

# CAVITE GAZETTE

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## BATTLE OF ALAPAN CEREMONY HIGHLIGHTS YOUTH'S ROLE IN FREEDOM, PATRIOTISM

**IMUS CITY, Cavite (PIA)** — The crucial role of the youth in safeguarding historical heritage and nurturing a sense of patriotism took center stage during the commemoration of the 127th anniversary of the historic Battle of Alapan and National Flag Day on May 28.

Themed “Kalayaan, Kinabukasan, Kasaysayan,” the commemoration, held at the Dambana ng Pambansang Watawat in Alapan II-B, Imus City, Cavite, also marked the



### CAVITE PPO STRENGTHENS COMMUNITY SERVICE WITH KADIWA NG PANGULO PROGRAM LAUNCH CAMP

**BGen. Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite** — The Cavite Police Provincial Office successfully held the ceremonial launching of the Kadiwa ng Pangulo (KNP) Program Store on May 30, 2025, at 7:00 AM, at the Covered Court of Camp BGen. Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite. The KNP Program is a flagship initiative of President Ferdinand R. Marcos

Jr., spearheaded by the Department of Agriculture (DA) in collaboration with various national government agencies and local stakeholders. This program aims to improve food security, eliminate unnecessary marketing layers, and provide consumers with direct access to affordable, high-quality agricultural products. It seeks to stabilize the prices of essential commodities, particularly during periods of inflation and supply chain disruptions. Gracing the event as Guest of Honor and Speaker (GOHS) was Director

Fidel L. Libao, Regional Executive Director of the Department of Agriculture – Region IV-A, represented by Mr. Gaudencio V. Genil, Regional Agricultural and Fishery Council Executive Committee Chairperson. His presence underscored the importance of multisectoral collaboration in advancing food sufficiency and building economic resilience. The program commenced with an invocation led by Pastor Bong Barona, followed by welcome remarks from PLTCOL WILLIE B. SALAZAR, Deputy Provincial Director for Administration, who formally opened the event. PCOL DWIGHT E. ALEGRE, Provincial Director of Cavite PPO, delivered a message of support and introduced the Guest of Honor. Director Libao delivered an inspiring keynote address highlighting the critical role of law enforcement and local communities in supporting national development goals. A plaque of appreciation was presented to Director Libao in recognition of his support, followed by a photo opportunity with officials, guests, and attendees. The event was attended by PNP personnel, partner agencies, and community stakeholders who participated in the initial Kadiwa market day, featuring a wide variety of fresh produce and other goods. The establishment of the KNP Store at Cavite PPO demonstrates the Philippine National Police's active support for national programs that uplift both the general public and local producers. It reflects the PNP's broader commitment to community service, sustainable development, and economic empowerment. This initiative directly benefits local farmers, fisherfolk, and small-scale entrepreneurs by offering a direct market for their products while enabling the community to access essential goods at more affordable prices. Through this endeavor, Cavite PPO reaffirms its dedication not only to public safety and security but also to nation-building through inclusive community engagement and food sustainability.

“Understanding our history provides us with the foundation to build a strong and prosperous future. As we commemorate the Battle of Alapan and our national flag, it is important that this serves as a lesson we can use in shaping each individual,” Ortega concluded.

Cavite Third District Representative Adrian Jay Advincula echoed this sentiment, urging young Filipinos to carry forward the legacy of the past.

“Every color and strand of our flag tells a story, stories of unity, sacrifice, and triumph. Our flag is not just a symbol, but a call to continue fighting for our ideals,” Advincula said.

National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) Chairperson Regalado Trota Jose Jr. also attended the event, alongside other national and local leaders, civic groups, and members of the community.

The site holds historical significance as the location where the Philippine national flag was first unfurled in victory on May 28, 1898, following the Filipino forces' triumph over Spanish troops, a milestone in the nation's long struggle for independence.

This year's observance featured a solemn flag-raising ceremony conducted by the Armed Forces of the Philippines, followed by a wreath-laying ceremony in honor of fallen heroes. **(RBF, PIA Cavite)**  
**By RUEL FRANCISCO**

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## PROVINCIAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON ARRESTED IN BULACAN

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, City of Imus, Cavite** - In an intensified campaign against wanted persons, warrant personnel of Magallanes Municipal Police Station, arrested a Provincial Level Most Wanted Person in the Province of Quezon, at around 8:45 PM of May 28, 2025, in Barangay Poblacion, San Ildefonso, Bulacan.

PMAJ RAYMOND T BALBUENA, Chief of Police, Magallanes MPS identified the arrested suspect as alias MEO, male and a resident of Ajoint operation of warrant personnel of Magallanes MPS, personnel of San Ildefonso Municipal Police Station, Bulacan PPO, PRO3, and personnel of Lubang Municipal Police Station, Occidental Mindoro, PRO4B resulted to the arrest of the suspect by virtue of a warrant of arrest for the crime of

Frustrated Murder issued by the Presiding Judge of the Regional Trial Court, Branch 61, Gumaca, Quezon, dated March 24, 2006 with a recommended bail of Php 200,000.00.

At present, the accused is under the custody of Magallanes MPS and then Warrant of Arrest will be returned to the court of origin for proper disposition.

In a statement, PCOL DWIGHT E ALEGRE, Acting Provincial Director commended the dedication and coordination of the operating units, saying: "This successful arrest underscores the unwavering commitment of our police personnel to bring fugitives to justice, no matter how long it takes or where they attempt to hide. We remain steadfast in our mission to ensure that justice prevails and the rule of law is upheld."

## WANTED SA KASONG PAGNANAKAW, INIHAIN ANG WARRANT NG MAGALLANES PNP

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Lungsod ng Imus, Cavite** — Matagumpay na naserbisyuhan ng Warrant of Arrest ng mga tauhan ng Warrant Section ng Magallanes Municipal Police Station ang isang wanted na indibidwal na kinilalang si alyas "Ong", residente ng Brgy. Daine, Indang, Cavite, dakong alas-3:30 ng hapon noong Mayo 27, 2025 sa Brgy. Poblacion 4, Magallanes, Cavite.

Batay sa isinagawang operational research, napag-alaman na si Ong ay may kinakaharap na kasong Theft sa ilalim ng Criminal Case No. MR-24-035, alinsunod sa Warrant of Arrest na inilabas ng Municipal Trial Court, Ika-Apat na Rehiyong Panghukikatura, Maragondon, Cavite noong Abril 22, 2024, na may rekomendadong piyansa na Php 10,000.00.

Ayon kay PMAJ Raymond T Balbuena, Chief of Police ng Magallanes MPS, "Ang mabilis na pagsasagawa ng warrant service ay nagpapakita ng kahandaan at dedikasyon ng ating mga kapulisan sa paghahatid ng hustisya."

Naipabatid sa akusado ang kanyang mga karapatang konstitusyonal sa wikang kanyang nauunawaan, at pinili nitong manahimik sa presensya ng kanyang abogado. Inihanda na ang mga dokumento para sa pagbabalik ng warrant sa korte ng pinagmulan.

Ayon kay PCOL Dwight E Alegre, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, "Ang masigasig na implementasyon ng ating mga operatiba sa mga warrant ay isa sa pundasyon ng mapayapang pamayanan. Sa Bagong Pilipinas, ang gusto ng Pulis – Ligas ka!"

## WANTED SA RECKLESS IMPRUDENCE, NAARESTO SA GEN. TRIAS

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Lungsod ng Imus, Cavite** — Dakong alas-6:15 ng gabi ng Mayo 27, 2025, matagumpay na naaresto ng mga tauhan ng General Trias Component City Police Station ang isang wanted na lalaki.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL JAYMAR B MARBELLA, hepe ng General Trias CCPS, ang suspek na si alyas Rickson, na nakatira sa Brgy. Pasong Kawayan 2, General Trias City, Cavite.

Isinagawa ang operasyon gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD) ng mga warrant personnel ng General Trias CCPS, na nagresulta sa pag-aresto sa akusado para sa kasong Reckless Imprudence Resulting in Slight Physical Injuries, na may Criminal Case No. 99-25 na inilabas noong Mayo 14, 2025 ng Municipal Trial Court in Cities, Fourth Judicial Region, General Trias, Cavite. Ang rekomendadong piyansa

ay nakatakda sa Php 5,000.00.

Kasalukuyang nakakulong ang akusado sa General Trias City Custodial Facility sa Brgy. Bagumbayan, General Trias City, Cavite. Ayon kay PLTCOL JAYMAR B MARBELLA, hepe ng General Trias CCPS, "Ipinapakita nito ang ating determinasyon na tugisin at panghawakan ang mga may kaso upang mapanatili ang kapayapaan at kaayusan sa ating bayan."

Ayon kay PCOL DWIGHT E ALEGRE, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, "Patuloy ang aming paninindigan na ipatupad ang mga batas at siguraduhing ang sinumang may kaso ay haharap sa hustisya. Ang matagumpay na isinilbing warrant na ito ay patunay ng kahusayan at dedikasyon ng ating mga pulis sa General Trias sa pagpapanatili ng katahimikan at kaayusan sa kanilang nasasakupan."

## "ARESTADO! BABAENG WANTED SA KASONG 'LESS SERIOUS PHYSICAL INJURIES,' NALAMBAT SA NOVELETA, CAVITE"

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Lungsod ng Imus, Cavite** — Naaresto ng mga tauhan ng Noveleta Municipal Police Station ang isang babaeng wanted person dahil sa kasong Less Serious Physical Injuries, sa ikinasang operasyon dakong 2:54 ng hapon noong Mayo 27, 2025 sa Brgy. Salcedo II, Noveleta, Cavite.

Kinilala ni PMAJ SANDIE D CAPARROSO, Acting Chief of Police ng Noveleta MPS, ang akusado na si alyas Regine, at residente ng San Miguel Street, Brgy. Poblacion, Noveleta, Cavite.

Ang operasyon ay pinangunahan ng mga warrant personnel ng Noveleta MPS gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD). Ang operasyon ay isinagawa sa bisa ng Warrant of

Arrest na inisyu ng Fourth Judicial Region, Municipal Trial Court ng Rosario, Cavite, noong Mayo 15, 2025, para sa Criminal Case No. 25-11, na may rekomendadong piyansa na ₱6,000.00.

Ayon kay PMAJ SANDIE D CAPARROSO, Acting Chief of Police ng Noveleta MPS, "Ang maayos at mabilis na pag-aresto sa akusado ay resulta ng patuloy na kampanya ng ating kapulisan sa paghuli sa mga may kaso at pinaghahanap ng batas."

Ang naarestong suspek ay kasalukuyang nakapiit sa Custodial Facility ng Noveleta MPS, habang ang Warrant of Arrest ay isasauli sa korte ng pinagmulan para sa kaukulang disposisyon.

Ayon kay PCOL DWIGHT E ALEGRE, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO,

## "ARESTADO! WANTED PERSON SA KASONG PAGLABAG SA RA 7610, NALAMBAT SA CARMONA, CAVITE"

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Lungsod ng Imus, Cavite** — Isang matagumpay na operasyon ang isinagawa ng mga operatiba ng Carmona City Police Station (CCPS) na nagresulta sa pagkakaaresto ng isang wanted person bandang alas-12:30 ng tanghali noong Mayo 27, 2025 sa Brgy. Maduya, Carmona, Cavite.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL JACK E ANGO, Acting Chief of Police ng Carmona CCPS, ang naaresto na si alyas Dante, at residente ng Brgy. Lantic, Carmona City, Cavite.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa ng Warrant operatives katuwang ang Women and Children Protection Desk (WCPD) ng Carmona CCPS, gamit ang dalawang (2) Alternative Recording Devices (ARDs), sa bisa ng Warrant of Arrest para sa paglabag sa Section 10(A) ng Republic Act 7610 (Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act), sa

ilalim ng Criminal Case No. 2023-304-1.

Ang nasabing warrant ay inilabas ng Regional Trial Court Branch 65 sa Infanta, Quezon noong Disyembre 6, 2023, na may rekomendadong piyansa na ₱80,000.00.

Ayon kay PLTCOL JACK E ANGO, Acting Chief of Police ng Carmona CCPS, "Isinagawa ang operasyon nang maayos alinsunod sa tamang proseso at may pagsunod sa karapatang pantao."

Kasunod ng pagkakaaresto, dinala na sa kustodiya ng Carmona CCPS ang akusado, at agad na inihanda ang mga dokumento para sa pagsasauli ng warrant sa korte.

Ayon kay PCOL DWIGHT E ALEGRE, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, "Ang matagumpay na pag-aresto sa wanted person ay patunay ng mas pinaigting na kampanya ng ating kapulisan laban sa mga lumalabag sa batas. Sa Bagong Pilipinas, ang gusto ng Pulis – Ligas ka!"

## PROVINCIAL MOST WANTED SA KASONG ILLEGAL NA DROGA, NAARESTO SA BATANGAS

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Lungsod ng Imus, Cavite** — Matagumpay na naaresto ng mga operatiba ng Carmona City Component Police Station ang isang Provincial Level Most Wanted Person na si alyas "Boy", at residente ng Tabing Ilat, Bayungan, Brgy. Kaong, Silang, Cavite.

Dakong alas-2:15 ng hapon nitong Mayo 27, 2025, naisagawa ang operasyon sa Brgy. San Isidro, Malvar, Batangas gamit ang dalawang Alternative Recording Devices (ARDs) alinsunod sa umiiral na patakaran ng PNP sa transparency at accountability.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa batay sa

"Ang bawat tagumpay sa pag-aresto ng mga wanted person ay isang hakbang tungo sa mas ligtas na pamayanan. Sa Bagong Pilipinas, ang gusto ng Pulis – Ligas ka!"

Warrant of Arrest na inisyu ng Regional Trial Court, Branch 89, Bacoor City, Cavite, noong Setyembre 27, 2022, kaugnay ng kasong paglabag sa Section 11, Article II ng Republic Act 9165 (Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002), sa ilalim ng Criminal Case Number B-2013-571, na may rekomendadong piyansa na Php 120,000.00.

Ang akusado ay kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng Carmona CCPS habang ang warrant of arrest ay pormal na ibabalik sa korte na nag-isyu nito.

Ayon kay PCOL DWIGHT E ALEGRE, Acting Police Director, Cavite PPO, "Ang matagumpay na pagsasakatuparan ng warrant laban sa isang most wanted person ay isang patunay ng dedikasyon ng ating mga kapulisan sa paghahatid ng hustisya at pagsugpo sa kriminalidad."

## LTO SUSPENDS LICENSE OF RIDER WHO COVERED PLATE NUMBER TO AVOID NCAP

**MANILA** — The Land Transportation Office (LTO) on Friday issued a 90-day preventive suspension against the driver's license of a motorcycle rider who covered his license plate to avoid the government's No-Contact Apprehension Policy (NCAP) in Metro Manila.

In a statement, LTO chief Assistant Secretary Vigor Mendoza II said the driver, a resident of San Juan City, was caught after he was seen in a now-viral Facebook post.

"Maliwanag na isa itong pambabastos sa batas. Gaya ng sinabi ng ating DOTr (Department of Transportation) Secretary Vince Dizon, hindi na papayag ang pamahalaan sa mga motoristang katulad nito (This is clearly a disrespect to the law. Like what Secretary Dizon said, the government won't tolerate such motorists)," Mendoza said.

In the Facebook post captioned 'NCAP? No problem, magaya nga (I'll copy this),' a motorcycle driven by a rider wearing a Move It helmet had the last three letters of its license plate covered with packaging tape to obstruct visibility.

In addition to the preventive suspension, the driver was summoned to a hearing at the LTO Central Office and asked to submit

a written explanation on why he should not be penalized through a show cause order (SCO).

The hearing and investigation seek to find out whether the registered owner was the one who covered the license plate.

On Thursday, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) advised motorists that covering their license plate is penalized with a PHP5,000 fine.

In comparison, first offenders of illegal counterflow under the MMDA's single ticketing system are fined PHP1,000, speeding carries a PHP1,000 fine, reckless driving up to PHP2,000, and number coding violations are fined PHP500.

The NCAP was recently reimplemented in major Metro Manila thoroughfares following the lifting of a temporary restraining order against the policy to help address the expected vehicular traffic that may be caused by the Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue (EDSA) rebuild project beginning June 13.

The NCAP is currently on a dry run for one month, with those caught to be issued a notice of violation, but will not be issued a fine. (PNA)

**BY RAYMOND CARL DELA CRUZ**

## CALABARZON POLICE SUPPORT PBBM'S ORDER FOR INTENSIFIED PATROLS

**CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA)** — The Police Regional Office (PRO) Calabarzon has affirmed its commitment to President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s directive to intensify police visibility and vowed to strengthen its presence, particularly at the grassroots level, through enhanced patrol and community engagement initiatives.

"The Police Regional Office Calabarzon will continue to fulfill its duty and place great importance on aggressive police presence, not just to be seen, but to be felt, so that the public may truly experience our mission which is to serve and to protect," said Regional Director Police Brig. Gen. Paul Kenneth Lucas in a statement.

Lucas noted that they have already been implementing recalibrated anti-criminality efforts even before the President's pronouncement.

These include the RONDA CALABARZON, or the Revitalized Patrol Operations and Neighborhood Watch to Deter Crimes and Public Safety Incidents through Aggressive Police Presence.

"The program focuses on enhancing police visibility and strengthening community partnerships to prevent crime and ensure

the safety of communities across the Calabarzon region," Lucas explained.

Under RONDA CALABARZON, various community-focused strategies, technologies, and programs have been initiated, including Patrol 101 procedures, bicycle patrols for narrow areas, and motorcycle patrols for rapid response in crowded locations.

The Calabarzon police have also been implementing mobile patrols tasked with maintaining a visible presence and ensuring quick incident response. Another initiative is the Blue Cops in Mobile Sub-station on Wheels (BCMWS), where police are strategically stationed at choke points such as terminals, markets, and transport hubs.

Lucas added that the Calabarzon police have adopted the containment ring system, which allows them to implement security layers around critical areas to effectively deter crime.

The regional police have also begun utilizing technology, including drone patrolling to monitor remote areas and cyber patrolling to maintain a proactive presence in the digital space.

Additionally, the region has introduced the Lakas Tulungan Patrol Support System, a multi-sectoral approach that mobilizes all personnel and resources to expand security coverage, alongside an IT-Integrated Patrol System for real-time monitoring and data-driven patrol management.

While anti-criminality efforts are all in place, Lucas urged the public to actively cooperate in maintaining peace and order in the region, as they serve essential partners in building a safe and peaceful community. (CO/PIA4A) **BY CHARMAINE ODONG**

She also urged the public to remain vigilant and to uphold their rights and responsibilities as consumers, noting that proper awareness can help avoid the inconvenience of filing time-consuming complaints. (MPDC, PIA Batangas) **BY BHABY DE CASTRO**

## EDITORIAL

### Bente pesos na bigas, epektibo nga ba?

Mababalitaan nakaraan ang pagpupuna ng ilang grupo ang pagbebenta ng bigas sa halagang bente (20) pesos kada kilo na limitado lamang sa Visayas at siya umanong posibleng pagkalugi ng gobyerno. Ngayon ay hinihiling ng mga taga- NCR ang pagdala ng bente (20) per kilong bigas sa kanilang lugar.

Maaaring ang mga ganitong klaseng balita ay magandang pakinggan ngunit hindi maiiwasan magbigay pangamba ito kung biglaan itong isasagawa nang walang sapat na pag-aaral para rito. Hindi posible na ang mga ibebentang bigas sa murang halaga ay mga hindi magandang klase ng bigas at maaaring hindi rin tangkilin ng mga mamimili at masayang.

Ang bigas ay isa sa pangunahing pagkain ng mga Pilipino at ang higit na pagtaas ng presyo nito ay dulot ng inflation. Sa biglaang pagbaba ng presyo ng bigas sa merkado, maaaring hindi maging maganda ang dulot nito sa ekonomiya at gobyerno lalo na kung hindi pumatok sa masa ang ibebentang bigas sa murang halaga.

## DTI REMINDS CONSUMERS HOW TO FILE COMPLAINTS

**BATANGAS CITY (PIA)** — The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is urging the public to be skillful at proper procedures for filing consumer complaints, including which government agencies are responsible in addressing specific concerns.

In an interview on the PIA Ngayon radio program, Sally Pagtakhan, chief of the Consumer Protection Services Division of DTI Batangas office, emphasized that understanding consumer rights and responsibilities empowers individuals to make informed decisions and seek appropriate redress when necessary.

Pagtakhan added that consumers should always check their purchases thoroughly to determine

whether a complaint is valid and supported by existing laws.

"If a product needs to be replaced, the consumer should approach authorized personnel at the establishment where it was purchased and calmly explain the issue. If the complaint is not resolved, only then should the consumer reach out to the appropriate government agency for assistance," she said.

She highlighted several key examples, such as: complaints about defective appliances, canned goods, or toiletries should be filed with the DTI; issues concerning internet and telecom services fall under the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC);

problems with food from eateries and restaurants should be reported to the City or Municipal Health Office; and financial concerns involving banks, credit cards, and pawnshops should be directed to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

For LPG-related issues, concerns about product quality should be reported to the Department of Energy (DOE), while issues with LPG tanks fall under the DTI's jurisdiction.

Pagtakhan noted that one of the most common complaints they receive involves delays in the release of vehicle Official Receipts and Certificates of Registration (OR/CR), which are referred to the Land Transportation Office (LTO).

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## SRA SUSTAINS CLOSE MONITORING VS. RSSI INFESTATION IN NEGOCO

**MANILA** – The Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) on Thursday assured close monitoring to contain the red-striped soft-scale insects (RSSI) infestation in Negros Occidental.

The RSSI, which was initially recorded in Luzon in 2023, poses a potential reduction of sugar content by almost 50 percent.

In an interview, SRA Administrator Luis Pablo Azcona said there are "favorable" responses from the Department of Agriculture (DA) to help mitigate the situation.

"Tinutulungan ng DA ang SRA, nagtutulongan din po kami ng DA-NIR [Negros Island Region]. So, mabilis po iyong reaction natin (The DA is helping the SRA, we are also working with the DA-NIR. So, we have a fast reaction)," he said.

He, however, noted that there's a containment challenge amid the harvest season.

"So, iyong mga sugarcane and iyong trucks and iyong tao po lipat-lipat North to South. So, medyo mahirap iyong (the sugarcane, trucks, and the people are moving from North to South. So, it's somehow challenging to) control a bit. But once harvest is over this month, it will be

a lot easier to contain," Azcona said.

As of May 26, the SRA recorded 186.03 hectares of damaged areas amid the RSSI infestation in select portions of Negros Occidental, with 96.21 hectares reporting an "extremely mild" degree of infestation.

These include La Castellana, La Carlota, Bago City, Murcia, Bacolod City, Silay City, EB Magalona, Victorias City, Manapla, Cadiz City, Toboso, and Sagay City.

Around 115 sugar farmers in the said areas, meanwhile, are affected.

Earlier, the DA assured to provide intervention including assistance on the possible distribution of pesticides to farmers; stringent implementation of quarantine and transport protocols; and provision of two tankers in the Negros Island and Iloilo for disinfection of planting materials and canes that are being transported.

The SRA, likewise, is coordinating with the National Crop Protection Center (NCPC) and Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority for the possible issuance of an emergency use permit once a second trial is completed on potential insecticides against RSSI. **(PNA) BY STEPHANIE SEVILLANO**

## NO OFFICIAL DESIGN YET FOR NEW NAGA AIRPORT – CAAP

**MANILA** – The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) on Thursday said there is no official or approved design yet for the New Naga Airport.

The clarification comes as apparent architectural images of the airport have been circulating online.

"CAAP clarifies that the architectural images currently circulating online, presented as the official design of the New Naga Airport Development Project, are not legitimate. These images did not originate from CAAP and are not associated with the project," it said in a statement.

The images were traced to a student project shared

online, it added.

"While CAAP appreciates the public's interest, it emphasizes that the official airport design has not yet been finalized or approved," the CAAP said. The public is advised to rely only on CAAP's official channels for updates and information.

The first phase of the New Naga Airport Development Project, which covers earthworks and site preparation, will start in September.

The project is in line with the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to focus on developing and strengthening the country's regional airports. **(PNA) BY MA. CRISTINA ARAYATA**

## TOLL HOLIDAY AT SKYWAY STAGE 3, NLEX CONNECTOR DURING EDSA REBUILD

**MANILA** – The use of Skyway Stage 3 (Skyway) and the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) Connector Road will be free to all motorists for the entire duration of the Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue (EDSA) rebuild.

In a statement on Thursday, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) thanked San Miguel Corporation (SMC) Tollways and Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC) --the operators of Skyway Stage 3 and NLEX Connector Road, respectively-- for offering to implement the toll holiday.

"Nais nating magpasalamat sa SMC at MPTC sa pangunguna nina Mr. Ramon Ang at Mr. Manny Pangilinan dahil handa silang isantabi ang arawang kita mula sa toll upang matulungan ang pamahalaan at ating mga kababayan (We would like to thank the SMC and MPTC led by Mr. Ang and Mr. Pangilinan because they are willing to set aside profits and help the government and the people)," the DOTr said.

## PH NAVY: 'ATIN ITO' CONVOY SAILS HOME AFTER SUCCESSFUL WPS MISSION

**MANILA** – The "Atin Ito" civilian mission is now sailing back to Manila after wrapping up a successful mission to Pag-asa Island in the West Philippine Sea (WPS), the Philippine Navy (PN) said Thursday.

"The Navy will continue to monitor the situation and coordinate with relevant agencies to ensure the convoy's safe return to Manila by its expected arrival at around 4 o'clock in the afternoon on May 30, 2025," PN spokesperson for the WPS Rear Admiral Roy Vincent Trinidad said in a message to reporters. As of Thursday afternoon, the Navy said the civilian convoy's main ship, T/S Kapitán Felix Oca, is "maintaining a steady course and speed" on

Both Skyway Stage 3 and NLEX Connector will serve as alternate routes once the EDSA rebuild begins on June 13 until its completion in 2027.

"President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. wants to ease the burden of the EDSA rebuild to commuters and motorists, and this deep sense of social responsibility to the nation and Filipinos from our private partners will at least alleviate the expected struggles brought by the rebuild," the DOTr said.

Aside from the Skyway and NLEX Connector, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority advised motorists to take the so-called 'Mabuhay Lanes' or official alternative routes instead of EDSA for the duration of the rebuild to avoid heavy traffic.

On Monday, Department of Public Works and Highways Secretary Manuel Bonoan announced the timeline of the EDSA rebuild that seeks to strengthen EDSA's road, drainage, and pedestrian infrastructures. **(PNA) BY RAYMOND CARL DELA CRUZ**

its way back, with the Philippine Coast Guard's BRP Melchora Aquino (MRRV-9702) escorting it at a distance.

Meanwhile, the China Coast Guard (CCG) vessel 21549 was observed trailing at approximately 4.2 nautical miles off the starboard quarter of the T/S Kapitán Felix Oca.

He added that the PN and the Armed Forces of the Philippines reiterated their full support to the group after completing its mission.

"The Navy remains steadfast in its commitment to ensuring the safety and security of the convoy throughout its journey in the WPS. It continues to monitor developments in the area, noting the routine

## DA, BOC SEIZE P9-M SUGAR, P81.06-M TOBACCO PRODUCTS

**MANILA** – The Department of Agriculture (DA), Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA), and the Bureau of Customs (BOC) on Thursday flagged around PHP9 million worth of smuggled sugar at the Port of Manila.

The operation was in line with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s directive to intensify efforts against agricultural smuggling as it poses a threat to local farmers' income and public health safety.

In particular, the agencies seized 2,000 50-kilogram bags of sugar, equivalent to 100,000 kilograms or 100 metric tons (MT) in volume, found inside four container vans.

These include 50 tons of unauthorized imported sugar from Thailand, and another 50 tons of refined sugar misdeclared as "sweet mixed powder" from Vietnam.

In a media interview, DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. warned smugglers anew amid close collaboration for a continuous agri-smuggling crackdown.

"Maganda ngayon iyong cooperation ng (There's a good cooperation between the) DA, BOC, and other government agencies like PNP," he said.

"I'm sure matatakot na talaga iyong mga smugglers na iyan (the smugglers will be afraid), especially with the law of anti-agricultural smuggling."

The seized sugar, meanwhile, will undergo another test after initial results turned out to be positive for bacteria.

"Iyong artificial sweetener na dalawa (The two

presence of CCG and maritime militia vessels, but with no indication of imminent aggression or escalation. Western Naval Command remains vigilant, with contingency measures in place should the situation require further action," Trinidad said. **(PNA) BY PRIAM NEPOMUCENO**

artificial sweeteners), this is quite alarming. There are traces of bacteria seen. So that is considered now not fit for human consumption. But I told them to retest just to be sure," Tiu Laurel said. The confiscated sugar may be considered for distribution if it is tested safe for consumption.

SRA Administrator Luis Pablo Azcona reported that the initial results showed the presence of mesophilic bacteria.

"Mesophilic Bacteria result is 3775, (the) safe standard is no more than 200 CFU (colony forming unit) per 10 grams," he told reporters in a Viber message.

Some mesophilic bacteria, which thrive in moderate temperatures, include E. coli, salmonella, and lactobacillus.

Besides smuggled sugar, the BOC also presented PHP81.065 million worth of smuggled cigarettes.

BOC Commissioner Bienvenido Rubio said the shipment was misdeclared as "fabrics," containing a total of 1,046 boxes or 52,300 reams.

Blacklisting, liabilities The agri and customs officials, likewise, assured that legal actions would be taken against the consignees of illicit products.

Tiu Laurel said the two consignees of the said unauthorized and misdeclared sugar imports will face immediate action. "I just gave instructions just now. Pagkabukas na doon to SRA, iyong dalawang consignee noon registered sila sa SRA actually. Pinaba-blacklist ko na (When the SRA opened it, the two consignees they are actually registered with SRA. I ordered them blacklisted)," he said.

To date, there are three blacklisted sugar importers and almost 20 traders in other agricultural commodities.

Rubio, meanwhile, said the involved consignees may be held liable for the alleged violation of the Anti-Economic Sabotage Law. **(PNA) BY STEPHANIE SEVILLANO**

## 2 WANTED ASG MEMBERS NABBED IN METRO MANILA

**MANILA** – Two wanted Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) members who have been hiding for over two decades were arrested in separate police operations in Metro Manila, the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) said on Thursday.

In a statement, NCRPO director Maj. Gen. Anthony Aberin said the first wanted Abu Sayyaf member was arrested while he was on his way out of a construction site in Binondo, Manila, at around 10:30 p.m. on May 11.

The other ASG member, he said, was collared at around 11 p.m. on the same day while playing basketball near his residence along Alcoy Street, Barangay Bagong Pag-Asa in Quezon City.

Aberin said the arrest was based on the arrest warrant issued by a court in Basilan for a case of kidnapping and serious illegal detention that stemmed from the abduction of 15 plantation workers in Lantawan town on June 11, 2001.

"For over two decades, these identified ASG members hid behind false identities and sought refuge in our communities,

but through our program against fugitives, we have proven that no criminal, no terrorist, can escape the long arm of the law," Aberin said.

"This mission reflects our strengthened intelligence efforts, our solid partnerships with allied units, and our unwavering resolve to safeguard our people from terrorism. Justice may have been delayed, but today, it was delivered."

During their arrest and subsequent verification process, one suspect presented a fake national ID while the other submitted a forged National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) clearance to hide their identities.

"These deceptive acts further reinforced the reliability of the sworn identification provided by the victim-witness and confirmed the fugitives' ongoing efforts to evade justice," Aberin said.

The suspects are now in police custody as the return of the warrant of arrest is being prepared, and a commitment order from the issuing court. **(PNA) BY CHRISTOPHER LLOYD CALIWAN**

## SC: GOV'T WORKERS WHO FAIL DRUG TESTS MUST BE ALLOWED TO REHABILITATE

**MANILA** – A government employee facing an administrative offense for drug use must be given an opportunity to undergo rehabilitation, the Supreme Court (SC) said Thursday. "Dismissal is only justified if they refuse to cooperate with, or fail to complete, the required rehabilitation program. This is consistent with the approach provided by law and treaties to consider drug use as a public health challenge," the court said in a statement.

This was underscored by the SC En Banc in a decision dated May 20, 2025 which modified the Court of Appeals' (CA) rulings that upheld the dismissal of Muntinlupa City Office Engineer Carlito Salomon after he tested positive twice for shabu.

Salomon first tested positive in an initial screening by the Muntinlupa Laboratory on March 2, 2011, but the confirmatory drug test yielded a negative result. He was again tested on June 6, 2011, where both initial screening and confirmatory drug tests yielded positive results. After a formal investigation and a formal charge of grave misconduct, the mayor dismissed him from service.

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) and the

CA affirmed this decision. However, the SC ruled that while the findings were valid, Salomon should first be given a chance to rehabilitate before being dismissed.

It stressed that drug use is considered a sickness or disease, not just a crime, and must be treated accordingly.

"Republic Act No. 9165, or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002, requires the State to provide drug users with access to rehabilitation programs to help them recover and reintegrate into society. This also aligns with the Philippines' duty under international agreements to address the public health aspect of illegal drug use and addiction," the SC said.

It added that the CSC's own guidelines (Memorandum Circular No. 13, series of 2017) support this approach.

"These guidelines call for intervention rather than immediate dismissal for employees who test positive for drug use. Although there is administrative liability, the goal is to help employees recover and return to public service," the SC said.

In Salomon's case, the SC said he should have been referred to a proper rehabilitation program instead of being dismissed right away.

The SC ordered Salomon to take another drug test, as nearly 14 years have passed since his last one.

If he tests negative, the court said no treatment will be required, and the CSC may already reconsider releasing his benefits and allowing him to return to government service.

"If he tests positive, he must undergo a drug dependency exam and enter a rehabilitation program. His penalties will be put on hold while he undergoes treatment," the SC said.

"Once certified that he has fully recovered and is fit to work, the CSC shall assess whether to release his benefits and allow him to work in government again." **(PNA) BY BENJAMIN PULTA**

## TOP PRODUCER OF SOCIALIZED HOUSING COMMITS 35K UNITS TO 4PH

**MANILA** – One of the top producers of socialized housing in the country has committed more than 35,000 units to the government's Pambansang Pabahay Para sa Pilipino Housing (4PH) Program.

This comes after Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling's announcement to include horizontal developments in the recalibrated housing program.

In a news release on Thursday, Aliling said Raemulan Lands Inc. (RLI) chief executive officer Eileen Uy Doyle has sent a letter of commitment to deliver 35,656 housing units in the next two years. The construction of some of the units is currently ongoing in the provinces of Pampanga, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal. "This is a clear indication

that the expansion of 4PH to horizontal developments is on the right track to rally more private partners to join the President's program. With more partners expected to come in, we can produce more housing units faster," Aliling said.

"We need to be more inclusive. We hear the clamor of LGUs (local government units) and other partners for horizontal developments so that they can be more affordable," he added.

RLI has been recognized by Pag-IBIG Fund as the top developer nationwide for three consecutive years, or from 2020 to 2022.

The firm was also awarded the highest number of socialized housing units taken out nationwide for the years 2022 to 2024 and in the National Capital Region for 2024. **(PNA)**

**BY MA. TERESA MONTEMAYOR**

## MMDA ASSURES MANUAL REVIEW OF NCAP VIOLATIONS

**MANILA** – The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) on Wednesday assured that all violations captured through artificial intelligence (AI)-powered closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras under the no-contact apprehension policy (NCAP) are personally checked by its personnel.

"Mano-mano po itong susuriin ng mga personnel ng NCAP. Mai-invalidate po ito kung mali ang pagkakahuli lalo na kung mave-verify na nag-give way sa mga emergency vehicles (NCAP personnel verify these manually. They will invalidate violations especially if they can verified that you gave way for emergency vehicles)," the MMDA said in a message to reporters.

In addition, those who receive a notice of violation may file an appeal with the MMDA Traffic Adjudication Division online through this link: <https://bit.ly/3J62YhH>. The agency's remarks came in response to public

concerns that giving way to emergency vehicles can be considered a violation under the NCAP.

In a radio interview, MMDA Chair Romando Artes said NCAP personnel are mostly deaf-mutes who are tasked with manually reviewing violations caught by their AI CCTV.

He said the AI CCTVs are only placed on EDSA, with other thoroughfares in Metro Manila equipped with regular high-definition CCTVs, digital cameras, and personnel with other gadgets such as speed guns and handheld cameras.

As of 3 p.m. Wednesday, the MMDA reported a total of 552 violations caught through the NCAP, more than the 549 apprehensions made on Tuesday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

A total of 1,112 violations were caught through the NCAP on Monday, the first day of the resumption of the policy. **(PNA) BY RAYMOND CARL DELA CRUZ**

## SENIOR GOV'T EXECS COVERED BY ONGOING PERFORMANCE REVIEW – BERSAMIN

**MANILA** – The ongoing "rigorous" performance review will also cover senior government officials, Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin said on Thursday.

In a Palace press briefing, Bersamin said Marcos' directive is to evaluate government performance not only at the Cabinet level but across the entire bureaucracy.

He said the President wants to go deeper into the government agencies, systems, and quality of public service being delivered on the ground.

"The people expect results and the President has no patience for

underperformance," he said. "He has further indicated that senior officials will likewise be included in the continuing review."

As part of the performance review, the heads of government-owned and -controlled corporations were also directed to submit their courtesy resignations.

Bersamin said Marcos would not hesitate to make the necessary changes to keep the government moving forward.

He lauded those who heeded Marcos' directive to resign from their respective posts, amid efforts to recalibrate the

government.

Bersamin assured a smooth transition to ensure continuity of services and stability in government.

"Each resignation accepted is based on a careful assessment of whether the standards set by the President for efficiency and leadership have been met. Some have delivered, others have not," he said.

"This is not a purge, let me remind you of that. This effort is the President's commitment to a government that works fast, delivers results, and meets the expectations of the Filipino people." **(PNA) BY RUTH ABBEY GITA-CARLOS**



## NEGROS ORIENTAL SETS UP CONTROL MEASURES VS GLANDERS DISEASE

**DUMAGUETE CITY, Negros Oriental (PIA)** — Negros Oriental Board Member Woodrow Maquiling Sr., has called for a whole-of-government response to the threat posed by the suspected glanders case reported in Siquijor Island.

The Department of Health in Negros Island Region (DOH-NIR) assured that this resurfacing rare disease can be prevented, managed, and treated.

DOH-NIR regional director, Dr. Razel Nikka Hao, said that for now, animal blood sample test results from Siquijor are still being validated for possible cases of glanders disease.

The Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) took blood samples from animals in Siquijor and brought it to the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) in Manila for laboratory examination, including those suspected of having glanders, to test for the disease.

Glanders, a zoonotic disease, is an infectious disease that affects horses, donkeys, carabao or animals with hoofs, and can be transmitted to humans.

Glanders can be fatal only if it is not treated early. Such zoonoses can be transmitted either directly from animals to humans, or indirectly via food or the environment.

Hao said that based on initial incidental findings in NIR, there were suspected cases or patients from Siquijor that have been seen in the hospitals in Dumaguete City.

"All of the specimens that were found are being sent to RITM kasi they want to do further tests on the specimen to really confirm that it's glanders. We are still waiting for the confirmation from the RITM of DOH," said Hao.

The patients showed infections either pulmonary (ubo and sipon), general fever, joint pains, and skin ulcer.

"The history of the case nagka-direct contact ng sick or dead animals or a contaminated environment, meaning animals swimming in the rivers then the community nalligo o naglalaba in the same river. Yung at risk are those occupational risks to the sick animal like vets, transport workers,

slaughter personnel," Hao said.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) here has coordinated with BAI for the animal blood collection from Siquijor for confirmatory lab tests in Manila.

The blood samples were collected from 25 cases with six deaths, according to DA agricultural program coordinating officer Alejandro Rafal.

For now, the DOH-NIR has been going around the barangays to teach the barangay health workers on the preventive measures.

The DOH has been conducting town hall meetings with barangay health workers, sanitary engineers, and other health offices in Siquijor and Negros Oriental.

To avoid transmission, the DOH-NIR is reminding the public to restrict direct contact with sick animals, refrain from swimming in areas where sick animals are present, do not consume meat, meat products or milk coming from sick animals, practice hand hygiene, and use safe drinking water.

"For the community, please be advised that if the animal is sick or dead, it should not be eaten kasi there is something wrong with the animal," said Hao. The DOH said it is important for individuals to report or visit the rural health units (RHUs) if symptoms are present or if an individual has been exposed to a sick animal, as medicines and antibiotics are locally available.

BAI quarantine officer Alfonso Tundag said that one of the ways the disease is transmitted to humans is through eating infected meat.

"That's why I am soliciting the support from the shipping lines, dili mag karga ug mga (do not transport) meat products coming from Siquijor because a couple of times, I encountered or intercepted and confiscated meat products from carabaos, cows and pigs from Siquijor without pertinent documents from BAI," Tundag said.

He said the shipping lines are already aware that pertinent shipping documents are required.

"But usahay mag neglect nila kay dili mabantayan ning mga pasahero na

## DPWH STRENGTHENS COASTAL DEFENSES IN AURORA WITH NEW FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT

**BALER, Aurora (PIA)** — To protect residents from flooding and storm surges, particularly during typhoon season, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has completed rehabilitating an 848.6-lineal-meter flood control structure along Sabang Beach in Balera, Aurora.

The two-phase project, which cost P144.43 million, included installing durable sheet pile protection, grouted riprap, a box culvert, and Portland cement concrete pavement.

DPWH Aurora District Engineer Roderick Andal said the structure

enhances the community's defenses against coastal hazards while supporting the long-term viability of its tourism and fishing sectors.

"The upgraded flood control ensures the area's capacity to withstand coastal hazards, reducing potential disruptions to daily life and local economic activities," Andal stated.

Funded under the 2024 national budget, the project underscores DPWH's commitment to safeguarding vulnerable communities through resilient infrastructure. (CLJD/RPQ, PIA Region 3-Aurora) **BY RICK P. QUIAMBAO**

## SSS VISITS 101-YEAR-OLD PENSIONER TO CHECK 'PROOF OF LIFE'

**SAN FERNANDO CITY, La Union (PIA)** — As part of its continued commitment to inclusive service, officials of the Social Security System (SSS) in La Union recently visited 101-year-old Alejandria Arellano in Barangay Ortiz in Naguilian town, for her Annual Confirmation of Pensioners (ACOP).

During the visit, the team personally facilitated Arellano's ACOP compliance, ensuring the uninterrupted release of her monthly pension.

This initiative is part of SSS's ongoing efforts to provide accessible services to elderly and mobility-challenged members.

SSS La Union branch head Francisco Pentecostes said the beneficiary's centenarian status reflects a lifetime of contribution to the workforce—now reciprocated through sustained social protection.

"We remain committed to ensuring that no member is left behind. By bringing our services directly to senior

nagdala og karne sulod sa styro foam," said Tundag. (But sometimes it's neglected and left unwatched by the passengers bringing meat inside a Styrofoam.) (JCT/PIA-7 Negros Oriental) **BY MARIA JENIFER C. TILOS**

pensioners, especially those who are physically unable to visit our offices, we uphold their dignity and affirm our responsibility to protect their welfare," Pentecostes explained.

Arellano, meanwhile, expressed her appreciation for the visit.

"My pension is a big help every day. I can no longer walk to the office, so it means a lot that you came to visit me personally," she said.

Her family also recognized the vital role of the SSS pension in sustaining her health and daily needs, describing the visit as a clear demonstration of the government's concern for the elderly.

This initiative is part of SSS La Union's broader efforts to institutionalize responsive and development-oriented programs.

Since early 2025, the branch has conducted multiple home visits across the province—including in coastal and upland areas—reinforcing its mission to ensure service continuity, even in challenging circumstances.

These visits are usually done every quarter, depending on requests and eligibility.

At least 45 elderly pensioners—mainly those aged 85 and above or with certified health issues—have already received this

## NEW DOH BICOL CHIEF VOWS TO DELIVER ON IMMUNIZATION, MATERNAL HEALTH GOALS

**LEGAZPI CITY (PIA)** — The newly-appointed head of the Department of Health (DOH) in the Bicol region on Wednesday vowed to prioritize DOH directives regarding immunization, maternal health, and children's nutrition.

"Unang-una po diyan ay (first and foremost is) immunization. We need to increase our coverage in Bicol," stated DOH Regional Director Melissa Sena during her inauguration ceremony.

A quick look at the 2024 Annual Field Health Services Information System report reveals that Bicol is struggling to achieve the national target of 95 percent coverage for routine immunizations of children against common vaccine-preventable diseases.

The report indicates that Bicol has reached a fully immunized children coverage of only 47.84 percent, with 71,070 children fully immunized out of an eligible population of 148,559.

To be considered fully immunized, a child must receive the following vaccines by the time they reach one year old:

One dose of the Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine; three doses of the Pentavalent Vaccine,

personalized service.

Families of senior pensioners are encouraged to coordinate with their local SSS branch for similar assistance.

For help, SSS La Union can be contacted at (072) 700-5806, email launion@sss.gov.ph, message their official Facebook page (SSS La Union Official), or visit [www.sss.gov.ph](http://www.sss.gov.ph).

By prioritizing compassionate outreach, SSS La Union reinforces its commitment to inclusive social protection for all members, regardless of age or ability. (CCMT/KJCR/KJC/QM, PIA La Union) **BY KATHLENE JOYCE RAMONES, KRISTINE JOY CARDENAS, QUEENIE MELITON**

which includes Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus (DPT), Haemophilus influenzae Type B and Hepatitis B; three doses of the Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV); and two doses of the MMR vaccine, which protects against measles, mumps, and rubella.

Completing these vaccinations ensures that the child is fully immunized. Sena emphasized that reducing maternal and infant mortality would be her second top priority.

"We also need to improve maternal health, not only because it is part of the national health agenda, but also because it has been our commitment since the Millennium Development Goals and continues to be under the Sustainable Development Goals," she said.

According to data from the Philippine Statistics Authority, at least 128 women died due to pregnancy or childbirth in 2023.

The country is working towards the Sustainable Development Goal of reducing maternal deaths to 70 per 100,000 live births by the year 2030.

Nutrition is a crucial factor in health and is a top priority for Sena. She emphasized the long-term effects of proper nourishment, especially for children.

"When our children are well-nourished, they are better prepared for the future," she stated, pointing out that malnutrition significantly affects a child's learning, development, and productivity later in life.

To go about them, the DOH Bicol Center for Health Development (CHD) must secure the full support of local government units (LGUs) for DOH programs, according to Gladys Demdam-Escote, chief of the local health support division of DOH Bicol CHD. LGUs must actively engage in implementing DOH programs, which include conducting immunization campaigns, providing nutrition education, and promoting health activities, she said. (PIA Bicol) **BY MARLON ATUN**

## ANTI-AGRI SABOTAGE COUNCIL TARGETS BIG-TIME SMUGGLERS IN NEW RULES

**MANILA** – The Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage (AAES) Council has intensified the Marcos administration's campaign against large-scale smugglers, profiteers, and cartel operations distorting the country's food supply chains.

In a statement Thursday, Office of the Special Assistant to the President for Investments and Economic Affairs (OSAPIEA) Secretary Frederick Go said the council has approved key enforcement rules "going after the big fish".

"The Council reaffirmed that its enforcement efforts will focus on dismantling major syndicates that manipulate markets and unfairly drive up prices," the OSAPIEA said.

In a meeting at the Malacañan Palace on Wednesday, the council approved the Department of Justice's (DOJ) operational protocols, which provide a framework for coordinated action against major market saboteurs.

It also greenlit the council's Enforcement Group, composed of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Philippine National Police (PNP), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), and Department of Finance, to implement the AAES Act and run after smuggling

and profiteering networks.

DOJ-appointed Special Team of Prosecutors will also help in expediting the filing and resolution of cases under the AAES Act. Moreover, the Department of Agriculture (DA) also secured backing for its Daily Price Index (DPI) framework, a tool to monitor agricultural prices and expose price manipulation. The council committed to do regular audits and public dissemination of the DPI.

Guidelines were also approved for declaring "abnormal situations", which would signal to the council that immediate response is required to address market disruptions triggered by economic sabotage or other supply chain issues.

Meanwhile, the DOF, Bureau of Customs, and the Department of Information and Communications Technology were tasked to fully implement the National Single Window to streamline import tracking. The agencies were also instructed to ensure storage readiness for confiscated goods.

"Protecting consumers entails going after the root of the problem — large-scale economic saboteurs who distort our agricultural and fisheries markets," Go said. **(PNA) BY KRIS CRISMUNDO**

## BCDA RELAUNCHES BIDDING FOR P2.5-B ICT PROJEC IN NEW CLARK CITY

**MANILA** – The Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) announced Thursday the rebidding of the PHP2.5-billion information and communications technology (ICT) project in New Clark City after the initial round failed to award a contract in 2023.

With technical assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the BCDA is seeking a private partner to form a joint venture (JV) that will handle the commercialization, expansion, repair, and maintenance of the ICT infrastructure in its flagship land development in Tarlac.

The pre-qualification conference for interested bidders will be held on June 4, 2025 at 2 p.m. at the ADB headquarters in Mandaluyong City.

Submission of bids is open until Sept. 4, 2025 at the BCDA Corporate Office in Taguig City.

The BCDA is eyeing to complete the selection process and the signing of the JV agreement within the year.

"More than providing fast and affordable internet

connection to residents and businesses, this project will become pivotal in the smart urban development of New Clark City," BCDA president and chief executive officer Joshua Bingcang said.

"This will also help usher the fifth industrial revolution in the country, attracting high-value investments in the digital and high-tech industries and creating demand for highly skilled Filipino workers in these sectors," Bingcang added.

The ICT project in New Clark City will be implemented under "Open Access Fiber" model, which will allow multiple data transmission providers to use a shared fiber network, helping reduce costs while promoting competition and innovation in the delivery of ICT services.

The infrastructure is also expected to power e-government services and support emerging technologies in the 9,450-hectare New Clark City.

Interested parties may contact BCDA PPP Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat at pbac\_ict@bcda.gov.ph or +632 8575-1765. **(PNA) BY KRIS CRISMUNDO**

## SEC PITCHES CAPITAL MARKET AS FUNDING SOURCE FOR REAL ESTATE FIRMS

**MANILA** – The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) urged real estate companies to tap the capital market for their growth and financing needs.

The SEC earlier formally launched the streamlined rules for the registration of securities by companies with rental pool arrangements.

It introduced the guidelines of Securing & Expanding Capital in Real Estate Investment Transactions (SEC RENT) on May 21 at the SEC headquarters in Makati City.

Implemented through SEC Memorandum Circular No. 12, Series of 2024 issued on July 16, 2024, SEC RENT simplifies the registration process for securities of real estate companies engaged in selling or offering investment contracts through rental pool agreements.

Rental pool agreements refer to investment contracts where a property developer sells or offers units in real estate projects such as condominiums, hotels or resorts to the public, provided that buyers contribute the units to a rental pool managed and operated by the company or a third-party operator.

Buyers in a rental pool agreement will receive a share in profits based on agreed conditions, typically by renting out the units to third parties.

"Accounting for 5.6 percent of GDP (gross domestic product) in 2024, the real estate industry continues to be a

vital engine of economic development, with strong interconnections to construction, finance, retail, and tourism," SEC Commissioner McJill Bryant Fernandez said.

"Given its scale and strategic importance, the real estate sector stands to benefit immensely from deeper participation in the capital market."

Under the program, the SEC Markets and Securities Regulation Department (MSRD) is required to complete the review of the registration statement of the covered companies within 45 days from filing.

The launch was conducted in partnership with the Chamber of Real Estate & Builders' Association, Inc. (CREBA), an organization with over 4,000 members including firms, individuals and associations involved in the property industry.

"We probably look at securities offering and all these types of capital market sourcing as for the big players alone. Small companies like us traditionally resort into borrowings as source of funds to continue operating our businesses," CREBA Vice President for Housing Affairs Demetrio Posadas.

"Our organization appreciates the efforts being extended by the SEC for now reaching out not only to big developers, but likewise for making us understand that we, small companies, probably have a chance to participate in this capital market." **(PNA) BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**

## BIR TO 'HAUNT' TAX EVADERS OVER GHOST RECEIPTS

**MANILA** – Ghost receipts will come back to haunt businesses that use them to evade taxes, Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) Commissioner Romeo Lumagui Jr. warned on Wednesday.

Lumagui issued the warning following the filing of criminal charges against cosmetics firm Ever Bilena for its alleged use of fake or "ghost" receipts to reduce its tax liabilities.

In a post on his official Facebook page, Lumagui said the Department of Justice (DOJ) had found probable cause in the case and had already filed charges in court in April.

Four criminal information were filed against Ever Bilena Cosmetics Inc. and its president, Dioceldo Sy, and treasurer, Miami

Siytaoco, before the Quezon City Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 33 for tax evasion and failure to supply correct and accurate information in its tax returns.

The cases are in relation to the BIR's intensified Run After Fake Transaction (RAFT) Program involving fake/fictitious receipts.

The charges against Ever Bilena are also part of the BIR's Fearless and Aggressive Enforcement Activities program, which targets tax evasion and fraud.

Based on the investigation of the RAFT Task Force, Ever Bilena used and claimed benefits from the ghost receipts issued by Decarich Supertrade Inc., a ghost company.

The BIR previously filed a

criminal complaint against Ever Bilena before the DOJ on Feb. 1, 2024 for tax liabilities amounting to PHP1.6 billion.

"Ito po ay malinaw na tax evasion. Kaya't paalala po natin sa ating mga negosyante... tigilin po natin ito. Wag po tayong gumamit ng ghost receipts, magbayad po tayo ng tamang taxes para makatulong po sa ating bayan (this is a clear case of tax evasion. We are reminding our businessmen... stop this practice. Don't use ghost receipts, pay the correct taxes to help our country)," Lumagui said.

"Hindi mag aatubili ang BIR, katuwang ang DOJ, na magsampa ng kasong kriminal na tax evasion laban sa mga gumagamit

ng mga ghost receipts (The BIR, in coordination with the DOJ, would not hesitate to file criminal charges of tax evasion against those who use ghost receipts)."

In the same post, Lumagui thanked the DOJ and Secretary Jesus Crispin Remulla for backing the BIR's campaign against tax evaders.

Under Section 255 of the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) of 1997, any person found guilty of tax evasion may be punished by a fine of not less than PHP500,000 but not more than PHP10 million.

Guilty parties also face imprisonment of not less than six years but not more than 10 years. When the offender is a corporation, the penalty is imposed on the responsible officers. **(PNA)**

## PAGCOR CHIEF, ENTIRE BOARD TENDER COURTESY RESIGNATION

**MANILA** – Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) chairperson and chief executive officer Alejandro Tengco on Thursday said he and all members of the agency's Board of Directors tendered their courtesy resignations last week.

In a statement Thursday, Tengco said this is to give President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. a free hand in reorganizing the bureaucracy.

"We serve at the pleasure of the President," Tengco said. "And we will accept whatever the Chief Executive's decision will be."

Aside from Tengco, those who voluntarily stepped down were PAGCOR president and chief operating officer Wilma Eisma and Directors Jose Maria Ortega, Francis Democrito Concordia, and Gilbert Cesar Remulla. **(PNA) BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**





## NCR SWIMMER SIA SECURES 5TH GOLD MEDAL IN PALARONG PAMBANSA

**LAOAG CITY** – National Capital Region's Titus Rafael Sia came up with another stunning performance at the Ferdinand E. Marcos Memorial Stadium swimming pool Thursday to secure his fifth gold medal in the 65th Palarong Pambansa.

The 12-year-old from San Juan City ruled the elementary boys' 400-meter freestyle event with a new meet record of 4:31.39, eclipsing the 4:35.42 established by Davao Region's Omar Dacera in the 2009 edition held in Tacloban City, Leyte.

Caraga Region's Cosme Calejesan (4:41.36) and Francis Anunciado (4:54.25) settled for the silver and bronze medals, respectively.

Sia, an incoming Grade 7 student in Xavier School, also set new marks in the 200m and 100m backstroke, and claimed victory in the 400m freestyle and 4x50 medley relay with Reighlem Scziyo Salon, Mackenzie, Findlay Jake Mackenzie and Joshua Erik Chua.

Meanwhile, Sophia Rose Garra of De La Salle Araneta University in Malabon dominated the elementary girls division with five golds coming from the 200m Individual Medley and 100m backstroke (new meet records), 100m and 200m freestyle, and 4x50m medley relay with Adrienne Reese Tacuboy, Kaeley Vianna Cabalida

and Ceanna Gabrielle Mitra.

In athletics, Central Luzon Region's Lance Nicolas of Taal High School registered 3.80 meters in the secondary boys' pole vault to prevail over NCR's Francis Allen Sillar of University of Santo Tomas (3.60m) and Northern Mindanao's Jay Clarabal of Looc National High School (3.30m) Nicolas' teammate, Kae Ross Ferrer also triumphed in the elementary boys' 1500m while the other winners were Cagayan Valley's Angel Agapito (secondary girls' high jump), Davao Region's Mary Jane Pagayon (secondary girls' 1500m) and Eastern Visayas Region's Joyce Panganoron (elementary girls' 1500m).

Over at the Bacarra National Cultural Center, NCR swept the mixed category in aerogymnastics courtesy of Mab Ysabelle Angela Esguerra and Anton Eliezer Dungog (secondary) and Antonette Amante and Jerico Catilogo (elementary).

Winners in the wushu competition at the Sarrat Civic Center were Davao Region's Ivy Ledama (Group B secondary girls 48kg), Jacob Rey Agad (Group B secondary boys' 48kg), Abrianna Jed Payao (Group B secondary girls' 42kg) and Clarens Villacastin (Group A secondary boys' 56kg).

The other gold medalists were Cordillera Administrative Region's

Aron Dulos (Group A secondary boys' 52kg), Joelle Peñaflor (Group B secondary girls' 45kg), Xiviel Bantali (Group B secondary boys' 42kg); Soccsksargen Region's King McJones Moreno (Group B secondary boys' 45kg); Ilocos Region's James Duag (Group A secondary boys' 48kg).

As of 6:30 p.m., NCR has collected 77 golds, 52 silvers and 31 bronzes in the overall medal tally board of the annual event organized by the Department of Education.

Calabarzon Region is at No. 2 with 33 golds, 46 silvers and 41 bronzes while Western Visayas Region ranks third with 25 golds, 35 silvers and 30 bronzes.

Davao Region moved up to fourth place with 24 golds, 17 silvers and 28 bronzes, while Northern Mindanao Region slid to fifth with 21 golds, 17 silvers and 33 bronzes.

Central Visayas took the No. 6 spot with 20 golds, 18 silvers and 28 bronzes followed by Central Luzon (19-15-26), CAR (16-12-7), Caraga (15-12-25), Eastern Visayas Region (10-10-16), Soccsksargen (8-14-22), Ilocos Region (6-15-17), Bicol Region (6-4-22), Cagayan Valley Region (4-8-14), National Academy of Sports (4-2-5), Zamboanga Peninsula (2-11-12), Mimaropa Region (1-3-3) and BARMM (1-1-5). **(PNA) By Jean Malanum**

## LUZON GIANTS FALL AS WV, DAVAO FORCE PALARO BASKETBALL FINAL

**MANILA** – The three teams expected to reign supreme in the Palarong Pambansa secondary boys' basketball event fell one by one at the Centennial Arena in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte on Thursday.

Defending champion National University-Nazareth School, representing the National Capital Region, was the first to crash out after succumbing to St. Robert's International College of Western Visayas, 67-76, in the quarterfinal during the daytime session.

Kissing its back-to-back title hopes in the Palarong Pambansa goodbye, it was the third time the Bullpups fell short of a championship within three months after also losing the University Athletic Association of the Philippines high school boys championship to the University of Santo Tomas Tiger Cubs and to eventual winner Fil-Am Nation Select in the semifinals of the National Basketball Training Center National Finals.

St. Robert's eventually

continued its giant slaying in the semifinals later in the night after dropping Calabarzon, 80-73.

Calabarzon, led by a good mix of players from National Collegiate Athletic Association teams San Beda-Rizal and Lyceum-Cavite, had a solid first half behind the hot hands of Andrei Ugaddan, but the Iloilo City-based ballers, led by Elijah Rose, took over in the second half to score another huge upset. St. Robert's will face Ateneo de Davao University (ADDU), representing Davao Region, in the gold medal game Friday.

ADDU pulled off a shocker of its own after stunning the Pampanga Delta program-backed Central Luzon, 66-65, in the other semifinal duel.

ADDU climbed back from 11 points down with a little over eight minutes left and held on after Pampanga, which lost Chog Moral due to cramps with 40.5 seconds to go, turned the ball over with 1.9 seconds left. **(PNA) BY IVAN STEWART SALDAJENO**

## UST BEATS UPIS FOR 2ND STRAIGHT WIN IN SHAKEY'S GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

**MANILA** – University of Sto. Tomas defeated University of the Philippines Integrated School (UPIS), 25-20, 25-13, on Thursday, bagging its second win in the 2025 Shakey's Girls Volleyball Invitational League (SGVIL) Rising Stars Cup at the La Salle Green Hills Gym.

Kimberly Rubin scored 13 points on nine attacks and four aces, while Aneeza Santos and Ryzel Laag chipped in five points apiece for UST, which pulled off a 25-20, 27-29, 25-19, win over St. John's Institute-Bacolod in the opener.

UPIS suffered its second loss after bowing to Far Eastern University-Diliman, 9-25, 12-25, on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, defending champion Adamson University demolished University of Perpetual Help System Dalta, 25-4, 25-12, for its first win in Pool A.

In Pool B, Bethel Academy rallied past Holy Rosary College, 26-24, 18-25, 25-21, to improve at 1-1.

Eunice Suamer and Joanne Reducto scored 11 and 10 points, respectively, for Bethel Academy, which fell to Chiang Kai Shek College, 15-25, 22-25, on Wednesday.

In Pool C, King's Montessori School prevailed over Corpus Christi School, 25-16, 25-12.

In Division 2, De La Salle Zobel B and La Salle Green

## GILAS YOUTH SWEEPS SEABA U16 ELIMS WITH 35-POINT DRUBBING OF MALAYSIA

**MANILA** – Gilas Pilipinas Youth completed a sweep of the FIBA U16 Asia Cup SEABA Qualifiers elimination round after beating Malaysia, 96-61, at Bren Z. Guiao Sports Complex in San Fernando, Pampanga on Thursday night.

The LA Tenorio-mentored squad was all fired up from the get-go, posting a 28-12 lead in the opening quarter.

Gilas followed it up with a 27-point second quarter for a 55-29 lead at halftime. The complexion of the game didn't change much as the host never let up the rest of the way.

Six Gilas players scored in double figures, led by Jeremiah Antolin and Travis Pascual who logged 15 points apiece.

Evaraigne Cruz added 14 while Prince Cariño registered a double-double of 13 points and 11 rebounds.

Mark Jhelo Lumangub and Jolo Pascual chipped in 10 points each.

The win gave the nationals a 5-0 card and a trip to the final round on Friday against No. 2 seed Indonesia (4-1).

Gilas handed Indonesia its lone loss in the tournament on Wednesday night, 77-68. **(PNA) BY DARRYL JOHN ESGUERRA**

Hills won their respective matches to share the Pool E lead at 2-0.

DLSZ-B conquered Assumption College-San Lorenzo, 25-21, 25-18, while LSGH outplayed Everest International Academy, 26-24, 25-22.

Domuscola International School (DIS) survived Immaculate Conception Academy, 25-21, 20-25, 25-23, for its second consecutive win in Pool F. DIS won its first match over St. Therese-Quezon City, 13-25, 25-20, 29-27. **(PNA) BY JEAN MALANUM**