

Korean-funded Dumaguete Airport consulting contract opened to potential bidders

THE Department of Transportation (DoTr) said it is inviting parties interested in bidding for the design and construction consultancy contract for the New Dumaguete Airport.

In a request for expressions of interest, the DoTr said the consultancy deal covers basic design, tender assistance, and construction and maintenance supervision.

The DoTr valued the contract at up to \$14 million. The project is funded by the Export-Import Bank of Korea.

Interested parties can submit proposals until Jan. 20, the DoTr said, adding that the contract for the project will run for 78 months.

Last year, the DoTr declared a failure of bidding for the procurement of consultancy services for the New Dumaguete Airport project after the bidder failed to submit a technical proposal.

The DoTr has said that it is working to complete land acquisition for the Dumaguete project, which will rise on 197.55-hectare site in Bacong, Negros Oriental. The project is set to replace the Dumaguete-Sibulan airport to accommodate the rising passenger demand.

The project is expected to boost tourism and trade, as well as enhance the standard of living in Negros Oriental and the surrounding area. The new airport will be capable of serving international flights, with estimated capacity of up to 2.5 million passengers per year. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

Customs single window expected to raise exporter competitiveness

THE Bureau of Customs' National Single Window-Integrated Trade Facilitation Platform (NSW-ITFP) will allow exporters to better compete within the region by lowering costs and improving the reliability of supply chains, the Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI) said.

"Importers and exporters used to shuttle between offices ... (where) each agency had its own forms, its own queues, and its own delays. The NSW-ITFP promises to end that fragmentation," the FPI said in a statement on Monday.

Citing the Philippines NSW website, the FPI said that 40 agencies are involved in the issuance of import and export permits, licenses, and clearances.

"If connected to a single digital portal, where one submission flows seamlessly across regulators, this will lower transaction costs for businesses, while faster clearance can improve supply chain reliability," it said.

"This is a herculean task, but one that needs to have been started yesterday, so our country can finally move forward and be at par, to a certain extent, with our Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) neighbors," it added.

FPI also expects the platform to help the Philippine integrate with the ASEAN Single Window.

"ASEAN members such as Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam have operated National Single Windows since the 2008-2016 period, connecting to the ASEAN Single Window by 2016 to streamline cross-border trade," it said.

"The Philippines is in catch-up mode, and its success will depend on execution," it added.

Once realized, the FPI foresees fewer trips to multiple agencies, faster clearance of goods, and reduced compliance costs.

"Businesses that once struggled with fragmented permits will gain easier market access, while exporters can compete more effectively in ASEAN supply chains," it said.

"If implemented faithfully, the NSW-ITFP will lower transaction costs, improve predictability, and help local enterprises focus on growth rather than bureaucracy," it added.

The group also welcomed the Bureau of Internal Revenue's (BIR) Digital Transformation Roadmap 2025-2028, which aims to overhaul tax enforcement.

"For decades, taxpayers dreaded the letter of authority — a document that could arrive multiple times a year, often leading to harassment and confusion," it said.

"The new roadmap promises a different approach: audits chosen by data, not discretion ... By 2028, the BIR envisions a system where compliance is predictable, transparent, and far less prone to abuse," it added.

The group expects investor confidence to be restored when unpredictability in taxation and trade is reduced.

"If these roadmaps are delivered faithfully, they could mark a turning point — where businesses no longer see government processes as obstacles but as enablers of growth," it added. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

MAP seeking to drive regional sustainability, digitalization agenda as PHL chairs ASEAN

THE Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) said it is seeking to play a key role in pushing sustainability and digital integration when the Philippines chairs the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) this year.

At the MAP Inaugural Meeting 2026 on Monday, MAP President Donald Patrick L. Lim said the group's "most ambitious" plan for the year is "to position MAP as a dynamic force in national development and ASEAN leadership."

He said MAP will actively provide input to help define the business agenda for ASEAN on trade, sustainability, and digital integration.

"By strengthening cross-border dialogues, business missions, and partnerships, we can expand our influence and position MAP as a key contributor in the region," he said.

"The Philippines today does not have a very positive image. I think ASEAN right now is a very good opportunity for us to take the leadership across multiple fronts," he added.

Mr. Lim said another focus area for the group this year includes future-proofing through innovation, technology, and next-generation leadership.

"The challenges we face are systemic, interconnected, and require coordinated action across sectors, institutions, and ideological divides," he said.

"When we act together, we multiply our strengths, and therefore our first direction is to strengthen unity and broaden cooperation within MAP and beyond its walls," he added.

"This year, we will formalize the Partnerships for Nations Program, a platform to expand collaboration with government agencies, local government units, academic institutions, civil society organizations, and the private sector," he added.

"The world is changing at a pace that would have been unimaginable a generation ago. Artificial intelligence is reshaping industries, automation is transforming the nature of work, and digital platforms are redefining how commerce, communication, and community function," he said. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

BYD premium brand DENZA launching in PHL this quarter

BYD Group's premium DENZA brand said it is set to enter the Philippine market this quarter with its initial offerings to be revealed soon.

"DENZA's official Philippine brand launch and unveiling of its initial offering are set to take place in the first quarter of 2026," DENZA Philippines said in a statement on Monday, noting that it will also outline its roadmap for premium electrified mobility in the Philippines at the same time.

"This milestone will mark DENZA's formal introduction to the market and sets the stage for a broader rollout of premium electrified vehicles in the months ahead," it added.

According to DENZA, it appointed BYD Philippines Corp. as the official Philippine distributor of the brand.

Adam Hu, country head of BYD and DENZA, said DENZA's brand touchpoint are elegance, performance, and technology-driven progress. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

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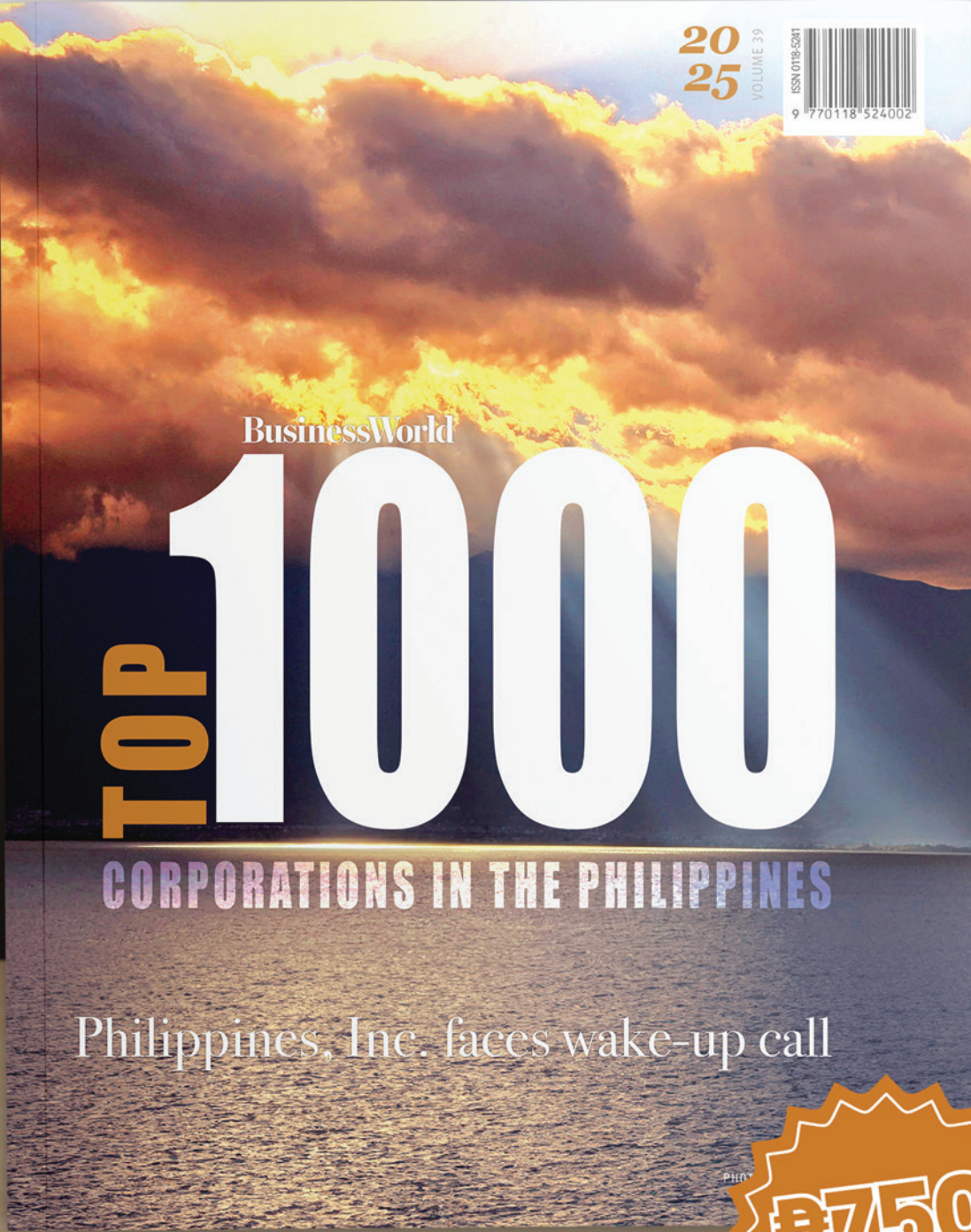
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