how can we ensure the safety of the millions of passengers who pass through the airport every day?” Tulfo said.The senator said aviation security must go beyond protecting passengers and their belongings, stressing its importance to national security and border protection.Tulfo also raised concerns over the Oct. 1 interception in Laos of 521 kilograms of suspected shabu worth P3.54 billion aboard a private jet bound for Manila.The aircraft had reportedly secured a flight permit from the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP), prompting questions about screening and approval procedures for private aircraft bound for the country. “If the drugs had not been intercepted in Laos, could they have made it into the Philippines? Why not?” Tulfo said.Beyond airport security, the senator flagged safety concerns involving maritime transport, expressways, ride-hailing services and delivery platforms, saying recent incidents underscored the need for stricter regulatory enforcement and greater accountability. “Every day, millions of our fellow Filipinos board ferries, take planes, travel along major expressways, use ride-hailing services to get home safely, and rely on delivery networks to keep their businesses running,” Tulfo said. “But when we look closely at recent events, we have to ask ourselves: Are our systems doing enough to protect the lives and dignity of every Filipino as they travel every day?” he added.Tulfo said these incidents were interconnected and pointed to broader gaps in public safety and regulatory enforcement."These are not isolated, disconnected stories,” Tulfo said, citing the Palawan maritime tragedy, the Laos drug case, flooding along NLEX, safety gaps in ride-hailing services, problems in logistics networks and the theft of luxury watches.He reiterated that motorists’ failure to yield at pedestrian crossings remained a serious concern, saying he had repeatedly raised the issue after receiving complaints on his radio program. “People continue to get run over right on pedestrian lanes because many motorists have no regard for pedestrians and refuse to stop,” Tulfo said. “Installing speed humps may seem like a small thing, but when we weigh it against the value of human life, that is a big deal to me and to everyone,” he added.

- Comelec to test Viber for transmitting canvass results in Batanes election (2026-10-28 18:09)

MANILA, Philippines — The Commission on Elections (Comelec) will test the use of Viber in the transmittal of results from municipal to provincial canvassers during the special election in Batanes.The Nov. 28 special election is for Batanes' seat in the House of Representatives. This follows the death of Ciriaco Gato Jr., its lone legislative district's elected congressional representative, at 66."We have a new innovation that we will do. We will pilot test it here. We will talk to all the candidates," Comelec Chairman George Garcia said in Filipino and English in an interview with reporters after the launch of the seventh Asian Electoral Stakeholder Forum in Makati."Remember, [the Batanes special election] is a manual election. This is not an automated election," Garcia said.Wave heights can suspend sea travel in Batanes which has towns located in several islands. The results of the special election will be done by the provincial board of

canvassers at the provincial capitol in Basco in Batan Island."What we did now is we placed it in our rules that the board of canvassers itself of, for example, the town of Itbayat can transmit results through Viber," Garcia said."You will send the result through Viber, with the consent of the parties and the candidates and the lawyers. If they consent, that will be like election results, the accredited cellphone will send the result itself to the cellphone of the board of canvassers and that is what will be canvased without waiting for the physical copy of the statement of votes, CoC, and SoVP, no need, although these will still be sent for purposes of further verification later. So, menaing, we can expedite, we can ensure that on the night of the day of the election...we can proclaim the winning candidate," he said.CoC stands for Certificate of Canvass while SoVP stands for Statement of Votes by Precinct."Now that we have modern technology, why don't we use it?" said Garcia, who also said that the Comelec was empowered by the 1987 Constitution to promulgate rules and guidelines to ensure "honest, orderly, peaceful, and transparent, and acceptable" elections.The transmittal of the results from the barangay (village) precincts in Batanes to the municipal board of canvassers in the special election will still be physical, he said.Garcia said that the Comelec had instructed election officers to talk, with the provincial election director of Batanes, to talk with the four candidates about the matter.

- Dela Rosa: Bounty a threat to my life (2026-10-28 16:28)

SEN. Ronald dela Rosa, the top police enforcer during president Rodrigo Duterte’s war on drugs, said on Wednesday that the P50-million bounty placed on his head put his life in “serious danger” and asked the Supreme Court to stop his arrest.International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutors have named dela Rosa as one of eight “co-perpetrators” in the drug crackdown that killed thousands of drug suspects and drug users during the Duterte presidency.The former national police chief has been in hiding since May, when officers attempted to serve an ICC warrant charging him with the crime against humanity of murder.Authorities designated him last week as an “armed and dangerous” fugitive, offered a P50-million reward for his capture, and formed a police task force to find and detain him.“In law enforcement practice, the designation signals to operating units that armed resistance should be anticipated, which is precisely the setting in which lethal force is most likely to be used,” dela Rosa said in a Supreme Court filing that he posted on his Facebook page on Wednesday.“Coupled with a bounty and a declaration abandoning restraint, the designation places petitioner dela Rosa’s right to life .... in present and serious danger,” the 64-year-old said.He asked the Court to prevent law enforcement officers from arresting him and to block his surrender to the ICC.Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla welcomed the court filing, calling it “his right as a Filipino citizen,” before accusing the former top policeman of employing a double standard.“Sadly, he did not afford the same rights to the thousands killed in the drug war. They never had their day to prove their innocence nor be proven guilty. He was judge, jury and executioner,” Remulla said.PNP appealA day before the one-week ultimatum on Thursday, Oct. 29, lapses, the Philippine National Police (PNP) made another appeal to dela Rosa to surrender.“What we all want, especially the PNP, is for this matter to be resolved

peacefully, with nobody hurt or worse, killed," Col. Allen Rae Co, PNP spokesman, said in Filipino and English. "So we are appealing to the senator to surrender." While appealing for a peaceful arrest, the PNP said it is ready for an armed encounter given that dela Rosa is now considered "armed and dangerous," and under the protection of a powerful and armed group in Mindanao.Because of this, the PNP has already mobilized tracker teams, including Special Action Forces, to locate and arrest the fugitive senator.National Bureau of Investigation Director Melvin Matibag also said there is always a possibility of an encounter but said no stone will be left unturned until they find dela Rosa.President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. himself has ordered an intensified manhunt for dela Rosa but specifically instructed law enforcement agents to avoid loss of lives as much as possible.Bato hotlineCo said the PNP has also established hotlines for the people to contact should there be any information on the senator who now has a P50-million bounty on his head.The hotlines include: (Globe) 0927-3073501, (Globe) 0995-512-2729, (Globe) 0945-611-5926, (Smart) 0999-361-9878 and (Smart) 0960-692-3025. "We assure anybody who will be giving tips that their identities, numbers will be kept confidential so we cannot discuss the tips we receive," Co said.The PNP warned the public that prank callers will be held criminally liable, especially if the intention is only to sow chaos or flood authorities with false information. "This is an official law enforcement resource, and you can be criminally charged if you mess with this," Co said.No surrender feelersDespite the nearing lapse of the ultimatum, the senator's camp also has not sent any surrender feelers to the PNP, or the Department of the Interior and Local Government.The senator's camp, in fact, renewed his plea to the Supreme Court to block his possible arrest and surrender to the ICC, specifically citing the P50-million bounty and the government's designation of him as "armed and dangerous" as a threat to his life.Absentee senatorDela Rosa had ceased attending Senate sessions months before the ICC unsealed a November 2025 arrest warrant against him in May.He emerged from months of hiding on May 11 to take refuge inside the Senate building, but slipped out days later following a standoff between security guards and investigators attempting to arrest him during which shots were fired.That same month, the Supreme Court rejected dela Rosa's bid for a temporary restraining order to prevent his arrest.It still has to rule on his petition to have the ICC arrest warrant against him declared illegal.Duterte was arrested in Manila on March 11 last year and handed over to the ICC the following day.The 81-year-old will stand trial on Nov. 30 on charges of committing crimes against humanity during the crackdown on the drug trade.Police have said they killed more than 6,000 drug suspects in self-defense during Duterte's presidency from 2016 to 2022, but human rights groups put the death toll from Duterte's drug war at between 12,000 and 30,000. WITH AFP

- Eligible SSS members to get P8K UPLIFT aid (2026-10-28 16:26)

STARTING Oct. 30, eligible members of the Social Security System (SSS) who are covered by the expanded Uplift assistance program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) will receive up to P8,000 in financial aid.SSS President and CEO Victor Alfonso Limlingan said the upcoming payout will benefit qualified SSS members whose monthly salary credit

(MSC) does not exceed P10,000.Uplift, or Unified Package for Livelihoods, Industry, Food and Transport, assistance would be disbursed in four tranches of P2,000 each, credited directly to beneficiaries' registered SSS disbursement accounts, Limlingan said.Working in coordination with the SSS, the DSWD extended the program to extend additional assistance to qualified members with an MSC not exceeding P10,000, supplementing the aid previously available to members with an MSC of up to P20,000.The SSS emphasized, however, that an MSC not exceeding P10,000 does not automatically qualify a member for Uplift assistance.To be eligible, members must also have paid at least one SSS contribution in 2025 or 2026 and be listed in the Philippine Statistics Authority's 2024 Community-Based Monitoring System database. In addition, they must have enrolled their disbursement accounts through the SSS Disbursement Account Enrollment Module within the prescribed period.Members are then encouraged to check their My.SSS accounts for official notifications regarding their eligibility for Uplift assistance.In the meantime, qualified SSS members with an MSC of P20,000 are set to receive the third and fourth tranches of Uplift assistance, totaling P4,000, on Nov. 6. This follows the DSWD's successful release of the first and second tranches earlier this year, according to the state pension fund.It said that eligible beneficiaries who have not yet received any Uplift assistance will receive the full P8,000 covering all four tranches. "Those who have already received the first two tranches totaling P4,000 will receive an additional P4,000 for the third and fourth tranches," the SSS chief executive said.ARLIE CALALOBoth amounts will be credited simultaneously to beneficiaries' registered SSS disbursement accounts, he added.

- 'Asean unity, defense cooperation crucial' (2026-10-28 16:25)

LAPU-LAPU CITY — Southeast Asian nations must strengthen their unity and defense cooperation to navigate an increasingly fragmented international environment, Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. said on Wednesday, as regional defense leaders gathered in Cebu with United States Secretary of War Pete Hegseth.Teodoro delivered the call during the opening of the 20th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), which the Philippines is hosting under the theme "Navigating Our Future Together." "First, in a fragmenting world, our internal stability and intra-Asean unity are vital, perhaps even in the future existential," Teodoro said.He said Asean members must protect the bloc's central role in regional affairs by respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity, resolving disputes peacefully and rejecting threats, or the use of force. "We must therefore not allow our differences to divide us from within. And where such differences exist, rather, including in the South China Sea, we shall settle them through peaceful and legal means," he said.Teodoro also welcomed efforts by Cambodia and Thailand to sustain their ceasefire agreement and pursue a lasting peaceful settlement.He reaffirmed the Philippines' participation in the process established by the two countries' leaders through the Asean Observer Team, with due regard for the sensitivities of those involved.Teodoro urged defense officials to pursue practical initiatives that build confidence among military establishments and produce tangible benefits for their populations.He cited cooperation through the ADMM and the ADMM-Plus in maritime security and the protection of critical underwater infrastructure,

while calling for stronger regional efforts to safeguard food and energy supplies amid disruptions caused by conflicts outside Southeast Asia.Teodoro also warned of the security implications of a super El Niño, which could disrupt food and water supplies, electricity and connectivity across the region.He encouraged participants to engage in candid discussions throughout the meetings as Asean confronts shared and emerging security concerns.Hegseth arrived at the Mactan-Cebu International Airport on Tuesday night, Oct. 27, aboard a Boeing E-4B Nightwatch aircraft operated by the US Air Force.The aircraft, known as the “Doomsday Plane,” functions as an airborne command center designed to keep the US government operational during emergencies that disable ground-based command facilities.Hegseth is attending the Cebu meetings with Assistant Secretary of War for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs John Noh, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of War for South and Southeast Asia Rafael Leonardo.Defense Assistant Secretary Arsenio Andolong said maritime security, particularly tensions in the West Philippine Sea, would remain a key subject of discussion.Other agenda items include humanitarian assistance and disaster response, counterterrorism, peacekeeping operations, military medicine, cybersecurity and practical defense operations.The Philippines is using its 2026 Asean chairmanship to promote stronger regional partnerships and expand cooperation on shared defense concerns.The meetings also coincide with the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, which establishes principles for peaceful relations among countries in the region.On the sidelines of the meetings, Teodoro met Singaporean Defense Minister Chan Chun Sing on Tuesday to discuss regional security challenges, including foreign interference and coercion at sea, according to the Department of National Defense (DND).Teodoro also highlighted the fundamental principles of the 2016 arbitral tribunal award on the South China Sea, which the DND said could benefit Asean member states.He promoted the Philippines’ defense partnerships with Japan, Canada, South Korea, Australia, India and New Zealand, particularly opportunities to develop defense capabilities, expand practical cooperation and strengthen supply chain resilience.The DND said the meeting sought to deepen defense cooperation between the Philippines and Singapore in support of sustained regional stability.The ADMM and the 13th Asean Defense Ministers’ Meeting-Plus are scheduled to conclude on Thursday, Oct. 29, with delegates expected to issue a joint statement and consensus.The Philippines is scheduled to hand over the chairmanship of both regional defense mechanisms to Singapore for 2027.KAISER JAN FUENTES

- Jordan to boost tourism, cultural exchange with PH (2026-10-28 16:24)

JORDAN aims to invigorate the tourism and cultural exchange relations with the Philippines to allow citizens from both countries to marvel at each other’s “wonders of the world,” its top envoy in Manila said.Jordanian Ambassador to Manila Nasser Shraideh said Jordan’s tourism minister is expected to visit Manila in early 2027 to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Department of Tourism (DOT) to further enhance tourist traffic between the two countries.“Tourism is not an end by itself, but rather a means to get Jordanians closer to Filipinos and vice versa. And I believe that tourism is the best way to introduce each other’s culture,” Shraideh said on Monday.“I believe that you don’t visit Jordan, you experience

Jordan. I think what we would love to offer is a unique experience for Filipino tourists to enjoy in Jordan — the culture, the people, the hospitality," he said.Shraideh told The Manila Times that Jordan "has human footprints" that go back over 2 million years ago. "We have one of the seven wonders of the world in Jordan, which is Petra. We have the lowest point on Earth, which is the Dead Sea," the ambassador said. On the other hand, Jordanian tourists can marvel at the 2,000-year-old hand-carved rice terraces in Ifugao, often described as the 8th wonder of the world. It is included in the Unesco (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) list of world heritage sites. "We have a 'piece of Mars' on Earth which is in Jordan. It's Wadi Rum," Shraideh said, referring to the location where the science fiction film "Star Wars" was shot. He also said that it was at the Jordan River that Jesus Christ was baptized. "And in 2030, we will mark the 2,000 years anniversary of Jesus Christ's baptism in the Jordan River. We would love for Filipinos to come and witness this event." "I know that many Filipinos also love to do pilgrimage to the holy sites, and I think Jordan could be their gateway for visiting those sites, too," Shraideh said.Accompanied by Michael Alexander Ang, Honorary Consul of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in the Philippines, Shraideh met with DOT Undersecretary Stanley Ng and Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) acting Secretary Tess Dizon De Vega.Ang said Shraideh also met with the DFA chief of protocol, DFA director of the Office of Middle East and African Affairs, and officers and members of the Philippine Tour Operators Association Inc. "We discussed our bilateral relations in the areas of tourism, and we have agreed that we have to work closer together to improve tourist flows between the two countries," Shraideh said.He said Jordan is famous for its hospitality services. "We have one of the best foods in the region. We have one of the best tourism services in the region. And I hope that we could tailor design some of the services and the products for Filipinos." "I believe that tourism should be two-way. While we would love to see more Filipinos coming and visiting Jordan, we would love to see more Jordanians coming and visiting the Philippines, too," Shraideh said. "We are hoping that early next year there will be a visit of the minister of tourism of Jordan to Manila to not only to meet with his counterpart from the government of the Philippines but also to engage directly with the stakeholders, tour operators, travel agents here to present what Jordan is about," he said. "There will be an MOU that will be signed between our two countries in this regard. We hope during the upcoming visit of the minister of tourism to Manila this MOU will be signed," he said. "We have agreed that while we don't have direct flights between Manila and Amman today, we could make connectivity possible through one stop in one of the countries whether in your region or in our region," he said.Shraideh, Jordan's nonresident ambassador to the Philippines, previously served as deputy prime minister for economic affairs, minister of state for public sector modernization from 2022 to 2024, and as minister of planning and international cooperation from 2020 to 2022. With diplomatic relations established in 1976, the Philippines and Jordan continue to pursue bilateral engagement, with Jordan ranking as the Philippines' 82nd trading partner in 2025.BERNADETTE TAMAYO

- PH in talks with several countries for oil storage – Garin (2026-10-28 16:23)

SINGAPORE — The Philippines is in talks with Saudi Arabia, Russia and the United States to store oil in the fuel-import-dependent nation, its energy secretary said on Wednesday, in a bid to hedge against fuel price spikes driven by the Iran war.The Southeast Asian nation, which imports nearly all its energy needs, also plans to increase diesel and gas-fired power output to make up for an estimated 60-percent decline in hydropower and 20-percent fall in solar output in the first half of 2027 due to the El Niño weather phenomenon, Energy Secretary Sharon Garin told Reuters.The Philippines is also in talks with Russia, the US, Japan, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Australia on oil storage, Garin said, as it looks to build stockpiles after the US-Israeli strikes on Iran in February disrupted supplies. “If El Niño finishes in April, that’s the time that summer starts for us. So this would be a prolonged pressure for us, which started with the oil crisis in the Middle East,” she said on the sidelines of the Singapore International Energy Week conference.OPEC kingpin Saudi Arabia, which is exploring locations to store its oil following attacks on its ports and oil facilities, announced this week an initial agreement to store Saudi crude in Singapore’s rock caverns starting 2027.The Philippines plans to build its first government-owned storage tank next year at Bataan to hold strategic oil reserves, Garin said, adding that the government has been working with Tokyo to build regional oil stockpiles, which would complement its national reserve.Fuel inventories in the Philippines are currently at 55 days, up from a 15-day minimum requirement, Garin said. The government has 1 million barrels of oil stocks in private facilities, she added. “We start with 1 million [barrels] and scale it up over the years with the objective of reaching 60 days,” she said, adding that the volume will be split evenly between crude and fuels.The country’s average daily demand for petroleum products was about 78 million liters, or about 490,600 barrels, as of May, government data showed.The country of 114 million also plans to install 2 gigawatts of new coal-fired power plants over the next five years to ensure reliable, round-the-clock power to complement 8 gigawatts of additional renewables capacity it plans to add by 2028.Garin said the government was keen on using clean power sources, but also faced rising power demand and geographical limitations. “Our country needs to progress. And for you to be progressive, you have to have steady, secure energy. And sacrificing that just to transition, that would not help our country,” Garin said. “We’re an archipelago, we cannot just have 5,000 megawatts of solar in a small island.”

- Probe into halted BIR badge posting pushed (2026-10-28 16:22)

KABATAAN Party-list Rep. Renee Co, with Gabriela Rep. Sarah Jane Elago and ACT Teachers Rep. Antonio Tinio, has filed House Resolution 1565, calling for an inquiry into the sudden stoppage of the mandatory online posting of Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) Registration Seal Badges by online sellers.”Suddenly reversing course? The BIR implemented this policy without prior consultation or proper consideration for every Filipino engaged in online work. It is even more concerning that, after more than 50,000 registrations, the BIR suddenly withdrew it,” Co said.The BIR suspended the requirement on Oct. 26, days before the Oct. 31 compliance deadline, citing concerns over data privacy and technical difficulties.The badge was introduced as an alternative to posting the full BIR Certificate of Registration on websites, online stores and

social media business pages. The requirement drew flak because of the risk of personal information being accessed through its QR code. This has prompted the National Privacy Commission to ask the BIR to explain its handling of personal data.” A reversal is not enough; there must still be an investigation,” Co said.

• PH growth beyond UMIC to be tackled in Manila Times forum (2026-10-28 16:21)

The Manila Times will bring together government officials, economists and business leaders for its 128th Anniversary Business Forum, “Beyond UMIC: Locking in on Sustainable, Equitable Growth,” to examine how the country can sustain its transition to upper-middle-income status and translate economic gains into better jobs and broader prosperity.A key speaker is Zafer Mustafaoglu, World Bank division director for the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam, who has been closely involved in the World Bank’s engagement with the Philippines as it reached the upper-middle-income country (UMIC) threshold.Mustafaoglu spoke at the Aug. 3 launch of the World Bank’s Philippines Economic Update Midyear 2026, which examined the implications of the country’s new classification and the reforms needed to sustain growth, strengthen competitiveness and reduce poverty.The keynote address is by Budget Secretary Kim Robert De Leon. Other speakers include Gisela Kalalo, executive vice president and chief operating officer of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority; Nicholas Antonio Mapa, chief economist and markets strategist at Metrobank; Emilio Neri Jr., senior vice president and lead economist at BPI; Michael Ricafort, chief economist at RCBC; Robert Dan Roces, economist at the Office of the Chairman of SM Investments Corp.; and Lars Wittig, vice president of the European Chamber of Commerce.The discussion comes as the Philippines faces the challenge of sustaining its economic gains amid concerns about investment, productivity, the cost of doing business and the quality of employment. The World Bank has emphasized the need for reforms that attract investment, lower electricity costs and create more and better jobs.The forum will examine how government policy, private investment and stronger business competitiveness can help the country maintain its progress while ensuring that more Filipino households benefit from economic growth.The event forms part of The Manila Times’ 128th anniversary activities, continuing the newspaper’s engagement with the economic policies and decisions shaping the country’s future.

• US-Asean defense framework proposed (2026-10-28 16:20)

US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth proposed the creation of an “ambitious” new US-Asean defense framework on Wednesday, telling the bloc’s leaders it could help them navigate “critically important” years ahead.The United States has been seeking to boost its regional defense partnerships in recent years, citing the need to uphold what it terms a “free and open Indo-Pacific” as China has increasingly flexed its muscles in the region.Hegseth, speaking before a meeting with defense chiefs from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Cebu, praised what he called the region’s “pragmatism” and “proud nationalism.” “We’re not going to agree on everything, nor do we need to,” he said, calling for cooperation where shared interests overlap.“As we look to the future in this region, I’d like us to be even more

ambitious... we propose that we work together to develop a US-Asean Framework for Defense Cooperation," Hegseth said, without offering details. "A practical framework that guides our cooperation over the next several years. I will note a critically important next several years." He added that the United States was ready to begin the project as Singapore assumes the chairmanship of the Asean Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus in the coming year.The grouping includes not only the bloc's 11 member states but also representatives from the United States, Japan, China, Australia and others.Hegseth also called for the strengthening of "maritime domain awareness" and advanced cooperation among naval forces. "These are not symbolic things; they are concrete demonstrations of what serious partners do, serious partners train together, learn together, plan together, and build the confidence and competence necessary to prevent conflict," he said.US ally the Philippines has been engaged in years of confrontations with China over disputed areas of the South China Sea.China's military and coast guard presence in contested areas of the critical waterway nearly doubled in September, Manila said this month.Japanese Defense Chief Shinjiro Koizumi met Hegseth earlier on the sidelines of the Cebu event, where they discussed the need to implement "an effective denial defense in the First Island Chain," a reference to islands that lie between China and the open Pacific.The two allies also committed to continued "close coordination" on munitions production.Southeast Asian economies are grappling with the effects of Iran war, while tension between the host, the Philippines and Beijing adds another source of friction to a forum meant to promote dialogue and practical cooperation on security.The Iran war, launched by US and Israeli strikes on Feb. 28, has disrupted shipping and oil markets, exposing Southeast Asia's vulnerability to imported-fuel shocks and pushing energy security higher on Asean's agenda.Greg Poling, director of the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, said Hegseth would get an opportunity at the gathering to tackle aspects regarding China, the disputed South China Sea and Washington's commitments to its treaty allies. "Most will want reassurance about US commitment to the region, despite the political turmoil in Washington and the weakening of both US capabilities and readiness by the war in Iran," he said.

- Lazaro leads humanitarian mission in Myanmar (2026-10-28 16:19)

FOREIGN Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro will lead a two-day humanitarian mission in Myanmar this week but is not certain whether she will meet with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) on Tuesday said Lazaro, in her capacity as Special Envoy of the Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) chairman, will lead the mission from Oct. 28 to 29.President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., as chairman of Asean in 2026, has designated Lazaro as Asean Special Envoy to Myanmar. She was tasked to facilitate a peaceful solution to the political crisis in that country.She will lead an Asean Monitoring Team (AMT) Mission, "to support the delivery of humanitarian assistance to affected and displaced communities in Myanmar," the DFA said in a statement.The mission will be coordinated with the Asean Coordinating Center for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Center) on disaster management.The AMT Mission, participated in by representatives of Asean Missions and Japan based in Yangon, will take place in designated sites in Taunggyi, Southern Shan State, on Oct.

28.This will “kickstart the month-long distribution of humanitarian support to communities in Kayin State, Southern Shan State, and Northern Shan State, focusing on areas not previously reached by the AHA Centre,” the DFA said.Lazaro will also lead the symbolic handover of a religious building, as well as the distribution of school kits to prefabricated school buildings that were built through contributions from the Philippines following the 2025 earthquake, which severely affected central Myanmar.Working with its implementing partner, the Myanmar Red Cross Society, the AHA Centre will continue the delivery of food and essential non-food items to affected communities through November 2026.“Overall, the operation is expected to reach more than 11,000 households through the distribution of 50-kilogram bags of rice, family kits, and personal hygiene kits. It will also mark the AHA Centre’s first delivery of humanitarian assistance in Northern Shan State,” the DFA said.Lazaro remains committed to engaging with all parties concerned to implement the Asean five-point consensus, particularly the “cessation of hostilities, facilitation of constructive dialogue, the mediation of the dialogue process, and expansion of humanitarian assistance in Myanmar,” the DFA said earlier.The military junta in Myanmar initially placed Suu Kyi, also a human rights activist, under house arrest in July 1989. She was released years later but was arrested again in 2021 during a coup.After subsequent intermittent releases, Suu Kyi was arrested again during a coup on Feb. 1, 2021. After spending years in prison, she was allowed house arrest on May 1.

- Teachers need to spot warning signs (2026-10-28 16:18)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. wants teachers and other school personnel trained by psychologists and psychiatrists to help them recognize early warning signs of behavioral problems among students.Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro said the president has directed concerned government agencies to strengthen school security and improve the early detection of behavioral warning signs among students to prevent incidents of violence.“And that is indeed the president’s order: There is a need to provide teachers and teaching personnel with more adequate knowledge so they can better guide the students in school,” Castro said in Filipino in a press briefing on Tuesday.Marcos also directed closer coordination among teachers, parents, barangay (village) officials, and social workers to ensure the safety of schoolchildren nationwide.Castro said barangay officials and barangay tanods (village watchmen) should also be mobilized to strengthen security around schools, particularly through increased visibility and monitoring in surrounding areas.“Because the presence of barangay tanods in schools is not prohibited, unlike the police who are not allowed inside school premises,” she added.The president’s directive came following reports of violent incidents involving minors, including a 12-year-old student who was allegedly found carrying a firearm near an elementary school in Misamis Oriental on Oct. 22 and a 13-year-old student who allegedly stabbed a schoolmate in Davao City on Oct. 24.Castro said the Department of Education has proposed a P500 million allocation under the 2027 national budget to strengthen school security and safety measures, including personnel, facilities and programs aimed at protecting learners.She added that 45,994 learner formation officers are assigned to schools nationwide, with 36,713 schools having designated personnel responsible

for values formation, discipline management, learner engagement, and early intervention for students experiencing social, emotional, or behavioral difficulties.The Department of Social Welfare and Development has stepped up efforts to educate parents and teachers on identifying behavioral changes and signs of emotional distress among children through its social workers.These interventions also focus on helping parents recognize potential warning signs among children who spend extended periods alone or engage in potentially harmful online activities, the Palace said.

- 'Overseas Filipinos need better services' (2026-10-28 16:17)

COMMISSION on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) Chairman Dante Ang II said the sacrifices of overseas Filipinos (OFs) deserve "more than recognition." Ang said government support for OFs or non-resident Filipinos (NRFs) must also translate into better services and meaningful opportunities. "They deserve a government that listens, responds and creates opportunities," Ang said during the Month of Overseas Filipinos (MOF) Migrant Fair in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte. "More importantly, we want Filipinos to see that a good life and a promising future are also possible here at home," he said.Ang also underscored the contributions of OFs to national development, citing the record $35.63 billion in cash remittances in 2025, alongside diaspora investments and support for Philippine products abroad.He said the CFO continues to strengthen the economic, political and cultural ties of OFs with the Philippines through programs that promote diaspora participation in community development. "Wherever you may be, the CFO will continue to stand with you," Ang told OFs.The "One Ilocos for Overseas Filipinos" convergence project brought together the MOF Migrant Fair, OWWA Serbisyo Caravan, and BBM-NRN Fair to serve overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), NRFs, returning migrants, and their families.Ang said the initiative supports the goal of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to make migration a choice rather than a necessity by creating comparable opportunities for Filipinos abroad and at home.

- 'Climate change a global health emergency' (2026-10-28 16:16)

PARIS — Climate change must be declared a "global health emergency" to shape governments' policies after heat caused 3 million deaths between 2016 and 2023, a report in The Lancet said Wednesday.Published by the British medical journal ahead of the COP31 summit in November, the 10th edition of the report brought together 146 researchers from 30 countries to assess the impact on the health of the world's population.It said there were a record 710,000 heat-related deaths in 2023, with more than 70 percent of that toll linked to human causes.Marina Romanello, the executive director of the health and research project Lancet Countdown, said there were "three million heat-related deaths globally in an eight-year span since the Paris Agreement" of 2015. "That's roughly equivalent to the entire population of Wales being wiped out in the space of eight years due to heat," she told a news conference.And "68 percent of those deaths are directly attributable to." The legally binding international treaty adopted in the French capital aimed to limit global warming to well below 2 C and pursue efforts to keep it to 1.5 C compared to pre-industrial levels.Romanello said the

global health emergency should have “an integrated approach so that we’re not responding to emergency after emergency.” Instead, she called for “a cohesive long-term response that builds resilience, builds capacities, and builds the possibilities of countries to avoid further emergencies moving forward.” To determine the share of deaths attributable to warming caused by human activity, the researchers compiled the number of heat-related deaths recorded by states, then subtracted those that would have occurred in the absence of, said Professor Ollie Jay of the University of Sydney.Jay said the intensity and frequency of periods of intense heat were amplified by, pointing out that last year an extreme drought affected more than half of the world’s land surface for at least one month.By reducing worker productivity, warming has cost the global economy more than 1 trillion dollars per year over the past three years, the researchers said.Southeast Asia and Africa, the hardest-hit regions, are estimated to have lost the equivalent of 3.9 percent and 3.2 percent of their GDP, compared with 0.2 percent for Europe and 1.5 percent for the Americas.However, there has been concrete progress in some areas.Since 2016, 56 of the WHO’s 194 member states have adapted their health and early-warning systems to anticipate extreme events.

- Identify El Niño response funds – Pangilinan (2026-10-28 16:14)

SEN. Francis Pangilinan urged government agencies on Tuesday to identify funds for mitigating the threats of a potentially severe El Niño.” Let us determine now where we can source the funds and how we can quickly put them to use. We should not wait for the problem to hit before scrambling to find the money. For once, let us be proactive rather than reactive,” Pangilinan said in a statement.” We cannot wait for crops to dry up, fisherfolk to lose their catch and food prices to rise before we act,” he added.This comes as Congress deliberates on the proposed P7.2-trillion national budget for 2027, which includes larger allocations for disaster response and recovery.The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) has proposed P45.67 billion for the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund (NDRRMF), 14.68 percent higher than the P39.82 billion allocated under the 2026 General Appropriations Act.Of the proposed disaster fund, P30 billion would go to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Program, while P14.67 billion would support the rehabilitation and reconstruction of local government infrastructure. Another P1 billion is proposed for the People’s Survival Fund.For 2026, the DBM reported that P17.30 billion, or 43 percent of the NDRRMF allocation, had been released as of Sept. 25, leaving P22.52 billion available for eligible requirements for the rest of the year.The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration has warned of a very strong El Niño, raising concerns over below-normal rainfall, drought, and the availability of water for agriculture and household consumption.The Department of Agriculture reported P6.87 billion in agricultural damage and losses across 14 regions as of Sept. 26, affecting more than 223,000 farmers and fisherfolk.Pangilinan, chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform, called for the immediate mobilization of available funds as part of his eight-point action plan to address the threat of super El Niño.The plan calls for declaring a state of calamity, prepositioning supplies and delivering assistance to affected communities, protecting farms and

water systems, enforcing price freezes, cracking down on profiteering and hoarding, providing livelihood assistance, and establishing a public accountability mechanism.Citing Section 10 of Republic Act 12287, or the Declaration of State of Imminent Disaster Act, Pangilinan identified several potential funding sources for disaster preparedness and risk reduction.These include local disaster risk reduction and management funds, the Special Trust Fund comprising unexpended balances of local disaster risk reduction and management funds, regular appropriations of national government agencies, and the NDRRMF.Pangilinan expressed concern over the possible underutilization of P112 billion in unprogrammed appropriations under the 2026 national budget, which includes allocations for risk management and foreign-assisted projects, as well as P104 billion earmarked for similar purposes under the proposed 2027 National Expenditure Program.He urged the DBM to clarify which existing appropriations and available balances could be tapped for specific El Niño interventions, how much could be mobilized immediately, which agencies would release the money and when it would reach affected communities.” These funds must not be wasted or squandered. The DBM must clarify existing appropriations, available balances and how much can be used for specific El Niño interventions,” Pangilinan said.

- DOJ urged to probe Lustre’s case (2026-10-28 16:13)

THE lawyer of veteran journalist Philip Lustre Jr. called on the Department of Justice (DOJ) to investigate how a cyberlibel complaint reached the courts without his client receiving notice of the charge.The 72-year-old Lustre, author of the book “Kill, Kill, Kill,” about the bloody drug war of former president Rodrigo Duterte, was arrested at Dapo Restaurant while attending the Saturday News Forum hosted by fellow journalists.Dino de Leon, a lawyer and a guest at the forum, was asked to be Lustre’s legal counsel.The cyberlibel complaint was filed by lawyer Manases “Mans” Carpio, husband of Vice President Sara Duterte.” The prosecutor’s resolution sets out the complainant’s version. Where is Philip’s version? There is none — precisely because he never received the complaint and was never given a chance to respond,” de Leon said.” Produce the records. Did they really intend to accord ‘Ka Ipe’ (Lustre’s moniker) a meaningful opportunity to defend himself?” de Leon added.De Leon said he and his fellow lawyers, who were assisting Lustre, questioned the way the lawmen presented the arrest warrant issued by a Davao City trial court judge.De Leon said reports that Davao City Prosecutor Jhopee Salvador Avanceña is a first cousin of Honeylet Avanceña, the longtime partner of former president Duterte, should be verified. He noted that National Bureau of Investigation Director Melvin Matibag cited the same issue when he sought the inhibition of the Davao prosecutor’s office from handling libel and cyberlibel complaints filed against him by Davao Rep. Paolo Duterte.De Leon said the absence of Lustre’s response to the charge should have prompted the prosecutors to determine whether he had been properly notified.” Is the Davao City prosecution service being used to pursue justice, or is it being weaponized to silence a critic of the Duterte family? The DOJ must investigate and answer that question,” he said.De Leon questioned why Lustre was handcuffed while Vice President Duterte, who faces the more serious charge of grave threats, was not subjected to the same restraint.” Did he resist? Did he

attempt to escape? Did he threaten anyone? We are demanding equal treatment and respect regardless of your position or status. No official should be treated as untouchable. No journalist should be treated as an easy target," de Leon said.

- Deadlock over budget cuts a risk – Gatchalian (2026-10-28 16:13)

SENATE President Sherwin Gatchalian on Wednesday acknowledged the risk of a deadlock with the House of Representatives over the 2027 national budget, as lawmakers race against a tight, highly compressed calendar to ensure the spending bill is signed before the year ends. "We need to pass this before the end of the year," Gatchalian said, highlighting the budget's role in driving domestic growth. "A deadlock is what we are trying to avoid because this is time-bound. Both chambers want this finished because it serves as our most important economic stimulus tool," he said.Fears of a fiscal delay have mounted as the Senate inherits a House-approved version of the budget that introduces sharp departures from the executive branch's original plan. Gatchalian admitted that bridging the gap between the two versions will likely trigger intense political friction, potentially threatening the timely release of crucial economic funds. "Last year, we clashed, and there were times the bicameral conference was canceled altogether," Gatchalian recalled. "It is not far-fetched to expect heavy, intense deliberations this time around as part of the process, but we must find common ground."Impeachment pressureCompounding the threat of a budget standoff is a severe scheduling bottleneck. The Senate must simultaneously host a full-scale impeachment trial against Vice President Sara Duterte, a dual mandate Gatchalian described as "very challenging." The Senate leader conceded that a November passage is no longer realistic, officially pushing the fiscal timeline deep into December. To mitigate the risk of a government shutdown or a reenacted budget — which would freeze new infrastructure and economic stimulus projects — Gatchalian said lawmakers are fully prepared to sacrifice their year-end recess. "Our target is to approve and ratify it before the end of the year," he said. "I am certain that we will work through the Christmas season if required. We have no choice. Even during Christmas, we will work to finish this budget."Logistical strainsThe threat of a deadlock is further exacerbated by logistical hurdles during the upcoming Bicameral Conference Committee (Bicam) reviews. Media queries pointed out that deploying the mandatory contingent of six to seven senators to iron out budget differences with the House could break the vital quorum required to legally sustain the parallel impeachment proceedings.Gatchalian acknowledged the risk. "That is genuinely challenging. If we lose our quorum at the trial to run the Bicam, it complicates everything. We will have to negotiate with our counterparts in the House to arrange the logistics." For now, the Senate leadership is deferring adjustments regarding potential deep cuts or realignments to the Senate Committee on Finance chairman, Sen. JV Ejercito, who is tasked with consolidating the chamber's version to present a unified front before facing the House panel.ARAL fundingSenators are pressing for the full restoration of funding for the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program after discovering it was omitted from the proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 National Expenditure Program (NEP).Despite receiving P8.9 billion in the FY 2026 General Appropriations Act through

congressional allocations, the FY 2027 NEP contains zero dedicated funds for the initiative, while the House version of the budget provides a sparse P350 million. The Department of Education is requesting P15.98 billion to expand the program, citing a minimum baseline of P8 billion required to maintain basic operations.Lawmakers expressed alarm over the defunding of a program credited with significant learning gains. Gatchalian highlighted an impact evaluation conducted with Youth Impact and the World Bank, which revealed that ARAL helped pull over 1.37 million students out of the struggling reader category, successfully bringing 730,000 learners to their proper grade level.JAVIER JOE ISMAEL

- Researchers harness AI for durian analysis (2026-10-28 16:12)

RESEARCHERS from the University of the Philippines Mindanao (UPMin) said they have developed a non-invasive artificial intelligence (AI)-based system to assess the maturity and quality of a durian fruit.The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) said that the Philippines produces at least 80,000 metric tons of fresh durian annually, with production valued at nearly P6 billion.The AI-based Non-Invasive Grading System for Durian (AIDurian) uses computer-operated visual scanning, acoustic analysis and deep learning to assess fruit ripeness, surface defects, locule count and shape.Project leader Dr. Armacheska Satina said traditional durian grading relies on visual observation and acoustic tapping, which depend on the experience and judgment of classifiers. “These methods are subjective and difficult to replicate consistently; grading can vary among classifiers and may become a bottleneck when skilled personnel are limited, particularly during peak handling periods,” Satina said.AIDurian is integrated into two prototype platforms: Inspection of Durian Using AI, a mobile application for field-level inspection and decision support; and Durian Desktop-Oriented Non-Invasive Grading System, a desktop application for more comprehensive analysis.The AIDurian project reported more than 80-percent accuracy in maturity classification and acoustic ripeness assessment, 93 percent in defect detection and nearly 98 percent in locule analysis. “By automating selected grading tasks, AIDurian can help support more timely sorting, handling and marketing decisions while potentially reducing postharvest losses,” Satina said.UPMin implemented the project under DOST’s I-Cradle program, with a budget of P11 billion. It was completed in early January 2026.AIDurian is among the technologies to be featured at the National Science, Technology and Innovation Week, scheduled for Nov. 25 to 29 in General Santos City, South Cotabato.

- PNP orders review of bomb threat response protocols (2026-10-28 16:11)

THE Philippine National Police (PNP) on Wednesday directed concerned police units to assess procedures and strengthen their ability to respond to bomb threats as incidents involving schools and universities underscore the need to keep security measures up to date.PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said the review would focus on ensuring police protocols and operational capabilities remain responsive to changing threats.He added that the organization is ready to provide additional specialized training to improve personnel readiness to handle and investigate such incidents if necessary. “We must ensure that our bomb threat protocols evolve

with the threats we face. Our response must be swift, our personnel well-trained, and our investigative capabilities strong enough to identify those responsible and prevent similar incidents," Nartatez said in a statement.The directive came after two incidents of bomb threats in two major universities in Metro Manila that led to the evacuation of students and suspension of classes. The same threat also hit other schools in the provinces in the past months.Police are investigating the incidents to determine possible links between some of the bomb threat incidents, which will help investigators determine whether they were isolated cases or part of a wider pattern.In Batangas, for instance, at least two people were recently arrested for their involvement in bomb threats that targeted at least two schools in the province.Nartatez underscored the need for prompt security assessments and coordinated action whenever a potential threat is reported. "Every bomb threat must be treated with urgency and investigated thoroughly. We will establish the facts, determine whether these incidents are connected, and hold those responsible accountable under the law. Our priority is to protect lives and ensure that our schools remain safe for students and personnel," the top cop said.

- Technical officers beef up PNP health, forensic services (2026-10-28 16:10)

THE Philippine National Police (PNP) has expanded its specialized support services with 25 new members through the 2026 Lateral Entry Program, and has taken key roles in medical, psychological and forensic operations.The newly inducted technical officers took their oath and received their ranks during a ceremony held at Bulwagan Lapu-Lapu in Camp BGen Rafael T. Crame on Tuesday, Oct. 27.Of the 25 officers, 14 were assigned to the PNP Health Service, including five medical doctors, four dentists and five psychologists. The remaining 11 were deployed to the PNP Forensic Group, consisting of one medical doctor, one odontologist and nine chemists.PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said the new officers carry a critical responsibility beyond their professional credentials. "Your expertise is more than a professional qualification as it is also a responsibility to serve the Filipino people with competence, integrity and compassion. Use your knowledge to strengthen police health services, improve forensic investigations and help ensure that every service we deliver meets the highest standards of professionalism," he said in a statement on Wednesday.The lateral entry program allows the PNP to recruit professionals with specialized qualifications for functions that require technical expertise beyond regular police training. Their addition is expected to reinforce the organization's ability to provide medical and psychological support to personnel while strengthening evidence examination and criminal investigations.To maximize the contribution of the newly inducted officers, Nartatez directed the concerned offices to assess health care and psychological services across police units nationwide so that the PNP could identify gaps in medical care, mental health support and access to specialists among personnel.He ordered the promotion of professional development programs and closer coordination among technical officers, investigators, medical personnel and other operational units to ensure that specialized expertise is effectively shared throughout the organization. "Professionalism is measured not only by how we enforce the law but also by the quality of our services and the integrity of our decisions. By putting specialized knowledge to

work in personnel welfare and evidence-based investigations, we can strengthen public trust through results that are accurate, timely, and accountable," Nartatez said.

- Marijuana in luggage seized at NAIA (2026-10-28 16:09)

PERSONNEL from the Bureau of Customs (BOC) discovered 7,335 grams of marijuana kush from three unclaimed pieces of luggage abandoned by passengers at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) on Oct. 26, the agency said on Wednesday.BOC officials said the contraband items were concealed in food-labelled aluminum packaging when they arrived in Manila.The BOC discovered the suspected illegal drugs during routine x-ray screening, manual inspection and K9 paneling by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency. According to the BOC, the items were linked to two passengers who arrived from Bangkok, Thailand, on Sept. 24, with the seized substances.Operatives present during the inspection included the NAIA Inter-Agency Drug Interdiction Task Group and the Philippine National Police-Aviation Security Group.Meanwhile, the Office for Transportation Security has canceled the vacation leaves of some 2,529 security screening officers to be deployed in airports, seaports, bus terminals, and rail stations nationwide to ensure sufficient personnel and uninterrupted security screening operations during All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day.Also, the agency will activate its Transportation Operation Center for monitoring, coordination and dissemination of security information.Regular maintenance of security screening equipment will also be conducted to prevent technical issues and minimize downtime during the holiday rush.

- Marcos highlights 'Bilis Laya' merits (2026-10-28 16:08)

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said he would ensure that prisoners who have completed serving their sentences would be released without delay."Completing a sentence should mean going home to your family, not waiting for delayed paperwork," Marcos said in his speech during the celebration of National Correctional Consciousness Week. The president led the distribution of certificates of discharge to 266 inmates who finished their sentences.The Marcos administration's "Bilis Laya" program aims to accelerate case review and document processing of prisoners qualified for release. Under the initiative, volunteer lawyers review cases of inmates eligible for release to expedite their discharge from prison.Currently, 43 inmates received a certificate of discharge from prison, while 857 received free legal services. "That is why we continue to improve our processes and services. Through the 'Katarungan Karaban' (Justice Caravan), we have brought legal services closer to our fellow citizens," Marcos said.Marcos added that the program helps in decongesting prisons."This helps reduce overcrowding in prisons and facilitates reintegration with our families. It is difficult to turn one's life around when prisons are overcrowded and in poor condition," he said.Bureau of Corrections Director General Gregorio Catapang Jr. said the Marcos administration facilitated the release of over 37,000 inmates since 2022, primarily due to the good conduct time allowance, surpassing the number released under previous administrations."President Marcos has secured the release of 37,066 inmates. We also want to highlight that compared to the previous administration, which, over the course of six years, only managed to release 21,000,

President Marcos succeeded in releasing 30,000 individuals by 2025 in his third year in office," said Catapang." The Supreme Court has agreed with the government's position, ruling that even if an individual has committed a heinous crime, they should be granted good conduct time allowance, provided they demonstrate good behavior," Catapang said, noting that he is optimistic that by the end of Marcos' term, the total number of qualified inmates released will reach 50,000.

• Oreta defends P398M cemetery project (2026-10-28 16:07)

MALABON Lone District Rep. Antolin Oreta III said rehabilitation of the Tugatog Public Cemetery was long overdue after a plunder complaint was filed against him before the Office of the Ombudsman on Tuesday over alleged irregularities in the P397.99-million project." Before we took out a loan for the rehabilitation, we first consulted the affected families to hear their concerns," Oreta said in a statement.The complaint questioned the contract awarded to International Builders Corp. (IBC), alleging procurement irregularities and a business arrangement involving a.m. Oreta & Co. Inc., a company owned by the Oreta family.It alleged that IBC entered into a joint venture with the family-owned company while the cemetery project was ongoing. The complainants also questioned the project's estimate of the number of remains that would need to be exhumed, citing 9,304 remains allegedly dug up during the work.Oreta maintained that the project was properly implemented during his administration. By the time his term ended in June 2022, more than 60 percent of Phase 1 had been completed, with roads and pathways paved, and a cluster of new tombs ready to receive remains, he said.The project was formally turned over to the succeeding city government, along with its documents and records, in the presence of the Department of the Interior and Local Government, Oreta added." The need of Malabon families for a decent final resting place does not discriminate based on social status or political affiliation," he said, urging the current administration to set aside political disputes and complete the rehabilitation.The controversy predates the latest complaint. In October 2025, resident Tomas Santos Cruz filed a separate complaint against Oreta and IBC before the Ombudsman over alleged sanitation, procurement and anti-graft violations in the cemetery project.

• Caloocan opens crematorium, columbarium (2026-10-28 16:06)

CALOOCAN Mayor Dale Gonzalo Malapitan led key city officials in opening to the public the city's columbarium and crematorium, a local government infrastructure project in Barangay 178 and Barangay 187.Designed to provide residents with dignified, proper services to honor departed loved ones, the project ranks among the mayor's priority infrastructure initiatives. Construction commenced during the early years of his administration.In addition to cremation services and vault rentals, the facility offers urn storage, four funeral halls, a lawn crypt, a chapel, and both indoor and outdoor cinerariums — giving citizens a range of options for respectfully remembering their deceased loved ones."The welfare of 'Batang Kankaloo' (Caloocan Kid) has always been a priority of our city government. We want to ease their burdens, especially during times of grief, by providing affordable services for their departed

loved ones," Malapitan said."Our fellow citizens can rest assured that we at the local government will stand with them in every stage of life," the mayor added.In related development, Malapitan told The Manila Times that he inspected the Tala and Bagbaguin Cemeteries as part of the city's preparations for the upcoming observance of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, locally and collectively called Undas.Among the new systems being implemented at Tala Cemetery is the use of Gates 1, 2, and 3 as entry and exit points for visitors, along with the inspection of their belongings.Meanwhile, the last day for burials is Oct. 28, while cleaning of graves will only be permitted until Oct. 29.An estimated 150,000 to 200,000 visitors are expected to flock to Tala Cemetery while around 50,000 to 60,000 are expected to visit Bagbaguin Cemetery.The son of former long-time mayor and now District 1 Rep. Oscar Malapitan encouraged city residents visiting their departed loved ones to maintain cleanliness within the cemeteries and follow the guidelines the city government issued for Undas.

- Operators, drivers urged to ensure PUV roadworthiness (2026-10-28 16:05)

THE Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Wednesday reminded operators and drivers of public utility vehicles (PUVs), especially those serving provincial or long routes, to ensure their units' roadworthiness amid the expected passenger surge for All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. "Our road safety reminder comes with a warning of serious legal consequences. Let us avoid that by simply complying with the obligations you promised to observe when you applied for the CPC (certificate of public convenience) and authority to operate," said acting LTFRB Chairman Greg Pua Jr. on PUV operators and drivers.The reminder comes as millions of Filipinos begin preparing to travel to their home provinces and other destinations for "Undas," which also offers a long holiday break, the agency said.Pua reiterated that keeping every PUV unit properly maintained is an obligation each operator must fulfill under the conditions set in the issuance of the CPC and other authority to operate."Always remember that your passengers pay not only to reach their destinations but also for the trust and confidence that they will travel safely and comfortably," said Pua, a lawyer.The directive aligns with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s instruction to the Department of Transportation (DOTr), of which the LTFRB is an attached agency, to ensure road safety and protect all travelers and road users, the top LTFRB official stressed.According to the LTFRB, millions of Filipinos are expected to head to the provinces and other areas for Undas and vacation plans, with the significant increase in passengers expected to begin on Friday, Oct. 30.To meet the demand for more passenger buses, the LTFRB issued special permits to over 1,200 buses nationwide — most of them for routes between Metro Manila and various parts of Luzon, and vice versa.Pua said that the roadworthiness reminder also extends to other modes of public transportation, as millions are likewise expected to take taxis, ride-hailing services, and other PUVs to and from bus terminals and other transportation hubs such as airports and seaports."Let us do away with the 'puwede pa 'yan' (that will do) mentality. Lives are at stake, and as responsible operators and drivers, it is always a must to regularly check the condition of your units," he said.Beyond the lives of drivers and passengers, Pua noted that poorly maintained PUVs also pose safety threats to other road users.

• PWD employment at LRT-1 expanded (2026-10-28 16:04)

THE Light Rail Manila Corp. (LRMC), private operator of Light Railway Transit (LRT-1), has reaffirmed its commitment to workplace inclusivity by renewing its partnership with the Manila City government to promote employment of residents, particularly persons with disability (PWDs).Reporting a milestone for "Project PWD: Promoting Workforce Diversity," an initiative that empowers persons with special needs in public transit operations, the LMRC said that it forged a memorandum of agreement with Mayor Isko Moreno Domagoso, Vice Mayor Angela Lei Atienza, and other key city hall officials.LRMC President and CEO Enrico Benipayo said that since the program's initial rollout in December 2025, the company has onboarded 15 persons with special needs across various LRT-1 stations as Station Service Aides (SSAs). “Working alongside frontliners, these individuals assist daily commuters, manage passenger flow, and help ensure a seamless and friendly station experience,” Benipayo said.With the partnership renewed, more Manila residents with special needs will gain access to dignified livelihoods and skills development, the LRMC chief executive said.Building on its collaboration with the Manila city government, LRMC is also exploring expansion opportunities with other local government units along the LRT-1 alignment to open more slots and extend the program's reach to more communities, he said.LRMC further announced that high-performing SSAs may have pathways toward career advancement, with the company considering qualified SSAs for full-time employment, subject to meeting job requirements and completing LRMC's standard recruitment process."At LRMC, our employees are our greatest asset, and we firmly believe that a diverse workforce enriches our organizational culture and strengthens our service to the riding public," the LRMC chief stressed.He emphasized that Project PWD goes far beyond traditional corporate social responsibility. “It is a concrete step toward building a truly inclusive environment. Our SSAs have proven to be invaluable assets to our daily operations, bringing dedication, warmth, and excellence to our stations every day,” Benipayo said.

• BI warns of Malaysia fake job scheme (2026-10-28 16:02)

THE Bureau of Immigration (BI) said three Filipinos bound for Malaysia were intercepted at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport after being found to have no legitimate job offer in the country.The three, bound for Kuala Lumpur via Singapore, initially claimed they were coworkers taking a vacation. However, inconsistencies in their employment records, financial capacity and travel declarations prompted immigration officers to scrutinize further. The three said their employment arrangements would be discussed only upon their arrival in Malaysia.”An overseas job offer should never require you to travel first and find out the details later,” Immigration Commissioner Joel Anthony Viado said on Wednesday.The passengers were turned over to the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking for further investigation and assessment.The case was the latest in a series of airport operations against trafficking schemes that use deceptive travel arrangements to send Filipinos abroad for bogus employment.The BI warned that trafficking syndicates exploit social media, false job offers, misleading travel declarations and promises of high salaries to recruit Filipinos for overseas work. Some victims are ultimately exposed to forced labor, exploitation or fraudulent online operations.

- ‘Employers cannot force workers to retire before 65’ (2026-10-28 16:01)

EMPLOYERS cannot force workers to retire before age 65 without their clear and voluntary consent, the Supreme Court ruled.In a decision written by Associate Justice Ramon Paul Hernando, the Supreme Court First Division partly granted the petition of Rodolfo Ondevilla, who was considered retired by the Colegio de San Juan de Letran in Laguna when he turned 60 in 2019.The court ruled that Ondevilla’s early retirement was not based on a mutual agreement, and therefore amounted to illegal dismissal.Ondevilla joined the school as comptroller in 2004 and was later promoted to assistant vice president for finance. Following a management reorganization in 2018, he was reassigned as controller, a move he opposed as a demotion, although his salary and benefits remained unchanged.When Ondevilla turned 60 on Aug. 29, 2019, the school treated his appointment as expired. He subsequently filed an illegal dismissal complaint, which the labor arbiter and the National Labor Relations Commission decided in his favor.The Court of Appeals likewise found that he had been illegally dismissed but ruled that he had agreed to retire effective July 31, 2020, based on a letter he sent to the school.Ondevilla challenged that finding before the Supreme Court, insisting he had never agreed to retire before reaching 65.The court agreed, finding no evidence that the school had offered a retirement plan that Ondevilla could freely accept or reject. It also found no indication that the school was willing to discuss retirement arrangements with him.The Supreme Court said that Ondevilla’s letter was not an unequivocal declaration of voluntary early retirement. Rather, it was a response to the school’s demand that he repay a cash advance.His objections to early retirement and subsequent illegal dismissal complaint further showed that he had no intention of voluntarily leaving employment before turning 65, the court said.Under the Labor Code, the applicable retirement age is determined by an existing agreement or employment contract. In the absence of one, the compulsory retirement age is 65, while optional retirement may begin at 60.The Court stressed that optional retirement requires the employee’s free and express consent, without pressure or coercion, because agreeing to retire early means relinquishing the right to security of tenure.As a result, Ondevilla was entitled to full back wages and separation pay in lieu of reinstatement, as well as retirement benefits covering his employment from June 16, 2004, until Aug. 29, 2024, when he reached the compulsory retirement age of 65.The court directed the labor arbitration branch to compute the total amount due to him.

- 1 Pinoy injured in Spain train crash (2026-10-28 14:42)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine embassy in Madrid, Spain on Wednesday confirmed that a Filipino was injured in the train crash near the town of Urda.In a statement, the embassy said they are coordinating with relevant authorities and train operators on other Filipinos involved in the incident. “As of this time, we have verified information of one (1) Filipino national who sustained a minor injury and was brought to a hospital for medical attention,” the embassy’s notice read.It called on families and friends of Filipinos who may have been traveling in the involved trains in the collision or the Madrid-Andalusia line to contact the Renfe family helpline at (+34) 900 101 020, and the Embassy 24/7 hotline at (+34) 619 491 861.Filipinos are also

advised to fill out a Google Docs form to report any other information on Filipinos involved in the crash. “Following the train collision near Urda, Toledo on Oct. 28, 2026, the Philippine Embassy in Spain requests the public to report any information regarding Filipino nationals who may have been involved in the incident. The information collected will be used strictly to coordinate with local Spanish authorities and provide immediate assistance,” the embassy said.As of posting time, 68 people died in the train crash.

- Pagasa forecasts rains in parts of PH on Thursday (2026-10-28 12:31)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) forecast rains in parts of the Philippines on Thursday.Pagasa Weather Specialist Benison Estareja said in the 5 p.m. weather update on Wednesday that there was a high chance of rain in the eastern portion of Luzon by Thursday because of the northeast monsoon (amihan) and shear line."Light rains here in Batanes, Cagayan, Apayao, Kalinga, and Isabela while there will be light to moderate with at times heavy rains in" Aurora, Quirino, Quezon, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, parts of Marinduque, and Oriental Mindoro, he said. He cautioned the public against flash floods and landslides.Estareja said isolated drizzles on Thursday were possible in the rest of northern Luzon and central Luzon.As to Metro Manila and the rest of southern Luzon including Calabarzon as well as the west of Mimaropa and Bicol, he said that "more on afternoon or evening thunderstorms" on Thursday were possible. The weather would be hot and humid by Thursday noon, he said.In the Visayas, based on the forecast, its eastern portion had the highest chance of rains on Thursday. Estareja said that the rains would not be continuous but, generally, would be light to moderate rains if occasional rains occur.As to the rest of the Visayas and a large part of Palawan, he said it would be partly cloudy or weather conditions would be fair from morning to noon on Thursday. He said that by afternoon to evening on Thursday, the chance of overcast skies is high and that " there is also a chance of isolated rain showers or localized thunderstorms."Estareja said that in Mindanao, the weather would be sunny and hot on Thursday from morning to noon. "So make sure, if you are going out of the house, to also bring water aside from an umbrella or protection from direct sunlight," he said.He said that parts of Mindanao, particularly Dinagat Islands, Surigao del Norte, and several areas in the Zamboanga Peninsula, and Northern Mindanao, would have localized thunderstorms or isolated thunderstorms by afternoon and evening on Thursday.No gale warning was issued.However, Estareja said that moderate seas could be expected in northern Luzon as well as the coastal waters of Aurora, Quezon, and the Camarines provinces because of the northeast monsoon. He cautioned fishers, saying wave heights could reach 3.4 meters.

- SSS to release up to P8K in UPLIFT aid to qualified members (2026-10-28 09:16)

MANILA, Philippines — Eligible members of the Social Security System (SSS) who are covered by the expanded UPLIFT assistance program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) will receive up to 8,000 in financial aid starting Oct. 30, 2026.SSS president and CEO Victor Alfonso Limlingan said that the upcoming payout would benefit qualified SSS members

whose monthly salary credit (MSC) does not exceed P10,000.UPLIFT or Unified Package for Livelihoods, Industry, Food and Transport assistance would be disbursed in four tranches of P2,000 each, credited directly to beneficiaries' registered SSS disbursement accounts, Limlingan said.Working in coordination with the SSS, the DSWD extended the program to extend additional assistance to qualified members with an MSC not exceeding P10,000, supplementing the aid previously available to members with an MSC of up to P20,000.The SSS stressed, however, that an MSC not exceeding P10,000 does not automatically qualify a member for UPLIFT Assistance.To be eligible, members must also have paid at least one SSS contribution in 2025 or 2026 and be listed in the Philippine Statistics Authority's (PSA) 2024 Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) database.In addition, they must have enrolled their disbursement accounts through the SSS Disbursement Account Enrollment Module (DAEM) within the prescribed period.Members are then encouraged to check their My.SSS accounts for official notifications regarding their eligibility for UPLIFT Assistance.In the meantime, qualified SSS members with an MSC of P20,000 are set to receive the third and fourth tranches of UPLIFT Assistance, totaling P4,000, on Nov. 6, 2026.This follows the DSWD's successful release of the first and second tranches earlier this year, according to the state pension fund.It said that eligible beneficiaries who have not yet received any UPLIFT Assistance will receive the full P8,000 covering all four tranches. “Those who have already received the first two tranches totaling P4,000 will receive an additional P4,000 for the third and fourth tranches,” the SSS chief executive said.Both amounts will be credited simultaneously to beneficiaries' registered SSS disbursement accounts, he added.

- Teodoro urges Asean unity in disaster response amid Super El Niño threat (2026-10-28 08:47)

MANILA, Philippines — Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. stressed the need for Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) member states to unite in disaster response mechanisms across the region, especially in preparation for the effects of the looming Super El Niño.Speaking at the 20th Asean Defense Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM) in Lapu-Lapu City, Teodoro expressed his sympathies to member states affected by recent natural calamities. “I would like to express likewise our sincere sympathies to our fellow member states who have been affected recently by natural calamities which have grown more frequent, severe, complex, and unpredictable in recent years,” he said.On behalf of the Philippines, Teodoro thanked fellow member states for the assistance they have given to the country when it faced severe natural calamities. “For our part, we remain deeply grateful and committed to preserving the solidarity which you have extended to the Republic of the Philippines and for the assistance offered sometimes even before we could ask,” he said.As the world braces for the effects of the Super El Niño, the defense chief stressed the need for stronger cooperation to mitigate the expected aftermath of the phenomenon.

- No need to raise alert level in Saudi Arabia or issue a travel advisory, says envoy (2026-10-28 08:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine Ambassador to Riyadh Raymond Balatbat said there was no need to raise the alert level in Saudi Arabia or issue a travel advisory amid recent attacks on the kingdom by Iran-backed Houti rebels.An attack on King Khalid International airport in Riyadh last Oct. 10, 2026 killed at least 13 people and wounded more than 300. It was considered the deadliest assault on the kingdom in more than a decade. The Houthis have also struck airports, ports and oil facilities.The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) previously placed Saudi Arabia under Alert Level 2 (restriction). It will reptriate Filipinos if the alert level is raised to 3.But the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) has clarified that there was currently no total deployment ban to Saudi Arabia.In a television interview on Tuesday, Balatbat said the Philippine Embassy was prepared to implement its contingency plans based on evolving developments in the kingdom."At present, it is not necessary to raise the alert level or issue a travel advisory to the kingdom," Balatbat said in Filipino.He also said that the DMW has confirmed that there was "no deployment ban" for those wishing to work in Saudi Arabia."We are actively coordinating with the relevant government agencies of Saudi Arabia and our partner agencies to closely monitor the situation and adjust our contingency plan based on current events and potential scenarios taking into account the fluid situation in various areas of the kingdom," he said."We encourage the Filipino community to remain updated and follow instructions from official sources," the ambassador added."These attacks are a grave threat to regional peace and stability," the DFA said in a statement on Oct. 19.The Philippines also called on all parties to cease hostilities and to pursue a peaceful resolution through dialogue and diplomacy."We urge all Filipinos in the Kingdom to follow the guidance of Saudi authorities and to remain in contact with the Embassy and Consulate General," the DFA added.

- Hegseth proposes 'ambitious' US-Asean defense framework at Philippine summit (2026-10-28 07:45)

MANILA, Philippines — US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth proposed the creation of an " ambitious" new US-Asean defense framework on Wednesday, telling the bloc's leaders it could help them navigate "critically important" years ahead.The United States has been seeking to boost its regional defense partnerships in recent years, citing the need to uphold what it terms a "free and open Indo-Pacific" as China has increasingly flexed its muscles in the region.Hegseth, speaking before a meeting with defense chiefs from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) in Cebu, praised what he called the region's "pragmatism" and " proud nationalism.""We're not going to agree on everything, nor do we need to," he said, calling for cooperation where shared interests overlap."As we look to the future in this region, I'd like us to be even more ambitious... we propose that we work together to develop a US-Asean Framework for Defense Cooperation," Hegseth said, without offering details."A practical framework that guides our cooperation over the next several years. I will note a critically important next several years."He added that the United States was ready to begin the project as Singapore assumes the chairmanship of the Asean Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus in the coming year.The grouping includes not only the bloc's 11 member states but representatives from the United States, Japan, China, Australia and others.Hegseth also called

for the strengthening of "maritime domain awareness" and advanced cooperation among naval forces."These are not symbolic things; they are concrete demonstrations of what serious partners do, serious partners train together, learn together, plan together, and build the confidence and competence necessary to prevent conflict," he said.US ally the Philippines has been engaged in years of confrontations with China over disputed areas of the South China Sea.China's military and coast guard presence in contested areas of the critical waterway nearly doubled in September, Manila said this month.Japanese defense chief Shinjiro Koizumi met Hegseth on the sidelines of the Cebu event, where they discussed the need to implement "an effective denial defence in the First Island Chain", a reference to islands that lie between China and the open Pacific.The two allies also committed to continued "close coordination" on munitions production.

- Employers cannot force workers to retire before 65 — SC (2026-10-28 06:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Employers cannot force workers to retire before age 65 without their clear and voluntary consent, the Supreme Court (SC) has ruled, declaring Colegio de San Juan de Letran in Laguna liable for illegally dismissing a finance executive.In a decision written by Associate Justice Ramon Paul L. Hernando, the First Division partly granted the petition of Rodolfo C. Ondevilla, who was considered retired by the school when he turned 60 in 2019.The Court ruled that Ondevilla’s early retirement was not based on a mutual agreement and therefore amounted to illegal dismissal.Ondevilla joined the school as comptroller in 2004 and was later promoted to assistant vice president for finance. Following a management reorganization in 2018, he was reassigned as comptroller, a move he opposed as a demotion, although his salary and benefits remained unchanged.When Ondevilla turned 60 on Aug. 29, 2019, the school treated his appointment as expired. He subsequently filed an illegal dismissal complaint, which the labor arbiter and the National Labor Relations Commission decided in his favor.The Court of Appeals likewise found that he had been illegally dismissed but ruled that he had agreed to retire effective July 31, 2020, based on a letter he sent to the school.Ondevilla challenged that finding before the Supreme Court, insisting he had never agreed to retire before reaching 65.The high tribunal agreed, finding no evidence that the school had offered a retirement plan that Ondevilla could freely accept or reject. It also found no indication that the school was willing to discuss retirement arrangements with him.The Court clarified that Ondevilla’s letter was not an unequivocal declaration of voluntary early retirement. Rather, it was a response to the school’s demand that he repay a cash advance.His objections to early retirement and subsequent illegal dismissal complaint further showed that he had no intention of voluntarily leaving employment before turning 65, the Court said.Under the Labor Code, the applicable retirement age is determined by an existing agreement or employment contract. In the absence of one, the compulsory retirement age is 65, while optional retirement may begin at 60.The Court stressed that optional retirement requires the employee’s free and express consent, without pressure or coercion, because agreeing to retire early means relinquishing the right to security of tenure.

- PNP orders review of response protocols as bomb threats hit schools (2026-10-28 05:59)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Wednesday said it has directed concerned units to assess existing procedures and strengthen their ability to respond to bomb threats as incidents involving schools and universities underscored the need to keep security measures up to date.PGen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr, PNP chief, said the review would focus on ensuring that police protocols and operational capabilities remained responsive to changing threats, adding that the organization is ready to provide additional specialized training to improve personnel readiness in handling and investigating such incidents if necessary. “We must ensure that our bomb threat protocols evolve with the threats we face. Our response must be swift, our personnel well-trained, and our investigative capabilities strong enough to identify those responsible and prevent similar incidents,” Nartatez said in a statement. The directive came following two incidents of bomb threats in two major universities in Metro Manila that led to the evacuation of students and suspension of classes. This kind of incident also happened in other schools in the provinces in the past months.Police are investigating the incidents to determine possible links between some of the bomb threat incidents, saying it will help investigators determine whether they were isolated cases or part of a wider pattern.In Batangas, at least two people have been arested for their alleged involvement in bomb threats that targeted at least two schools in the province.Nartatez underscored the need for prompt security assessments and coordinated action whenever a potential threat was reported. “Every bomb threat must be treated with urgency and investigated thoroughly. We will establish the facts, determine whether these incidents are connected, and hold those responsible accountable under the law. Our priority is to protect lives and ensure that our schools remain safe for students and personnel,” Nartatez said.

- PNP renews appeal for Dela Rosa to surrender as deadline nears (2026-10-28 05:34)

MANILA, Philippines — A day before the one week ultimatum lapses, the Philippine National Police (PNP) appealed anew to Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa to surrender. Speaking in Filipino and English at a press briefing at the national police headquarters in Camp Crame, Quezon City, Col. Allen Rae Co, PNP spokesman, said, "Everyone, most especially the Philippine National Police, wants this matter to be resolved peacefully without anyone getting hurt, injured or worst, dead." “So we are appealing to the senator to surrender,” he added.The PNP said it has mobilized special action forces to track the senator who is reportedly in Mindanao under the protection of a very powerful and armed group.Co said the PNP has also established hotlines for the people to contact should there be any information on the senator who now has a P50 million bounty on his head.The PNP, however, warned the public that prank callers would be held criminally liable, especially if the intention was to sow chaos or flood authorities with false information. “This is an official law enforcement resource ito pong numbers na ito and you can be criminally charged kapag nilaro laro niyo ito,” Co said.

- LTFRB orers public transport to 'ensure units roadworthiness' for ‘Undas’ travels or face legal consequences,' (2026-10-28 04:28)

MANILA, Philippines — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Wednesday reminded the operators and drivers of public utility vehicles—especially those serving provincial or long routes—to ensure the roadworthiness of their units amid the expected surge for All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. “Our road safety reminder comes with a warning of serious legal consequences. Let us avoid that by simply complying with the obligations you promised to observe when you applied for the CPC (certificate of public convenience) and authority to operate,” said acting LTFRB chairman Greg Pua Jr. on PUV operators and drivers.The reminder comes as millions of Filipinos begin preparing to travel to their home provinces and other destinations for the "Undas," which also offers a long holiday break, the agency said.Keeping every PUV unit properly maintained is an obligation each operator must fulfill under the conditions set in the issuance of CPC and other authority to operate, Pua reiterated."Always remember that your passengers pay not only to reach their destinations but also for the trust and confidence that they will travel safely and comfortably," said Pua, a lawyer.The directive aligns with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s instruction to the Department of Transportation, of which the LTFRB is an attached agency (DOTr), to ensure road safety and protect all travelers and road users, the top LTFRB official stressed.Millions of Filipinos are expected to head to the provinces and other areas for the Undas and vacation plans, with the significant increase in passengers expected to begin on Friday, according to LTFRB.To meet the demand for more passenger buses, the LTFRB issued special permits to over 1,200 buses nationwide—most of them for routes between Metro Manila and various parts of Luzon, and vice versa.Pua said that the roadworthiness reminder also extended to other modes of public transportation, as millions are likewise expected to take taxis, ride-hailing services, and other PUVs to and from bus terminals and other transportation hubs such as airports and seaports."Let us do away with the 'puwede pa yan' (that will do) mentality. Lives are at stake, and as responsible operators and drivers, it is always a must to regularly check the condition of your units," he said.Beyond the lives of drivers and passengers, Pua noted that poorly maintained PUVs also pose safety threats to other road users.

- Lazaro to conduct humanitarian mission in Myanmar (2026-10-28 03:59)

MANILA, Philippines -- Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro will lead a two-day humanitarian mission in Myanmar this week but is not certain whether she will meet with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.The military junta in Myanmar initially placed Suu Kyi, also a human rights activist, under house arrest in July 1989. She was released years later but was arrested again in 2021 during a coup.The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said Lazaro, in her capacity as Special Envoy of the Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) chairman, will lead the mission in from Oct. 28 to 29.President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., as chairman of Asean in 2026, has designated Lazaro as Asean Special Envoy to Myanmar. She was tasked to facilitate a peaceful solution to the Myanmar political crisis.Asked whether Lazaro will meet with Suu Kyi, DFA Assistant Secretary Dax Imperial said, "[There are] No details on such a meeting.""For now, what we have is the humanitarian mission in Shan State and engagements in Nay Pyi Taw," Imperial said in a text message.The Philippines, as 2026 Asean chairman, reaffirms the 5PC as

Asean’s primary reference to address the political crisis in Myanmar.Lazaro remains committed to engaging with all parties concerned to implement the 5PC, particularly the " cessation of hostilities, facilitation of constructive dialogue, the mediation of the dialogue process, and expansion of humanitarian assistance in Myanmar," the DFA said.After subsequent intermittent releases, Suu Kyi was arrested again during the military coup on Feb. 1, 2021. After spending years in prison, she was commuted and transferred back to house arrest on May 1.

• Marcos tells people not to panic even as peso sinks further (2026-10-28 03:55)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. urged the public not to panic after the peso hit another record low of ₱64.18 on Wednesday.In an interview, Marcos cited the rising cost on fuel caused by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East as the primary factor behind the peso drop to another all-time low.“Do not take it with alarm. Don’t panic,” said Marcos.

• Hegseth in Manila for Asean defense summit amid Iran war, tension with China (2026-10-28 03:24)

MANILA, Philippines — US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth is likely to face questions about Washington’s commitment to the Indo-Pacific region when he meets Southeast Asian counterparts in the Philippines on Wednesday.As the Iran war strains US military readiness and tension rises with China, the Pentagon said Hegseth's attendance at the gathering in the Philippine province of Cebu would reaffirm Washington’s commitment to "peace through strength" in the Pacific.Analysts said Southeast Asian nations could use meetings with Hegseth on the sidelines to seek clarity about the endgame in Iran, US expectations from allies and partners, and how the conflict's demands square with commitments to the Indo-Pacific."They will want to seek answers from the United States regarding certainty towards alliances and partnerships," said Collin Koh, a security scholar at Singapore's S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies."And of course, the bigger elephant in the room is how does that juxtapose with US commitment to the Indo-Pacific or Western Pacific theatre."Economies grappling with Iran war impact Southeast Asian economies are grappling with the effects of Iran war, while tension between host the Philippines and Beijing add another source of friction to a forum meant to promote dialogue and practical cooperation on security.The Iran war, launched by US and Israeli strikes on Feb. 28, 2026 has disrupted shipping and oil markets, exposing Southeast Asia’s vulnerability to imported-fuel shocks and pushing energy security higher on ASEAN's agenda.Greg Poling, director of the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative said Hegseth would get an opportunity at the gathering to tackle aspects regarding China, the disputed South China Sea and Washington’s commitments to its treaty allies."Most will want reassurance about US commitment to the region, despite the political turmoil in Washington and the weakening of both U.S. capabilities and readiness by the war in Iran."The topic is critical for the Philippines, a US treaty ally whose ties with Beijing have soured amid repeated confrontations in the disputed South China Sea, Chinese sanctions and, more recently, a summoning of the Chinese ambassador.China's defense attaché in the Philippines will attend the meeting, its defense ministry said on Tuesday.Days before the meeting, set for Oct. 28 and 29, the Philippine

military said it monitored and shadowed China's Liaoning aircraft carrier group as it passed through waters off the southern Philippines toward the Celebes Sea.Stronger signals were more likely to figure in talks among like-minded partners, added Poling.Such partners include the Squad, a grouping of the United States, Japan, Australia and the Philippines, whose defence chiefs are set to meet on Oct. 28.Eventual chairman's statement seen as restrained However, the eventual chairman's statement was likely to be more restrained than talks behind closed doors and would employ familiar Asean language, said Koh.Manila’s position as Asean chairman while embroiled in a dispute with China was "particularly sensitive," he added.Poling said the Philippines had to balance "aspirational cooperation" on issues such as energy connectivity, the digital economy and coast guard cooperation against rising tension with China and stalled progress on a South China Sea code of conduct."For the Philippines, the whole Asean chair year has been a difficult balance," added Poling, who is also a fellow with the Southeast Asia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies."I’d expect tactical cooperation on the ADMM workstreams ... but no strategic alignment on the South China Sea or other thorny issues," he said, referring to the bloc's effort to tackle issues such as maritime security and counter-terrorism.

- Budget deadlock looms as Senate races against time to secure economic stimulus (2026-10-28 02:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian warned of the critical economic stakes surrounding the 2027 national budget, calling it the country’s "most effective stimulus program" while acknowledging the growing risk of an institutional deadlock with the House of Representatives amid an impending impeachment trial.Speaking to reporters in an ambush interview at the Senate on Tuesday, Gatchalian emphasized that lawmakers were racing against a tight, highly compressed calendar to ensure the spending bill was signed before the year ends, warning that failure to do so could jeopardize national economic momentum.The stimulus imperative "We need to pass this before the end of the year," Gatchalian stressed, highlighting the budget's role in driving domestic growth. "A deadlock is what we are trying to avoid because this is time-bound. Both chambers want this finished because it serves as our most important economic stimulus tool."Fears of a fiscal delay have mounted as the Senate inherits a House-approved version of the budget that introduces sharp departures from the executive branch's original layout. Gatchalian admitted that bridging the gap between the two versions would likely trigger intense political friction, potentially threatening the timely release of these crucial economic funds."Last year we clashed, and there were times the bicameral conference was cancelled altogether," Gatchalian recalled. "It is not far-fetched to expect heavy, intense deliberations this time around as part of the process, but we must find common ground."The impeachment threat to fiscal timelines Compounding the threat of a budget standoff is a severe scheduling bottleneck. The Senate must simultaneously host a full-scale impeachment trial, a dual mandate Gatchalian described as "very challenging."The Senate leader conceded that a November passage was no longer realistic, officially pushing the fiscal timeline deep into December. To mitigate the risk of a government shutdown or a reenacted

budget—which would freeze new infrastructure and economic stimulus projects—Gatchalian stated that lawmakers were fully prepared to sacrifice their year-end recess."Our target is to approve and ratify it before the end of the year," he said. "I am certain that we will work through the Christmas season if required. We have no choice. Even during Christmas, we will work to finish this budget."Logistical strains and quorum risks The threat of a deadlock is further exacerbated by logistical hurdles during the upcoming Bicameral Conference Committee (Bicam) reviews. Media queries pointed out that deploying the mandatory contingent of six to seven senators to iron out budget differences with the House could break the vital quorum required to legally sustain the parallel impeachment proceedings.

• Sara's defense team dared: Bring on the ‘bloodbath’ (2026-10-27 23:58)

MANILA, Philippines — The defense team of Vice President Sara Duterte at her impeachment trial is expected to deliver the "bloodbath" she had warned of when it begins presenting its evidence in her impeachment trial on Nov. 9, 2026, a spokesman for the prosecution said early Wednesday. “And as what the vice president has always mentioned, we will expect a bloodbath, right? That’s what we expect,” former Surigao del Norte representative Robert Ace Barbers said. “If it really is going to be a bloodbath, let’s see,” said the impeachment adviser for the House of Representatives.Barbers said Duterte’s lawyers had ample time to prepare their defense against the remaining impeachment charge involving alleged unexplained wealth, following 39 days of proceedings. “Well, I’m sure they have already. Defense counsel has already prepared for this,” Barbers said. “They have been preparing for this for quite some time, for a long time,” he added.He further noted that despite the prosecution’s confidence in its evidence, Barbers said Duterte’s defense should be given the opportunity to present its case. The Senate impeachment court is set to resume proceedings in two weeks, with Duterte’s defense team expected to present evidence on Article II, the sole remaining charge.The prosecution has submitted its offer of evidence, including financial records, asset declarations, corporate documents and witness testimony.Articles I, III and IV, involving confidential funds, grave threats, and bribery and graft, were withdrawn with prejudice.

• Police work with schools on response to recent bomb threats (2026-10-27 22:32)

MANILA, Philippines — The Manila Police District (MPD) is coordinating with school officials and security personnel following bomb threats reported at schools in recent days, according to PMAJ Philipp Ines, MPD spokesperson and chief public information officer.Ines discussed the district’s response during a media forum at Ermita, Manila, on Tuesday. He attended in place of MPD Director PBGen. Arnold Santiago.Ines told the reporters that police station commanders and community precinct commanders maintain communication groups with school officials and security personnel to help facilitate responses to incidents.According to Ines, the MPD’s Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel respond to bomb threat reports, while its anti-cybercrime unit handles threats made online.He said investigators were working to identify those behind the threats but that he had no progress report to share at the time of the forum.Ines urged school officials to continue coordinating with police and called on students

and other members of the public with information about those responsible to report it to authorities.He warned that making bomb threats carries penalties. “This is not a joke,” Ines said in Filipino, adding that those responsible could face imprisonment or fines.He also urged the public to report threats and suspicious activity through MPD hotlines or the Unified 911 emergency number.Ines cited Manila’s Anti-Child Endangerment Ordinance, saying parents or guardians may be held accountable in certain incidents involving minors. He said accountability depends on the child’s age.

- Hontiveros pushes for free water, cooling centers amid Super El Niño (2026-10-27 22:31)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Risa Hontiveros on Tuesday urged local government units (LGUs) to set up free drinking water stations and cooling centers to protect Filipinos from dehydration, heat stroke and other health risks as the country braces for a potentially severe Super El Niño.Hontiveros, chairman of the Senate Committee on Health and Demography, called on LGUs to coordinate with national government agencies and the private sector to ensure that residents have access to clean drinking water and safe places to cool down during periods of extreme heat. “There should be free drinking water stations in places where Filipinos work and gather every day. Preventing dehydration and heat stroke should not mean additional expenses,” Hontoveros said in a statement.Hontiveros said government efforts should go beyond reporting heat index levels and include practical measures to help people cope with dangerously high temperatures. “Simply reporting the heat index is not enough. We must also ensure that people have safe places to rest and access to clean drinking water,” she said.Hontiveros proposed installing drinking fountains and water-refilling stations in public markets, transport terminals and other crowded areas to provide free access to potable water.She also suggested turning existing public facilities, including schools, libraries, museums and community centers, into cooling centers during periods of extreme heat.Malls and other private establishments could likewise designate air-conditioned common areas where people could rest and cool down without being required to make a purchase, she said. “We already have public spaces that our fellow Filipinos can use. I hope the private sector can also provide places where people can freely rest and cool down, even if they do not buy anything,” Hontiveros said.She urged authorities to prepare these facilities in advance and tailor their use to the needs of individual communities. “Experts have warned that this could be the strongest El Niño in history, so the government, together with LGUs and the private sector, must prepare for it,” the senator said. “When a typhoon strikes, we know that we need evacuation centers and work and class suspensions. Now that we may experience extreme heat, we also need to prepare just as seriously,” she added.

- Manila mayor gives Undas reminders, announces cemetery schedules (2026-10-27 22:28)

MANILA, Philippines — Manila Mayor Francisco "Isko" Moreno Domagoso shared reminders and the schedules for Manila's north and south cemeteries for Undas 2026.Burials in both cemeteries will be suspended starting Oct. 29, based on information shown on the screen during his livestreamed Talk to the People on Tuesday."Manila North Cemetery announcement.

Last day for burials,...October 28," Domagoso said in Filipino and English.The Manila North Cemetery's regular services will resume on Nov. 3, 2026. Burials in the Manila South Cemetery will resume on Nov. 3, 2026.The Manila North Cemetery "is open from 5 in the morning until 8 in the evening from October 29 to November 2," Domagoso said.Vehicles will not be allowed to enter the Manila North Cemetery from Oct. 29 to Nov. 2, 2026."But do not worry, my mothers and fathers, my grandfathers and grandmothers, several vehicles that will take you to the graves of your loved ones from the gate have been designated," Domagoso said."Karaokes are not allowed," he said.Guitars, loud sound systems, and speakers will not be allowed in the Manila North Cemetery, based on information shown on the screen.The following will likewise be prohibited: Guns and sharp objects; alcoholic drinks; pets; easily flammable objects like alcohol and thinners; and gambling.The Manila South Cemetery has similar prohibitions.Vehicles will not be allowed to enter the Manila South Cemetery from Oct. 29 to Nov. 2, 2026.

- Cayetanos laud BIR suspension of online seller badge rule (2026-10-27 20:14)

MANILA, Philippines — Senators Pia Cayetano and Alan Peter Cayetano on Tuesday welcomed the Bureau of Internal Revenue’s (BIR) suspension of its mandatory online registration badge requirement, citing data privacy concerns and the need to ease compliance burdens on small businesses and online sellers.The BIR suspended the Oct. 31 deadline to give the agency time to review privacy and technical issues raised by taxpayers and other stakeholders, following mounting concerns over the mandatory display of its Registration Seal Badge.In a statement, Senator Pia said her office had raised the data privacy issues directly with the National Privacy Commission (NPC), which subsequently issued a Notice to Explain to the BIR seeking clarification on the requirement. “My office raised this directly with the National Privacy Commission (NPC), whose 2027 budget I handle, to help expedite action on the data privacy concerns,” she said.Pia Cayetano said the suspension would allow the BIR to review the privacy and technical issues raised by stakeholders.She also cited reports of difficulties in completing the registration process itself, urging the agency to address these concerns. “While tax compliance is important, we must also ensure that the right to data privacy is protected and the ease of doing business is guaranteed,” she said.She expressed confidence that continued coordination among the agencies would lead to a resolution that balances taxpayers’ obligations with their right to privacy and the need to make business compliance easier. “I trust that this continued coordination will lead to a fair resolution that upholds both responsibilities,” she added.Alan Cayetano also welcomed the suspension, thanking online sellers, content creators and other members of the public who raised concerns about the requirement.He credited Pia Cayetano for bringing the privacy issues to the NPC and Sen. Bam Aquino for calling for a postponement and urging the government to hear affected sellers and content creators. “The agency deserves thanks for listening and making room for adjustments. This is how we should work together,” Alan Cayetano said.While recognizing the BIR’s responsibility to collect taxes, the minority leader said government requirements should not unnecessarily burden micro and small entrepreneurs trying to earn a living. “A day spent

completing a requirement may mean a day without earnings," he said, noting that small-business owners often juggle multiple responsibilities, from preparing orders and making deliveries to maintaining records."We should help, not hamper, these entrepreneurs!" he added.Cayetano urged government agencies to coordinate their requirements, reduce repetitive submissions and ensure their systems work efficiently to make compliance easier for small businesses."This requires a whole-of-government effort. Each agency handles part of the work; the business owner must navigate the entire process," he said.He said simpler procedures and clearer guidance would help businesses enter the formal economy while protecting consumers, personal information and government revenues.Cayetano also reminded business owners to maintain proper records and pay their taxes, saying feedback from taxpayers could help the government improve its procedures."The lesson is simple: listen to the people who deal with these requirements every day. Their experience can help us get policies right," he said."Let government be seen as a blessing, not a curse!" he added.

- Estrada refutes Bonoan's claim of P7B budget insertions (2026-10-27 18:45)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Jinggoy Estrada on Tuesday disputed former Public Works secretary Manuel Bonoan's claim that more than P7 billion in "congressional initiatives" were inserted into the 2025 national budget, insisting that no documents linked him to alleged insertions involving the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).Estrada pointed to the Senate's Legislative Budget Research and Monitoring Office (LBRMO), which told the Office of the Ombudsman in March that it found no legislative records or official documents showing that he had made such amendments."The official records of the Senate, particularly those of the Legislative Budget Research and Monitoring Office (LBRMO), will attest to this," Estrada said in a statement, reiterating his denial of the allegations.In its letter to the Ombudsman, the LBRMO stated that "there are no legislative records or official documents indicating any official insertions or amendments made by a senator, specifically Senator Jinggoy Estrada, in the 2025 (national budget) related to the DPWH."Estrada issued the statement after Bonoan testified before the Sandiganbayan on Tuesday, claiming that about P7.4 billion in congressional initiatives had been inserted into the 2025 budget.The senator said his position had been consistent and cited a privilege speech by Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, who also echoed the LBRMO's finding that no such insertions were made."The General Appropriations Act is not the work of any single lawmaker. It is the product of both Houses of Congress, approved by the President — all in accordance with the constitutional process," he said.

- Diokno pushes for stronger protection against elder abuse, free dialysis, healthcare aid for seniors (2026-10-27 18:40)

MANILA, Philippines — Akbayan Party-list Rep. Chel Diokno called for the stronger protection of elders against abuse as well as improved healthcare services for senior citizens, including free dialysis and access to medicines.Speaking before members of the Municipal Federation of Senior Citizens Associations of the Philippines (MFSCAP) in Camarines Norte last weekend, Diokno said senior citizens need sustained assistance and protection, not just financial

aid.Diokno cited House Bill No. 3647, or the Anti-Elder Abuse Bill, which seeks to strengthen safeguards against elder abuse; House Bill No. 8368, or the Free Dialysis for Senior Citizens Act, which seeks to provide free dialysis treatment; and House Bill No. 6835, or the Health Outreach for Seniors and Indigents Program Act, which aims to bring healthcare services and free medicines to villages. “Assistance alone is not enough. What we need is continuous assistance for all senior citizens, especially our brothers, sisters, and fellow Filipinos who are struggling every day,” the lawmaker said in Filipino.He also reminded senior citizens of their rights and benefits under the Expanded Senior Citizens Act, clarifying that they may present other valid government-issued identification cards to claim discounts even without their senior citizen IDs. “Any ID issued by the government—driver’s license, SSS, whatever it may be—as long as it is a valid government ID, you just have to show it, and they must respect it,” Diokno said.He also explained that purchase booklets are no longer required to claim medicine discounts but remain necessary for other covered purchases, including groceries and liquefied petroleum gas.He likewise encouraged senior citizens to learn about the laws protecting their rights and assert them when establishments refuse to honor their benefits. “Caring for our senior citizens is not a favor, but their right. We will continue pushing for laws that will ensure their dignity, provide protection against abuse, and deliver affordable healthcare services,” he said.

- Peso weakens, falls below P64:$1 level (2026-10-27 16:19)

THE peso breached the P64:$1 level on Tuesday amid market’s adverse reaction to the central bank’s aggressive surprise rate hike last week.The peso weakened by 22 centavos to close at P64.17 from the previous record low of P63.95:$1. This marks the sixth consecutive trading day that the peso has hit a record low.The peso’s depreciation stoked concerns that power and fuel would cost more, triggering more increases in commodity prices.The Palace acknowledged this on Tuesday, saying the government has instituted several interventions to lower the prices of commodities.Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Undersecretary Claire Castro said the ongoing geopolitical conflict in the Middle East "keeps crude oil prices high and the dollar-to-peso exchange rate volatile." "This is not what the president wanted. This is not what the government wanted. Who would ever want a crisis, war, or conflict in the Middle East?" Castro said."Since we import our crude oil from there, it has a massive impact on our products because it creates a domino effect," she said.Downward trend The peso opened at P63.95 and traded between P63.9 and P64.2:$1. The volume reached P1.726 billion, higher than the previous P1.648 billion.Chinabank economist Domini Velasquez said the peso has been depreciating further despite the jumbo rate hike announced by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) last week.Velasquez said a similar episode occurred two months earlier, when the peso also weakened to a record low following a rate increase. “This reinforces our view that rate hikes alone may not be enough to reverse the peso’s depreciation,” Velasquez said. “Ultimately, the key question is how quickly the Philippine economy can recover amid heightened uncertainty,” she added.The BSP policymaking body Monetary Board raised key policy rates by 50 basis points last week, bringing rates to a higher 5.5 percent.The central bank told The Manila Times in a Viber message that they continue to monitor the foreign exchange

market. “We intervene to smooth extreme volatility, especially when these can accelerate inflation, in line with our primary mandate of price stability,” the BSP said, adding they also intervene to address disorderly market conditions. “The BSP has ample reserves to support these actions,” it added.Data from the central bank showed that gross international reserves (GIR) dropped to $99.99 billion as of end-September amid efforts to smooth out peso volatility. This was markedly lower than the $104.85 billion and $109.06 billion recorded a month and year earlier.This is the lowest reserves recorded since September 2023’s $98.12 billion.The peso has been depreciating since the Middle East war began in March, breaching the P60-per-dollar level during the period.Compared to Oct. 27 of last year, the currency had weakened by P5.27, or 8.9 percent, from its P58.90:$1 level.To date, the peso has depreciated by P5.38 or 9.15 percent, from its P58.79:$1 close on Dec. 29, 2025.Metrobank economist Nicholas Antonio Mapa said the pass through of forex depreciation to inflation was measured by the central bank at 0.04 percentage point for every peso depreciation. “So the sharp move in reaction to the surprise overly aggressive tightening may be viewed as inflationary given how quickly spot increased in reaction to the meeting,” Mapa said. “Market is aware that aggressive tightening cannot stop inflation and now remains focused on likely weaker growth prospects,” he added.Velasquez also said pressure on the currency is likely to persist, with October and November inflation potentially approaching 8 percent and the third quarter growth possibly falling below 3 percent.Consumer price growth accelerated to 7.2 percent in September and the central bank has already said this could go higher amid local and global uncertainties. “Financial markets could also remain volatile in early November as investors assess incoming economic data and the outlook for economic recovery,” she said.Velasquez also argued that seasonal dollar inflows, particularly remittances in November and December, could provide some support for the peso.However, she said that uncertainty over the pace of economic recovery appears to be offsetting the seasonal support from remittances. “If the peso remains near P64.00 per dollar, it could recover modestly to around P63.00 by year-end, although downside risks remain,” Velasquez said.Power rates to rise Energy Secretary Sharon Garin on Tuesday said the peso’s depreciation could cause electricity rates to go higher as most fuels being used by major distribution utilities are bought using dollars."Indirectly, this development will affect electricity rates and make them go up because we buy coal, diesel, and LNG with dollars, and P64 is really one of the highest we have right now. So it will impact the rate of electricity because it is a pass-through charge," Garin said in a media interview at the Singapore International Energy Week event.She said that the DOE intends to have a meeting with the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) on how they can ease the impact of the development.She said all stakeholders must work together as the country is beset by global, economic, and climate pressures."We have the oil crisis, we have this currency devaluation, we also have the El Niño and coming summer as well. We have to try to work it out like as much as possible and minimize the overall impact," Garin said.Supply is priority Castro said President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has ordered concerned agencies that "no matter what happens, even if the price of fuel rises, we must always have a supply." That is the primary directive to the Energy secretary "because even if the price of fuel or crude oil is low, it means nothing if you have no supply," Castro said in Filipino."It is harder to live and harder for the economy to move if we do

not have crude oil," Castro said."There is also the fuel subsidy for our drivers and operators. So, a lot of assistance is currently being implemented," the PCO official said.

- Dizon cites reforms at DPWH as he exits (2026-10-27 16:18)

OUTGOING Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Secretary Vince Dizon on Tuesday reported to the public that the agency under his watch has blacklisted or suspended 29 contractors and removed more than 80 personnel from their positions as part of the government's campaign against corruption.Taking over the top Department of Transportation (DOtr) post, which he previously held, Dizon disclosed the figures during a media briefing with newly appointed DPWH chief Giovanni Lopez.Dizon outlined the reforms undertaken at the DPWH and called for their continuation under the new leadership.Of the 29 contractors, about 20 had been blacklisted and nine suspended, Dizon said, warning that more contractors and personnel could face sanctions in the coming weeks as he turned over to Lopez several documents that appeared to be involving more erring agency officials and personnel.Saying government would continue going after those responsible for irregularities while protecting honest and competent employees, Dizon cited the arrest of two individuals in connection with corruption allegations, saying the government's accountability drive would continue.Dizon said the DPWH prioritized completing stalled infrastructure projects before undertaking new ones, in line with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s directive.He cited several projects that had remained unfinished for years but were completed or accelerated under his leadership, including a bridge project that had been stalled for 15 years before being completed in five months.Other bridges and roads in various parts of the country had also been completed or brought closer to completion, he said, stressing that infrastructure delays affect public safety, mobility and livelihoods.On flood control, Dizon said nearly half of more than 70 pumping stations in Metro Manila had been nonoperational when he assumed leadership of the DPWH. Most of the previously nonoperational stations have since been restored, he added.The department had also continued dredging and desilting waterways to improve drainage and reduce flooding while 19 flood management master plans were ready for implementation, he said.Dizon said the DPWH was also exploring nature-based flood control solutions instead of relying primarily on concrete structures, with technical cooperation being pursued with the Netherlands, Japan and South Korea.He cited the department's transparency initiatives, including an online portal launched in November that allows the public to access and download project and budget documents.Dizon said infrastructure projects proposed in the 2027 national budget must have complete supporting documents, stressing that transparency and accountability should remain central to project implementation.He also called for continued cooperation with civil society organizations, religious groups, namely, Caritas, People's Budget Council, Bisto Proyekto; and local governments led by the Mayors for Good Governance to monitor infrastructure projects and ensure that complaints prompt swift action.The department, he said, could not independently inspect and monitor all projects nationwide, making public participation essential to identifying irregularities and implementation problems.Dizon added that nearly 3,000 DPWH employees were promoted, emphasizing the

importance of recognizing personnel based on merit rather than personal connections.The DPWH has about 70,000 employees nationwide.He said the challenge for the new leadership was to institutionalize the reforms so they would continue beyond the tenure of individual officials.Dizon said the anti-corruption campaign, transparency measures and improvements in infrastructure delivery must be sustained regardless of changes in leadership.Allocation defendedMalacañang on Tuesday defended the allocation for the public works projects in the district represented by House Majority Leader Sandro Marcos, the president's son.This comes after the district received a P4.38 billion increase in funding through insertions made by the House in the General Appropriations Bill for 2027 — the largest increase in allocation in public works funding.In a press briefing in Cagayan de Oro, Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said funds should be allocated to projects as long as they are properly used and do not involve ghost projects or substandard materials. "If the projects of a congressman will be used properly, why should they be blocked?" she said in Filipino.Addressing concerns about whether the president would veto unitemized or undocumented budget allocations, Castro noted that the legitimacy of a project rests on whether funds are executed as intended rather than the origin of the insertion.Castro emphasized that lawmakers naturally seek funding improvements for their respective constituencies, regardless of their family ties to the executive branch. "Congressmen have their own districts that they look after — districts where they want to see improvements. And this applies to everyone — it's not specific to Congressman Sandro Marcos; we are speaking in general terms," Castro said.She noted that budget insertions are only problematic if they end up in the pockets of politicians. "There will be no issues, provided they always keep in mind and take to heart the president's intent — that the funds are for the Filipino people, not for the pockets of any politician," said Castro.Castro reiterated Marcos' policy that public funds must directly benefit taxpayers rather than serve personal interests. "There will be no harm done, provided they always keep in mind and take to heart what the president desires — that the funds are for the Filipino people, not for the pockets of any politician," Castro said.

- Senators cite civic groups' budget review role (2026-10-27 16:17)

SENATE President Sherwin Gatchalian commended civil society groups for using technology, artificial intelligence, and coding to speed up their review of the national budget, announcing that the Senate has included a link to an independent study on its official Senate Budget Transparency Portal.The landmark initiative aims to provide the public with greater access to external analyses of the proposed P7.2-trillion national budget for 2027.During the Committee on Finance hearing on Monday, Oct. 26, Gatchalian cited a specific analysis prepared by the civil society organization (CSO) BetterGov.ph, which he described as "detailed, granular, and easy to analyze." Gatchalian noted that BetterGov.ph managed to release its comprehensive analysis just one day after the General Appropriations Bill (GAB) was approved on second reading. This rapid turnaround, driven by digital tracking tools and AI, allowed lawmakers to begin scrutinizing the massive measure much earlier than in previous budget cycles.He emphasized that the study was uploaded to the transparency portal to help the public examine the nuances of government spending beyond the standard, dense official documents provided by the

Senate. Historically, processing thousands of pages of line items would take groups up to two weeks, but technology has compressed that window into a single day.The integration of third-party digital reviews comes at a critical time, as Congress deliberates on the Marcos administration's final full-year spending plan. Anchored on the theme "People-Centered Growth for an Inclusive and Resilient Future," the proposed P7.2-trillion budget represents a 6 percent increase from the 2026 fiscal plan and makes up roughly 21.7 percent of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP).Social services claim the lion's share of the 2027 allocations at P2.456 trillion — funding critical programs in education, healthcare, and social protection.Meanwhile, economic services follow at P1.833 trillion to drive infrastructure and agricultural productivity. Given the unprecedented size of the budget and recent strict Supreme Court rulings on spending limits, both senators and watchdogs have underscored the necessity for airtight, itemized oversight.Transparency portalFirst launched on Sept. 1, 2025, to track the 2026 national budget, the Senate Budget Transparency Portal was designed to spearhead a "golden age of transparency" in local governance. In its initial iteration, the platform served primarily as a digital repository, hosting live streams of committee hearings, plenary debates, and official documents like the National Expenditure Program (NEP) and comparative budget matrices.However, Gatchalian previously acknowledged that simply uploading massive raw data files amounted to an "information dump" that ordinary citizens struggled to digest. To transform the portal from a static archive into an interactive accountability tool, the Senate expanded its features. The inclusion of direct links to independent trackers developed by groups like BetterGov.ph and the People's Budget Coalition marks a major step forward, giving users accessible dashboards to spot potential spending flags.Institutionalizing civic oversightFinance Committee Chairman JV Ejercito echoed Gatchalian's sentiments, asserting that accessibility is only the first step in true government oversight. "Transparency is more felt when people can actually use the information to ask questions and hold their government accountable," Ejercito said.Gatchalian encouraged other CSOs and specialized budget watchdogs to submit sector-specific reviews, particularly in education, health, and infrastructure. By institutionalizing these tech-driven partnerships, the Senate aims to protect the integrity of public funds and guarantee that the 2027 budget directly responds to the immediate needs of the Filipino people.One trillion porkSen. Panfilo Lacson said the fight for a clean national budget must continue with the help of civil society groups to expose questionable spending.Lacson said a Senate hearing with budget advocacy groups reinforced his resolve to protect public funds, despite the troubling issues raised by the advocates. "Yesterday's budget hearing left me torn between despair and hope. Engaging with diverse advocacy groups, both young and old, united as guardrails for public funds was truly inspiring. As a steadfast budget vanguard myself, it has further strengthened my resolve," Lacson said in a social media post. "From One Trillion March to One Trillion Pork — and all the way to Payatas!" he wrote, referring to the site of a city jail where officials accused of corruption are detained.Lacson described Monday's hearing as a paradox, saying the concerns raised by CSO representatives initially made him question whether there was still hope for the country. "I sensed a paradox in the hearing. On one end, after hearing the corruption they described, is there still hope for the nation? But after hearing their passion and

advocacy, I thought there is still much hope for the nation," Lacson said.Lacson said he was considering inviting the CSO representatives to the bicameral conference committee hearings, where they could serve as a "cheering squad" for lawmakers pushing for a transparent budget.He stressed that CSOs help senators scrutinize the proposed budget and identify questionable items that lawmakers and their staff might otherwise miss, describing their contribution as a "multiplier effect." "Without you, we cannot do the job. Our staff are dedicated but they cannot comb through all the items in the budget in a short time. You are our multiplier effect," Lacson told the advocates.

- Surrender before deadline expires, dela Rosa urged (2026-10-27 16:16)

MALACAÑANG on Tuesday said the deadline given to fugitive Sen. Ronald dela Rosa, which expires Oct. 29, was intended to give him chance to surrender voluntarily and peacefully, but if he does not take the opportunity, the authorities will hunt him down "with no mercy" until he is captured.The government earlier this week offered a P50-million reward for information leading to dela Rosa's capture and issued a one-week deadline for the senator to surrender. Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla added that a "no mercy" approach would apply if dela Rosa ignores the deadline.In a press briefing in Cagayan de Oro, Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said a voluntary surrender would avoid a dangerous or violent confrontation.Castro also criticized attempts to spin the information regarding the P50-million bounty by linking it to Super El Niño disaster response allocations, explaining that each government agency operates under distinct and mandated budgets. "A matter concerning El Niño is entirely different from the matter of arresting those who need to be held accountable. So you cannot combine funds meant to curb the El Niño issue with funds meant to combat crime and apprehend culprits," Castro said.The Palace press officer reminded dela Rosa that as a former Philippine National Police chief and a current senator, he should set an example by respecting the law and the authorities instead of hiding or serving as an idol to fugitives.Castro also addressed arguments concerning the lack of a local court warrant, pointing out the provisions of Republic Act 9851 or the Philippine Act on Crimes Against International Humanitarian Law, Genocide, and Other Crimes Against Humanity, noting that cases involving crimes against humanity initiated while the Philippines was still a member of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2017 can be pursued by the international tribunal.Regarding intelligence reports suggesting that dela Rosa is under the protection of an armed group, Castro issued a warning, urging anyone harboring the senator to love their country and abide by the law rather than contribute to criminal activity. "I hope that you love your country, uphold our nation's laws, and ensure that we do not become the reason for the further spread of crime here in the Philippines," she said.Wife's appealNancy dela Rosa, wife of the fugitive senator, appealed to her husband's influential former allies not to use him for personal or political agendas, urging them to offer support rather than persecution.In a social media statement confirmed by their daughter, Cedie dela Rosa, Nancy expressed gratitude to the public, stating that their support reaffirmed that "millions still believe" in the former PNP chief. "I just pray that the powerful few, who were also his friends, would come to realize he is not their enemy nor the enemy of this state,"

Nancy wrote. “Please do not use him for your personal agenda. He has helped you in countless ways, and he has done you no wrong personally. He needs your help, not your persecution.” Dela Rosa is the subject of an International Criminal Court arrest warrant for leading the previous administration’s bloody war on drugs, and has been in hiding since slipping out of the Senate in May.

- PAF vows safety review after crash (2026-10-27 16:15)

PHILIPPINE Air Force (PAF) chief Lt. Gen. Arthur Cordura said a rigorous probe would be conducted into the training accident that resulted in the death of four airmen on Oct. 23. “A thorough investigation is underway and we will establish the facts, examine our training and safety practices, and immediately act on its findings,” Cordura said Tuesday, noting the Air Force owed it to the victims, and their families to address any shortcomings identified in the investigation.Cordura said the PAF is committed to strengthening safety systems to ensure its personnel could perform their duties safely and effectively. “The welfare of our people is inseparable from our mission,” he said.Cordura extended his condolences to the bereaved families and appealed to the public to respect their privacy as they mourn.

- Defense wants to cross witnesses (2026-10-27 16:14)

FORMER president Rodrigo Duterte has asked the International Criminal Court (ICC) to require two prosecution witnesses to testify in person so his defense team can cross-examine them on allegations central to the crimes against humanity case against him.In a filing dated Oct. 26, Duterte’s defense team opposed the prosecution’s request to introduce the previously recorded testimonies of witnesses P-1393 and P-1416 without requiring them to appear in court, arguing that their accounts involve disputed issues and require further examination.The filing was submitted to ICC Trial Chamber III, composed of Presiding Judge Joanna Korner and Judges Keebong Paek and Nicolas Guillou. The defense, however, did not object to the admission of the prior recorded testimony of a third witness, P-1370, under Rule 68(2)(b) of the ICC’s Rules of Procedure and Evidence.The prosecution’s application seeks to introduce the three witnesses’ recorded statements as part of efforts to streamline the trial proceedings.Duterte’s lawyers argued that allowing the statements of P-1393 and P-1416 without cross-examination could prejudice the former president’s right to a fair trial, particularly because their accounts touch on allegations of a policy to neutralize suspected criminals through violent acts.The defense said P-1393’s testimony included allegations linking Duterte to payments allegedly made to police officers in connection with killings. It argued that the witness relied on information from third parties rather than personal knowledge of the events and that his account contained inconsistencies and contradictions.The defense also questioned the reliability of P-1393’s statements, saying the witness did not personally see the death of the relative whose killing he discussed. His account of the incident and the alleged motives behind it was based on information he said he received from other people.Duterte’s lawyers further objected to the prosecution’s attempt to introduce documents associated with P-1393’s testimony, arguing that the witness had not sufficiently explained their contents

during his interview.The defense likewise sought to question P-1416, whose recorded statement concerns an incident covered by Count 3 of the charges against Duterte.They said P-1416's account addressed the circumstances surrounding the victims' deaths, including his alleged observations of their bodies and bullet wounds and his attribution of the killings to police officers purportedly acting for financial gain.The defense argued that this testimony raises questions that cannot be adequately resolved without questioning him in court. It also cited discrepancies between his account and another witness' testimony concerning the same incident.Duterte's lawyers said P-1416 was particularly important because his account contained information that other witnesses identified by the prosecution could not independently provide.The defense maintained that the prosecution's reliance on other witnesses to address inconsistencies would not be an adequate substitute for cross-examining P-1416 himself.Under Rule 68(2)(b), the ICC may allow previously recorded testimony to be admitted in the absence of a witness, subject to specified requirements. The defense argued that the provision must be applied cautiously, particularly when the evidence concerns matters central to the charges and the accused has no opportunity to challenge the witness' account.The filing acknowledged the trial chamber's interest in limiting hearing hours, especially in view of Duterte's age and frailty, but maintained that procedural efficiency must not compromise his right to defend himself effectively.The chamber has yet to rule on the defense's request.

- Holidays do not lift the requirement for a travel authority (2026-10-27 16:13)

Dear PAO,I am a government employee working for the Department of Health (DOH), and I am planning to travel to Thailand for only two days during a holiday here in the Philippines. However, my travel authority has not yet been approved, and I have already bought my plane ticket. Do I need to secure a travel authority even if my trip falls on a holiday?MichiDear Michi,Yes. The rules on foreign travel by government officials and employees can be found in Section 6 of Memorandum Circular 35, series of 2017, dated Nov. 22, 2027, which provides: "Section 6. Private Trips Abroad of Government Officials and Employees. No government official or employee shall be allowed to depart for any travel abroad, even if such travel is for a purely personal or private purpose without cost to the government, unless such official or employee has duly accomplished the requisite leave forms and has obtained the appropriate travel authorization from his or her agency." Said rule is consistent with Executive Order 459, series of 2005, dated Sept. 1, 2005, which streamlines the procedure for requesting an authority to travel abroad of government officials and employees. The issuance establishes the appropriate approving authorities and procedures for foreign travel by government personnel: "SECTION 2. Subject to Section 5 hereof, all other government officials and employees seeking authority to travel abroad shall henceforth seek approval from their respective heads of agencies, regardless of the length of their travel and the number of delegates concerned. For the purpose of this paragraph, heads of agencies refer to the Department Secretaries or their equivalents." These rules and regulations, to which one submits himself or herself, have been issued to guide government officers and employees in

the efficient performance of their obligations. When one becomes a public servant, he or she assumes certain duties with their concomitant responsibilities and gives up some rights like the absolute right to travel so that public service would not be prejudiced. (Leave Division, Office of Administrative Services-OCA v. Heusdens, AM P-11-2927 [Formerly AM OCA IPI 10-3532-P], Dec. 13, 2011, Ponente: Associate Justice Jose Mendoza)Similarly, in the case of Judge Luis Enriquez Reyes v. Raquel S. Bautista, Administrative Matter P-04-1873, promulgated on Jan. 13, 2005, Per Curiam, the Court held that "[a] court stenographer was found guilty for traveling abroad without securing the necessary permission for foreign travel. She was also found guilty of dishonesty when she indicated in her application that her leave would be spent in the Philippines, when in truth it was spent abroad." Applying the foregoing to your case, the fact that your travel abroad is personal, short, or during a holiday does not, by itself, exempt you from securing the appropriate authority before leaving the country. As a government employee, you are still bound by regulations governing foreign travel as part of the conditions of public service. You may check your agency's travel guidelines, as this varies depending on your position and the government agency you are employed in. We hope that we were able to answer your query. This advice was solely based on the facts you have narrated and our appreciation of the same. Our opinion may vary when other facts are changed or elaborated.Thank you for your unwavering trust and support.Editor's note: Dear PAO is a daily column of the Public Attorney's Office. Questions for Chief Acosta may be sent to dearpao@manilatimes.net

- SC's Marquez vows end to court congestion by 2032 (2026-10-27 16:12)

SUPREME Court Associate Justice Jose Midas Marquez has vowed to eliminate overburdened courts by 2032 by sustaining judicial reforms, accelerating digitalization and speeding up case resolution if appointed the country's next chief justice.Presenting his vision before the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC), Marquez proposed a five-year reform program, the Strategic Plan for Judicial Innovations 2.0 (SPJI 2.0), covering 2028 to 2032 and building on reforms initiated under Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo. "My goal is not to begin anew, but to sustain and strengthen transformative reforms already underway," Marquez said, stressing the need to institutionalize successful initiatives while addressing persistent weaknesses in the judicial system.Marquez cited his more than three decades of experience at the Supreme Court, where he started as an executive assistant in 1991 while studying law at Ateneo de Manila University.He later served as chief of staff to former Chief Justice Reynato Puno, Supreme Court spokesman and Court Administrator for nearly 12 years before becoming an associate justice in November 2021.Having worked under at least nine chief justices and alongside justices, judges and court personnel nationwide, Marquez said his experience has given him a deep understanding of the judiciary's operations and challenges.He entered the race after accepting endorsements from the Association of Retired Regional Trial Court Judges of the Philippines and retired Supreme Court Associate Justice Arturo Brion, who cited his work ethic, integrity and extensive judicial administration experience.Marquez, however, cautioned against treating seniority as an automatic qualification for the top post. "Length of service is not by

itself the qualification," he told the JBC, adding that what mattered was what his years in the institution had taught him and how he would use that experience.At the heart of his proposed reform agenda is the development of judicial personnel, whom he described as the judiciary's most important asset.He pledged stronger training and leadership programs, employee wellness initiatives, and the development of ethical, competent future judicial leaders.To address mounting caseloads, Marquez proposed nationwide docket studies to identify the causes of delays, determine which cases take the longest to resolve, and pinpoint courts suffering from severe congestion.He also called for specialized judicial training and the establishment of additional courts where caseloads justify them. "By 2032, we should no longer have overburdened courts," he said.Marquez also vowed to advance digitalization by sustaining the eCourt PH system and digitizing court records.He proposed artificial intelligence-assisted information portals and helpdesk chatbots to provide litigants and other court users with faster assistance, alongside the prompt online publication of decisions and resolutions after promulgation.He suggested allowing persons deprived of liberty to help digitize non-sensitive court records in exchange for a stipend, providing opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration into society while supporting the Judiciary's modernization efforts.He also pushed for stronger fiscal autonomy under Republic Act 12233, or the Judiciary Fiscal Autonomy Act, including a review of court staffing patterns and personnel benefits.His agenda further covers revisions to the Rules of Court scheduled to take effect in June 2027, stronger integrity investigations, enhanced judicial security, and improvements to the JBC.To expand professional development, Marquez proposed establishing judicial training centers in Visayas and Mindanao and amending the Philippine Judicial Academy's charter to allow it to confer degrees and certificates in judicial leadership, law and public administration.He acknowledged that his proposals were initial ideas that could be refined through stakeholder consultation.Marquez also expressed confidence in the other four Supreme Court aspirants, saying he hoped all five justices seeking the post would make the JBC shortlist.The other candidates are Senior Associate Justice Marvic M.V.F. Leonen and Associate Justices Alfredo Benjamin Caguioa, Rodil Zalameda and Japar Dimaampao.The council is screening candidates to succeed Gesmundo, who will retire upon reaching the mandatory retirement age of 70 on Nov. 6.The JBC will submit a shortlist to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who will appoint the next chief justice.

- Malabon steps up preparations for El Niño (2026-10-27 16:11)

MALABON CITY Mayor Jeannie Sandoval has strengthened coordination among local departments, barangay officials, utility providers, and partner agencies as it intensified preparations for the potential impact of El Niño, including water scarcity, extreme heat, increased fire risks, and possible disruptions to food supply and livelihoods."Preparations for El Niño require proper coordination among our offices, partner agencies, and villages. The cooperation of everyone is essential in conserving water, taking precautions against extreme heat, and preventing fires so we can protect the health, safety, and livelihoods of every Malabueño," Sandoval told The Manila Times on Tuesday. "I also encourage my constituents

to use water responsibly and follow government advisories. Through collective action and early preparation, our city will be better equipped to face the possible challenges posed by El Niño," the mayor said.Preparations took center stage at the Task Force El Niño meeting led by the Malabon Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO), she said.With water conservation and emergency water supply emerging as key priorities, City Administrator Alex Rosete said that the local Environment and Natural Resources Office, Engineering Office, MDRRMO, villages and Maynilad have been identified as key partners in assessing water availability, identifying areas vulnerable to supply interruptions, checking public facilities for leaks, promoting responsible water consumption and appropriate water reuse, and preparing emergency water distribution arrangements.To protect residents from extreme heat, the City Health Office, Ospital ng Malabon, MDRRMO, and barangay health workers were tasked with coordinating the dissemination of heat advisories from the national weather agency, preparing for possible cases of heat exhaustion and heatstroke, and identifying vulnerable residents who may need assistance, Rosete said.Food security and livelihood protection were likewise included in the preparations.Concerned city offices and partner agencies, including the City Social Welfare and Development, market authorities, and national agencies, were expected to help monitor the prices and availability of basic commodities and identify possible interventions in case of supply disruptions.Top city officials also said targeted food assistance was considered if the situation worsens."It is important that the responsibilities of each office and partner agency are clear so that our response to the possible effects of El Niño is orderly and prompt," Rosete said.The issues shared and recommendations raised during the meeting should serve as a guide for planning and coordination, ensuring that our measures address the needs of our barangays and our citizens," he pointed out.Public information and barangay-level preparedness were also highlighted as essential components of the city's response.The Public Information Office, Malabon TV, and villages were expected to help disseminate timely advisories on water conservation, heat safety, fire prevention, and emergency reporting through official social media channels and other communication platforms.Residents were then encouraged to conserve water, observe fire-safety precautions, take care during extreme heat episodes, and follow official advisories from the city government and concerned agencies.

- Motorist arrested for unjust vexation over NAIA parking dispute (2026-10-27 16:10)

AVIATION Security Group (Avsegroup) personnel at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 1 arrested a 32-year-old motorist on Oct. 25 for unjust vexation after a confrontation over traffic enforcement.The Avsegroup said the NAIA Police Station 1 and the Mobile Police Security Unit responded to a report of illegal parking at the New Arrival Extension.Police said the situation escalated when the motorist allegedly became uncooperative while being issued a citation ticket, reportedly hurling abusive language and physically resisting the responding officers.Authorities eventually apprehended the motorist for unjust vexation under Article 287 of the Revised Penal Code.He remains in the custody of NAIA Police Station 1 pending inquest proceedings.After the incident, Avsegroup director Brig. Gen. Dionisio Bartolome reminded the public that respecting the law and airport security personnel is

essential to maintaining safety and order within airport premises.

• BOC pushes digital overhaul to speed up MSMEs trade (2026-10-27 16:09)

THE Bureau of Customs (BOC) is ramping up its digitalization drive to cut red tape, speed up cargo clearance and lower transaction costs for Filipino micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) as it pursues a major overhaul of its customs processing system.The agency presented its digital transformation initiatives at the Asean Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises Trusted Trade Interoperability Forum, highlighting efforts to simplify customs procedures and improve cross-border trade connectivity.Celso Bugaoan Jr., director of the BOC's Planning and Systems Development Service under the Management Information Systems and Technology Group, outlined several Department of Finance-BOC initiatives, including eInvoice Acceptance, Advance Digital Information, and Electronic Customs Clearance.The digital tools are designed to streamline customs transactions, improve transparency and compliance, and enable businesses to move goods across borders more efficiently. "The Bureau of Customs is in the midst of transforming its systems, applications, and processes toward minimizing physical interaction," Bugaoan said. "These enhancements aim to improve trade data connectivity and facilitate simpler, faster and more compliant cross-border trade for Filipino MSMEs," he added.A major component of the modernization drive is the proposed Customs Processing System (CPS), the BOC's flagship initiative to integrate and automate customs operations through a technology-driven platform.The proposed system aims to reduce manual processing, strengthen compliance monitoring, improve transparency and speed up processes for shipment release.Once implemented, the CPS is expected to provide businesses with a more efficient, predictable trading environment while reinforcing revenue collection and border control. The Department of Finance is reviewing the project.The BOC also highlighted the National Single Window, which allows trade-related documents to be submitted through a single digital entry point, facilitating information exchange among government agencies and industry stakeholders.The BOC is among eight government agencies that have successfully onboarded and operationalized the platform.Other digital tools supporting customs operations include the Electronic-to-Mobile System for electronic transactions; the Customer Care Portal System for client inquiries; and the Automated Routing and Monitoring System for tracking and routing documents.The agency also uses the Alert Order Monitoring System to monitor shipment alert orders, the Electronic Tracking of Containerized Cargo System to track containerized shipments, and the ATA Carnet Monitoring System to oversee temporarily imported goods.The BOC said these systems are intended to make customs services more accessible and efficient while reducing processing delays and unnecessary costs for businesses.For MSMEs, faster, more transparent customs procedures would ease engagement with international trade, improve access to regional markets, and make it easier to compete in the global economy.

• QC honors excellence, service at 24th MLQ 'Gawad Parangal' (2026-10-27 16:08)

THE Quezon City government conferred honors on 15 outstanding individuals and organizations whose achievements and service have strengthened communities and advanced inclusive

development during the 24th Manuel Luis Quezon (MLQ) Gawad Parangal, Mayor Joy Belmonte said on Tuesday.Under the theme "Pagkilala sa Kahusayan, Pagbibigay-Inspirasyon sa Kinabukasan" (Recognizing Excellence, Inspiring the Future), the ceremony celebrated contributions spanning education, community development, public service, business, culture, sports, and other fields, Belmonte said.The seven organizational awardees were Miriam College; Mabuting Pastol Multi-Purpose Cooperative; Philippine Institute of Civil Engineers, Inc., Quezon City Chapter (PICE QC Chapter); Philippine Association of Intercultural Development (Pafid); Likhaan Center for Women's Health Inc.; University of the Philippines Kontemporaryong Gamelan Pilipino (Kontra-GaPi); and Fairplay for All Foundation.The eight individual awardees include Dr. Zeus Salazar, historian and anthropologist; Dr. Prospero Covar, anthropologist and sociologist; Steve Sy, founder and CEO of Great Deals E-Commerce Corporation; Dr. Ernesto de Castro, president and founder of ESCA Inc.; Marilyn Barua-Yap, Civil Service Commission chairman; Rep. Percival Cendaña, human rights advocate and legislator; Ricky Lee, national artist for film and broadcast arts; and Samantha Kyle Catantan, Olympian and international foil fencer.The city government also paid tribute to 64 employees who have served the local government for more than 40 years, honoring their dedication and decades of public service.Belmonte said the awardees exemplify how excellence, compassion and a commitment to others can create lasting change.Their work, she noted, highlights the needs of vulnerable sectors and inspires more people to help build a caring and inclusive city."Quezon City is what it is today because of individuals and organizations who, in their own ways, live out the values that make our city what it is. Through their dedication, compassion, and commitment to serving others, they help us build a community where every QCitizen is valued, empowered, and given the opportunity to thrive," according to the city chief executive.The local government said the awards recognized contributions across seven pillars of good governance and development: human and social services; economic development; urban development; institutional development; social inclusion, diversity and equality; creative arts and cultural heritage; and sports and athletic excellence.Belmonte congratulated the awardees and called for continued citizen participation, emphasizing that the city's progress rests on the shared efforts of its people."Even if the language of our actions and words differs, many things still bind us together. We are united by the desire to contribute to the wider world,” she stressed.

- MPD prepares cemetery security measures (2026-10-27 16:07)

THE Manila Police District (MPD) is preparing security measures covering four Manila cemeteries for the observance of All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day, according to Maj. Philipp Ines, MPD spokesman and chief public information officer.Ines said more than 2 million people visited Manila North Cemetery, Manila South Cemetery, La Loma Cemetery, and Manila Chinese Cemetery in 2025. Manila North Cemetery alone recorded more than 1.7 million visitors.Ines said authorities expect more visitors this year.He urged the public to visit cemeteries early to avoid peak periods.Ines said intelligence personnel would blend into crowds at cemeteries as part of the security preparations.Police will conduct security checks at Manila North Cemetery and Manila Chinese Cemetery and secure access points not designated for entry or exit, he

said.Authorities will also check for prohibited items brought into the cemeteries.Local government personnel will record visitors' names and contact numbers at entrances to help locate people who become separated from their companions. Public address systems will also be available inside the cemeteries, Ines said.Wheelchairs and personnel to assist persons with disabilities and senior citizens will be available at cemetery entrances. Vehicles will not be allowed inside the burial grounds.Police personnel will also be deployed in crowded areas, including shopping districts, based on identified crime hotspots, he said.Ines urged the public to cooperate with police and report suspicious activity.He discussed the preparations during a media forum in Ermita, Manila, on Tuesday.

- Gatchalian: Senators ready to work through holidays (2026-10-27 16:06)

SENATE President Sherwin Gatchalian said Tuesday that the Senate would temporarily pause the impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte for about 1 to 1 1/2 weeks to focus exclusively on plenary debates for the national budget."To be fair to the respondent, the defense has not yet presented its evidence and testimony. We need to hear their side first before thinking about the next steps. In my opinion, there is still a lot of work to be done in this impeachment process," Gatchalian said."I am concentrating on the impeachment right now. We are studying everything carefully — the proceedings, the dates, and the schedules. At the same time, the budget season is moving into plenary. We are focusing strictly on the process," he added.The senator urged the public to be patient until the defense presents its case and evidence.Gatchalian thanked civil society organizations, including the People's Budget Coalition, for submitting materials highlighting severe budget insertions in the version passed by the House of Representatives."I am grateful to them for independently studying the budget. We have reviewed their findings, and they align with what we are seeing," he said."While it is within their mandate to propose amendments, every change must have a proper basis. You cannot just swap projects without justification. In fact, I coordinated with the Department of Public Works and Highways this morning to ensure that proposed changes are backed by feasibility studies, work programs, and technical evaluations," Gatchalian added.He said that the huge volume of work might force senators to work through the holidays."It is very challenging — I won't deny that it will be difficult. Our goal is to approve and ratify the budget before the end of the year. Just like last year, if necessary, we will work through the Christmas holidays. We have no choice — even during Christmas, we will work to finish the budget," he said.

- PH eyes closer defense ties with Cambodia (2026-10-27 16:05)

THE Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) discussed closer defense cooperation against emerging regional threats.AFP Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Rommel Roldan represented the Philippines while Lt. Gen. Hun Manith of the General Department of Research and Intelligence represented Cambodia in a meeting on Oct. 26.The discussions focused on strengthening bilateral defense relations between the two Southeast Asian countries through information sharing, sustained dialogue and closer coordination.On Oct. 20, AFP Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Antonio Nafarrete met with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun

Manet in Phnom Penh to discuss air and maritime security cooperation.Hun Manet expressedoptimism that the countries could move forward with an agreement, according to an Oct. 22report by Cambodia.Nafarrete also met with RCAF Commander-in-Chief Gen. Vong Pisen to talkabout expanding cooperation in defense, information exchange, counterterrorism,transnational crime prevention, cybersecurity, and humanitarian assistance.Cambodiawelcomed the Philippines' leadership of the Asean Observer Team, which monitorsdevelopments along the Cambodia-Thailand border as part of regional efforts to support apeaceful resolution of border disputes.The Philippines and Cambodia signed a memorandum ofunderstanding on defense cooperation in December 2017, providing a framework forexchanges of military personnel, training, information and expertise, as well as other mutuallyagreed activities.The two countries subsequently held their inaugural Joint Defense CooperationCommittee meeting in Phnom Penh in March 2019 to discuss regional security concerns,including cybersecurity, counterterrorism, violent extremism and peacekeepingoperations.During a September 2025 meeting between President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and HunManet in Manila, an amended agreement on police cooperation covering human trafficking,arms trafficking, and cybercrime was signed.

- Leonen pushes sustained judicial reforms (2026-10-27 16:04)

SUPREME Court Senior Associate Justice Marvic Leonen said judicial reforms should continue beyond 2027 to make justice accessible to all Filipinos. “The Judiciary will not merely adopt technology. Within our sphere of influence, we will govern it,” Leonen said in his keynote address at the recent eNotary and Digital Trust: Twala Legal Tech Forum 2026 in Taguig City. “No machine will sit on our Bench because no machine can give those reasons and answer for them. No machine can take the same oath that we took under our Constitution,” he added.Leonen, who chairs the Supreme Court committees on Access to Justice and Underserved Areas and Human-Centered Augmented Intelligence in the Judiciary, said digital transformation must be measured by its impact on ordinary Filipinos, particularly those hampered by poverty and geographical isolation.Technology, he said, can allow litigants to attend hearings without expensive travel, file pleadings remotely and have documents notarized without missing a day of work.He cited the launch of the Remote Hearing and Equal Access to Law and Justice Program in Tawi-Tawi in 2024, which used satellite internet to enable videoconferencing and allow litigants and witnesses in remote communities to participate in court proceedings.But Leonen cautioned that faster and more convenient services alone would not guarantee meaningful access to justice. “Access to justice is an outcome of [the Strategic Plan for Judicial Innovations]. We are almost done, alongside efficiency and innovation. The plan ends in 2027. The obligation it names does not,” he said.The Supreme Court’s Strategic Plan for Judicial Innovations 2022-2027 identifies access to justice, efficiency and innovation as key reform objectives. Leonen said the commitment to these goals must continue beyond the plan’s expiration.He stressed that technology must be complemented by legal assistance and programs that empower marginalized communities to understand, assert and defend their rights.Among the reforms he cited were the Unified Legal Assistance Service (ULAS) Rules, which

took effect in 2025 and require covered lawyers to provide legal aid, and the Rules on Institutionalizing Support for Developmental and Social Change Lawyering. While the ULAS Rules expand access to legal representation, the latter rules recognize sustained legal work by lawyers and organizations addressing human rights concerns and the underlying causes of inequality.Leonen said the nationwide rollout of electronic notarization, which began on Oct. 19, was another step toward making legal services more accessible.The Supreme Court signed joint memorandum circulars with the Land Registration Authority and the Securities and Exchange Commission to establish guidelines for accepting and processing electronically notarized documents.The forum, organized by Filipino legal technology company Twala, brought together representatives from the Judiciary, government, the legal profession, academe and the technology sector to discuss digital trust and the modernization of legal services.Leonen said the judiciary must ensure that artificial intelligence enhances rather than replaces the work of judges and court personnel. Judicial decisions, he emphasized, must remain grounded in facts and law and be supported by reasoned explanations for which human judges are accountable.He underscored the importance of clear rules, reliable technology and cooperation among institutions to build public confidence in electronic transactions. “Digital transformation is measured in people. For them, digital justice means a case filed promptly, heard without needless delay, and decided fairly," he said.

- PH will not ban nickel export to China – Palace (2026-10-27 16:03)

MALACAÑANG said President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will not ban nickel export to China to counter the alleged plan of Beijing to impose economic sanctions against Manila over heightened maritime issues between the two countries."The president will not think of that kind of retaliation because we know that China and the Philippines help each other in relation to the economy, trade, and investment," Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro said on Tuesday.She was reacting to a media query about whether the government intends to ban nickel export to China as a retaliation to Beijing's reported economic threat. “The economy is a different issue, and protecting our interests is also a different issue," she said in Filipino in a press briefing.

- Gatchalian: Penalize abusive power generation firms (2026-10-27 16:02)

SENATE President Win Gatchalian on Tuesday called on the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) to penalize non-compliant energy stakeholders to prevent unwarranted increases in electricity rates.Gatchalian said that while electricity spot market prices in Luzon averaged P4.80 per kilowatt-hour (kWh), rates reached P18.59/kWh in Visayas and P19.56/kWh in Mindanao, regions that experienced over 120 grid alerts."Beyond the brownout alerts, electricity prices in the Visayas and Mindanao are extremely high. We cannot let this slide; the DOE needs to provide a concrete solution," he said, urging regulatory bodies to protect consumers from market exploitation and systemic grid failures.The Senate leader instructed energy authorities to enforce strict regulatory oversight against underperforming power generation companies."If power generation players are underperforming or engaging in

abusive practices, they must face heavy penalties," Gatchalian stressed. "The DOE, as thepolicymaker, and the ERC, as the regulator, must work together. The public is fed up with highelectricity bills and brownouts. Therefore, we will continue to press and keep a close watch onthe DOE and the ERC until this crisis is resolved."Gatchalian also urged the DOE to conductaudits of fuel pass-through charges.

- Lacson on Cayetano's proposal to reject VP post: Foolish (2026-10-27 16:01)

SEN. Panfilo Lacson on Tuesday slammed as "foolish" a proposal urging senator-judges to commit to rejecting a possible appointment as vice president if Vice President Sara Duterte is removed from office through impeachment.Lacson questioned Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano's call for his colleagues to rule out accepting the position, saying it was unnecessary."Somebody had the gall to suggest that my Senate colleagues should decline a Vice Presidential appointment from President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. if the impeachment trial ends in conviction. While 'no comment' would be the most appropriate response to such a nonsensical idea, silence might be misconstrued as interest in the position," Lacson said on a social media post."Let me be clear: I have a mandate to fulfill until 2031, and the VP post is not under consideration," he added.Lacson cited a hypothetical scenario in which Marcos considers appointing Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid to replace Duterte if the vice presidency becomes vacant."What if PBBM considers appointing Sen. Lito Lapid because he is makamasa and has a good heart? Must Sen. Lapid decline simply because he is a senator-judge? Isn't that a foolish proposition?" Lacson said.Lacson said that Cayetano's proposal was unwarranted because the Constitution allows the president to nominate a replacement vice president from among members of either chamber of Congress, subject to confirmation by both chambers voting separately."Cayetano should not meddle with the president's prerogative to appoint, subject to the confirmation of Congress," Lacson said.Cayetano on Tuesday urged senator-judges to set aside personal political ambitions in deciding Duterte's impeachment case, saying they should assure the public that the prospect of assuming higher office would not influence their votes.He welcomed Senate Presiding Officer Francis Escudero's declaration that he would decline the vice presidency if Duterte was removed from office."Nobody had offered him the position. He could have kept quiet and left the possibility open. Instead, he gave people a reason to trust that his vote would not be influenced by the prospect of becoming vice president," Cayetano said.Cayetano said his proposal was not intended to prejudge the trial's outcome but to address concerns about the impartiality of senator-judges."Everyone remains free to decide. I hope we can consider the concern behind the invitation before taking offense at being asked," he said.He acknowledged concerns that discussing succession was premature while the trial remained ongoing but questioned whether senator-judges should wait until after voting or receiving an offer before declaring their intentions."But when should we make clear that we will put personal interests aside? Must we wait until we have voted or someone offers us the position?" Cayetano said.Investigations, he said, must proceed based on evidence regardless of whether an official remains in office.He also urged his colleagues to discuss concerns about the trial calmly, warning that personal disputes could distract from the

Senate's constitutional responsibilities. "Whatever their views on the vice president, they deserve to know that those judging her case have put personal advantage aside," Cayetano said. "Our conduct must live up to our words. We must hear both sides, weigh the evidence, and follow the Constitution," he added.The impeachment trial is focused on Article II, which accuses Duterte of unexplained wealth, inaccuracies in her statements of assets, liabilities and net worth, and failure to divest business interests.The prosecution withdrew the other three articles earlier this month.

• Finding Lost Souls: Manila offers online Puntod Finder for Undas 2026 (2026-10-27 12:52)

The Manila City Government is encouraging the public to use its online Puntod Finder to locate the graves of their departed loved ones ahead of Undas 2026.The Manila Public Information Office advised visitors to use the official online grave locators for the Manila North Cemetery and Manila South Cemetery by entering the full name of the deceased.The services are accessible through manilanorthcemetery.ph for Manila North Cemetery and manilasouthcemetery.com for Manila South Cemetery.Visitors who need help locating graves may also seek assistance at designated Puntod Finder help desks and guidance stations within the cemeteries.However, some burial records may not appear in online searches as cemetery staff continue to encode and update their databases.Meanwhile, the Manila South Cemetery announced that its operating schedule for Oct. 31 to Nov. 2 would be from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m.The cemetery also set Oct. 26 as the deadline for tomb cleaning and painting, while the last day for burials was Oct. 28. Burial services will resume on Nov. 3.To assist visitors, priority lanes, wheelchairs and electric tricycles will be available for senior citizens, pregnant women and persons with disabilities.The city government also reminded the public to observe safety precautions, maintain cleanliness and follow cemetery regulations during their visits for All Saints' Day on Nov. 1 and All Souls' Day on Nov. 2.

• 4 Filipinos charged with illegal voting in US elections (2026-10-27 12:15)

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Four Filipinos were among 48 foreign citizens charged by the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) with election-related offenses, including illegal voting, fraudulent voter registration, and falsely claiming American citizenship.The DOJ announced the charges on Oct. 26, involving foreign nationals in Pennsylvania, California, Florida, New York, and Nevada.All four Filipinos are US permanent residents or green card holders. They are accused of participating in federal elections despite not being US citizens.The Filipinos were identified as Giezell Viduya Adawag, 41, of California; José Probitsado Amaro, 51, also of California; Pamele Arbués Line, 56, of California; and Jullie Ann Sumalinog Moore, 44, of Nevada.According to the DOJ, Adawag registered to vote on the same day as the November 2024 general election, falsely certified that she was a US citizen, and cast her ballot that day.She was charged in the Eastern District of California with voting by an alien in a federal election, a misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in federal prison.Amaro, meanwhile, allegedly registered to vote by falsely claiming US citizenship before casting a ballot in the November

2024 general election.The DOJ said Amaro subsequently made false statements during his naturalization interview, denying that he had ever claimed to be an American citizen and misrepresenting his voting history.He faces charges in the Southern District of California involving false claims of citizenship to vote, unlawful attempted procurement of naturalization, and false statements under oath in a matter relating to naturalization or citizenship.Line, also charged in the Southern District of California, allegedly voted in the November 2024 general election and later made false statements during her naturalization interview.Federal prosecutors accused her of denying previous claims of US citizenship and misrepresenting her voting history.In Nevada, Moore was charged with voting by an alien after allegedly participating in a federal election involving candidates for president, vice president, the US Senate, and the House of Representatives.The DOJ did not specify the election date in its announcement concerning Moore.The four Filipinos were among 48 foreign nationals facing election-related charges across five states. The other 44 defendants came from various countries, including Mexico, Cuba, Canada, Guatemala, India, Kenya, Russia, and several European, Asian, Pacific, Caribbean and Latin American nations.Under US federal law, lawful permanent residency does not grant an individual the right to vote in federal elections. That privilege is generally reserved for American citizens.The DOJ emphasized that all defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty beyond reasonable doubt.The announcement did not indicate that any of the four Filipino defendants had been convicted or sentenced.

- Light to moderate, sometimes heavy rains possible in parts of Luzon — Pagasa (2026-10-27 12:07)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said light to moderate and sometimes heavy rains were possible in parts of Luzon because of the shear line.In the 5 p.m. weather update on Tuesday, Pagasa Weather Specialist Benison Estareja explained that the shear line is where warm and cold winds collide."So when we have colliding winds, the tendency is that there will be thick clouds and at times heavy rains," he said in Filipino and English."So expect, within the next 24 hours, light to moderate with at times heavy rains are possible here in the Bicol Region, especially in the Camarines provinces and Catanduanes, as well as in Quezon province, Marinduque, Oriental Mindoro, and, later on, here in several parts of Calabarzon, Aurora, and Isabela," he said.Pagasa forecast that localized thunderstorms would affect some parts of the Philippines including Metro Manila.Estareja said the northeast monsoon "is bringing just light rains overnight here in Batanes, Cagayan province, and Apayao."He told the public to expect isolated light rain showers in some areas of the Cordillera region, Ilocos, and parts of Central Luzon.While no gale warning was issued, seas could be moderate to strong (wave heights of 1.5 to 3.4 meters) up to Wednesday afternoon in the coastal waters of northern Luzon, Aurora, Quezon, and Bicol. This is based on information shown during the weather update and what Estareja said. "Up to 3.4 meters..., dangerous for our small sea vessels, especially for" fishers, he said.

- PAO assists nearly 508K detainees (2026-10-27 11:31)

MANILA, Philippines — The Public Attorney’s Office (PAO) assisted nearly 508,000 persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) through jail visitation activities from January to September 2026, providing legal assistance and medical, dental, and optical services, as part of efforts to address jail congestion.Citing PAO data, Chief Persida Rueda-Acosta on Tuesday said that its central office assisted 9,894 PDLs during 17 jail visits through its legal and medical jail visitation and decongestion program, while its regional and district offices assisted 497,772 detainees through 51,830 visits.The central office also provided legal assistance to 1,969 PDLs, medical services to 4,369, dental services to 1,470, and optical services to 2,086, Rueda-Acosta told The Manila Times via Viber.At the Correctional Institution for Women in Mandaluyong City, PAO conducted nine jail visits and assisted 5,943 PDLs. Of these, 1,258 received legal assistance, 2,806 received medical services, 723 received dental services, and 1,156 received optical services.PAO's regional and district offices, meanwhile, conducted legal assistance activities in jails nationwide, assisting nearly half a million detainees during the nine-month period, according to the chief public attorney. “During jail visits, our public defenders interview detainees to identify those without legal counsel, those who may have been detained beyond the maximum imposable penalty for their alleged offenses, and those whose preventive imprisonment has reached the minimum imposable principal penalty,” she revealed.She explained that under Article 29 of the Revised Penal Code, detainees who meet the applicable requirements may seek release on reduced bail or on their own recognizance through the appropriate motion.In a separate interview, Deputy Chief Ana Lisa Soriano said they also check cases involving detainees who have not been arraigned within the period prescribed under the Speedy Trial Act and cases requiring the release of minors held in custody under Republic Act 9344 or the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006.Detainees are informed that they may avail themselves of PAO services free of charge. When a detainee already has private counsel, the lawyer is informed of circumstances that may warrant immediate action. Otherwise, the PAO resident lawyer is notified, said Soriano.She also said procedures are provided under Section 2, Article 6, Chapter XI of the 2021 Revised PAO Operations Manual. From January to September 2026, 57,284 PDLs were released for various legal grounds, according to PAO-National Capital Region director Revelyn Ramos-Dacpano, concurrent Executive Support Staff head.Of these, 2,140 were released on recognizance after serving the minimum sentence, while 7,134 were released after the provisional dismissal of their cases, Ramos-Dacpano said. “Another 1,932 were released because their preventive imprisonment equaled the maximum imposable penalty, although their cases remained pending,” she added.PAO said it likewise recorded 12,369 releases following the complete service of sentence, when the cases had already been terminated, and 33,709 releases for other legal reasons. However, it had no estimate of PDLs who qualified for release by year-end, but maintained records of those already released during the reporting period.The Department of Justice tapped PAO to support its jail decongestion efforts, resulting in five culminating programs from January to September 2026. These activities led to the release of 9,326 PDLs held in penal facilities administered by the Bureau of Corrections, Rueda-Acosta said.

- Lawmaker pushes reforms to bridge income, housing prices (2026-10-27 11:13)

MANILA, Philippines — A lawmaker has called for stronger coordination among government agencies, property developers and housing finance institutions to bridge the gap between residential property prices and what Filipino families can afford.Rep. JP Padiernos, a member of the House Committee on Banks and Financial Intermediaries, said the housing challenge was not simply about building more homes but ensuring that available properties matched household incomes and financing capacity.He stressed the need for closer coordination among concerned agencies amid the reported sales dip in the property sector.He said stronger public-private partnerships could help identify practical ways to make home ownership more attainable through manageable monthly payments while allowing developers to deliver quality housing at commercially sustainable prices.“Prices, down-payment requirements, monthly amortization, location and loan eligibility can prevent potential buyers from purchasing available units, while developers face financing, maintenance and other costs when inventory remains unsold,” Padiernos, who has authored or co-authored at least seven bills on condominium redevelopment, urban development and socialized housing, said.The proposed approach would examine targeted financing assistance, more efficient construction methods, improved infrastructure coordination and streamlined government approvals to reduce avoidable costs without compromising construction quality or buyer protection.The call comes as Colliers Philippines reported about 79,200 unsold condominium units in Metro Manila at the end of 2025, including nearly 30,000 ready-for-occupancy units. The real estate research firm projected residential vacancy to reach 25.6% by the end of 2026.Pag-IBIG Fund’s housing loan releases offer one measure of the demand for financing. The agency reportedly released P69.19 billion in housing loans covering 43,051 units in the first half of 2026, up 15% in loan value and 9% in units financed from the same period last year.Socialized housing loans for minimum-wage and low-income members reached P6.70 billion, financing 6,601 units. The amounts represented year-on-year increases of 118% in loan value and 132% in units financed.Pag-IBIG offers eligible socialized-housing borrowers an annual interest rate of 3%, alongside promotional rates of 4.5% and 5.75% for qualifying loans in other housing price categories. Its maximum housing loan ceiling is P10 million, subject to program conditions.Padiernos said the existing financing programs provided a basis for examining how assistance could help qualified households purchase homes that would otherwise be beyond their reach.The broader housing situation is reflected in the Philippine Statistics Authority’s 2020 Census of Population and Housing, which recorded approximately 28.50 million housing units nationwide, of which 25.19 million were occupied, alongside 26.38 million households.The 1.18-million difference between households and occupied housing units indicates housing pressure but is not an official estimate of the housing backlog or the number of families able to purchase available homes.Colliers identified economic and affordable condominiums as the main drivers of residential demand in the first half of 2026, underscoring the importance of aligning housing products with buyers’ purchasing power.Among major developers, Ayala Land Inc. generated P41 billion in property development revenues in the first half of 2026, ahead of Megaworld Corp. with P27.2 billion, SM Prime Holdings with P20.9 billion and Robinsons Land Corp. with P7.1 billion.Ayala Land also reported that its residential inventory levels improved from 18 months in the first quarter to 15 months, while it turned over nearly

6,000 residential units across 40 projects during the first half.

• DHSUD holds talk with urban poor (2026-10-27 10:37)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) held a dialogue with urban poor groups on Tuesday to address housing concerns."We are talking with the urban poor leaders so that we can resolve their grievances in a proper and orderly way. They are part of the process, so we need to work on this together," DHSUD Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling said.Present in the meeting were representatives of the National Housing Authority, Social Housing Finance Corporation, and the Urban Poor Action Committee led by Alice Murphy. Among the concerns raised were various presidential proclamations and issues on government relocation projects.Aliling said that direct engagements give the urban poor an opportunity to bring their concerns before responsible government offices."When I was appointed last year, I reopened that. I was the one who said let us continue those presidential proclamations and the CMP (Community Mortgage Program) that was stalled for three years," he added.Murphy thanked the government officials present in the meeting. She stressed the need for concrete action on urban poor communities such as Parola and Baseco.Aliling said the dialogue was in line with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s directive to expand access to decent, safe, and affordable homes. He promised the groups comprehensive answers to their questions within two weeks.

• Cooler weather expected as 'amihan' season starts — Pagasa (2026-10-27 08:43)

MANILA, Philippines — The northeast (amihan) season has started, said the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa)."Over the past few days, observations have indicated the strengthening of a high-pressure area over East Asia, which has caused a surge of northeasterly winds over Extreme Northern Luzon," Pagasa said in a statement on Tuesday."In addition, other environmental conditions, which include the increasing atmospheric pressure and cooling of the surroundings, have been observed. These meteorological patterns indicate the start of the Northeast Monsoon (Amihan) season," it said.Pagasa added that forecasts indicated "successive surges of the monsoon over the next two weeks that may cause rough" seas over Northern Luzon's seaboards."With these developments, the Amihan is expected to be more dominant in most areas of the country, bringing cool and dry air and episodes of cold temperature surges," Pagasa said.Rough seas and shear lines were expected within the amihan season, it said.

• Duterte asks ICC to allow cross-examination of 2 witnesses (2026-10-27 08:22)

MANILA, Philippines — Former president Rodrigo Duterte has asked the International Criminal Court (ICC) to require two prosecution witnesses to testify in person so his defense team can cross-examine them on allegations central to the crimes against humanity case against him.In a filing dated Oct. 26, 2026 Duterte's defense team opposed the prosecution's request to introduce the previously recorded testimonies of witnesses P-1393 and P-1416 without requiring them to appear in court, arguing that their accounts involve disputed issues and

require further examination.The defense, however, did not object to the admission of the prior recorded testimony of a third witness, P-1370, under Rule 68(2)(b) of the ICC's Rules of Procedure and Evidence.The prosecution's application seeks to introduce the three witnesses' recorded statements as part of efforts to streamline the trial proceedings.Duterte's lawyers argued that allowing the statements of P-1393 and P-1416 without cross-examination could prejudice the former president's right to a fair trial, particularly because their accounts touch on allegations of a policy to neutralize suspected criminals through violent acts.The defense said P-1393's testimony included allegations linking Duterte to payments allegedly made to police officers in connection with killings. It argued that the witness relied on information from third parties rather than personal knowledge of the events and that his account contained inconsistencies and contradictions.The defense also questioned the reliability of P-1393's statements, saying the witness did not personally see the death of the relative whose killing he discussed. His account of the incident and the alleged motives behind it was based on information he said he received from other people.Duterte's lawyers further objected to the prosecution's attempt to introduce documents associated with P-1393's testimony, arguing that the witness had not sufficiently explained their contents during his interview.The defense likewise sought to question P-1416, whose recorded statement concerns an incident covered by Count 3 of the charges against Duterte.According to the filing, P-1416's account addressed the circumstances surrounding the victims' deaths, including his alleged observations of their bodies and bullet wounds and his attribution of the killings to police officers purportedly acting for financial gain.The defense argued that P-1416's testimony raises questions that cannot be adequately resolved without questioning him in court. It also cited discrepancies between his account and another witness's testimony concerning the same incident.Duterte's lawyers said P-1416 was particularly important because his account contained information that other witnesses identified by the prosecution could not independently provide.The defense maintained that the prosecution's reliance on other witnesses to address inconsistencies would not be an adequate substitute for cross-examining P-1416 himself.Under Rule 68(2)(b), the ICC may allow previously recorded testimony to be admitted in the absence of a witness, subject to specified requirements. The defense argued that the provision must be applied cautiously, particularly when the evidence concerns matters central to the charges and the accused has no opportunity to challenge the witness's account.The filing acknowledged the trial chamber's interest in limiting hearing hours, especially in view of Duterte's age and frailty, but maintained that procedural efficiency must not compromise his right to defend himself effectively.Duterte's lawyers asked the chamber to reject the prosecution's application concerning P-1393 and P-1416 or, alternatively, exclude two associated documents from the evidence.

- EAC students evacuated, classes suspended following bomb threat (2026-10-27 08:09)

MANILA, Philippines — Classes at the Emilio Aguinaldo College (EAC) in Manila were suspended on Tuesday, following a bomb threat in the campus.Students were evacuated, following the threat, and synchronous classes were implemented following the suspension of face-to-face classes. “The safety and well-being of our students, employees, and visitors remain our top

priority. As a precautionary measure, the campus remains closed until further notice while appropriate assessments and necessary safety measures continue to be undertaken," the college said in an advisory."Students, faculty, and staff are advised to monitor EAC Manila's official communication channels for further announcements and updates," it added.The evacuation and suspension of classes followed bomb threats in University of Santo Tomas and the De La Salle University this week.

• UST says campus safe amid online threats (2026-10-27 07:50)

MANILA, Philippines — The University of Santo Tomas (UST) gave assurances on Tuesday that the campus is safe for occupancy and that it is coordinating with the police following threats that circulated online."The University is actively coordinating with the Philippine National Police and related government agencies to investigate and address the safety threats circulating online. Upon recommendation from law enforcers, no evacuation order was issued," UST said in a statement."Our law enforcers are with our own security personnel on campus and have completed their assessment. The campus has been declared safe for occupancy," it added."Our campus personnel remain vigilant and on alert to ensure the safety of everyone," the university said.Last Friday, UST was evacuated following written bomb threats found in restrooms at the San Martin de Porres Building.Over the weekend, the university's operations were reduced to Enhanced Virtual Mode of Instruction for students, while offices had remote work arrangements.

• Sara Duterte's defense team dared to dispute bank records (2026-10-27 06:27)

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives' prosecution panel on Tuesday challenged Vice President Sara Duterte's defense team to produce a witness who could dispute bank records cited in the impeachment proceedings, questioning whether the reported balances could be contradicted."Will the banks' records change? Will they present a witness who will say that those outstanding balances are wrong?" House prosecution adviser and spokesman Ace Barbers said in a press briefing.Barbers pointed to combined year-end bank balances held by Duterte and her husband, lawyer Manases "Mans" Carpio, that reached about P71 million in 2023, compared with the P14 million Duterte declared under other personal properties in her Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN) that year.The combined balances stood at about P59 million in 2022, P22 million in 2024 and P39 million in 2025. Duterte declared about P13 million, P21.13 million and P29 million in other personal properties for those years, respectively."Our citizens have the right to a clear and complete explanation from our Vice President's camp," Barbers said, adding that the defense should address the financial records presented during the impeachment proceedings.The trial is set to resume on Nov. 9, 2026 when Duterte's defense team was expected to begin presenting evidence on Article II, the remaining impeachment charge involving alleged unexplained wealth.Barbers also questioned whether Duterte had declared her insurance policies, investments, 51 registered firearms worth P7.22 million, business interests and real properties in Davao City and Samal Island."These are the things the defense really needs to explain," he said.Forensic accounting

expert Alexander Cabrera identified at least P817.87 million in alleged undeclared assets and unexplained wealth from 2022 to 2025. He testified that the amount could reach P1.5 billion under a broader calculation, subject to adjustments.The prosecution also presented Anti-Money Laundering Council records covering about P4.4 billion in reported financial transactions from 2007 to 2025.

• Quiboloy co-accused named as FBI Most Wanted by Anti-Trafficking Bureau (2026-10-27 06:21)

MANILA, Philippines — The Anti-Trafficking Bureau reminded the public that an administrator of the Apollo Quiboloy-led Kingdom of Jesus Christ was still wanted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the United States.In a Facebook post by the nonprofit organization, Teresita Dandan, 64, is “wanted on federal charges including conspiracy to engage in sex trafficking by force, fraud and coercion, and sex trafficking of children.” “Prosecutors say girls and young women ages 12 to 25 were recruited as personal assistants and coerced, while church members were brought to the US on fraudulent visas and forced to solicit for a bogus charity. She is charged, not convicted, and remains a fugitive,” the Anti-Trafficking Bureau said.Americans are advised to call the FBI at 1-800-CALL-FBI (1-800-225-5324) or visit their website, tips.fbi.gov.Quiboloy remains imprisoned in Pasig City Jail, awaiting extradition to the US.

• Lacson vows to fight 'one trillion pork' (2026-10-27 05:19)

MANILA, Philippines — From the “One Trillion March” to “One Trillion Pork,” Sen. Panfilo “Ping” Lacson said the fight for a clean national budget must continue as he considers bringing civil society groups into bicameral deliberations to help expose questionable spending.Lacson said a Senate hearing with budget advocacy groups had reinforced his resolve to protect public funds, despite the troubling issues raised by the advocates. “MAAWA NAMAN KAYO (Have pity)! Yesterday’s budget hearing left me torn between despair and hope. Engaging with diverse advocacy groups, both young and old, united as guardrails for public funds was truly inspiring. As a steadfast budget vanguard myself, it has further strengthened my resolve,” Lacson said in a social media post. “From One Trillion March to One Trillion Pork — and all the way to Payatas!” he added.Lacson described Monday’s hearing as a paradox, saying the concerns raised by CSO representatives initially made him question whether there was still hope for the country. “I sensed a paradox in the hearing. On one end, after hearing the corruption they described, is there still hope for the nation? But after hearing their passion and advocacy, I thought there is still much hope for the nation,” Lacson said. “Thank you, it was very informative and enlightening. It also strengthened our resolve. We already have a strong advocacy for a clean budget, and Monday’s hearing strengthened our resolve,” he added.Lacson said he was considering inviting the CSO representatives to the bicameral conference committee hearings, where they could serve as a “cheering squad” for lawmakers pushing for a transparent budget. “We can invite them in the bicam as a cheering squad so we will have a better chance in upholding transparency,” he said.He stressed that CSOs help senators scrutinize the proposed budget and identify questionable items that lawmakers and

their staff might otherwise miss, describing their contribution as a “multiplier effect.” “Without you, we cannot do the job. Our staff are dedicated but they cannot comb through all the items in the budget in a short time. You are our multiplier effect,” Lacson told the advocates.

• Palace says deadline given to Dela Rosa to surrender peacefully (2026-10-27 04:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang on Tuesday said the deadline given for fugitive senator Ronald “Bato” Dela Rosa was intended to give him time to surrender peacefully, reiterating Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla’s warning of a “no mercy” arrest.This comes after the government placed a P50 million reward for information leading to Dela Rosa's capture and issued a one-week deadline for the senator to surrender to authorities, which is set until Thursday, October 29.In a press briefing in Cagayan De Oro, Palace Press Officer Claire Castro said that should Dela Rosa fail to surrender within the given timeframe, authorities will continue to find him until he gets arrested.

• Cebu Pacific suspends Clark-San Jose flights over network realignment (2026-10-27 04:24)

MANILA, Philippines — Budget carrier Cebu Pacific Air (CEB) confirmed that its flights between Clark and San Jose, Occidental Mindoro have been suspended due to network realignment."As a result, flights DG6339 and DG6340 between Clark and San Jose will be cancelled beginning Oct. 26, 2026," CEB said in a statement.Reports said that this came exactly a year after the airline initially transferred its San Jose operations out of Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) to Clark International Airport (CRK) in October 2025 to help ease runway congestion in the main gateway.Operated by Cebgo using an ATR turboprop aircraft (registration RP-C7287), the flights concluded nearly 18 years of continuous service.The airline apologizes to passengers for the inconvenience this may cause and added, "We thank our passengers for their continued support to CEB."

• AFP moves to improve conditions aboard BRP Sierra Madre (2026-10-27 04:12)

MANILA, Philippines — The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is pursuing measures to improve living conditions aboard the BRP Sierra Madre at Ayungin Shoal in the West Philippine Sea, its spokesman said.Rear Adm. Roy Vincent Trinidad, AFP spokesman for the West Philippine Sea, said funds had long been allocated to maintain the aging warship and improve its habitability.Although the vessel appears dilapidated, Trinidad said it remained sturdy and would continue to serve as the Philippines' military outpost at Ayungin Shoal, which lies within the country's exclusive economic zone (EEZ).The BRP Sierra Madre, a commissioned AFP warship built in the 1940s, was deliberately grounded at the shoal in 1999 to reinforce the Philippines' claim to the feature.Trinidad warned that forcibly towing the vessel away would constitute an act of war and could prompt discussions on invoking the Philippines-US Mutual Defense Treaty.He stressed that the Philippines would not seek another country's permission to conduct activities within its EEZ, asserting the country's right to maintain its presence at Ayungin Shoal.The AFP has repeatedly conducted rotation and resupply missions to sustain Filipino

personnel aboard the vessel despite China's efforts to assert control over the disputed waters.

• Senator-judges urged to set aside personal interests in Sara trial (2026-10-27 02:05)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano on Tuesday urged his fellow senator-judges to set aside personal political ambitions in the impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte, saying they must ensure their judgment is not influenced by the prospect of assuming higher office.Cayetano welcomed Senate Presiding Officer Francis "Chiz" Escudero's declaration that he would decline the vice presidency if Duterte were convicted and removed from office, citing a potential conflict of interest because the Senate would have decided her fate."Nobody had offered him the position. He could have kept quiet and left the possibility open. Instead, he gave people a reason to trust that his vote would not be influenced by the prospect of becoming Vice President," Cayetano said in a statement."With so much doubt surrounding our politics, I think we need more of that," he added.Cayetano said he had invited his fellow senator-judges to make the same commitment, stressing that the proposal was intended to address concerns about impartiality, not prejudge the outcome of the trial."Everyone remains free to decide. I hope we can consider the concern behind the invitation before taking offense at being asked," he said.Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian had said it was improper to discuss the outcome of the impeachment trial in advance, assuring the public that the Senate would reach a fair and impartial decision. Sen. JV Ejercito likewise described discussions about the vice presidency as premature while the trial remained ongoing and the verdict uncertain.Cayetano acknowledged that he initially shared those reservations, saying the Senate should not discuss a successor as though Duterte's conviction were already certain."But when should we make clear that we will put personal interests aside? Must we wait until we have voted or someone offers us the position?" he said.He stressed that senators could remain open-minded about the evidence while deciding beforehand whether they would accept the vice presidency should a vacancy arise."We can keep an open mind about the evidence while deciding what we would be willing to accept afterward," Cayetano said."Senator Chiz's commitment does not presume a conviction. It assures the public that he will not accept the office his vote might help make vacant," he added.Under the Constitution, the president may nominate a replacement for a vacant vice presidency from among members of the Senate or the House of Representatives, subject to confirmation by both chambers of Congress. A senator remains free to decline the nomination.

• PH, Cambodia boost defense ties amid regional security threats (2026-10-27 01:41)

MANILA, Philippines — The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) discussed information sharing and closer defense cooperation as the two Southeast Asian countries seek to expand military ties and address regional security threats.AFP Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Rommel P. Roldan met with Lt. Gen. Hun Manith of Cambodia's General Department of Research and Intelligence under the Ministry of National Defense on Oct. 26 , 2026.The discussions focused on strengthening bilateral defense relations through information sharing, sustained dialogue and closer coordination in advancing their shared

security interests, the AFP said.The meeting followed a series of high-level engagements aimed at expanding military cooperation between Manila and Phnom Penh.On Oct. 20, AFP Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Antonio G. Nafarrete met with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet in Phnom Penh to discuss strengthening defense and security cooperation, particularly through closer ties between the two countries' navies and air forces.The two sides also discussed military training, capacity-building and cooperation between their armies. Hun Manet expressed optimism that the countries could move forward with an agreement on naval and air force cooperation, according to a report by Cambodianess published on Oct. 22.In a separate meeting during the visit, Nafarrete and RCAF Commander-in-Chief Gen. Vong Pisen discussed expanding cooperation in defense, information exchange, counterterrorism, transnational crime prevention, cybersecurity and humanitarian assistance.Cambodia also welcomed the Philippines' leadership of the Asean Observer Team, which monitors developments along the Cambodia-Thailand border as part of regional efforts to support a peaceful resolution of border disputes.The latest engagements build on an established defense partnership. The Philippines and Cambodia signed a memorandum of understanding on defense cooperation in December 2017, providing a framework for exchanges of military personnel, training, information and expertise, as well as other mutually agreed activities.The two countries subsequently held their inaugural Joint Defense Cooperation Committee meeting in Phnom Penh in March 2019 to discuss regional security concerns, including cybersecurity, counterterrorism, violent extremism and peacekeeping operations.Beyond traditional defense concerns, Manila and Phnom Penh have also sought closer cooperation against transnational crime and cyber-related threats.During a September 2025 meeting between Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Hun Manet in Manila, the two governments witnessed the signing of an amended agreement on police cooperation that expanded collaboration against crimes including human trafficking, arms trafficking and cybercrime.The AFP said continued engagement with foreign military counterparts helps promote mutual understanding and contributes to regional peace, stability and security.

- 86.7% of Filipino streaming subscribers say services worth cost; Gen Z leads pack — survey (2026-10-27 01:19)

MANILA, Philippines — More than 86 percent of Filipino adults who pay for streaming services consider their subscriptions worth the money despite the 12 percent value-added tax (VAT) imposed on digital services, according to a survey by Momentum Research.The August 2026 National Momentum Survey found that 86.7 percent of streaming subscribers considered their payments “sulit,” or worth the cost, while 13.3 percent said their subscriptions were not worth the money.The findings come as lawmakers seek to repeal Republic Act 12023, which imposes a 12 percent VAT on digital services, including streaming platforms. The law took effect in 2025.Minority lawmakers at the House of Representatives filed House Bill 7844 earlier this year seeking to repeal the measure.The survey also found that streaming platforms have overtaken traditional television as the more popular way of watching shows and movies among Filipino adults.Some 43.2 percent of respondents said they watched programs on streaming

platforms such as Netflix, Disney+ and YouTube, compared with 30.2 percent who relied on traditional television, including cable, satellite and free-to-air services.Another 13.5 percent watched on both streaming platforms and traditional television.Including those who use both, 56.7 percent of respondents watched shows and movies through streaming services, while 43.7 percent watched on traditional television.The remaining respondents said they did not watch series or movies (6.1 percent), used neither of the listed options (6.4 percent), or were unsure (0.6 percent).Subscriptions worth it across income groupsThe perception that streaming subscriptions offer value for money was consistent across income groups, with subscribers from poorer households reporting the highest proportion of positive responses.The survey found that 88.6 percent of subscribers from poor households considered their subscriptions worth the cost, compared with 85 percent among low-income households and 85.1 percent among middle-income households.Only 11.4 percent of subscribers from poor households said their subscriptions were not worth the money. The corresponding figures were 15 percent for low-income households and 14.9 percent for middle-income households.Momentum Research defined poor households as those with estimated monthly household incomes below P13,873, low-income households as those earning between P13,873 and P27,746, and middle-income households as those earning between P27,746 and P166,476.Gen Z most satisfiedBy generation, Generation Z subscribers were the most likely to consider streaming subscriptions worth their cost, with 91.9 percent expressing a positive assessment.They were followed by Generation X at 87.8 percent, millennials at 82.8 percent, and baby boomers and the Silent Generation at 78.1 percent.Older subscribers were also more likely to say their subscriptions were not worth the money. Some 21.9 percent of baby boomers and members of the Silent Generation gave a negative assessment, compared with 17.2 percent of millennials, 12.2 percent of Generation X and 8.1 percent of Generation Z.Regional differencesMetro Manila recorded the highest proportion of streaming subscribers who considered their subscriptions worth the money, at 97.6 percent.The Visayas followed at 94.6 percent, Mindanao at 88.5 percent, and the rest of Luzon at 80.7 percent.In contrast, 19.3 percent of subscribers in the rest of Luzon said their subscriptions were not worth the cost, compared with 11.5 percent in Mindanao, 5.4 percent in the Visayas and 2.4 percent in Metro Manila.Momentum Research cautioned that margins of error were larger for estimates broken down by demographic and regional groups, particularly those with smaller sample sizes.The National Momentum Survey was conducted through face-to-face interviews with 1,487 Filipino adults nationwide from Aug. 18 to 23, 2026.It has a national margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level.

- 'Red carpet' welcome for Trump questioned (2026-10-27 00:52)

MANILA, Philippines — Gabriela Women’s Party questioned why the Marcos administration was rolling out the red carpet for United States President Donald Trump during the upcoming Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summit, citing the reported flight cancellations and road disruptions Filipinos would face during his visit. “Why is the Philippines rolling out the red carpet for US President Donald Trump, a leader whose record is marked by war, racism, and attacks on women, children, and marginalized peoples, while Filipinos bear the costs and

disruptions of his visit?” Gabriela Secretary General KJ Catequista said in a statement.The group cited reports of more than 100 flight cancellations, including 106 flights affected by Cebu Pacific, as well as expected road closures in Pasay City that could disrupt commuters and workers.Catequista also accused President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. of pursuing the proposed Pax Silica agreement to secure Washington’s backing, saying the administration was prioritizing US interests while ordinary Filipinos bore the inconvenience of the visit.Trump is scheduled to attend the 49th Asean Summit from Nov. 16 to 18, 2026.Gabriela also criticized Trump’s foreign policy and his record on human rights, arguing that diplomatic relations should not come at the expense of accountability and the dignity of Filipinos.“No red carpet for war criminals," Catequista said.

- Yellow, red alerts up again for Visayas grid (2026-10-27 00:35)

MANILA, Philippines — National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) on Tuesday issued red and yellow alerts for the Visayas grid as some major power plants cintinue to be unavailable.In its 7:30 a.m. advisory, the transmission firm said that the yellow alert would be between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. while the red alert would be between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. as peak demand is estimated to reach 2,482 megawatts (MW) against an available capacity of only 2,452 MW.NGCP said that currently, 30 plants were on forced outage, while 16 plants were running on derated capacities, for a total of 861.2 MW unavailable to the grid.The company said that the factors that contributed to the red and yellow alerts were the unavailability of Visayas’ large coal plants, namely Therma Visayas Inc.1, Therma Visayas Inc. 2, and KEPCO SPC Power Corporation Unit 1; and the limited power imports from Mindanao due to the planned outages of some power plants in the region.A red alert status is issued when power supply is insufficient to meet consumer demand and the transmission grid’s regulating requirement.Meanwhile, a yellow alert status is issued when the operating margin is insufficient to meet the transmission grid’s contingency requirement.

- Ejercito backs call for senators to reject VP post amid impeachment trial (2026-10-26 20:18)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. JV Ejercito on Monday agreed with calls for senators to reject any offer to become vice president should Vice President Sara Duterte be removed from office through impeachment, saying such an appointment could raise questions about their impartiality as members of the impeachment court.Ejercito said senators should preferably decline the position, as they are tasked with deciding Duterte’s fate in the ongoing impeachment proceedings.“Ideally, they should not accept it. How can we do that when we are the judges in the impeachment court?” Ejercito said in a media interview.“I think it would be better, preferably, if it were not accepted. But it would depend on whom the President offers the position to. I would agree with that,” he added.Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano on Monday also called on senators to turn down any offer to assume the vice presidency, citing the potential conflict of interest arising from their role in Duterte’s impeachment trial.Cayetano’s call followed Senate Presiding Officer Francis “Chiz”

Escudero’s statement that he would decline the vice presidency if Duterte were removed from office through impeachment, saying it would be inappropriate for him to assume the post after the Senate had decided her fate.Ejercito said he had not heard of any offer for the vice presidency being made to senators. “I haven’t heard anything like that. I haven’t heard of any offer concerning the position,” he said.Ejercito also cautioned against discussing possible successors to Duterte while the impeachment trial remains unresolved, stressing that the Senate has yet to determine its verdict. “It should not be discussed. It is premature to talk about the vice presidency while the impeachment trial is ongoing,” Ejercito said. “We cannot be certain about the impeachment court’s decision. It is not as if a guilty verdict has already been reached,” he added.

- Bounty for Bato's arrest will not come from President's intel funds — Malacanang (2026-10-26 20:01)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacanang on Monday said the P50 million bounty for information leading to the arrest of fugitive Sen. Ronald Dela Rosa will not come from the President's confidential and intelligence funds.Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro said the bounty will be sourced from the intelligence funds of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Philippine National Police (PNP).The Palace press officer said the bounty offer is "part of the operations" of the DILG and the PNP."That won't come directly from the President because this is a strategy and operation of [DILG] Secretary Jonvic Remulla and the PNP leadership," Castro said in a radio interview."So, if this is their method for utilizing their intel funds, it is appropriate as long as they can prove the operation they are conducting and it yields results," she added.Castro on Saturday said the bounty could have been avoided had Dela Rosa not escaped and instead surrendered to Remulla in May.This comes after the Senate Minority bloc urged President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to work with Dela Rosa’s legal counsel to seek a “peaceful resolution.”In a statement, Castro said Marcos had directed law enforcement authorities to act swiftly in arresting the fugitive senator.Remulla earlier warned of a possible “bloodbath” if Dela Rosa forcibly resisted arrest.

- Book on PH education during Martial Law launched (2026-10-26 19:56)

MANILA, Philippines — A book on Philippine education during Martial Law was launched on Monday.The book, entitled "The Impact of Martial Law on Philippine Education, 1972-1986: Foregrounding Teachers' Perspectives," was authored by Dr. Michael Pante."While much has been written about Martial Law, just a very few discuss its impact on education or, more than that, the lives of the teachers who underwent that time," Francisca Castro, former ACT Teachers representative, said in Filipino at the launch held at Areté in the Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU).Castro said the book "is based on thorough research" using official documents and school records as well as newspapers and teachers' accounts."By giving voice to the teachers, it brings back a part of our history that is often forgotten," she said.The book is the latest publication of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) which co-organized the launch with the ADMU. The Ateneo Department of History and Ateneo Martial Law Museum

and Library were event partners of the NHCP."This publication examines the effects of Martial Law on Philippine education and the experiences of teachers under the Marcos Sr. administration. It explores how educational policies shaped classroom instruction, knowledge production, and teachers' roles in society during this period," the NHCP said on Facebook.

• De Lima questions P50-M bounty for Bato’s arrest (2026-10-26 18:34)

MANILA, Philippines — Deputy minority leader and Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima on Monday questioned the necessity of putting out a ₱50-million bounty for the arrest of Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa.De Lima was echoing concerns about earlier raised by Sen. Panfilo “Ping” Lacson who insisted De La Rosa, despite being in hiding, is still is entitled to due process, “a fundamental right guaranteed to every Filipino”. “I join Sen. Ping Lacson in raising the issue of the propriety or necessity of the ₱50M bounty for the arrest of Sen. Bato,” De Lima said. “If the whereabouts are known, what then is the rationale for such a bounty?” she added.Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Juanito Victor Remulla last October 23 announced the reward, as authorities sought to locate Dela Rosa, who faces an arrest warrant from the International Criminal Court (ICC) over alleged crimes against humanity linked to former President Rodrigo Duterte’s unforgiving anti-drugs campaign.The senator has been out of the public eye and has since been declared a fugitive by the foreign tribunal.The ICC case stems from allegations related to the anti-drug campaign during Duterte’s presidency.

• Thomas Markle Sr. devices undergoing digital forensics — PNP (2026-10-26 17:53)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) is seeking warrant to examine the digital devices recovered from American director Thomas Markle Sr., father of Megan Markle, Duchess of Sussex over allegations of child abuse images. According to the PNP's Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC), through its Visayas field unit, four boxes containing laptops, CPUs, hard drives and other similar devices and personal effects were surrendered to them by no less than Thomas Markle Jr., his son. Investigation could take a week, the PNP said, depending on the issuance of the warrant. “We have to establish the file and its nature, the origin of the files as well as ownership of these materials,” Co said during a press briefing at PNP Camp Crame on Monday. “Now, if there will be evidence found of any wrongdoing, especially ‘yung ina-allege, we will have to establish ‘yung possession during the relevant timeline, as well as the identities of the victims if there are any,” he added. According to the investigation, Markle Jr. discovered the alleged explicit materials while looking for a cellphone at a friend's house in Cordova, Cebu, where his father's belongings had been left.Upon discovery, the young Markle was said to have contacted authorities immediately and turned over the devices. “We cannot discuss as to the contents pero ‘yun ang allegation niya that he saw some violation ng OSAEC (Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children) so that started the investigation,” Co said. OSAEC refers to the production, dissemination, and possession of child abuse materials, online grooming, sexual extortion, image-based sexual abuse, online prostitution, and live-streamed sexual abuse of minors. The PNP vowed to pursue the

investigation regardless of the nationality of the person involved. “We are very saddened by this, and we will not let anybody whether foreign national or Filipino national to do this to our children,” Co stressed.

- Dizon, Lopez trade places in reshuffle (2026-10-26 16:23)

SECRETARIES Vince Dizon and Giovanni Lopez will swap roles in the latest Cabinet reshuffle announced by the Palace Monday, with Dizon returning to the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and Lopez taking over at the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).In a press briefing, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Secretary Lino Cayetano said the move ordered by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. aims to “accelerate reform” across the two agencies. “Secretary Dizon moves to the DOTr to fix the daily commute. Secretary Lopez moves to the DPWH to ensure that the reforms there are sustained. All of this is aimed at making government services faster and more accessible for our fellow citizens,” said Cayetano, quoting Marcos.The rumors that Dizon would return to the DOTr began when it was revealed that he had longstanding ties to Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano—brother of the PCO secretary — who Sen. Panfilo Lacson flagged for billions of pesos in allegedly anomalous infrastructure and flood control projects in Taguig City.Because Dizon was tasked with investigating infrastructure anomalies, his relationship with Senator Cayetano raised concerns over his impartiality on the issues.But the PCO secretary said the president’s decision was based entirely on the needs of the agencies, not on politics. “The president makes decisions based on what is best for the Filipino people — that is the kind of president we have,” he said.Cayetano noted that Lopez is a “systems builder” who can ensure that reforms made in the agency will last. “We want to ensure that the approach is comprehensive and long-term. The president believes that Secretary Banoy Lopez — who is both a CPA and a lawyer — is a ‘systems builder’ and the right person for the job,” he said.He described Dizon as a “disruptor and reformer,” noting that his return to the DOTr will help ease the struggles of commuters. “His move to the DOTr stems from the president’s belief that we must urgently provide some relief to our fellow citizens regarding their daily commute — focusing on the commuting experience, addressing issues like the long queues at the LTO, and prioritizing critical transportation projects that will benefit the Filipino people,” he added.When asked if other people were considered to take the helm of the two agencies, Cayetano noted that the two secretaries were among the high-performing Cabinet secretaries under the Marcos administration.Mixed reactionTransport groups were divided over Dizon’s return to the DOTr, with Piston opposing his reassignment and Manibela welcoming his return.Piston President Mody Floranda said Dizon’s return was no cause for celebration, citing the government’s transportation policies. “There is nothing to celebrate in the return of Vince Dizon to the DOTr,” Floranda said in Filipino. “Certainly, he was placed there to further push the rotten and trashy World Bank Jeepney Phaseout program, privatization of MRT-3, and other stinking pro-business and anti-foreign government programs,” he added.Floranda said that the group would oppose Dizon’s return through protests. “Dizon can expect us to greet his return with intense strikes and protests,” he said.On the other hand, Manibela Chairman Mar Valbuena welcomed Dizon’s return to the

DOTr and thanked Giovanni Lopez. “We are with you in the good programs of the DOTr, but we will also remain fierce critics of those that are not aligned with the welfare of the nation, especially in transportation,” Valbuena said in Filipino.Budget processSen. JV Ejercito on Monday expressed confidence that leadership changes at the DPWH and the DOTr would not derail the 2027 budget process, saying incoming officials were already familiar with key infrastructure priorities and funding requirements.Ejercito, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, said he had worked with Dizon and Lopez on their respective agencies’ proposed budgets and had discussed the need to sustain funding for major infrastructure projects, particularly railways, airports and foreign-assisted initiatives. “Normally, that would be a problem because we are already in the middle of the budget season. But having worked with both Secretary Vince Dizon and Secretary Manuel Lopez, I am quite familiar with both of them,” Ejercito said in an interview. “Fortunately, as chairman of the Committee on Finance, I handle both the DPWH and the DOTr, and I have been in talks with them on several occasions, mostly about their work,” he added.Dizon previously served as Transportation secretary before taking over the DPWH, allowing him to work with Ejercito on transportation initiatives. “Before Secretary Vince Dizon moved to the DPWH, he was already with the DOTr, and we have been pushing for the same things ever since,” Ejercito said.He identified the North-South Commuter Railway (NSCR), the South Commuter Railway, the Metro Manila Subway and airport improvements as among the key projects that need sustained funding. “Our concern is the railway systems and ensuring that funding for foreign-assisted projects continues without interruption,” Ejercito said. “These include the NSCR, the South Commuter Railway, the Metro Manila Subway System and airport improvements. These are the projects we have been pushing for and discussing for some time,” he added.Ejercito said he had discussed similar infrastructure priorities with Lopez and hoped the transition would not disrupt the agencies’ programs. “We have discussed the same things with Secretary Manoy. Hopefully, things will continue in the same direction,” he said. “I don’t think it will be a difficult transition because we are already familiar with each other,” he added.Ejercito also urged Lopez to sustain reforms at the DPWH following controversies involving flood control projects, stressing that those responsible for irregularities must be held accountable and measures must be put in place to prevent a recurrence. “I hope he will continue the reforms that were started after the flood control issue. The reforms must continue, and those who should be held accountable must answer for their actions so that this will not happen again,” Ejercito said.He said infrastructure spending should focus on projects that deliver lasting economic benefits and improve public services rather than on construction undertaken merely to justify spending. “I really want to push for projects that will have a significant impact on the economy and help improve public services,” he said.

- OMB to go after those ‘who game the budget (2026-10-26 16:22)

OMBUDSMAN Jesus Crispin Remulla on Monday vowed to go after officials who manipulated the national budget following the Supreme Court’s ruling declaring portions of the 2024 to 2026 national budgets unconstitutional.Asked whether the ruling could lead to President

Ferdinand Marcos Jr. being held liable, Remulla said the president's role differed from that of lawmakers who made changes during congressional deliberations. "The president submits the proposed bill to Congress. The action goes on inside Congress," he said in an ambush interview.Remulla warned that budget amendments made in bad faith or to manipulate public funds would be a different matter. "For the people who gamed the budget, we will study how to go after them," he said, adding that such practices "should never happen again." The Ombudsman said his office had begun a "budget watch" and that he would form a team to study the Supreme Court decision and the affected budgets to determine where responsibility lay and whether officials should be made to explain their actions.He specifically flagged the placement of important government projects, including flood control, under unprogrammed appropriations, which are standby funds released only when conditions prescribed by law are met. "They put important government projects under unprogrammed appropriations so they could put flood control there. What happened was really bad," Remulla said.Warning on lobbyingMeanwhile, Sen. Panfilo Lacson warned against money-laced lobbying in the 2027 budget process, saying government agencies must justify their funding requests rather than resort to questionable offers as Congress scrutinizes the proposed spending plan.Lacson said agencies whose proposed 2027 budgets were reduced in the National Expenditure Program (NEP) could appeal to the House of Representatives and the Senate for funding restoration, provided they could justify their requests.He said the Senate would continue scrutinizing the proposed budget with the help of budget advocates and civil society groups assisting lawmakers in examining the spending measure.The senator also called for greater transparency throughout the budget process, including keeping livestream cameras running even during suspended deliberations, particularly at the bicameral conference committee level. "We must sustain the practice of transparency in the budget," Lacson said in a radio interview.Lacson also warned against excessive reliance on financial assistance programs, including the Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially Incapacitated Patients and the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation, citing accounts of beneficiaries allegedly spending the money on shopping and gambling.He said that the country's projected budget deficit of P1.695 trillion and projected national debt ballooning to P21.48 trillion in 2027 could leave the Philippines sinking further into debt.The senator also cited the projected gross borrowings of P3.043 trillion in 2027 for principal and interest payments.Lacson said the Senate's plan to slash P2 billion from its budget under the NEP to set an example of fiscal discipline could free up funds for realignment to education, health or other more productive endeavors, which would benefit Filipinos in the medium and long terms. "If we don't invest in productive endeavors, we won't benefit in the long run. We will instead continue to sink deeper in debt," he said.

- Socialized housing loans shoot up 173% – Pag-IBIG (2026-10-26 16:21)

PAG-IBIG Fund financing for socialized housing surged 173 percent in the first nine months of 2026, with 10,904 homes financed for minimum-wage and low-income members, up from 3,987 in the same period last year.The amount released for socialized housing loans also rose 172 percent to P12.10 billion from P4.45 billion, increasing the segment's share of

Pag-IBIG-financed homes to nearly 16 percent from 7 percent a year earlier.The figures were reported by the Home Development Mutual Fund, or Pag-IBIG Fund, as the government pushes its Expanded Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino (4PH) program to make homeownership more accessible to low-income Filipino families.Overall, Pag-IBIG financed 68,514 homes worth P111.29 billion from January to September, up 15 percent from 59,789 homes worth P93.03 billion in the same period in 2025. Housing loan releases increased by 20 percent.Housing Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling, who chairs the Pag-IBIG Fund board, said the figures reflected efforts to expand access to affordable housing while providing more financing options for middle-income members.Under the Expanded 4PH program, qualified socialized housing borrowers may avail themselves of a subsidized interest rate of 3 percent.Eligible middle-income borrowers, meanwhile, can access promotional rates of 4.5 percent and 5.75 percent, as well as housing loans of up to P10 million.Pag-IBIG also released P5.93 billion in financing for housing developments under Expanded 4PH in the first nine months of the year, up 172 percent from P2.18 billion a year earlier.Pag-IBIG Fund Chief Executive Officer Marilene Acosta said the subsidized interest rate could help qualified minimum-wage and low-income members manage their monthly housing payments, while expanded loan options could make homeownership more attainable for middle-income families.The figures come as the government seeks to match affordable housing financing with a greater supply of homes.Pag-IBIG said it had strengthened partnerships with property developers to offer housing options across different price ranges and was working with the Bases Conversion and Development Authority to bring housing closer to workplaces in New Clark City.At the second National Housing Expo held on Oct. 19 and 20 at the SMX Convention Center in Pasay City, organizers recorded 30,425 attendees, up from 19,215 last year.Housing inquiries increased to 44,567 from 8,698, while 1,262 housing units were reserved. More than 80 partner developers offered over 50,000 housing units during the expo.The figures provided by Pag-IBIG cover homes financed and housing units reserved but do not establish how many beneficiaries have moved into completed homes.

- Special Action Forces track fugitive senator (2026-10-26 16:20)

THE Philippine National Police (PNP) said it has mobilized dedicated tracker teams, including Special Action Forces, to locate and arrest fugitive Sen. Ronald dela Rosa who now has a P50-million bounty and who has been given one week since Friday (Oct. 23) to surrender. “The full force of the Philippine National Police is in play to bring the senator to the fold of the law,” Col. Allen Rae Co, PNP spokesman, said in a press briefing at Camp Crame on Monday.President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. himself ordered the intensified manhunt for the senator, who is wanted by the International Criminal Court for his role in the previous administration’s blood war on drugs.The president, however, instructed law enforcers to avoid losing lives as much as possible.Co said the one-week ultimatum for him to surrender is a “sign of goodwill” and reiterated that the PNP always prefers a peaceful resolution to the matter. “We are giving the senator a chance to end this peacefully and with dignity,” Co said.With the one-week deadline lapsing on Thursday (Oct. 29), Co said there still haven’t been any feelers on the part of dela

Rosa, a former PNP chief.Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla repeatedly said the senator is under the protection of a well-financed, heavily armed group in Mindanao that the government has been negotiating with for dela Rosa's peaceful arrest.While not going into details of the status of the communication, Remulla issued a fresh warning for dela Rosa to surrender or face an intensified manhunt.The PNP said it is premature to tag the supposed group either as an extremist group or a private army but maintained that anyone proven to be harboring fugitives will be legally liable.Bounty defendedThe announcement of the P50-million bounty has drawn widespread criticism online from both supporters and critics of the administration.Lawyer Israelito Torreon, dela Rosa's counsel, questioned the legality of the bounty yet again, arguing that he has no existing local case and that the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) own reward system, in fact, requires an active warrant from a Philippine court.Deputy minority leader and Mamamayang Liberal Rep. Leila de Lima on Monday questioned the necessity of offering a P50-million bounty.De Lima echoed concerns earlier raised by Sen. Panfilo Lacson. "I join Sen. Ping Lacson in raising the issue of the propriety or necessity of the P50-million bounty for the arrest of Senator Bato," de Lima said. "If the whereabouts are known, what then is the rationale for such a bounty?" she added.But Co said the bounty is "just for additional information" since a person hiding is never static in one place.Also, the International Criminal Court, which issued the warrant, is a competent court, Co said.The PNP also welcomed the offering of the Senate minority to bridge communication between the dela Rosa's camp and the government for a peaceful resolution on the matter.Malacañang on Monday said the P50-million bounty will not come from the president's confidential and intelligence funds.Presidential Communications Office Undersecretary Claire Castro said the bounty will be sourced from the intelligence funds of the DILG and the PNP. "If this is their method for utilizing their intel funds, it is appropriate as long as they can prove the operation they are conducting and it yields results," she added. "This is really where the confidential funds and intel funds given to the DILG-PNP are allocated because this is truly an operation, a real operation," Castro said in Filipino.She added, "So, just like what was mentioned, this isn't the type where the intel funds or confidential funds are completely wiped out in just 11 days." "So, this is a real operation and not just planting banana chips," Castro said, referring to allegations that emerged from the impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte.Castro on Saturday said the bounty could have been avoided had dela Rosa not escaped with the help of minority senators and instead surrendered to Remulla in May.In a statement, Castro said Marcos had directed law enforcement authorities to act swiftly in arresting the fugitive senator.Remulla earlier warned of a possible "bloodbath" if dela Rosa resisted arrest.

- OMB joins justice council to bolster corruption fight (2026-10-26 16:19)

THE Office of the Ombudsman has joined the Justice Sector Coordinating Council (JSCC) to strengthen the government's fight against corruption, address delays in corruption cases, and improve coordination among justice institutions.Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla on Monday signed a memorandum of understanding with the JSCC, which is composed of the Supreme Court, Department of Justice (DOJ) and Department of the Interior and Local Government

(DILG), during a ceremony at the Supreme Court. “Corruption does not operate within the boundaries of a single government agency. Neither should our response to it,” Remulla said as he pointed to the partnership as a means to bolster coordination in investigation, prosecution, adjudication and enforcement. “We cannot simply wait for public funds to be stolen, government services to be compromised or public trust to be destroyed before we act,” he said.Under the agreement, the institutions will work together to remove bottlenecks in corruption cases, improve information-sharing and digital systems, and develop joint initiatives on financial crimes, asset recovery, cyber-enabled corruption and digital forensics. “I do not want this Memorandum of Understanding to become another document that we sign today and forget tomorrow,” Remulla said. “We must translate this agreement into concrete programs, clear responsibilities, realistic timelines and measurable results.” Remulla said the partnership will not compromise the Ombudsman’s independence. “Institutional independence and meaningful cooperation are not contradictory. They reinforce each other,” he said.

- NBI probes 26 more flood control projects (2026-10-26 16:18)

THE National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has widened its investigation into alleged flood control anomalies, placing 26 additional projects under scrutiny as six Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) officials and engineers were relieved from their posts over questionable projects in Davao City.The additional cases are spread across several regions, with nine under the NBI’s Southeastern Mindanao Regional Office, seven in Bulacan and five in Cebu, according to a list released by the bureau.The NBI’s Fraud and Financial Crimes Division is investigating two more cases, while its offices in Calabarzon, Bayombong in Nueva Vizcaya and Bulacan South are handling one case each.The 26 projects are separate from the 47 flood control projects being investigated in Davao City, underscoring the expanding scope of the government’s crackdown on alleged irregularities in public infrastructure spending.Of the 26 additional cases, 17 have been filed before separate investigating panels, while nine are undergoing evaluation by the Department of Justice (DOJ).Four cases involving the Davao projects have also been referred to the DOJ for further investigation. The contracts are worth a combined P364.2 million and form part of the broader inquiry into 47 projects valued at about P1.9 billion.The expanding investigation has also triggered personnel actions at the DPWH, with six officials and engineers relieved or reassigned following the NBI’s recommendation to pursue charges over alleged irregularities involving contractor Genesis88 Construction Inc.Those affected include Ferdinand Dallo, assistant regional director of DPWH Region 5; Emilio Sucaldito Jr., officer-in-charge of the Davao City First District Engineering Office; and engineers Kristine Apao, Aljun Barcoma, Kim Anthony Duque and Alexander Omadley.The personnel changes followed the filing of criminal complaints arising from the Davao investigation. The allegations include falsification of public documents and violations of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.Investigators have flagged alleged irregularities in project documentation, including the reported reuse and alteration of photographs submitted to support progress billings for flood control works.The NBI’s complaints also involve personnel associated with Genesis88 and Agong Builders and Construction Supply Inc.The NBI’s flood control

investigation has extended beyond the newly identified projects and the Davao contracts, with cases being handled by its Public Corruption Division, Organized and Transnational Crimes Division and district offices in Cebu, Lucena and Cagayan Valley.Among the respondents in separate cases are dismissed officials of the Bulacan First District Engineering Office, former congressman Zaldy Co, former senator Ramon “Bong” Revilla Jr. and Sen. Jinggoy Estrada.The widening probe comes amid mounting scrutiny of government flood control spending and whether public funds were used for projects that were incomplete, improperly implemented or supported by questionable documentation.

- Larger public role eyed in budget process (2026-10-26 16:16)

SEN. JV Ejercito on Monday filed two bills seeking to give civil society organizations (CSOs) a formal role in shaping government spending, including participation in congressional budget hearings and consultations to ensure public funds address communities’ needs.The measures seek to strengthen public oversight by allowing accredited groups to scrutinize budget proposals, question government agencies and help identify spending priorities.Ejercito, chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance, filed Senate Bill 2576, or the Bantay Budget Act, and Senate Bill 2577, or the Grassroots Participatory Budgeting Act, following a consultation with CSOs and government watchdogs on priorities for the proposed 2027 national budget. “We want your participation to have a meaningful place in the scrutiny of the proposed budgets of our national government agencies, in the questions officials are asked to answer, and in the priorities we put forward,” Ejercito told the groups. “Your contributions are important because many of you work directly with communities. Your experience helps us assess whether the proposed allocations respond to the actual needs of our people,” he added.The Bantay Budget Act seeks to establish mechanisms for accredited CSOs to participate in the preparation and congressional approval of the annual national budget.Under the measure, national government agencies and government-owned or -controlled corporations whose budgets are included in the General Appropriations Act would be required to establish guidelines for CSO accreditation and participation in budget preparation.Accredited groups could serve as resource persons during congressional budget hearings, submit position papers and alternative budget proposals, and provide written recommendations on government projects and activities.The bill would also require the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance to set aside at least one hearing day for accredited CSOs to present their positions on the proposed national budget.It would allow CSOs to observe budget deliberations and bicameral conference committee proceedings. Records, stenographic notes, committee reports and recordings of bicameral meetings would be made accessible to the public.The Grassroots Participatory Budgeting Act, meanwhile, seeks to institutionalize a bottom-up approach to development planning and budgeting, ensuring that community-identified needs are considered in local and national spending plans.The measure would require barangay, municipalities, cities and provinces to hold at least two consultation assemblies annually with accredited CSOs. Priorities identified during these meetings would inform local poverty reduction action plans, local development investment programs and

annual local budget proposals.It would also require accredited CSOs to make up at least one-fourth of the membership of local development councils at the provincial, city, municipal and barangay levels. “Our goal is to let communities identify the projects they need and establish a clear mechanism for incorporating these priorities into planning and funding decisions, all the way to the national level,” Ejercito said.He said the proposed laws aim to make public participation a lasting part of the budget process rather than a practice dependent on the leadership of a particular Senate finance committee chairman. “Taken together, these measures seek to give citizens a sustained voice in how priorities are set, how public funds are allocated, and how government programs are carried out,” the senator said. “Our goal is to make citizen participation part of our institutions so it continues regardless of who is in office.” Ejercito acknowledged that not all proposals from civil society groups could be adopted but he pledged to bring their concerns to budget deliberations, seek answers from government agencies and work with fellow senators on proposals that would benefit the public. “I cannot promise that every proposal will be adopted. What I can commit to is that we will continue to bring your concerns to the table, seek clear answers from the agencies, and work with our colleagues to advance proposals that will best serve our people,” he said. “The funds we are discussing belong to the people. They deserve a meaningful voice in deciding how their money is spent,” he added.

- Barbers seeks stronger PH presence in Basilan Strait (2026-10-26 16:13)

HOUSE prosecution panel adviser and spokesman Ace Barbers on Monday renewed his call for a stronger Philippine Navy or Coast Guard presence in Surigao del Norte following the reported transit of a Chinese aircraft carrier strike group through the Basilan Strait.Barbers said the reported movement of the carrier Liaoning, accompanied by escort warships Wuxi, Anshan and Huainan, underscored the need to strengthen maritime surveillance and response capabilities, including consideration of an appropriate site under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA).He said Philippine authorities reportedly issued radio challenges to the Chinese vessels and deployed Navy and Coast Guard vessels to monitor their movement, but the Chinese ships allegedly switched off their Automatic Identification System (AIS). “This is not just a matter of Chinese warships passing through our waters. It is a matter of respect for the Philippines, our maritime authorities, and our sovereign rights,” Barbers said.He argued that foreign warships cannot invoke innocent passage as blanket justification for military exercises, intelligence-gathering activities prejudicial to Philippine security or threatening maneuvers in the country’s territorial sea.Whether the reported transit violated international law, however, would depend on the vessels’ location and conduct, Barbers said.He urged the Philippine Navy, Coast Guard, Department of National Defense and Department of Foreign Affairs to coordinate more closely, preserve radar and radio records, document foreign vessel movements and pursue appropriate diplomatic action based on verified facts. “We need stronger monitoring capabilities, faster response times, and a more visible Philippine presence in our strategic waters,” he said.

• Cayetano backs Escudero’s pledge to reject VP post if Sara Duterte is impeached (2026-10-26 16:11)

SENATE Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano on Monday backed Sen. Francis Escudero’s pledge to turn down the vice presidency if Vice President Sara Duterte is removed from office through impeachment. “That's right! All of us Senator-Judges should make this declaration,” Cayetano said on a Facebook post, sharing a news report quoting Escudero.Escudero said he would decline the position “for the simple reason that it would be a conflict of interest. We are the ones who made the decision, and I don’t think that would be right."Cayetano called on senators who would sit as judges in future impeachment trials to remain politically neutral, particularly in cases involving the president or vice president.The trial, which resumes in November, will tackle the remaining charge against Duterte after House prosecutors withdrew three of the four articles of impeachment on Oct. 13.Dropped were Article I, which concerned the misuse of confidential funds; Article III, which accused Duterte of bribery; and Article IV, which involved alleged grave threats and related accusations against President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the first lady and former House Speaker Martin Romualdez.Article II accuses Duterte of failing to fully disclose assets in her Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth, and of retaining business interests while serving as vice president.During the prosecution’s presentation, forensic financial analyst Alexander Cabrera identified about P817.87 million in allegedly unexplained wealth amassed by Duterte and her husband, lawyer Manases “Mans” Carpio, from 2022 to 2025.He said the estimate could reach P1.5 billion under less conservative assumptions.The prosecution rested its case on Oct. 13 and was directed to submit its documentary and object evidence for Article II.The defense is expected to present its evidence when the trial resumes.Cayetano’s call highlights concerns about the appearance of a conflict of interest if senators deciding an impeachment case could also benefit politically from the removal of the official on trial.Escudero’s pledge addresses that concern as a personal commitment, although senators are not automatically disqualified from being considered for the vice presidency.Under the Constitution, only the Senate can try and decide impeachment cases. Conviction requires the concurrence of two-thirds of all its members.If the vice presidency becomes vacant, the president nominates a replacement from among the members of the Senate or House of Representatives. The nominee must be confirmed by a majority of all members of both chambers, voting separately.Former senator Teofisto Guingona Jr. became vice president in 2001 after then-president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo appointed him following the ouster of former president Joseph Estrada.

• Repatriated OFWs from Saudi reach over 360 (2026-10-26 16:10)

THE number of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) repatriated from Saudi Arabia reached 365, following the arrival of 60 more on Sunday night.The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) said on Facebook that the 60 OFWs from Riyadh arrived at about 10 p.m. at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) on a Qatar Airways flight.The latest batch was transported to Al Qassim, where they boarded their flight to the Philippines.OFWs began returning home after Houthi rebels in Yemen launched drone strikes on King Khalid International Airport in

Riyadh, disrupting flights.The first batch arrived on Oct. 19."Every OFW who we are able torepatriate is one countryman who will again be with their family. Our assistance continues untilthey have returned to their respective homes," OWWA Administrator Patricia Yvonne Caunansaid.

- 3 Filipinos hired for military jobs in Europe held (2026-10-26 16:08)

THREE Filipino men allegedly recruited for military and border guard jobs in Eastern Europe were detained at Davao International Airport after falsely claiming they were headed to Thailand for a Muay Thai tournament, the Bureau of Immigration (BI) said Monday.The BI said the men were promised monthly salaries of P200,000 to work as soldiers or border guards, raising concerns about a possible illegal recruitment and human trafficking scheme.The men were stopped on Oct. 17 after immigration officers found inconsistencies in their declared travel plans.Further questioning revealed that Thailand was just a transit point, with the men expecting to proceed to Eastern Europe after their electronic visas were provided.They said two individuals, “Alexander” and “Oleg,” recruited them and arranged their deployment. Some of the men said they encountered the recruiters through Facebook and Telegram.The three were instructed on Oct. 13 to leave through a supposed “backdoor” route in Zamboanga, but the plan was changed to air travel through Davao.The BI’s Immigration Protection and Border Enforcement Section referred the three men to the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking for further investigation and assessment.BI Commissioner Joel Anthony Viado said the interception underscored the need for stricter scrutiny of overseas job offers, particularly those involving unusually high salaries, unclear employment arrangements and questionable travel plans. “Filipinos must be cautious of recruiters who promise high salaries but provide unclear employment arrangements or questionable travel plans,” Viado said, urging jobseekers to verify employers and recruitment agencies through the Department of Migrant Workers.The Davao incident follows a series of similar cases in which Filipinos were recruited for military or security-related work abroad.In September, immigration officials at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) intercepted four Filipino men who were attempting to travel to Russia for military or security roles. The group initially claimed their destinations were Thailand or Vietnam.One of the men said they were promised a monthly salary of P150,000, along with the prospect of Russian citizenship after one year of service.In August, authorities intercepted 14 suspected trafficking victims at NAIA and Clark International Airport, all of whom were recruited for employment in Russia.The individuals initially provided conflicting accounts of their travel plans, with six men claiming they were vacationing with former military colleagues and eight others claiming they were on business trips. They later disclosed they were hired to work in Russia for $3,000 a month. Two suspected recruiters were apprehended during the operation.The recruitment pattern points to the use of social media, misleading travel declarations and third-party sponsors to facilitate potentially dangerous overseas deployments.In February, the Department of Foreign Affairs said seven Filipinos had been recruited to join Russian forces. One of them was reported to have been killed, and several others were being held as prisoners of war in Ukraine.

• 5 in 10 Pinoys distrust VP Sara, survey shows (2026-10-26 16:08)

VICE President Sara Duterte's approval and trust ratings edged up by 1 percentage point each in the third quarter of 2026, but about five in 10 Filipinos remain dissatisfied with and distrustful of her performance, a Pahayag survey released Monday said.The survey by Publicus Asia Inc. showed Duterte's approval rating rising to 29 percent from 28 percent in the second quarter, while her trust rating increased to 27 percent from 26 percent.The findings came amid continuing scrutiny of the use of confidential funds by the Office of the Vice President (OVP) and the Department of Education (DepEd), including testimonies from three officials linking Col. Raymund Dante Lachica, former head of the Vice Presidential Security and Protection Group (VPSPG), to the use of the funds.The survey found that 13 percent of respondents cited the testimonies as having a negative effect on their assessment of Duterte, compared with 8 percent who said the disclosures had a positive effect.Another 13 percent cited the position of military officials that military certification alone was insufficient to justify the DepEd's use of confidential funds, reflecting concerns over the basis for the expenditures.The proposed 2027 OVP budget also remained a factor in public assessments of the Vice President, with 14 percent of respondents identifying it as having a negative effect on their views.The proposed allocation is 11.7 percent lower than the OVP's 2026 budget, but the reduction has not eliminated the controversy surrounding the office's confidential funds.Calamity assistance and Duterte's public visibility were among the factors cited positively by respondents. Twelve percent pointed to assistance provided by the OVP during calamities, while 9 percent cited the vice president's presence and visibility.The positive assessment linked to calamity assistance was more pronounced in Mindanao, where 21 percent cited it as a favorable factor.Despite the mixed assessments of her performance, bravery remained the personality trait most strongly associated with Duterte, cited by 40 percent of respondents.Concern for fellow Filipinos ranked second at 27 percent, followed by love of country at 25 percent. Being pro-poor and authenticity were each cited by 21 percent.In contrast, nearly half of registered voters said they did not know or could not identify a defining personality trait for other top national officials.The third-quarter 2026 Pahayag survey was conducted from Oct. 1 to 4 among 1,581 registered Filipino voters through purposive sampling.Respondents were randomly selected from the market research panel of PureSpectrum, a US-based panel marketplace with global operations and a regional office in Singapore.The survey reported a national margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.Pahayag is the corporate social responsibility initiative of Publicus Asia Inc., which has tracked key metrics since 2017. Vox Opinion Research has served as the company's research arm since 2013.FRANCO JOSE BAROÑA

• Legarda calls for wider access to museums (2026-10-26 16:07)

SEN. Loren Legarda called for wider public access to museums, stronger cultural institutions outside major cities and greater support for communities keeping the country's living traditions alive.In a statement marking Museums and Galleries Month this October, Legarda said the next phase of museum development should bring cultural spaces closer to Filipinos and ensure that heritage preservation remains connected to the people and communities

behind it.The 2026 Museums and Galleries Month carries the theme “Bridging Divides, Preserving the Present for Tomorrow,” highlighting the role of museums and galleries in connecting communities, generations and stories.“Museums become more meaningful when a child, a family, or a community sees their own story reflected in them. We should not have to travel far to discover our own history and culture,” she said.Legarda, chairman of the Senate Committee on Culture and the Arts, said museums should go beyond collecting and preserving objects by connecting their collections to the people who created them and ensuring that cultural traditions continue to be practiced and passed on to future generations.Her cultural initiatives have supported Schools of Living Traditions, the documentation of indigenous knowledge, traditional weaving, cultural mapping and programs that bring local heritage to wider audiences.Among the cultural spaces she initiated or supported with the National Museum were the Baybayin Gallery, Manlilikha ng Bayan Gallery and Hibla ng Lahing Filipino, the country’s first permanent textile gallery at the National Museum.“These spaces were never meant to say, ‘This is what our culture was like in the past.’ The more important questions are, ‘Where is this culture today, who is keeping it alive, and how can we help them?’” Legarda said.“A museum should allow us to look back, but it should also help culture move forward,” she said.Legarda said this approach is reflected in Republic Act 10066, or the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009, which she authored and co-sponsored, and RA 11961, or the Cultural Mapping Law, which she authored and principally sponsored.Republic Act 11961 strengthened the country's heritage protection framework by requiring local governments to identify and document their tangible, intangible, natural and built heritage, giving communities a greater role in safeguarding their cultural assets.In the 20th Congress, Legarda has pursued additional measures to strengthen the country's cultural infrastructure.Senate Bill 510 seeks to amend the National Museum framework to strengthen the preservation of traditional folk arts as part of the country's intangible cultural heritage, while SB 1852 seeks to strengthen heritage conservation through incentives under RA 10066.She also cited SB 1507, which seeks to institutionalize the Schools of Living Traditions, where cultural masters pass on traditional knowledge and skills through community-based learning.Another measure, SB 1425, proposes the establishment of an Aklan Piña Conservation and Innovation Center in Kalibo to support the conservation, development, research, training and continued innovation of the province's piña weaving tradition.Legarda also stressed the importance of keeping museums open to contemporary creativity, noting that preserving heritage and supporting innovation should complement each other.She authored RA 11904, or the Philippine Creative Industries Development Act, which recognizes the contribution of creative workers and industries to national development.

- Customs eyes P1T haul as collections hit P757.4 billion (2026-10-26 16:06)

THE Bureau of Customs (BOC) collected P757.406 billion in the first nine months of 2026, surpassing its revenue target by P8.913 billion as it strives for a historic P1-trillion collection goal by year-end.Customs Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno rallied the bureau’s top officials to sustain the revenue momentum, intensify enforcement and crack down on corruption during

the recently concluded Collectors' Conference hosted by the Port of Davao.The bureau's January-to-September collections exceeded its P748.494-billion target and were P55.735 billion higher than the amount collected during the same period last year.The bureau needs to collect P242.594 billion in the final three months of 2026 to hit its P1-trillion goal, requiring a monthly average of about P80.865 billion.The conference brought together deputy commissioners, assistant commissioners, service directors, district collectors, and other senior officials to assess the bureau's performance, address operational challenges and align strategies for the remainder of the year.Nepomuceno commended Customs personnel for exceeding revenue targets but stressed that the agency must push harder to deliver bigger results. "We are still far from what we want to happen," he said.He reiterated his directive to expedite the auction and condemnation of seized and forfeited goods, including overstaying containers.He warned that the bureau would continue to closely monitor operations and take appropriate action against personnel involved in corruption, unlawful conduct and other illicit activities.Port of Davao District Collector Maita Acevedo, who hosted the conference, called on bureau officials to intensify revenue collection, facilitate legitimate trade and strengthen border protection while upholding the bureau's principles of Integrity, Accountability and Modernization (IAM).Acevedo stressed that reaching the P1-trillion milestone would require a collective effort from Customs personnel.The conference also recognized ports and offices that met or exceeded their revenue targets, including the ports of San Fernando, Manila, Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA), Batangas, Legazpi, Iloilo, Cebu, Tacloban, Cagayan de Oro, Zamboanga, Davao, Subic, Clark, Aparri and Limay.The Ports of Manila, Cagayan de Oro and the Manila International Container Port (MICP) were also cited for their performance in public auctions, supporting efforts to dispose of seized and forfeited goods.Special recognition went to offices and personnel pursuing legal action over delayed and abandoned balikbayan boxes, advancing accountability in cases involving luxury vehicle importations, and conducting a successful enforcement operation that resulted in the seizure of P1.428 billion worth of illicit vape products.Among those recognized were the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service and the Enforcement and Security Service.

- Airline passenger advisories issued ahead of All Saints' Day (2026-10-26 16:04)

LOCAL budget carriers Cebu Pacific Air (CEB) and AirAsia Philippines have issued separate travel advisories ahead of the All Saints' Day break, reminding passengers to arrive early at the airport to avoid peak-season congestion.Cebu Pacific advised travelers to arrive at least three hours before departure for domestic flights, and four hours for international flights.Long lines can be avoided by checking in via the official CEB mobile app or through the Manage Booking section of the CEB website. Passengers should also review the baggage policy, which allows up to 10 kilograms of hand-carry items for Cebu Pacific flights.For international trips, travelers must complete their e-Travel forms within 72 hours before departure from and arrival to the Philippines, and save the QR code generated at the end of the form.Portable electronic devices such as phones, laptops, power banks, and tablets must be placed in hand-carry baggage and are strictly prohibited in checked baggage.Cebu Pacific also reminded passengers traveling to

select destinations — Bacolod, Butuan, Cagayan de Oro, Caticlan, Cauayan, Clark, Coron, Davao, El Nido, General Santos, Iloilo, Legazpi, Manila, Pagadian, Puerto Princesa, Siargao, Surigao, Tacloban, Tagbilaran, Tuguegarao, and Zamboanga — to use self-tag luggage kiosks at the airport before proceeding to bag drop counters.AirAsia Philippines said travelers bringing extra belongings for family gatherings and holiday trips can choose a baggage allowance ranging from 15 kilograms to 60 kilograms, as long as the total weight stays within their purchased limit and no single bag exceeds 32 kilograms.AirAsia noted that passengers can save up to P919 by pre-booking baggage online instead of purchasing it at the airport. Additional baggage can be pre-booked up to two hours before the scheduled departure.It added that passengers may bring one cabin bag and one small bag onboard, provided the combined weight of both items does not exceed 7 kilograms.Passengers, including those traveling under group bookings, are encouraged to complete self check-in through the AirAsia MOVE app or the AirAsia website in advance. Self check-in is available from 14 days up to one hour before departure.

- Pasig police officer arrested for grave threats (2026-10-26 16:03)

THE Pasig City Police will file criminal and administrative charges against an officer for poking a gun at a family who were in their car Sunday.In a statement, the Pasig police strongly condemned the incident. “Police personnel are expected to uphold the law, exercise restraint, and maintain the highest standards of discipline, professionalism, and accountability at all times and misconduct and abuse and misuse of authority is never tolerated in the organization,” it said.The incident took place at a gasoline station on Sandoval Road, Barangay Pinagbuhatan. The officer, who was not identified, allegedly approached the complainant and her family while they were inside their vehicle and pointed a firearm at them.The complainant was able to record the incident with her phone camera and reported it to Pinagbuhatan Police Sub-Station.The officer was arrested during a follow-up operation, and his firearm was confiscated.The Pasig police assured the public that the incident is being addressed in accordance with existing laws, rules, and regulations.

- PNP to adopt stricter recruitment procedure (2026-10-26 16:02)

THE Philippine National Police (PNP) said on Monday it will enforce stricter recruitment standards for aspiring police officers.PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. emphasized the need to weed out applicants with questionable character early in the recruitment process to prevent them from compromising the integrity and professionalism of the force. “There is no room for future policemen who cannot even observe and respect the simplest rules and regulations,” Nartatez said in a statement.The National Police Commission (Napolcom) earlier warned erring criminology interns that their applications for police service would not be processed and they would not be allowed to take entrance examinations.Napolcom issued the warning following reports of criminology interns brazenly violating traffic rules, including riding motorcycles without helmets and using unauthorized license plates.While the PNP already has a strong mechanism to choose the best applicants, Nartatez said inputs from netizens and other information regarding an aspiring officer is important in verifying their background. “Discipline

and respect for the law must begin even before an aspiring police officer enters the service. We cannot allow those who disregard the law to wear the uniform and enforce it against others," he said.He urged colleges and universities offering Criminology courses to ensure that their students are not only physically and mentally ready but are also morally fit to become police officers.

- Several Pasay roads closed for Asean summit (2026-10-26 16:01)

SEVERAL roads around the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) and Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) will be closed as part of preparations for the 49th Asean Summit on Nov. 16 to 18.In its advisory, the Pasay Traffic and Parking Management Office said partial road closures would be implemented from Oct. 24 to Nov. 9, followed by full closures from Nov. 9 to 20.Pasay traffic authorities advised motorists and commuters to avoid Macapagal Boulevard, Diokno Boulevard, the World Trade Center area and portions of Roxas Boulevard due to expected heavy traffic and travel delays.Designated bus lanes will also be temporarily converted into exclusive lanes for official vehicles and delegations attending the summit.Motorists were advised to use alternative routes, allow extra travel time and follow instructions from authorized personnel to avoid inconvenience.It said employees working within the affected areas may be allowed to enter or pass through upon presenting a valid company ID, subject to security regulations.

- MPD probes email bomb threat at DLSU Manila (2026-10-26 15:33)

(UPDATED) The Manila Police District (MPD) is investigating an alleged bomb threat sent through email to faculty members of De La Salle University-Manila's Brother Andrew College of Education (BAGCED) on Monday.In its report, the MPD said DLSU security officials Jose Billy O. Aguirre and Colin G. Papa reported the incident to Malate Police Station at around 12:40 p.m.Initial investigation showed that BAGCED Associate Dean Philip Rentillo received the email and relayed it to university security personnel.Police coordinated with the MPD Anti-Cyber Crime Team for technical assistance regarding the email sent from traknisky@photo.com.The MPD's Explosive Ordnance Disposal and K9 unit began a bomb sweep and assessment of the university premises at around 2 p.m. as a precautionary measure.The bomb sweep and threat assessment were still ongoing as of 3:15 p.m., according to the authorities.

- Pagasa may declare amihan season in next days (2026-10-26 13:18)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) might declare the start of the amihan season in the next days.Pagasa Weather Specialist Grace Castañeda-Carpio said in the 5 p.m. weather update that the northeasterly windflow was affecting extreme northern Luzon area."Tonight, this will bring light rains or drizzles here in the area of Batanes and Babuyan Islands," she said in Filipino and English.Castañeda-Carpio explained that the northeasterly windflow is the "precursor" to the northeast monsoon (amihan)."As of the moment, we have no official declaration yet of the start of the amihan season but we are monitoring and we expect that it is possible for us in the next

days to officially declare the start of the amihan season," she said.Castañeda-Carpio also said there still were slight flare-ups of cloudiness in the western section of Mindanao due to the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ).She said that rain showers were still possible tonight in parts of Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi even as she said that less rainfall due to the ITCZ was expected compared to previous days.For other areas including Metro Manila, Castañeda-Carpio said the skies would be partly cloudy to cloudy. "Isolated rain showers, thunderstorms, are still possible due to localized thunderstorms," she added.As to the forecast weather for Tuesday, Castañeda-Carpio said light rains were still possible in Batanes and Cagayan due to the northeasterly windflow.She added that skies would be partly cloudy to cloudy on Tuesday in a large part of Luzon."Light rains or drizzles are also possible [on Tuesday] here in Ilocos Norte still due to the northeasterly windflow," she said.As to Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon, she said that sudden but brief rains were possible on Tuesday due to localized thunderstorms.She also said that by Tuesday evening, the chance of rains would be high in the eastern part of Luzon.The chance of "scattered rains, thunderstorms" due to the Intertropical Convergence Zone on Tuesday was high in parts of Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi, Castañeda-Carpio said. "But throughout the day, it is possible that these rains will also lessen," she said.The skies would be partly cloudy to cloudy in the rest of Mindanao as well as Palawan and the Visayas "but by afternoon and evening, the chance of isolated rain showers due to localized thunderstorms increases," she said. Short periods of rains were possible during severe thunderstorms, she added.No gale warning was issued by Castañeda-Carpio cautioned those who would go out to sea in extreme northern Luzon because seas would be moderate to rough "within the next 24 hours."Castañeda-Carpio said that from Wednesday to Friday, skies would continue to be partly cloudy to cloudy in Metro Manila. "If we will experience rains, these will mostly be isolated rain showers due to localized thunderstorms," she said.Baguio City would have light rains or drizzles due to the northeasterly windflow by Wednesday, she said. This city might experience rain showers and thunderstorms by Thursday and Friday, based on Pagasa's forecast.As to the area of Legazpi City, Castañeda-Carpio said that the chance of "scattered rain showers, thunderstorms, possibly due to the easterlies or shear line," was high. Pagasa forecast less rain by Friday but, she said, "isolated rain showers due to localized thunderstorms are still possible."Skies in parts of Metro Cebu, Iloilo City, and Tacloban City would be partly cloudy to cloudy from Wednesday to Friday, she said. "If we will experience rains, these will mostly be just isolated rain showers by afternoon and evening" due to localized thunderstorms, she said.As to Metro Davao, Cagayan de Oro, and Zamboanga City, Pagasa forecast that skies would continue to be partly cloudy to cloudy from Wednesday to Friday. Castañeda-Carpio said that if rains would be experienced, these would mostly be isolated rain showers. However, she said, short periods of heavy rain are possible during severe thunderstorms.

- Philippine Airlines resumes Saipan flights (2026-10-26 12:20)

SAIPAN, Northern Marianas — Philippine Airlines has resumed direct flights between Manila and Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands after months of delays following Typhoon Sinlaku.The Philippine flag carrier's first returning flight touched down at Francisco C.

Ada-Saipan International Airport at 4:25 a.m. Monday, October 26, nearly three hours behind schedule.Despite the delay, arriving passengers welcomed the restoration of direct flights, which eliminate the need to transit through Guam or South Korea.Some friends and relatives of arriving passengers said they had been waiting at the airport since 2 a.m., while passengers booked on the return flight to Manila were notified of the delay.Saipan resident Christopher Hart, who was returning from a family visit to the Philippines, said the direct service was a welcome convenience."It's really nice just being able to go straight back home from Manila," Hart said.Lourdes Samonte of CTSI Logistics, who arrived for a business conference, also welcomed the direct connection despite the delay."Of course, it's a lot easier, it's just unfortunately, it's delayed," she said.Commonwealth Ports Authority board chairman Bartley Jackson welcomed the airline's return, saying the direct service would help the territory's economic recovery."The addition of direct service to Manila from Saipan is sure to help us on the road to economic recovery," Jackson said.Marianas Visitors Authority acting board chairman Vicky Benavente said international air connections were essential to rebuilding the territory's tourism industry."One of the most important aspects of marketing a destination, such as the Marianas, is having flights to and from international airports. The MVA will continue to garner airline partnerships that will result in an increase in our visitor arrivals. We are fortunate for the opportunity to work with Philippine Airlines," Benavente said.Philippine Airlines is operating twice-weekly flights using an Airbus A321 aircraft, with departures from Manila on Wednesdays and Sundays and return flights from Saipan on Mondays and Thursdays.The Marianas Visitors Authority board earlier approved a US$400,000 promotional agreement with the airline to support its winter and summer operations and attract more visitors to the Northern Marianas.The restored service is expected to benefit Filipino workers, tourists, business travelers, and residents seeking easier access to the Philippines and connecting international flights.

- Ombudsman urged to act on complaints vs Mangudadatu (2026-10-26 11:55)

MANILA, Philippines — The Office of the Ombudsman in Mindanao is being urged to resolve pending administrative and criminal complaints against former Sultan Kudarat governor Suharto “Teng” Mangudadatu as he reportedly seeks a seat in the Bangsamoro Parliament and the region’s chief minister post.The criminal complaint, filed by Mastura Usman and Nhoraidha Ebus, alleges violations of Republic Act 3019, or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, and Article 177 of the Revised Penal Code, which penalizes usurpation of authority or official functions.The separate administrative complaint accuses Mangudadatu of grave misconduct, conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service, and violations of provisions of the Local Government Code.The complaints concern his residency and voter registration after he won the Sultan Kudarat gubernatorial election on May 13, 2019.According to the complainants, Mangudadatu transferred his residence from Sultan Kudarat to Datu Abdullah Sangki, Maguindanao, on Sept. 27, 2021, and subsequently transferred his voter registration to the same locality.The case documents cite certifications reportedly issued by Commission on Elections offices in Datu Abdullah Sangki and Intramuros, Manila, in support of the allegations

concerning his voter registration.The complaints have drawn renewed attention amid reports that Mangudadatu is seeking entry into the Bangsamoro Parliament through a party-replacement arrangement as a potential route to the chief minister’s post.An elected member of the Bangsamoro Parliament, who requested anonymity, said the selection of the region’s chief executive must comply with the law and established parliamentary procedures.“Coercion, bribery, deception, or other unlawful means must not be allowed to determine the outcome of the Bangsamoro leadership selection process,” the lawmaker said.The lawmaker warned that any proven attempt to manipulate the selection could undermine the credibility of the Bangsamoro Parliament and public confidence in regional institutions established through the peace process.Calls for the Ombudsman to act center on the need for a clear resolution of the complaints as the region prepares to select its next chief minister.Mangudadatu has yet to respond to the allegations.

- DOJ confirms Thomas Markle probe over alleged child abuse materials (2026-10-26 11:24)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Justice (DOJ) confirmed on Monday that an anti-trafficking task force in Cebu is investigating Thomas Markle Sr., father of Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, over a case involving suspected child sexual abuse materials.DOJ spokesman Raphael Niccolo Martinez said the Regional Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) task force in Cebu is handling the investigation.“The DOJ confirms that the matter involving Thomas Markle Sr. is currently under investigation by the Regional Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) Task Force in Cebu,” Martinez said.Martinez did not provide further details.Media reports said the investigation stemmed from the alleged discovery of suspected child sexual abuse images and videos among belongings reportedly left at Markle’s former residence in Cebu.

- PNP deploys tracker teams to arrest Dela Rosa (2026-10-26 09:33)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine National Police (PNP) has mobilized tracker teams that include special action forces to locate and arrest fugitive Senator Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa.“The full force of the Philippine National Police is in play to bring the senator to the fold of the law,” Col. Allen Rae Co, PNP spokesman, said in a press briefing at Camp Crame on Monday.Last week, the PNP offered a P50-million bounty for dela Rosa’s arrest. He was given one week to surrender.President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. himself ordered an intensified manhunt for Dela Rosa but instructed security forces to avoid losing lives as much as possible.Co said the one week ultimatum for him to surrender is a “sign of goodwill,” reiterating that the PNP always prefers a peaceful resolution to the matter.The one week deadline will lapse on Thursday, October 29.Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla had said that the senator is under the protection of a well-financed, heavily armed group in Mindanao.

- Doctors group urges PRC to investigate Leachon over alleged ethics violations (2026-10-26 09:27)

MANILA, Philippines — A group of doctors on Monday urged the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) to investigate Dr. Anthony “Tony” Leachon over alleged violations of professional ethics involving his public medical claims and statements against fellow medical professionals.The group questioned the scientific basis of Leachon’s statements on the Dengvaxia controversy and accusations against fellow doctors.Dr. Kenneth Hartigan-Go, former Department of Health undersecretary, said that medical professionals have a responsibility to ensure that public medical information is accurate and supported by scientific evidence.The group said in a press briefing that it was prepared to submit relevant documents to the PRC and other authorities. It called for a fair and impartial review of the allegations.Leachon said that his statements on the Dengvaxia controversy aimed to highlight accountability and transparency. “My statements on the Dengvaxia controversy were never meant to malign colleagues, but to highlight issues of accountability and transparency that continue to affect thousands of Filipino families who lost loved ones,” he said in a statement sent to The Manila Times. “I will answer the complaint in due course, as it is premature to make further statements at this point,” he said.

- Peso sinks to new record low (2026-10-26 09:23)

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine peso closed at an all-time low of P63.95 against the US dollar on Monday.The peso weakened by 33 and a half centavos to P63.95 from the previous record low of P63.615:$1. This marks the fifth consecutive trading day that the peso has hit a record low.It opened at P63.535 and traded between P63.5 and P63.95:$1. The volume reached P1.648 billion, higher than the previous P1.284 billion

- Aquino welcomes BIR suspension of online sellers’ seal requirement (2026-10-26 08:57)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Bam Aquino on Monday welcomed the Bureau of Internal Revenue’s (BIR) suspension of its Registration Seal Badge requirement even as he urged the agency to continue listening to taxpayers’ concerns and ease the burden of doing business, particularly for small entrepreneurs, content creators and online sellers.In a statement, Aquino thanked the BIR for suspending the mandatory display of the badge, which had drawn concerns from digital entrepreneurs ahead of the Oct. 31 compliance deadline. “Thank you, BIR, for suspending the Registration Seal Badge. Let us continue listening to the concerns of our fellow Filipinos and make it easier to do business, especially for small entrepreneurs, content creators and online sellers,” Aquino said.The senator earlier called on the BIR to postpone the implementation of the requirement.Under Revenue Memorandum Circular No. 38-2026, the BIR required taxpayers engaged in online business activities to display a Registration Seal Badge on their websites, e-commerce platforms or social media business pages as proof of registration.The measure covered online sellers, freelancers, professionals, vloggers, influencers and other individuals earning income through digital platforms.The badge was introduced as an alternative to publicly displaying a taxpayer’s full Certificate of Registration. It contains a QR code that customers and other parties can scan to verify a business’s registration with the BIR.However, the requirement drew concerns from affected taxpayers over data privacy,

technical difficulties and the scope of compliance.In suspending the requirement through Revenue Memorandum Circular No. 113-2026, the BIR said the move would allow it to review the implementation of its registration verification initiatives. Taxpayers who have already secured their badges may continue displaying them voluntarily, while no penalties will be imposed solely for failing to display the badge during the suspension.The BIR has also said it would consult affected taxpayers and stakeholders and coordinate with the National Privacy Commission to address concerns surrounding the requirement.

• DLSU Manila suspends classes, office work amid reported security threat (2026-10-26 08:29)

MANILA, Philippines — De La Salle University-Manila suspended classes and office work on Monday due to a reported security threat.In a statement, the University Student Government (USG) said that classes from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. were suspended, while classes scheduled from 6 p.m. onward would shift to online learning.Office work was also suspended starting at 1 p.m., and campus access was restricted.The Manila Police District said that it was still assessing the situation related to the reported security threat.

• Diesel, kerosene prices to increase, gasoline to go down (2026-10-26 08:24)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Energy on Monday announced that diesel and kerosene prices will increase this week, while gasoline prices will slightly go down as tensions in the Middle East again influenced global oil prices.The agency said that diesel prices will increase by P1.20 per liter while kerosene prices will go up by P0.50 per liter. The cost of gasoline will decrease by P0.30 per liter.Last week, diesel prices jumped by P2.60 per liter, gasoline prices dropped by P4.30 per liter, while kerosene prices declined by P1 per liter.

• Lacson warns vs money-laced lobbying in 2027 budget process (2026-10-26 05:21)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Panfilo Lacson on Monday warned against money-laced lobbying in the 2027 budget process, saying government agencies must justify their funding requests rather than resort to questionable offers as Congress scrutinizes the proposed spending plan.Lacson said agencies whose proposed budgets were reduced in the National Expenditure Program (NEP) could appeal to the House of Representatives and the Senate for funding restoration, provided they could justify their requests.He said the Senate would continue scrutinizing the proposed budget with the help of budget advocates and civil society groups.The senator also called for greater transparency throughout the budget process, including keeping livestream cameras running even during suspended deliberations, particularly at the bicameral conference committee level. “We must sustain the practice of transparency in the budget,” Lacson said in a radio interview.He warned against excessive reliance on financial assistance programs, including the Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially Incapacitated Patients and the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation, citing accounts of beneficiaries allegedly spending the money on shopping and gambling.He said that the country's projected budget deficit of P1.695 trillion and projected national debt ballooning to P21.48 trillion in 2027 could leave the

Philippines sinking further into debt.The senator also cited the projected gross borrowings of P3.043 trillion in 2027 for principal and interest payments.Lacson said the Senate's plan to slash P2 billion from its budget under the NEP to set an example of fiscal discipline could free up funds for realignment to education, health or other more productive endeavors, which would benefit Filipinos in the medium and long terms. “If we don't invest in productive endeavors, we won't benefit in the long run. We will instead continue to sink deeper in debt,” he said.Meanwhile, Lacson said the alleged P5-million “allocation fund” offer linked to the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority was becoming “curiouser and curiouser,” questioning why the agency had not categorically denied that a staff member identified as “Stephanie” worked there.TESDA Secretary Jose Francisco Benitez had denied authorizing anyone to offer Lacson an allocation. “I am willing to give TESDA Sec. Benitez the benefit of the doubt after he immediately denied authorizing anyone to make the offer, and thanked me for bringing up the matter. But I am not quite convinced,” Lacson said. “It is much simpler to say they had no such staff, to convince us that someone was using his name. But to my knowledge, there was no such denial,” he added.

- Lacson: Dela Rosa safer in PH than abroad (2026-10-26 05:13)

MANILA, Philippines — Sen. Panfilo Lacson on Monday said that Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa may be safer staying in the Philippines than fleeing abroad, where he could face a greater risk of arrest under an International Criminal Court (ICC) warrant.Lacson said the international nature of the warrant would limit Dela Rosa’s options for seeking refuge overseas."Sen. dela Rosa's situation is difficult because the ICC warrant is international. Where will he go? If he goes abroad, he would be more exposed and it will be easier for authorities to arrest him," Lacson said in an interview with DZMM radio.The warrant against Dela Rosa is linked to the ICC investigation into alleged crimes against humanity committed in connection with the Duterte administration’s war on drugs.Lacson said that had the arrest warrant been issued in the Philippines, Dela Rosa could have sought refuge in a country that has no extradition treaty with the Philippines."But if it was the ICC that issued the warrant, he'll have a harder time hiding. He would be safer in the Philippines," he said.Lacson also warned against denying Dela Rosa due process in response to the alleged extrajudicial killings (EJKs) during the previous administration."It is wrong to argue that since EJK victims were denied due process, dela Rosa should also be denied due process," he said.On Sunday, Lacson said he is hoping that if Dela Rosa is arrested, it will be peaceful and without bloodshed.

- Cayetano backs Escudero’s pledge to reject VP post if Sara Duterte is impeached (2026-10-26 03:05)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano on Monday supported Sen. Francis Escudero’s pledge to turn down the vice presidency if Vice President Sara Duterte is removed from office through impeachment. “That's right! All of us senator-judges should make this declaration,” Cayetano said in a Facebook post, sharing a news report quoting Escudero.Escudero said he would decline the position if offered to him because accepting it

after participating in Duterte's impeachment trial could create a conflict of interest. "I would not accept it for the simple reason that it would be a conflict of interest. We are the ones who made the decision, and I don't think that would be right," Escudero said in the 14th episode of his program Chiz Wiz: Usapang May Laman on Sunday. Escudero clarified that his position was a personal decision, not a recommendation for his fellow senators to make the same pledge. He also stressed that nobody had offered him the vice presidency.Cayetano called on senators to remain politically neutral, particularly in cases involving the president or vice president. "It's essential that in all impeachment proceedings, especially those involving presidents and vice presidents, senator-judges remain politically neutral and have no incentive to convict other than evidence proving the articles of impeachment," he said.The Senate impeachment court will resume Duterte's trial in November, with the proceedings narrowed to a single remaining charge after House prosecutors withdrew three of the four articles of impeachment on Oct. 13.The House prosecution dropped Article I, which concerned the alleged misuse of confidential funds; Article III, which accused Duterte of bribery; and Article IV, which involved alleged grave threats and related accusations against President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the first lady and former House Speaker Martin Romualdez.Article II accuses Duterte of failing to fully disclose assets in her Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth and of retaining business interests while serving as vice president, allegedly violating constitutional restrictions.During the prosecution's presentation, forensic financial analyst Alexander Cabrera testified that his analysis of available financial records identified about P817.87 million in allegedly unexplained wealth involving Duterte and her husband, lawyer Manases "Mans" Carpio, from 2022 to 2025. He said the estimate could reach P1.5 billion under less conservative assumptions. The prosecution rested its case on Oct. 13 and was directed to submit its documentary and object evidence for Article II. The defense is expected to present its evidence when the trial resumes, with the Senate scheduled to hold hearings on Nov. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 19, 20 and 23.

• Vince Dizon to go back to DOTR, Lopez to head DPWH — Palace (2026-10-26 02:51)

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang announced on Monday that Vince Dizon will reassume his post as secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOTr).In a press briefing, Presidential Communications Office Secretary Lino Cayetano said Giovanni Lopez will replace Dizon as chief of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).Quoting President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., Cayetano said the move aims to "accelerate reform" in the two agencies. "Secretary Dizon moves to the DOTr to fix the daily commute. Secretary Lopez moves to the DPWH to ensure that the reforms there are sustained. All of this is aimed at making government services faster and more accessible for our fellow citizens," said Cayetano, quoting Marcos.

• Gatchalian vows to remove lump-sum funds in 2027 budget (2026-10-26 02:23)

MANILA, Philippines — The Senate will eliminate lump-sum funds in the proposed P7.2-trillion national budget for 2027 and ensure that unprogrammed appropriations comply with Supreme Court restrictions, Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian said.Gatchalian said the Senate will

align the proposed budget with the high court’s ruling declaring the 2024 and 2025 national budget laws unconstitutional over congressional increases in appropriations and invalidating provisions governing unprogrammed appropriations in the 2026 budget. “The bottom line is that the Supreme Court said appropriations cannot exceed the budget proposed by the president,” the senator said in an interview with DZBB radio on Sunday. “For 2027, we will ensure that there are no lump-sum funds because they are unconstitutional,” he added.The high tribunal however clarified that unprogrammed appropriations are not inherently unconstitutional. These are standby funds that may be released only when specified funding conditions are met.Gatchalian said the Senate will retain unprogrammed appropriations in the 2027 budget, provided these comply with the court’s requirements. “There will still be unprogrammed appropriations. The Supreme Court did not say these are prohibited or unconstitutional. It merely set parameters, which we will follow,” he said.He estimated that unprogrammed appropriations accounted for about 2 percent to 5 percent of the national budget.During a Senate Committee on Finance hearing on Oct. 22, Budget Secretary Kim Robert De Leon said the provisions struck down by the court were no longer included in the proposed 2027 budget.

- No subsea cables deal with Taiwan — DFA (2026-10-26 02:16)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) clarified that there is "no cooperative arrangement" with Taiwan on subsea cables or other critical undersea infrastructure (CUI).The DFA issued the clarification Monday amid a media query on the reported plan of the Philippines to explore deeper cooperation with Taiwan on protecting undersea cables and addressing "gray-zone" activity.The issue stemmed from the remarks of Felipe Cariño III, deputy chief of mission at the Philippine Embassy in Washington, at a forum organized by the Center for a New American Security (CNAS).Cariño allegedly mentioned about the Philippines' plan to explore cooperation with Taiwan to protect CUI and address gray zone activity.The DFA reiterated that the Philippines "adheres to its longstanding and consistent One China Policy," which was outlined in its October 22 statement."There was no mention of gray-zone activity cooperation with Taiwan," the DFA said in a statement on Monday.It said that the discussion at CNAS was "focused on the importance of protecting CUI, including through stronger public-private cooperation, particularly in the repair and recovery of damaged infrastructure.""It must be emphasized that the protection of CUI requires concerted efforts by all parties that benefit from these essential networks," the DFA said.The CNAS on Facebook said it hosted a conversation on "an overlooked Pacific vulnerability: subsea cables, which carry more than 99 percent of intercontinental data traffic and are increasingly targets of Chinese gray zone activity."The CNAS thanked the panelists that included Cariño; Andrea Yang, deputy representative at the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office; Richard Fontaine, CNAS chief executive officer; and Ryan Claffey, CNAS research assistant, "for a great discussion on how these allied governments can strengthen monitoring, response, and resilience."The DFA earlier said the Philippines values its relations with China as it reaffirmed Manila's continued adherence to its One China Policy.The DFA said that One China Policy, anchored on the 1975

Philippines-China Joint Communique, underscored the government's "consistent position that the People’s Republic of China is the sole legal government of China."

- DFA on Remulla’s call: We do not tolerate corruption (2026-10-26 01:17)

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) objected to the call of Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla to strip the agency of its visa-issuance functions, alleging that it has been turned into a business.The DFA on Monday said Remulla’s remarks undermined the "institutional integrity of the Department and unfairly malign the reputation of the Philippine Foreign Service and its personnel.""The DFA does not tolerate corruption and remains committed to accountability, transparency, and utmost professionalism in the delivery of public service," it said in a statement.The agency pointed out that its "visa-issuing mandate is grounded on both domestic law and international convention."It said that Section 21(3), Chapter 7 (The Foreign Service), Title I, Book IV of Executive Order 292, or the Administrative Code of 1987, "expressly recognizes visa issuance as a statutory consular function."Under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963, Article 5(d) provides for the issuance of visas or appropriate travel documents as a consular function, while Articles 3 and 70 recognize the exercise of consular functions by diplomatic missions."Contrary to the characterization of visa processing as a merely clerical function, the issuance of visas involves the substantive assessment of applications and verification of documents," the DFA said."These responsibilities require the exercise of official judgment pursuant to the applicable Philippine laws, rules and regulations, and cannot be reduced to just the administrative receipt and processing of documents," it added.The DFA said it recognizes that administrative support services may be provided by third parties such as VFS, primarily in the receipt of applications."Such outsourcing of administrative services does not mean the transfer of sovereign authority to approve or deny visas," the department said.This authority remains a governmental responsibility, as exercised by the Philippine embassies and consulates, it added.The visa fees collected are pursuant to applicable laws and regulations, including the prescribed Schedule of Fees.The DFA said it "will continue to faithfully discharge its statutory responsibilities and uphold the integrity of Philippine visa issuance in the best interest of the country and the Filipino people."

- SPD crackdown on illegal firearms nets 2 suspects (2026-10-26 00:13)

THE Southern Police District arrested two suspects on Friday in Muntinlupa and Pasay cities as it ramped up its crackdown on illegal firearms. Police operatives identified one suspect in an entrapment operation in Muntinlupa City.The operation stemmed from information provided by an informant regarding the suspect's alleged illegal sale of unregistered firearms in the area. Recovered during the operation were one.38 caliber revolver, three live rounds of.38 caliber ammunition, a black sling bag, and marked money used in the entrapment operation.In a separate operation late Friday, the Station Intelligence Section of Pasay City Police Station arrested a man seen holding a firearm.Police Brig. Gen. Rodel Pastor, SPD district director, said that the illegal possession and sale of firearms will remain a priority.