

Emergency declaration risked signaling ‘distress’ to markets — ex-central banker

THE government could have held off before calling an energy emergency, with the Palace acting before the legal conditions were met for making such a declaration, GlobalSource Partners said.

In a commentary published late Monday, GlobalSource Principal Advisor Diwa C. Guinigundo, a former Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) deputy governor, said: “Rather than immediately declaring an energy emergency, a more measured and strategic

approach could have been unmissably pursued.”

“A well-articulated energy contingency blueprint could have achieved preparedness without signaling distress to markets and the public,” he added.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. last week declared a yearlong state of national energy emergency via Executive Order No. 110.

Mr. Guinigundo noted that the Oil Deregulation Law provides for the declaration of a national

energy emergency due to actual or imminent supply shortages, evidence of market failure such as hoarding or cartel behavior, and severe economic disruption or transport paralysis.

“At the time EO 110 was issued, these conditions were not fully evident,” he said. “The government itself described the situation then as a ‘price disruption,’ not a full-blown crisis.”

On the other hand, Marco Antonio C. Agonia, an economist

at the University of Asia and the Pacific, called the government’s decision a “good first step” but cited the need to preserve confidence in the economy.

The emergency “grants powers to free up funding and oil procurement in an expedited manner,” he told *BusinessWorld* via e-mail. “The National Government needs to make good use of these provisions to anchor confidence in the Philippine economy.”

Mr. Guinigundo said measures being contemplated once the government decides to exercise its emergency powers, such as suspending or cutting the fuel excise tax and lowering the value-added tax on petroleum products, “can directly cushion consumers and reduce inflationary pressures... However, the tax decision should be weighed very carefully because suspending the implementation of any tax measures means foregoing that part of public revenue.”

In a blog post published on Monday, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said the disruption of energy shipments transiting the Strait of Hormuz, will have an outsized effect on “economies with weaker currencies and large energy imports” in much of Asia and parts of Latin America.

The IMF said affected countries must adopt well-calibrated policies, noting that those with limited reserves and fiscal space should be more cautious. — **Katherine K. Chan**

Worst-case food price scenario deemed unlikely by Agri dep’t

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Tuesday that the worst-case scenario for food prices of a 20%-60% rise is unlikely because it expects the oil price shock to be mitigated by government measures to cushion the blow.

In a statement, Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. called scenarios that assumed a crude oil price of \$200 per barrel for six months were based on “extreme assumptions” that did not factor in the impact of government intervention.

“The prices presented assumed the full impact of soaring

crude,” Mr. Laurel said. “They did not factor in government action, which we will undertake to protect Filipinos from an oil shock.”

The DA had presented at a Senate hearing last week projections for the retail prices of key agricultural commodities, such as rice, meat, and vegetables, which it floated the possibility of a 20%-60% rise in the worst-case scenario.

The impact of fighting around the Strait of Hormuz has raised concerns over disruptions to the supply of fuel as well as fertilizer.

The DA said about 30% of global urea trade and roughly 20% of ammonia and phosphate flows transit the strait.

The DA said, to mitigate potential fallout, the Department of Energy has procured crude from non-traditional sources, including Russia, while the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority has been authorized to make emergency purchases of agricultural inputs.

It added that state-run firms such as Planters Products, Inc. can also be mobilized to import more fertilizer.

The DA said it is also exploring alternatives like organic fertilizer, including chicken manure, to reduce reliance on petroleum-based inputs.

While risks persist if oil prices remain high, the DA said agriculture is currently better positioned to absorb shocks than earlier thought.

“Despite global uncertainty, domestic indicators remain stable. Food prices have held broadly steady, pork inventories are sufficient, and broiler production is exceeding demand, easing farm-gate prices,” the DA said. — **Vonn Andrei E. Villamil**

Career Opportunity in **GAVIN VENTURES INC. (OKBET, OKGAMES, OKFUN, OKPLAY, OKLUCK, OKSPORTS, OKWIN AND OKZONE)**

POSITION TITLE: PROJECT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

JOB DESCRIPTION:
 *Act as the primary liaison between local teams and Mandarin-speaking clients or partners
 *Translate and interpret business requirements, technical documents, and communications (Mandarin ↔ English)
 *Plan, execute, and monitor project timelines, deliverables, and budgets
 *Coordinate cross-functional teams (operations, IT, finance, etc.)
 *Track project progress and provide regular status reports to stakeholders
 *Identify risks and implement mitigation strategies
 *Ensure project deliverables meet quality standards and client expectations
 *Facilitate meetings, presentations, and negotiations in Mandarin and English
 *Maintain proper documentation of project processes and outcomes

QUALIFICATION:
 *Fluent in Mandarin and English (spoken and written)
 *Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
 *Strong organizational and multitasking abilities
 *Problem-solving and critical-thinking skills
 *Ability to work under pressure and meet tight deadlines
 *Cultural awareness and ability to work with diverse teams

Applications may be sent to: VENTURA, RUBIELYN BASILAN Email: nikki.okbet@gmail.com

COMPANY / EMPLOYER	NAME OF FOREIGN NATIONAL INTENDING TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION
COMPANY NAME: GAVIN VENTURES INC. (OKBET, OKGAMES, OKFUN, OKPLAY, OKLUCK, OKSPORTS, OKWIN AND OKZONE) ADDRESS: 11TH FLR KINGSTON EXCELL BUILDING, LOT 3 BLK 38 CIVIC DRIVE FILVEST, ALABANG, CITY OF MUNTINLUPA NATURE OF BUSINESS: COMPUTER PROGRAMING/ OTHER SERVICES ACTIVITIES	NAME: LI, PEXIAO ADDRESS: ICON PLAZA BGC TAGUIG CITY NATIONALITY: CHINESE INTENDED PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT: THREE (3) YEARS

GAVIN VENTURES INC. (OKBET, OKGAMES, OKFUN, OKPLAY, OKLUCK, OKSPORTS, OKWIN AND OKZONE) 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**

Career Opportunity in **GAVIN VENTURES INC. (OKBET, OKGAMES, OKFUN, OKPLAY, OKLUCK, OKSPORTS, OKWIN AND OKZONE)**

POSITION TITLE: BRANDING SPECIALIST

JOB DESCRIPTION:
 *Develop and implement branding and marketing strategies targeting Mandarin-speaking audiences
 *Translate and localize marketing materials (English ↔ Mandarin) ensuring cultural relevance
 *Manage brand voice, messaging, and positioning across digital and offline channels
 *Coordinate with marketing, design, and content teams to create campaigns aligned with brand identity
 *Conduct market research on Mandarin-speaking demographics and competitors
 *Handle client communications, presentations, and negotiations in Mandarin
 *Monitor brand performance metrics and recommend improvements

QUALIFICATION:
 *Fluent in Mandarin and English (spoken and written)
 *Ability to work in a fast-paced, cross-cultural environment
 *Excellent communication and presentation skills
 *Ability to multitask and work in a fast-paced environment
 *Strong attention to detail and problem-solving skills

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Career Opportunity in **TOTAL GAMEZONE XTREME INCORPORATED**

POSITION TITLE: VIP ACCOUNT SUPERVISOR

JOB DESCRIPTION:
 *Manage and oversee relationships with VIP or high-value clients
 *Act as the primary point of contact for client concerns and escalations
 *Ensure timely and high-quality service delivery to all VIP accounts
 *Supervise and support account managers or executives handling VIP clients
 *Develop personalized strategies to retain and grow key accounts
 *Monitor client satisfaction and implement improvements when needed
 *Prepare reports on account performance, client feedback, and revenue growth
 *Coordinate with internal teams (sales, operations, finance) to meet client needs
 *Identify upselling and cross-selling opportunities
 *Maintain confidentiality and professionalism in handling sensitive client data

QUALIFICATION:
 *Fluent in Mandarin and English (spoken and written)
 *Strong leadership and team management skills
 *Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
 *Customer-focused mindset with strong problem-solving abilities
 *Ability to handle pressure and manage escalations effectively
 *Strong organizational and multitasking skills

Applications may be sent to: CHAVEZ, CELESTE MONTAÑO Email: Corp.compliance@digipius.com.ph

COMPANY / EMPLOYER	NAME OF FOREIGN NATIONAL INTENDING TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION
COMPANY NAME: TOTAL GAMEZONE XTREME INCORPORATED ADDRESS: 2nd FLOOR STARMALL EDSA COR SHAW BLVD, WACK-WACK GREENHILLS, MANDALUYONG CITY NATURE OF BUSINESS: AMUSEMENT AND RECREATION	NAME: VIERU, MARIUS-DUMITRU ADDRESS: TIME SQUARE WEST TAGUIG CITY NATIONALITY: ROMANIAN INTENDED PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT: TWO (2) YEARS

TOTAL GAMEZONE XTREME INCORPORATED 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**

Career Opportunity in **TOTAL GAMEZONE XTREME INCORPORATED**

POSITION TITLE: PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICER

JOB DESCRIPTION:
 *Assist in developing project plans, timelines, and budgets
 *Monitor project progress and track deliverables
 *Coordinate with internal teams, stakeholders, and external vendors
 *Prepare status reports, dashboards, and presentations for management
 *Support resource planning and allocation
 *Facilitate meetings, including taking minutes and tracking action items
 *Help implement and improve project management processes and tools

QUALIFICATION:
 *Fluent in Mandarin and English (spoken and written)
 *Strong organizational and time management skills
 *Excellent communication (English proficiency is important in PH corporate settings)
 *Attention to detail and problem-solving ability

Applications may be sent to: CHAVEZ, CELESTE MONTAÑO Email: Corp.compliance@digipius.com.ph

COMPANY / EMPLOYER	NAME OF FOREIGN NATIONAL INTENDING TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION
COMPANY NAME: TOTAL GAMEZONE XTREME INCORPORATED ADDRESS: 2nd FLOOR STARMALL EDSA COR SHAW BLVD, WACK-WACK GREENHILLS, MANDALUYONG CITY NATURE OF BUSINESS: AMUSEMENT AND RECREATION	NAME: PENG, YUN-JHU ADDRESS: TWO SERENDORA SEQUOIA TAGUIG CITY NATIONALITY: TAIWANESE INTENDED PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT: TWO (2) YEARS

TOTAL GAMEZONE XTREME INCORPORATED 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**

Career Opportunity in **A-WON'S AUTO SUPPLY CORPORATION**

GENERAL MANAGER

Job Description:
 1. Overseeing daily business operations.
 2. Developing and implementing growth strategies
 3. Training low-level managers and staff.
 4. Creating and managing budgets.

Qualifications/Requirements:
 1. At least one (1) year of experience as a General Manager.
 2. Proven leadership and people management skills.
 3. Strong background in strategic planning and business development.
 4. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

Applications may be sent to: **MARIEL B. TONDO** awons2004@gmail.com

Company/ Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
A-WON'S AUTO SUPPLY CORPORATION 215 West San Francisco St., California Village San Bartolome, District 5, Quezon City - Wholesaler	WON HEUM PARK - 72 San Francisco Street, San Bartolome, Novaliches, Quezon City - Korean National - Three (3) Years

A-WON'S AUTO SUPPLY CORPORATION 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 (NCR)** located at **967 Maligaya Street, Malate Manila**.

Availability of renewables seen driving data center investment interest — DICT

THE Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) said the availability of renewable energy will loom large in the investment criteria of data-center companies as prices of fossil fuels turn volatile.

Information and Communications Technology Secretary Henry Rhoel R. Aguda said: “*Ayaw ng mga* data center ng fossil fuel (the data center industry will not bet on fossil fuels). *Marami tayong solar* (we have a lot of solar power), so all the more they will come to us,” he told reporters on the sidelines of the Anti-Red Tape Authority 3rd Telco Forum on Monday.

“A lot of them will look for other data center locations, so they might move to the Philippines,” he added.

The Philippines currently has an energy mix of 26% renewable, though its power grid remains heavily dependent on coal and gas.

He added that the viability of the Philippines has been enhanced by its fiber optic cable connections.

“Meta is already crossing the Philippines through the bypass,” he said, referring to Facebook parent Meta Platforms, Inc. “Two more of the major operators are going to go

through the Philippines. So soon, the three household names that provide our social media platforms will go through the Philippines,” he added.

He added that the Philippines is due to release a harmonized data sovereignty law and the data embassy policy, which are meant to incentivize local industries that locate in the country.

For its part, ARTA said the Asian Development Bank has completed a study on streamlining approval processes in the digital infrastructure and renewable energy industries.

“The study is already completed, we are already in the implementation phase,” ARTA Secretary Ernesto V. Perez told reporters.

“Of course, our target is within the year we should implement. The most effective way to implement it through the provincial one-stop shops. The big challenge (to streamlining) is at the local government unit level,” he added.

He said that he required the eight regional offices of ARTA to have at least one provincial one-stop shop this year. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

Prices of some basic goods to rise after mid-April

THE price of some basic goods could increase after April 16, the Department of Trade and Industry said after conducting a round of consultations with manufacturers.

“There is no price increase for basic necessities and prime commodities (BNPC) until April 16,” Trade Secretary Ma. Cristina A. Roque said at a briefing on Tuesday.

Afterwards, “definitely, we can expect some price increase but not for all,” she added.

The consultations with BNPC manufacturers will resume after the Easter break, after which price advisories will be issued, she said.

Ms. Roque discouraged the practice of panic buying, saying the supply of basic goods is ample.

“*Marami po tayong supply*” (Supplies are adequate) she said. “The manufacturers have assured us that we have enough supply.”

Republic Act (RA) No. 7581 or the Price Act, as amended by RA 10623, classifies as basic necessities rice, corn, bread, fresh, dried and canned fish and other marine products, fresh pork, beef and poultry meat, fresh eggs, fresh and processed milk, fresh vegetables, root crops, coffee, sugar, cooking oil, salt, laundry soap, detergent, firewood, charcoal, candles, and drugs classified as essential by the Department of Health (DoH).

Prime commodities under the law include fresh fruit, flour, dried, processed and canned pork, beef, and poultry meat, dairy products not falling under basic necessities, noodles, onions, garlic, vinegar, *patis*, soy sauce, toilet soap, fertilizer, pesticide, herbicide, poultry, swine and cattle feed, veterinary products for poultry, swine and cattle, paper, school supplies, nipa shingles, *sawali* (woven bamboo panels), cement, clinker, GI sheets, hollow blocks, plywood, plyboard, construction nails, batteries, electrical supplies, light bulbs, steel wire, and all drugs not classified as essential drugs by the DoH. — **Beatriz Marie D. Cruz**

MARINA allows up to 30% rise in fares, cargo charges

BOAT FARES and ship cargo rates have been allowed to rise as much as 30%, the industry’s regulator, the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), said.

In a March 30 advisory, MARINA authorized domestic shipping companies, ship operators, shippers, charterers, and cargo owners to raise their charges by up to 30% from the rates published in their certificates of public convenience (CPC) or franchises, citing global fuel costs and state of national energy emergency.

The order, signed by Administrator Sonia B. Malaluan, said increases may only be implemented at the pace of the weekly required rate adjustments (RRA) issued by MARINA.

“Shipping operators must observe the RRA to be issued by MARINA on a weekly basis. The RRA shall serve as the maximum allowable limit for any rate adjustments implemented by shipping operators specifically attributed to fuel price fluctuations,” it said.

MARINA said the 30% cap on rate adjustments also covers the

collection of fuel surcharges of up to 20% of base fares, announced earlier this month.

The regulator added that the transport of agricultural products, basic and critical commodities will continue to be given priority and will remain subject to a 20% limit for rate adjustment.

Operators must also notify MARINA and the public at least three days before implementing any upward rate adjustment, it said, noting that they must publish the notification in a newspaper of general or regional circulation or post notice in ports, vessels, company premises, passenger terminals, and official websites and social media accounts.

“Should global fuel prices decrease, operators are mandated to implement a corresponding downward rate adjustment. Similar to increases, these must be posted or published and will take effect three calendar days following the notification,” MARINA said.

MARINA said it will regularly monitor freight and passenger rates to deter overcharging.

“The inflation impact should be modest and sector-specific, not broad-based, since transport is just one cost component,” Reyes Tacandong & Co. Senior Adviser Jonathan L. Ravelas said via Viber on Tuesday.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, in its month-ahead inflation forecast, projected March inflation at 3.1% to 3.9%, up from 1.8% a year earlier and 2.4% in February.

The central bank attributed the acceleration to rising fuel, electricity, and rice prices, compounded by the peso’s sustained depreciation.

“But allowing reasonable rate increases actually reduces the risk of disruption. From a policy standpoint, it’s better to absorb a manageable cost pass-through than face delays or shortages in the movement of goods,” Mr. Ravelas said.

Ateneo Center for Economic Research and Development Senior Research Fellow Ser Percival K. Peña-Reyes said the move is linked to fuel price volatility, as shipping companies face rising

operating costs that could lead to adverse consequences if fares are not adjusted.

“Some routes might become unprofitable. Service frequency could decline. Supply chains could be disrupted. So, the policy is a trade-off between short-term inflation pressure and maintaining stable logistics services,” he said via Viber.

The rise in fares and cargo charges will likely add to inflation through higher logistics costs, especially for food, construction materials, and basic goods, according to Philippine Institute for Development Studies Senior Research Fellow John Paolo R. Rivera.

“As transport costs increase, businesses tend to pass these on to consumers. It may also affect the flow of goods as some operators could reduce trips or adjust routes to manage costs, leading to delays. While necessary for industry viability, it risks amplifying second-round inflation effects if fuel prices remain high,” Mr. Rivera said. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**