

BPOs wary of ‘indirect’ effects of US tariffs

By Justine Irish D. Tabile
Reporter

THE IT & Business Process Association of the Philippines (IB-PAP) said US tariffs may result in disruptions to global investment flows that could ultimately affect its industry.

IBPAP President and Chief Executive Officer Jonathan R. Madrid said no direct impact is expected on the information technology and business process management (IT-BPM) industry,

which is also known as the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO), because it supplies services and not goods.

“(Nevertheless), we are closely monitoring the broader economic and investment impacts this may indirectly bring,” he told *BusinessWorld*.

US President Donald J. Trump announced a 20% tariff on the Philippines this month, higher than the 17% reciprocal tariff he initially imposed in early April.

Mr. Madrid said the government has responded to the US tariff decisions promptly, with

a diplomatic push by President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., who is visiting Washington for “a strategic dialogue.”

“Their efforts reflect a strong commitment to investment promotion and economic diplomacy at a critical time,” he added.

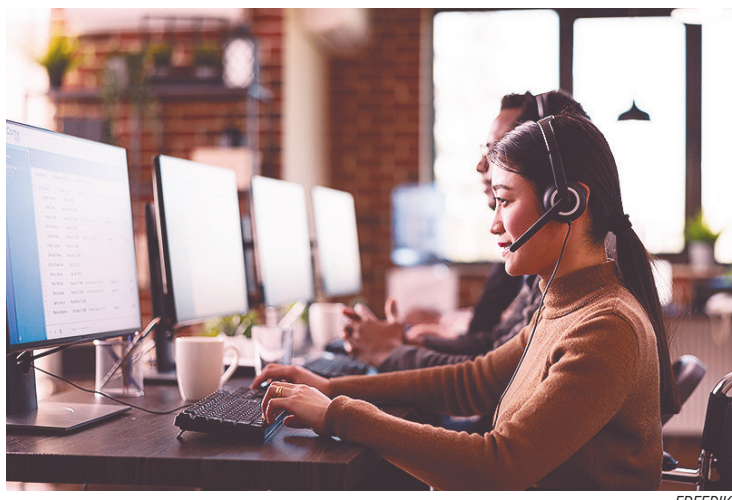
He said sustained engagement and collaboration with the US will help “ensure that the Philippine economy remains resilient and attractive to global investors, especially with US counterparts.”

Mr. Marcos and tariff negotiators are in the US to negotiate a lower rate.

Mr. Marcos was due to meet Mr. Trump on Tuesday, Washington time, becoming the first head of state from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to meet the US President during his second term.

IBPAP said it still expects a 5% increase in industry revenue this year and between 4% and 5% workforce growth.

“For 2025, we are going to show growth. I think we will touch \$40 billion in revenue as an industry and should touch 1.9 million in terms of number of workers,” Mr. Madrid said.



FREPIK

Biodiesel blend changes suspended amid high global prices of coco oil

THE Department of Energy (DoE) said it suspended the planned increase in the coco methyl ester (CME) component of biodiesel, citing the potential impact on pump prices.

In an advisory dated July 17, the DoE informed the downstream oil industry, biodiesel producers, and other stakeholders of the suspension of the CME hike in the biodiesel blend.

The increase to 4% biodiesel blend (B4) was due to be implemented on Oct. 1, going to B5 a year later.

National Biofuels Board (NBB) issued a resolution in May to suspend changes to the biodiesel blend due to “anticipated significant impact on pump prices and the potential inflationary effects on the national economy.”

Energy Undersecretary Alesandro O. Sales said last month cited the current high cost of coconut oil, a primary feedstock for CME.

Mr. Sales said that the global price of coconut oil at the start of the year was

about \$1,100 per metric ton. This increased to over \$3,000 per metric ton at the time of the NBB decision.

“Moving forward, the NBB shall regularly assess and recommend appropriate market interventions to help stabilize the price of biodiesel and its feedstock,” the DoE said.

The DoE will issue a directive to resume the upward adjustments once the NBB gives its approval.

The Biofuels Act of 2006 requires that all liquid fuels for motors and engines contain locally sourced biofuel components.

Under the law, the NBB is tasked with monitoring the implementation of the National Biofuel Program as well as the supply and usage of biofuels and biofuel blends.

The CME blend in diesel was raised to 3% on Oct. 1, 2024 from 2% previously. The blending of biofuels was originally intended to decrease dependence on imported fuel, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and support the biodiesel industry. — **Sheldeen Joy Talavera**



FREPIK

DA says crop damage initially estimated at P134.7 million

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said preliminary crop damage estimates totaled P134.7 million following heavy rains generated by tropical storm Crising and the southwest monsoon.

Citing the DA's Disaster Risk Reduction Management Operations Center, the DA said the estimate covers losses to rice, corn, cassava, high value crops, fisheries, livestock and poultry.

“Affected areas span 8,035 hectares while affected farmers and fisherfolk number 6,377,” it added.

“We are keeping a close watch to prevent significant price increases on key agricultural commodities,” particularly highland vegetables, it said.

The DA has allocated P495.4 million to provide inputs to affected farmers, on top of its quick-response funds, which can be tapped for rehabilitation, survival, and recovery loans, as well as indemnification via the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. — **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**

PAGCOR driving upside surprise in GOCC dividends, Recto says

GOVERNMENT-OWNED or -controlled corporations’ (GOCCs) dividends will be stronger than expected this year, with the gaming industry regulator largely responsible for the upside, Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto said.

“PIGO (Philippine Inland Gaming Operations) led to an increase in dividends from PAGCOR (Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.), which we did not expect,” he told reporters recently.

Mr. Recto has said that GOCC dividends overall will exceed the target by “P90 billion to P110 billion.”

The Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing report had assumed that state-run firms will remit only P20 billion this year.

Asked to clarify whether Mr. Recto meant the final dividend tally would be P110-P130 billion, Undersecretary Ma. Luwalhati C. Dorotan-Tiuseco provided confirmation.

The Department of Finance (DoF) reported on Tuesday that GOCCs had remitted P105 billion to the Bureau of the Treasury as of July, indicating that dividends are currently approaching the low end of the projected range.

The top source of dividends was the Land Bank of the Philippines, which had remitted P26 billion.

This was followed by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (P18.91 billion), PAGCOR (P12.68 billion), and Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (P10.13 billion), Power Sector Assets & Liabilities Management Corp. (P8.96 billion), the Philippine Ports Authority (P5.20 billion) and Manila International Airport Authority (P3.32 billion).

Rounding out the list of top remitters were Clark Development Corp. (P2.49 billion), the Philippine National Oil Co. (P2.43 billion) and the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (P2.20 billion) also among the top remitters.

In order to boost nontax revenue, the DoF had requested GOCCs to remit dividends equivalent to 75% of their net earnings, well above the 50% floor set by Republic Act No. 7656 or the Dividend Law.

Separately, Mr. Recto ruled out any possible sales of major government assets this year, saying that any disposals will be small.

Asked for updates on the proposed sale of the government's stake in the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX), Mr. Recto said: “I think that's still being

worked on” by Metro Pacific Investments Corp. and the Bases Conversion and Development Authority.

Last year, the BCDA said it was considering selling its remaining stake in the toll road to MPIC.

Mr. Recto also floated the possibility of the Social Security System or Government Service Insurance System taking over the SCTEX stake, failing which the two government pension funds could look into “other privatization assets.”

The government is set to generate P36.26 billion from the sale of the Caliraya-Botocan-Kalay-aan hydroelectric complex.

For 2026, the goal for privatization proceeds has been set at around P100 billion after changes to the medium-term fiscal framework approved by the Development Budget Coordination Committee.

MPIC is one of the three key Philippine units of Hong Kong's First Pacific Co. Ltd., the others being Philex Mining Corp. and PLDT Inc.

Hastings Holdings, Inc., a unit of PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund subsidiary MediaQuest Holdings, Inc., has a majority share in *BusinessWorld* through the Philippine Star Group, which it controls. — **Aubrey Rose A. Inosante**

Career Opportunity in **Freyssinet International Manila, Inc.**

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- First experience post-graduation in external audit, cost control, FP&A or finance
- Excellent knowledge of French accounting standards (PCG)

Applications may be sent to:
Rose Anne De Guzman | rose-anne.deguzman@freyssinet.com

COMPANY / EMPLOYER	NAME OF FOREIGN NATIONAL INTENDING TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION
FREYSSINET INTERNATIONAL MANILA INC Address: Unit B and C 16/F BDO Equitable Bank Tower, Paseo De Roxas, Bel-Air Makati City Nature of Business: Engage in general construction, and other allied activities.	Name: SOPHIE BRANCOT Address: Ayala South, Makati Nationality: French Intended Period of Employment: One (1) Year

Freyssinet International Manila, Inc. 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 Maligaya Street, Malate Manila.**

Ban on e-gaming could result in job losses, attract underground operators — consultant

THE proposed online gaming ban could result in job losses, the proliferation of underground gaming operations, and a decline in government revenue, a regulatory consultant said.

The current operators “implement robust (know-your customer protocols), age verification, self-exclusion tools, and real-time monitoring. You ban those, and what you get is a black-market surge,” according to Marie Antonette B. Quiogue, chief executive officer of Arden Consult, which advises technology companies on navigating Philippine regulations.

Senators Juan Miguel F. Zubiri and Christopher Lawrence T. Go have filed separate bills seeking to ban e-games.

Ms. Quiogue said in a statement that illegal and unregulated gambling operations are the “real enemy” and not licensed platforms that follow global best practices.

“The infrastructure is already in place. What we need is stronger enforcement against illegal operators, not policies that penalize the compliant,” she said.

The administration's economic managers support stricter regulation of the industry instead of a ban.

Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto said the government is considering raising the levy on e-gaming operators proposed that operators be required to list on the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan of the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development said supported such a tax hike while floated a proposal to tax e-wallets.

A group of 14 licensed operators has warned that a ban will result in 50,000 lost jobs.

Mr. Recto has said that about 60% of the gaming market operates illegally. — **Aubrey Rose A. Inosante**



FREPIK

Career Opportunity in **THE BLUE CIRCLE PHILIPPINES HOLDINGS CORP**

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Job Description:

Main Responsibilities of the Business Development Manager will be:

- Creating development plans and develop a growth strategy
- Coordinating with respective departments in preparation and submission for new project WESCs.
- Conduct research to identify project development opportunities through meetings, networking and other channels
- Monitoring country RE market trends, updates and NGAs power development plan, grid development plan and competitors watch
- Promote the company's RE development plan and predicting Power market needs
- Overlooking the new project development processes including legal, contractual, technical, financial and permitting matters
- Build long-term relationships with new and existing stakeholders including NGAs, LGUs
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- Developed further the project portfolio of the company with the acquisition of three onshore wind projects representing a combined capacity of more than 300 MW. Also, responsible for managing the sale of a partner's stake in a leading offshore wind project of 1.2 GW to a renowned foreign offshore wind developer.

Qualifications:

- Graduate of Marketing, Business or any related course
- At least 10 years of experience in energy industry and managing renewable energy development
- With advanced and Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- With good connection with different LGUs and

Applications may be sent to:
Joe-Anne Princess Nival
princess.nival@thebluecircle.sg

COMPANY / EMPLOYER	NAME OF FOREIGN NATIONAL INTENDING TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION
Company Name: THE BLUE CIRCLE PHILIPPINES HOLDINGS CORP. Address: 23F Ayala Tower and Exchange Plaza Ayala Avenue, corner Paseo de Roxas Bel Air Makati City Philippines	Name: Amaury Yves Guillaume Brucker Address: 2301, 23/F Brent Tower, Brixton Place, 29 Brixton St, 1603 Pasig City Nationality: French Intended period of employment: Three (3) years

The Blue Circle Philippines Holdings Corp 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- National Capital Region** located at **967 Maligaya Street, Malate Manila.**

PCCI backs 20 measures to ‘unlock economy’s potential’

THE Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) said it supports 20 legislative measures which it hopes will help President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. “unlock the full potential of the economy.”

“The proposals target structural reforms to unlock the full potential of our economy and ensure broadly shared and sustainable growth,” PCCI President Enunina V. Mangio said in a statement on Tuesday.

“The measures align with the administration's momentum in enhancing competitiveness, expanding economic opportunities, and driving innovation,” she added.

The business group's endorsements cover measures promoting digital transformation and infrastructure.

“Among the top priorities is the Open Access in Data Trans-

mission Bill (or the proposed Konektadong Pinoy Act), which seeks to expand high-speed internet access nationwide and fully leverage the Digital Transformation Roadmap and National Fiber Backbone,” it said.

“PCCI also backs the passage of a National Comprehensive Infrastructure Masterplan, providing a long-term framework for strategic and resilient infrastructure investment,” it added.

The business group sought the passage of the proposed International Maritime Competitiveness Act and amendments to the charters of the Philippine Ports Authority and the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines.

According to the PCCI, these measures, which will resolve conflicting mandates and enhance regulatory oversight in the ship-

ping and aviation sectors, will help improve logistics efficiency and reduce costs.

The PCCI also hopes the President backs the passage of amendments to the Magna Carta for micro, small, and medium enterprises, which it said will help enhance access to finance, markets, and technology for small businesses.

“Agricultural and fisheries reforms are also on the agenda, including the Blue Economy Act, Corporate Farming Act, amendments to the Agri-Agra Law, ASIN Law, Warehouse Receipts Act, and the long-awaited National Land Use and Management Act,” the PCCI said.

The PCCI also sought the President's support for the proposed Apprenticeship Training System Act, amendments to the Dual Training System Act, and

the proposed National Quality Infrastructure Act.

“To enhance public service delivery and fiscal accountability, the PCCI urges the passage of the (proposed) Budget Modernization and Reform Act and Customs Amnesty Act,” it added.

The group recommends the passage of the proposed Cybersecurity Act, E-Governance Act, and Artificial Intelligence Act.

“These measures address structural bottlenecks that hinder investment, logistics, rural development, and regulatory efficiency,” Ms. Mangio said.

“We believe strong endorsement of these bills during the State of the Nation Address will help fast-track their passage and demonstrate the administration's commitment to inclusive and future-ready economic growth,” she added. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**