DICT seeking to establish over 15,000 free WiFi sites in 2024

THE Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) said it has set a target of over 15,100 free WiFi sites in 2024.

Its other goals include the implementation of a National Broadband Plan calling for up about 2,800 kilometers of dark fiber reaching parts of Mindanao by December 2024, the DICT said in a statement.

This plan ensures "cost-effective internet" connectivity for National Government agencies and local government units, Heherson M. Asiddao, Information and Communications Technology undersecretary, said in a statement.

Mr. Assidao said the DICT also hopes to launch operations at two data centers next

The DICT is proposing a 2024 budget of P8.73 billion, Secretary Ivan John E. Uy told the House appropriations committee on Thursday.

"The department firmly believes that digitalization is one of the greatest, most powerful tools — not just to improve the ease of doing business but as a means to eliminate graft and corruption," Mr. Uy said.

Under the National Expenditure Program (NEP), the DICT plus its associated agencies



were allocated funding of P9.86 billion, with P355.77 million going to its Cybercrime Investigation and Coordinating Center; P347.95 million to the National Privacy Commission; and about P453.65 million to the National Telecommunications Commission.

The DICT's proposed budget had been cut from its 2023 funding level of P10.88 billion due to underspending.

"We have implemented a catch-up plan for the department to efficiently utilize its budget," My. Uy said. - Ashley Erika O. Jose

Installation of facilities and line reconductoring work along Marigman St. in Sitio Halang, Bgy. San Roque, Antipolo City, Rizal Province.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2023

Portion of Burol Road from Bubuyan Barangay Road in Bgy. Bubuyan to and including Valle Dulce Subd. Phase 1C and Sitio Burol Ylaya in Bgy. Burol.

TUESDAY TO WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5-6, 2023

South East Asian Medical Center, Super 8 Grocery Warehouse, Puregold Molino and Lokal Mo

Mall; and Cidad Del Valle Subd. in Bgy. Molino III.

Portion of Masaito Drive from Molino Blvd. to and including Bellazona Castilla Subd.

REASON: Replacement of pole, line reconductoring work and installation of new facilities

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2023

Bugarin, Sitio Mahabang Sapa, Sitio Malihim and Bella Vita – Pililla Subd.; Brenton International Venture Manufacturing Corp., Pililla Water District - Bugarin Pumping Station and Bellavita Land

East to and including Lakeside Park Subd., Living Water Subd., Sitio San Antonio, Sitio Barak, Sitio

Lamuan, Sitio Manggahan, Sitio Masantol, Sitio Yakat and Sonet Subd.; Belleza, M. L. Quezon, Naval, Roxas, Vicencio, Villaran, Daria, G. Manuyag, Bulo-Bulo, Feeder Road, San Antonio,

A. Luna, Acosta, Del Pilar, F. Vidanes and F. Vidanes Ext. Sts.; and Inno Realty Corp. in Bgys.

Portion of National Highway (Pililla – Jala-Jala – Pakil Road) from near Mary Mother of God Chapel to and including Bulo-Bulo and L. Pascasio Sts.; Sitio Pahang and Sitio Pulong Hubo; and

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2023

CAVITE (TERNATE; MARAGONDON; NAIC; AND GEN.

and Gulod Ext. Sts.; Isaiah Ville Subd. and Santa Mercedes Ville Subd.; Jidan Agrich Harvest Corp.,

State University (CvSU) - Maragondon Campus in Bgys. Pinagsanhan 1-A and Pinagsanhan 1-B in Maragondon; Aplaya, Custodio, Aguada, B. Tibayan, Dr. C. Nuñez, H. Ventura, Judge P. Ramos, Sto. Niño, Riverside Residents, Capt. Dirain, C. Ramos, Olano and Zapanta Sts.; Sitio Ulong and

Puzon Compound: Cathay Farms Development Inc., Dalaroy Beach Resort and Ternate Integrated

National High School in Bgys. Bucana, San Jose, San Juan I, San Juan II, Sapang I and Town

Portion of Maragondon – Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo Road from Maragondon – Magallanes Road in Bgy. Tulay Silangan, Maragondon to and including Sitio Dao, Sitio Balong Marami, Sitio

Cubao and Sitio Dikay; Kausapin, Legarda, Lirio, Sampaloc, Amontay, Lopez Jaena, Magallanes, Real, San Jose, Balagtas, Gen. Aguinaldo, Gen. Trias, J. P. Rizal, Campo Sto., Katapang Road, Kaykuli-Kaypaaba, Taktak-Kaypaaba, Lumipa-Taktak and Callejon Sts.; Chubby Chicks Poultry

Farm Inc., LAJ Nutri Farms Inc., Sustamina Agri-Industrial Corp. and Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo Municipal Hall in Bgys. Batas, Castaños Cerca, Castaños Lejos, Poblacion I, II, III & IV, Kabulusan,

Kavmisas. Kavpaaba. Lumipa and Tabora in Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo; Sitio Kay-Ake; and Jinfeng

substation to and including Caylabne, Crusher and Caysubic Sts.; Sitic Calumpang, Mira Hills Subd., Ocean View Villas Subd., Ocean Villas Subd. and Velasco Subd.; Caylabne Bay Resort,

Puerto Azul Beach & Country Club, Vista de Loro and Gregorio Lim Marine Barracks in Bgys. Sapang I & II, Puerto Azul and Town Proper in Ternate.

REASON: Replacement of facilities and maintenance work in Bgy. Sapang, Ternate, Cavite.

BETWEEN 10:00AM AND 3:00PM - PORTION OF CIRCUITS PUERTO AZUL 32XX; AND

Portion of Governor's Drive and Nagsubu - Ternate Highway from near Meralco - Ternate

Philippine Center for Advanced Maritime Simulation & Training Inc. (PHILCAMSAT) and Cav

BETWEEN 9:30AM AND 10:00AM AND THEN BETWEEN 3:00PM AND 3:30PM - PORTION

Portion of Governor's Drive and Nasugbu - Ternate Highway from near Jetti Gas Station in Town Proper, Ternate to and including Sapang – Pinagsanhan and Bonifacio Shrine Roads; Gulod

Relocation of pole and line reconstruction work related to DPWH relocation of

BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 5:00AM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT MALAYA 44MM

poles in Bgy. Halayhayin, Pililla, Rizal Province.

BETWEEN 11:00PM (TUE., 09/05/23) AND 4:00AM (WED., 09/06/23) - PORTION OF

Portion of Molino Blvd. from Molino - Paliparan Road to and including Phoenix Gas Station,

along Molino Blvd. and Masaito Drive in Bgy. Molino III, Bacoor City, Cavite.

BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 12:30AM AND THEN BETWEEN 4:30AM AND 5:00AM -

Portion of Pililla – Jala-Jala – Pakil Road from near Winnies Café to Mary Mother of God

Portion of Pililla - Jala-Jala - Pakil Road from Iglesia Ni Cristo - Lokal Ng Bulo-Bulo - Rizal

BETWEEN 10:00AM AND 2:00PM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT CANLUBANG 45XE

REASON: Replacement of facilities in Bgy. Burol, Calamba City, Laguna

Subd.; Conti's Bakeshop & Restaurant and Paseo De Bacoor in Bgy. Molino III

Power Maintenance Updates MERALCO ADV/SORY

LAGUNA (CALAMBA CITY)

CIRCUITS BACOOR 415WX AND 426WX

a Navarre Subd., Bellazona Aragon Subd.

RIZAL PROVINCE (PILILLA)

PORTIONS OF CIRCUIT MALAYA 44MM

Corp. in Bgys. Halayhayin and Quisao.

Halayhayin, Quisao, Niogan and Malaya.

EMILIO AGUINALDO)

Urarco Ventures Corp. in Bgys. Halayhayin and Quisao.

OF CIRCUITS TERNATE 31ZO; AND PUERTO AZUL 32XX

Proper in Ternate; and Andalajao Subd. in Bgy. Labac, Naic.

Farm Inc. in Bgys. Tulay Silangan and Mabato in Maragondon

The following are scheduled power interruptions necessary for the regular maintenance and upgrade of our power distribution facilities, to ensure the delivery of safe and reliable electricity to your areas. Rest assured that Meralco is doing everything to quickly restore your electricity according to schedule.

CAVITE

OF CIRCUITS TMC-II 42WA, 43WA, 45WA AND 46WA; TERNATE 31ZO; AND PUERTO AZUL 32XX

The whole towns of Ternate, Maragondon, Magallanes and Gen, Emilio Aguinaldo Portion of Governor's Drive and Antero Soriano Highway from Ternate to Bukal Road including Bayview Subd., Casa Amaya South Subd., Belleview Meadows Subd., Camella Tanza Subd., Carissa Homes, Grandiosa Lane Subd., Lumina Tanza Subd., Pabahay 2000, Istana Tanza Subd., Villa Tanza Subd., Spring Green Village, Springtown South Gate Subd., Bernaville Subd., South Crest Hills Subd., Villa Juanita Subd., Bonita Del Mar Estates, Garden Coast Subd., Pear Residences Subd., Retirees Village 2, Concepcion Solis Fojas Subd., Lynville Residences Tanza Subd., Tierra Fraile Homes, Palmerston Subd., Belvedere Towne Subd., Ciudad Verde Homes, Nusa Dua Farm Estate Subd., Pulcena Ville Subd., Westwood Mansions, Woodside Subd., Brisas De Tanza, Deca Homes Tanza, Glowingfield Village, Greenville Homes, Micara Estates – Tanza Subd., One Cenon Place, Pineview Subd., Springfield View Subd., Pabahay sa Santol Subd., Las Brisas Tierra Del Sol Subd., Phirst Park Homes, Sunrise Place and Wellington Tanza Subd. in Bgys. Tres Cruses, Timalan Lontoc, Tanauan, Santol, Sahud Ulan, Punta 1 & 2, Paradahan 1 & 2, Mulawin, Lambingan, Julugan 1 & 6, Halayhay, Daang Amaya 1 & 2, Capipisa, Calibuyo, Bucal, Biga, Bagtas and Amaya 1 & 2 in Tanza.; Bgys. Bagong Kalsada, Balsahan, Bancaan, Bucana Malaki, Bucana Sasahan, Calubcob, Gomez - Zamora, Halang, Humbac, Ibayo Estacion, Ibayong Silangan, Kanluran, Labac, Latoria, Mabolo, Makina, Malainen Bago, Malainen Luma, Molino, Munting Mapino, Muzon, Nazareno, Palangue 1 – 3, Sabang, San Roque, Santulan, Sapa, Timalan Balsahan, Timalan Concepcion and Timalan Lontoc in Naic.
Portion of Bgys. Aguado, Cabuco, De Ocampo, Gregorio, Hugo Perez, Lallana, Lapidario

and San Agustin in Trece Martirez City; Bgys. Pasong Kawayan 2 in Gen. Trias City; and Bgys Esperanza Ilaya, Marahan I, Matagbak I, Sta. Teresa, Kaysuyo and Kaytitinga II in Alfonso.

REASON: Repair work inside Meralco - FCIE substation.

MANILA (MALATE); MAKATI CITY (PALANAN AND SAN ISIDRO); AND PASAY CITY

BETWEEN 8:00AM AND 8:30AM AND THEN BETWEEN 3:00PM AND 3:30PM - PORTION OF CIRCUITS PACO 424VY - MALATE 41J; AND MALATE 15J

Portion of Dominga St. from Pablo Ocampo Sr. St. (Vito Cruz) in Malate, Manila to San Isidro St. including Dolores St.; and The Camden Place in Pasay City.

Portion of Pablo Ocampo Sr. St. (Vito Cruz) from Sandejas St. to Tramo St. including R Square Condotel & Mall in Malate, Manila.

Portion of Leon Guinto St. from Meralco - Malate substation to Ocampo St. including Providence Tower, D' University Place Residences, Immaculate Conception Ladies Dormitory and Saint Scholastica's College in Malate, Manila.

Portion of Captain Ticong St. from Leon Guinto St. to Singalong St. including Don Ysidro St.; Casa Catalina, Cara Celine Dormtel and Residencia Bonita in Malate, Manila

BETWEEN 8:00AM AND 3:30PM - PORTION OF CIRCUITS PACO 424VY - MALATE 41J;

Eusebio, Villa Barbara and Gutierrez Sts.; Rafael Palma Elementary School, De La Salle - College of Saint Benilde Sports & Dorm Complex, The Aston Place Residences and Monaco Garden Tower

Portion of Dominga St. from San Isidro St. to Sen. Gil Puvat Ave. (Buendia Ave.) including

Portion of Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. (Buendia Ave.) from Dominga St. in Pasay City to Dian St in Bgys. Palanan and San Isidro in Makati City.

Portion of Burgos St. from Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. (Buendia Ave.) to Taylo St. including P. Dandan St. in Pasay City.

Portion of G. Villanueva and Taylo Sts. from Burgos St. to Taft Ave. including E. Rivera and F. Fernardo Sts. in Pasay City.

Portion of Taft Ave. from near Sen. Gil Puvat Ave. (Buendia Ave.) to Villareal St. including College Road; Arellano University - Jose Abad Santos Campus and Southeastern College in Pasay City REASON: Replacement of poles and line reconductoring work along Dominga St. in

BULACAN (BOCUAE; AND BALAGTAS)

BETWEEN 12:00NN AND 5:00PM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT SAOG 412SAO

Intercity Ricemillers Industrial Compound in Bgy. Wakas, Bocaue; and Bgy. San Juan, Balagtas. Line maintenance work inside Intercity Ricemillers Industrial Compound in Bgy. Wakas, Bocaue; and Bgy. San Juan, Balagtas in Bulacan.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2023

RIZAL PROVINCE (ANTIPOLO CITY) BETWEEN 9:00AM AND 2:00PM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT DOLORES 423XM

Portion of Marigman Road from Merano St. to and including Don Enrique Road and Loreland Road; Anila Park Townhomes, Cattleya Homes Subd., Crystal Heights Subd., Don Enrique Heights Subd., East View Homes Phases 1, 2 & 3, Knights of Columbus Subd., Nazarene Ville Subd. Phases 1 & 2, Pines City Executive Village, Pines City Royale Subd., San Agustin Village, Steniel Ville Subd., Cribs Magkaisa Compound, Sitio Bueno, Sitio Duhatan and Sitio Halang; Loreland Farm Resort, Luljetta's Hanging Gardens Spa and University of Rizal System Antipolo Campus in Bgy. San Roque

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Energy dep't awards 77 offshore wind contracts

THE Department of Energy (DoE) said it has awarded 77 offshore wind energy contracts to date, as well as eight contracts to develop ocean, tidal, and wave energy projects.

"Right now, we have awarded 77 offshore wind energy contracts with a potential capacity of 60 gigawatts," Energy Assistant Secretary Mylene C. Capongcol said on Tuesday during the Energy Smart Forum organized by the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines.

She said of the eight marine resource service contracts, one developer is in the process of engaging an engineering procurement contractor.

"As of June 2023, a total of 1,087 service contracts with a potential capacity of 113 GW (gigawatts) have been awarded and are in various development stages," Ms. Capongcol said.

Citing various DoE studies and assessments, Ms. Capongcol said the Philippines has a potential renewable energy (RE) capacity of about 500 GW.

Wind projects - both onshore and offshore — accounted for 254 GW of the potential capacity, while ocean and marine

energy accounted for 170 GW, with solar amounting to 58 GW. Combined potential capacity for biomass, geothermal, and hydropower is estimated at about 10 GW.

Ms. Capongcol said on the sidelines of the event that the DoE is looking to amend the guidelines governing the awarding of RE contracts of offshore wind technology.

"We are now currently revising the omnibus guidelines for the award of contract, specifically on offshore wind, magkakaroon siya ng (there will be) differentiation with onshore wind," she said.

The DoE is looking to implement a pre-development period for offshore wind projects of eight years, from five years previously, she said. The changes are subject to public consultation in September.

RE accounted for about 22% of the Philippines' energy mix, with coal-fired power plants providing nearly 60% as of the end of 2022.

The government hopes to increase the share of RE to 35% by 2030 and to 50% by 2040. -**Sheldeen Joy Talavera**

Privacy commission issues warning against sale of registered SIM cards

THE National Privacy Commission (NPC), in an advisory issued on Thursday, warned against the sale of registered SIM (subscriber identity module) cards for mobile devices.

"Recent developments have drawn our attention to alarming instances wherein certain individuals, ostensibly acting as agents of malevolent entities, are enticing unsuspecting individuals with monetary offers, averaging P1,000.00, in exchange for SIM cards that have been registered," the NPC said.

The NPC said the trade in SIM cards is prohibited under the SIM Registration Act (Republic Act No. 11934). The law states that the practice exposes data subjects to potential legal repercussions,

Violators are liable for imprisonment of between six months and six years, or a fine of P100,000 to P300,000, or both.

"The NPC earnestly urges all data subjects to take heed of this advisory and to remain vigilant against participating in any actions that may put at risk their personal data," it said.

It added that it will take action against those who disregard and violate the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

The National Telecommunications Commission recorded SIM card registrations of 113.97 million, equivalent to 67.83% of the estimated 168.02 million cards in

circulation. Globe Telecom, Inc. had 53.73 million registered subscribers or 61.9% of its total. Smart Communications. Inc. registered 52.5 million or 79.18% of its users, while DITO Telecommunity Corp. registered 7.74 million users or 51.72% of its users. - Justine Irish D. Tabile

Pension reform to leave benefits of current personnel untouched

THE Department of Finance (DoF) said current military and uniformed personnel (MUP) will retain the same retirement benefits after their pension system is reformed.

'We're not reducing the pension or changing the benefits. In our latest proposal, there's no changes made to the pension. In fact, for the military, we are even raising it. Now, the maximum pension they can get is 85% of their base pay and (long-service) pay. We are making this 90%," Finance Undersecretary Cielo D. Magno said at the Pandesal Forum on Thursday.

The bill proposing reform to the MUP pension system was recently approved by a House ad hoc committee and is currently up for debate at plenary level.

The MUP pension reform bill is on the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC) list of priority measures targeted for approval by Congress by the end of the year.

"The benefits they get from retirement are still the same. We aren't changing that. It's important to clarify this," she added, though the reforms will allow active-duty personnel to contribute more to their pensions going forward.

Ms. Magno also noted that the proposed reforms do not impact the pensions of retired MUPs.

"If you're retired, don't worry. We agree that we will keep the indexation for the retired," she said, referring to retiree payouts indexed against active-duty pay.

"That's their vested right and we don't want to reduce their vested right," she added.

Last week, Albay Rep. Jose Maria Clemente S. Salceda, who also chairs the ad hoc committee, announced that the House will introduce Defense Secretary Gilberto C. Teodoro's proposals to the bill as floor amendments.

Mr. Teodoro's proposals seek the full indexation of pensions to the salaries of active-duty personnel. Mr. Teodoro also expressed concerns over the mandatory contributions to be required under the proposed bill.

Finance Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno has expressed concern about indexation for current active-duty personnel and new entrants.

"The pensioners and the activeduty personnel have different needs. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the pension and wages have different bases for adjustment. Removing automatic indexation... gives us flexibility to respond to the unique needs of the pensioners and the active-duty personnel," Mr. Diokno has said.

Under the current system, funding for the pensions is drawn from the annual budget.

"The pension has to be sustainable, not because we want to reduce the budget earmarked by the government for pensions, but we want to make sure that when they retire, we have money to fund their pensions," Ms. Magno said. – Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson