

## CAVITE PNP JOINS THE 4TH REGIONAL JOINT SECURITY CONTROL CENTER (RJSCC) MEETING

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, City of Imus, Cavite**— The Acting Provincial Director of Cavite PPO, PCOL DWIGHT E ALEGRE, participated in the 4th Regional Joint Security Control Center (RJSCC) Meeting held at Multi-Purpose Center, Camp BGen Vicente P Lim, Laguna, to further enhance preparations for the May 12, 2025, National

and Local Elections (NLE). The activity was led by PCOL DOMINIC L BACCAY, Deputy Regional Director For Operations, PRO CALABARZON, and presided over by Atty. Allan S. Enriquez, Regional Election Director 4A and RJSCC Chairperson, as the activity focused on streamlining efforts to ensure a peaceful, secure, and credible electoral

process in the region.

The Cavite PNP's involvement underscores the importance of inter-agency cooperation in achieving a peaceful electoral process. As it also showcases our dedication in supporting national and local initiatives and fostering trust between government institutions and other local communities.

# PBBM TO NEW POLICE OFFICERS: BE READY TO FACE 'CHALLENGE BUT NOBLE PATH OF PUBLIC SERVICE'

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Tuesday acknowledged the sacrifices of the 206 graduates of the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) "Sinaglawin" Class of 2025. "Hindi biro ang inyong pinagdaanan. Hindi rin biro ang inyong tatahakin," the President said.

During the 46th commencement exercises held at the PNPA ground in Camp Castañeda in Silang, Cavite, the President said the graduates who would leave the academy gates as full-fledged police lieutenants, would surely "face a challenging but noble path of public service — one that will test their ideals, principles, and convictions."

"But whenever those days come and doubts creep in, remember who you are and why you chose this path," President Marcos said.

Officials from the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) attended the PNPA graduation rites, as well as the graduates' parents and relatives.

Strategies and best practices

Graduates agreed with President Marcos about the sacrifices they endured during their four years in the academy.

They shared their strategies and best practices, which helped them complete the tasks. The second placer, Police Lt. Kristina Aragoncillo Acidre, said, "If you can find balance in academics and tactics, then surely you will be able to survive."

Acidre received the Vice Presidential Kampilan Award and Special Academics Awards for Best in Laws and Jurisprudence and Best in Public Safety Administration.

"It is very difficult—the physical demands. We are already college degree graduates. So, it is very hard to be in that kind of environment. It boils down to managing academics and tactics," Acidre said.

"We also have to be tactically proficient. So, when it comes to academics, it is a matter of studying smart and not studying hard. Hindi pwede igugol mo lahat ng oras mo sa pag-aaral," she said during a press briefing at the PNPA compound before the 46th commencement exercises.

The top graduate is Police Lt. Marc Joseph Lacatan Vitto, from Gloria, Oriental Mindoro. Vitto received the Presidential Kampilan Award and Journalism Kampilan Award under the Institutional Awards and Special Academic Awards for Best in Forensic Science and Best in General Education.

"Guided by our honor code system, we cadets do not lie, cheat, steal, nor tolerate among us those who do," Vitto said. "And those values and principles, we will carry once we step outside the academy's portals and serve as police officers with dignity and integrity."

Police Lt. Jay Cheever Goyha Rocaberte of Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental, is ranked third among the top graduates of the class. Rocaberte received the Secretary of the DILG Kampilan Award.

The top four to 10 graduates are as follows: Police Lieutenants Matilde Macachor Deligero, Christian Martin Dagupan Bumanglag, Chanchai Acoba Nacion, Lyka Pepito Antig, Daniel Abejuela Lisondra, Xien Lei Juan Buyuccan, and Rizel Erika Pudang Taipan. | PND



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## CAVITE POLICE JOINS LOCAL ABSENTEE VOTING FOR 2025 NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia,** Imus City, Cavite —Aktibong naki-isa ang Cavite Police Provincial Office (CPPO) sa isinagawang Local Absentee Voting (LAV) bilang paghahanda sa nalalapit na National and Local Elections sa Mayo 12, 2025.

Sa huling araw ng Local Absentee Voting, Abril 30, 2025, ay nakilahok sa pagboto ang mga personnel ng Cavite PPO mula sa provincial headquarters at mga city at municipal police stations. Ginanap ito sa Kabalikat Lounge, Mayo's

Hall, sa loob ng Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia sa Lungsod ng Imus, Cavite. Pinangunahan ni PCOL DWIGHT E ALEGRE, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, ang maayos na pagpapatupad ng absentee voting sa lalawigan. Ang aktibong partisipasyon ng mga kawani ng pulisya ay patunay ng kanilang pagtupad sa tungkulin bilang mga tagapagtaguyod ng demokrasya.

Ang pagsasagawa ng LAV ay bahagi ng mas malawak na inisyatibo ng Philippine National Police

(PNP) na pinangunahan ni PNP Chief, PGEN ROMMEL FRANCISCO D MARBIL, na personal na bumoto sa pagbubukas ng Local Absentee Voting sa Camp Crame. Aniya, "Ang pagboto ay hindi lamang karapatan kundi isang tungkulin. Isa itong paraan para ipakita ang pagmamahal natin sa bayan."

Pinangunahan ni PBGEN PAUL KENNETH T LUCAS, Regional Director ng PRO CALABARZON, ang pagsiguro na ang mga personnel mula sa Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, at Quezon ay makaboboto nang maayos, ligtas, at mabilis. Binigyang-diin din ni RD Lucas ang kahalagahan ng karapatan ng bawat mamamayan na bumoto, kabilang na ang

mga tagapagpatupad ng batas na may tungkulin ding pangalagaan ang integridad ng nalalapit na halalan.

Ang absentee voting ay nangyari mula Abril 28 hanggang 30, 2025, ayon sa mga patakaran ng Commission on Elections (COMELEC), para bigyan ng pagkakataon ang mga pulis, sundalo, at iba pang frontliners na makaboto bago ang kanilang mga tungkulin sa halalan sa Mayo 12, 2025.

Ang Cavite PNP ay naninindigan sa pagsusulong ng malinis, maayos, at mapayapang halalan sapagkat ang inyong Kapulisan ay mga tagapangalaga ng seguridad at katuwang sa pagpapatibay ng demokratikong proseso.

## OTHER WANTED PERSON, NAARESTO SA BAGUIO CITY SA BISA NG WARRANT OF ARREST MULA CAVITE

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia,** Lungsod ng Imus, Cavite — Sa patuloy na kampanya ng PRO4A laban sa mga wanted persons, matagumpay na naaresto ng pinagsanib na puwersa ng Magallanes Municipal Police Station at Baguio City Police Office ang isang Other Wanted Person dakong alas-2:05 ng hapon ngayong araw, Mayo 1, 2025, sa SM City Baguio, Governor Pack Road, Baguio City, Benguet.

Kinilala ni PMAJ Raymond T. Balbuena, Hepe ng Magallanes Municipal Police Station, ang naarestong suspek na si alyas "Jerson", residente

ng Dominican Hills, Purok 49, Baguio City.

Pinangunahan ng warrant personnel ng Magallanes MPS ang operasyon, katuwang ang mga tauhan ng Baguio City Intelligence Unit, sa ilalim ng pamumuno ni PLTCOL Nicomedes A. Olarte III. Isinagawa ang operasyon gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD), alinsunod sa umiiral na panuntunan ng PNP hinggil sa karapatang pantao.

Naaresto ang suspek sa bisa ng isang Warrant of Arrest para sa kasong Qualified Theft sa ilalim ng Criminal Case No. NC-3450, na inisyu ng RTC Branch 15, Naic, Cavite, noong Abril 13, 2024, na may inirekomendang piyansa na ₱80,000.00.

Sa kasalukuyan, nasa kustodiya ng mga awtoridad ang akusado para sa kaukulang dokumentasyon at isasauli ang kanyang Warrant of Arrest sa korte ng pinagmulan.

Ayon kay PCol Dwight E Alegre, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite Police Provincial Office, "Maging saan mang panig ng bansa magtago ang mga lumalabag sa batas, hindi titigil ang ating kapulisan hangga't hindi sila napapanagot. Sa tulong ng mga katuwang nating ahensya at suporta ng komunidad, patuloy nating naisasakatuparan ang ating layuning gawing ligtas ang bawat pamilyang Pilipino."

Ang matagumpay na operasyong ito ay patunay ng matatag na paninindigan ng pamunuan ng PNP sa pangunguna ni PGEN Rommel Francisco D Marbil, Chief of the Philippine National Police, para sa mas pinaigting na kampanya laban sa kriminalidad at pagpapatibay ng kaayusan sa ilalim ng Bagong Pilipinas.

## PULIS DASMARIÑAS, NAARESTO ANG RANK 6 CITY MOST WANTED

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia,** Lungsod ng Imus, Cavite — Sa patuloy na pagpapatupad ng agresibong kampanya laban sa mga Most Wanted Persons, matagumpay na naaresto ng Dasmariñas Component City Police Station ang isang City Level Most Wanted Person – Rank No. 6, sa isinagawang operasyon dakong 10:30 ng gabi ng Abril 29, 2025, sa Barangay Sampaloc 4, Dasmariñas City, Cavite.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL REGINO L OÑATE, OIC ng Dasmariñas CCPS, ang naarestong suspek na si alyas EDGAR, kasalukuyang naninirahan sa Barangay Sampaloc 4, Dasmariñas City, Cavite.

Ang operasyong ito ay isinagawa ng Warrant Personnel ng Dasmariñas CCPS sa bisa ng Warrant of Arrest para sa kasong Acts of Lasciviousness sa ilalim ng Article 336 ng Revised Penal Code, kaugnay ng Section 5(b) ng Republic Act 7610, alinsunod sa Criminal Case Number DC-16903-24-FC. Ang nasabing warrant ay inilabas ng Regional Trial Court, Branch 128, Dasmariñas City, Cavite noong Enero 27, 2025, na may inirekomendang piyansang halagang ₱130,000.00.

Gamit ang Body Worn Camera (BWC) at Alternative Recording

Devices (ARDs), isinagawa ang operasyon na may mahigpit na pagsunod sa umiiral na PNP operational procedures at mga alituntunin sa karapatang pantao. Naipabatid sa akusado ang kanyang mga karapatang konstitusyonal sa paraang malinaw at nauunawaan niya.

Ayon kay PCOLDWIGHT E ALEGRE, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, "Patuloy na pinaigting ng ating mga kapulisan ang kanilang pagtugis sa mga taong nagtatago sa batas. Nararapat lamang na makamit ng mga biktima ang nararapat na hustisya. Kaya't kami ay patuloy na humihingi ng tulong at suporta mula sa ating komunidad sapagkat sa Bagong Pilipinas, ang gusto ng Pulis — Ligtas ka!"

Ang tagumpay na ito ay bunga ng malinaw na direktiba at matatag na pamumuno ni PGEN ROMMEL FRANCISCO D MARBIL, Chief of the Philippine National Police, na patuloy na nagsusulong ng mas agresibong operasyon laban sa kriminalidad.

Sa kanyang pamumuno, muling pinatitibay ang paninindigan ng bawat pulis na itaguyod ang batas, protektahan ang mamamayan, at ipaglaban ang hustisya — tungo sa isang ligtas, maayos, at disiplinadong Bagong Pilipinas.

## DLSU, DILG PUSH FOR ACCOUNTABILITY IN BARANGAY LEADERSHIP

**DASMARIÑAS CITY, Cavite (PIA)** – A professor from the De La Salle University – Dasmariñas (DLSU-D) underscored the importance of upholding ethical and accountable leadership among public officials.

During the launch of the Executive Program on Barangay Leadership: Ethics, Accountability, and Development (B-LEAD) Dr. Rommel Mazo, Director of the School of Governance, Public Service, and Corporate Leadership, reminded elected officials to uphold accountability in public service.

"Public office is a public trust. Our government officials are in their positions because the people trust them. People will trust them if these public officials govern with accountability and integrity," he said.

Taking off from the university's Sustainable Barangay Leadership and Governance (BALAG) and the ongoing implementation of the Barangay Peace and Conflict Transformation (B-PACT) Executive Programs, B-LEAD provides barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan

officials the skills and knowledge on the principles of ethical and sustainable governance and their role in upholding ethical and accountable public service.

"[Government] Positions are public property. We run for office because we believe that we can contribute to national and local development. We are there because the people trust us. Remember that running for a position and occupying a position is always for public service, not personal interest."

Thelma Vecina, executive director of the Local Government Academy (LGA), emphasized the shared responsibility of local government units in upholding accountability at the grassroots level.

"Governance should be shared. The barangay captain cannot do it alone, and the Sangguniang Barangay cannot manage the barangay by themselves. They need partners and allies in governance."

Nencita Costelo, Local Government Operations Officer of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) emphasized the importance

of ethical leadership in ushering in developments in barangays.

"When you serve the barangay with your heart, your compassion for the people naturally follows. You cannot truly serve the barangay and prioritize the welfare of the people if you do not have the heart for it." Costelo added that the DILG determines the level of ethical leadership by barangay officials through the effectiveness of services at the grassroots level.

"We have barangays that excel because of ethical leadership. The DILG has created parameters to determine how barangays perform," Costelo added, citing the Seal of Good Local Governance for Barangay (SGLGB) as an example.

The B-LEAD Executive Program is aligned with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in ensuring transparent, inclusive, and sustainable governance, as well as the AmbisyonNatin2040, the country's long-term vision for a prosperous, inclusive, and resilient society by 2040. **(PB/PIA4A) BY PATRICIA BERMUDEZ**

## RESERVISTS, ROTC CADETS PLAY VITAL ROLE IN NATIONAL SECURITY

**CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA)** — In an effort to recognize the vital role of soldiers as well as Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) cadets and veterans, the Second Infantry "Jungle Fighter" Division of the Philippine Army held its first Reservists, ROTC, and Veterans' Day in Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal.

According to Lt. Col. Jeffrex G. Molina, chief of the Division Public Affairs Office (DPAO) of 2ID, the initiative is a meaningful tribute in honoring the contributions of reservists, ROTC cadets, and veterans in safeguarding national defense and readiness in bolstering the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in times of need.

During the Sulong Calabarzon public affairs program, Molina also stated that the initiative was inspired by the recent Regional Annual Administrative and Tactical Inspection (RAT), which evaluated the operational readiness of various ROTC units.

"This initiative was strongly supported by our Division Commander, Major General Cerilo Balaoro Jr., because he saw the importance of dedicating a day of recognition to our ROTC cadets, reservists, and especially our veterans—to honor their loyalty and dedication as protectors of the nation," Molina explained.

Molina also emphasized that ROTC cadets serve as the primary pool for future reservists, who play a vital role in both national defense and disaster response. Likewise, veterans, from World War II heroes to recently

retired military personnel, continue to be pillars of wisdom and strength in society whose selfless sacrifices have laid the foundation for the country's safety and sovereignty. He added: "Just because their active duty has ended doesn't mean their service is over, they still hold an important place in safeguarding our people and assisting in times of crisis."

In addition, Molina reiterated that reservists make up 80 percent of the military's total force, while regular soldiers comprise 20 percent, combining both will form a formidable and resilient force capable of responding immediately to both natural disasters and security threats.

The 49th founding anniversary celebration of the division was attended by 203 ROTC cadets from various academic institutions, including the Kurios Christian Colleges Foundation, Cavite State University, University of Rizal System-Morong, University of Rizal System-Tanay, Laguna State Polytechnic University, and Southern Luzon State University-Infanta. 271 reservists from 401st, 402nd, 403rd, 404th, and 405th Community Defense Center Ready Reserve Infantry Battalions and 48 veterans from the Eastern Rizal AFP Retirees and Pensioners Association Inc. (ERAFRPAI).

The Reservists, ROTC, and Veterans' Day marks a significant milestone for 2ID, reaffirming its commitment to unity, preparedness, and honoring the past while investing in the future of national security. **(RB, CO/PIA4A) BY CHARMAINE ODONG**

## BENEFITS THAT MATTER FOR SOLO PARENTS

This fourth week of April, the nation celebrates Solo Parents Week, casting the spotlight on the unwavering strength and daily sacrifices of Filipino solo parents. Among them is Rose Cortes, a single mother of four, who works as a housekeeper in a condominium in Quezon City, earning minimum wage.

For years, Rose faced the reality of raising her children on her own, budgeting every peso just to put food on the table, pay for school needs, and cover household bills. But things have become a bit lighter, thanks to Republic Act 11861 or the Expanded Solo Parents' Welfare Act. "Mabuti at salamat at may mga ganito pala kaming mga solo parent na makukuha," Rose shared.

(It's good and I'm thankful that we solo parents actually have benefits like these that we can receive.) RA 11861, signed into law in 2022, expands the definition of solo parents and strengthens government support for them. Solo parents are now entitled to a wide array of benefits, including:

- Monthly cash subsidy of ₱1,000 for minimum wage earners with children aged 0-22 (not married and not working).
- 10% discount and VAT exemption on baby's basic necessities such as milk, diapers, and medicines for children aged 0-6.
- Seven-day parental leave, on top of existing leave benefits.
- Priority access to livelihood, scholarship, housing, and employment assistance from government agencies.
- Automatic PhilHealth coverage, if not yet enrolled.
- Flexible work schedule and protection from work discrimination.

To qualify for these benefits, solo parents must present a Solo Parent ID, which can be obtained from the local Social Welfare and Development Office (SWDO) by submitting the following:

- Barangay certification proving solo parent status.
- Birth certificates of children.
- Proof of income.
- Supporting documents based on status (e.g., death certificate of spouse, court documents for legal separation, etc.).

Under RA 11861, the definition of a solo parent now includes:

- Women who give birth as a result of rape or other crimes against chastity.
- Spouses of OFWs away for at least a year.
- Legal guardians or foster parents solely responsible for a child.
- Family members or relatives who assume the role of a parent due to abandonment or absence of both parents.
- Pregnant women without partners.

As of 2025, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has rolled out the Solo Parent Cash Assistance Program, continuing its ₱1,000 monthly subsidy program for qualified solo parents nationwide. The DSWD has also partnered with LGUs to streamline Solo Parent ID applications and conduct barangay-level information drives to ensure that solo parents are aware of their rights and how to access them.

For Rose and many others like her, these changes are more than policy updates — they are lifelines. "Malaking tulong, lalo na di talaga kasya ang sweldo sa panggastos naming mag-iina."

(It's a big help, especially since my salary really isn't enough to cover our family's expenses.)

This Solo Parents Week, let us honor the resilience of solo parents and amplify awareness of laws designed to support them. Because when we uplift one solo parent, we empower an entire family. **(AVS / PIA-NCR) BY ALICE V. SICAT**

## EDITORIAL

### Ilang mga paliguan, ligtas pa nga ba?

Ipinagbabawal ngayon ang pagligo sa Baseco Beach ng LGU dahil sa maruming tubig nito ngunit sa kabila ng pagbabawal ay pami-pamilya pa rin ang naliligo rito dahil sa mainit na panahon. Dahil sa kakulangan ng mga nagbabantay dito ay patuloy at malaya pa rin ang mga residente na maligo at magliwaliw sa naturang Beach.

Patuloy pa rin ang pagtaas ng temperatura sa bansa kaya naman patok ngayon sa mga tao ang pagpunta sa pampublikong paliguan o mga beach upang maibsan ang init na nararamdaman. Sa kabilang banda ay ilan sa mga beach sa bansa ay hindi na malinis at hindi ligtas na pagliguan dahil sa maaring makuha ng sakit mula rito, ngunit hindi nito alintana ng ilan sa mga residente na malapit sa Baseco Beach at patuloy pa rin naliligo rito kahit na pinagbabawalan ang mga ito ng Local Government Unit.

Upang maisakatuparan ang pagbabawal sa pagligo rito, nararapat na maglabas ng mga alintuntunin ang naturang LGU upang tumupad ang mga residente. Hindi sapat ang pagbabawal lamang upang mapasunod ang mga ito. Dapat din na magsagawa ng cleaning operations upang hindi na lalong dumami ang basura at ligtas na makaligo muli ang mga residente rito.

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## DOTR AWAITS CATHAY PACIFIC EXPLANATION ON RIPPED PASSPORT INCIDENT

**MANILA** – The Department of Transportation (DOTr), through the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), has ordered Cathay Pacific to explain the alleged passport mishandling incident which led to the denial of boarding of a passenger at Mactan-Cebu International Airport last week.

Based on the CAB incident report, the 65-year-old passenger was supposed to board Flight CX948 bound for Dubai, United Arab Emirates on April 24.

However, during the check-in process, the passenger's passport was allegedly torn while being handled by the airline staff, rendering it invalid for boarding.

The passenger complained that the airline staff did not provide any explanation or immediate assistance, and just continued to process other passengers. Cathay Pacific's explanation was due

Thursday.

Transportation Secretary Vince Dizon directed all airlines to ensure that no intentional tampering of passports occurs at airports and reminded personnel to exercise their authority responsibly and respectfully when verifying the validity of travel documents.

On the other hand, the New NAIA Infra Corp. management said passengers at Ninoy Aquino International Airport are no longer required to show their passports at the entrance gates.

All security personnel have been instructed not to touch passports during terminal entry and security verification. A valid identification card or travel document will do, to be held only by the passenger.

Passport inspection will be handled by the airline staff at check-in counters, by immigration officers, and by airline personnel at the boarding gates. **(PR/PNA)**

## DEPED BOOSTING INTERVENTION AMID POOR LITERACY REPORT AMONG GRADS

**MANILA** – The Department of Education (DepEd) assured on Thursday that the government has been intensifying interventions in schools following reports of more than 18 million high school graduates from 2019-2024 considered "functional illiterate".

DepEd Secretary Sonny Angara said instead of memorization, the agency is making efforts to help students become critical thinkers while teaching them 21st-century skills.

"Hindi namin hahayaang may batang nahuhuli sa pagbasa at pag-unawa (We will not let any child fall behind reading and comprehension). The recent FLEMMS results on functional literacy highlight what we have long recognized - literacy must be at the heart of our education reforms," he

said.

The government, he said, is improving the teaching and assessment method as well as the remedial and literacy programs in schools.

Angara said the agency will ensure that every Filipino learner is functionally literate and prepared for the future.

Lawmakers on Wednesday raised alarm over the results of the 2024 Functional Literacy, Education, and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS), which revealed that over 18 million high school graduates from 2019 to 2024 cannot read and comprehend.

The Philippine Statistics Authority defines a functionally literate person as someone who can read, write, compute, and comprehend. **(PNA) BY JOYCE ANN L. ROCAMORA**

## 10 CIDG MEMBERS UNDER RESTRICTIVE CUSTODY FOR 'ROBBERY EXTORTION'

**MANILA** – Ten members of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) assigned in the Southern Metro Manila District Field Unit were put under restrictive custody and detained at the Philippine Custodial Facility for alleged kidnapping and robbery extortion as ordered by Director Maj. Gen. Nicolas Torre III.

"Last Monday, April 28, upon receipt ng report ng (of the report of) Integrity Monitoring and Enforcement Group (IMEG), immediately, Gen. Torre put under restrictive custody 10 CIDG personnel and ordered them to be detained," PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Jean Fajardo told reporters in a press briefing held at Camp Crame on Thursday. Initial investigation revealed that on Feb. 17, 2025, the accused personnel raided a warehouse at First Tondo Complex, Tondo,

Manila and brought their targets to the CIDG office

in Taguig City for alleged violation of the Republic Act 10591, also known as the Comprehensive Firearms and Ammunition Regulation Act.

Afterward, the CIDG operatives allegedly demanded money in exchange for the release of their victims.

The PNP IMEG report showed that on April 21, the filing of administrative cases against the accused cops was recommended "for grave misconduct, conduct unbecoming of a police officer, and neglect of duty."

Torre said the cops' issued firearms and badges were immediately recalled and turned over to the CIDG NCR Logistics Section.

"Hindi ko papayagan at itolerate ang mga ganitong pangyayari sa CIDG (I will not allow and tolerate these kinds of incident in the CIDG)," Torre said. **(PNA) BY CHRISTOPHER LLOYD CALIWAN**

## JAPANESE MINESWEEPING UNIT VISITS PH NAVY

**MANILA** – The commander of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense (JMSDF)'s Minesweeping Division 3 paid a courtesy visit to the Philippine Navy (PN), highlighting the growing military ties between the two countries.

Naval Air Wing Deputy Commander Capt. Emerson David, representing Philippine Fleet chief Rear Adm. Joe Anthony Orbe, welcomed JMSDF Minesweeping Division 3 commander Capt. Amano Shinsuke and his delegation at the Navy headquarters, Naval Station Jose Andrada, Roxas Boulevard, Manila on April 29, the PN said in a news release Thursday. Minesweeping refers to the removal or disarming of explosive naval mines in the water using specialized vessels called minesweepers.

The visit aligns with the

goodwill visit of JMSDF vessels JS Bungo (MST-464) and JS Etajima (MSO-306) to the country.

This naval visit emphasizes the strong defense ties and mutual support between the two navies. During the meeting, both sides discussed ongoing and future collaborations, exchanged insights on operational best practices, and reaffirmed their shared commitment to regional maritime security and stability.

"We are very thankful for your visit here in the Philippines. It clearly reflects the growing cooperation between the PN and the JMSDF. From the perspective of other countries, your presence here sends a strong signal of our partnership. It truly boosts our morale as we carry out our day-to-day operations," David said. **(PNA) BY PRIAM NEPOMUCENO**

## MALACAÑANG DISMISSES SENIOR CITIZENS COMMISSION EXEC

**MANILA** – Malacañang has ordered the dismissal of National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC) Commissioner Reymar Mansilungan for serious dishonesty, grave misconduct and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service.

In a decision dated April 23, 2025 made public Friday, the Office of the President said Mansilungan committed serious offenses such as falsifying his academic qualifications, misusing government funds, and disobeying directives.

Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin signed the ruling following complaints filed by Senior Citizens Partylist Rep. Rodolfo Ordanes and a certain Miguelito Garcia. Garcia and Ordanes accused Mansilungan of misrepresenting his educational background in his application for the position.

Mansilungan claimed to have earned a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication (Journalism) from the University of the Philippines (UP), but a certification from UP's Office of the University Registrar stated

that "there is no record of enrollment of Mansilungan in the said institution."

The order also cited alleged misuse of NCSC resources.

Despite having jurisdiction only over North Luzon, Mansilungan allegedly spent time and agency funds conducting activities in South Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, which are outside his assigned regions.

Liquidation reports and travel documents supported these claims. He also reportedly awarded midyear bonuses to contract-of-service workers who are not entitled to the incentives.

The Palace found the violations constitute serious dishonesty, gross neglect of duty, grave misconduct, and gross insubordination.

"This Office reiterates that public officials and employees are obliged to remain true to the people at all times," the decision read. "Integrity is the capital of government workforce, hence dishonest acts are much to be condemned." **(PNA) BY FILANE MIKEE CERVANTES**

## SENATE INVITES AD FIRM TO PROBE ALLEGED DEAL WITH CHINESE EMBASSY

**MANILA** – The Senate has invited InfinitUs Marketing Solutions, Inc. to attend a hearing next week on its alleged 2023 deal with the Chinese embassy to run pro-Beijing social media campaigns, Senate Majority Leader Francis Tolentino confirmed Thursday.

Tolentino, who chairs the Senate Special Committee on Maritime and Admiralty Zones, said the firm will be given a chance to air its side.

The inquiry is part of an ongoing probe into

foreign interference and espionage.

"We want to strengthen our democracy. We may not make it bulletproof, but we can make it stronger," Tolentino said in a statement.

The Senator has filed a legislation that seeks stiffer penalties, tighter regulations, and greater public awareness.

He said local troll farms aiding foreign actors could be held liable, with keyboard warriors potentially charged as accessories. **(PNA) BY WILNARD BACELONIA**

## PBBM VOWS CONCRETE STEPS TO PROTECT WORKERS' RIGHTS, WELFARE

MANILA — President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. pledged on Thursday that the government would do its best to protect and promote workers' rights and welfare.

This, as he paid tribute to the toil and sacrifices of the Filipino workforce on Labor Day.

"Narapat lamang na ang pagdiriwang na ito ay gawin nating pagkakataon upang bumuo ng mga kongkretong hakbang upang matugunan ang mga pangangailangan ng bawat pamilya, matiyak ang kaligtasan sa lugar ng trabaho, at mapangalagaan ang karapatang makamit ang magandang kinabukasan (It is only fitting that we take this celebration as an opportunity to develop concrete steps to meet the needs of every family, ensure safety in the workplace, and protect the right to a better future)," Marcos said in his Labor Day message.

Marcos recognized the Filipino workers' contributions to the country's development, as well as their important role in shaping the society.

He assured them that the government is not just an observer of development

but also "an active partner of the people in creating a New Philippines where society is fair and just."

"Ang paggawa ay hindi lamang pag-aangat sa sarili, kung hindi dakilang ambag sa kasaysayan ng ating bansa (Working is not just self-promotion, but a great contribution to the history of our country)," he said.

"Sa bawat araw na ang manggagawang Pilipino ay kumakayod para sa sarili at pamilya, naroroon ang diwang handog para sa ikabubuti ng higit na nakararami (Every day that the Filipino worker works for himself and his family, there is a spirit of sacrifice for the greater good)."

Marcos also acknowledged that the development of the country depends on the workers.

He guaranteed the continuity of the projects to promote their growth and prosperity.

"Taimtim ang aming paninindigang kayo ay hindi pababayaan, bagkus ay higit pang itataguyod-hindi bilang tungkulin lamang, kung hindi bilang pasasalamat at pagkilala sa inyong tunay na halaga at sakripisyo. Isang makabuluhan at mapayapang pagdiriwang

## TOKYO SAYS INVESTMENTS TO CLIMB ONCE PH BECOMES UPPER MIDDLE INCOME

MANILA — The Philippines would receive reduced Japanese official development assistance (ODA) once it reaches an upper-middle-income status, but Tokyo said it can expect higher investments in return.

In a media luncheon in Makati City on Wednesday, Japanese Foreign Ministry Press Secretary Toshihiro Kitamura affirmed that

sa lahat (We sincerely affirm that we will not abandon you, but rather will further support you - not just as a duty, but as gratitude and recognition of your true value and sacrifice. A meaningful and peaceful celebration to all)," he said.

"Ang mga patakarang ating ipinatutupad ay dapat sumasalamain sa paninindigang ang tunay na yaman ng bansa ay hindi nasusukat sa kita, kung hindi sa dangal ng taong nagsusumikap (The policies we implement should reflect the conviction that the true wealth of the country is not measured by income, but by the dignity of the hardworking person)." (PNA) BY RUTH ABBEY GITA-CARLOS

Japan is eager to support the country reach its goal to graduate into an upper middle income state by 2026.

"Our ODA vary according to the category of the countries, if one country becomes a high-income country, probably we cannot provide the ODA as it were up to now," he said. "But at the same time, ODA is not the only tool to support the economic growth of the country, we also mobilize our private sources— As for the Philippines, there are more than 1,600 Japanese company operating here and we'd like to support further investment of Japanese companies here."

Kitamura said development assistance that creates a conducive environment for investments and businesses in the Philippines could be among the possible ODAs that would stay.

Japan's ongoing support for inclusive development in the Bangsamoro region is also highly likely to continue.

"We are not going to stop everything immediately, but we'll try to provide every possible measure which could help the Philippines," the official said.

Department of Economy, Planning, and Development Secretary Arsenio Balisacan earlier said the Philippines is "well-positioned to achieve upper-middle-income status by 2026," barring major external shocks and assuming a favorable global trade environment.

An upper-middle-income economy has a gross national income (GNI) per capita of USD4,256-13,205. In 2023, the Philippines' GNI was at USD4,335 or PHP241,165, according to the Department of Finance.

In a summit on Tuesday, Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. agreed to strengthen cooperation on agriculture, and information and telecommunication technology areas.

The two leaders also pledged to strengthen public-private partnerships

## DND: PROTECTION OF PH TERRITORY VITAL FOR ECONOMIC PROGRESS

MANILA — The Department of National Defense (DND) on Thursday vowed to spare no effort in securing the country and its territories for various development projects of the Marcos administration to bear fruit.

Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. made the assurance as he joined the nation in honoring the contributions and hard work of the Filipino workforce on Labor Day.

"Ang araw na ito ay pag-alala at pagkilala sa kontribusyon ng ating mga manggagawa tungo sa isang matatag, maunlad, at payapang Pilipinas (this day is to remember and recognized the contribution made by our workers in ensuring that the nation is strong, prosperous and peaceful)," Teodoro said in a message.

The DND chief said a safe and secure country will pave the way for progressive industries, robust infrastructure projects and socio-economic programs that will help uplift the lives of Filipinos.

Teodoro also said the DND would assist the Department of Labor and

Employment in upholding the rights of Filipino workers.

"Muli, ang Kagawaran ay nakikiisa sa pagpupugay at pagbati sa mga manggagawang Pilipino, na tunay na maipagmamalaki saan mang panig ng mundo (Again, the Department joins in saluting and congratulating all Filipino work force whom we can be proud of in any part of the world)," he added.

AFP salutes all Filipino workers

AFP chief Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. also expressed their appreciation for every Filipino worker, whom they called the "driving force behind our nation's strength and resilience."

"Your dedication, whether in the quiet perseverance of early mornings or in the relentless effort through long days, powers our country's continued progress," he added.

This includes the Filipino farmers who tirelessly till the land, teachers who shape young minds, healthcare professionals, public servants and skilled workers and overseas Filipino workers, Brawner added.

"You labor not only for your families but for the generations yet to come. In the way you strive and persevere, you embody what it means to work with honor, purpose, and heart," Brawner said.

He also added that the AFP stands with all hardworking Filipino workers.

"As you build and sustain the firm foundations of our nation, we, your Armed Forces, remain steadfast in our duty to safeguard the peace and security that allow every Filipino to labor with dignity and pride," he added.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) also hailed the strength, wisdom, and dedication of all Filipino workers striving to create a better future for the country. It added that these Filipino workers go about their jobs daily despite the challenges.

The PNP also called Filipino workers the "society's foundation". (WITH REPORTS FROM LLOYD CALIWAN/ PNA) BY PRIAM NEPOMUCENO

## PNP WANTS ANSON QUE'S SON DELISTED AS RESPONDENT IN KIDNAP-SLAY CASE

MANILA — The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Thursday said it will ask for the removal of the name of businessman Anson Que's son from the list of respondents in connection with the kidnap-slay case it recently filed at the Department of Justice (DOJ).

PNP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Jean Fajardo said there are no corroborative pieces of evidence to support the claim of David Tan Liao, a Chinese national, that Que's 42-year-old son Ronxian Gou or Alvin Aue, was involved in the killing of his father.

"Walang direktang ebidensya na maglilink kay Alvin Que dito sa nangyaring panginidnap sa kanyang ama (There is no direct evidence linking Alvin Que to the kidnapping of his father)," Fajardo said in press briefing at Camp

Crame.

"We are considering that but we also have to consider that we have to take the whole statement of Liao not only with regard doon sa sinasabi niya at allegations si Alvin Que yung nag utos siya (to what he says and allegations that Alvin ordered it)."

Liao is one of the key players in the kidnapping and killing of Anson Que. He surrendered after two Filipino suspects were arrested in Palawan.

Alvin Que's legal counsel Kit Belmonte said the PNP explained to him that the inclusion of the name of his client was based on Liao's allegations.

"The PNP communicated to us that, aside from the bare assertion of David Tan Liao, no other evidence can be adduced against Alvin, thus they are submitting a motion to the DOJ to amend the complaint

requesting the removal of Alvin's name from the list of respondents," Belmonte in a statement sent to reporters.

"We thank the Philippine National Police under the leadership of Chief PNP Gen. Rommel Marbil for the swift clarification on the erroneous reports regarding Mr. Alvin Que," he added.

Fajardo said Alvin Que is cooperating with the Anti-Kidnapping Group and has submitted his cell phone to undergo forensic and scientific processing.

Anson Que, a steel magnate, and his driver Armanie Pabillo were last seen in Valenzuela City on March 29 after leaving the former's office in Valenzuela City.

Their bodies were found by a roadside in Rodriguez, Rizal on April 9. (PNA) BY CHRISTOPHER LLOYD CALIWAN



## GOV'T CONDONES OVER P15-M DEBTS OF KABANKALAN CITY ARBS

**BACOLOD CITY** – A total of 111 agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs) in Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental, have been relieved of debts amounting to PHP15.378 million under the Republic Act (RA) 11953 or the New Agrarian Emancipation Act. The certificates of condonation with the release of mortgage (CoCRoMs) were distributed to identified farmers under the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) Negros Occidental 2 (South) in a ceremony held on Tuesday led by Provincial Agrarian Reform Program Officer II Arnulfo Figueroa, District Manager Elma Popioco, and City Assessor Roldan Dunque.

"We continue to stress the importance of the parcel of land awarded to the beneficiaries and the opportunities it presents," Figueroa said in a statement on Thursday. On behalf of the recipients, ARB Romulo Jimenez

expressed his appreciation to the DAR for the financial relief. The distribution of the CoCRoMs in Kabankalan City came after 25 ARBs in Bago City also received significant financial relief after the government condoned their debts totaling PHP3.48 million. The beneficiaries from Barangay Bacong in Bago City were presented with CoCRoMs on April 15. RA 11953 writes off all outstanding loans, including accrued interests, penalties, and surcharges, incurred by ARBs for lands awarded to them, allowing the farmers to redirect their resources toward enhancing their agricultural productivity. The New Agrarian Emancipation Act also includes a provision exempting the payment of estate tax on lands awarded under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. **(PNA) BY NANETTE GUADALQUIVER**

## ARMY, REBELS CLASH IN NEGOR AHEAD OF POLLS

**DUMAGUETE CITY** – Government troops of the 62nd Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army clashed with suspected members of the New People's Army (NPA) in three separate incidents in Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental on Thursday.

Lt. Col. Evelio Ilanga, commanding officer of the 62IB, told the Philippine News Agency that the initial clash occurred around 6 a.m. in Barangay Humay-humay, where soldiers encountered about nine remnants of the dismantled Central Negros 1 (CN1) guerrilla front.

A brief three-minute firefight ensued before the insurgents retreated. The soldiers recovered one high-powered firearm, some live rounds of ammunition, magazines, and personal belongings that were left behind by the suspected NPA rebels.

Ilanga said that pursuit operations led to two more brief skirmishes with the same group later that day at separate locations. He refused to give further details.

He assured the public that the military is working to prevent any disruption by the NPA during the upcoming elections, particularly in Guihulngan City.

Based on the Commission on Elections' (Comelec) classification of election hotspots, Guihulngan City and La Libertad are currently under the red category—the highest level—due to the presence of armed groups.

Basay has been placed under the orange category, while the remaining 22 towns and cities in Negros Oriental are classified under the yellow category. **(PNA) BY MARY JUDALINE PARTLOW**

## DAVAO QUALIFIES ANEW FOR ONE PLANET CITY CHALLENGE

**DAVAO CITY** – Davao City has once again qualified to participate in the One Planet City Challenge (OPCC) for the 2025–2026 cycle, the local government said on Thursday. City Planning and Development Coordinator Engr. Ivan Cortez bared in a television interview that One Planet Cities (OPC) recently recognized Davao among 28 global metropolises for its consistent prioritization of greenhouse gas emission reduction and its strong advocacy for sustainable development practices. The One Planet City Challenge (OPCC) serves as a prominent global initiative that provides cities with a platform to showcase and further strengthen their environmental endeavors. "We are immensely proud of Davao City's achievement as a returning participant in this year's challenge. This recognition underscores the city's unwavering commitment to sustainability and proactive climate action," Cortez said. He noted that while Davao

City was not a finalist in the 2023–2024 cycle, its consistent engagement in the OPCC since 2019, including its recognition as a finalist in the 2021–2022 cycle, highlights the city's resilience and steadfast determination in pursuing environmental goals.

"Being identified as a 'returning city' is not merely an acknowledgment of past efforts but also serves as a significant encouragement for Davao to strive for even more ambitious climate objectives," Cortez emphasized.

He attributed this achievement to the city's deep-rooted commitment to environmental protection, proactive climate change adaptation strategies, and consistent participation in global sustainability initiatives such as the OPCC.

"This valuable opportunity opens doors for forging new partnerships, securing crucial funding, and accessing vital technical support, all of which will further enhance the city's comprehensive environmental programs," he added. **(PNA) BY CHE PALICTE**

## BARMM PARTNERS WITH 10 NEW HOSPITALS TO EXPAND HEALTHCARE ACCESS

**COTABATO CITY** – The Ministry of Health in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (MOH-BARMM) has broadened its healthcare network by signing a memorandum of agreement (MOA) on Wednesday with 10 additional hospitals. Dr. Kadil Sinolinding Jr., the MOH-BARMM minister, said in a statement on Thursday that the partnership aims to address the medical needs of more disadvantaged Bangsamoro people both within and outside the region.

"This MOA enables a greater number of Bangsamoro individuals to access medical assistance through these new partner hospitals under the Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially

Incapacitated Patients Program (MAIFFIP)," Sinolinding said.

The 10 newly partnered hospitals include St. Pius Hospital in Midsayap, North Cotabato; Kabacan Polymedic Cooperative Hospital in Kabacan, North Cotabato; Premier Medical Center Zamboanga in Zamboanga City; Hiraj Hospital in Marantao, Lanao del Sur; Mindalano Specialist Hospital Foundation, Inc. in Marawi City; Mindanao Doctors Hospital and Cancer Center in Kabacan, North Cotabato; Tacurong Doctors' Hospital in Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat; Sulaik Clinic and Hospital in Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao del Sur; St. Elizabeth Hospital, Inc. in General Santos City; and Dr. Jose Ma. Torres Memorial Foundation

## P36M IN LIVELIHOOD GRANTS RELEASED TO VULNERABLE WORKERS IN W. VISAYAS

**ILOILO CITY** – In line with its mission to combat poverty through sustainable livelihood, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) released PHP36.05 million in grants to support 1,422 vulnerable individuals in Western Visayas during the Labor Day celebration on Thursday.

The distribution of funds was highlighted during the event's opening at Robinsons Place Iloilo, where seven livelihood projects from Iloilo and Guimaras received a combined PHP11.3 million. These initiatives, set to benefit 318 recipients, include fish and rice trading, community and sari-sari stores, dishwashing liquid production, and farm machinery services.

Simultaneous grant releases took place across other provinces in the region, further extending support to local communities.

In addition to the livelihood grants, DOLE hosted a job fair featuring 8,337 local job openings and 966 overseas opportunities. DOLE Western Visayas regional director lawyer Sixto Rodriguez urged employers to hire as many applicants and

job seekers and fill in all vacancies needed for their companies.

"This is a way of standing by our moral obligation to provide decent employment to our job seekers," he said in his message.

As of Thursday, only 2,120 job seekers have preregistered, as per DOLE data.

The Labor Day celebration also gathered farmer and fisherfolk exhibitors joining the Kadiwa ng Pangulo. On the same day, DOLE launched the Kadiwa store in partnership with the rank-and-file employees union of Central Philippine University.

"We encourage you to support the products of our local farmers and producers at the Kadiwa and Livelihood Fair that covers affordable and fresh products from 34 government-assisted sellers and six DOLE-assisted livelihood projects," Rodriguez said. Among the exhibitors was Lorie Noblezada, owner of the De Paul Artisanal Manufacturing ("BudBud" Sea Salt) from Miagao, Iloilo.

She said she always finds Kadiwa helpful because it is an opportunity for them to market their products in other places and for buyers to appreciate the significance of a local product.

"We encourage our fisherfolk and farmers to join. Here, we also have learning; we can connect with our fellow farmers and barter our products," she said in an interview.

Noblezada said budbud is a traditional salt-making, once a dying industry but was revived with the help of the government.

Frank Longno, a rice and vegetable farmer from Sta. Barbara has been joining Kadiwa since January. Twice a month, they displayed their products at the provincial capitol.

"We consolidate the products of our fellow farmers in Sta. Barbara, and bring them to the venue so they can also earn," Longno said in a separate interview. **(PNA) BY PERLA LENA**

Hospital in Lamitan City, Basilan.

"Our responsibility is to ensure the health and well-being of the entire Bangsamoro population, including our brothers and sisters residing outside the region, and this partnership will extend essential hospital care to them," Sinolinding said.

The MAIFFIP program provides continuous medical support to eligible indigent and financially incapacitated patients. Sinolinding urged the partner hospitals to maintain open communication and promptly inform his office of their needs to facilitate efficient responses.

MOH-BARMM had established similar agreements with 30 other hospitals across the nation. **(PNA) BY EDWIN FERNANDEZ**

## LPG PRICES DOWN FOR 3RD STRAIGHT MONTH IN MAY

**MANILA** — For three consecutive months, fuel companies have implemented rollbacks on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

In separate advisories, Petron, Regasco, and Solane slashed LPG prices by PHP1 per kilogram (kg). The rollbacks took effect 12:01 a.m. of May 1. This adjustment would

bring down the cost of a regular 11-kg. household LPG cylinder by PHP11.

According to Petron, the price movement reflects the international contract price of LPG for May.

Data from the Department of Energy showed that common prices of an 11-kg. LPG tank stood at PHP1,085. **(PNA) BY KRIS CRISMUNDO**

## GOV'T REVENUES, EXPENDITURES SUSTAIN GROWTH IN Q1

**MANILA** — The national government's revenue collections and expenditures continued to grow in the first quarter of the year, data from the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr) showed.

In its latest cash operations report released on Tuesday, the BTr said revenue collections rose by 6.90 percent to PHP998.2 billion from PHP933.7 billion in the first quarter of 2024.

Of the total, tax collections increased by 13.55 percent to PHP931.5 billion due to the strong performance of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs.

"The revenue agencies' sustained growth for the third consecutive month was driven by their ongoing revenue enhancement measures, particularly the intensified campaign against the use of fake receipts, intensified crackdown on illicit trade, digitalization, and improvements in tax payment facilitation, among other initiatives," the BTr said.

Non-tax revenues, on the other hand, amounted to PHP66.7 billion, lower than last year's PHP113.4 billion.

The BTr said the decline was "largely due to timing as 18 Government-Owned and -Controlled Corporations (GOCCs) remitted PHP28.23 billion in early first quarter dividends in 2024 compared with only three GOCCs with PHP0.027 billion early dividends for the current year."

The BTr, however, expects non-tax revenues to improve in the coming months, with dividends from the GOCCs set to be remitted to the National Treasury starting May.

Expenditures The BTr said government spending was on target at PHP1.5 trillion or 23.89 percent of the full-year expenditure program.

The expenditures in the first quarter of the year was also higher by 22.43 percent than the recorded PHP1.21 trillion in the same period last year.

"The strong spending performance can be attributed to the higher disbursements recorded in the Department of Public Works and Highways for its road infrastructure program and regular operating requirements, and in the Department of Social Welfare and Development for its various protective services programs," the BTr said.

The BTr said significant fiscal transfers to local government units were also made that include their National Tax Allotment shares, the Annual Block Grant to the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, as well as Local Government Support Fund releases.

The transfer of PHP32.8 billion to the Coconut Farmers and Industry Trust Fund in accordance with the mandated schedule of capitalization also contributed to the larger spending outturn, the bureau added.

The BTr, meanwhile, said that for the first quarter of

## ASIALINK DIVERSIFIES TO REAL ESTATE LENDING

**MANILA** — Asialink Finance Corporation, known for lending to small and medium enterprises, is diversifying into real estate lending, offering quick processing and low interest rates to individuals and small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

In a statement Thursday, Asialink said it is offering three types of lending under this move namely Sangla Titulo (loan using land title as collateral), take-out of housing units, and acquisition of property. Under Sangla Titulo, a business entity can borrow up to PHP20 million and offer property as collateral. The interest rate is 0.8 percent if up to five years, plus a one-time 5.5 percent as service fee.

For the take-out of housing units, Asialink advances the full payment for the property on behalf of the borrower at an interest rate same with Sanlang Titulo. Asialink said the release

of the funds is faster by a few months than bank processing time.

For acquisition of property, Asialink can lend up to PHP15 million for the purchase of a property, at a rate of 0.9 percent per month for loans with a term of five years and below, and one percent if up to 10 years.

"Our sustained and astronomical growth in the past few years has attracted the flow of foreign funds as well as local financing that now allow us to go into new opportunities such as real estate," Sam Cariño, President and CEO of Asialink Finance Corporation, said.

The company earlier attracted investments from the International Finance Corporation, an arm of the World Bank, and Creador, a private equity fund, as well as financing from the Asian Development Bank, among others. **(PNA) BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**

## PAGCOR'S NET INCOME UP 23% IN Q1

**MANILA** — State-run Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) on Wednesday reported a PHP4.2-billion net income in the first quarter of the year, as revenues continued to grow while lower operating expenses declined.

In a statement, PAGCOR said the net income during the period was 23 percent higher than the PHP3.43 billion in the first quarter of 2024.

PAGCOR chairman and chief executive officer Alejandro Tengco attributed the strong performance to improved operational efficiency and strategic reforms within the agency.

"This solid performance reflects PAGCOR's commitment to responsible governance and fiscal discipline," he said.

the year, the budget deficit amounted to PHP478.8 billion, 75.62 percent higher than the same period last year, but still in line with the PHP1.5 trillion deficit program for 2025.

**(PNA) BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**

"The gains we have made in the first quarter will allow us to contribute even more to nation-building for the rest of the year."

Revenues jumped 11.2 percent to PHP28.07 billion from PHP25.24 billion a year ago.

The bulk of PAGCOR's revenues came from gaming operations, which contributed PHP25.52 billion.

More than half of gaming revenues came from the Electronic Games and E-Bingo segment which generated PHP14.32 billion, followed by licensed casinos at PHP8.32 billion. PAGCOR-operated casinos, meanwhile, contributed PHP2.88 billion.

Operating expenses fell by 15.54 percent to PHP6.21 billion from PHP7.36 billion in the same period last year.

Tengco said the state gaming agency will continue to innovate and strengthen regulatory oversight to ensure that its revenues directly benefit the Filipino people through its nation-building and corporate social responsibility programs.

## SSS ENHANCES LOAN PROGRAMS FOR MEMBERS, PENSIONERS

**MANILA** — State-run Social Security System (SSS) said it will reduce interest rates for salary and calamity loans, expand the pension loan to include surviving spouse pensioners programs, and implement a micro-credit loan facility through third-party providers.

The enhanced benefits of members, which are part of the government's move to recognize Filipino workers, was announced by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. in his Labor Day message at the SMX Convention Center in Pasay City on Thursday.

In a separate statement, SSS said the reduced interest rate shall be for members who have no availment of penalty condonation in the five years or those who have good credit quality.

The target implementation of the reduced interest rates for these loan programs is July 2025.

"As announced early this year, we proposed and obtained approval of the Social Security Commission, headed by our Chairperson Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto, to reduce interest rates for salary loans and calamity loans. From the current interest rate of 10 percent, salary loan interest rate shall be reduced to 8 percent while calamity loan interest rate shall be reduced to 7 percent," SSS President and Chief Executive Officer Robert Joseph de Claro said.

SSS is also looking at expanding the Pension Loan Program to include surviving spouse pensioners.

Data from the agency showed that as of December 2024, there are 1.2 million surviving spouse pensioners who could benefit from the expanded Pension Loan Program which is targeted

to be implemented by September this year.

"We acknowledge the need of other pensioners for access to a dependable loan facility, so we are expanding the PLP to surviving spouse pensioners. The maximum loanable amount shall be PHP150,000," de Claro said.

The PLP for surviving spouse pensioners shall also be covered by Credit Life Insurance, with the insurance premium to be deducted from the proceeds of the Pension Loan (PL).

SSS said this will ensure that in the event of the death of the PL borrower before full payment and end of the loan term, the PL balance shall be fully paid.

The SSS has also begun discussions with partner financial institutions on the feasibility of implementing a micro-credit loan facility for members with a tenor between 15 to 90 days.

"Currently, we are bringing the idea of a micro credit loan facility among our partner financial institutions through meetings and brainstorming sessions, and see if we can address such short-term cash needs of our members. When we see a framework for this micro-credit program, we will implement as soon as possible," de Claro said.

"We offer these enhancements to all Filipino workers, here and overseas, for Labor Day — Araw ng mga Manggagawa. We remain committed to our push for service excellence with program enhancements and innovations," De Claro added.

De Claro said SSS is also looking at ways on how to help members through livelihood loans as part of the Marcos administration's bid to reduce poverty.

The SSS is also in talks with the Department of Information and Communications Technology on digitalization programs, with PhilHealth for better collaboration through data synchronization, and with several industries for targeted stakeholder engagements. **(PNA) BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**

PAGCOR's total contributions to nation-building (CNB) reached PHP18.9 billion in the first quarter, up 21.5 percent from the 2024 first quarter CNB of PHP15.56 billion. **(PNA) BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**





## PH LIFTERS DELIVER 5 GOLDS IN WORLD YOUTH AND JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

MANILA – The Philippines pocketed five gold medals on Thursday at the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) Youth and Junior World Championships in Lima, Peru.

Jay-R Colonia of Zamboanga City delivered two gold medals (clean and jerk, and total) and a silver (snatch) in the Youth men's 49kg. category in his first international competition.

Alexsandra Ann Diaz, also from Zamboanga City, dominated the Youth women's 45kg snatch and total and was third in the clean and jerk.

Cebuano Althea Bacaro added one more gold medal for Team Philippines after topping the snatch in the Youth women's 40kg category. She got the silver medal in total and the bronze in the clean and jerk.

Zamboanguena Angeline Colonia took the silver (snatch) and the bronze (total) medals in the Junior

women's 45kgs. She was fourth in the clean and jerk. Prince Keil Delos Santos of Angono, Rizal placed fourth in snatch and total and was sixth in the clean and jerk in the Junior men's 55kg category.

"I'm grateful and proud to bring home the silver medal. All I can say is, always train with purpose, listen to the coach and believe in yourself. Consistency and discipline are the keys to success," said Bacaro, a grade 8 student from University of Cebu.

National coach Christopher Burerros praised Bacaro's performance.

"I'm extremely proud of Althea's silver finish. Her discipline, focus and heart brought her to the podium. All I can say is, never underestimate the value of the right technique and mindset," said Burerros, who is with Zamboanga City coaches Antonio Agustin, Gregorio Colonia and Diwa Delos Santos in

Peru.

"We are now witnessing the future of Philippine weightlifting, competing against the world's best, including China, yet grabbing 5 golds in the opening day. We would like to thank the Philippine Sports Commission, MVP, SM Group, ICTSI, and Ayala Land together w/ the Coaches and parents for their support. Getting ready again for Los Angeles Olympics," said Samahang Weightlifting ng Pilipinas president Monico Puentevella.

Meanwhile, Zamboanga City bets Rosalinda Faustino (Junior women's 49kg), Jhodie Peralta (Youth/Junior women's 55kg) and Albert Ian Delos Santos (Junior men's 67kg) will see action on Friday.

The Youth division is for athletes aged 13 to 17 while the Junior division are for competitors aged 15 to 20. **(PNA) BY JEAN MALANUM**

## SUZUKI, ANCIANO SECURE JPGT SPLENDIDO TITLES

MANILA – Shinichi Suzuki beat Zachary Villaroman by three in the final round and bagged the Splendido Taal leg title with a 72 in the boys' 15-18 division of the ICTSI Junior PGT Championship in Batangas on Wednesday. Suzuki tallied 219 to secure the win before the Luzon series pauses for the Visayas-Mindanao (Vis-Min) swing, which starts in Mactan, Cebu on May 5.

Villaroman, third in the series' first two legs at Eagle Ridge and Sherwood Hills, improved to second with a 222 after a 76. Despite the loss, he still leads the points race for the national finals with 32 points, followed by

Suzuki at 27.

"The key was staying patient because this course is pretty difficult, especially the greens. I had a great experience in Japan, where it was much windier.

That helped me refine my club selection and learn to play with the wind instead of fighting it. I was able to hit a lot of greens and stay consistent," said the 16-year-old Suzuki, a student of St. Francis of Assisi in Biñan, Laguna.

Meanwhile, Rafa Anciano defeated Angelica Bañez by 36 strokes despite a closing 96 for a 54-hole total of 260 in the girls' 15-

18 category.

"It was fun, but I put a lot of pressure on myself to score well because I really wanted to. Unfortunately, I didn't quite meet my goal, so it was a little disappointing not to end on a high note," said the 16-year-old Anciano.

"But a win is still a win. I played well over the first two days, even on such a tough course, and I'm happy with that."

Zach Guico and Mavis Espedido (7-10) and Ryuji Suzuki and Mona Sarines (11-14) were the other winners in the third of the seven-leg Luzon series organized by Pilipinas Golf Tournaments, Inc. **(PNA) BY JEAN MALANUM**

## LA SALLE ADVANCES TO UAAP BASEBALL FINALS

MANILA – De La Salle University marched to the finals of the UAAP Season 87 baseball tournament after beating University of Santo Tomas, 6-5, Tuesday at Rizal Memorial Baseball Stadium in Malate, Manila. Rookie Yuan Sumague came up with a dramatic walk-off hit in the 11th inning to send the Green Batters to their fifth straight championship stint.

Sumague, a graduate of Faith Colleges in Tanauan, Batangas, delivered a deep shot to center field, good enough to allow catcher and co-captain Tuting Samuel sprint home for the winning run.

Samuel and JR Alcontin advanced to the third and second bases, respectively, after Miguel Agoncillo made a sacrifice hit, setting the stage for Sumague's clutch hit.

"I told them, at this point, it's a battle of mental toughness. They need to have that fighting spirit and give it their all until the game is over. Because as long as the game isn't finished, the chance to win is still ours," long-time head coach Joseph Orillana said.

"I also told them that there's no such thing as rookies-rookies here -- anyone can be a leader on this team; we don't always have to rely on the seniors. We just need to execute the play, believe in it, and give our best, and we'll achieve what we're aiming for," Orillana, a former national team standout from La Salle, added.

Sumague put La Salle ahead in the bottom of the seventh inning with his lone hit of the game -- three-RBI triple that brought Samuel, Alcontin and Pio Villamiel home.

Sumague finished with one hit and a sacrifice fly, earning four RBIs while Alcontin had three hits and one RBI.

UST took a 4-2 lead entering the bottom of the seventh, banking on rookie Cedrick Marquez, whose solo home run extended the game to an 11th inning.

The other semifinal match pits top seed and defending champion National University and Adamson University. **(PNA) BY JEAN MALANUM**

## UP'S TALARO RULES 10,000M WALK RACE ANEW IN ICTSI PH TRACKFEST

CAPAS, TARLAC

– University of the Philippines' Juliana Talaro defended the women's 10,000-meter walk title Thursday in the ICTSI Philippine Athletics Championships at the New Clark City Athletic Stadium here.

The 22-year-old from Pinagbuhatan, Pasig clocked 55 minutes and 57.21 seconds to claim her third straight title.

University of Santo Tomas' Azeneth Serat finished second in 56:51.95 followed by University of the East's University of the East's Sep Blessee Placido (57:59.90).

"I really want to defend the title, I'm glad I did it," said Talaro, who competed in the 20,000-meter walk race at the 2023 FISU World University Games in Chengdu, China.

Talaro's teammate, Mary Julianne Bayola placed

fourth in 58:23.56.

Meanwhile, Muntinlupa Athletics Team's Wenniel Simba and Rain Mabeling had a 1-2 finish in the men's U-18 5,000-meter walk race of the tournament supported by ICTSI Foundation, Inc., CEL Logistics, United Auctioneers Inc., Milo Philippines and Pocari Sweat.

Simba registered 27:27.04 to prevail over 2024 champion Mabeling, who posted 27:29.95.

Jaycee Reyes, representing Biñan City (Laguna), was third in 27:52.94.

The tournament serves as one of the qualifiers for the country's representatives in the 33rd Thailand Southeast Asian Games in December and the Asian Youth Games in Manama, Bahrain in October. **(PNA) BY JEAN MALANUM**

## RONDINA-PONS LEAD PH CAMPAIGN IN WORLD VOLLEYBALL BPT FUTURES NUVALI

MANILA – The pair of Sisi Rondina and Bernadeth Pons will lead the country's campaign at Volleyball World Beach Pro Tour (BPT) Futures Nuvali starting on Thursday in Santa Rosa City, Laguna.

Champions at the 2022 BPT Future Subic Bay, Rondina and Pons are eyeing to improve their bronze medal finishes in the Southeast Asian Games in Thailand this December.

Four other women's pairs and four men's tandems are entered in the tournament featuring 19 countries, including the US, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Italy.

University of Santo Tomas young stars Khylem Progella and Sofia Pagara are entered in the competition which also has entries from Czechia, Greece, Lithuania, Finland, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Vanuatu, Israel and Japan.

Sunnie Kalani Villapando, who played for Stanford and University of Southern California in the National Collegiate Athletic Association, reunites with Jen Gaviola of the Coast

Guard after playing at the Songkhla Futures in Thailand.

"We're going to be competing, training, getting our mind right for the SEA Games. This is mental preparation," Villapando said.

University Athletic Association of the Philippines champions Honey Grace Cordero teams up with Kat Epa of National University, while the other local pair is composed of Alexa Polidario and Dij Rodriguez.

Meanwhile, Volleyball World Beach Pro Tour Futures silver medalists Jude Garcia and Jaron Requinton lead the local entries in the men's division.

Garcia and Requinton are members of the four-man team that won the bronze at the 2023 SEA Games in Cambodia.

Lerry John Francisco teams up with Edwin Tolentino, while Ronniel Rosales joins Alex Iraya.

Men's world No. 88. Eylon Elazar and Kevin Cuzmiciov of Israel seeks another title after dominating the BPT Futures Songkhla in Thailand last month. **(PNA) BY JEAN MALANUM**