

Marcos eyes special power to lower fuel excise taxes

Move premised on possibility Dubai crude price breaches \$80 per barrel

By BETHEENA UNITE

While President Marcos gave an assurance that the Philippines has ample supply of oil amid the Middle East conflict, he bared plans to ask the Congress to grant him a special power to reduce excise tax on petroleum products should prices exceed \$80 per barrel. Marcos made the statement in a

press conference at Malacañan on Tuesday, March 3, following a meeting with Cabinet members on the situation of Filipinos in the middle of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, and its impacts on the country.

"I am going to talk to the leaders in both the House and in the Senate," the President said.

He noted that having this authority "is one tool that we will have to have."

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FUEL WORRIES – Wary of any more fuel price increases, a group of motorcycle riders line up to get their tanks filled at a gas station in Quezon City on Tuesday, March 3, 2026. There is growing anxiety among motorists about more fuel price hikes amid global supply concerns caused by the escalating tensions in the Middle East. (Santi San Juan)

Over 1,400 Filipinos in Middle East want to return home

By BETHEENA UNITE and MARTIN SADONGDONG

More than 1,400 Filipinos across the Middle East have requested for repatriation amid the ongoing conflict in the region, President Marcos said.

In a press conference at Malacañan on Tuesday, March 3, Marcos announced that the number of Filipinos

who have expressed desire to be sent back home had reached 1,416—10 Filipinos from Iran, 297 from Israel, 22 from Jordan, 231 from Bahrain, 586 from Dubai, and 270 from Abu Dhabi.

However, bringing them home is a challenge as airports in these countries are closed.

"This is the problem now. No planes are flying, and the airports are being hit," Marcos said. "We

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DepEd clears 5,335 teacher promotion backlogs

By MERLINA HERNANDO-MALIPOT

The Department of Education (DepEd) has secured approval for more than 5,000 teacher promotion backlogs, advancing the implementation of its Expanded Career Progression (ECP) System and reinforcing the administration's commitment to strengthening public school teachers' welfare and professional growth.

In a statement issued Tuesday, March 3, DepEd announced the approval of 5,335 teacher reclassification applications processed under previous guidelines, marking

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PH-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (left) and South Korean President Lee Jae Myung (third from left) troop the line during the arrival honors for the visiting head of state at the Kalayaan Grounds of Malacañan Palace in Manila on Tuesday, March 3, 2026. Lee's two-day state visit to the Philippines underscores both country's commitment to strengthening bilateral ties, expanding economic cooperation, and enhancing collaboration on regional security and strategic partnerships. (Mark Balmores)

Marcos, South Korean President Lee meet in Palace

By BETHEENA UNITE

President Marcos and South Korean President Lee Jae Myung met at the Malacañan Palace on Tuesday, March 3, for the latter's two-day state visit.

Marcos and First Lady Liza Arana-Marcos welcomed Lee and First Lady Kim Hea Kyung on Tues-

day afternoon.

Lee was accorded arrival honors at the Kalayaan Grounds inside the Palace upon his arrival. Members of the Marcos Cabinet were also present to welcome South Koreans First Couple.

After rendering the arrival honors, Marcos led Lee to the Malacañan Reception Hall for the signing

of the Guest Book.

Marcos and Lee then held a Tête-à-Tête, followed by a bilateral meeting to exchange views on regional and international issues and reaffirm the countries' strategic partnership.

After the bilateral meeting, they held a presentation of signed agreements and a joint press con-

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STAYING READY – Emergency responders from SM Lanang participate in a simulated rescue operation at the Fifth Nationwide Simultaneous Fire Drill for High-Density Occupancies, which was held in partnership with the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) at the SM Lanang in Davao City on Tuesday, March 3, 2026. (Keith Bacongco)



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