

# Child labor in the Philippines dropped 24% in 2024 — DoLE

CHILD LABOR in the Philippines has dropped by 24% to about 513,000 in 2024 from 678,000 a year ago as the government seeks to end child labor in the country, according to the Labor secretary.

“Despite this progress, we will continue to be aggressive and relentless in our efforts. We have mainstream child labor elimination in our Philippine Development Plan and our Philippine Labor and Employment Plan, where we set zero child labor by 2028,” Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE) Secretary Bienvenido E. Laguesma said in his livestreamed address to the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The government implements its anti-child labor mandates through the National Council Against Child Labor, headed by the Labor secretary, with the Social Welfare department as co-chairman. Its members include the secretaries of Education, Health, Interior and Local Government, Justice, and Agriculture.

Mr. Laguesma added that the Philippine government had converged its resources and efforts to end child labor in the country.

“These efforts would show that with political will, inter-agency convergence, and grassroots engagements, with the participation of the tripartite

partners, progress is attainable even in the face of challenging environments,” he said.

In a report dated June 11, the ILO said the Asia-Pacific region had shown the most significant reduction to 28 million or accounting for 3.1% of the region from 49 million or 5.6%.

The highest incidence of child labor was logged in Sub-Saharan Africa accounting for about 87 million with a prevalence of 21.5%, noting that the total number has remained stagnant against the backdrop of population growth.

The report also showed that there were still 138 million working children globally, with about

54 million of them working under hazardous conditions. This was a 22 million reduction from the ILO’s 2020 report, where it saw a significant spike in child labor.

“Children belong in school, not in work. Parents must themselves be supported and have access to decent work so that they can afford to ensure that their children are in classrooms and not selling things in markets or working in family farms to help support their family,” ILO Director-General Gilbert F. Houngbo said.

“But we must not be blindsided. We still have a long way to go before we achieve our goal of eliminating child labor,” he added. — **Adrian H. Halili**

Commission and are hereby requested to be considered confidential as these documents contain information about the offers received by MORE from the other qualified parties during the procurement of offers which constitute trade secrets of such parties that submitted the respective offers.

45. In the case of *Air Philippines Corporation vs. Pennswell, Inc.*,<sup>1</sup> the Supreme Court defined “trade secret” as follows:

“A trade secret is defined as a plan or process, tool, mechanism or compound known only to its owner and those of his employees to whom it is necessary to confide it. The definition also extends to a secret formula or process not patented, but known only to certain individuals using it in compounding some article of trade having commercial value. A trade secret may consist of any formula, pattern, device, or compilation of information that (1) is used in one’s business; and (2) gives the employer an opportunity to obtain advantage over competitors who do not possess the information. Generally, a trade secret is a process or device intended for continuous operation of the business, for example, a machine or formula, but can be a price list or catalogue or specialized customer list. It is indubitable that trade secrets constitute proprietary rights.” (Emphasis ours.)

46. The protection of trade secrets is likewise recognized by the Honorable Commission in its Decision in ERC Case No. 2015-111 RC:

“In the case of PNOCC RC, the documents sought to be protected from disclosure contains formula and pricing structures used in arriving at their proposed tariff. The prices cited in the documents were components of the proposed tariff. In fact, all three (3) documents were used by the Commission in evaluating the reasonableness of the proposed rate. In electric power industry [where] prices is a major consideration in selecting one’s supplier, it is apparent that the assumption used in arriving at one’s proposed tariff is considered a competitive leverage by one player against its competitors.

Thus, the Commission resolved to treat the said documents confidential and may not be publicly disclosed.”

47. Thus, Applicants hereby submit one (1) copy of each of the foregoing confidential documents in sealed envelopes, with the envelopes and each page of the documents marked “Confidential.”

48. The interest of the consumers of MORE is sufficiently protected by the review and evaluation of the rates under the PSA by the Honorable Commission, without the need to disclose the contents of the confidential information. The reasonableness and transparency of the prices of electricity is to be assured by the Honorable Commission through its own review and verification of the foregoing documents sought to be afforded confidential treatment in the evaluation and handling thereof.

## PRAYER

WHEREFORE, premises considered, Applicants respectfully pray that the Honorable Commission:

- Issue an Order granting **PROVISIONAL APPROVAL/INTERIM RELIEF** for the instant Joint Application and authorizing Joint Applicants PCPC and MORE to implement the subject PSA in a timely manner by 26 June 2025 in accordance with the terms of the PSA;
- Issue an Order **TREATING ANNEX “DD”** and all other information contained therein relevant to the other bid received by MORE, as **CONFIDENTIAL**, directing their non-disclosure to persons other than officers and staff of this Honorable Commission, continuously protecting the said information from public disclosure by maintaining the same separate and apart from the records of the case, and ensuring that these are not divulged to unauthorized persons, pursuant to Rule 4 of the ERC Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure; and
- After hearing on the merits, render a Decision **APPROVING THE PSA** between PCPC and MORE and the terms and conditions thereunder, including the electricity rates.

Other relief just and equitable under the circumstances are likewise prayed for.

The Commission hereby sets the instant *Application* for determination of compliance with the jurisdictional requirements, expository presentation, Pre-trial Conference, and presentation of evidence on the following dates and online platforms for the conduct thereof, pursuant to Resolution No. 09, Series of 2020<sup>3</sup> and Resolution No. 01, Series of 2021<sup>4</sup> (ERC Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure):

Date and Time	Platform	Activity
<b>1 July 2025</b> (Tuesday) at two o’clock in the afternoon (2:00 P.M.)	<b>Microsoft Teams Application</b>	Determination of compliance with jurisdictional requirements, and Expository Presentation
<b>8 July 2025</b> (Tuesday) at two o’clock in the afternoon (2:00 P.M.)		Pre-trial Conference and Presentation of Evidence

MORE and PCPC are hereby directed to mirror the virtual hearings to be hosted by the Commission at **MORE’s principal office at GST Building, Quezon St., Iloilo City**, as the designated venue for the conduct thereof and ensure that the same is open to the public. Moreover, MORE and PCPC shall guarantee that, during the conduct of the expository presentation, the participation of the public shall not be impaired.

Any interested stakeholder may submit its **comments and/or clarifications** at least one (1) calendar day prior to the scheduled initial virtual hearing, via electronic mail (e-mail) at [docket@erc.ph](mailto:docket@erc.ph), copy furnish the Legal Service through [legal@erc.ph](mailto:legal@erc.ph). The Commission shall give priority to the stakeholders who have duly submitted their respective comments and/or clarifications, to discuss the same and propound questions during the course of the expository presentation.

Moreover, any person who has an interest in the subject matter of the instant case may become a party by filing with the Commission via e-mail at [docket@erc.ph](mailto:docket@erc.ph), copy furnish the Legal Service through [legal@erc.ph](mailto:legal@erc.ph), a verified **Petition to Intervene** at least five (5) calendar days prior to the date of the initial virtual hearing and subject to the requirements under Rule 9 of the ERC Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure, indicating therein the docket number and title of the case and stating the following:

- The petitioner’s name, mailing address, and e-mail address;
- The nature of petitioner’s interest in the subject matter of the proceeding and the way and manner in which such interest is affected by the issues involved in the proceeding; and
- A statement of the relief desired.

Likewise, all other persons who may want their views known to the Commission with respect to the subject matter of the case may file through e-mail at [docket@erc.ph](mailto:docket@erc.ph), copy furnish the Legal Service through [legal@erc.ph](mailto:legal@erc.ph), their **Opposition or Comment** at least five (5) calendar days prior to the initial virtual hearing and subject to the requirements under Rule 9 of the ERC Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure. No particular form of Opposition or Comment is required, but the document, letter, or writing should contain the following:

- The name, mailing address, and e-mail address of such person;
- A concise statement of the Opposition or Comment; and
- The grounds relied upon.

All interested parties filing their Petition to Intervene, Opposition or Comment are required to submit the hard/printed copy/ies thereof either through personal service, registered or ordinary mail/private courier, within five (5) working days from the date that the same were electronically submitted, as reflected in the acknowledgment receipt e-mail sent by the Commission.

Any of the persons mentioned in the preceding paragraphs may access the copy of the *Joint Application* on the Commission’s official website at [www.erc.gov.ph](http://www.erc.gov.ph).

Finally, all interested persons may be allowed to join the scheduled initial virtual hearings by providing the Commission, thru [legal.virtualhearings@erc.ph](mailto:legal.virtualhearings@erc.ph), with their respective e-mail addresses and indicating therein the case number of the instant *Joint Application*. The Commission will send the access link/s to the aforementioned hearing platform within five (5) working days prior to the scheduled hearings.

**WITNESS**, the Honorable Chairperson and CEO **MONALISA C. DIMALANTA**, and Honorable Commissioners **ALEXIS M. LUMBATAN**, **CATHERINE P. MACEDA**, **FLORESINDA G. BALDO-DIGAL**, and **MARKO ROMEO L. FUENTES**, Energy Regulatory Commission, this 28<sup>th</sup> day of April 2025 in Pasig City.

FOR AND BY AUTHORITY  
OF THE COMMISSION:

**KRISHA MARIE T. BUELA**  
Director III, Legal Service

LS: LPS/BBB/AGW/KTB

<sup>1</sup> G. R. No. 172835, 13 December 2007.

<sup>2</sup> In the Matter of the Application for the Approval of the Power Supply Agreement Between Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative, Inc. – Area 2 (NEECO II – Area 2) and PNOCC Renewables Corporation (PNOCC RC) with Prayer for Provisional Authority, ERC Case No. 2015-111 RC, Decision dated 30 May 2017, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> A Resolution Adopting the Guidelines Governing Electronic Applications, Filings and Virtual Hearings Before the Energy Regulatory Commission.

<sup>4</sup> A Resolution Adopting the Revised Rules of Practice and Procedure of the Energy Regulatory Commission.

## OPINION

# Worker loves the job but hates the boss

**I’ve been with my employer for the past ten years under the tutelage of someone who recently retired. I liked my job until the hiring of an external new boss who had a toxic management style. How do I manage my situation? — Broken Record.**

Loving your job is a rare and wonderful thing. Don’t lose that. Enjoying your company? That’s the cherry on top. But what if the one person standing between you and ideal professional bliss is your boss? Suddenly, your job feels like a daily test of patience and perseverance.

That’s not just a workplace annoyance; it’s a strategic challenge with real consequences.

Whether it’s personality clashes, communication misfires, or a lack of mutual respect, a strained work relationship can quietly sabotage your growth, morale, and momentum.

However, it doesn’t have to be that way. With the right approach, you can reclaim your sanity and even turn your current situation into a source of strength. All you have to do is understand the situation objectively to discover a win-win solution.

Here’s how to rise above friction, without losing your cool and ambition in the process. You only have to make the most of your role and strengthen your positioning in the company while keeping the relationship with your boss productive, if not perfect.

## MANAGING THE SITUATION

Looking back, I was in the same boat many times in the past with different bosses. It’s not easy to navigate the situation, but as long as you love your job and the organization, that’s more than enough fuel so that you can overcome your issues with your new boss. Take the following lessons that I’ve distilled for the past four decades of my corporate life:

**One, define the real problem.** The first step in transforming an unwanted relation-

ship with your boss is to understand them. Disliking your boss is a poor generalization. To understand the real situation, ask and answer the following targeted questions: Is this a personality mismatch or a values clash?

Is your boss inconsistent or simply uncommunicative? Do you feel undervalued, overlooked, or misunderstood? Once you can name what’s not working, you can start to adapt your approach and make better decisions on how to engage the boss.

**Two, discover a common objective.** Professional alignment or realignment is your best leverage. Somehow, you and your boss would likely share at least one objective, like doing an excellent job. That shared purpose can be the foundation of

a more functional dynamic. Start by observing what matters the most to your manager. Do they want you to interpret the raw data and make recommendations? Do they prioritize deadlines, client satisfaction, or their upward visibility? By delivering on the things, they value the most and framing your situation under those terms, you can show that you’re not only competent but also strategic.

**Three, manage the relationship.** Think of managing your boss the way you approach project management. It’s not about controlling them; it’s about structuring interactions in a way that leads to better outcomes for both of you. Try these subtle but powerful techniques: Anticipate their questions and provide updates before they ask. If your boss dumps work on you shortly before the close of office hours, propose a regular check-in or weekly update to ensure that priorities are regularly adjusted. In doing that, keep interactions professional, neutral, and positive, even if you feel frustrated. Keep your language steady and solutions focused.

**Four, get your energy from elsewhere.** Dealing with a difficult boss can be emotionally draining. That’s why it’s essential to build a network of support within the organization and beyond. Invest in lateral relationships with colleagues you enjoy working with. Seek out friendly mentors who can guide you without damaging your boss’s reputation.

Develop your skills through external, online courses during your free time. This not only balances your energy but also increases your confidence. Somehow, it could open a door to opportunities like when an internal job vacancy becomes available which could be your escape hatch.

## REMAINING STRATEGIC

If the situation remains difficult despite your best efforts, don’t rush to leave the company or the job you love. Continue exploring internal mobility. Many organizations support lateral moves across departments or teams — especially when you’re a high-performing employee.

Alternatively, use this experience to position yourself for upward mobility.

Demonstrating that you can deliver results under imperfect conditions is a powerful narrative when vying for a promotion or leadership role. The key is not to let one poor work relationship define your future. Your job satisfaction and professional reputation are bigger than one difficult situation.

You don’t have to love a difficult boss to love your job. Instead, use your current situation to learn how to manage complexity with clarity, tact, and strategy. Your situation may be challenging, but it’s also an opportunity to build the kind of professional resilience that could set you apart from the rest.

You’ll find that you’re not just surviving the situation but influencing its outcome.

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



## Stock tax, from SI/1

“The law will help attract more large foreign and local investors with lower stock transaction costs vis-a-vis other ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and Asian stock markets,” he said. “This is part of making our markets more cost competitive for transactions,” he added.

China Bank Capital Corp. Managing Director Juan Paolo E. Colet said in a Viber message the lower stock tax will be beneficial to investors.

“The lower friction cost will benefit all investors in listed stocks, but perhaps more so for traders who frequently bet on short-term price movements,” he said.

“We expect the significant reduction in the STT to boost trading activity and tighten bid-ask spreads,” he added.

The PSE said in a statement last week that the reduction of the STT is expected to boost trading activity and liquidity in the stock market, as well as the local market’s competitiveness against other foreign markets.

The local bourse had one of the highest friction costs in the ASEAN region prior to the enactment of CMEPA, the PSE said.

## Gender gap, from SI/1

This subindex includes literacy rate, enrollment rate in primary, secondary, tertiary education. “Despite strong performances in educational attainment, the gender parity in education has slightly declined. For the first time, the primary school net enrollment rate for boys surpasses that of girls, resulting in a 1.2-percentage-point drop in the education parity score from previous years of full parity,” WEF said.

The report showed the Philippines had gender parity in the literacy rate, as well as enrollment in secondary education and tertiary education.

For political empowerment, the Philippines improved from 30<sup>th</sup> place from 34<sup>th</sup> last year.

This subindex includes women in parliament, ministerial positions, years with female or male head of state.

“The Philippines’s political parity score is buoyed by nearly 16 years of female leadership under Presidents Corazon Aquino and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. This contributes to a 46.2% score in the head-of-state indicator, the second highest in the region,” the WEF said.

Despite this, progress in female representation in parlia-

## ment is described as “modest” with a score of 38.9%.

“The score for ministerial positions has declined to 21.1% in 2025, down from over 30% in both 2006-2007 and 2023,” it added.

For the health and survival sub-index, the Philippines rose a notch to 85<sup>th</sup> spot this year.

“The Philippines has faced growing sex imbalances at birth over the past decade. The sex ratio at birth (females to males) has declined from 0.944 in 2016 to 0.926 in 2025,” the WEF said.

Reinielle Matt M. Erece, an economist at Oikonomia Advisory and Research, Inc., said the Philippines’ improved ranking in the gender parity report was mainly driven by gains in wage equality, but noted that the “country still has a long way to go.”

“This is a good indicator of improvements in job opportunities and reduction of gender discrimination,” Mr. Erece said in a Viber message to *BusinessWorld* on Thursday.

However, he pointed out that female enrollment in primary education remains below 90%. “Thus, improvements in education accessibility and also childhood health are equally important to ensure that students have proper access to education,” he added.

— **Aubrey Rose A. Inosante**