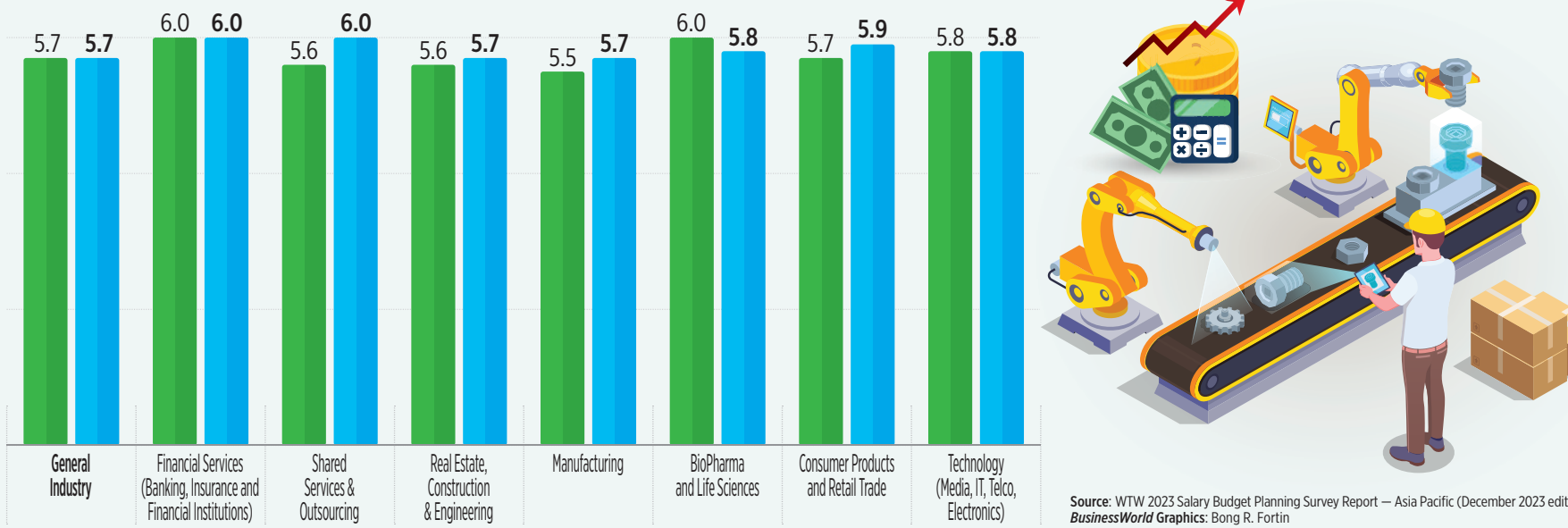


Median Salary Increase by Industry



Source: WTW 2023 Salary Budget Planning Survey Report — Asia Pacific (December 2023 edition)
BusinessWorld Graphics: Bong R. Fortin

BCDA to build 10,000 housing units in Clark

THE Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) said it is completing a deal for the construction of 10,000 housing units in Clark ahead of the amendments to its charter.

In a recent briefing, BCDA President and Chief Executive Officer Joshua M. Binggang said the project will be pursued via a joint venture contract with the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD).

“We are about to finalize a deal with the DHSUD under Secretary Jose Rizalino L. Acuzar and a big local developer to build the first 10,000 units,” Mr. Binggang said.

According to Mr. Binggang, the three parties have signed a memorandum of understanding for the vertical housing project at an estimated initial cost of P10 billion.

“What we are waiting for are the details because we want to make sure that the housing... is not an eyesore or far from what we have envisioned for New Clark City,” he said.

“What the developer wants is to do it via a joint venture so that the risk is spread out to parties with the means and capability to handle the risk,” he added.

The DHSUD initially requested 100 hectares of land, but the BCDA has identified a 10-hectare site, for which the developer has submitted a design adapted to the new dimensions.

Set for groundbreaking this year, the residential project is expected to rise in New Clark City in Bamban, Tarlac.

“What will happen is should this housing project proceed ahead of the legislative arrangements we are pursuing, we’ll make sure that there will be a provision in the contract to make it convertible from leasehold into freehold,” Mr. Binggang said.

The BCDA is currently seeking amendments to its charter which will allow the agency to convert 5% of its economic zones for disposal to freehold buyers, as against the current charter which only allows leasehold residential deals.

“The challenge of building housing inside is the leasehold limitations. Under the law, Clark and Subic and the rest of the economic zones are (allowed to pursue) leasehold arrangements,” he added.

He said that there is a need to address the housing needs of Clark as more than 138,000 people working in the economic zone, most of whom live outside it.

“One way to address the issues in leasehold is... working right now with the Congress to convert certain land into freehold but specifically targeting residential segments,” he said. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

FULL STORY
Read the full story by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by typing the link <tinyurl.com/ynq2xwux>

FAO says mango industry can take lead in raising food export competitiveness

By Adrian H. Halili Reporter

THE PHILIPPINES needs to make greater use of its mango industry in expanding agricultural exports, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said.

“The Philippine mango has a real competitive advantage. It is known globally, it is well reputed for the quality of the product,” FAO Country Representative for the

Philippines Lionel Henri Valentin Dabbadie told *BusinessWorld*.

“When it comes to international trade the Philippines has been done more as an importer than an exporter in recent years,” he added.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) has said that it is preparing to increase exports of agricultural goods, and is in the process of drafting of a Philippine Agricultural Export Development Plan.

Agricultural exports declined 13.3% to \$1.61 billion during the

third quarter, accounting for 8.2% of total exports, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. has proposed the revival of mango exports to Japan, which had imposed stricter quality standards on Philippine fruit imports.

The DA said mango exports to Japan declined sharply since 2011 with Philippine producers having to meet upgraded sanitary and phytosanitary standards.

“The Philippines however does not have the best conditions for this, you have disasters, no big land to cultivate mangoes. That is why you need to focus on where you have competitive advantage and what products can compete,” Mr. Dabbadie said.

He added that the Philippines should grow mangoes with an eye towards meeting export market standards.

Mr. Dabbadie said that the FAO is working with the government to implement its One Country

One Priority Product initiative.

The project aims to identify and prioritize essential agricultural products which have growth potential and the promise making farmers more prosperous.

“Especially mangoes. This what we are working on with the government,” he said.

The Philippines exported 12,548 metric tons of mangoes in 2023, according to the Bureau of Plant Industry. This was valued at about P2.9 billion.

World Bank proposes to restructure Cebu BRT project following delays

THE World Bank has proposed to restructure its financing package for the Cebu Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, citing delays in implementation.

In a document uploaded on its website, the bank said that the restructuring will involve revisions to the allocation of the loan proceeds; revisions to the results framework; an additional extension of the project closing date; and a change of selected project activities to keep within the scope of what was agreed during the project’s mid-term review.

“The project faced further delays after the first restructuring due to frequent staff turnover and delays in budget allocations and protracted procurement processes for services, goods and works,” it said.

“However, in the last 18 months, the project achieved notable progress and has been receiving the highest attention and commitment from all levels of the government. The project continues to remain relevant,” it added.

The World Bank Board first approved the \$228.5-million project in 2014.

The package includes an International Bank for Reconstruction and Development loan worth \$116 million; a \$25-million grant from the Clean Technol-

ogy Fund; counterpart financing by the Philippine government worth \$30 million; and parallel financing amounting to \$57.7 million from the Agence Française de Développement (AFD).

The Department of Transportation has said that the launch of the full operations for the BRT has been pushed back to 2027.

The project’s last restructuring in 2021 extended the facility’s closing date by two years.

“After this first restructuring in June 2021, the project made some progress in ensuring appropriate deliverables from key consultants, but this momentum was soon lost,” it said.

It said that delays in implementation were mainly due to the “inability of the client to maintain sufficient capacity in the early years of the project, absence of regular allocations from the annual budget, which, in turn, delayed the procurement of and/or payments to the key consultants.”

However, it noted that the project performance “notably improved” when the Marcos administration assumed office in July 2022.

“Furthermore, the World Bank and AFD informed the government that a request for a second extension could be considered for completion of the activities as per the adjusted scope/design as

agreed during and since the mid-term review,” it said.

“Since then, the project closing date was extended for the second time and third time respectively on June 30, 2023, and Sept. 30, 2023, essentially to allow the Government of the Philippines to secure necessary internal approvals before submitting request for restructuring to reflect the current scope/design of the project as discussed during and since the mid-term review,” it added.

The restructuring proposed to extend the project closing date to Sept. 30, 2026 from Jan. 30, 2024 previously in order to “complete delayed civil works and operationalize bus services that will allow achievement of the project development objective.”

The project cost was also proposed to be increased to \$309.3 million, with the government now providing counterpart financing worth \$112 million and the AFD committing \$56.3 million.

Other proposed changes include the extension of the deadlines for compliance with the covenants on institutional and implementation arrangements; revision of the scope of operating costs; revisions to the results framework; reallocations between disbursement categories. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson**

Talent retention seen as top employer challenge in 2024

EMPLOYERS will need to rethink their job offerings amid increasing voluntary turnover, estimated at 15.9% last year, risk and employment consultancy WTW said.

Patrick Marquina, WTW’s head of work & rewards for the Philippines, said that the labor market continues to shift despite inflation declining.

“Voluntary turnover and attrition continued to increase and reached 15.9% in 2023 compared to 14.2% in 2022,” he said.

“The typical reasons cited for leaving were better pay and growth opportunities, relocation or family migration and flexible work arrangements or work-life balance,” he added.

Mr. Marquina said that the increasing number of voluntary departure is likely to continue in 2024.

“Employers in the Philippines will continue to face significant talent challenges including the

attraction and retention of key talent,” he said.

“Winning the talent race will require employers to stay focused on balancing the entire package of rewards they offer, both monetary and non-monetary, in order to remain competitive and align with employees’ needs and wants,” he added.

A compensation survey conducted by WTW found out that companies in the Philippines project an overall median salary increase of 5.7%, which was also the actual salary increase last year.

“The average salary increase has also continued to rise steadily over the last few years since the pandemic,” WTW said.

“However, inflationary pressure and concerns over a tight labor market continue to influence factors on salary budget planning,” it added.

The study found that workers in biopharma and life sciences, financial services, outsourcing, consumer products, and technology are projected to have salary increases higher than the 5.7% projected median salary across all industries.

Projected salary increases in financial services and outsourcing are at 6%, consumer products and retail trade 5.9%, and biopharma and life sciences 5.8%.

Meanwhile, projected salary increases in the real estate, construction and engineering, and manufacturing sectors are 5.7%.

MILLENNIALS AND GEN Z

In terms of changing work dynamics, WTW said that it expects millennials and Gen Z to form 80% of the country’s workforce by 2025, after the Gen Z workforce grew 100% last year.

In 2023, the Gen Z workforce accounted for 19.9% of the labor force from 10% in 2022.

“With the significant workforce changes in the Philippines, employers are now being challenged to rethink their work models, optimize organizational structures and forecast people resources needed to operate,” WTW said.

In its research, WTW said that the employers are currently doing three things to address the changes in the workforce such as in digitalization, working conditions, and alternative talent sources.

“Two in five employers, or 44%, said that they are expecting greater use of technology and automation,” it said.

Meanwhile, a third of the 44% of the employers said that they are redesigning jobs to reallocate work between employees and new technologies. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

INVITATION TO BID Disposal of the Three (3) Unserviceable Motor Vehicles and One (1) Unserviceable Motorized Bangka ITB No. CDC-2024-01-02

The Cagayan Economic Zone Authority (CEZA), through its Property Disposal and Awards Committee, invites interested parties to participate in the line item public bidding of the following unserviceable motor vehicles on “as-is-where-is” basis, viz:

Line Item No.	Particulars	Floor Price	Location
1	Mitsubishi Pajero SFA 929	23,922.89	CEZA Complex, Centro, Santa Ana, Cagayan, Philippines, 3514
2	Nissan Patrol CEO 06	268,240.58	CEZA Complex, Centro, Santa Ana, Cagayan, Philippines, 3514
3	Mitsubishi Pajero BED 747	114,959.78	CEZA Complex, Centro, Santa Ana, Cagayan, Philippines, 3514
4	Motorized Bangka	3,700.92	CEZA Complex, Centro, Santa Ana, Cagayan, Philippines, 3514

Interested bidders may inspect the unserviceable properties located at the CEZA Complex, Centro, Santa Ana, Cagayan during regular working days from **January 26 to February 12, 2024, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM**.

Bidding will be conducted through sealed public bidding procedures using a non-discretionary “pass/fail” criterion.

A non-refundable bid fee of 500.00 shall be paid to the CEZA cashier. Upon payment of the bid fee, interested bidders may secure a Bid Form from the Property Disposal and Awards Committee Secretariat at the given address below.

Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA No. 5183.

Duly authorized representatives, if any, shall submit a Certification/Board Resolution or Special Power of Attorney issued by the Board of Directors/President/Corporate Secretary/General Manager/Owner of the entity or individual being represented, as may be applicable, authorizing him/her to represent and submit bids on behalf of its latter.

The CEZA will hold a prebid-conference on **January 30, 2024, 3:00 PM** at the given address below and through video conferencing via Zoom (link shall be provided in the CEZA official website before the scheduled conference), which shall be open to prospective bidders.

Sealed Bids must be duly received by the Property Disposal and Awards Committee Secretariat through manual submission at the office address indicated below, **on or before February 12, 2024, 12:00 PM**. Late bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on **February 13, 2024, 2:00 PM** at the given address below and through video conferencing via Zoom (link shall be provided in the CEZA official website before the scheduled conference). Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders’ representatives who choose to attend the activity.

All Bids must be accompanied by a bid bond equivalent to 10% of the total bid amount in the form of cash, manager’s check or cashier’s check acquired from a reputable bank.

The CEZA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award without incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further information, please refer to:

FELIX LAUDHEMIR A. FERIA
Cagayan Economic Zone Authority
10F Greenfield Tower, Mayflower and Williams Streets, Highway Hills, Mandaluyong City Metro Manila, Philippines, 1550
Email Address: logistics@ceza.gov.ph
Phone No.: (02) 8291-6704 to 6708 local 362
Website: https://www.ceza.gov.ph

January 26, 2024

(Sgd.) **PERLA C. TUMALIUAN**
Chairperson
Property Disposal and Awards Committee