

PLM, UDM students to get P1-K monthly allowance from Manila LGU

MANILA -- Manila Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso on Wednesday signed an ordinance granting PHP 1,000 monthly allowance for students of two universities operated by the local government.

In a statement, Domagoso said "there is a need to support the youth of Manila intellectually and it can be done by providing public school students of the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (PLM) and the Universidad de Manila (UDM)".

The ordinance stressed the monthly allowance would allow them to continue their education despite hardships and struggles of their families.

To qualify for the monthly allowance, the student-applicants must be in good standing, must not have any disciplinary record, must be a resident of Manila, and must be a registered voter of the nation's capital.

If the student is not of legal age, the parent or legal guardian must be a registered voter of Manila.

"All qualified students duly enrolled in PLM and UDM in good standing, for undergraduate courses in the aforementioned university and college are entitled to receive the allowance covered," the ordinance read.

On the other hand, students who will be dismissed before the end of the school year would immediately be disqualified from receiving the monthly allowance. (PNA)

SC vows tight scrutiny of courts' injunctions vs. PCSO deals

MANILA -- The Supreme Court (SC) will closely scrutinize irregularities in the issuance of injunction orders by lower courts, in connection with contracts for local gaming operations run by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO).

In a chance interview with newsmen in Manila Wednesday, Chief Justice Lucas Bersamin, however, clarified that the judges are presumed to have acted in good faith in issuing these injunctions.

"We cannot presume these judges had committed irregularities, the Court Administrator is very fair and he will look at these reports and see if there are grounds for further investigation," the top

magistrate said.

"You know the status report is only one element of proof. These reports are made by the judges and their clerks of court and their personnel and the (Office of the Court Administrator) is a very experienced office, there are many personnel there who are very, very capable of detecting efficiencies or non-compliances. If they noticed anything irregular, then they will determine if there is a need to investigate deeper or just call the judges' attention to whatever shortcomings there were," Bersamin told reporters.

Bersamin said the circular, recently issued by the Office of the Court Administrator for

all trial court judges and clerks of court to submit a list of their PCSO-related cases beginning January 2018 up to present, is only a preliminary move to determine whether there is a need for further investigation as to the circumstances surrounding the issuance of these injunctions.

On Monday, Court Administrator Jose Midas Marquez issued the circular following President Duterte's order to stop all gaming activities of PCSO due to massive corruption involving its officials and stakeholders.

Marquez said the list should include all pending and terminated cases and should be submitted on or before August 15. (PNA)

No need for Duque to go on leave amid probe: Palace

MANILA -- Malacañang has no intention of asking Health Secretary Francisco Duque III to take a leave amid a looming Senate investigation into the corruption allegation against him, Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo said on Wednesday.

"Like what the President said, if there is an accused, let him be investigated. But while there's no result yet, the presumption of innocence under the Constitution applies to every person being accused of any wrongdoing," he said in a dzRH radio interview.

Asked if the chief

executive plans to ask Dugue to take a leave while the Senate inquiry is ongoing, Panelo answered: "wala (none)".

Earlier, Senator Richard Gordon said the Senate blue ribbon committee may start its probe into the alleged conflict of interest involving Duque next week.

The inquiry comes following allegations that the Cabinet member was involved in the 2016 and 2017 government contracts awarded to the Duque family-owned Doctors Pharmaceuticals Inc.

On Tuesday, Panelo said just like any

complaint that reaches President Rodrigo Duterte's table, the graft and plunder complaints against Duque will be subject to a 'serious investigation' by the Office of the President.

"Any allegation against any member of the Cabinet or against any official of the government of corruption or conflict of interest or any act illegal is always a serious concern of the Office of the President (OP)," he said.

Despite the allegations, Panelo maintained that Duterte still trusts Duque pending results of the OP's investigation. (PNA)

DFA chief wants visa-on-arrival privilege for foreigners removed

MANILA -- Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. on Wednesday recommended the removal of visa upon arrival privilege for foreigners.

Locsin's proposal came following the remarks of National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. that the influx of undocumented foreigners to Manila pose a possible security threat to the country.

"We need to put an end to visas upon arrival; all visas should be issued by consular offices after vetting," Locsin said on his official Twitter account, in reaction to the headline carrying Esperon's remarks.

"We must take extra care in outsourcing any part of the visa application process, picking only the most reputable worldwide," Locsin added.

In an earlier news forum, Esperon said he remains on the "cautious side" when looking at the issue of the volume

of foreigners in the country, particularly when they are undocumented and when their intent is not clear.

"On the matter of Chinese coming in, are we surprised about that? Of course," Esperon said.

"What's really happening is that there are businesses, offshore gaming, coming in to the Philippines-- these

are regulated by the PAGCOR (Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation). But there are illegal players, illegal operators, that's our problem, because some of these Chinese could come in as tourists and they could end up for the period that they are allowed here to be workers," he added in Filipino.

No sightings of missing aircraft, student pilot: CAAP

MANILA -- The Cessna C-152 aircraft and the student pilot that went missing on July 28 are still nowhere to be found, Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) said on Wednesday.

CAAP spokesperson Eric Apolonio said the CAAP has not received a report from the search and rescue team.

The male student pilot went missing after the plane, owned by Omni Aviation Corporation, took off from Baler Airport. The student was supposed to

fly the Clark-Baler route.

From Clark, he was able to reach Baler, but failed to go back to Clark, Apolonio said.

The search and rescue team from the Philippine Air Force (PAF) started its operations on July 29, he said.

"We still need to verify if the aircraft just landed in another airport. That's why PAF dispatched a helicopter for search and rescue operations the following day," he said.

Apolonio added that the PAF's helicopter returned to its base on July 29 due to bad weather and problem in visibility.

"CAAP only dispatches its Aircraft Accident Investigation and Inquiry Board if we know where to go. As of now, nothing was found," he said.

He said there are about three other trainer aircraft that flew the same route on July 28, but only one went missing.

He said among the final tests for one to be issued a commercial pilot license is to fly solo.

He added that there have been many trainer aircraft that went missing and were not found.

"Search and rescue operations continue. Omni Aviations is also assisting," Apolonio said. (PNA)

2-month voter registration period starts August 1

MANILA -- The Commission on Elections (Comelec) on Wednesday reminded those interested to become registered voters that the two-month voter registration period, in connection with the 2020 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections (BSKE), will start on Thursday.

"Thirty days has September, April, June, and November, all the rest have 31 -- including July, so remember, tomorrow is August the first, the first of #VoterReg2019, go to your

local Comelec if you haven't yet been," Comelec spokesperson James Jimenez said in a Facebook post on Wednesday.

He added that all poll body field offices in the city/municipality where the registrant is residing are ready to accept their application for registration, among others six days a week or from Monday to Saturday, including holidays.

Applications may be filed from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Office of the Elec-

tion Officer or any satellite registration site in the locality where the registrant resides.

Applicants to be accepted are those applying for registration, transfer of registration record, change/correction of entries, reactivation of registration record, inclusion of registration record and reinstatement of name in the list of voters.

"Yes, Comelec offices will be open on Saturdays, unless there is a scheduled satellite registration

for that day," Jimenez said.

"Yes, there will be satellite registrations in malls -- please stay tuned for announcements on satellite registration locations," he added.

Satellite registration offices may be established in barangay halls/centers, public and private schools and universities, malls and commercial establishments and other public and convenient places.

Comelec Resolution 10549 states that any Filipino citizen, who is not yet a registered voter but will

be at least 15 years of age on May 11, 2020, and residing in the barangay for at least six months on or before Election Day is eligible to register.

For purposes of the SK elections, those who will be at least 15 but not more than 30 years of age on Election Day shall be included in the list of those who may vote for SK candidates.

The poll body noted that registered voters as of the May 13, 2019 midterm elections need not apply.