

DoE considering standard LGU power project approval process

THE Department of Energy (DoE) said it is seeking to standardize local government unit (LGU) ordinances for approving energy infrastructure projects.

“By implementing this standardized approach, the DoE seeks to create a more transparent regulatory environment and accelerate the development of critical energy infrastructure that supports the country’s long-term energy security and economic growth,” the DoE said in a statement on Thursday.

The DoE said it has consulted with LGUs on ways to streamline the permit process and “create a more investment-friendly environment for energy development.”

“By working closely with LGUs, we enhance regulatory transparency, improve coordination, and streamline approval processes. These efforts not only facilitate faster project implementation but also reinforce the government’s commitment to strengthening the country’s energy infrastructure and advancing sustainability initiatives,” Energy Undersecretary Sharon S. Garin said.

The DoE said Iloilo province is serving as a pilot area for the initiative due to its large number of existing and upcoming renewable energy (RE) projects.

It said that the province is positioning itself as a center for

sustainable energy after passing the Iloilo Province Renewable Energy Ordinance (I-PORE) in 2022.

As the first LGU to pass such an ordinance, Iloilo has encouraged the development of renewable energy infrastructure, pushing barangays and municipalities to identify potential RE investment sites, and provided incentives under the provincial investment code.

Iloilo is currently hosting three operational renewable energy projects and is expecting 26 more.

According to the DoE, one of the most common bottlenecks in developing power projects is the “varying timelines for the issuance of permits” like the LGU Resolutions of Support, causing significant delays.

The proposed ordinance template recommends that these resolutions be issued “within a definite and transparent timeline” to ensure “a more predictable and efficient approval process.”

The DoE said that LGUs should also prioritize and allow parallel processing of applications for strategic investments in energy, as opposed to resorting to a step-by-step approval chain. They were also urged to issue provisional permits and publish and post their schedules of fees and charges. — **Sheldene Joy Talavera**

Easing inflation leaves room for rate cuts, ex-central banker says

THE Monetary Board could cut rates at its April meeting, with receding inflation giving it space to ease monetary policy, a former Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) official said.

GlobalSource Partners Country Analyst Diwa C. Guinigundo, a former deputy governor, told reporters on Wednesday: “I think the BSP has a space to cut. One, the actual inflation rate of 2.1% in February. And then in January, 2.9 — so that’s 2.5 average. That is within the target of 2-4%. So on that basis, they have a reason.”

BSP Governor Eli M. Remolona, Jr. said the monetary authorities are still in easing mode, after an unexpected decision to keep the benchmark rate steady last month at 5.75% amid “global trade uncertainties.”

He signaled that a rate cut is still “on the table” at the Monetary Board’s next rate-setting meeting on April 10.

Mr. Guinigundo said inflation expectations and the BSP’s forecast fall within the range of 2-4% target.

Headline inflation in January eased to 2.1% in February from 2.9% a month earlier and 3.4% a year earlier, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority.

“Of course, as I said, yes you can cut, but you have to be very careful because of the risks,” he said.

He said these include the new US government’s trade policies, and the possible adjustment to fares and wages, noting that these could add to inflation.

“Even without this political noise, the BSP should always be careful in its easing policy stance. Precisely because in America, the US Federal Reserve is not that aggressive,” he said.

He also noted the differential between the Federal funds target rate and the BSP’s policy rate.

“(The gap is) around 100-125 bps. That is the risk premium. If it can go down, because we are going down, that could be a possible reason or underlying reason for capital to flow out,” he said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Guinigundo said the political noise surrounding former President Rodrigo R. Duterte’s arrest could hurt the peso.

“But there are bonds coming in. Some people invested. Others made outward investments in the previous period. Now they are returning the money here. That is a counterweight to the negative political noise.” — **Aubrey Rose A. Inosante**

Trade dep’t plans more funding for film industry

THE Department of Trade and Industry said it hopes to increase funding allocated to develop the film industry next year.

“We are still reviewing. The budget (season) is approaching,” Trade Secretary Ma. Cristina A. Roque told reporters on Wednesday.

“To be honest, I really haven’t thought about how much the increase is. But probably double and we’ll get the private sector involved also,” she added.

According to Ms. Roque, the budget for the film industry was around P300 million in 2025.

“I am also really looking at the marketing cost to get our films displayed abroad. Based on my research, in Korea and Thailand, there really is government funding for the push of the industry,” she said.

She said that the increased support for the industry will help promote the country which may encourage tourism and trade.

“Pushing the creative industries is also something that the President really wants us to be aggressive on. Of course, when our sites are seen in the movies abroad, the filmgoers are enticed to go to the Philippines,” she said.

“The more tourists we have, the more sales the small and medium enterprises will have,” she added.

During her visit to Los Angeles last week, Ms. Roque, together with the Tourism Secretary Ma. Esperanza Christina G. Frasco and First Lady Marie Louise Araneta-Marcos introduced the “Expanding the Bridge” package of financial incentives, including cash rebates of up to 25% via the Film Location Incentive scheme and grants of up to P10 million for international co-productions through the International Co-Production Fund. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

Career Opportunity in Vault Outsourcing OPC

1 Vacancy

Company Name: Vault Outsourcing OPC

Address: 7th Floor Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Avenue, Barangay Bel-Air, Makati City

Nature of Business: Business Support Service Activities

Contact details of the Company: Beryl Fauni | beryl@vaultoutsourcing.com

Job Position: Recoveries Manager

Job Description:

- Managing business delivery and results of the Recoveries Team
- Supervise and support the recoveries team, providing coaching, performance monitoring, and ensuring consistent achievement of individual and team KPIs.
- Identify opportunities for process enhancements and system improvements to optimise the efficiency and success of recovery efforts.
- Collaborate with others to resolve complex cases, negotiate settlements, and maintain strong professional relationships.
- Prepare detailed reports on recovery performance, trends, and key insights to inform decision-making and drive continuous improvement initiatives.

Basic Qualifications for the Position:

- Deep understanding of Australian debt recovery legislation, compliance standards, and legal processes to ensure adherence to local requirements.
- Proven track record in managing recoveries or collections within Australian markets, demonstrating an ability to navigate local business and regulatory environments effectively.
- Insight into Australian workplace culture and customer expectations, ensuring alignment with the communication styles and sensitivities of stakeholders.
- Ability to leverage knowledge of Australian economic conditions, industry trends, and regional dynamics to design strategies that maximise recoveries.
- Familiarity with Australian creditor expectations, financial systems, and recovery practices, ensuring effective engagement with stakeholders and successful case resolutions.

Workplace Address: Makati City

Name of Foreign National: Matthew Monaghan

City of Residence: Taguig City

Duration of Employment: 1 year

Vault Outsourcing OPC, hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Wasmiya Building, Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila.

Tariff Commission expects to conclude probe into safeguard duties for cement by June

THE Tariff Commission said it hopes to complete the safeguard duty investigation into cement imports by June.

At a preliminary conference on Thursday, the commission said it hopes to submit the formal investigation report to the Secretary of Trade and Industry by June 24.

On March 4, the Tariff Commission launched formal proceedings to determine whether to impose safeguard duties on imports of ordinary Portland cement and blended cement from various countries.

Following the preliminary conference held on March 13, the commission has set a March 25 deadline for the submission of the adjustment plan and an April 4 deadline for the submission of initial memoranda position papers.

Verification of submissions is scheduled to begin on April 4, while the staff report is set to be issued on May 15.

Comments on the staff report will be accepted until May 25, while public hearings are tentatively scheduled from June 2 to 6.

Amended memoranda or final position papers are due on June 15, the commission said.

Last month, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) issued Department Administrative Order No. 25-01, which imposes provisional duties on products classified under AHTN Code Nos. 2523.29.90 and 2523.90.00.

Under the order, safeguard duties of P400 per metric ton or P16 per 40-kilogram bag in the form of a cash bond will be provisionally imposed on imports of ordinary Portland cement and blended cement.

The order follows the preliminary safeguard measures investigation conducted by the DTI.

The DTI said increased imports resulted in declining sales, production, capacity utilization, profitability, and employment for domestic producers.

Currently, the Philippines imposes an anti-dumping duty against cement imports from Vietnam, which accounted for 94% of cement imports in 2024. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**



MONIKA-KUBALA-UNSPASH

Dairy regulator to open 5 stock farms by April

THE National Dairy Administration (NDA) said it plans to open five stock farms by April to help expand the dairy cattle herd.

Each of the stock farms will initially hold 50 head of dairy cattle, NDA administrator Marcos Antonius T. Andaya told reporters.

He said the NDA is awaiting the arrival of 600 head of cattle from Australia.

“The structures are nearing completion,” he said.

The five stock farm locations are General Tinio, Nueva Ecija; Ubay, Bohol; Malaybalay, Bukidnon; Carmen, Cotabato; and Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur.

Mr. Andaya said the NDA is also studying sites in Isabela and Palawan.

The dairy herd rose 56% to 156,000 animals in 2024, including cattle, carabaos, and goats.

Mr. Andaya said the NDA will partner with the private sector to put up nucleus farms to develop dairy animals that can deal with the Philippine climate.

Dairy production increased 11.31% to 32.39 million liters last year, bringing the milk self-sufficiency ratio to 1.66% from 0.8% a year earlier.

Philippine dairy imports rose 19.99% to 3,495.88 million liters.

The NDA has a self-sufficiency target of 2.5% this year, rising to 5% by 2028. — **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**

Philippine business conditions seen headed in right direction

THE PHILIPPINES is headed in the right direction in terms of becoming a more conducive business environment, the Chandler Institute of Governance (CIG) said.

“The attractive marketplace (pillar) is about the capabilities that the government has to create a conducive business environment,” Kenneth Sim, dean at Chandler Academy of Governance, a Singapore-based public-sector training organization, said in an event organized by CIG and the Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration.

“Relative to peers, the Philippines doesn’t do as well. But the gap is closing, and in the right direction, which means the Philippines is actually catching up to the global average,” he added, citing comparable economies like Vietnam and Egypt.

Citing results of the Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI) in 2024, Mr. Sim said that the Philippines posted a 0.56 marketplace attractiveness score last year, up from 0.53 in 2023. The global average is 0.58.

“Part of the reason why this is improving is the stable macroeconomic environment, which looks at things like inflation, as well as the other one that has improved, which is logistics competence,” he said.

Some key indicators for an attractive marketplace, like property rights and business regulations, are below the global average.

In particular, the country scored 0.39 in stability of business regulations, against the 0.51 global average. It scored 0.30 in property rights, against the 0.50 global average.

Mr. Sim noted opportunities to improve in the leadership and foresight components of the index.

“Over the years, there has been a decline in the score for the Philippines. It started at just above 0.4 in 2021, and by 2024, the Philippines will have dropped to 0.33. So this means, again, that the gap between the Philippines and the global average has been widening,” he said.



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“It is important to point out, however, that even though we call it leadership and foresight, it is not about individual leaders; it is about the ability of the system to develop these capabilities,” he said.

“Of course, leaders play an important role, but this pillar is not about people. It is about the system,” he added.

“The performance of the Philippines in the CGGI in 2024 is somewhere in the middle. 67th out of 113, not the best, but certainly not the worst,” Mr. Sim said.

He added that although the country’s rank has suffered, its score has declined only slightly.

“What this means is that over time, relative to itself, in your own country, you have kept your performance relatively stable, but the rank has fallen, which simply means that more people are joining the index, and others are doing even better,” he said.

“So, staying in place and being patient is not going to help you to improve in ranking,” he added.

He said that the Philippines is stronger in areas like strong institutions and financial stewardship. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

Career Opportunity in HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILS INC.

POSITION TITLE: Project Manager (2 Vacancies)

Job Description:

Manage the delivery of key projects and provide necessary resource support for key projects. Identify project risks, resolve technical issues, and push product teams to resolve issues that affect project delivery. Maintain customer satisfaction, focus on customers, and focus on the implementation and closure of key pain points that affect customer satisfaction and future value requirements. Be customer-centric, identify key gaps in the industry from the perspective of projects, drive continuous product improvement, and continuously improve product competitiveness

Qualification (Education, Experience, Professional License, Skills Certification, Specialized Trainings):

- With at least a Bachelor’s degree or above
- At least 3 years of work experience
- Have general knowledge of PV & Energy storage system solutions. Be familiar with PV inverters, PV array communication data collectors, and energy storage systems, and have a certain understanding of related industries.
- Be conscientious, responsible, proactive, able to work under certain pressure, and have good communication and teamwork skills. Highly proficient in both Chinese and English language considering the clients include both local and Chinese clients.

Applications may be sent to:

Jeanne Robles

Email: ph_recruitment@huawei.com

Company name: HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILS INC.

Company address: 11-5302 53/F PBCOM Tower 6795 Ayala Avenue Cor. VA. Rufino St., Makati City

Nature of business: Information & Communications Technology

Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position:

NAME: FU, WEIYU

ADDRESS: 1207 BRITANNIA HOTEL 6, MCKINLEY PKWY, TAGUIG CITY METRO MANILA

NATIONALITY: CHINESE

INTENDED PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT: THREE (3) YEARS

NAME: LI, HAIXIANG

ADDRESS: 1804 THE RESIDENCES AT BONIFACIO CIVIC CENTER TOWER BGC 6 MCKINLEY PKWY TAGUIG CITY METRO MANILA

NATIONALITY: CHINESE

INTENDED PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT: THREE (3) YEARS

HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILS INC. hereby declares that the above-name of foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment-National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila.