

MAP Insights *column in* BUSINESSWORLD

Tariff rates should be lowered to help poor Filipinos

August 15, 2023



Mr. BENEDICT S. CARANDANG

“MAPping the Future” *column in* INQUIRER

**“Debt crisis, AI, SME
digitalization:
The hot topics of
Summer Davos 2023”**

August 14, 2023

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“Tariff rates should be lowered to help poor Filipinos” *(from page 1)*

(This is the Management Association of the Philippines’ “Position Paper on the Comprehensive Review of the MFN Tariff Structure.”)

In the midst of the ongoing move by the Tariff Commission (TC) and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) to review and reform the tariff structure of the Philippines, the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) calls on the government to move towards achieving a tariff structure that:

1. Supports food security for Filipinos, especially accessibility and affordability of competitively priced food, via low tariffs on food products;

2. Strengthens sustainable agri-food value chains, especially domestic agricultural value-adding enterprises including processing, storage, and logistics, through a rational tariff structure where tariff rates on inputs do not exceed those on finished products;

3. Is neutral across industries and avoids distortions and unwarranted protection arising from tariff peaks, currently seen primarily in agricultural products; and,

4. Reduces incentives and opportunities for corruption and smuggling by unifying Minimum Access Volume (MAV) and non-MAV tariff rates, and keeping tariffs relatively low and uniform across all goods (with a maximum 10% to 15%) to keep food prices affordable, especially to the poor.

Filipino families have historically been burdened with higher food prices than consumers in other countries across the ASEAN and beyond. The burden is worsened by relatively lower incomes, the bulk of which must be spent on food because food prices are higher than elsewhere. Worse, lower-income families are forced to purchase food products of low nutritional value, leading to a worsening vicious cycle of poverty, hunger and poor nutrition, lowered human capacity, hence persistent and further deepening poverty.

Yet Philippine tariffs on agricultural and food commodities are higher than those applied to goods in general. The TC reports that the simple average of tariffs applied on agricultural products is 12%, while the average for all products is 8%. Trade-weighted averages show the same pattern, with 9% for agriculture, nearly double that for all goods at 5%.

Agricultural tariffs have remained high because these have been generally excluded from tariff adjustments over the past decades, with agricultural products deemed “sensitive” levied the highest statutory rates of up to 65%. In 2015, two-thirds or 66% of Philippine agricultural output by value was shielded from foreign competition by MFN tariffs of 40% or more. The 2018 Philippines Trade Policy Review, jointly undertaken by the Philippine government and the World Trade Organization, showed that the majority of commodities have MFN tariffs ranging from zero to 20%. However, about 6% of lines have tariffs significantly above 20%, reaching up to 65%.

The Trade Policy Review also observed that the tariff peaks translate

into a reduced incentive for domestic value adding. For example, high tariffs on corn at 40% dampen incentives to manufacture livestock and aquaculture feeds within the country, which are vital in the meat and fishery industries that provide the protein needs of Filipinos.

This exceptional level of protection has dampened the impetus for government and agricultural producers to achieve higher levels of productivity, hence lower costs and prices, to be comparable to and competitive with that of our neighbors. The long-term and lasting solution to attain food security for Filipinos is to implement game-changing reforms for productivity improvement, such as farm consolidation, better water management, and effective extension systems.

Maintaining high import tariffs will only remove the urgency to pursue these.

Most of the agriculture commodities with very high tariffs are food products (sugar, meat, fish, rice) or inputs to local manufacturing and value addition (corn, meat, fish, sugar, etc.). These commodities are prominent and crucial in family food consumption, food security, and general inflation.*

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) reports that on average, food and agricultural items have accounted for 38% of inflation since 2017. The recent and disheartening episodes of inflation on specific food items, such as pork, fish, sugar, garlic, and onions, highlight the disproportionate impact of high tariffs that underlie high domestic food prices.

Trade enhances food security.

It improves access to food, lowers food costs, mitigates supply shocks, reduces inflationary pressures, and ultimately strengthens economic and social prosperity. High tariffs have long been shown to be counter-productive, and lead to reduced investment, low or stagnant wages, and higher rates of malnutrition. Using protective trade policy to help farmers causes unwanted collateral damage to the much wider mass of consumers, especially the poor who suffer the long-term consequences of high-priced food.

But the positive economic gains of greater trade must be accompanied by effective implementation of focused adjustment and assistance measures carefully aimed at adversely affected sectors, especially small farmers. Government must refocus its support and assistance to farmers from high levels of trade protection to effective improvement of productivity and competitiveness.

In sum, removal of existing peaks and achieving low uniform rates in a tariff structure that provides equal incentives across domestic industries will encourage more and wider agricultural processing and value-adding, help control inflation, and enhance the country's food security. We urge the TC and NEDA to move the Philippine economy in this direction.

**Annex A accompanying this position paper can be found here: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/142608056@N02/53115376424/in/album-72177720310480989>*

"Debt crisis, AI, SME digitalization: The hot topics of Summer Davos 2023"

(from page 1)



Mr. BENEDICT S. CARANDANG

The World Economic Forum's 14th Annual Meeting of the New Champions (AMNC23) brought together influential leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators from around the globe on June 27 to June 29. Also known as the "Summer Davos Forum," AMNC23 was held in Tianjin, People's Republic of China, with the theme "Entrepreneurship: The Driving Force of the Global Economy." The annual meeting aims to foster collaborative efforts in addressing the critical geopolitical and geoeconomic challenges facing humanity—such as sustainable energy transition, internet of things (IoT) security and safeguarding nature and climate.

In the opening ceremony, Chinese Premier Li Qiang emphasized the need for communication, cooperation and openness to sustain economic globalization and global supply chain stability. He highlighted China's major contributions to global economic growth—being the first in the world for goods trading in six consecutive years—and outlined China's commitment to innovation, sustainability and global cooperation to aid world economic recovery.

This year's topics centered on key issues

that have the potential to either transform or derail economies and societies worldwide.

A debt crisis for developing countries

Soaring global debt and rising interest rates are forcing governments worldwide to divert funding from important development goals, such as education and climate change. The issue is exacerbated in developing countries that are forced to get credit at very high interest rates.

Global debt hit \$305 trillion in previous months due to compounding shocks, such as COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine. Developing countries, in particular, saw external debt levels grow by over 15 percent last year compared with prepandemic levels. The interest cost on external borrowing is, on average, three times more for developing countries than for developed countries, resulting in developing countries using a far greater percentage of their domestic revenue on interest payments.

At the Summer Davos Forum, political and economic leaders called for better coordination and communication among major world economies to help curb the global debt crisis. Experts stressed that governments, the private sector and international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund need to create new funding mechanisms. International lenders were also urged to increase access to long-term public financing and improve market borrowing terms for developing countries.

The need for AI guardrails and responsible design

At the Summer Davos forum, experts agreed that artificial intelligence (AI) models are powerful, creative technology that could change human civilization. One session discussed AI's potential to revolutionize health care by improving medical diagnosis, health-care delivery and clinical trial selections. A report was also shared about the success of FireAId, a pilot initiative that uses AI to predict wildfires with 80 percent

5 accuracy rate.

Forums discussed the need for a framework to develop responsible generative AI models and address AI's potential negative consequences. Emilija Stojmenova Duh, Slovenia's Minister of Digital Transformation, expressed concerns about the biases inherent in AI systems and the need to eliminate them. Darko Matovski, CEO of CausaLens, stated that to build trust in AI innovation, humans need to understand how AI systems operate; AI, in turn, must be able to explain its decisions and actions.

To regulate AI, panel members leaned toward a public-private approach between governments and the tech industry. Legislators alone might create regulation that's inadequate in controlling risks or stifles positive innovation. Tech companies have a better understanding of AI and thus can help governments worldwide ensure that people feel secure in a world with AI, especially those who may be displaced by AI development.

Digital inclusion for entrepreneurs of all sizes

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) make up the majority of companies worldwide. However, while the digital economy contributes a significant portion to the global gross domestic product, the gaps in digitalization between large businesses and SMEs prevent digital productivity gains from translating into overall economic growth.

SMEs face challenges in investing in digital upgrades due to high costs, technological barriers and security challenges. A promising solution is the creation of collaborative technology-driven models to help increase SMEs' digital capabilities in payment, security, marketing and more, at a lower cost. The "Platform + Independent Software Vendor (ISV)" model, for instance, allows ISVs to use a platform's repertoire of open APIs to build a customized solution for an

SME's unique need. An example in Hong Kong is restaurant outlet Kitchen 11 Food Court, which uses Alipay's Smart Restaurant solution to resolve bottlenecks during peak hours. The food court enables customers to use the Alipay app to view menus, order and pay on their phones, removing the in-person frictions of queuing, ordering and paying at every restaurant stall.

SMEs also struggle with being data-ready and data-driven. Many are unable to unlock valuable insights that can help them gain a competitive advantage due to limited resources, a lack of data policies and difficulty extracting value from data. Multiple Summer Davos sessions called upon stakeholders to help SMEs prioritize data readiness through collaborations between the public and private sectors. Private sector players were urged to share best practices and knowledge on quality management and data governance. Governments and regulators were asked to simplify regulatory frameworks and provide incentives for responsible and ethical data management. International and civil society organizations were encouraged to promote the responsible use of data and provide open-source data tools and training resources.

This year's Summer Davos concluded with experts emphasizing the need for business communities and public sectors to work together to maintain the benefits of a connected and relationship-based world. For Philippine SMEs, embracing AI, data readiness and vital collaborations with the government and private sector can transform their decision-making processes. More importantly, these can help them respond to market trends, streamline operations, capitalize on growth prospects and ignite innovation.

(This article reflects the personal opinion of the author and not the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines or MAP. The author is NextGen vice chair of MAP ICT Committee and vice president for external relations at First Circle. This article was co-written with Jess Jacutan, First Circle's content marketing lead. Feedback at map@map.org.ph and benedict@firstcircle.ph).

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BOARD TALK

Business Features Editor
Doris Dumlac-AbadillaWarning: Here is what every business needs
product and service development**"Debt crisis, AI, SME digitalization:
The hot topics of
Summer Davos 2023"**

by

Mr. BENEDICT S. CARANDANG
NextGen Vice Chair of
MAP ICT CommitteeVice President
for External Relations
of First Circle**"MAPping the Future"**
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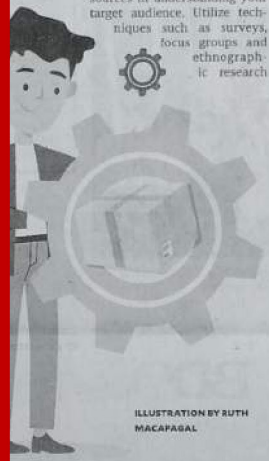
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**Implementing the
needs-based approach**

Adopting a needs-based
approach requires a shift in
mindset, processes and organi-
zational culture. Here's a road
map for CEOs and business
owners looking to integrate this
approach into their operations:

1. Deep customer under-
standing: Invest time and re-
sources in understanding your
target audience. Utilize tech-
niques such as surveys,
focus groups and
ethnograph-
ic research

ILLUSTRATION BY RUTH
MACAPAGAL

to uncover their pain points,
aspirations and preferences.
Create buyer personas to hu-
manize your customers and
make their needs tangible for
your teams.

If you are a business lead-
er, CEO or business owner,
you must also put yourself out
there to experience your cus-
tomers' pain points regularly
and repeatedly. There is no
substitute for that. The more
you and your top people sit in
an ivory tower, the more your
doomday looms.

This could lead to another
bad phenomenon: a company
and its leadership fall in love
with new products and services
they develop just because they
like them—without ensuring
customers do. This was, by the
way, one of the main reasons
why Nokia missed the smart-
phone trend years ago. Do you
want to join them in becoming
another famous failure? I don't
think so.

2. Cross-functional collabora-
tion: Break down silos within
your organization to encour-
age collaboration across de-
partments. A multidisciplinary
approach fosters diverse per-
spectives that can lead to more
holistic solutions. Encourage
regular communication and
knowledge sharing among
teams to ensure everyone is
aligned with customer needs.

3. Iterative develop-
ment—the magic of the mini-
mum viable product (MVP):
We always recommend the fol-
lowing principles to our clients:
Dream very big but have tight
feedback loops and then iter-
ate. The quality of the output is
almost always a function of the
iterations.

Move away from linear de-
velopment processes and em-
brace an iterative approach.
Build prototypes or MVPs to
gather early feedback from cus-

tomers. This allows you to make
informed refinements based on
real-world insights, minimizing
the risk of investing heavily in
a concept that doesn't resonate
with the market.

Imagine you're a chef work-
ing on a brand-new recipe for a
dish. The idea of an MVP in the
business world is similar.

An MVP is like a basic ver-
sion of a product or service
that has just the essential fea-
tures needed to work and be
helpful. It's like serving a sim-
plified version of your dish to
see if people like the taste
before you spend much time
making it fancier.

Just as you would only cook
an elaborate meal if you're sure
people will enjoy the primary
flavors, businesses create an
MVP to test if their idea is
something customers want.
This way, they can spend less
time and money on something
that might not be well-received.

4. Embrace technology:
Leverage technology to gain
deeper insights into cus-
tomer behavior and prefer-
ences. Data analytics, social
listening tools and artificial
intelligence-driven sentiment
analysis can provide valu-
able real-time information
about customer sentiments
and emerging trends. This
data-driven approach can en-
hance your ability to respond
swiftly to changing needs, no



Tom Oliver, a "digital management guru,"
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many of the world's most influential family
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**MAPPING
THE FUTURE**

BENEDICT CARANDANG

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MAP INSIGHTS
BENEDICTA DU-BALADAD
and **CIELITO F. HABITO**

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But the positive economic gains of greater trade must be accompanied by effective implementation of focused adjustment and assistance measures carefully aimed at adversely affected sectors, especially small farmers. Government must refocus its support and assistance to farmers from high levels of trade protection to effective improvement of productivity and competitiveness.

In sum, removal of existing peaks and achieving low uniform rates in a tariff structure that provides equal incentives across domestic industries will encourage more and wider agricultural processing and value-adding, help control inflation, and enhance the country's food security. We urge the TC and NEDA to move the Philippine economy in this direction. ■

*Annex A accompanying this position paper can be found online at <https://bbsr.bsp.gov.ph/Assets/Docs/AnnexA.pdf>.

BENEDICTA DU-BALADAD is the MAP president. CIELITO F. HABITO is the government-in-charge (GIC) of the MAP Chapter on Residence and Recovery, and the GIC of the MAP Campaign Against Malnutrition and Child Stunting (CAMACS) team ENDORANGE.

"Tariff rates should be lowered to help poor Filipinos"

"MAP Insights"
Column in **BUSINESSWORLD**
August 15, 2023

Resilience, and the finance are at the PDE reunion

MY CUP OF LIBERTY
BIENVENIDO S. OPLAS, JR.

performances of -0.2% and 0.4%. ASEAN's richest economy, Singapore, grew by 0.5% while South Korea's was 0.9%. The Philippines grew by 4.3% and it is gridding to a "halt"? That is a ridiculous political job.

I checked the GDP performance of the world's top 50 largest economies in GDP size nominal values in 2022 (No. 1 was the USA, No. 2 China, No. 39 the Philippines, No. 50 Portugal). Of these 50 economies, five have no quarterly data, and as of this writing, 22 have GDP data until Q1 only (including Japan, Thailand, India, Malaysia, and Canada), and 29 have data until Q2. I averaged the Q1 and Q2 or first half (H1) performance of the 23 economies that provided the data, and the results are very interesting. (See Table D)

One — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has had the fastest H1 performance at 8.5%, followed by the Philippines and China with 5.4%. But the UAE's fast growth rested on a low base, with low growth of only 0.6% in H1 2022, which was the same for China with only 2.6% last year. Whereas the Philippines' 5.4% rested on a high base, with high growth of 7.8% last year. So, it shows that the Philippines has the most dynamic, most resilient economy out of the 23 here.

Two — If the other 22 economies report their Q2 performance, their H1 performance very likely will be lower than Philippines' because their Q1 data were all lower than the country's 4.3%.

Three — The global economic environment this year is worse than last year. Of the 23 economies, only five (the UAE, China, Mexico, Hong Kong, and Russia) have H1 2023 results that are higher than in H1 2022. Among the other 18 economies, some suffered huge growth deceleration, like the UK which was at 7.2% in H1 2022 then 0.3% in H1 2023; Austria, which went from 7.5% to 0.8%; Singapore, which went from 4.3% to 0.5%; Taiwan, from 3.4% to -0.7%; and Sweden from 4.7% to -0.8%. Germany is technically in a recession with -0.2% in both Q1 and Q2.

With an economic resilience like this, the Philippines' economic team has actually done a good job. Minus a political agenda, and just a pure economic assessment considering the worsening global and regional economic environment, one sees that the Philippines deserves a toast.

PUBLIC DEBT/GDP RATIO

Our big issue that the economic team must address seriously is the big jump in the country's public debt/GDP ratio since the ill-advised strict and prolonged lockdown dictatorship of 2020-2021. Recall again that the Philippines' GDP contraction of 9.5% in 2020 was the worst in Asia, and the worst in Philippine economic history since World War 2.

I put together a table comparing public debt/GDP ratios. While the Philippines' ratio has increased to 87.9% in 2022, this is still lower and more manageable compared to the 100% of Malaysia, 76.7% of Pakistan and China, 83% of India, above 100% of Singapore and the G7 countries except Germany. (See Table 2)

We should focus on reducing the numerator (public debt)

TABLE 2
General government gross debt as % of GDP

| Country | 2012 | 2019 | 2022 | 2023 |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| US | 103.0 | 108.7 | 121.7 | 122.2 |
| Canada | 87.2 | 90.2 | 106.6 | 105.1 |
| Italy | 136.5 | 134.1 | 144.7 | 140.3 |
| France | 88.4 | 97.4 | 110.1 | 111.4 |
| Spain | 90.0 | 98.2 | 112.0 | 110.5 |
| UK | 83.0 | 84.5 | 102.6 | 106.2 |
| Germany | 80.7 | 58.9 | 66.5 | 67.2 |
| Japan | 226.1 | 236.4 | 261.3 | 258.2 |
| Singapore | 106.7 | 127.8 | 134.2 | 134.5 |
| India | 68.0 | 75.0 | 83.1 | 83.2 |
| China | 34.4 | 60.4 | 77.1 | 82.4 |
| Pakistan | 56.7 | 77.5 | 75.8 | 73.6 |
| Malaysia | 53.8 | 57.1 | 66.3 | 67.0 |
| Thailand | 41.9 | 41.1 | 60.5 | 61.0 |
| Philippines | 45.7 | 37.0 | 57.5 | 58.7 |
| Korea | 35.0 | 42.1 | 54.3 | 53.3 |
| Indonesia | 23.0 | 30.6 | 39.9 | 39.1 |
| Vietnam | 38.3 | 40.8 | 37.1 | 36.3 |
| Taiwan | 39.2 | 32.1 | 21.5 | 25.0 |

SOURCE: IMF, WORLD ECONOMIC OUTLOOK 2022/2023/2024

while expanding the denominator (GDP size). Political hit jobs via dishonest economic assessments do not contribute to solving these important twin challenges.

DIOKNO AND PANGANDAMAN LECTURES

This coming Saturday, Aug. 19, the UP School of Economics (UPSE) Program in Development Economics (PDE) Alumni Association will hold a homecoming. The first program is "A Conversation with Finance and Budget Secretaries on Financing Sustainable Growth" with Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno (7th PDE batch) and Budget Secretary Amesh Pangandaman (33rd PDE batch) as speakers. This will be held at the UPSE auditorium in UP

Diliman at 4 p.m. This is open to the public.

There are oodles of issues in finance and accounting in the country and they are the top officials of the government to address these issues. See for instance these recent reports in *BusinessWorld*, mostly written by my other favorite objective economics reporter, Luisa Muela-Jacinto C. Jenson.

A. Finance and taxation reports. "Unpaid tobacco excise cutting gov't PRRs this year." "Sale of defunct GOC's assets expected to raise over P25B." "Outstanding debt hits P14.1B-T as of end-June" (Aug. 2). "Outstanding debt seen to hit P13.6-T in 2024" (Aug. 3). "BIR files 127 tax evasion complaints" (Aug. 4). "Falling interest payments benefit other gov't programs" (Aug. 9). "Q2

OPINION

"Alternative to college"

by **CTALK - Cito Beltran**

The Philippine Star

August 14, 2023 | 12:00am

While the DepEd has been talking about their Matatag curriculum for K-10, business owners and leaders have likewise been suggesting if not pushing for policy makers to review or realign post-K-12 options other than the traditional four-year courses Filipinos flock to.

During a recent interview on our program AGENDA on Cignal TV, we had a chance to interview Atty. Benedicta Du-Baladad, president of the Management Association of the Philippines, who spoke about the many projects and concerns of MAP. As the pre-eminent organization representing the long-term concerns of business organizations and leaders, the MAP has consistently voiced their concerns on the quality of education and graduates in the country as the future talent pool of corporations and industries.

Even before our talk, I already knew that MAP was seriously invested in the current and future state of students and their education. The organization has been working with companies such as Harbest, the agricultural technology provider in developing "food gardens" to turn back the serious problem of malnutrition among students, even among mothers during their first 1,000 days covering pregnancy, birth and child rearing.

The sense of urgency placed on this concern is because malnutrition is not just confined to physiological stunting but the equally destructive intellectual stunting that prevents malnourished children from learning and developing their intelligence potential.

Beyond physical malnutrition, many employers as well as graduates are facing the job match challenge. Many college graduates can't find jobs and many employers can't find qualified/experienced graduates for specific businesses and industries. The suggestion was for the education sector to audit or review the available menu of college courses, the level of employability of graduates and compensation in order to determine the relevance and usefulness of those courses.

Atty. Du-Baladad even raised the question of how many lawyers, doctors or IT experts does the country need? It was a valid point and I chimed in by pointing out the continued popularity of Mass Communication, Journalism and Broadcasting in an era when traditional media outlets have almost all been shrunk to bits by social media and digital technology along with political re-engineering.

Drawing from my days in UP Diliman, I suggested that the MAP or higher education officials should push for placing quotas or making quota courses for overly popular studies, possibly requiring aptitude tests and entrance exams for such courses in order to limit the volume of enrollees and potentially unemployed graduates.

Adding to the mismanaged offerings of college courses, the majority of Filipino students can't afford a four-year course. Even with the sprinkling of free educational programs, the daily cost of the commute, daily expense, etc. for four years is something unsustainable for the average Filipino student.

In contrast to all that, the jobs are mostly in the urban or metro area and not in provinces. What we also want to reduce is the wasted money on a four-

9 year college education that does not even give parents and graduates a respectable ROI in terms of wages and benefits in the future.

Perhaps it is about time that the Commission on Higher Education, along with Congress, consider making investments in honest-to-goodness training and education centers that support the goals of the technical-vocational intent of K-12.

For instance, I have long been advocating for the national government to establish a counterpart of the ITCPH or the International Training Center for Pig Husbandry in every region or, ideally, in every province of the Philippines. The ITCPH provides courses and training on hog raising in almost every aspect and would be ideal in training farm "technicians."

With the country realizing the gains to be made in tourism, training centers for marine and standard engine mechanics would surely be better aligned. Every tourist destination and 90 percent of hotels and resorts we stayed in have badly maintained air conditioners. It takes very little to conduct training seminars for air conditioning service technicians.

While practically every major city and developed town has a "tourism officer," hardly any town seems to have invested in an honest-to-goodness tourism business development center, where locals learn of different tourism-related business opportunities, business development studies or project studies, documentary requirements as well as actual training programs for employees.

In addition to all these tourism-related potentials, there is also the tourism support services that barely get any attention such as food production, programming,

handling etc. Every resort or hotel operator knows the nightmares that come when food supplies are disrupted.

During my early days in resort development and operations in Busuanga, we often dread the coming full moon because it meant that fish would be scarce. Being the "Last Frontier" also meant you relied on wild caught crabs, etc. In other words, you had to make up or manage the expectations of guests.

In the beginning we compensated by serving a native lechon on full moon days. Eventually we had to put up crab fattening pens and a floating fish cage for lapu-lapu, raised free range chickens and built a small piggery just to make sure we could serve on demand.

I share these stories because they have a common thread: I learned most of the skills or knowledge from training seminars that were provided by the now defunct Technology Livelihood Resources Seminar.

I often refer to myself as a frustrated veterinary medicine student after quitting on the goal during my pre-vet studies. But through the years, I have learned to do quite a lot of "vet-like" work by way of exposure and self studies. I've managed to have a backyard piggery, free range chickens and a small game fowl farm because of exposure to B-Meg veterinarians and specialists, as well as training from the ITCPH.

What the MAP suggests makes perfect sense. It's about real skills training and not just degrees.

* * *

E-mail: utalk2ctalk@gmail.com

“Gov’t urged to consider uniform tariff structure”

by **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

BusinessWorld

August 15, 2023 | 12:33 am

THE MANAGEMENT Association of the Philippines (MAP) urged the government to keep tariffs low and uniform for agricultural and food products to keep food prices affordable for more Filipinos.

The MAP said in a position statement that the government should consider a tariff structure that “reduces incentives and opportunities for corruption and smuggling by unifying the minimum access volume (MAV) and non-MAV tariff rates.”

It said that tariffs should be kept “relatively low and uniform across all goods with a maximum 10-15%” to ensure the affordability of food prices.

The MAP issued the position paper as the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and Tariff Commission (TC) are moving to review and reform the tariff structure of the Philippines.

“The removal of existing peaks and achieving low uniform rates in a tariff structure that provides equal incentives across domestic industries will encourage more and wider agricultural processing and value-adding, help control inflation, and enhance the country’s food security. We urge the TC and NEDA to move the Philippine economy in this direction,” the MAP said in the paper signed by MAP President Benedicta Du-Baladad and MAP Governor-in-Charge for Resilience and Recovery Cluster and former NEDA Secretary Cielito F. Habito.

The MAP noted that agricultural tariffs have remained high as these are generally excluded from tariff adjustments “with agricultural products deemed ‘sensitive’ levied the highest statutory rates of up to 65%.”

“This exceptional level of protection has dampened the impetus for government and agricultural producers to achieve higher levels of productivity, hence, lower costs and prices, to be comparable to and competitive with that of our neighbors,” it said.

The MAP recommended that agricultural commodities with high tariff rates should be reviewed for reduction.

“Most of the agriculture commodities with very high tariffs are food products (sugar, meat, fish, rice) or inputs to local manufacturing and value addition (corn, meat, fish, sugar, etc.). These

commodities are prominent and crucial in family food consumption, food security, and general inflation,” it said.

The MAP said the Philippines should have a “rational tariff structure” in which tariff rates on inputs do not go beyond the tariffs imposed on finished products.

“High tariffs have long been shown to be counter-productive, and lead to reduced investment, low or stagnant wages, and higher rates of malnutrition. Using protective trade policy to help farmers causes unwanted collateral damage to the much wider mass of consumers, especially the poor who suffer the long-term consequences of high-priced food,” it said.

Sought for comment, Foundation for Economic Freedom President Calixto V. Chikiamco said he agreed with the MAP’s proposal but suggested that variable tariffs be allowed.

“If I may tweak it a little bit to allow for variable tariffs, a bit higher during the harvest season and a bit lower, during the lean season,” Mr. Chikiamco said via mobile phone. “The variable tariffs help to mitigate the downward pressure on domestic prices during harvest season. Also, this is politically more acceptable to the farmers.”

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. Chief Economist Michael L. Ricafort said in a Viber message that the MAP’s proposal could address surging food prices and curb inflation.

“This is one effective way to further bring down food prices and overall inflation, as one intervention measure that the government can implement by reducing and unifying import tariff rates on imported food products, while also reducing the opportunity for smuggling brought about by the relatively higher tariffs,” Mr. Ricafort said.

“One benefit is the lower retail food prices for consumers, in terms of reduced import tariffs passed on to them as savings,” he added.

In March, the TC started the comprehensive tariff review program of the Most Favored Nation Tariff Schedule from 2024 to 2028. The tariff review is done every five years as provided under Republic Act No. 10863 or the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act.

The review covers tariffs for various items including agriculture and food products; chemicals and chemical products; textiles, paper and leather products; metal and non-metal products; and machinery and transport equipment.

MULTI-SECTORAL GROUP PARTNERSHIP MOA SIGNING

AUGUST 8, 2023 | TUESDAY

3/F, BIR EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM, BIR BUILDING, AGHAM ROAD, DILIMAN, QC



MAP GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING NATIONAL PRIORITY PROGRAMS ON POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

AUGUST 10, 2023 | THURSDAY
GRAND BALLROOM A&B, LEVEL 3 | SHANGRI-LA THE FORT



MAP - BDB LAW BREAKFAST DIALOGUE WITH DOE SECRETARY RAPHAEL PERPETUO M. LOTILLA AND ERC CHAIRPERSON MONALISA C. DIMALANTA

AUGUST 14, 2023 | MONDAY
TALISAY ROOM | SHANGRI-LA THE FORT





present

ICT Summit | Cyber Security

Protect Your Business:

Emerging Strategies for Cyber Risk Management

Aug 22, 2023

2:00 PM - 6:30 PM

Bonifacio Hall

Shangri-La The Fort, BGC

Keynote Speakers



Secretary IVAN JOHN E. UY
Department of Information and
Communications Technology (DICT)



Ms. MARTHA M. SAZON
President and CEO
GCash

Entry Fee: FREE-MAP Members ; P3,000- Non-MAP Members

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presents

21st MAP INTERNATIONAL
CEO CONFERENCE

ON A
COHESION
COURSE

Leading in the Age of
Unlimited Possibilities

September 12, 2023 | Tuesday
8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Grand Ballroom, Shangri-la The Fort

in partnership with



His Excellency KAO KIM HOURN
Secretary-General, Association of
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OPENING KEYNOTE SPEAKER

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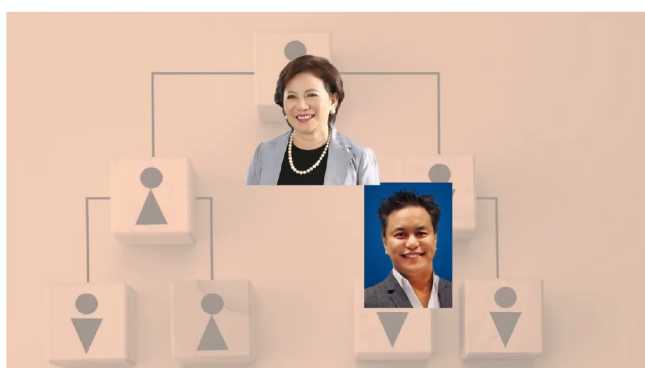
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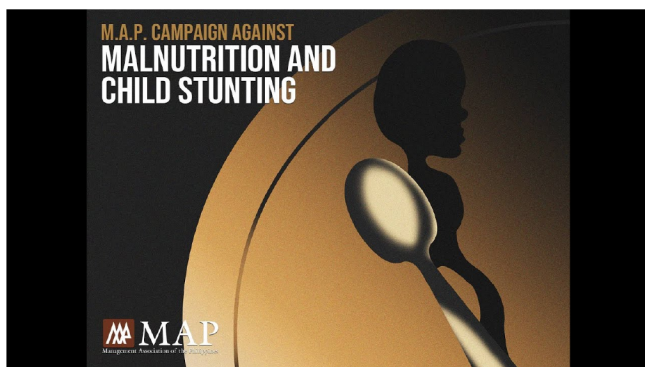
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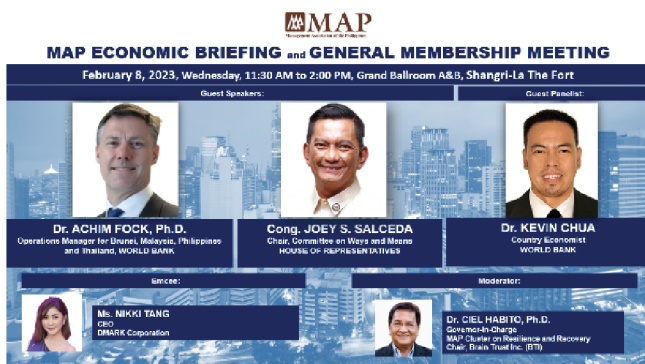
July 12, 2023
MAP GMM on Business Opportunities in ASEAN



About MAP



MAP Campaign against Malnutrition and Child Stunting



February 8, 2023
MAP Economic Briefing and General Membership Meeting (GMM)



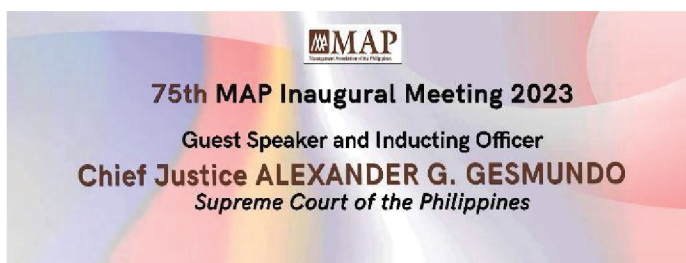
MAP Activities (loop)



MAP GMM on "National Priorities on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change"



March 8, 2023
MAP General Membership Meeting (GMM) on International Women's Day



January 31, 2023
MAP Inaugural Meeting and Induction of MAP 2023 Board of Governors



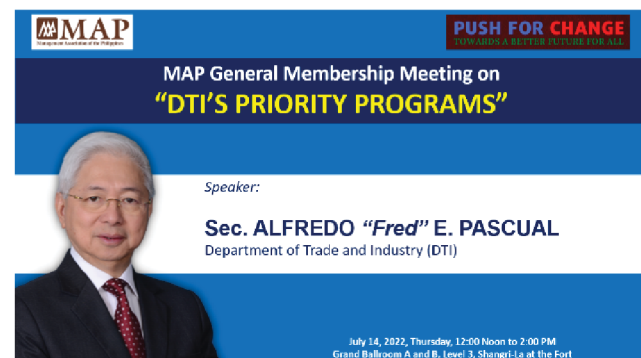
November 22, 2022
MAP Annual General Membership Meeting and
"MAP Management Man of the Year 2022"
Awarding Ceremony



October 13, 2022
MAP GMM



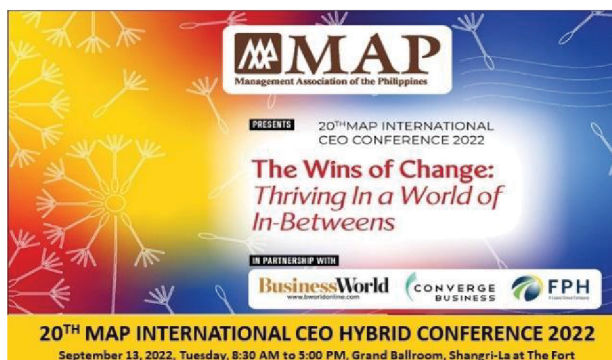
September 8, 2022
MAP - PMAP Joint GMM



July 14, 2022
MAP GMM



November 11, 2022
3rd MAP NextGen Conference 2022



September 13, 2022
MAP International CEO Hybrid Conference



August 19, 2022
MAP GMM



July 1, 2022
MAP Webinar



PUSH FOR CHANGE
TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL

MAP General Membership Meeting
JUNE 23, 2022, THURSDAY, 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM via ZOOM
A Project of MAP ICT Committee

ICT LEADERSHIP IN OUR NEW WORLD*



Dr. DAVID R. HARDOON
Managing Director
Abolite Data Innovation



Mr. AILEEN JUDAN JIAO
President and Country General Manager
IBM Philippines, Inc.



Mr. PAUL WHITEN
Cloud Advocate
Red Hat Asia Pacific




Mr. PATRICK D. REIDENBACH
Chair, MAP ICT Committee
President, UbaidesdenbachSolutions, Inc. (UB Solutions)



Mr. EDUARDO "Teddy" G. SUMULONG
Co-Vice Chair, MAP ICT Committee
Managing Director and CEO, Land Registration Systems, Inc. (LARS)


June 23, 2022
MAP GMM




PUSH FOR CHANGE
TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL

MAP General Membership Meeting
MAY 19, 2022, THURSDAY, 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM via ZOOM
A Project of MAP ESG Committee


INTEGRATING ESG IN THE WAY WE DO BUSINESS




Mr. ANDREW CHAN
Asia-Pacific Leader in ESG
PwC Malaysia




Mr. VINCENT KNEFFEL
Circular Economy Director
Public Credit Exchange



Ms. MA. ANTONIA YULO LOIZAGA
President
National Resilience Council




Ms. AGNES A. GERVACIO
Co-Vice Chair for Environment, MAP ESG Committee
CEO, MGI Navero



Atty. ALEXANDER B. CABRERA
Governor-in-Charge, MAP ESG Committee
Chair Emeritus and ESG Leader
Ike Igarna & Co., PwC Philippines


May 19, 2022
MAP GMM




PUSH FOR CHANGE
TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL

MAP Webinar
May 2, 2022, Monday, via ZOOM
A Project of MAP Human and Management Development Committee (HMDC)


SENTIMENT ANALYSIS
AI and Big Data for Reading Collective Minds



Mr. WILSON I. CHUA
Managing Director and Founder
Future Gen International Pte Ltd. (Singapore)



Mr. ROGER DO
CEO
AutoPolis (Singapore)



Dr. BENITO L. TEEHANCHEE
Co-Vice Chair for MAP CEO Academy, MAP HMDC
Professor and Head of the Business for Human Development Network, DLSU

May 2, 2022
MAP Webinar





PROTECTING THE EARTH. PRESERVING OURSELVES.
Doing what we need to do in celebration of Earth Month



Sec. JIM O. SAMPILNA
Secretary
Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)



Ms. ANA MARGARITA MONTIVEROS
PwC Vice President and Chief Reputation & Sustainability Officer
Abolite Equity Ventures, Inc.



Atty. ANGELA CONSUELO S. IBAY
Head of Climate Change and Energy Program
World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF)



Atty. TONY LA VINA
Dean, Ateneo School of Government
Associate Director, Manila Observatory



Mr. SANTIAGO F. DUMILAG, JR.
Executive Director, Association of Credit Rating Agencies in Asia (ACRAA)



Ms. RACQUEL B. CASURANGAN
Co-Chair for MAP ESG Committee
VP for Operational, Auditing Medical Corp., Inc.

April 29, 2022
MAP Webinar



PUSH FOR CHANGE
TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL

MAP CEO Academy Webinar
April 29, 2022, Friday, 9:00 PM to 10:00 PM via ZOOM
A Joint Project of MAP Agribusiness Committee and MAP Trade, Instruments & Ecosystem Committee

PUSHING FOR LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT



Dir. RAQUEL B. ECHAGUE
Director for Resource-based Industries Service
Board of Investments (BOI)



Mr. DANILO V. FAUSTO
President
DVT Dairy Farms, Inc.



Mr. OSCAR A. YORRALDA
Chair, MAP Agribusiness Committee
Chair and CEO, Twin Holdings Corporation



Mr. CHARLES P. VILLANBLANCO
Chair, MAP Trade, Instruments & Ecosystem Committee
Chair and CEO, PASA, TransProcess and PASA Shared Services

April 29, 2022
MAP Webinar

Happy Birthday!

to the following MAP members who are celebrating their birthdays within August 2023

August 1

Mr. RODERICK "Rick" M. DANA

Chair and Senior Partner, Isla Lipana & Co./
PwC Philippines

Mr. DANIEL "Dan" RIVAS FRANCISCO

Director, 1Infinity Traders Securities Corporation

Dr. CONCHITA "Chit" L. MANABAT

President, Development Center for Finance

Atty. JOSE MIGUEL "Miko" C. PALARCA

Managing Partner, Palarca and Baluyut Law Offices

August 6

Atty. LILIA B. DE LIMA

August 7

Mr. EDWIN H. HERNANDEZ

President, Jardine Distribution, Inc.

Mr. VICENTE "Bimbo" T. MILLS JR.

Chair, Hino Motors Philippines Corporation

August 8

Atty. ANTONIO "Bing" A. PICAZO

Senior Partner, Picazo Buyco Tan Fider & Santos
Law Offices

August 9

Mr. FLORIDO "Doy" P. CASUELA

OIC, Philippine National Bank (PNB)

Mr. PETER G. COYIUTO

President and CEO, First Guarantee Life Assurance
Company, Inc.

Engr. RODOLFO "Rod" N. FERRER

Chair, RN Ferrer and Associates, Inc.

August 10

Ms. CLARISSA ROWENA "Butch" C. BONSON

President and Managing Director, Expat
Communications, Inc.

Ms. IREEN GO CATANE

Country President, Schneider Electric Philippines, Inc.

Mr. ARTURO "Art" N. DALUPAN

Consultant, Professional Payroll Specialists Inc. (PPSI)

Mr. LORENZO V. TAN

President and CEO, House of Investments, Inc.
(a YGC Member)

Ms. SHARON T. TAN

President, Universal Rich Property and Management
Corporation

Mr. ARTEMIO "Jason" B. VITANGCOL

President and CEO, St. Peter Chapels

August 2

Mr. ROBIN R. BERNABE

President, Multimedia Exponents, Inc.

Mr. GERARD "Gerry" M. LANE

President, Lane Archive Technologies

Mr. MICHAEL SHERWIN "Mike" M. MACATANGAY

Founder, President and CEO, One A-TEAMS
Consultants Pte. Ltd.

Mr. NOEL M. TEMPONGKO JR.

VP and General Manager, Century Pacific Agricultural
Ventures, Inc.

August 4

Mr. ROBIN R. BERNABE

President, Multimedia Exponents, Inc.

Dr. ANDREW "Andy" I. LIUSON

Co-Founder and Vice Chair, Cityland Group of Companies

Dr. RAMON "Mon" B. SEGISMUNDO

Founder and CEO, 1-HR.X Pte. Ltd. (Singapore)

August 5

Ms. RUBY BAIRAN

President, EstateMart Dev't. Inc.

Mr. VICTOR S. CHIONGBIAN

Chair, Fast Logistics

Dr. RAYMOND NELSON "Ray" DAVIS

Chair, Mabuhay Capital Corporation

Ms. CRISTINA "Tina" A. LEE

GM and Managing Partner, Cornerstone Performance
International Inc.

Mr. FEDERICO "Piki" R. LOPEZ

Chair and CEO, First Philippine Holdings Corporation

Mr. JOHNSON "Jong" ONGKING

VP, Pacific Paint (Boysen) Philippines, Inc.



Happy Birthday!

to the following MAP members who are celebrating their birthdays within August 2023

August 11

Mr. RUEL T. MARANAN

President, Ayala Foundation, Inc.

Dr. JUSTO "Tito" A. ORTIZ

Vice Chair, UnionBank of the Philippines

Mr. CESAR G. ROMERO

Country Chairman, Shell Companies in the Philippines

Mr. DELFIN ANGELO "Buds" C. WENCESLAO

CEO, D. M. WENCESLAO & ASSOCIATES, INC.

Dr. ANTONIO "Tony" S. YAP

President, Benita & Catalino Yap Foundation

Mr. GERARDO "Ral" A. ROSARIO

President and General Manager, RMG Hospital Supply, Inc.

Ms. MARION "Marcy" C. KOCHET CHUA

Managing Director and Head of ATRAM Wealth, ATRAM

August 15

Ms. MARY JADE "Jade" T. ROXAS-DIVINAGRACIA

Managing Partner for Deals and Corporate Finance, Isla Lipana & Co./ PwC Philippines

Dr. DIANA M. EDRALIN

General Manager, Roche Philippines Inc.

Mr. WILLIAM "Bill" B. GO

Vice Chair, CTBC Bank

Mr. JALLAIN MARCEL "Jallain" S. MANRIQUE

Partner, KPMG R. G. Manabat & Co.

August 16

Mr. MARCELO "Celo" S. CO

Managing Director, Marikina Food Corporation

Mr. CHRISTOPHER "Chris" M. GOTANCO

Senior Advisor (former President and COO), Anglo Philippine Holdings Corporation

Mr. ALBERTO "Bertie" ALDABA LIM

Chair, Culion Foundation, Inc.

Atty. PEDRO "Pete" H. MANIEGO JR.

Chair, Energy Lawyers Association of the Philippines

Mr. AURELIO "Gigi" R. MONTINOLA III

Chair, Far Eastern University (FEU)

August 18

Mr. FRANCISCO JAVIER "Franz" P. BONOAN

First Vice President, BDO Capital and Investment Corporation

Mr. ROBERTO JOSE "Boj" R. LOCSIN

Chief Administrative Officer, Manila Water Company, Inc.

Ms. CRISTINA "Tina" CARANTO VIVAS

Head of Consumer Goods and Retail, Food Service, Healthcare and Pharmaceuticals Division, ZMG Ward Howell, Inc.

August 19

Ms. MA. AURORA "Boots" D. GEOTINA GARCIA

President, MAGEO Consulting, Inc.

August 12

Mr. MICHAEL "Mhycke" C. GALLEG0

Partner and Advisory Practices Leader and Head, Knowledge Management, Punongbayan & Araullo/Grant Thornton Philippines

Mr. FRANCIS AUGUSTUS "Francis" L. WEE

CEO, W Group, Inc.

August 13

Ms. PIA SANDRA "Pia" N. ACEVEDO

Founder, President and CEO, The OneCORE and Creative Human Resource Group

Mr. MICHAEL ARCATOMY "Mike" H. GUARIN

Partner, Advisory, KPMG R. G. Manabat & Co.

Mr. JUAN "Johnny" B. SANTOS

Ms. MICHELLE M. UNGCO

SVP, Unicapital Inc.

Atty. JOSE LUIS "Bobet" L. VERA

President, Quest Broadcasting, Inc.

Mr. MARLO R. CRUZ

President and CEO, CIBI Information, Inc.

August 14

Ms. ANGIE G. FLAMINIANO

President and COO, NutriAsia, Inc.

Mr. SAMUEL ALASTAIR "Sam" RAMOS JONES

COO, Philippine Strategic Associates

Mr. ALVIN D. LAO

President and CEO, D & L Industries, Inc.

Mr. MICHAEL "Mike" G. REGINO

Former President and CEO, Social Security System (SSS)

Mr. BENJAMIN PHILIP "Philip" G. ROMUALDEZ

Trustee/VP, Doña Remedios Trinidad Romualdez Medical Foundation, Inc.

Happy Birthday!

to the following MAP members who are celebrating their birthdays within August 2023

August 19

Mr. ROGELIO "Roger" M. MURGA
Chair and CEO, Private Infra Dev Corporation
Mr. WILLY Q. TEE TEN
President and Dealer Principal, Autohub Group

August 21

Mr. IMMANUEL "Maui" GARCIA
SVP - Client Management Group, Trinity Insurance and Reinsurance Brokers, Inc.
Ms. MARIA VIVIAN "Vivian" C. RUIZ
Vice Chair and Deputy Managing Partner, SGV & Co. (EY Philippines)
Mr. BRUCE ALEXANDER "Bruce" WINTON
General Manager, Manila Marriott

August 22

Mr. LEONARDO "Leo" JARDIN MATIGNAS JR.

August 23

Atty. ALEXANDER "Alex" B. CABRERA
Chairman Emeritus and ESG Leader, Isla Lipana & Co./PwC Philippines
Ms. AMELIA "Amy" D. MANAS
Chair, Bruno's Services Corporation

August 24

Ms. MARTHA "Marts" M. SAZON
President and CEO, GCash/Mynt (Globe Fintech Innovations, Inc.)

August 25

Mr. ARTHUR LEACHON "Art" PANGANIBAN JR.
President and CEO, Gotuaco, del Rosario Insurance Brokers, Inc.
Mr. VICENTE "Nonoy" S. QUIMBO
President, Bel Mondo Italia Corporation

August 26

Mr. RAYMON "Mon" CAYABYAB
Managing Partner and CEO, Xiklab Digital
Mr. LUIS "Louie" B. QUISUMBING
President, Norkis Group of Companies
Mr. SEIJI TAKANO
President, Sumitomo Corporation of the Philippines

August 27

Mr. RANDOLPH "Randy" T. ESTRELLADO
COO, Maynilad Water Services, Inc.
Sec. PETER B. FAVILA
Monetary Board Member, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP)
Mr. ANTONIO "Tony" C. OPPEN
President and CEO, Welding Industries of the Philippines, Inc.
Dr. KAREN REMO
President and CEO, New Perspective Marketing International Inc.
Mr. KINGSON U. SIAN
President and CEO, Travellers International Hotel Group, Inc.

August 28

Ms. FAYE ABRIHAN
CEO, Pantheon Holdings OPC

August 30

Mr. OSCAR "Carey" L. DE VENECIA JR.
President and CEO, Basic Energy Corporation
Mr. TAKESHI HARA
President and CEO, Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corporation
Mr. WILLIAM RUSSELL "William" M. SCHEIRMAN JR.
CEO, Scheirman & Cruz Property Holdings, Inc.

August 31

Mr. IGNACIO "Chony" B. GIMENEZ
Corporate Secretary, I.B. Gimenez Securities, Inc.
Ms. MARIA BLANCA KIM "Kim" BERNARDO LOKIN
Managing Editor, Business+Class Magazine
Mr. JOSEPH JEROME "Jerome" D. ONG
President and General Manager, CDO FOODSPHERE, INC.
Mr. JOSE RAMON "Bom" V. VILLATUYA
President and Managing Director, Rural Bank of Luisiana, Inc.



Engr. RODOLFO "Rod" N. FERRER

MAP Life Member

Chair, RN Ferrer and Associates, Inc.

Please pray for the eternal repose of Engr. Ferrer who passed away on August 9, 2023 at the age of 88.

He was a MAP member for 23 years.

His remains were cremated and inurned yesterday at the Christ the King Parish Church, Greenmeadows, QC.

August 12, 2023



Circular No. 049 - 2023

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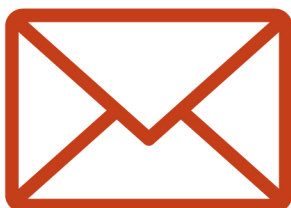
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