



At the Osaka Expo, the Philippines is highlighting its dynamic vision of fostering innovation, resilience and inclusive growth. Under the theme “Empowering Communities through Innovation,” the Philippine Pavilion is presenting the nation's aspirations for sustainable development driven by its commitment to progress and strong ties with Japan.

This special edition, featuring a message from the president of the Philippines, also includes insights from Japanese Ambassador Kazuya Endo, the Japan External Trade Organization, The Philippines-Japan Economic Cooperation Committee, the Philippines Department of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Trade, Investments and Tourism of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, Sojitz and Epson — key stakeholders contributing to the Philippines’ growth story.

The report also showcases various companies encompassing national development, reflecting the collective efforts toward progress and cooperation.



Read the full report at:
sms-bridges.com/PH25
or visit:
sms-bridges.com

The Philippines: Showcasing innovation and resilience at the Osaka Expo

A message from the president of the Republic of the Philippines

In these modern times, sovereign states can no longer afford to stand alone. The dynamics between nations have changed, making countries more open to fostering relationships that unite them. Thus, I extend my warmest greetings to The Japan Times on the publication of the Osaka World Expo special edition by Bridges.


With a rich history and interaction, the Philippines and Japan have learned to appreciate each other's cultures, practices and history. To this day we can still see the influences that paint the strong bond between our nations. I, for one, want to further open the doors that introduce our heritage and opportunities to each other.

I commend the management, editorial staff and publicists for taking the time and effort to help cultivate the strong ties between our two nations. Through this publication, you have articulated the fascinating convergence of diplomacy and trade, highlighting not only our willingness to work together, but also the countless possibilities that arise when we collectively prioritize progress, excellence and statesmanship.

To the reader, I encourage you to read beyond the words and find the value of the relationship described before you. Find meaning in striving toward shared goals and aspirations. Indeed, it is only by working together with those who seek a better tomorrow that can we achieve a more progressive and collaborative *Bagong Pilipinas* (New Philippines).

Congratulations and may you have a productive and insightful expo.

Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.



Security Bank-MUFG alliance builds bridges in banking

Founded in 1951, Security Bank Corp. is a leading Philippine universal bank guided by a customer-centric philosophy. Its 2016 partnership with Japan's Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group significantly strengthened its capital base, enabling tailored client solutions and accelerating growth across the retail, corporate and institutional sectors in a rapidly evolving market.

Security Bank plays a pivotal role in connecting Filipino businesses with Japanese investors through its dedicated Japan Desk. This initiative has led to impactful collaborations, including with Japanese real estate firms and domestic residential developers. The Japan Desk has also expanded its focus to include key sectors, such as renewable energy, infrastructure and retail, providing end-to-end support to Japanese and multinational clients in the Philippines.

Security Bank's Alliance Segment, meanwhile, strengthens the bank's regional presence by developing strategic partnerships, advancing sustainable finance and expanding its network through collaboration with MUFG.

Through the linkage with MUFG and its partner banks, Security Bank connects clients with a unique network across Southeast Asia, unlocking business-match-



Hirofumi Umeno, Executive Vice President and Alliance Segment Head of Security Bank

ing and investment opportunities and enabling cross-border business growth.

"We're not just supporting Filipino clients locally — we're creating pathways for them to grow globally," said Hirofumi Umeno, executive vice president and Alliance Segment head.

Security Bank has recently focused on bolstering its retail and consumer financing efforts in the Philippines. Significant examples include the acquisition of a 25% stake in Home Credit from MUFG and forming a joint venture with Mitsubishi Motors Corp. to establish Mitsubishi Motors Finance

Security Bank plays a pivotal role in connecting Filipino businesses with Japanese investors through its dedicated Japan Desk.


Philippines to support the market's expanding demand for automotive financing.

The Alliance Segment has also been instrumental in developing Security Bank's Sustainable Finance Framework, reinforcing its commitment to sustainability and enabling the issuance of sustainable financing instruments.

Umeno emphasized that sustainability remains a strategic priority, with MUFG's expertise playing an important role in guiding the bank's progress.

"We've made significant strides in integrating sustainable finance into Security Bank's operations, and we are proud to lead the market in this area," he said.

www.securitybank.com



Aerial view of **New Clark City**, a 9,450-hectare smart and green metropolis in Central Luzon BCDA

BCDA: From Bonifacio Global City to Clark — shaping the Philippines’ next investment hubs

The Bases Conversion and Development Authority, led by President and Chief Executive Officer Joshua M. Bingcang, is playing a pivotal role in transforming the Philippines' former military bases into modern economic zones.

Bingcang, who began his career as a junior engineer on the Bonifacio Global City project — now the country's most successful business district — continues to steer BCDA's expansion of development nationwide.

Among BCDA's most successful collaborations with Japan is the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway, funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency. Another is the new passenger terminal at Clark International Airport, the result of a public-private partnership with a consortium formed by listed builder Megawide Construction and Bangalore-based airport operator GMR Infrastructure. The terminal is run and maintained by a consortium including Filinvest, Cebu Pacific and Singapore's Changi Airport.

At the heart of BCDA's current strategy is New Clark City, a 9,450-hectare smart and green metropolis in Central Luzon. Developed in partnership with the Japan Overseas Infrastructure Investment Corporation for Transport and Urban Development, Aecom and Nikken Sekkei, the city is envisioned as a hub for manufacturing, technology and sustainability.

"We are transitioning from official development assistance to foreign direct investment,"



Joshua M. Bingcang, President and CEO of BCDA

Bingcang said. "Japanese partners have shown strong confidence — from master planning to power and industrial park development."

Key Japanese firms such as Marubeni and Tokyo Electric Power Co. have joined local utility Meralco in developing power infrastructure. A 100-hectare industrial park designed with Science Park of the Philippines Inc. and Sojitz reflects BCDA's vision to generate up to 600,000 jobs. New Clark City also features underground utilities, wide tree-lined walkways, and a driverless shuttle system funded by Japan's New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization.

Clark's strategic location has attracted logistics giants, including UPS, FedEx and Lufthansa Technik. Future phases will expand the

"We are not just building cities — we're building futures. With continued support from Japanese partners, BCDA developments are shaping the next era of Philippine growth."

airport to a capacity of 80 million passengers and link it to Metro Manila via the North-South Commuter Railway.

Beyond Clark, BCDA is revitalizing Camp John Hay in Baguio with a new master plan focusing on environmental, social and government issues, and redeveloping the Poro Point Freeport Zone in La Union.

"We are not just building cities — we're building futures," Bingcang said. "With continued support from Japanese partners, BCDA developments are shaping the next era of Philippine growth." ■

www.bcdagov.ph



Aerial view of the **Light Industry & Science Park IV** in Malvar, Batangas province SPPI

Science Park of the Philippines: Pioneering sustainable growth in strategic hubs

Science Park of the Philippines Inc. is at the forefront of sustainable growth as a pioneering private economic zone developer in the Philippines.

Established in 1989, SPPI holds the distinction of being the first private ecozone developer registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority, consistently achieving success in developing strategic economic hubs across the country.

SPPI's commitment to sustainability is evident in its award-winning initiatives. It is a PEZA Hall of Fame awardee for both environmental management and community development and has earned ISO certifications 9001, 14001 and 18001.

In 2021, its Light Industry & Science Park IV (LISP IV) Administration Building in Malvar, Batangas, achieved the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design's prestigious gold certification.

In 2024, SPPI received recognition from PropertyGuru for its

excellence in industrial development.

The company's industrial parks serve as home to long-term partners, many of which are listed among the Forbes Global 2000 and Fortune 1000. Notably, Japanese companies such as Sumitomo Wiring Systems, Tamiya, Pricon Microelectronics, NEC Tokin, Ohtsuka Polytech, Yokowo and Nippon Paint have established operations in SPPI's ecozones, reflecting its appeal to global industry leaders.

Looking to the future, SPPI is strategically expanding its presence to support economic growth. The company is developing new projects in key areas, including a logistics-focused park in Tarlac; the LISP IV east side; the expansion of the Hermosa Ecozone Industrial Park; a new industrial park at New Clark City; and a new, 100-hectare industrial park in Batangas along the Southern Tagalog Arterial Road Tollway corridor. These developments will collectively cover nearly 1,500 hectares,

reinforcing SPPI's role in shaping the country's investment landscape.

SPPI President and CEO Richard Albert I. Osmond emphasized the company's vision: "SPPI's commitment goes beyond building economic zones — we're supporting industries and shaping resilient, future-ready communities. Through innovation, green development and unwavering dedication, we aim to create spaces that empower industries, protect the environment and drive sustainable progress for the next generations."

As SPPI continues its journey of growth and innovation, it remains dedicated to advancing sustainable industrial development and fostering partnerships that drive progress in the Philippines. ■

<https://sciencepark.com.ph>



Empowering the workforce: How First Sumiden Circuits is redefining employee engagement in manufacturing

First Sumiden Circuits Inc. is a maker of flexible printed circuits in the Philippines that produces high-precision components used in hard disk drives, smartphones and automotive electronics.

Located in strategically accessible Cabuyao, Laguna province, near major seaports and international airports, FSCI serves global markets with speed and reliability.

FSCI, previously a joint venture of Sumitomo Electric Industries Ltd., First Philippine Holdings Corp. and Sumitomo Corp., was incorporated in 1996 and is now celebrating 29 years of existence. SEI acquired full ownership of FSCI in December 2011 and today it proudly employs a team of 2,600 and counting, making it one of the largest electronics manufacturing employers in the country.



Tetsuya Shimomura, President of FSCI

As part of the Sumitomo Electric Group, the company follows the Sumitomo spirit and Japanese *kaizen* (continuous improvement) philosophy. Under the leadership of President Tetsuya Shimomura, FSCI is steadily expanding its global footprint while putting its people at the heart of innovation.

FSCI's vision is to drive technological advancement through capability building, customer satisfaction and social responsibility. Its vision is to be the core FPC manufacturer enabling safe, efficient and comfortable living by 2030.

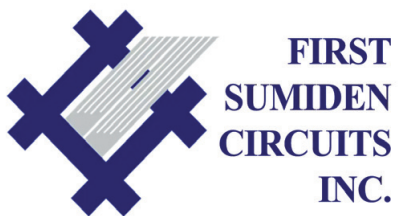
FSCI's mission is to focus on technological innovation by enhancing the skills and capabilities of our diverse workforce, strengthening our organizational competitiveness, responding to customer needs with

exceptional products and services, upholding corporate social responsibility through ethical practices, and contributing to the betterment of society and the environment.

Central to this vision is a strong culture of employee engagement. FSCI holds the core values of integrity, teamwork, respect, diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

Driven by core values and the Sumitomo spirit, FSCI empowers its people on a purpose-driven journey, contributing to technological advancement. ■

www.fsci.com.ph



Rent.ph: Real connections shaping the future of rentals

In a conversation with May Leuterio, managing director of Rent.ph, we discussed how the company has grown into a trusted rental platform in the Philippines and how it's becoming a bridge between local and international clients, particularly Japanese renters and investors.

Leuterio shared that Rent.ph has moved beyond being just a digital bulletin board for rentals.

"More than just a platform, Rent.ph has become a community that empowers rent managers and supports their professional journeys with us," she said. This transformation reflects a commitment to building genuine connections and a sense of community, rooted in traditional face-to-face interactions, while using technology to make the experience more efficient.

One of the main reasons Rent.ph is attracting more international clients, particularly Japanese renters and investors, is its focus on clear, respectful communication and a deep under-



May Leuterio, Managing Director of Rent.ph

standing of cultural differences.

Leuterio points out that Japanese clients appreciate thoughtful guidance

and personalized service, especially when navigating the Philippine rental market, which can feel unfamiliar.

"For our international clients, especially those new to the country, feeling understood is everything. Our team isn't just trained to do transactions — they genuinely care about providing thoughtful guidance and support," Leuterio said. To make renting in the Philippines more accessible, Rent.ph has enhanced its platform with user-friendly features, language support and tailored services that resonate with the needs of Japanese and other foreign clients.

Citing the example of the Osaka Expo, Leuterio highlights the company's vision of blending modern technology with a personal touch.

"At Rent.ph, we strongly believe that the future of housing in the Philippines needs both smart solutions and a human approach." Integrating new technologies while staying focused on real human connections remains at

the heart of Rent.ph's philosophy.

As Rent.ph continues to expand and build new partnerships, strengthening international connections remains a key goal. Leuterio is optimistic about future collaborations, emphasizing the company's dedication to forming meaningful relationships.

"Our bond with international clients is something we truly value. We're always looking for ways to grow and stay ahead in the rental space," Leuterio said.

Through strategic partnerships and a focus on people, Rent.ph is set to shape the future of property rentals while building stronger international ties. ■

Read the full interview on Bridges:
sms-bridges.com/PH25-RentPH

<https://rent.ph/>





The **Anflo Industrial Estate**, Damosa Land’s flagship project, is combining world-class infrastructure with a focus on sustainability and economic inclusivity. DAMOSA LAND

Damosa Land drives Mindanao’s rise as an investment hub

Damosa Land, a premier homegrown developer, is at the forefront of transforming Mindanao into a globally competitive investment hub.

With the Anflo Industrial Estate as its flagship project, the company is combining world-class infrastructure with a focus on sustainability and economic inclusivity. As Damosa Land continues to grow, it is shaping the future of industrial, residential and logistics development in the region.

"The significant growth comes from a combination of factors. First, there is the number of projects we've undertaken. But more importantly, we made a conscious effort to diversify across different sectors of real estate," said Ricardo F. Lagdameo, president and CEO of Damosa Land.

"We're not just focused on industrial parks. We've diversified into residential properties, office leasing and larger mixed-use developments. Last year was our best year in terms of revenue, and we expect this year to be just as successful."

AIE, which spans over 63 hectares, is registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority, offering both fiscal and nonfiscal incentives to attract investment. Strategically located within Davao's agricultural innovation corridor, the industrial park provides tenants with easy access to the Davao International Container Terminal, which services about 70% of the Davao region's international container throughput. This proximity allows companies to reduce logistics costs and enhance operational efficiency, especially for export-driven industries.

"The port's proximity to our industrial park is a critical advantage," Lagdameo



Ricardo F. Lagdameo, President and CEO of Damosa Land DAMOSA LAND

said, "It saves on logistics costs and improves efficiency. We're also proud to offer cold storage facilities to companies operating in the park, which is especially beneficial for businesses dealing with perishable goods."

AIE has attracted both local and international businesses, including Packwell Inc., a Japan-based manufacturer of paper-based packaging and containers. In addition, Head Sport, a leading global sporting goods brand, has chosen AIE for the world's largest tennis ball factory. This facility will produce 168 million tennis balls annually, underscoring the region's potential for large-scale manufacturing operations.



Head Sport, a global leader in sporting goods, has selected AIE to operate the world's largest tennis ball manufacturing facility (above) in Mindanao. DAMOSA LAND

In addition to AIE, Damosa Land is expanding with several key projects. Bridgeport Park, a seaside leisure development on Samal Island, is thriving amid the growing demand for leisure real estate. Agriya, combining agriculture and tourism, further enhances the company's portfolio. Kahi Estates, a high-end subdivision, serves as a model of sustainability for Mindanao, incorporating green building features like solar panels, tree retention and rainwater catchment.

Beyond real estate, Damosa Land is deeply committed to community development. The company's industrial park has already created around 1,200 jobs, with plans to expand that number to 2,000 by year's end. By the time the park is fully developed, Damosa Land estimates it will provide 5,000 jobs, contributing significantly to the local economy. The company is also engaged in sustainability efforts, scholarship programs for student athletes and the development of infrastructure for schools.

"We're very active in the communities where we operate. Creating jobs is just one aspect of our commitment to local development," Lagdameo said.

Damosa Land's vision for Mindanao extends beyond industrial growth. Given its PEZA-registered industrial park, full logistics support and proximity to a major international port, Damosa Land offers an investment-ready destination for both local and international companies.

And with locators from six countries including Japan, Austria and Thailand, the park has become a hub for global businesses seeking to tap into the region's growth potential.

"We're backed by a large, diverse conglomerate with solid capital and a long history, ensuring that we're well-positioned for future growth," Lagdameo noted. "Damosa Land is committed to making Mindanao a key driver of national growth, and we will continue to create sustainable, inclusive opportunities for local and global investors." ■

To learn more about how Damosa Land contributes to Mindanao's growth, visit www.damosaland.com.



Cotton & Diaz: Expertise, experience and heartfelt insurance for Japanese and Filipino clients

For over 20 years, Cotton & Diaz Insurance Services has helped businesses and individuals in the Philippines protect what matters most.

Founded in 2003 by partners Mutsuo Watada and Constancio Diaz, the firm was created to meet the insurance needs of Japanese companies operating in the country, offering reliable service built on cross-cultural understanding and deep local expertise.

Today, Cotton & Diaz offers a comprehensive range of insurance and risk management solutions tailored to both Japanese and Filipino clients. These services include enhanced medical and life insurance plans, personal accident coverage and a variety of nonlife insurance products such as fire, travel, marine, engineering and motor insurance. The firm also provides pension and retirement plans to support staff retention, as well as risk consultation services to help clients protect assets and minimize exposure.

"We want to be the only one broker offering the best service by combining the strengths of both Filipino and Japanese cultures — especially the Japanese-oriented approach to client service," said Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Mutsuo Watada.

With its blend of Filipino warmth and Japanese precision, Cotton & Diaz has built a reputation for professional, personalized service. Following its expansion to Cebu City in 2004, the company has grown from a small Manila-based team into a dynamic organization that includes



From left: Cotton & Diaz Chairman and CEO **Mutsuo Watada**, Vice Chairman **Constancio Diaz** and President **Chito Diaz** COTTON & DIAZ

four Japanese staffers and an expanding number of Filipino professionals. Under the leadership of President Chito Diaz, the firm continues to evolve in step with the growing presence of Japanese businesses in the region.

"Our Chairman and CEO, Mr. Watada, has instilled the values that guide us: transparency, trust and partnership," Diaz said. "We're constantly enhancing our service to make it more dynamic and responsive."

As the insurance landscape modernizes, Cotton & Diaz remains committed to innovation while staying rooted in human connection. Whether you are a

Japanese company entering the Philippine market or a local business seeking trusted coverage, Cotton & Diaz stands ready to deliver insurance solutions with expertise, experience and heart. ■

www.cotton-diaz.net


Cotton&Diaz

SM: Weaving growth by enabling businesses and communities

Amid global uncertainties, SM Investments Corp., the parent company of the SM Group, stays true to its commitment in enabling people, businesses and communities to grow together.

Believing that progress is only meaningful when shared, SM plays a vital role as a driving force of opportunity and resilience. Its businesses help empower local enterprises, preserve cultural heritage and promote sustainability at every level.

"Success is only meaningful when it uplifts others," President and CEO Frederic C. DyBuncio said. "Enabling growth means creating opportunities for our tenants, suppliers, employees and communities. We aim to be a platform for MSMEs (micro, small and midsize enterprises), a conduit for capital and a champion of Filipino enterprise."

Central to this catalyst role is SM's support for MSMEs, the backbone of the Philippine economy. By the end of 2024, SM supported over 100,000 MSMEs, providing platforms for growth, scale and sustainability. Through its banks — BDO Unibank and China Banking Corp. — SM extended ¥173 billion (\$1.2 billion) in loans to small businesses, fueling jobs and community development.

Small enterprises, local culture

SM's integrated ecosystem of businesses acts as both partner and catalyst. A good example is Kultura, one of its retail brands, where artisans and entrepreneurs showcase sustainable, handcrafted, culturally rich products on a national stage. Kultura goes beyond commerce, enabling heritage preservation and livelihood.

Within SM's 87 malls, close to 70% of



Kultura, one of SM's retail brands, features products from many MSMEs, celebrating Filipino artistry and sustainability. SM INVESTMENTS



Representatives of public- and private-sector entities in the Philippines assemble for the National MSME Summit at SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City in 2024. SM INVESTMENTS

the tenants are MSMEs. SM promotes their growth through capacity-building, emergency preparedness and digital tools. In 2024, SM launched a Business Continuity Planning initiative, helping MSMEs prepare customized strategies to survive disruptions. Tenants also gain free access to secure digital storage for faster recovery and insurance claims.

Sustainable shopping, green habits

SM encourages sustainable shopping by offering customers over 20,000 eco-friendly products via the SM Store's Green Finds program. From locally sourced to upcycled goods, these products promote greener choices. SM's Green Store initiatives improve energy and water efficiency, reduce packaging waste and encourage the use of reusable "eco-bags," encouraging consumers to adopt sustainable lifestyles.

SM aligns to the Philippines' low-carbon shift through renewable-energy investments and innovative urban development. It has installed over 96,000 solar panels and expanded energy exploration with the Philippine Geothermal Production Co., targeting up to 400 megawatts of additional capacity.

Its banks have financed more than ¥2.6 trillion (\$18 billion) in sustainable projects, including 63 renewable-energy ventures totaling 2,679 MW — demonstrating how financial inclusion supports climate action.

SM's integrated developments promote sustainable urban living through "15-minute cities" — walkable communities where housing, commerce, education and entertainment are all within a 15-minute walk

or bike ride. This reduces transport needs and lowers emissions.

With 22 integrated properties nationwide — including malls, residences, hotels, offices and convention centers — SM incorporates resilient infrastructure like water catchments and recycling systems to mitigate climate risks and promote efficient resource use.

Job creation and livelihood

Through the SM Job Opportunities Building Skills program, SM connects job seekers to employers. SM partnered with the Department of Labor to connect over 149,000 Filipinos to job opportunities, while advancing skills and economic mobility.

The SM Foundation's Kabalik sa Kabuhayan (Partner in Livelihood) Farming Program allows farmers to pursue livelihood opportunities. Over 30,000 farmers have successfully graduated from the program, many of whom are seasonal suppliers for SM and sellers at the SM Weekend Market.

SM is also investing in the formation of a future-ready generation through its educational institutions and scholarship programs that aim to equip students with the skills, networks and confidence to thrive in an increasingly competitive global workforce.

SM continues to weave growth opportunities by facilitating access to markets and supporting sustainability, inclusive finance and community transformation to create value not only for shareholders, but for society as a whole. ■

www.sminvestments.com

Committed to Our Customers



Serving customers has been at the heart of our business. Millions of Filipinos count on us daily and we look forward to serving more as we continue to expand across the nation.



Scan to see how our businesses work together to serve more customers or visit www.sminvestments.com for more information

