

# Ornamental plants seen as potential growth pillar for agriculture industry

ORNAMENTAL PLANTS are being touted as a potential growth driver for agriculture according to participants at the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Philippine Horticulture and Urban Agriculture Summit, also known as Pagsibol.

Roger V. Navaro, agriculture undersecretary for Operations and Agri-Fisheries Mechanization, said horticulture or garden cultivation, as well as urban agriculture are potential “pillars of national strategy” if backed by proper investments.

Urban residents make up around 49.3% of the population, Mr. Navarro said.

Antonietta J. Arceo, agriculture training institute director said the drive for profits must be balanced “with protecting biodiversity and safeguarding our ecological heritage.”

Nevertheless,” (We must) hold fast to our vision of agriculture as a profitable investment and a viable and modernized career for Filipinos,” Ms. Arceo said in a speech.

The International Association of Horticulture Producers valued the global industry at \$70 billion in 2024. — **Andre Christopher H. Alampay**



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Career Opportunities in **AB LEISURE EXPONENT INC.**

**POSITION TITLE: MANDARIN PROCESS MANAGER**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

- Perform root cause analysis on process failures or deviations, propose corrective actions
- Drive process automation initiatives in collaboration with IT/Systems teams
- Manage and coordinate cross-functional projects
- Ensure compliance with regulatory or client requirements, especially for “Mandarin market serve as liaison / point of escalation for “Mandarin clients, vendors, or external partners
- Conduct training / coaching for process owners, supervisors, agents on new or updated processes
- Lead or support process audits, quality assurance, and process governance

**QUALIFICATION**

- Fluent in Mandarin (reading, writing, and speaking) – required
- Proficient in English – required
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Attention to detail and ability to handle sensitive information.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office (especially Excel)
- “Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

Applications may be sent to: LAU, NIEL KEVIN LIM  
Corp.compliance@digiplus.com.ph

COMPANY / EMPLOYER	NAME OF FOREIGN NATIONAL INTENDING TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION
<b>COMPANY NAME: AB LEISURE EXPONENT INC.</b> <b>ADDRESS:</b> 5/F SM MEGAMALL BLDG D, J VARGAS WACK-WACK GREENHILLS, CITY OF MANDALUYONG <b>NATURE OF BUSINESS:</b> AMUSEMENT AND RECREATION	<b>NAME: CHEN, SHUBIN</b> <b>ADDRESS:</b> F1 HOTEL 32 <sup>ND</sup> STREET CORNER LANE A TAGUIG CITY <b>NATIONALITY:</b> CHINESE <b>INTENDED PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT:</b> TWO (2) YEARS
<b>AB LEISURE EXPONENT INC.</b> 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 <b>Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment- National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate Manila</b>	

Career Opportunities in **AB LEISURE EXPONENT INC.**

**POSITION TITLE: MANDARIN SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

- Prioritize product features and enhancements based on business needs, customer impact, and data analysis.
- Communicate product vision, plans, and progress to executive leadership and stakeholders.
- Collaborate with engineering and UX to define detailed product specs and user stories.
- Monitor market trends, competitors, and technology to identify new opportunities.
- Ensure localization and regionalization of products.

**QUALIFICATION**

- Native or fluent Mandarin speaker with excellent English communication skills (written & spoken).
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills; comfortable with data and product metrics.
- Proven ability to deliver successful products in complex and fast-paced environments.
- Ability to influence and collaborate across functions and senior leadership.

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Career Opportunities in **AB LEISURE EXPONENT INC.**

**POSITION TITLE: MANDARIN PRODUCT MANAGER (2 VACANCIES)**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

- Define and execute product strategies and roadmaps aligned with company goals.
- Collaborate with cross-functional teams to deliver high-quality products on time.
- Act as the main point of contact for “Mandarin-speaking stakeholders, including suppliers, manufacturers, and regional offices.
- Collect and analyze user feedback, market data, and business requirements.
- Prioritize product features and enhancements using data-driven decision-making.
- Monitor product performance and iterate based on feedback and analytics.

**QUALIFICATION**

- Proficient in both Mandarin and English (spoken and written).
- Excellent analytical, communication, and project management skills.
- Strong understanding of UX/UI principles and customer-centric design.

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	<b>NAME: ZHANG, KAINAN</b> <b>ADDRESS:</b> TIMES SQUARE NORTH BONIFACIO BGC TAGUIG CITY <b>NATIONALITY:</b> CHINESE <b>INTENDED PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT:</b> TWO (2) YEARS
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Career Opportunities in **AB LEISURE EXPONENT INC.**

**POSITION TITLE: MANDARIN JAVA DEVELOPER ENGINEER**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

- Design, develop, and maintain high-quality Java applications.
- Write clean, scalable, and efficient code following best practices and coding standards.
- Collaborate with frontend developers and other teams to integrate user-facing elements with server-side logic.
- Develop and implement APIs for data exchange between various systems.
- Conduct thorough testing and debugging of applications to ensure optimal performance and user experience.
- Participate in code reviews to maintain code quality and promote knowledge sharing.
- Maintain detailed documentation of development processes, code changes, and system configurations.
- Contribute to technical documentation for internal and external use.
- Work closely with cross-functional teams to gather requirements and deliver effective software solutions.

**QUALIFICATION**

- Proven experience in designing, developing, and maintaining Java applications.
- Solid understanding of Java, Java frameworks and related technologies.
- Fluent in both Mandarin and English (both written and spoken)
- Strong debugging and troubleshooting skills to ensure that applications are optimized and free of critical issues.

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Career Opportunities in **AB LEISURE EXPONENT INC.**

**POSITION TITLE: MANDARIN DEVELOPER**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

- Develop new features, modules, and functionality for applications.
- Collaborate with the development team to troubleshoot and debug code.
- Implement and maintain integration with APIs and third-party services.
- Ensure software applications are properly localized for Mandarin-speaking users.
- Translate and adapt software content for Mandarin-speaking regions, including adjusting for cultural differences.
- Conduct unit testing, integration testing, and bug fixes.
- Ensure the software works seamlessly in Mandarin language environments.
- Maintain high standards of code quality and ensure proper documentation.

**QUALIFICATION**

- Strong proficiency in one or more programming languages (e.g., Java, Python, C++, JavaScript, etc.).
- Proficiency in Mandarin, both spoken and written, is essential.
- Strong problem-solving skills and attention to detail.
- Excellent communication and teamwork abilities.
- Ability to work independently and manage multiple tasks effectively

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# PEZA approves nearly P49B worth of investments in Sept.

THE Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) said it approved P48.87 billion worth of investment proposals in September, helping it exceed 60% of its approvals target in the year to date.

The September total is 9.8% lower year on year, it said. The 36 approved projects are expected to create 10,312 jobs and generate \$1.113 billion worth of exports.

Of the total, 16 are manufacturing projects, while nine are information technology and business process management (IT-BPM) projects.

Five of the approved investment pledges were economic zone (ecozone) developments, three are to develop facilities, two are logistics projects, and one is a domestic market enterprise.

Eighteen of the projects approved in September plan to locate in Region IV-A, while others selected sites in the National Capital Region, Region VII, Region III, Region I, Region V, and Region XI.

Approvals in September brought the nine months’ total to P154.7 billion, up 33.5% from a year earlier.

These comprise 215 projects which are projected to generate 50,430 jobs and \$4.49 billion in exports.

“These approvals demonstrate enduring investor confidence in the Philippines,” PEZA Director General Tereso O. Panga said in a statement on Tuesday.

“Backed by sustained momentum and robust investment activity, we are on track to attain our P250-billion goal and strengthen our standing as a leading investment destination in Asia,” he added.

He said that he expects the approvals to further increase in the last quarter amid the agency’s “expanded regional engagements.”

Of the projects approved so far this year, 98 are manufacturing projects, 55 are IT-BPM projects, 18 are domestic enterprises, 17 are ecozone developments, 16 are facilities projects, seven are logistics projects, and four are utilities projects.

“The manufacturing sector remains the backbone of PEZA’s growth, with notable gains in electronics, automotive and auto parts, and food processing,” PEZA said.

“These industries collectively contributed more than P42.4 billion in approvals from January to September, reinforcing the Philippines’ position as a vital hub for advanced and diversified manufacturing in Asia,” it added.

**JAPANESE INVESTMENTS**

Investments from Japan led the foreign investment approvals in the first nine months, worth P14.778 billion, or 9.55% of the total.

“This rebound firmly puts Japan back on top as PEZA’s leading investment partner, reaffirming its long-standing role as a driver of Philippine industrial growth and innovation,” PEZA said.

These approvals include a P9.1-billion project of a domestic market enterprise that will manufacture food products and processed foods inside the TARI Estate, which will cater to both domestic and export markets.

“Japan’s return as our leading partner reflects the fruit of our investment missions and strong collaborations with stakeholders,” said Mr. Panga.

“With nearly 10% of this year’s total project approvals coming from Japanese companies, we see undeniable proof of the Philippines’ standing as a trusted and highly competitive hub in Asia,” he added.

Meanwhile, P13.142 billion came from the Cayman Islands, P10.765 billion from South Korea, P6.322 billion from China, and P6.105 billion from the US.

“Given the robust interest and caliber of projects underway, we are not merely on track to meet our goal; we are positioned to deliver even bigger economic wins for the country and our people as we achieve our 2025 investment targets,” he added. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

## Carabao genetic program boosts milk yields

THE Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) said a carabao genetic improvement program has improved milk output, allowing farmers to tap into the rise in milk prices.

The PCC, an arm of the Department of Agriculture, said 12 million kilograms of milk have been produced since the program began, putting carabao raisers in position to benefit from the rise in milk prices from P63.27

per liter in 2020 to P84.87 in 2024.

The program produced 145,181 calves with upgraded genetics between 2019 and 2024, directly assisting 227 cooperative-led enterprises.

About 90% of such calves are raised for milk and meat. Smallholder farmers grow 99% of carabaos.

PCC Executive Director Liza G. Batad said: “The accelerated shift toward

a more productive carabao population is expected to strengthen farmer cooperatives due to higher volumes of milk and meat handled collectively.”

Carabaos are the most numerous dairy animal in the Philippines with 82,908 heads, according to the National Dairy Animal Inventory. The program produced 36,618 calves in 2024. — **Andre Christopher H. Alampay**

# NLEX Corp. launches P200-million SCTEX upgrade program

NLEX CORP. said it is investing P200 million in technology and infrastructure upgrades for the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX).

“The system enhancement program in SCTEX is essential not only for ensuring faster and smoother travel, but also for enforcing stricter road discipline. These upgrades will significantly improve the safety and reliability of the road network, boosting motorists’ confidence,” NLEX President and General Manager Luis S. Reñon said in a media release on Tuesday.

The technology upgrade includes the installation of additional closed-circuit televisions (CCTVs) and speed cameras to strengthen expressway monitoring, as well as the modernization of computer systems and equipment for data processing.

NLEX, a unit of Metro Pacific Tollways Corp. (MPTC), is the builder-concessionaire and operator of major expressways including North Luzon Expressway, SCTEX, and NLEX Connector.

SCTEX is a 94-kilometer toll road linking Central Luzon’s Subic Bay Freeport Zone in Zambales, Clark Freeport Zone in Pampanga, and the Central Technopark in Tarlac.

Aside from technology upgrades, NLEX said it is also implementing infrastructure improvements and maintenance for the expressway.

The company said its annual pavement repair program for SCTEX began this month, adding that it has also partnered with SCTEX owner Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) for the repair and strengthening of the Pasig-Potrero Bridge.

MPTC is the tollway unit of Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC), one of the three key Philippine subsidiaries of Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd., along with Philex Mining Corp. and PLDT Inc.

Hastings Holdings, Inc., a unit of PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund subsidiary MediaQuest Holdings, Inc., holds a majority stake in *BusinessWorld* through the Philippine Star Group, which it controls. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**



PETRON.COM

## Petron accredited as first LPG training hub in oil sector

LISTED oil company Petron Corp. has been certified by the Department of Energy (DoE) as a training institution in the liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) sector, the first oil company to receive the accreditation.

The DoE accreditation allows Petron to certify service personnel from its refinery, terminals, haulers, dealers, and retail outlets, the company said in a statement on Tuesday.

The accreditation aligns with the LPG Industry Regulation Act, which seeks to raise industry standards and enforce stricter penalties for violations in the LPG sector, according to the company.

Under the law, all individuals engaged in activities or facilities regulated by the DoE within the LPG industry must complete an approved training program conducted by DoE-accredited organizations.

“As more LPG personnel undergo proper training from qualified institutions, consumers can be more confident in the quality and reliability of the LPG products they receive,” DoE-Oil Industry Management Bureau Director Rino E. Abad said.

All LPG personnel trained by Petron will receive a DoE certificate, which will be submitted to the DoE as part of their licensing requirements.

Petron will begin its LPG training sessions with dealers and retailers in Ormoc, Leyte.

Petron remains the leading oil industry player, with a 24.9% market share as of June 2024, according to DoE data.

The company has a combined refining capacity of nearly 270,000 barrels a day, operates about 50 terminals in the region, and runs roughly 2,700 service stations selling gasoline and diesel. — **Shelden Joy Talavera**

## FNG plans to launch second tower at The Observatory by mid-2026

FEDERAL Land NRE Global, Inc. (FNG) said it plans to launch a second residential tower at its Mandaluyong township by mid-2026, following sales from the first tower.

“The launching of the second tower should happen within the first half of 2026,” FNG Vice-Chairman William Thomas F. Mirasol told reporters on the sidelines of an event on Tuesday.

The 36-story SORA is the first of nine towers within The Observatory, FNG’s 4.5-hectare mixed-use township along Pioneer Street in Mandaluyong City.

Since its launch, the SORA tower has sold 60% of its units. Construction is scheduled for completion by 2030.

Sora, which means “sky” in Japanese, will have 692 units ranging from studio to three-bedroom units.

The studio units measure 28 square meters (sq.m.) to 30 sq.m., while one-bedroom units range from 45 sq.m. to 60 sq.m.

The property will also have two-bedroom and three-bedroom units sized between 65 sq.m. and 150 sq.m. Unit prices start at P290,000 per sq.m.

The Observatory will also feature retail spaces on its lower floors, with the first phase targeted for completion by 2028.

The retail segment will cater to the needs of residents, including a supermarket, drugstore, health and wellness establishments, and a mix of local, foreign, and Japanese restaurants.

“The people are beginning to really recognize the potential of Mandaluyong, especially the Japanese market,” FNG Sales Group Head Maria Margarita Saenz-Resurreccion said.

He added that the development of The Observatory aligns with Robinsons Land Corp.’s upcoming mixed-use project, The Jewel, which is expected to reinforce Mandaluyong’s position as an urban hub.

“When Robinsons finishes their development, and we finish our development, I think we’re going to see this whole area start to come alive and bloom,” Mr. Mirasol said. “It’s going to change in the same way that BGC (Bonifacio Global City) changed.”

Also on Tuesday, FNG unveiled its 1,700-sq.m. Sales Pavilion, which features model unit viewings for The Observatory.

The model units come in one- to three-bedroom configurations, offering prospective homeowners a glimpse of Japanese-inspired living. — **Beatriz Marie D. Cruz**