

DoF unveils 'double-dipping' into coco funds »Story on B1

# The Manila Times

★ ★  
Php20.00  
• 3 SECTIONS  
• 20 PAGES  
• VOL. 123 NO. 260

MONDAY June 27, 2022

Trusted since 1898

www.manilatimes.net

**T**HE 8th International Day of Yoga (IDY) was celebrated in Manila on June 21 with a specially curated event in partnership between the Embassy and local Philippine institutions, yoga teachers and schools as well as the Indian community organizations.

The celebration was organized at the Music Hall of SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City. The highlight of the event was the practice of the comprehensive common yoga protocol by over 200 participants led by leading yoga experts and teachers in the Philippines.

Janice Cuevas, a certified Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga teacher, opened the yoga practice with Suryanamaskar (sun salutation). On the other hand, Chandru Mahtani, a yoga teacher with an experience of over 35 years, led the participants through a sequence of Jigasanas.

Yoga and wellness expert Clara Day Herrera helped participants explore yoga as a tool for relaxation and vitality through Pranayama practice, while Jennifer Aguas Non closed the yoga session and

shared that meditation practice was inspired by her experience of self-transformation through yoga and meditation.

Recognizing their contribution towards creating awareness about yoga and making yoga practice more accessible in the Philippines, Ambassador of India to the Philippines Shambhu Kumaran felicitated local yoga teachers and yoga schools present at the event.

The book *How to Never Diet Forever* written by Herrera was also launched by Ambassador Kumaran during the event. The book provides the readers a step-by-step system on achieving holistic health, longevity, beauty, and a life of fulfillment and service to others. The book draws on Herrera's education in nutrition and wellness

including her extensive training in the ancient Indian system of Yoga and Ayurveda in Mysore, India.

In run-up to the International Day of Yoga, several pre-events were also organized in Manila. These included yoga workshops at the Miriam College, Quezon City and the Asian Centre of the University of

the Philippines-Diliman. The workshops consisted of yoga webinars and practical classes for university students, faculty and staff.

India's unique and civilizational pathway to well-being, yoga is practiced in various forms around the world. In the Philippines, yoga continues to grow in popularity

with increasing number of instructors and passionate practitioners going beyond the physical aspects of yoga, and engaging with it as a potent tool of self-refinement. Over the last few years, several Filipino yoga enthusiasts and teachers have traveled to India, some to receive the required authorization as a teacher, others in search for greater depth and authenticity.

Recognizing its universal appeal and its efficacy as a tool for experiencing well-being across age groups, nationalities and social backgrounds, the United Nations proclaimed June 21 as International Day of Yoga in December 2014.

This year International Day of Yoga is being celebrated with the theme "Yoga for Humanity." While unveiling the theme last month, Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi said, "The theme appropriately portrays, how during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic, yoga served the humanity in alleviating the suffering and in the emerging post-Covid scenario too, it will bring people together through compassion, kindness, foster a sense of unity and build a better world for all people world over."

This year the International Day of Yoga is being celebrated as India commemorates 75 years of Independence. As a tribute to the occasion, Common Yoga Protocol demonstrations were held simultaneously at 75 national-level iconic sites in India on June 21.

Another innovative feature of the 8th edition of International Day of Yoga was the program named "Guardian Ring." The Guardian Ring — a relay Yoga streaming event underlines the idea of "One Sun, One Earth." The program showcased participation of people from across the world synchronized with the movement of the sun, beginning from the east and marching towards west. Celebrations in the Philippines are also a part of the Guardian Ring.

With the annual celebration of the International Day of Yoga, the Embassy aims to facilitate a definitive change in the way we perceive and approach health and well-being by making the holistic well-being practice of yoga accessible to a large cross-section of people in the Philippines.



Ambassador of India to the Philippines Shambhu Kumaran

## Japan loan for Commuter Railway Project signed



Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez and Asian Development Bank President Asakawa Masatsugu (standing left and right) hold the signed loan agreement as witnessed by President Rodrigo Duterte (center). PHOTO FROM ADB

JAPANESE Ambassador Koshikawa Kazuhiko witnessed the signing ceremony between Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez and Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Asakawa Masatsugu for the North-South Commuter Railways (NSCR) South Extension on June 16. The ceremony was held in attendance of President Rodrigo Duterte at the Malacañang Palace.

Ambassador Koshikawa stated that "We welcome today's signing for the NSCR Extension between the Department of Finance and ADB. This project is a symbolic collaborative project among Japanese government, Philippine government and ADB to deliver efficient mass transportation for the benefit of many Filipinos. This first airport-bound, high-speed railway in the Philippines is seen to enhance the functionality of Clark International Airport as well as to boost

connectivity and convenience of commuting for those living in surrounding areas of Metro Manila."

The Ambassador also assured that Japan will continue to support the NSCR Extension project to the utmost of our abilities until its completion, such as in the procurement of rolling stock and development of railroad system, through Japan International Cooperation Agency's official development assistance support.

The NSCR extension project is one of the key infrastructure projects supported by Japan under the Philippine Government's Build, Build, Build program. It will reduce travel time from Clark International Airport to Metro Manila from current two to three hours to only about an hour, and halve travel time between Metro Manila and Calamba, Laguna from about two hours to less than an hour.

## US Chargé d'Affaires in Clark

UNITED STATES (US) Embassy in the Philippines Chargé d'Affaires ad interim Heather Variava visited the Clark Freeport and Special Economic Zone to highlight the impact of US support for economic development in Central Luzon.

Variava went to the FedEx Clark Gateway, the US shipping and logistics company's major investment in the Clark Freeport on June 17. This 17,000-square-meter facility supports the Philippines' growing e-commerce demand and small-and-medium-sized industries that are helping drive the country's economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. FedEx already employs hundreds of Filipinos

at the facility and plans to expand operations further in the coming years.

In a meeting with the American Chamber of Commerce, Variava discussed the impact of US investments in Central and Northern Luzon. US companies create thousands of local jobs, enhance the region's economic development, and conduct charitable activities that help improve the lives of the area's residents.

"As President Biden said during the launch of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, the future of the 21st century economy is going to be largely written in our region—the Indo-Pacific," said Variava. "This why we are grateful for the investment that

are being poured into the Philippines by American businesses, which support our longstanding commitment to the shared prosperity of our two nations."

Variava also visited major infrastructure projects, including the new Clark International Airport Terminal and the Malolos-Clark railway project, which will transform transportation in the Metro Manila and Clark regions. The Asian Development Bank (ADB)-financed Malolos-Clark railway project will create thousands of local jobs, ease traffic congestion, and reduce auto emissions by tens of thousands of tons. The United States is the largest shareholder in ADB and

supports the Philippines' efforts to improve environmental outcomes through greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

Variava also expressed her support for the Philippine Disaster Relief Foundation (PDRF), which leverages resources and knowledge from the Philippines' business community to respond to natural disasters, such as last year's devastating Typhoon Odette. The United States, through the United States Agency for International Development, supports PDRF's activities to improve the preparedness and resilience of Metro Manila and other disaster-prone regions across the Philippines.



US Embassy in the Philippines Chargé d'Affaires ad interim Heather Variava visits Clark International Airport and the FedEx Clark Gateway in her trip to the Clark Freeport and Special Economic Zone to highlight the US support for economic development in the region.



Philippine resident and businessman Dr. Andreas Klippe (right) receives International Business Expert Award in Germany from chairman and best-selling author Herman Scherer.

## PH-based German business expert wins int'l speaker award

INTERNATIONAL business expert Dr. Andreas Klippe won an Excellence Award at the International Speaker Slam. This year's edition took place at the studio of Hermann Scherer, a German author who has written several bestsellers. Over 140 speakers from 19 countries spoke six languages. Dr. Klippe bested them all.

Anyone who hears Dr. Klippe speak will say he speaks like a champion. His stage presence and way with words made him stand out that day. He described how, in 2007, beer and hand tests helped him build a successful flood protection company in Asia.

He's the President and CEO of Flood Control Asia RS Corporation. It has attracted several Asian customers because it uses sophisticated German technology. In Dinalupihan, Bataan, Dr. Klippe and his team designed and installed German food barns at Jose G. Puyos Memorial Hospital. Their barns will protect the hospital from severe flooding in the future.

Dr. Klippe is based in Clark, Pampanga, when he's not in Dubai or Qatar. He and his partner, Ma. Fatima Viray Usi started their company in a termite-infested building. Through hard work and grit, they grew the company to 43 employees. They kept growing even during the pandemic, which is no mean feat.

Dr. Klippe will continue to promote Asia and the Philippines by sharing his expertise wherever he goes.

UNITED States (US) Embassy in the Philippines Chargé d'Affaires

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