

## No free tuition until 2018 despite law, says Diokno

President Duterte has signed the bill that would provide free tuition in state universities and colleges (SUCs) into law last Friday but the government would not offer free tertiary education until next year.

Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno said

See page A3

Inside the Monitor



**BOURSE SALES UP 18% TO P662M IN 1ST HALF**  
page A4



**BDO FLOATS P5B LTNCDS TO FUND EXPANSION PROGRAM**  
page A5



**PBA TWEAKS PLAY SCHEDULE FOR GILAS' FIBA ASIA CAMPAIGN**  
page B1



**A MONTH FOR MOVIE MARATHONS**  
page B4



## S. Korea realty tycoon targets hole-in-one via Clark project

It all started with a leisure trip for gold in Manila for South Korean real-estate magnate Lee Shin-Kun, and now, he owns Donggwang Clark Corp. (DCC) which is considered one of South Korea's

See page A8



Lee Shin-Kun.

# PCC eyes cement firms in anti-trust investigation

By Luis Leoncio

The Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) is investigating anti-competitive practices in the cement industry, PCC Commissioner Johannes Benjamin Bernabe said in a forum last week.

He said PCC's Competition Enforcement Office has found "indications of anti-competitive agreements" in the local cement industry.

Bernabe added that the Competition Enforcement Office is continuing its study and investigation, but he added that the PCC has not yet established that there is cartel in the industry.

In August 2016, former Depart-



## PHILIPPINE COMPETITION COMMISSION

ment of Trade and Industry (DTI) undersecretary and now Laban Konyumer Inc. president Victorio Mario Dimagiba filed an affidavit-complaint against the Cement Manufacturers Association of the Philippines (CeMAP) president Ernesto Ordoñez in the anti-trust body.

Dimagiba's complaint alleged that Ordoñez, in his capacity as president of CeMAP, LaFarge Holcim Philippines, Inc., and Republic Cement and Building Materials Inc., violated provisions in the Philippine Competition Act by engaging in anti competitive agreements.

"These allegations were the basis of

PCC to investigate the cement industry," Bernabe said.

"We found reasonable grounds to believe that anti competitive acts or practices have been committed," he added noting that this made the Commission to proceed to conduct a full administrative investigation.

The PCC also reminded businesses to comply with the provisions of the Philippine Competition Act (PCA) or face hefty fines and penalties.

PCC Chairman Arsenio Balisacan said that, with the transitory period ending on August 8, businesses that still do not comply with the provisions of the PCA could be meted out with

See page A2

## BSP eyes relaxing forex rules anew

By Riza Lozada

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) vows to further relax foreign exchange trading rules to help address rising financing requirements of the local economy.

BSP Governor Nestor Espenilla Jr. said bank lending continues to be robust but noted financial institutions cannot sufficiently fund increasing needs, thus, the need to also support the local currency debt market.

"We believe this is a crucial component to sustain the economy's growth momentum," he said.

Espenilla said monetary officials also bid to develop the domestic debt market due in part to the developments in the foreign exchange market.

To date, the peso is trading its near 11-year low to a greenback at around 50 per \$1 level.

Espenilla said daily peso-dollar trading volume averages to around \$600 million to date but cited that when the BSP started to collect data, the volume reaches to more than \$1 billion.

"For transactions to be happening in the unregulated parallel markets, this has got to change," he said as he pointed to the needed reforms in the financial sector.

Espenilla said reforms needed include making foreign exchange transactions "more risk-based, but trans-



parent."

He said that "notwithstanding the waves of liberalization that the BSP has announced in the past, we recognize that the foreign exchange market today remains restrictive, difficult, opaque, shallow."

"It is a throwback to time when fx (foreign exchange) was scarce and reserves were meager and market confidence was very low," he said.

"Today, it's an entirely different picture. To preserve those kinds of rules in a market that is rapidly growing is to impede the growth of market itself. It simply adds to cost of doing business and just creates a bigger and bigger black market," he said.

Espenilla said foreign exchange liberalization will be "a very important focus of my term."

"We will also continue to reshape the financial system so that it is truly responsive to the needs of the domestic economy. Here we have

See page A2



Agriculture Undersecretary Evelyn Laviña explains a shift in policies at the Department of Agriculture (DA) during the the third general assembly of the Philippine Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture (PPSA).

## DA to shift policy focus to agribusiness

By Gia Catimbang and Hananeel Bordey

The Department of Agriculture (DA) plans to shift focus on the agriculture sector to agribusiness to adapt to a business world that is fast advancing due to technology, Agriculture Undersecretary Evelyn Laviña said.

At the the third general assembly of Philippine Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture (PPSA) forum on July 27, 2017 Laviña said the DA appreciates the PPSA's encouragement of private entities to take a closer look at what local producers can do

by helping bring together industry players and local producers.

"You are sending the right signal," she added.

Laviña expressed the need to set the right framework by shifting agriculture to "agribusiness," in line with President Duterte's focus on agricultural growth that allowed the sector to grow 9.28 percent in the course of 12 months since he became president, including a significant 5.28-percent growth in the first quarter of 2017.

Several ways to allow the policy shift to agribusiness were also discussed such as the intercropping or crop di-

versification where the DA puts increased emphasis to high-value crops such as cocoa and coffee and focusing where crop grows best, citing Ilocos Norte for their 'favorable' farms for garlic and re-locating crops from Negros island and Quezon.

Natural-resource management is also a key ingredient that aims to harvest crops for growth and ensure a healthy farmland and fishing grounds for future generations.

Moreover, she also discussed the use of the recently introduced National

See page A2

## Asean integration focus on poverty woes urged

Not only economic growth should be the focus of the integration of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) members but also poverty and income inequality, Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) President Gilberto Llanto said.

Speaking at a forum recently organized by the Philippine APEC Study Center Network, together with PIDS and the De La Salle University (DLSU)-Angelo King Institute, Llanto explained that while globalization and the opening of markets proved to be beneficial, policymakers have to "bear in mind that these should work for the people, especially for the so-called 'left behind'."

Llanto said to feel the positive effects of the Asean integration, the Philippines

See page A3



Gilberto Llanto, PIDS

GET YOUR COPY OF THE MARKET MONITOR AT THESE NATIONAL BOOK STORE AND POWERBOOKS BRANCHES



FESTIVAL ALABANG • SM AURA PREMIER • TRINOMA • SM CITY NORTH EDSA  
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA • SM MEGAMALL • SM MANILA • HARRISON PLAZA  
ROBINSONS MANILA • GLORIETTA 1 • GREENBELT 1



TRINOMA • SM MEGAMALL • SHANGRI-LA PLAZA • SERENDRA  
FESTIVAL ALABANG • ALABANG TOWN CENTER

FOR INQUIRIES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS, CALL (632) 785-6020 OR SEND AN E-MAIL TO MARKETMONITOR2014@GMAIL.COM

