



TAMBULI Weekly Newsletter

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Federation of Philippine Industries

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1. 26 days to go: FPI Business Summit 2025

FEDERATION OF PHILIPPINE INDUSTRIES, INC.
BUSINESS SUMMIT 2025

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The Voice of Industry

WEDNESDAY
08 OCTOBER '25
8AM-12NN

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THRIVING THRU TURBULENCE
ADVANCING PHILIPPINE MANUFACTURING
RESILIENCE & GROWTH



2. FPI Calls for Strict Enforcement of Philippine Standards in Public Infrastructure

The Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI) strongly urges the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to enforce the strict implementation and monitoring of the Philippine National Standards (PNS) for all building materials, particularly cement and steel, used in public infrastructure projects nationwide.

The Philippine National Standards (PNS) are based on global standards and further customized to the unique environmental and geological conditions of the Philippines. This is why strict adherence to PNS in public infrastructure projects is critical. At its core, PNS is about safety and resilience—ensuring that structures, especially those built with cement and steel, can withstand the country's harsh climate conditions. In a nation prone to earthquakes, typhoons, and floods, it is vital that DPWH engineers and contractors consistently comply with PNS standards to protect lives and safeguard communities.

Strict compliance with PNS is essential to ensure the safety, durability, and resilience

of the country's public infrastructure. The use of substandard materials—whether in cement, steel, or other critical construction inputs—compromises public safety, wastes resources, and undermines confidence in national development efforts.

FPI Chairperson Elizabeth Lee emphasized: "Adherence to the Philippine National Standards is non-negotiable. Only by strictly following these standards—especially in cement and steel—can we ensure safe, durable, and resilient public infrastructure for our people."

The FPI works closely with the Department of Trade and Industry's Bureau of Product Standards (DTI-BPS) and reaffirms its commitment to collaborate with all government agencies in upholding these standards. Together, we must guarantee that our public infrastructure projects are built on quality, integrity, and accountability—laying the foundation for sustainable nation-building and long-term growth.

3. Joint Statement on Call for an End to Corruption in Government Public Works and Other Projects

Alliance of Women
for Action towards
Reform (AWARE)



CALL FOR AN END TO THE SHAMEFUL, UNABATED, CONTINUING AND EXCESSIVE CORRUPTION IN GOVERNMENT'S PUBLIC WORKS AND OTHER PROJECTS

September 4, 2025

In the strongest terms possible, we hereby declare our outrage, disgust and disappointment about the acts of many of our legislators in Congress and officials in the Executive Department, primarily in the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the local government units (LGUs), and the Commission on Audit (COA), for their shameful, unabated, continuing and excessive acts of graft and corruption – a crime against our people, specially those who continue to live in dire poverty.

While we take note of the President admonishing the corrupt in government, we are concerned that the guilty among these officials will continue their merry way of robbing the people and filling their pockets, completely oblivious to the fact that they are betraying the public trust, committing a treasonous act against our people, and simply being unpatriotic and sinful. It is thus important that thorough investigations be conducted by an independent body with the aim of prosecuting these corrupt officials, putting them in jail, and recovering the stolen funds. Justice for the Filipino people, specially the poor, can only be achieved by successfully punishing the corrupt.

Our call therefore is not just to “moderate your greed”. Our collective call to these corrupt officials is - - - **PLEASE STOP! MAAWA NAMAN KAYO SA MGA NAGHIHIRAP NA TAONG BAYAN.**

With this call to action, we can assure the corrupt politicians and officials that we in the undersigned organizations will:

1. Help identify those who have been guilty in the conspiracy to steal from the people;
2. Participate in and support citizen and voter education campaigns to make the people aware of the evils of corruption and other malgovernance practices so that citizens can discern and elect officials who have good anti-corruption records;
3. Gather evidences of corruption against officials in the government, particularly those in the DPWH, the LGUs and COA and their partners in crime in the private sector, so that appropriate criminal and civil cases can be filed against them;
4. Blacklist the notorious businessmen and contractors who conspire with the corrupt politicians and officials, and never do business with these people;
5. Lead the individual signing of the Integrity Pledge where, among others, the leader and the company he/she leads SHALL NOT BRIBE any politician or government official in exchange for project approvals or favors; and
6. Encourage the financial sector, particularly the banks and the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC), to be one with us in bringing out the money launderers and their unexplained wealth within legal and regulatory boundaries.

TAMA NA! SOBRA NA! TUMIGIL NA KAYO!

4. Joint Opposition on the Proposed 14th Month Pay Bill



The Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI), together with other employer and business organizations and industry associations, submitted a position paper to formally express its opposition to the Senate Bill No. 193 or the proposed 14th Month Pay Law.

The employers fully support initiatives aimed at enhancing employee welfare. However, we believe that mandating a 14th month pay for all private-sector employees will impose a significant burden on employers. Our registered establishments in the country is composed of 90% micro, 8% small, 1% medium, and less than 1% large. This measure is dangerous as it would increase labor costs by approximately 8.3%.

Furthermore, we contend that the existing Labor Code already mandates a 13th month pay. While there may be employers voluntarily granting additional bonuses, depending on company performance and financial capability, the micro enterprises are already struggling.

Although exemptions are made available to supposedly qualified establishments, we must take into consideration that many micros lack resources, such as time and personnel, that will enable them to take on the tedious task of applying for exemption. Even if there was a recourse, many enterprises will not go into the trouble for a lengthy process and a limited exemption period. Additionally, if exemption is available to the micro and small, then a blanket legislation should no longer be necessary at all.

It may also be recalled that for the last two years, the micros have been encountering

difficulties in paying their employees with the mandatory 13th month pay. There were efforts to assist them.

e.g. SB Corporation had to open a window to assist companies just so they could comply. Clearly, a mandatory 14th month pay would further burden already struggling businesses.

The micro enterprises comprising a vast majority of employers are not even our members as we represent mostly medium and large enterprises, and to some extent small enterprises. These enterprises are normally unorganized, but we at the formal sector have to take the cudgels for them. Our members, which are mostly medium and large, may be able to afford as some of them have already been giving out 14th month, probably even 15th, 16th and beyond; but we are more concerned about the micro and small companies.

While we share the goal of uplifting Filipino workers, we believe it must be achieved in a way that also ensures the long-term viability of businesses. The mandatory 14th month pay, although well-meaning, threatens business sustainability and employment security.

In light of the foregoing, we urge the Congress to redirect its efforts toward policies that reduce the cost of doing business, encourage productivity, and support job generation and stability. If the policymakers wish to help the Filipino workers, they could think of alternative measures to: reduce the cost of putting food on the table, improve food security, reduce the cost of commute for workers, conduct massive reskilling and upskilling that can qualify workers for higher-

paying jobs, and similar measures that can ensure workers' job security and well-being. The honorable policymakers can also find ways to subsidize fledgling employers and businessmen so that they can sustain the workers' gainful employment. We believe that

these suggested approaches can offer a clearer path towards a more prosperous 'Bagong Pilipinas' where both businesses and workers can truly thrive in industrial peace and harmony.

5. Joint Opposition on the Abolition of the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards (RTWPBS)



The Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI), together with other employer and business organizations and industry associations, submitted letters to congress to express our serious concern regarding ongoing discussions at the committee level regarding bills related to the abolition of the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards (RTWPBs).

There are roughly 52 million workers in the labor market. Out of this number, only 16% are covered by the various laws including the law on minimum wage determination. Out of the 16%, only 4 million are minimum wage earners. This shows that only very few are affected by the wage orders.

It must be recalled that the Eight Congress institutionalized this laudable mechanism through Republic Act No. 6727 or the Wage Rationalization Act of 1989, recognizing the need to set minimum wages based on regional socio-economic conditions to protect workers from unduly low wages, while allowing enterprises to grow, compete globally, and create more jobs. Since then, the RTWPBs have improved wage levels across the country, raising the floor in lower-income regions and reducing disparities across the country, even without a marked

increase in productivity.

To ensure a fair and just determination of minimum wages as a safety net, both chambers of Congress thought it wise to delegate the task to the RTWPBs, a tripartite body composed of representatives from labor, employers, and government, reflecting a well-balanced and consultative tripartite structure that uses social dialogue and mass consultation with all affected sectors of the economy. This design has ensured that wage decisions are evidence-based and tempered by the realities on the ground. The Boards have managed to maintain equilibrium between the needs of workers and the capacity of enterprises—especially the 99.6% micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)—to absorb upward wage adjustments. More importantly, the Board's decisions have not historically triggered inflationary surges, a testament to the prudence and balance embedded in the current system.

Over the years, the use of this mechanism in granting minimum wage increases on a regional basis has helped to sufficiently protect workers from unduly low wages, while ensuring that moderate wage increases would not result in business

closures among the MSMEs, and more importantly, ensuring that the RTWPB's decisions would not trigger undue inflationary surges. Certainly, this is a strong testament to the prudence and balance embedded in the current system created by the Eighth Congress. This also demonstrates the Boards' responsiveness to real economic conditions while preserving employment and enterprise sustainability.

It is important to note the Philippines has a minimum wage setting mechanism similar to eight other ASEAN countries – decentralized, regional wage setting based on realities at the regional level. This system helps keep the Philippines in line with other countries' wage-setting mechanisms, although the Philippines' current minimum wages are higher than those of many ASEAN countries.

We must also benchmark the Philippines against its ASEAN neighbors. We once had the lowest minimum wage rate in the region, but recent comparative data support the fact that our minimum wages are now among the highest, due to annual reviews and adjustments made by the RTWPBs.

This comparative context highlights the delicate balance between protecting workers and ensuring the Philippines' competitiveness in the region. If the country moves to legislated national minimum wages or steep across-the-board increases without corresponding improvements in productivity, it risks discouraging investments and disincentivizing the growth of MSMEs. ASEAN wage competition underscores that affordability of labor remains a critical factor in attracting foreign direct investment and sustaining job creation, as proven by experience in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Myanmar.

Considering the foregoing realities, and the current and emerging uncertainties of doing business globally, we strongly oppose the abolition of the RTWPBs.

We believe that it is not advisable to change the wage-setting mechanism that has proven responsive, fair and just to all stakeholders and social partners, and beneficial to the Philippine economy, in general, for more than three decades.

Abolishing the Boards would effectively strip away the only platform where regionally nuanced, tripartite dialogue on wage-setting takes place. The impact of such a move would be prejudicial to the majority of the workforce, particularly those outside the formal sector who will not benefit from national wage-setting. At most, only 250,000 workers are covered by formal unionized wage structures; the millions of other workers, mostly from informal and MSME sectors, risk being left behind or, worse, excluded from the labor market altogether due to unsustainable mandated wages.

It is also important to note that the existing regional disparity in wages in the regions is also meant to encourage investments in the countryside. With uniform wage rates, there is no guarantee that workers will stay in the countryside, where there are fewer business establishments that can afford to pay almost twice the old wage rates. Without investments in the region due to high wages, there will be increased urban migration and less productive regions. The sector that this proposed policy change hopes to protect will indeed suffer even more.

We therefore appeal to the Committee to carefully reconsider all the pending proposals and to instead focus on strengthening the existing mechanisms — ensuring they remain responsive, inclusive, and regionally relevant. We also reiterate that we are able and willing to work with Congress, labor, and government partners to improve the current wage system.

6. FPI Committees

Anti-Smuggling



The Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI) and the Bureau of Customs (BOC) held a productive meeting on August 28, 2025, 10:30 AM at Diamond Hotel, solidifying efforts to combat smuggling and corruption through digitalization initiatives. Key outcomes: Quarterly coordination meetings with the BOC Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners; Formation of an FPI-BOC Viber group for real-time communication; and Commitment to digital transformation to enhance transparency and efficiency. Further, Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno confirmed to join the FPI Summit on October 8, 2025, at Manila Polo Club, Makati City.

Summit Committee



FPI's Summit Committee met with Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto last August 27, 2025, 1:30PM. Key outcomes: Tax amnesty program to be launched soon this year; and Organization of a session between FPI and the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) for the latter to provide orientation and other relevant pieces of information so FPI members would know their rights.

7. FPI in the news

Building materials used in infrastructure must comply with standards, FPI says

To read/view the article: <https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/09/10/697660/building-materials-used-in-infrastructure-must-comply-with-standards-fpi-says/>

FPI urges DPWH to enforce construction standards amid corruption scandal

To read/view the article: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/09/11/business/top-business/fpi-urges-dpwh-to-enforce-construction-standards-amid-corruption-scandal/2182401>

PH industries group vows to work with gov't, heed nat'l standards

To read/view the article: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1258452>

Biz group urges DPWH to use PNS-approved materials in new projects

To read/view the article: <https://tribune.net.ph/2025/09/10/biz-group-urges-dpwh-to-use-pns-approved-materials-in-new-projects>

SteelAsia expansion forging ahead, to invest P75B in more plants

To read/view the article: <https://business.inquirer.net/545992/steelasia-expansion-forging-ahead-to-invest-p75b-in-more-plants>

'Count us in': MVP backs Ang's flood control initiatives

To read/view the article: <https://www.msn.com/en-ph/news/national/count-us-in-mvp-backs-ang-s-flood-control-initiatives/ar-AA1M3T9S?ocid=Huawei&cvid=f2f398f630fc4754af6560c73d95fefc&ei=12>

30 business groups condemn corruption in Philippine bureaucracy

To read/view the article: <https://business.inquirer.net/545155/30-business-groups-condemn-corruption-in-philippine-bureaucracy>

Rename PCA to Philippine Coconut Farmer Authority

To read/view the article: <https://business.inquirer.net/545206/rename-pca-to-philippine-coconut-farmer-authority>

Driving change: Elizabeth Lee on industry, innovation, and inclusion | ANC

Watch: https://youtu.be/dPDwaP2WMVc?si=D6tdE_8MfMQeuHu-

Submerged integrity: Corruption erodes flood defenses and endangers Filipinos

To read/view the article: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/09/02/submerged-integrity-corruption-erodes-flood-defenses-and-endangers-filipinos/>

Business groups welcome Dizon as new DPWH chief

To read/view the article: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/09/02/business/business-groups-welcome-dizon-as-new-dpwh-chief/2176992>

Business leaders hopeful Dizon can restore integrity at DPWH

To read/view the article: <https://mb.com.ph/2025/09/01/business-leaders-hopeful-dizon-can-restore-integrity-at-dpwh>

Ph manufacturers support Dizon - eye procurement collaboration

To read/view the article: <https://logisticsnews.ph/2025/09/01/ph-manufacturers-support-dizon-eye-procurement-collaboration/>

Biz groups welcome Dizon as new DPWH Chief

To read/view the article: <https://tribune.net.ph/2025/09/01/biz-groups-welcome-dizon-as-new-dpwh-chief>

FPI suportado ang paglipad kay Dizon sa DPWH

To read/view the article: <https://newsko.com.ph/2025/09/01/fpi-suportado-ang-paglipad-kay-dizon-sa-dpwh/>

FPI hails Dizons transfer to DPWH urges higher flood control standards

To read/view the article: <https://bilyonaryo.com/2025/09/01/fpi-hails-dizons-transfer-to-dpwh-urges-higher-flood-control-standards/business/>

Marcos to new DPWH chief Dizon: Root out corruption, ghost projects

To read/view the article: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1257690>

Businesses enraged by shady flood deals

To read/view the article: <https://tribune.net.ph/2025/08/29/businesses-enraged-by-shady-flood-deals>

Increase the rice tariff immediately

To read/view the article: <https://business.inquirer.net/544040/increase-the-rice-tariff-immediately>

Biz group dismayed by public works scandal

To read/view the article: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/08/30/business/top-business/biz-group-dismayed-by-public-works-scandal/2176024>

FPI drafts 4-point plan to eliminate anomalies in flood control projects

To read/view the article: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/08/29/fpi-drafts-4-point-plan-to-eliminate-anomalies-in-flood-control-projects/>

FPI calls for unified action against anomalous flood control projects

To read/view the article: <https://mb.com.ph/article/10882420/business/trade-industry/fpi-calls-for-unified-action-against-anomalous-flood-control-projects>

Manufacturers' group hails investigation of flood control projects

To read/view the article: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1257611>

FPI weighs in on fiasco over flood control

To read/view the article: <https://manilastandard.net/news/314636214/fpi-weighs-in-on-fiasco-overflood-control.html>

FPI hit 'corruption' in gov't flood control

To read/view the article: <https://tribune.net.ph/2025/08/29/fpi-hit-corruption-in-govt-flood-control>

Alyansa Agrikultura chairman Ernesto Ordoñez discusses a new systemized checklist proposed to the Department of Agriculture (DA) to cut waste and corruption by at least 30% - Market Edge | ANC (25 August 2025)

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/live/4NQNBIGK0J4?si=ZxvsM3h9L7p73jJr>

8. Other news & announcements

PROCLAMATION NO. 1006 - DECLARING THE REGULAR HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL (NON-WORKING) DAYS FOR THE YEAR 2026

To read/view the proclamation: <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2025/09/03/proclamation-no-1006-s-2025/>

PBBM signs Enhanced Fiscal Regime for Large-Scale Metallic Mining Act, mandating royalty fees from mining sites

To read/view the article: https://pco.gov.ph/news_releases/pbbm-signs-enhanced-fiscal-regime-for-large-scale-metallic-mining-act-mandating-royalty-fees-from-mining-sites/

Separation pay for validly dismissed employees

To read/view the article: <https://business.inquirer.net/544910/separation-pay-for-validly-dismissed-employees#>

House bill filed seeking return of VAT rate to 10%

To read/view the article: <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/economy/957916/congressman-seeks-return-vat-rate-to-10pct/story/>

Marcos leads launch of Hyundai Shipyard in Subic Freeport

To read/view the article: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2103389/marcos-leads-launch-of-hyundai-shipyard-in-subic-freeport>

Proposed amnesty could cover taxes from as far back as 2007

To read/view the article: <https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/09/01/695116/proposed-amnesty-could-cover-taxes-from-as-far-back-as-2007/>

Philippine manufacturing expands for third-straight month in August amid low inflation, steady employment

To read/view the article: <https://mb.com.ph/2025/09/01/philippine-manufacturing-expands-for-third-straight-month-in-august-amid-low-inflation-steady-employment>

Local automaker urges DTI to prioritize homegrown firms; DTI says incentives Available

To read/view article: <https://www.abs-cbn.com/news/business/2025/8/29/local-automaker-urges-dti-to-prioritize-homegrown-firms-dti-says-incentives-available-1659>

BOC CMC 165-2025 - Implementation of Executive Order No. 93 – Suspending the Importation of Regular Milled and Well-Milled Rice for 60 Days |

<https://customs.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/2025CMC-165-2025.pdf>

BOC CMC 162-2025 - Department of Trade and Industry Department Administrative Order No. 25-08, Series of 2025, on the Suspension of the Definitive General Safeguard Measure on Importations of High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) Pellets and Granules (AHTN 2017 Code 3901.20.00) |

<https://customs.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/2025CMC-162-2025.pdf>

BOC Enforces Stricter Disclosure Policy to Prevent Conflicts of Interest |

<https://customs.gov.ph/boc-enforces-stricter-disclosure-policy-to-prevent-conflicts-of-interest/>

BOC Orders Full Coverage of Condemnation Activities | <https://customs.gov.ph/boc-orders-full-coverage-of-condemnation-activities/>

BOC Intensifies Crackdown on Illicit Trade, Uncovers Smuggled Cigarettes

worth P605.29M in Bulacan | <https://customs.gov.ph/boc-intensifies-crackdown-on-illicit-trade-uncovers-smuggled-cigarettes-worth-p605-29m-in-bulacan/>

BIR RR No. 23-2025 - Updated Policies, Guidelines and Procedures in the Implementation of the Tax Subsidy Granted by the Fiscal Incentives Review Board (FIRB) to the Armed Forces of the Philippines Commissary and Exchange Service (AFPCES) | [Full Text](#)

BIR RMO No. 38-2025 - Consolidated Guidelines and Procedures for the Processing of Claims for Refund of Excise Tax Paid on Petroleum Products, amending Revenue Memorandum Order No. 16-2024 and other related issuances | [Full Text](#) | [Annex A](#) | [Annex A-1](#) | [Annex A-2](#) | [Annex B](#) | [Annex C](#)

BIR RMC No. 81-2025 - Reiterating the Criteria and Guidelines on the Deductibility of Ordinary and Necessary Expenses Under Section 34(A)(1)(a) of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as Amended | [Full Text](#)

20TH CONGRESS COMMITTEE HEARINGS/MEETINGS

- [Senate of the Philippines Committee Hearings/Meetings](#)
- [House of Representatives Committee Meetings](#)