

## Colombia court suspends Petro's labor reform referendum decree

BOGOTA — A Colombian high court suspended a decree by President Gustavo Petro that sought to call a referendum on his proposed labor reform, the latest setback for Mr. Petro's effort to broadly expand worker benefits.

Mr. Petro decreed the 12-question referendum last week in a bid to force the Senate to vote on his reform before the end of its session on June 20 and in defiance of the opposition, who say the vote would disregard institutional norms and threaten Colombia's separation of powers.

The Council of State, a high court that settles disputes between private parties and state entities, said in its decision that the referendum decree lacked approval it requires in the Senate.

On Tuesday, the Senate approved a modified and much-debated labor reform bill, and Mr. Petro has said he could withdraw his call for a referendum if that labor reform, as approved, passes a reconciliation process between the Senate and the House of Representatives and ultimately benefits workers.

Tuesday's bill aims to improve workers' conditions and includes measures to enshrine an eight-hour daytime workday. The approved reform will immediately increase wages for work conducted from 7 p.m. onward and gradually increase the surcharge for Sunday and holiday work through July 2027. — **Reuters**

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# Labor & Management

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# Grounding in strategy seen as key to navigating global disruptions

By Beatriz Marie D. Cruz  
Reporter

MADRID — Business schools must embrace the concept of "strategic foresight" in their teaching to help future executives navigate constant economic and technological disruption, an academic said.

"We think that being able to navigate, understand, and make decisions in an increasingly complex world is becoming more and more important for business students," IE Business School Dean Lee Newman told *BusinessWorld* on the sidelines of the South Summit Madrid on June 4.

Strategic foresight teaches future leaders the ability to analyze and explore possible futures to help their organizations prepare for change.

"The first step is to identify the forces of disruption that business people should take into account," he said. "Then you have to give students the tools to analyze these forces of disruption, to understand them, and to make sound decisions."

"You need to learn things like understanding (the impact of) geopolitics, economic shocks, as well as health, tech, and war on your supply chain," Mr. Newman said.



IE UNIVERSITY

IE BUSINESS SCHOOL Dean Lee Newman at a panel discussion at the South Summit Madrid on June 4.

About 69% of chief executive officers in the Philippines believe that their businesses will only remain economically viable for as long as 10 years if they continue on their current path, according to the PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) 28th Global CEO Survey.

This metric reflected business leaders' concerns over tech disruption, changing consumer preferences, and heightened competition, it said.

According to Mr. Newman, today's business school curricula must teach

future executives how to manage both humans and tech as artificial intelligence (AI) continues to disrupt work.

"Managers need to know not just how to orchestrate work, but they need to understand technology well enough to know what tech to hire on the team," he said.

Madrid's IE University offers a specialized course, "AI for Productivity," which teaches undergraduate and post-graduate students the proper use of AI for market research, writing, and brainstorming.

"We're starting to now push and embed different types of AI tools into different parts of our education based on the type of business function that the person is studying in a class or in a program," Mr. Newman said.

According to the PwC survey, 88% of business leaders expect moderate to large AI integration in their business processes, workflows and technology platforms in the next three years.

However, students have been using AI to cheat on their tests, posing a significant challenge among traditional schools globally, Mr. Newman said.

As such, business schools must revamp how they assess students to focus on project-based learning, he said.

"Students like real projects and they like exposure to the company and the mentors, which helps them get jobs," Mr. Newman said.

"(For example,) maybe a Philippine company wants to expand to the Singapore market... so the students have to do the project... And if this project team delivers... they get a better grade," he noted.

Co-organized by IE University, the South Summit Madrid is an annual global conference on innovation and entrepreneurship. Its 14th Edition was held between June 4 and 6 in Madrid.

## OPINION

### 'Constant complainer' contesting long-established policy

**I** have a direct report who is a constant complainer. Last week, he challenged an obsolete corporate-wide policy that many people believe should be changed or updated. I agree with them. How do I manage the situation without making it appear that management has failed in its job these past 15 years? — Mountain Joe.

No leader enjoys being challenged, particularly if it emerges years later that a long-standing company policy is wrong. Yet, pushback is inevitable, and how you respond can either erode trust or build a culture of innovation.

An employee complaining about a policy is not always an act of rebellion. It's often a form of feedback. Great leaders know that handling these moments well tests maturity and emotional intelligence.

Even if it's obvious that the policy is crazy, frame the situation as something that served a purpose in the past. Emphasize that such a policy was aligned with business needs and organizational priorities when it was introduced 15 years ago.

Be sure to explain that since that time, the landscape has significantly changed. This is a good argument for why every organization should establish and nurture a continuous improvement program (like kaizen and lean thinking) with the help of an army of employee problem-solvers.

If you can do that consistently, then management won't have to be exposed as wrong or remiss in maintaining an obsolete policy.

#### SPECIFIC STEPS

With inclusion and transparency mattering more than ever, how you respond to internal critiques even from an employee viewed as a troublemaker says more about your leadership than any inspirational speech you can deliver.

The best leaders don't shut down dissent. Instead, they refine their strategies by empowering people, not necessarily through a passive suggestion box, but through a dynamic system where all employees are evaluated by the quality of their proposals.

With that in mind, consider the following:

**One, don't take it personally.** When an employee questions a policy, resist the urge to feel attacked. It's not about you or your management style. Being defensive is the enemy of leadership. Take a deep breath, set aside your ego, and treat the situation as an opportunity to engage rather than enforce.

A calm response should be like: "Thanks for bringing that up. Let's talk about it at length." That statement can go a long way. It shows you're confident enough to listen without the need to release toxicity in the air.

**Two, be an active listener.** Too many managers often skip this part. Real listening means setting aside assumptions and hear-

#### IN THE WORKPLACE REY ELBO

the logic behind it. Don't assume employees understand it well. More often, they don't. For example, a policy

requiring them to arrive 15 minutes early before their shift may feel arbitrary until you explain that it ensures smoother customer service during peak hours.

People may not like that policy, but they're far more likely to accept it when they understand the intent behind it. If not, they could even propose a better solution.

**Four, know your blind spots.** What if the employees have a point? Most likely they have a reason for it. Being on the frontlines, they know the ins and outs of your business process. Even "established" policies can become outdated or misaligned with your company's evolving culture or values.

Ask yourself: Is this policy still serving its original purpose? Is it fair? Is it consistent with your goals? If the answer is no, consider tweaking or updating it.

**Five, give credit where it's due.** Letting your team see that their voices can lead to meaningful change strengthens motivation and morale. If you do that, more ideas will come. That alone could galvanize their resolve to remain loyal to the organization.

Best to maintain a reward and recognition system for both individual and team accomplishments.

**Six, reaffirm or establish the boundary.** If top management doesn't want to change a "crazy" policy, just the same, be clear, respectful, and firm. Say something like this: "We've taken a fresh look at this, and for now, we'll continue with the current policy until a better solution is made."

Still, emphasize that management values employee input and encourage them to keep raising concerns when they see something that needs attention. This approach honors the employee's courage to speak up — without undermining the authority of leadership.

The goal isn't to win an argument. It's to lead a team that believes in the direction you're going. Policy pushback isn't always a crisis — it's often a culture checkpoint. It can highlight discontent, confusion, or shifting values inside your team. Smart leaders see patterns before they become problems.

Solve your workplace problems with REY ELBO's help. E-mail your story to elbonomics@gmail.com or DM him on Facebook, LinkedIn, X, or via <https://reyelbo.com>

### ICE walks back limits on raids targeting farms

WASHINGTON — US immigration officials have walked back limits on enforcement targeting farms, restaurants, hotels and food processing plants just days after putting restrictions in place, two former officials familiar with the matter said, an abrupt shift that followed contradictory public statements by President Donald Trump.

US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) leadership told field office heads during a call on Monday that it would roll back a directive issued last week that largely paused raids on the businesses, the former

officials said, requesting anonymity to discuss the new guidance.

ICE officials were told a daily quota to make 3,000 arrests per day — 10 times the average last year during former President Joe Biden's administration — would remain in effect, the former officials said.

ICE field office heads had raised concerns they could not meet the quota without raids at the businesses that had been exempted, one of the sources said.

It was not clear why last week's directive was reversed. Some ICE officials left the call confused, and it ap-

peared they would still need to tread carefully with raids on the previously exempted businesses, the former officials said.

US Department of Homeland Security spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin said ICE would continue to make arrests at worksites but did not respond to questions about the new guidance.

"There will be no safe spaces for industries who harbor violent criminals or purposely try to undermine ICE's efforts," she said in a statement on Tuesday.

The Washington Post first reported the reversal. — **Reuters**

## VISTAMALL

### NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

Notice is hereby given that the annual meeting of stockholders of VISTAMALLS, INC. (the "Company" or "STR") for the year 2025 will be held online on **July 28, 2025, Monday at 10:00 a.m.** with the proceedings livestreamed and voting conducted in absentia through the Company's secure voting online facility which may be accessed through the following URL address: <https://vote.vistamalls.com.ph/VSRV/Login>.

The following shall be the agenda of the meeting:

1. Call to order
2. Certification of service of notice and presence of quorum
3. Approval of the minutes of the last Annual Meeting of Stockholders held on June 24, 2024
4. Presentation of the President's Report, Management Report and Audited Financial Statements for the year 2024
5. Ratification of all acts and resolutions of the Board of Directors and Management from the date of the last annual stockholders' meeting until the date of this meeting
6. Election of the members of the Board of Directors, including the Independent Directors, for the year 2025
7. Appointment of External Auditors
8. Adjournment

Minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting of Stockholders is available at the website of the Company (<https://documents.starmalls.com.ph/minutes-of-meetings.php>).

Electronic copies of the Information Statement and Management Report with respect to the 2025 Annual Meeting of Stockholders of the Company, as well as the 2024 Annual Report (SEC Form 17A) and Quarterly Report for period ended 31 March 2025 (SEC Form 17Q) of the Company, are available on the Company's website (<https://documents.starmalls.com.ph/index.php>) and PSE Edge (<https://edge.pse.com.ph>).

The Board of Directors has fixed the close of 19 June 2025 as the record date for the determination of stockholders entitled to notice of, and to vote at, said Annual Stockholders' Meeting.

For the convenience of the Company's stockholders, the Company will dispense with the physical attendance of stockholders at the meeting and will allow attendance only by remote communication and voting only in absentia or by appointing the Chairman of the meeting as their proxy.

Stockholders who intend to participate in the meeting via remote communication and to exercise their vote in absentia must notify the Corporate Secretary by registering in advance at <https://vote.vistamalls.com.ph/VSRV/Login> on or before July 18, 2025. All information submitted will be subject to verification and validation by the Corporate Secretary.

Stockholders who intend to appoint the Chairman of the Meeting as their proxy should submit duly accomplished proxy forms on or before July 18, 2025 at the Office of the Corporate Secretary at UGF Worldwide Corporate Center, Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City and/or by email to [ir@vistamalls.com.ph](mailto:ir@vistamalls.com.ph).

The procedures for participating in the meeting through remote communication and for casting of votes in absentia are set forth in the Information Statement.

MA. NALLEEN S. ROSERO  
Corporate Secretary