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# 27 airports being considered for PPP

THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation (DoTr) on Wednesday said it is considering offering 27 airports for redevelopment via public-private partnerships (PPP).

“We have currently 27 other airports undergoing PPP screening by our partners from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and International Finance Corp.,” Transportation Undersecretary Timothy John R. Batan said during a post-State of

the Nation Address (SONA) briefing Wednesday.

“Davao Airport is next, it is the fourth largest airport that we have. The PPP process for that is now ongoing,” Mr. Batan said.

In June, PPP Center said that it delisted the unsolicited proposal for the development, operations, and management of the Davao International Airport, which likely signals that the Transportation department is looking

to go the solicited route for the project. Earlier this year, the DoTr said it is setting aside P14 billion to upgrade and modernize regional airports.

It is also seeking PPP-led upgrades for Iloilo, Bohol, Puerto Princesa and Siargao.

In July, the Transportation department said that it is hoping to conduct the Swiss challenge for the Bohol-Panglao International Airport by the fourth quarter.

The Aboitiz group, through its infrastructure arm — Aboitiz InfraCapital, Inc. — secured original proponent status (OPS) for the 25-year operations and maintenance contract of the airport.

Negotiations are also ongoing with Prime Asset Ventures, Inc. which secured OPS for the upgrade, operation and maintenance of Iloilo International Airport. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

## JICA rules out G2G deals for PHL renewable projects

By **Ashley Erika O. Jose**  
Reporter

THE JAPAN International Cooperation Agency (JICA) said government-to-government (G2G) agreements are not a feasible route for investments in Philippine renewables, adding that its preferred approach is to attract investment from Japanese companies.

“We do not have so-called flagship projects because the energy sector is operated and dominated by the private sector. It is difficult for us to create and formulate projects on a G2G basis and ODA (official development assistance) support,” JICA Chief Representative in the Philippines Takema Sakamoto told *BusinessWorld*.

The Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) of 2001 sought to restructure the power



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industry via deregulation and privatization of most state-owned power generation and transmission assets.

JICA’s role would take the form of facilitating private sector involvement, Mr. Sakamoto said, citing the recently-signed deal between Light Rail Manila Corp. (LRMC) and the Sumi-

tomo Corp. and Hankyu Corp. for technical assistance in the operation and maintenance of the Light Rail Transit Line 1 (LRT-1) system.

“This is our direct intervention to the private sector, not G2G-based support, just like the LRT-1 investment. This is a PSIF (private-sector investment

finance) scheme, which could be adaptable to the energy sector,” he said.

Mr. Sakamoto said JICA has been in discussions with the Department of Energy (DoE) about future collaboration particularly in renewable energy.

The DoE and JICA are looking at partnering for offshore wind projects, pumped storage hydropower, grid stabilization and energy projects for off-grid areas, he said.

“This year I have acknowledged the start of a new technical cooperation project to list candidate areas for pumped hydropower generation,” he said.

Grid stabilization is also being studied as a potential area for partnership to better accommodate new renewable energy supply, Mr. Sakamoto said, adding that the possibility of off-grid energization has also been put forward for consideration.



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## Trademark filings on track to exceed 2023 totals this year

THE INTELLECTUAL Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL) said Wednesday that it is confident that trademark filings will post growth this year, based on the 7% rise in filings in the first half.

On the first day of the first Philippine Trademark Conference, IPOPHL Director General Rowel S. Barba said that trademarks account for the majority of the country’s intellectual property (IP) filings.

“Trademark filings from January to June have hit 21,751, comprising 86% of the total IP filings of 25,263 for the same period,” Mr. Barba said in his opening remarks.

“Given that we have already reached the year’s halfway mark, I am confident that the number of trademark applications for 2024 will soar even higher than last year’s,” he added.

The first-half trademark filings totaling 21,751 represent a 7% increase from a year earlier.

Mr. Barba said that most of the trademark filings were from the pharmaceutical, agriculture, scientific research information, and communication industries.

“This is a mix of foreign and local filings,” he added.

He said that the first half performance is also consistent with the growth of trademark filings since 2021. Filings first surpassed pre-pandemic levels in 2022.

This year, IPOPHL is targeting trademark filings of 46,148, up 10%.

“We can credit this to the continuing information or IP awareness campaign being conducted by IPOPHL and to the improved economic condition of the country,” he added.

He said the improving environment has encouraged the opening of new micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), on which IPOPHL is focusing for trademark registration.

In his keynote speech, Trade Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual said that trademarks create a level playing field, allowing MSMEs to compete with more prominent and established brands.

“By protecting their unique identities and products, MSMEs can enhance their market presence, attract investment, and expand their reach. This, in turn, translates into job creation, increased exports, and overall economic growth for our country,” Mr. Pascual said. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

## Temperature-regulated hatchery in the works for *bangus* industry

THE NATIONAL Fisheries Research and Development Institute (NFRDI) said it hopes to seal an agreement with the Department of Science and Technology (DoST) to build a temperature-regulated hatchery for milkfish (*bangus*).

The NFRDI said that the P5 million hatchery project, to be pursued in partnership with

the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), will seek to address production challenges during colder periods.

“The production of milkfish in hatcheries in the Philippines is affected by seasonal variations, particularly during colder months when environmental changes result in lower or no

egg production by the milkfish broodstock,” NFRDI Executive Director Lilian C. Garcia said in a statement.

The NFRDI said that the project is seeking to establish a cost-effective and reliable heating system to maintain optimal water temperature in broodstock tanks.

She said that the hatchery technology being considered is a Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS) equipped with a heat pump and an electric heater, with automated water-quality monitoring.

“This intervention aims to create a conducive breeding environment for milkfish broodstock by maintaining optimum water quality in tank-based facilities,” Ms. Garcia added.

The project is set to run until June 30, 2025, and will be funded with a DoST grant-in-aid.

The selected site is a BFAR-National Fisheries Development Center in Dagupan City.

“The project is expected to benefit the aquaculture industry in the Philippines, consumers of milkfish, and metals, engineering and allied industries involved in aquaculture,” the NFRDI said. — **Adrian H. Halili**



NFRDIA GON/PH

### OPINION

## How sustainable development changes business practices

More and more companies are beginning to understand and recognize the importance of sustainable development for long-term success and stability. But what is sustainable development and how does it affect us?

The concept of sustainable development was first introduced in the late 1980s due to the increasing social and environmental issues that come with economic progress. A United Nations (UN) 1987 paper, *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*, defines sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” The key is finding a balance where economic growth supports, rather than sacrifices, the well-being of individuals and communities.

**GLOBAL EFFORTS IN PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY**

In 2015, UN member states agreed to adopt 17 sustainable development goals or SDGs — “global goals” that help the world achieve sustainable development. These goals serve as a call to action to improve everyone’s lives by 2030 as companies strive and thrive in a dynamic business landscape. The SDGs aim to address a wide range of global challenges, among which are those related to poverty, education, healthcare and gender equality.

### TAXWISE OR OTHERWISE JOSE ANGELO A. CHIUCO

Currently, sustainable development is being championed by various international organizations, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Foundation and the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB). They develop frameworks and guidelines to help companies integrate sustainable practices into their business operations.

**PHL EMBRACES SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

To practice sustainable development, companies should begin by being socially and environmentally conscious and responsible in how they use their resources. In the Philippines, companies can reflect this commitment in various initiatives within and outside business operations:

- When working with suppliers, vendors and other third parties, choose to work with those with strong ethical practices, particularly with all those in the supply chain that comply with the law and adhere to high standards of business ethics.
- Observe transparency throughout the supply chain to ensure that materi-

als are sourced in an environmentally responsible manner and are not harmful to society.

- Integrate sustainability clauses into contracts or agreements to set clear expectations on environmental performance and social responsibility from their stakeholders.
- Use renewable energy sources to further reduce the environmental impact of energy consumption and support the global shift towards clean energy.
- Engage with communities where the business operates to help you assess the social and environmental implications that the business may have on these communities.

**REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY**

On Oct. 21, 2022, the Financial and Sustainability Reporting Standards Council (FSRSC) established the Philippine Sustainability Reporting Committee (PSRC) to render technical assistance to the former in the adoption and issuance of guidelines for sustainability reporting in the Philippines.

In 2019, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) introduced sustainability reporting guidelines for Publicly Listed Companies (PLCs). The guidelines were crafted to ensure transparency and accountability among publicly listed companies by requiring them to disclose their sustainability practices and impacts. Under SEC Memorandum

Circular No. 4, Series of 2019, PLCs are required to submit sustainability reports along with their annual reports.

At present, to comply with the sustainability reporting guidelines and standards, publicly-listed companies are asked to do the following:

- Include non-financial data when providing a comprehensive view of their overall business performance. Specifically, this involves disclosing detailed information on how sustainability is integrated into their governance structures, strategic planning, risk management processes, and performance metrics.
- Present sustainability reports at the same time as financial statements, allowing stakeholders to receive all relevant information in a timely manner.
- Include data from previous periods in sustainability reports to evaluate the progress and effectiveness of the company’s sustainability initiatives, to provide information on whether a company is improving, stagnating or regressing in its sustainability efforts.
- Explicitly state compliance with IFRS Sustainability Disclosure Standards to indicate that the company is adhering to the internationally recognized guidelines for sustainability reporting. This promotes the company’s credibility and reliability of the information provided on its sustainable practices.

The journey towards sustainable development is an ongoing process that demands commitment and collaboration among the government, business,

communities and the larger society. The government’s support through its regulatory frameworks is crucial in setting the direction of the country’s pursuit towards a more sustainable future for all. For micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and large corporations, their industrial and other business development programs must be designed in ways that would also mean progress for everyone. On the other hand, our society must be more involved in advocating for a sustainable lifestyle and in supporting businesses that are implementing sustainable business practices.

By understanding the principles of sustainability and integrating them in business development programs, companies can not only contribute to economic growth but also to a healthier environment and equitable society for current and future generations.

*The views or opinions expressed in this article are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of Isla Lipana & Co. The content is for general information purposes only, and should not be used as a substitute for specific advice.*

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