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P2.5-B shabu seized in Cavite



ILLEGAL DRUGS HAUL. Members of the Philippine National Police-Drug Enforcement Group (PNP-DEG) enforcers examine 63 boxes containing 374 packs of suspected shabu with a street value of PHP2.5 billion. The illegal drugs were seized in a General Trias, Cavite buy-bust that resulted in the arrest of a drug suspect on Thursday evening (June 11, 2020). (Photo courtesy PNP PIO)

cont. on Page 2

BIR reminds online businesses to register, ensure tax compliance

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) issued Revenue Memorandum Circular (RMC) No. 60-2020 dated June 1, 2020, reminding all persons doing business and earning income through digital means to ensure that their businesses are registered, or their registrations are updated.



This RMC is part of initial phases that the Department of Finance (DOF) and the BIR have undertaken to implement a tax collection program on digital transactions.

The RMC aims to cover online sellers/merchants and other stakeholders in the Philippines involved in digital transactions such as payment gateways, delivery channels, internet service providers and other facilitators.

No penalty for late registration shall be imposed on those who will

register and/or update their registration status on or before July 31, 2020.

The BIR likewise encourages online businesses to declare and pay the corresponding taxes on past taxable transactions, without penalty, if declaration and payment are made on or before the said date.

"The goal of this project is not to go after online merchants for unreported sales or unpaid taxes. We just want to encourage those who are engaged in online businesses to register with the BIR," according to DOF Revenue Operations Group Undersecretary Antonette Tionko.

She added: "Online transactions have increased for quite some time now, especially during the community quarantine period. That's why we want to take this opportunity to remind them to register their businesses. The BIR will issue an Operations Memorandum to this effect."

The RMC and the basic registration guidelines are accessible at <https://bit.ly/3cMvq6x>. (DOF PR)

Why June 12 is the pinnacle of Philippine independence P.2

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DOT, DTI TO ROLL OUT HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES, DIGITAL SOLUTIONS FOR RESTAURANTS

EDITORIAL: Not another one

"We've seen our fair share of entitlement, privilege and hypocrisy."

Filipinos have been treated to shameless displays of entitlement and privilege during this pandemic. These displays were made worse by the leniency and compassion extended to the individuals, while ordinary citizens are flagged and punished for lesser violations.

Remember how we were all aghast when a senator, tested positive for COVID-19, accompanied his pregnant wife to the hospital and went to a supermarket days before, exposing dozens to the virus at a time he had been feeling symptoms of the disease?

Remember, too, how the chief of Metro Manila police became a laughingstock for insisting that a birthday party thrown for him by his men—with food, drinks and merrymaking—was not a party but a mananita?

It turns out the joke was on us, because compassion and understanding were extended to these two officials despite their violations and despite the high office they occupied—and the degree of accountability supposedly demanded of them.

Now there appears to be another: The mayor of San Juan City went up to Baguio City last Friday and his six-vehicle convoy reportedly ignored a checkpoint set up on Kennon Road by the city government. The vehicles sped through a triage where visitors from outside the city were supposed to undergo a medical examination.

Mayor Francis Zamora claimed he was asleep in his vehicle when his driver sped through the checkpoint. He also said he went to Baguio to bring his wife, a Stage 3 cancer patient, who needed her rest. He immediately apologized to Baguio City Mayor Benjamin Magalong.

In a statement made Monday, Magalong said he accepted the apology of Zamora, asked the public to practice discernment and restraint in prejudging him, but said investigation would proceed.

A hilarious side story was that the same police official, General Debold Sinas, who held

a birthday party during the lockdown in violation of a number of health protocols, had the gall to talk about the consequences of violating quarantine restrictions. Sinas relieved five San Juan cops who were part of Zamora's entourage from their posts. "We've seen our fair share of entitlement, privilege and hypocrisy."

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"We, as law enforcers, are bound to respect the existing rules and regulations anywhere in the Philippines. The safety of the people remains as our top priority in this (sic) trying times," Sinas said, in a stunning display of hypocrisy.

We remain perplexed, however. Even if Zamora were indeed asleep and it was his escorts in charge of the vehicle, did he not give them instructions beforehand to abide by the city's health protocol? What were these escorts thinking when they drove past the triage—could they have been emboldened by the thinking that since they were the mayor's men, they could do anything?

If they knew Zamora to be a law-abiding, considerate individual, would not the rudest, most entitled of police escorts have thought twice about ignoring the rules, knowing that he would be in trouble the moment his boss found out? And why travel with 30 people when Zamora's wife needed her much-needed rest and private time?

Magalong said he found Zamora's apology sincere. That is his prerogative—and we agree we should gather the facts before judging anybody's behavior.

Still, all public officials should know that the public is keenly watching what they do with their privilege, especially when millions have suffered because of this health and economic crisis. In the end, we await the results of the investigation. We hope that this episode would not be consigned to mere memory, as we move on to the next thing to be furious about.

DOT, DTI...

The joint recommendations of the Department of Tourism (DOT) and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) on health and safety protocols for restaurant dine-in operations were approved by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID).

During the 42nd IATF-EID meeting yesterday, June 01, the task force agreed that the resumption and continued operations of restaurants during quarantine and during the new normal will depend on the strict compliance of stakeholders to the said health and safety protocols.

In her virtual press briefing today, Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said that "The DOT and the DTI shall soon roll out a post-audit mechanism to ensure that all restaurants follow the prescribed standards with non-compliant enterprises facing temporary closure until strict adherence to regulations is accomplished."

Meanwhile, in a bid to reopen the tourism businesses safely within the confines of community quarantined areas, the DOT is working together with the DTI and inclusiontech venture builder Talino Venture Labs to provide FREE digital solutions for accredited businesses to help them meet the technological demands of the new normal.

The IATF, during the same meeting has adopted SafePass, an all-digital, contact-free authorizing, scheduling, and contact tracing solution to help businesses operate safely during the Covid-19 pandemic situation.

"We introduce these free digital solutions as part of the government's support to businesses, especially MSMEs, in their transition to the new normal. Here, innovation is key to effectively implement and maintain health and safety protocols in their premises," Puyat assured. Features of

SafePass Express include space planning, registration and health questionnaire, protocol enforcement, and digital incident management.

The technological innovation also reduces the burden of manual data capture through its all-digital and contact-free collection of health information from every tourist or guest, and provides an efficient incident management experience with tools for digital contact tracing.

Another Express version of the app called Dine In, which is also free for accredited restaurants, will allow customers to schedule a reservation in a restaurant, following the government's safe distancing and incident management regulations, book, order and pay their dine-in orders ahead through an all-digital, contact-free menu.

These applications are powered by inclusiontech venture builder Talino Venture Labs and Amihan Global Strategies, an ASEAN leader in digital transformation. (DOT)

FROM PAGE 1

Why June 12 ...

The day the Philippines gained independence is the pinnacle of patriotism, and June 12 holds that symbolic sense of a truly independent Filipino nation.

More than half a century ago, Filipinos commemorated the declaration of Philippine independence on July 4, which is the same day as the American Independence Day.

However, it was only in 1962 that June 12 was declared as the country's day of freedom through a presidential proclamation issued by President Diosdado Macapagal. This change of date was further cemented through Republic Act No. 4166 in 1964.

Macapagal said the recognition of the independence of a nation should not be accorded by any other country but itself.

"It is proper that what we should celebrate is not the day when other nations gave recognition to our independence, but the day when we declared our desire to exercise our inherent and inalienable right to freedom and independence," Macapagal said in a 1962 public address on Independence Day.

Macapagal underscored that June 12, 1898 is the "true birthday of an independent Filipino nation" for it was on this day that the country showcased to the world its resolve to consider itself "absolved of allegiance to the Spanish crown".

It was during this time that President Emilio Aguinaldo proclaimed the independence of the Philippines from the Spanish colonial rule in Cavite el Viejo (Kawit), Cavite.

This event was also the first time the Philippine National Anthem was performed publicly and the first time the Philippine flag was displayed.

Macapagal said the proclama-

tion of Philippine independence on June 12, 1898 gave colonial Asia its first free and united nation.

"There had been other Asian revolutions before. But the revolution which culminated on June 12, 1898 was the first successful national revolution in Asia since the coming of the West, and the Republic to which it gave birth was the first democratic Republic outside of the Western hemisphere," he said.

Kalayaan 2020: Towards a free, united, and safe nation

The National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP), which leads the nationwide Independence Day celebration, branded the theme of the 122nd anniversary as "Kalayaan 2020: Tungo sa Bansang Malaya, Nagbayanihan, at Ligtas".

As the country battles the coronavirus pandemic, NHCP said this year's celebration would be dedicated to the front-liners in this health crisis.

"Through their sacrifices of time, energy, expertise, and even their own lives, they strive to keep our nation safe," the NHCP said.

The NHCP urged people to display the Philippine flag in homes, offices, and other buildings.

"On Independence Day itself, we invite everyone to take pictures while holding a flaglet and a sign that says, 'Thank you, front-liners!'," it said.

"Through these simple acts, we can celebrate freedom even while staying at home. As we have said before, this pandemic will not stop us Filipinos from celebrating our freedom, a freedom won and defended by our heroes past and present," it added. (PNA)

FROM PAGE 1



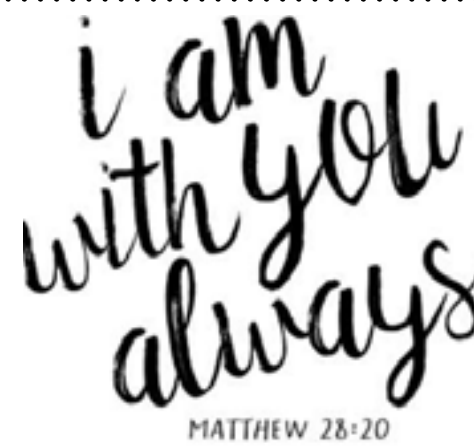
With more Filipinos turning to the internet to conduct daily businesses under the new economy, Senator Win Gatchalian is pushing for the Internet Transactions Act to make transactions easier and faster and strengthen the country's digital economy.

The Vice Chairman of the Senate Committee on Economic Affairs has filed Senate Bill No. (SBN) 1591 or the proposed Internet Transactions Act, to make buying, selling and other transactions faster with just a tap of a finger. Gatchalian said eCommerce provides consumers with time-saving options and access to swift delivery of goods and services. It also presents value for money because from the seller's perspective, set-up costs are lower and operating costs are kept at a minimum.

EXTRA JUDICIAL

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE ESTATE OF THE LATE SPS. CONSTANCIA SALIBA AND NICANOR PORTILLA HAVE BEEN EXTRA-JUDICIALLY SETTLED BY THEIR HEIRS THRU EXTRA-JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT OF ESTATE AS PER DOC. NO. 47 ; PAGE NO. 11 ; BOOK NO. 55 ; SERIES OF 2020, BEFORE NOTARY PUBLIC ATTY. CESARIO G. GONZALEZ JR.

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Easier and faster online transactions will be possible via Internet Transactions Act

Gatchalian admits that the Philippines' e-commerce is still at its developing stage despite the Philippines' estimated 76 million active internet users and high internet penetration rate (71% vis-à-vis global average of 54%), longer hours spent daily on the internet (10 hours vis-à-vis a global average of 6 hours 42 minutes), and very high social media penetration for population aged 13+ (99% vis-à-vis a 59% global average).

Citing a study by Google and Temasek, the Philippine internet economy posted a Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) of \$7 billion in 2019. The value pales in comparison with those of Malaysia (\$11 billion), Vietnam (\$12 billion), Singapore (\$12 billion), Thailand (\$16 billion), and Indonesia (\$40 billion).

The country's eCommerce market remains at 1.6% of GDP.

According to Gatchalian, it is paramount to enact SBN 1591 to resolve key concerns in the country's eCommerce industry such as (a) Lack of trust; (b) Inter-

net infrastructure; (c) Logistics infrastructure; (d) Payment mechanisms; (e) Lack of governing entity at the regional level that can fight cybercrime and settle cross-border disputes; (f) Difficulty in the process of returning product; (g) Taxation; and (h) Online consumer complaints.

The Internet Transactions Act will pave the way for the establishment of a singular office that will be given the responsibility of carrying out provisions of this bill; ensure the implementation of Republic Act. No. 8792 or the Electronic Commerce Act of 2000; and be the focal point in the monitoring and implementation of the Philippine eCommerce roadmap.

"Kaakibat ng isang masigla, matatag, at tuloy-tuloy na pag-unlad ng eCommerce sa bansa ang pagkakaroon ng isang batas na poprotekta sa interes ng bawat Pilipinong mamimili at mangangalakal. Ako'y naniniwala na napapanahon na upang magkaroon tayo ng batas na magbibigay solusyon sa mga isyu at problema ukol sa industriya ng eCommerce," he said.

DOH opens first LGU Molecular Laboratory in CALABARZON

The first local government unit (LGU) - initiated molecular laboratory in CALABARZON (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon) was formally opened to the public June 6, 2020 after the Department of Health (DOH) approved its license to operate to effectively address and diagnose COVID 19 cases in Imus and neighboring municipalities.

Regional Director Eduardo C. Janairo lauded the local government of Imus led by Mayor Emmanuel L. Maliksi for initiating the very important endeavor.

"Ito ang dapat na matupad sa ating mga LGU sa ating rehiyon, ang magkaroon ng tulongan upang makapagtaguyod ng mga proyektong magdudulot ng pagbabago lalo na sa larangan ng pangkalusugan. Kailangan magaging independent na tayo sa mga health facilities sa Metro Manila at palakasin natin ang kakayahan ng ating mga pasilidad upang hindi na tayo umasa pa sa mga pagamutan sa labas ng ating rehiyon."

Dr. Janairo emphasized, "Ang laboratoryong ito ay isang napakagandang proyekto upang masagot ang

pangangailangang pangkalusugan ng ating mamamayan. Ito ay magagamit natin hindi lang ngayong panahon ng epidemya kundi sa susunod pang henerasyon at sa maraming paraan at pagsusuri ng iba pang mga sakit upang mabigyan natin ng agarang lunas."

Located inside the compound of the Ospital ng Imus in Cavite, the testing facility is the second LGU- instituted laboratory in the country with the first one located in the City of Marikina. It is the country's 54th DOH-accredited CoViD-19 Testing Facility.

It has two Polymerase chain reaction or PCR machines and can handle 400 test a day. "We will be expecting three more PCR machines so that we can conduct more tests of at least 3,000 a day," Janairo disclosed. (PIA-4A/DOH-CALABARZON)

The use of PCR in infectious disease diagnosis results in the early diagnosis and treatment due to its rapid ability to determine the antimicrobial susceptibility of slow growing organisms, and ascertain the quantum of infection.

The LTO of the city's laboratory was given after a series of evaluation which was completed on May 29, 2020 and passing the proficiency test conducted by the DOH-Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) with a score of 5 out of 5 or 100 percent.

Janairo assured the people of Imus that the regional office will work for the level 3 accreditation of the "Ospital ng Imus" to better serve the health needs of the community and all Cavitenos. (PIA)



Officials from the DOH-Regional Office led by Regional Director Eduardo C. Janairo (center) and the City Government of Imus led by Mayor Emmanuel L. Maliksi (on blue polo shirt) flashes the thumbs up sign in front of the newly opened Imus Molecular Laboratory which was granted accreditation by the DOH on May 29, 2020. The blessing and opening ceremony was held on June 6, 2020 inside the compound of the Ospital ng Imus in Cavite. (Photo & caption: DOH-CALABARZON)

P2.5-B shabu ...

Members of the Philippine National Police-Drug Enforcement Group (PNP-DEG) arrested a drug suspect and seized around PHP2.5 billion shabu in a buy-bust in General Trias, Cavite, PNP Chief Gen. Archie Gamboa said on Friday.

Based on the report of the PDEG, Gamboa identified the suspect as Muad Romorus Abedin Mangotara, who was arrested by the PNP DEG and Cavite Police Provincial Office (PPO) on Somerset 9 Subdivision in Barangay Navarro at 8:30 p.m. on Thursday.

Seized from the suspect were 63 boxes containing 374 packs of suspected shabu with a street value of PHP2.5 billion and boodle money worth

PHP1 million.

Gamboa, meanwhile said the PNP has shifted to its focus on "supply reduction" in the anti-drug campaign.

On Monday, the PNP presented a part of more than PHP6 billion worth of shabu seized in anti-drug operations from January 1 to June 4.

Last June 4, police officers arrested a Chinese national and his two cohorts and seized PHP5.1 billion worth of shabu in a buy-bust at a warehouse in Marilao, Bulacan.

On June 6, law enforcers seized PHP244.8 million worth of shabu in a buy-bust that resulted in the killing of two drug suspects in Parañaque City. (PNA)

FROM PAGE 1

PHL, AIIB sign US\$750-M loan pact on co-financing for COVID-19 response

The Philippines has signed an agreement with the Asian Infrastructure Development Bank (AIIB) committing the multilateral lender to extend a loan of up to US\$750 million to support government efforts to suppress the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak and augment the funds needed to address this health crisis.

This loan accords cements AIIB's commitment to co-finance with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) the Philippines' COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support (CARES) program, a quick-disbursing budget support facility designed to fund the government's efforts to combat COVID-19 and mitigate the adverse impact of the contagion on the economy.

Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III and AIIB Acting Director General Rajat Misra signed the loan agreement last Friday (June 5).

"The loan package from the AIIB will help augment our funding requirements necessary to mitigate the severe negative impact of COVID-19 on our people and our economy. On behalf of the Philippine government, we thank the AIIB and President Jin Liqun for committing with the ADB to support the CARES program, which will go a long way in helping our people get back on their feet, and our economy recover and emerge stronger after the crisis," Secretary Dominguez said.

With the approval of the loan last May 28, AIIB Vice President DJ Pandian has said: "The focus of our efforts is to help the government tackle the immediate health and economic challenges posed by the pandemic. AIIB's support will contribute to building economic resilience and ensuring quick recovery."

The Department of Finance (DOF) expects the full disbursement of the US\$750 million AIIB loan within June.

The AIIB loan carries a maturity period of 12 years inclusive of a 3-year grace period.

Secretary Dominguez signed an

agreement last month with ADB Country Director for the Philippines Kelly Bird that would enable the government to access up to US\$1.5 billion in budgetary support from the Bank to augment funds for the CARES program.

This ADB loan for the CARES program is under the Bank's Countercyclical Support Facility Pandemic Response Option (CPRO).

According to the AIIB, its budgetary support for the CARES program is part of its coordinated international effort to counter the COVID-19 pandemic. Under its COVID-19 Crisis Recovery Facility, the AIIB has committed an initial US\$5 billion to US\$10 billion "to support AIIB members' urgent economic, financial, and public health needs and quick recovery from the crisis."

The AIIB's co-financing for the CARES program is the second loan it has extended to the Philippines.

In 2017, the AIIB approved a US\$207.6-million loan for the US\$500-million Metro Manila Flood Control Management Project, which it co-financed with the World Bank. (DOF PR)

'Bold' autonomy initiative in Bangsamoro region to push through despite COVID crisis, says Dominguez

Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III has reaffirmed the national government's commitment to fully support and implement the "historic and bold" initiative of bringing genuine autonomy to the Bangsamoro people even amid the crisis spawned by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Dominguez said the second meeting of the National Government-Bangsamoro Government Inter-Governmental Relations Body (IGRB) conducted online last week to thresh out several concerns is the "clearest indication" of the Duterte administration's resolve to help ensure the success of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

"I assure you that the agencies of the national government serving as counterparties in these

During the meeting, both Dominguez and Iqbal agreed to recommend to President Duterte the public launch at the soonest of the IGRB via an online platform even amid the COVID-19 emergency.

This move would signify, they said, the importance that both the national government and the BARMM attach to this intergovernmental body as a forum to forge closer cooperation between the two sides.

"We are confident that our partnership will remain strong as we traverse the road to rapid recovery and bring the country back to the path of inclusive and shared prosperity upon the defeat of the virus," Dominguez said.

In response to the concerns raised by the BARMM officials on their request to let the Bangsamoro government implement nationally funded programs in the autonomous region, Dominguez said he will urge national government agencies to enter into memoranda of agreement (MOAs) with their counterparts in the BARMM.

Dominguez said he will also inform the concerned national government agencies to include the nationally funded programs of the BARMM in their respective budgets.

These projects are in the areas of health; local government; agriculture and agrarian reform; trade and investment tourism; transportation and communications; public works and highways; science and technology; social welfare; and basic, higher, and technical education.

He likewise assured the Bangsamoro officials that he will remind the representatives on the side of the national government to start convening with their BARMM counterparts to begin the process of activating the following five mechanisms:

(1) the Joint Body for the Zones of Joint Cooperation (responsible for formulating policies relating to the Zones of Joint Cooperation in the Sulu Sea and Moro Gulf);

(2) Intergovern-

mental Infrastructure Development Board (responsible for coordinating and synchronizing both the national and Bangsamoro infrastructure development plans);

(3) Intergovernmental Energy Board (responsible for energy issues);

(4) Council of Leaders (provides advice to the Chief Minister on matters of governance in the BARMM); and

(5) the Philippine Congress-Bangsamoro Parliament Forum (for purposes of cooperation and coordination of legislative initiatives).

Dominguez called on the BARMM to also work on the establishment of the Bangsamoro Sustainable Development Board (BSDB), one of the IGRB mechanisms that require legislation by the Bangsamoro Parliament.

The BSDB will help ensure that economic, social, and environmental considerations are harmonized and integrated in the development of sustainable development policies and practices in the BARMM, Dominguez noted.

Dominguez also took the opportunity during the meeting to thank BARMM for the support it has sent earlier this year to the national government's relief and rescue efforts during the eruption of Taal Volcano and its full cooperation in the ongoing initiatives to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Joining Dominguez at the meeting were Secretary Delfin Lorenzana of the Department of National Defense (DND); DOF Undersecretary Bayani Agabin; and representatives from the Departments of Interior and Local Government (DILG), of Budget and Management (DBM), of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), of Energy (DOE), of Agriculture (DA), and of Transportation (DOTr); and from the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA).

Aside from Iqbal, the other BARMM officials who took part in the meeting were Speaker Ali Pangalalan Balindong of the Bangsamoro Parliament; Executive Secretary Ab-

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coordination mechanisms are as fully committed to move forward with this bold initiative in autonomy," Dominguez said during the May 29 meeting with BARMM officials held via the Zoom teleconference tool.

Dominguez said the national government has been impressed with the Bangsamoro government's commitment "to build a fully capacitated bureaucracy with meritocracy as its guiding principle," and has seen how BARMM is "fully committed to bringing social services closer to the people and transforming the (region) into an engine of growth in Mindanao."

Minister Mohagher Iqbal of the BARMM Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education, thanked the national government, spearheaded by the Department of Finance (DOF), for holding the meeting despite the COVID-19 emergency.

Dominguez and Iqbal co-chair the IGRB, which is mandated to coordinate and resolve issues on intergovernmental relations between the national government and the BARMM through regular consultations and continuing negotiations.

Such issues include the effective implementation of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) and the programs and projects of the national government in the BARMM.

dulraof Macacua, who is concurrent Minister of the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources, and Energy (MENRE); Cabinet Secretary Mohd Asnin Pendatun; and Ministers Naguib Sinarimbo of the Ministry of the Interior and Local Government (MILG), Eduard Guerra of the Ministry of Public Works (MPW), Raissa Jajurie of the Ministry of Social Services and Development (MSSD); Mohammad Yacob of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reform (MAFAR), and Dickson Hermoso of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications (MTC).

The representatives of the national and Bangsamoro governments in the IGRB Secretariat were also present.

The Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) is designated as the joint secretariat of the IGRB.

Last December, the IGRB held its inaugural meeting in Davao City.

Even before the IGRB held its first meeting last December, the DOF had already organized a series of dialogues with BARMM officials and formed a technical working group (TWG) involving other government agencies to assist the officials of the new Bangsamoro government in running their economic agencies and crafting sound fiscal policies. (DOF PR)

FOR WITH
GOD
ALL THINGS
ARE
POSSIBLE

MARK 10:27