

Wednesday, March 7, 2018

9

# Jobs, jobs, jobs

By **MANNY VILLAR**

**T**HE Duterte administration is determined to usher in what it calls the "golden age of infrastructure" in the Philippines. It has said that it is committed to pour in P8 to P9 trillion for infrastructure projects spread over six years.

This is something that we needed decades ago. But we are thankful that the present administration has used its political will to make sure that infrastructure is given the attention it deserves.

The massive spending will primarily address our backlog in building the necessary infrastructure — roads, rails, bridges — to address the gridlock in Metro Manila and other urban areas as well as sustain our phenomenal economic growth.

But another welcome result from this unprecedented infrastructure push is the increase in the demand for labor. The projects require massive manpower and the "Build, Build, Build" initiative of President

Duterté translates to "jobs, jobs, jobs" for our people.

According to the estimates of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the government's program will likely create two million more construction jobs. What this also means is that the demand for construction will put constraints on the supply for jobs. It seems that there is a backlog in terms of skilled workers.

It is a concern. But it is a welcome problem. All we need to do is make sure our workers possess the necessary skills to meet the demands of the boom in construction brought about by the numerous infrastructure project government is rolling out.

In my business alone, we are in need of around 18,000 jobs. This need is brought about by our increasing confidence in the economic fundamentals of the country and the solid governance efforts of the current administration.

And we are not alone. All property builders are in expansion mode. Even the other sectors are bullish. This means more infrastructure. And this is just from the

\* EMPLOYMENT  
\* INFRASTRUCTURE