



# 필리핀 한국 상공회의소 뉴스 KOREAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PHILIPPINES NEWSLETTER



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## Philippines, South Korea leaders pledge closer cooperation as geopolitical uncertainty mounts

March 04, 2026 | Reuters | BusinessWorld

MANILA — Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos met South Korean President Lee Jae Myung in Manila on Tuesday, where they discussed ways to deepen economic and security ties.

President Lee was in Manila on a state visit.

- Mr. Marcos said both sides “recognize growing uncertainty in geopolitical developments,” and agreed on the need to uphold a rules-based international order, including in the maritime domain.
- The Philippines and South Korea agreed to expand cooperation in shipbuilding, nuclear energy and artificial intelligence.
- Mr. Lee said the two countries will also cooperate in infrastructure and defense industries.
- Mr. Lee added that South Korea and the Philippines plan to work together on critical minerals and supply chains.
- The two leaders also discussed the situation in the Middle East during their talks.
- South Korean companies will help the modernization of the Philippine military, Mr. Lee said.
- The countries signed MOUs in various sectors, including digital technology, procurement of specific defense equipment, agriculture, intellectual property, foreign language education, culture, and police investigations.



President Lee Jae Myung of the Republic of Korea and President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. shake hands at the President's Hall in Malacañan Palace during their joint press statement, Mar. 3, 2026.—PPA POOL/ MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

*Source: <https://www.bworldonline.com/the-nation/2026/03/04/734107/philippines-south-korea-leaders-pledge-closer-cooperation-as-geopolitical-uncertainty-mounts/>*

## Palace: Marcos may study 4-day work week proposal to save energy

March 04, 2026 | Dexter Cabalza | Philippine Daily Inquirer



Palace press officer Claire Castro, Presidential Communications Office/ Facebook

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. may consider studying a proposal to adopt a four-day workweek as part of the government's efforts to save energy as conflict in the Middle East intensifies, according to Malacañang.

In a briefing on Wednesday, Palace press officer Claire Castro said the President could look into the suggestion, especially if the tensions in the Middle East persist and worsen.

“At present, the President may study the suggestion, especially if the conflict between Israel and Iran escalates,” she added. [Cont. page 2]

However, the proposal has not yet been discussed by Marcos' Cabinet. [Cont. page 2]

## Palace: Marcos may study 4-day work week proposal to save energy

[Cont. from page 2]

Senator Sherwin Gatchalian earlier proposed to squeeze the five days of work a week into four days or expand the work-from-home setup to help ease the burden of rising oil prices on the public.

The Civil Service Commission authorizes flexible work arrangements, including work from home setup, for government employees as outlined under CSC Memorandum Circular No. 6, series of 2022.

For private sector workers, alternative work arrangements are allowed under Republic Act No. 11165, or the Telecommuting Act, passed in 2018

President Marcos on Monday urged Filipinos to conserve energy to brace for a possible soaring of prices of petroleum products due to a projected shortage of petroleum products in the coming weeks amid the escalating conflict in the Middle East.

He called on the public, especially government officials, to avoid unnecessary travels, and urged them to ride public transportation or practice carpooling.

Upon orders of the President, the Inter-Agency Energy Efficiency and Conservation Committee (IAEECC) also issued an advisory calling on government offices to reduce fuel consumption "by at least 10 percent." /jpv

Source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2190400/palace-marcos-may-study-4-day-work-week-proposal-to-save-energy>

## BSP raises cash withdrawal threshold to P1 million

March 04, 2026 | Keisha Ta-Asan | The Philippine Star

MANILA, Philippines – The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) has raised the threshold for cash withdrawals that will trigger enhanced due diligence (EDD) to P1 million, easing compliance requirements for regular large transactions while keeping safeguards against illicit flows in place.

Under Circular 1230, the Monetary Board approved the recalibration of regulations on large value cash transactions, increasing the threshold to P1 million from P500,000 or its equivalent in foreign currency. The new circular amends provisions under Circular 1218 issued in September 2025, which first set the P500,000 ceiling.

The BSP said the adjustment was based on risk monitoring and consultations with banks and industry groups, which flagged a large number of legitimate cash transactions breaching the previous threshold. These included payroll payouts, loan releases and project-based disbursements.

"The increase also follows the results of the latest anti-money laundering National Risk Assessment and surveillance monitoring, recognizing that robust risk-based safeguards over cash transactions remain essential to protecting financial system integrity," the central bank said.

In the circular, the regulator said there are money laundering, terrorism financing and proliferation financing risks from cash transactions with banks and other BSP-supervised financial institutions (BSFIs).

Section 929/923-Q of the Manual of Regulations for Banks and Non-Bank Financial Institutions was amended to reflect the new ceiling. It provides that BSFIs "shall adopt appropriate anti-money laundering/countering terrorism and proliferation financing (AML/CTF/PF) policies and procedures to implement the conduct of risk-based EDD procedures," on large value cash payouts exceeding P1 million.

The P1-million threshold "may be carried out in a single transaction or in a series of transactions within one banking day." If the threshold is met, EDD "shall be performed at the customer level. EDD need not be performed separately for each transaction, provided the customer has already been subjected to appropriate EDD measures."

This means depositors may withdraw up to P1 million in cash without triggering enhanced due diligence. For amounts exceeding the threshold, clients will be required to provide information supporting the legitimacy of their transactions.

[Cont. page 3]



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Businessworld / File

## BSP raises cash withdrawal threshold to P1 million

[Cont. from page 2]

For individuals and businesses with recurring large transactions, enhanced due diligence will be conducted on a per-customer basis rather than per transaction and should not disrupt regular activity.

The BSP stressed that the approach remains anchored on risk-based supervision.

At the same time, the circular allows banks and other BSFIs to impose stricter internal limits. "In line with risk-based customer due diligence measures, BSFIs may, however, adopt lower cash transaction limits based on its institutional ML/TF/PF risk assessment and/or customer financial profile," it added.

The BSP also reiterated that financial institutions must escalate cases where enhanced due diligence cannot be completed or when suspicious activity is detected.

"If the BSFI fails to satisfactorily complete the EDD procedures; or reasonably believes that performing the EDD process will tip-off the customer, it shall file a suspicious transaction report (STR) and closely monitor the account and review the business relationship," the circular said.

Institutions must also consider alerts, red flags, suspicious indicators as well as typologies reported by relevant government agencies involving large or unusual cash transactions in filing STRs.

The earlier P500,000 threshold was imposed in September last year to help curb money laundering and ensure the financial system is not used to facilitate illicit activities.

The new circular will take effect 15 calendar days after its publication either in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

*Source: <https://www.philstar.com/business/2026/03/04/2511776/bsp-raises-cash-withdrawal-threshold-p1-million>*

## DOLE streamlines construction safety compliance with online filing

March 04, 2026 | William B. Depasupil | The Manila Times

**The Manila Times**® THE Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) has digitalized the submission of safety protocol requirements in the construction industry to streamline procedures and strengthen regulatory compliance.

Labor Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma on Tuesday said the department's move to modernize the submission process for the Construction Safety and Health Program (CSHP) followed his issuance of Labor Advisory 03, Series of 2026, to ensure that essential safety protections are in place before any construction activity begins.

"We are committed to making compliance easier and more transparent for all stakeholders," Laguesma said. "Digitalizing the CSHP submission not only expedites the process but also reinforces our commitment to safeguarding the welfare of construction workers nationwide."

Under the advisory, contractors, subcontractors or owners directly managing residential or small commercial projects are now required to prepare and submit their CSHP through the DOLE Online Compliance Portal at <https://reports.dole.gov.ph/>. They must also promptly address any deficiencies identified in their submissions.

Applicants will receive notifications, including acknowledgment of receipt of their duly accomplished CSHP, via their registered email addresses.

According to the labor department, the submission, evaluation, processing and approval of the CSHP are free of charge. The department also strongly discouraged the involvement of third parties in preparing or submitting the program to prevent undue costs and ensure authenticity.

Upon receiving email confirmation of a complete CSHP submission, applicants are required to print a copy of the program, conduct the mandatory orientation as stipulated in Department Order 252, Series of 2025, and prominently post the CSHP in an accessible location for all workers.

"This digital shift is part of our broader effort to enhance service delivery and uphold the highest standards of worker safety," Laguesma added. "We urge all project administrators to comply promptly and help us build safer workplaces."

Laguesma said the issuance supersedes Labor Advisory 06, Series of 2023, reaffirming DOLE's ongoing commitment to protecting workers' rights and welfare, and to maximizing digital platforms to improve regulatory processes.

*Source: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2026/03/04/news/national/dole-streamlines-construction-safety-compliance-with-online-filing/2292380>*

## Mideast war risks sending global economy into stagflation

March 03, 2026 | Agence France-Presse | ABS-CBN

An extended conflict in the Middle East after the US and Israel launched strikes on Iran could trigger global stagflation -- a troublesome blend of high inflation and anaemic growth -- due to spiking oil and gas prices, economists warned.

### Will there be an oil shock?

The conflict has nearly halted traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, through which around 20 percent of global seaborne oil passes, with several ships attacked.

Global oil prices shot higher on Monday, with the Brent crude international reference oil contract up nearly nine percent at \$79.30 per barrel at 1410 GMT.

It briefly surpassed \$80 per barrel earlier in the day, and was up considerably from the \$61 per barrel at the start of the year.

Economist Sylvain Bersinger said the war risks "creating a third oil shock after those in 1973 and 1979 and the 2022 gas shock".

Europe's benchmark gas price shot more than 50 percent higher on Monday.

He said the price of oil could rise to \$110 per barrel, but added that was no longer exceptional as oil prices had risen over \$140 in 2008 and were above \$100 in the 2010s.

Adam Hetts at asset manager Janus Henderson said that while oil prices would certainly rise, the increase should remain "at reasonable levels".

### What impact on global trade?

The global trading system is already under stress from US President Donald Trump's tariff offensive as well as the fragmentation of supply chains since Covid and the war in Ukraine.

Moreover the closure of the Gulf airspace is disrupting aviation between European and Asia, they noted.

For Ruben Nizard, head of political risk research at Coface, a trade credit insurance company, this crisis could also "throw another wrench into the works by driving up maritime freight costs" and pushing up inflation.

"At the global level, this would open the door to an economic scenario of stagflation," he added, referring to a situation with high inflation and weak or non-existent growth.

### What impact on the global economy?

According to economists at Natixis bank, a prolonged disruption of traffic in the Strait of Hormuz "would have major implications for markets, but also for inflation dynamics and overall economic stability".

The conflict could act as a shock to trade "at the worst possible moment", said economists at ING bank.

They added that "China would be particularly affected by this war."

Cyrille Poirier-Coutansais, director of the research department at the French Navy's Centre for Strategic Studies, agreed that China is particularly dependent upon oil shipped through the Strait of Hormuz.

"The question is whether there will be enough fuel to keep the world's factory running," he told AFP.

For the economist Sylvain Bersinger the impact on Europe will likely be less than the 2022 gas shock, which would help France in particular to avoid a recession.

In a sign of declining investor confidence, the interest rate on European sovereign bonds climbed on Monday.

The yield on 10-year German government bonds, the benchmark in the eurozone, stood at 2.70 percent in afternoon trading, compared with 2.64 percent on Friday. *[Cont. page 5]*



Plumes of smoke rise following reported explosions in Tehran on March 1, 2026. Atta Kenare, AFP

## Mideast war risks sending global economy into stagflation

[Cont. from page 4]

### What risks in a long war?

The intensity and duration of the conflict will be key in determining its impact.

"In a prolonged conflict, the combination of higher energy costs, disrupted logistics, and a generalised confidence shock would constitute a meaningful drag on global trade volumes at precisely the moment the world economy was still digesting the inflationary and growth consequences of the tariff shock," said economists at ING bank.

Coface's Nizard said they estimated that "an increase of roughly 15 dollars in the price of Brent over a prolonged period could shave about 0.2 percentage points off global growth and add almost half a point to inflation."

These are "not insignificant" effects in a context of "fairly fragile global economic growth", he added.

*Source: <https://www.abs-cbn.com/news/business/2026/3/3/mideast-war-risks-sending-global-economy-into-stagflation-0847>*

## UBS sees Philippine growth at low end of 5%-6% goal this year

March 05, 2026 | Katherine K. Chan | BusinessWorld



PHILSTAR FILE PHOTO

PHILIPPINE economic growth may land at the bottom of the government's 5% to 6% goal this year as investment slowly recovers from last year's flood control scandal, UBS Investment Bank Global Research said.

"Growth is near its trough, and we expect quarterly sequential momentum to strengthen to 1.4% over the next two quarters, and GDP (gross domestic product) growth to be 5% in 2026," it said in a note on Wednesday.

That would top last year's 4.4% growth, which was weighed down by a corruption scandal that hit investments, household spending and government outlays.

It would also mark a return to the government's target after three consecutive years of misses. UBS expects public investment to rebound early this year before normalizing toward yearend.

"In our revised forecasts, we assume a gradual and backloaded recovery in public investment, starting with a small uptick in the first quarter of 2026, with spending returning to second-quarter 2025 levels by the fourth quarter of 2026," it added.

Gross capital formation, the investment component of GDP, fell 2.1% last year after a 10.9% drop in the fourth quarter, the biggest in more than four years.

Economic managers said corruption allegations from last year's flood mess undermined business and investor confidence.

Across Southeast Asia, UBS expects the six major economies — Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam — to expand by about 4.9% this year.

"The region continues to benefit from deep integration into global manufacturing value chains, supported by a sizable domestic market," Grace Lim, senior ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and Asia economist at UBS Investment Bank Global Research, said in a statement.

"Conditions for growth remain in place, with household consumption driving momentum in Indonesia, an increase in private investment under way in Thailand and the Philippines, and resilient tech related export strengths in Singapore and Malaysia," she added.

Remittances, a key source of foreign inflows, could help cushion the economy, but analysts warn that global shocks may pose risks.

The Middle East war is likely to weigh on growth, according to Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. (Metrobank) Chief Economist Nicholas Antonio T. Mapa.

"For the economy, we'll likely brace for weaker growth," he said in a note. "Inflation is expected to breach the target and the central bank's easing cycle is over."

The peso-dollar rate is pressured higher as a bloated oil bill means more demand for dollars, he added.

The war could prompt the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to hike rates, ending a nearly two-year easing cycle.

[Cont. page 6]

## UBS sees Philippine growth at low end of 5%-6% goal this year

[Cont. from page 5]

"The war in the Middle East likely means inflation will breach the target, growth will stay at 4% and the next [central bank] move is a hike and not a cut in 2026," the Metrobank economist separately said in a post on social media platform X.

The Monetary Board last month cut the reverse repurchase rate by 25 basis points (bps) to 4.25%, the lowest since August 2022, trimming key rates by 225 bps since easing began in August 2024.

Singapore-based DBS Bank warned the Philippines might see the highest regional price pressures from oil.

"Amongst the ASEAN-6 countries, the net oil trade balance is most adverse in Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam (as a percentage of GDP), with the pass-through to price pressures most material in Thailand and the Philippines," DBS Senior Economist for Eurozone, India and Indonesia Radhika Rao and Senior Economist for ASEAN Chua Han Teng said in a note.

The Department of Energy has warned that oil price increases in the local market would continue as the Middle East war could last weeks.

Since January, pump prices have increased by P6.70 a liter for gasoline, P9.40 for diesel and P7.70 for kerosene.

*Source: <https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2026/03/05/734279/ubs-sees-philippine-growth-at-low-end-of-5-6-goal-this-year/>*

## Korean investments in priority sectors eyes

March 05, 2026 | Samuel P. Medenilla | BusinessMirror

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is seeking more investments from Korean firms in priority sectors such as automotive manufacturing, electronics, and biotechnology to make the country's economy more dynamic and resilient.

The chief executive made the statement during the Philippines-Korea Business Forum in Pasay City last Wednesday where he announced the seven newly signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Philippine and Korean firms.

Marcos said the priority sectors are part of this administration's target to make the country's economy sustainable and future-ready.

"Because together, we can secure a future where both nations are self-sustaining, competitive, and prepared for the demands of tomorrow," he told members of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Federation of Korean Industries who attended the forum.

He hopes the reforms initiated by his administration to create a business-friendly environment will help attract more Korean firms in the country.

"We are determined to advance policies that strengthen investor confidence, expand opportunities for our peoples, and ensure that economic growth is shared," he said.

Among the said policies, he said, is the Create More Act, which lowers corporate income taxes for qualified firms, the Capital Markets Efficiency Promotion Act, which rationalizes tax rates across financial instruments, and his Executive Order No. 18, series of 2023, which created the Green Lanes for Strategic Investments.

He also cited the Amended Foreign Investments Act, which lowers capital requirements for start-ups and the Amended Retail Trade Liberalization Act, which significantly lowered the capital requirement for foreign retailers.

The President said the government has also allocated P50 billion to "qualified projects" to create at least 10,000 jobs.

"Together, these measures form a coherent strategy to create an economy that is dynamic, that is inclusive, and resilient," he said.

[Cont. page 7]



## Korean investments in priority sectors eyes

[Cont. from page 6]

The government, he said, has already made some gains in persuading Korean firms to consider investing in the country with the signing of the seven aforementioned business-to-business agreements in these sectors: shipbuilding, nuclear energy, aerospace, critical minerals, supply chain, retail, health and wellness.

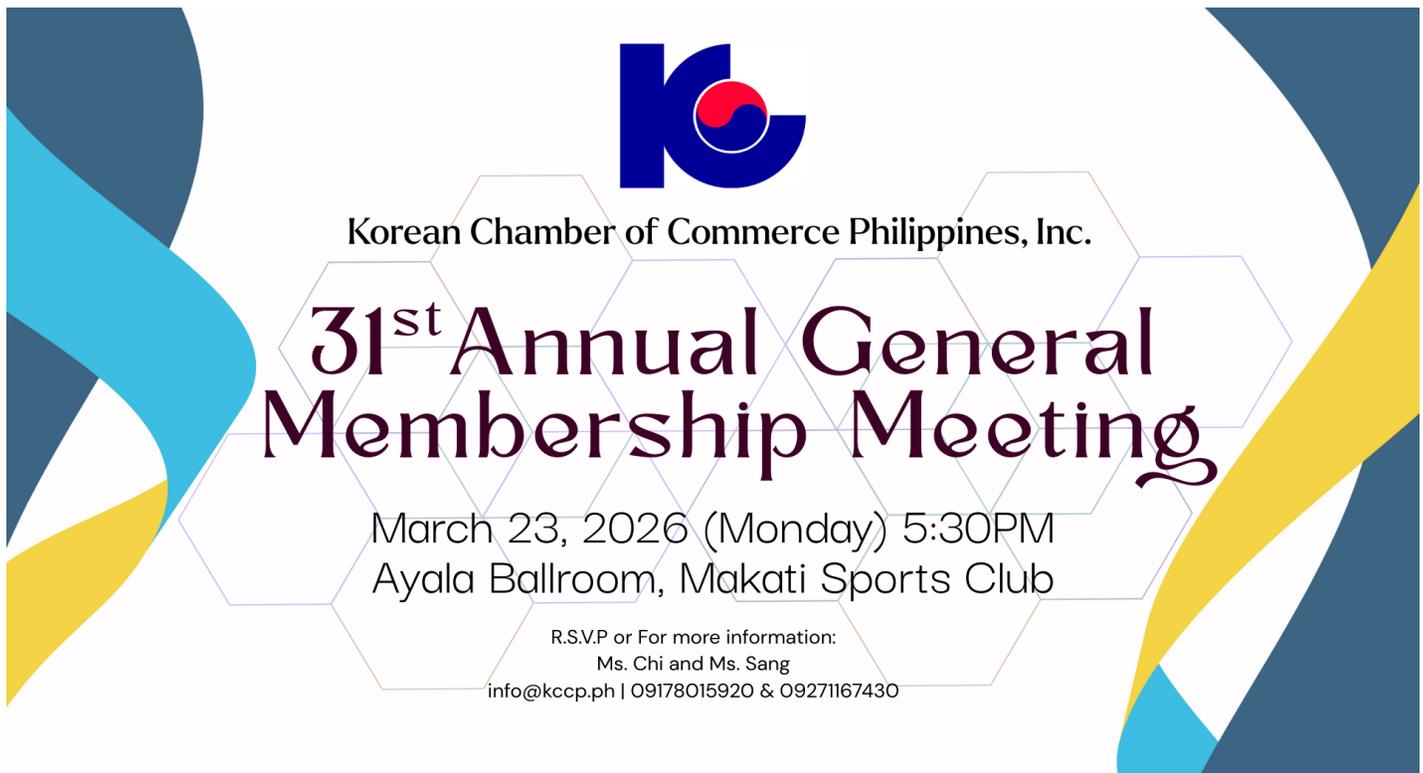
Among the signed MOUs are that of Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power as well as the Export-Import Bank of Korea signed with the Manila Electric Company (Meralco) to jointly develop business and financial models for new nuclear plant projects.

Another signed MOU is between HD Hyundai Heavy Industries and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) on shipbuilding technology development.

There were also MOUs between Samyang Food Inc. and S & R; Korean health care device manufacturer Ceragem Co. Ltd. with Belo Medical Group; Korean biotech firms and Jetema and the local medical equipment manufacturer Innomedics Trading Corporation; Korean Aerospace firm Perigee Aerospace Inc. and Philippine Space Agency, Ascend, Department of Information and Communications, Cagayan Economic Zone Authority; and the Korea Mine Rehabilitation and Mineral Resources Corporation and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

*Source: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2026/03/05/korean-investments-in-priority-sectors-eyed/>*

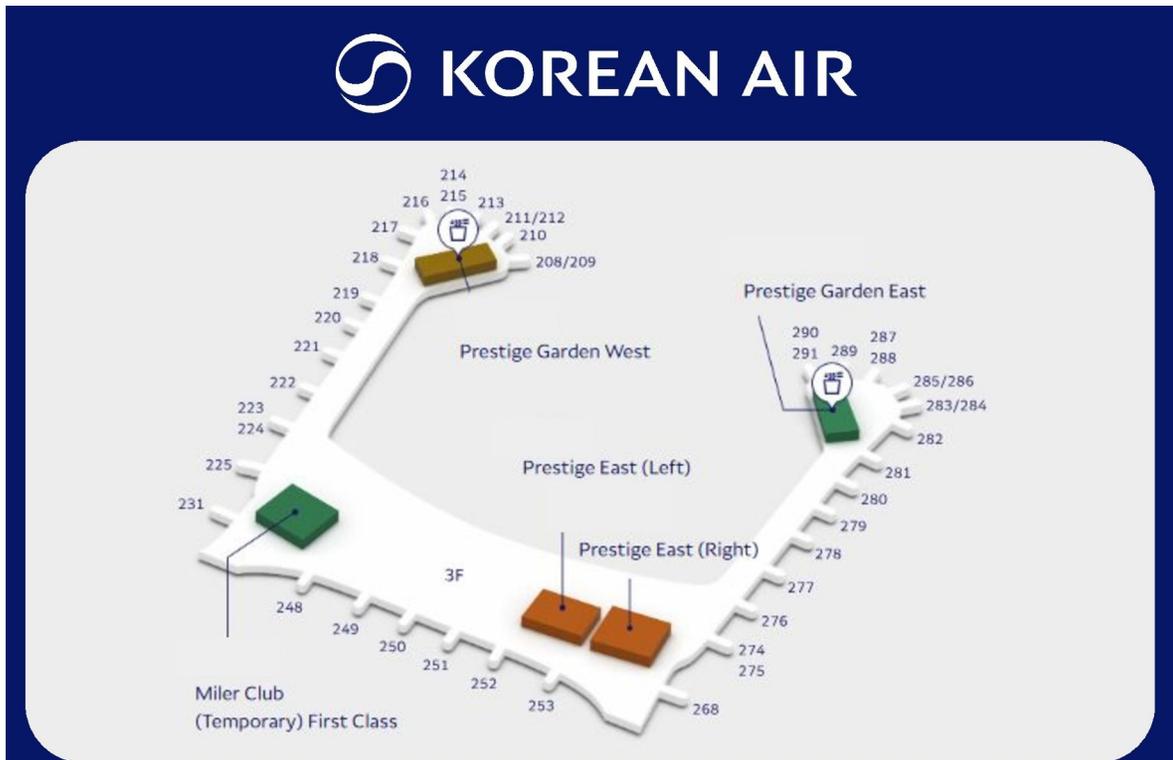
## [UPCOMING EVENT] KCCP's 31st Annual General Membership Meeting | March 23, 2026

The poster features a central graphic with a blue and red circular logo containing a white 'K' shape. Below the logo, the text 'Korean Chamber of Commerce Philippines, Inc.' is written in a dark blue font. The main title '31st Annual General Membership Meeting' is prominently displayed in a large, dark purple serif font. Below the title, the date and time 'March 23, 2026 (Monday) 5:30PM' and the location 'Ayala Ballroom, Makati Sports Club' are listed in a dark blue font. At the bottom, contact information is provided: 'R.S.V.P or For more information: Ms. Chi and Ms. Sang info@kccp.ph | 09178015920 & 09271167430'. The background consists of abstract geometric shapes in shades of blue, yellow, and white.

KCCP will hold its **31<sup>st</sup> Annual General Membership Meeting on March 23, 2026 (Monday) 5:30PM at the Ayala Ballroom, Makati Sports Club** located at L.P. Leviste corner Gallardo Sts., Salcedo Village, Makati City. This event gathers KCCP's member companies, embassy officials, Korean and local partner organizations and other guests for this important event. KCCP is expecting 120-140 attendees.

The event is also open for sponsorships. For more information about the event and mileages for sponsorship, please feel free to call KCCP Secretariat at 8885-7342 or 0917-8015920 (c/o Ms. Chi and /or Ms. Sang)

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