

CAVITE UNDER STATE OF CALAMITY DUE TO CRISING, HABAGAT

TRECE MARTIRES CITY, Cavite (PIA) – The provincial government has placed Cavite under a state of calamity on Tuesday, July 22 to hasten government aid for residents affected by Severe Tropical Storm Crising and the southwest monsoon (habagat). Governor Francisco Gabriel Remulla signed a resolution for the declaration amid the rising number of residents affected by flooding due to continuous heavy rains. In a statement, Remulla said the state of calamity will allow the provincial government to use its calamity and quick response funds for relief operations. “This declaration aimed to expedite government response in strengthening quick response and ensuring the safety and protection of Caviteños.” The resolution came after a meeting of the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (OPDRMO) and the Office of the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Officer (OPSWDO) to map out the local government’s measures to provide aid for residents amid the heavy rains brought by the typhoon. On July 22, the Cavite OPDRMO reported that around 496 families and 1,744 individuals from 12 local government units were evacuated. Authorities also noted 138 related incidents, including fallen trees, flooding, landslides, soil erosion, collapsed structures, and vehicular accidents which caused partial damages to eight houses and other infrastructures, while five houses were completely damaged. Damages to agricultural products included high-value crops amounting to Php 3,175,875.00 in Alfonso, Naic, and Tanza; Php 1,464,297.43 worth of damaged rice in the cities of General Trias and Imus and Naic town and; Php 407,500.00 worth of damaged corn in the towns of Alfonso and Tanza. (PB/PIA4A) **BY PATRICIA BERMUDEZ**



ALL VICTIMS RECOVERED IN TAGAYTAY LANDSLIDE: RESCUE OPERATIONS CONCLUDE SUCCESSFULLY



Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite – In a successful culmination of search and rescue operations, all four victims of the tragic landslide incident in Brgy. Iruhin West, Tagaytay City have been recovered by composite rescue teams. The remains of the deceased were respectfully retrieved in accordance with established disaster response protocols.

The landslide occurred at around 10:00 AM on July 24, 2025, when a perimeter wall at a construction site collapsed, burying a workers’ barracks under

soil and debris. Four construction workers were reported trapped during the incident.

PLTCOL JEFFERSON P ISON, Chief of Police of Tagaytay Component City Police Station, identified the victims by their aliases as Jose, Nonong, Armond, and Mark—all of legal age and residents of Brgy. Iruhin West, Tagaytay City. On the first day of operations, one worker was successfully rescued and immediately brought to the Ospital ng Tagaytay for medical attention. Sadly, one fatality was also confirmed on the same

day.

The families of the victims were kept informed of developments through close coordination with the City Investigation and Traffic Function (CITF) of Tagaytay and the Silang LGU. Heavy equipment, including a twelve-wheeler truck and backhoe, was deployed to support excavation efforts.

By midday on July 25, 2025, the third and fourth victims were successfully located and retrieved.

The success of the operation was made possible through the collaborative efforts of:

- BFP Tagaytay
- Tagaytay City Rescue
- Tagaytay City LGU
- Tagaytay CCPS
- Silang MPS and LGU
- CPMFC Cavite
- Barangay Officials of Cabangaan, Silang
- BFP Silang and Silang Rescue

The public is strongly advised to refrain from visiting or approaching the landslide site in Brgy. Iruhin West, Tagaytay City. Although the rescue phase has concluded, the area remains unstable and dangerous. Continued public presence may disrupt post-operation assessments, cleanup activities, and ongoing safety inspections. For everyone’s safety, full cooperation is earnestly requested.

The Cavite Police Provincial Office, under the leadership of PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director, commends the dedication and teamwork of all responding agencies. Cavite PPO reaffirms its commitment to safeguarding the lives and welfare of the people of Cavite, especially in times of crisis.

JOINT POLICE OPS LEADS TO THE ARREST OF PROVINCIAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON IN AURORA

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, City of Imus, Cavite- In a joint law enforcement operation, warrant personnel of Magallanes Municipal Police Station together with personnel of Aurora Police Provincial Office arrested a Provincial Level Most Wanted Person on July 23, 2025 at around 10:10 AM at Sitio Madalipay, Barangay Dimaseset, Dilasag, Aurora.

PMaj RAYMOND T BALBUENA, Chief of Police, Magallanes MPS identified the accused as alias Anton, from Dilasag, Aurora.

The accused, has long evaded capture, is facing a total of fifteen (15) outstanding Warrants of Arrest, 14 for the crime of Theft in relation to Republic Act 10175 (Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012), all issued by the Presiding Judge of RTC Branch 135, Tagaytay City, with a total bail recommended amounting to Php 160,000. While for the crime of Robbery was issued by the Presiding Judge of MTC Alfonso-Gen.

GENERAL TRIAS POLICE NABBED REGIONAL LEVEL MOST WANTED IN CAVITE

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, City, Cavite – In a relentless campaign against wanted person, the warrant personnel of the General Trias City Component Police Station apprehended a Regional Level Most wanted Person at around 10:40 PM of July 22, 2025 at Barangay San Francisco, General Trias City, Cavite.

PLTCOL BISMARCK S MENDOZA, Officer-in-Charge, General Trias CCPs, identified the arrested suspect as alias Ken and a resident of Barangay San Francisco, General Trias City, Cavite.

Alias Ken was listed as a Most Wanted Person at the Regional Level for

Aguinaldo, Cavite with a bail recommendation of Php 36,000.

The arrested person is now in custody and the warrants of arrest will be returned to their respective courts of origin for proper disposition.

POLICE COLONEL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director of Cavite Police Provincial Office, commended the dedication and teamwork demonstrated by the arresting units. "This arrest reflects our unwavering commitment to enforce the law and hold individuals accountable for their actions. Let this serve as a clear message to those who continue to hide from justice your time will come. Together with our partners in law enforcement, we will continue to pursue offenders no matter how far they flee, because the rule of law knows no boundaries, he added"

The Cavite Police continues to stand firm in its mission to maintain peace, order, and justice for the people it serves.

Violation of Section 5, Article II of Republic Act 9165 (Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002). The warrant was issued on January 31, 2025 by the Presiding Judge of Family Court, Branch 5, Trece Martires City, Cavite. "The arrest of alias Ken, a regional level Most Wanted Person, is a strong message to all individuals who choose to violate the law justice will find you, no matter how long it takes. Our personnel in General Trias displayed diligence, coordination, and a deep sense of duty in bringing this case to a close, and I commend their efforts." said PCOL ARIEL R RED.

The Cavite PNP

SWIFT POLICE ACTION LEADS TO ARREST OF ROBBERY SUSPECTS IN BACOR

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite – The Bacoor Component City Police Station successfully apprehended three suspects involved in a robbery that occurred in the early morning of July 25, 2025, at jewelry shop in Brgy. Zapote 1, Bacoor City, Cavite.

PLTCOL ALEXIE A DESAMITO, Officer-in-Charge of Bacoor CCPS, identified the arrested individuals by their aliases as Nico, Lando, and Glenda—all residents of Las Piñas City. They were arrested in Sitio Kawayanan, Brgy. Zapote 3, Bacoor City, following a swift hot pursuit operation conducted by Bacoor CCPS investigators and operatives.

According to initial investigation, the suspects forcibly entered the jewelry shop at around 4:00 AM by destroying the padlocks of its roll-up door with an unidentified tool. Once inside, they stole approximately ₱170,000.00 in cash and assorted jewelry worth around ₱200,000.00 before fleeing.

During the arrest, the following items were recovered from the suspects: One (1) S&W .357 Magnum revolver

Two (2) live rounds of ammunition for Caliber .38 Three (3) heat-sealed sachets containing suspected shabu (approx. 1 gram, estimated value: ₱6,800.00)

Assorted stolen jewelry Suspect alias Nico will be charged for the crime of Robbery, Violation of Sec. 11 of RA 9165 (Illegal Drugs), and Violation of RA 10591 (Illegal Possession of Firearm), while alias Lando and Glenda will be charged for the crime of Robbery and Violation of Sec. 11 of RA 9165.

The Cavite Police Provincial Office, under the leadership of PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director, commends the prompt and coordinated action of Bacoor CCPS personnel in swiftly apprehending the suspects and preventing further criminal activities.

This accomplishment underscores Cavite PPO's unwavering commitment to ensuring public safety and delivering justice to victims of crime. The public is encouraged to remain alert and report any suspicious activity via the official Cavite PPO Facebook Page or by contacting local emergency hotlines. For emergencies, dial 911 immediately.

WANTED PERSON SA KASO NG SLIGHT PHYSICAL INJURIES, BOLUNTARYO NG SUMUKO SA MAGALLANES POLICE

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Isang wanted person sa kasong Slight Physical Injuries ang boluntaryong sumuko sa tanggapan ng Magallanes Municipal Police Station dakong alas-9:00 ng umaga noong Hulyo 21, 2025.

encourages the public to remain vigilant and report any suspicious or criminal activity in their area. We are committed to making Cavite a safer province for every family, every resident, and every future we hope to build together.

Kinilala ni PMAJ RAYMOND T BALBUENA, Hepe ng Magallanes MPS, ang akusado na si alyas Donnie, at residente ng Tabing Dagat, Bacoor City, Cavite.

Ang pag-aresto ay isinagawa ng Warrant Section ng Magallanes MPS. Isinagawa ito batay sa Warrant of Arrest para sa kasong Slight Physical Injuries sa ilalim ng Criminal Case No. BCCR 24-0140, na inisyu ng RTC Branch 1, Bacoor City, Cavite, noong Pebrero 6, 2025. Ang kaso ay may piyansang itinakda sa halagang Php1,000.00.

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS TRAPPED IN TAGAYTAY LAND SLIDE INCIDENT; AUTHORITIES INTENSIFY RESCUE EFFORTS

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite – Rescue operations are underway following a landslide that occurred at around 10:00 AM today, July 24, 2025, in Brgy. Iruhin West, Tagaytay City, which caused a perimeter wall to collapse and bury a construction workers' barracks. Four workers were reportedly trapped during the incident.

PLTCOL JEFFERSON P ISON, Chief of Police of Tagaytay Component City Police Station, identified the victims by their aliases as Jose, Nonong, Armond, and Mark—all of legal age, construction workers, and residents of Brgy. Iruhin West, Tagaytay City.

Rescue and retrieval operations are being jointly conducted by BFP Tagaytay, Tagaytay City Rescue, Tagaytay City LGU, Tagaytay CCPS, Silang MPS, Silang LGU, CPMFC Cavite, Barangay Officials of Cabangaan, Silang, BFP Silang, and Silang Rescue. All teams are working around the clock to locate and retrieve the remaining victims.

As of this report, one victim has been pronounced dead, one

has been successfully rescued and brought to Ospital ng Tagaytay for medical treatment, while retrieval operations for the remaining two victims are still ongoing.

Further coordination with the LGUs of Silang and Tagaytay confirmed that the collapsed perimeter wall is located within Brgy. Cabangaan, Silang, Cavite, while the affected construction barracks fall under Brgy. Iruhin West, Tagaytay City.

In anticipation of weather-related hazards, the Tagaytay Component City Police Station, under the leadership of PLTCOL Ison, also conducted preemptive measures, including increased patrols and inter-agency coordination, in landslide- and flood-prone areas. This proactive initiative forms part of the station's ongoing disaster preparedness efforts, aimed at ensuring public safety and enhancing community resilience during emergencies.

Authorities are strongly urging the public to stay clear of the incident site to ensure the safety of everyone and to allow emergency responders to conduct search, rescue, and retrieval operations without obstruction. The presence of onlookers or unauthorized individuals may impede the movement of personnel and equipment, delay critical rescue efforts, and pose additional risks. Public cooperation is essential to the success of ongoing operations and to prevent further incidents or injuries.

pagkamit ng hustisya, "Ang boluntaryong pagsuko ng mga akusado ay isang positibong hakbang patungo sa katuparan ng hustisya. Ipinapakita nito na ang ating kampanya laban sa kriminalidad ay epektibo at patuloy naming paiigtingin ang serbisyo para sa kapayapaan at kaayusan ng lalawigan."

AYUDA IPINAABOT SA MGA MANGINGISDA NG TAAL LAKE

LUNGSOD NG BATANGAS (PIA)— ang Nagsagawa ang pamamahagi ng ayuda sa may 362 mangingisda sa bayan ng Laurel na rehistrado sa database ng Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) kasama ang iba pang mga mangingisda sa paligid ng Taal Lake.

Sa mensahe ni Governor Vilma Santos-Recto, ang hakbang na ito ay isang mabilisang pagtugon sa suportang kinakailangan ng mga mangingisda na lubhang apektado ang kabuhayan dahil sa usapin ng mga nawawalang sabungero na diumano ay itinapon sa Lawa ng Taal.

“Lahat ay nilalapitan namin upang makatulong sa ating mga kababayang mangingisda sapagkat alam naming lubhang apektado na ang kanilang hanapbuhay,” ani Santos-Recto.

Magkatuwang din na isinagawa ng BFAR at pamahalaang panlalawigan ang isang boodle fight na ginanap sa Calinisan Hotel and Resort sa Brgy. Buso Buso, Laurel, Batangas noong ika-22 ng Hulyo.

Pinangunahan nina BFAR IVA Regional Director Sammy Malvas at Santos-Recto ang aktibidad kasama ang mga Mayor at Vice Mayor ng mga bayan sa paligid ng Lawa ng Taal kabilang ang Balete, Cuenca, Taal, Malvar, Tanauan City, Lipa City, Agoncillo, San Nicolas, Laurel, Mataasna kahoy, Alitagtag, Sta. Teresita at Talisay.

Layunin nitong alisin ang takot ng mga mamimili at muling maibalik ang maayos at malakas na bentahan at pagsusuplay ng mga bangus at tilapia na mula sa lawa.

“Ang ating Taal Volcano ay landmark ng lalawigan at kapag sinabing Taal Lake

ay dito yan sa Batangas. Noong una ay hindi ito alarming pero sa patagal ay naging grabe dahil sa mga content na lumalabas at maging ang usapin ng war on drugs ay nahalo na. May mga social media posts na nagpapakita ng mga kalansay diumano kaya hindi maiaalis na may mga taong maapektuhan sa isyu na ito. Ang ating mga mangingisda ay humihina ang kita dahil halos matumal ang bumibili ng isdang mula sa ating lawa. Unang una ang mga isdang tulad ng tawilis ay hindi naman carnivorous dahil ang kinakain nito ay mga halaman at maging ang mga tilapia at bangus ay puro cultured at nasa loob ng lambat, hindi sila paligaw sa lawa kaya kontrolado ang kanilang kinakain,” ani Santos-Recto.

Dagdag pa nito na buhat ng bagyong Kristine noong isang taon ay nagsisimula pa lamang umahon ang mga bayan sa paligid ng lawa at ngayon ay may panibagong hamon muli kaya nagsama sama ang mga sangay ng pamahalaan upang makatugon at makapagbigay ng tulong. Sinabi naman ni Dir. Malvas na may malaking epekto na sa mga mangingisda ng lawa ang usapin ukol sa nawawalang sabungero na itinapon sa lawa ngunit muli niyang ipinaalala sa publiko na ligtas kainin ang mga aning isda na mula sa lawa ng Taal.

“Lahat ng produktong mula sa Taal Lake ay ligtas kainin at ito ay patutunayan natin sa pamamagitan ng isasagawang boodle fight upang ipakita sa publiko at sa ating mga mamimili na walang dapat ipangamba sa pagkunsumo ng produktong isda mula sa lawa,” ani Malvas.

Aniya pa, ang 40 porsiyento ng huling tilapia mula sa lawa ay siyang supply requirement ng Metro Manila kaya

AGONCILLO SA BATANGAS, ISINAILALIM SA STATE OF CALAMITY

LUNGSOD NG BATANGAS (PIA)— Isinailalim sa state of calamity ang bayan ng Agoncillo sa Batangas dahil sa epekto ng habagat at bagyong Crising at Dante.

Ang deklarasyon ay inilabas sa bisa ng Resolution No. 007-07-2025 sa pangunguna ni Pangalawang Punumbayan Remjelljan Humarang kasama ang mga miyembro ng konseho bilang tugon sa matinding banta at epekto ng Bagyong Crising na mas pinalakas ng Habagat at TD Dante na nagdulot ng pinsala sa naturang bayan.

Ayon kay Mayor Cinderella Valenton-Reyes, patuloy ang pagtugon ng lokal na pamahalaan sa mga kababayan nilang lumilikas.

“Sa kasalukuyan may tatlong evacuation centers (EC) na may 41 pamilya at naghihintay pa sa pagbubukas ng isa pang evacuation center dahil patuloy ang pagdating ng mga taong lumilikas. Ang

hindi maaaring isantabi ang usapin ukol dito dahil kapag tumigil ang pagkunsumo dito ay titigil din ang mga nagsusuplay nito at malaki ang magiging epekto sa kabuhayan at ekonomiya ng may 11,000 mangingisda sa paligid ng lawa.

Sa panayam kay Enrico Masangcay, isang mangingisda mula sa bayan ng Laurel, malaking tulong ang pagsasagawa ng boodle fight dahil maaaring mapawi nito ang takot at agam-agam ng mga mamimili at maibalik ang dating masiglang negosyo ng pag-iisda sa paligid ng lawa. (MPDC/PIA Batangas) **BY BHABY DE CASTRO**

nasa in-house naman ay 170 pamilya hindi pa kasama ang mga lumikas papuntang San Luis,” ani Valenton-Reyes.

Ang mga ECs na ito ay makikita sa mga barangay ng Bilibinwang, Banyaga, Pansipit at Pook.

Sa panayam naman kay Josalyn Cortez, Municipal Social Welfare and Development Officer, sinabi nito na nagkaloob na ang pamahalaang lokal ng provision para sa pagkain ng mga evacuees mula umaga hanggang hapunan, isinasagawa din ang pagsusuri ng RHU sa mga indibidwal sa ECs lalo na sa mga bata, matatanda at iba pang vulnerable sectors.

“Bukod sa mga nabanggit na interventions, naghahanda na din ng mga food packs para naman sa mga in-house evacuees o yaong mga pansamantalang nakitira sa mga kamag-anak sa halip na pumunta sa mga ECs,” ani Cortez.

Aniya pa, patuloy ang kanilang pagtugon sa kailangan ng mga evacuees at hinihintay din nila ang anumang tulong na ipaaabot ng Pamahalaang Panlalawigan ng Batangas at mga pamahalaang nasyunal tulad ng Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

Kabilang sa mga barangay na nakaranas ng pagbaha ay ang mga sumusunod: Banyaga, Bilibinwang, Barigon at Panhulan.

Sa inisyal na report ay may naitala nang dalawang partially damaged house sa Agoncillo at patuloy ang pagkalap at gagawing validation sa iba pang mga naiulat na pagkasira ng kabahayan. (MPDC/PIA Batangas) **BY BHABY DE CASTRO**

EDITORIAL

AI at Robotics katuwang sa Elderly Care, dinedevelop na

Pagdating ng taong 2030, ang Pilipinas ay masasabing aging na ang populasyon nito kung saan sampu sa porsyento ng bansa ay nakatatanda na. Dahil dito, handa na nga na ang bansa sa pagtaas ng pangangailangan sa elderly care? Ngayon, ang bansang Japan ay nagdedevelop na ng AI at Robotics upang maging katuwang sa elderly care.

Ang patuloy na pag-asa ng mga tao sa artificial intelligence ay lubhang nakakabahala. Patuloy ang pag-unlad nito na nasa punto na maaari nang palitan ang mga manggagawa ng teknolohiya at bumaba ang porsyento ng mga taong manggagawa. Kaya naman, dapat lamang na limitahan ang paggamit ng mga ito pag-asa sa mga ganitong teknolohiya.

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ANABELLE K. DUMALI
Publisher / Editor in Chief

JOHN RENNIEL K. DUMALI
Circulation Manager

BRYAN V. DE LUNA
Editor Consultant

JO-ANN K. ALCANTARA
Lay Out Artist/Special Project Coordinator

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Contact #: 09954361217

Email: cavitegazette@gmail.com

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PH, CANADA PLEDGE STRONGER CYBER DEFENSE COOPERATION

MANILA – The Philippines and Canada reiterated their commitment to beefing up their cyber defense cooperation, the Department of National Defense (DND) said on Friday.

Filipino and Canadian representatives made the pledge during a bilateral meeting held on the sidelines of the Digital Defense Symposium 2025 in Singapore on July 22, DND spokesperson Assistant Secretary Arsenio Andolong said in a news release.

"Representing the DND Philippines, Atty. Odessa Rossilyz L. Magisa, officer in charge, Office for DND Information Security, met with Mr. Hani Nasser, Director of Domains and Technology Policy of the Department of National Defense of Canada. Both sides explored practical areas for collaboration, including capacity-building and information-sharing

programs," he added.

Andolong said the bilateral engagement is part of the broader defense partnership between the Philippines and Canada, anchored on the Memorandum of Understanding on Defense Cooperation signed in January 2024.

This was reaffirmed by the conclusion of the negotiations for the Status of Visiting Forces Agreement (SOVFA) in March this year.

Earlier this month, Manila and Ottawa also convened a high-level bilateral cyber working group meeting in the Philippines.

The Digital Defense Symposium 2025 is one of the collaboration platforms facilitated through the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Cybersecurity and Information Center of Excellence (ACICE). **(PNA) BY PRIAM NEPOMUCENO**

SOKOR'S RICE DONATION TO BOOST DISASTER RESPONSE EFFORTS - ROMUALDEZ

MANILA – Leyte 1st District Rep. Ferdinand Martin Romualdez on Friday thanked South Korea for its generous rice donation to the Philippines to support food security and disaster response measures.

In an announcement on Tuesday, the Korean Embassy said it will donate 2,016 metric tons of rice to the Philippines "to support swift responses to humanitarian crises and persistent rice shortages in vulnerable communities."

Romualdez said Seoul's timely support to Manila is a testament to the robust alliance between the two countries, especially as many parts of the country are reeling from recent weather disturbances and flooding triggered by heavy monsoon rains.

"South Korea's heartwarming donation is proof of its strong ties

with the Philippines and its selflessness to look out for its neighbors in Asia – a reflection of Asian values of unity and community," he said in a statement.

"The Philippines and its people are truly grateful for the helping hand that Seoul extended to us in our time of need. It would boost our government's efforts to extend assistance to many of our kababayans (countrymen) affected by the floods."

He assured the Korean government that the Philippine government, under the leadership of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., would utilize the donated rice judiciously and in line with its intended purpose.

"This donated rice will be used as intended: deliver aid to disaster victims and provide access to affordable food in our most vulnerable communities. This is how the Philippines repays the kindness of its allies and neighbors – by bringing the aid it receives to people and places that need it the most," Romualdez said.

The turnover ceremony for the donated rice is scheduled for August in Manila. Of the 2,016 metric tons of rice, 1,616 will go to the Department of Social Welfare and Development, while 400 metric tons will go to the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

In February, South Korea provided 100,000 bags of rice, equivalent to 4,000 metric tons, to aid government relief operations following Tropical Storm Kristine, which affected several regions across the Philippines.

The donation is part of the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve's Tier 3 program, where South Korea actively participates as a donor. **(PNA) BY JOSE CIELITO REGANIT**

DMW VOWS AID FORAILING OFWS IN QATAR, PUSHES FASTER REPATRIATION

MANILA – The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) has committed to providing full support for ailing overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in Qatar as it pushes for faster medical repatriation.

The initiative is in line with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s directive to strengthen support to overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) with medical conditions.

In a news release on Thursday evening, the DMW said Undersecretary Jainal Rasul, Assistant Secretary Venecio Legaspi, and Qatar Labor Attaché Eduard Ferrer visited four ailing OFWs currently admitted at the Rumailah Hospital in Doha, in need of urgent medical attention and repatriation.

They also visited was a female patient who suffered a severe stroke and has been confined to the hospital since May.

The patient's sibling was repatriated earlier, while preparations for her repatriation are in process. During the visit, the DMW officials also conducted consultations with hospital staff, as well as with the Medical Repatriation Coordinator for Filipinos in Qatar, Alma Balanon, on the conditions and arrangements for patient transfers.

Balanon sought various forms of support, including

visa processing and hospital acceptance in the Philippines, as vital steps to ensure a smooth transfer and continuity of care once patients are repatriated to the country.

She said that aside from the visited patients, there are remaining patients being evaluated for possible transfer.

Ferrer, meanwhile, emphasized the importance of complete documentation and a structured referral system to ensure successful medical transfers.

He also noted the high cost of medical evacuations as well as the expensive medical costs in Qatar.

"A single stretcher repatriation costs (Qatari Riyal) QAR 150,000 while weekly stabilization expenses in high-end facilities can reach up to QAR 60,000," he said.

The DMW said the medical repatriation initiative in Qatar started in 2015.

Balanon said the program has facilitated the return of 28 OFWs in 2024, while 11 cases, including one currently in process, have been recorded so far this year.

A follow-up mission is scheduled for mid-August this year to monitor patients' reintegration and ensure sustained government support upon their return. **(PNA) BY MARITA MOAJE**

DEPED CHIEF VOWS SWIFT AID FOR STORM-HIT SCHOOLS

MANILA – Education Secretary Sonny Angara on Thursday pledged immediate support for schools affected by recent storms and monsoon rains.

After his visit to damaged schools in Navotas and Malabon, Angara said the Department of Education (DepEd) is prioritizing the safety and welfare of learners and educators amid class disruptions caused by tropical cyclones Emong, Dante, and Crising, and the enhanced southwest monsoon.

"We will not abandon our schools, teachers, and students during calamities," he said in a statement. "We will do everything to help them recover quickly and continue providing education."

He noted that the DepEd's Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS) has released funds to immediately roll out cleaning and clearing operations in affected schools.

As of Wednesday, about 1,876 classrooms sustained minor damage; 562 sustained major damage; 531 were destroyed; and 232 classrooms have damaged hygiene facilities, according to the DepEd.

To address infrastructure damage, DepEd is working with the Department of Public Works and Highways to utilize Quick Response Funds for the rehabilitation and recovery of affected schools, as well as the National Indemnity Insurance Program, a comprehensive insurance protection for public

schools against fire, lightning, and other natural calamities, in partnership with the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) and the Bureau of the Treasury.

For disaster-related injuries or fatalities, teaching and non-teaching personnel may file claims for PHP100,000 worth of accidental death or dismemberment coverage and reimbursements of up to PHP30,000 for accident-related treatment under the GSIS-issued Group Personal Accident Insurance policy.

The DepEd also assured assistance for teachers and other DepEd staff who will avail of the agency's provident fund loan in areas under a state of calamity and a 30-day calamity leave. **(PNA) BY STEPHANIE SEVILLANO**

PRA WARNS FIRMS VS. SMEAR CAMPAIGN ON RECLAMATION PROJECTS

MANILA – The Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) on Friday cautioned real estate entities against launching black propaganda campaigns targeting government-approved reclamation projects.

In a public warning, the agency said such actions undermine legitimate government programs and assured that those found responsible would be exposed and prosecuted. "The PRA, under the current leadership and the

administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., upholds its mandate to serve the national interest through lawful and strategic land development," it said.

The PRA said all its approved reclamation projects undergo rigorous multi-agency evaluation and are subject to a requirement that at least 51 percent of the project's value or land area be remitted to the government, ensuring substantial public benefit. **(PNA) BY WILNARD BACELONIA**

6 TRANSMISSION LINES DOWN IN NORTHERN LUZON DUE TO 'EMONG'

MANILA—Six transmission lines in Northern Luzon are unavailable as of 9 a.m. Friday due to the effects of Typhoon Emong (international name Co-May).

The National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP), in an advisory, said these are the Labrador-Bolinao 69-kilovolt (kV) line, which became unavailable at about 12:20 a.m., affecting customers of the Central Pangasinan Electric Cooperative (CENPELCO) and Pangasinan 1 Electric Cooperative (PANELCO 1).

The Bauang-San Fabian 69kV line became unavailable at about 1:01 a.m., and the Bauang-Naguilian 69kV line went down at about 1:52 a.m., affecting customers of the La Union Electric Cooperative (LUELCO).

The Bauang-San Fernando 115kV line also encountered a problem at about 1:41 a.m., while the Bacnotan-Bulala 69kV line became unavailable at about 2:34 a.m., affecting LUELCO customers.

A 230kV line is also unavailable but NGCP did not give specific details. The power transmission operator said "inspection and restoration of lines in the affected areas will be in full swing once the weather allows."

"Please note that loss of power may be caused by affected transmission facilities of NGCP or distribution facilities of local distribution utilities or electric cooperatives. Specific cities and municipalities affected by the power interruptions are determined by concerned Distribution Utilities, unless the outage affects the entire franchise area," it added.

Based on the 8 a.m. bulletin of the weather bureau, Emong has weakened into a severe tropical storm as it passes the Cordillera region.

Its center was last estimated in San Isidro, Abra, moving north-northeastward at 25 kph. Tropical Cyclone Wind Signal No. 3 is currently raised over Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, the northern portion of La

Union (Bangar, Sudipen, Balaoan, Luna, Santol, Bacnotan, San Gabriel, Bagulin, San Juan, and City of San Fernando), Apayao, Abra, the western portion of Kalinga (Balbalan, Pasil, Tinglayan, and Lubuagan), the western portion of Mountain Province (Besao, Tadian, Sagada, Bauko, Sabangan, Bontoc, and Sadanga), the northwestern portion of Benguet (Mankayan, Bakun, Kibungan, and Kapangan), and the northern and western portions of Cagayan (Santa Praxedes, Claveria, Sanchez-Mira, Pamplona, Abulug, Ballesteros, Rizal, Lasam, Allacapan, and Aparri).

Signal No. 2, meanwhile, has been issued for Batanes, the rest of mainland Cagayan, including Babuyan Islands, the northern and western portions of Isabela (Cordon, City of Santiago, Ramon, San Isidro, Alicia, San Mateo, Cabatuan, San Manuel, Luna, Aurora, Burgos, Roxas, Quirino, Mallig, Delfin Albano, Quezon, Cabagan, Santa Maria, San Pablo, Maconacon, Santo Tomas, Tumauni, Gamu, Ilagan City, City of Cauayan, Reina Mercedes, and Naguilian), the northwestern portion of Quirino (Diffun), the western and central portions of Nueva Vizcaya (Kayapa, Santa Fe, Ambaguio, Aritao, Bambang, Bayombong, Villaverde, Solano, Bagabag, Dupax del Sur, Dupax del Norte, Kasibu, Quezon, and Diadi), the rest of Kalinga, the rest of Mountain Province, Ifugao, the rest of Benguet, the rest of La Union, and the northwestern portion of Pangasinan (Bolinao and Anda).

Areas placed under Signal No. 1 are the rest of Pangasinan, the rest of Isabela, the rest of Quirino, the rest of Nueva Vizcaya, the northern and central portions of Aurora (Dilasag, Casiguran, Dinalungan, and Dipaculao), the northern portion of Nueva Ecija (Nampicuan, Cuyapo, Guimba, Talugtug, Science City of Muñoz, San Jose City, Lupao, Carranglan,

2 NABBED, P3.4-M SHABU SEIZED IN QC OPS

MANILA - Two suspects were arrested and suspected shabu, valued at PHP3.4 million, was seized in an anti-drug operation in Quezon City, the Philippine National Police - Drug Enforcement Group (PDEG) reported Thursday.

In a statement, PDEG acting chief Brig. Gen. Edwin Quilates said suspects Esmail, 22, and Heinrich, 40, were arrested in a buy-bust operation in Barangay Commonwealth, Quezon City on Wednesday afternoon.

The operating units seized approximately 500 grams of suspected shabu with a total standard drug price of

PHP3.4 million and other non-drug evidence.

The arrested suspects were brought to Batasan Police Station 6, Quezon City Police District for documentation and proper disposition, while confiscated pieces of drug evidence will be turned over to the PNP Forensic Group at Camp Crame in Quezon City for laboratory examination.

"Kudos to the team for this major breakthrough. Your actions send a clear message that we will not tolerate the spread of illegal drugs in our communities," Quilates said. (PNA) **BY CHRISTOPHER LLOYD CALIWAN**

PAF: ADD'L FA-50 FIGHTER JETS A BIG BOOST TO PH AIR DEFENSE

MANILA - The Philippine Air Force (PAF) welcomed South Korea's pledge to deliver by 2028 the first batch of the 12 FA-50 Block 70 light combat aircraft it has acquired from Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI).

"The PAF welcomes any development that will significantly expedite the enhancement of our air defense capabilities, as we also appreciate commitments such as this from our regional partners that highlight our strong security cooperation," PAF spokesperson Col. Ma. Consuelo Castillo said in a message to reporters late Thursday.

South Korean Ambassador to Manila Lee Sang-hwa, in a luncheon meeting with

and Pantabangan), the northern portion of Tarlac (San Clemente, Camiling, Moncada, San Manuel, Anao, Paniqui, Santa Ignacia, Mayantoc, San Jose, City of Tarlac, Victoria, Pura, Gerona, and Ramos), and the northern portion of Zambales (Santa Cruz, Candelaria, Masinloc, Palauig and Iba). (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

the press on Tuesday, said Seoul targets to deliver three out of the 12 FA-50 aircraft to the Philippines before the end of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s term.

Castillo also said the additional FA-50s, once they arrive, would substantially strengthen the country's air defense capabilities and support its mission of safeguarding Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Philippines last month signed the USD700 million contract to acquire the 12 FA-50 Block 70 light combat aircraft from KAI, as it seeks to enhance its air defense capabilities.

The comprehensive package includes mission equipment, integrated logistics support, and a training and logistics information system. The South Korea-made combat jets represent the latest evolution of the FA-50 platform, featuring advanced avionics, modern radar systems, and extended operational range.

Its delivery will be carried out in phases over the next five years, with full completion targeted by 2030. (PNA) **BY PRIAM NEPOMUCENO**

HOSPITALS, EVACUATION CENTERS PRIORITIES FOR POWER RESTORATION: DOE

MANILA - The Department of Energy (DOE) has ordered the prioritization of power restoration and maintenance activities in critical areas such as hospitals and evacuation centers as Tropical Depression Dante intensifies rains brought by the southwest monsoon (habagat).

During the meeting of the inter-agency Task Force on Energy Resiliency (TFER) Tuesday afternoon, Energy Secretary Sharon Garin directed the Manila Electric Company (Meralco) to help ensure power supply, especially in four hospitals identified as vulnerable to severe flooding.

These hospitals were identified as the San Lorenzo Ruiz General Hospital in Malabon, Tondo Medical Center in Manila, Valenzuela Medical Center, and Amang Rodriguez Memorial Medical Center in Marikina, the DOE said in news release Tuesday night.

DOE's Electric Power Industry Management Bureau (EPIMB) was also ordered to coordinate with Meralco "to conduct site inspections of the four high-risk hospitals and provide technical assistance to improve their flood-related electrical resiliency."

Meralco was also tasked

PHLPOST DEPLOYS TRUCKS TO BRING DSWD RELIEF GOODS TO BULACAN

MANILA - The Philippine Postal Corp. (PHLPost) on Thursday deployed two 10-wheel trucks to transport 3,400 food packs from the Department of Social Welfare and Development's (DSWD) warehouse in Metro Manila to Guiguinto, Bulacan. The move was in line with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s directive to support disaster recovery efforts following heavy rains brought by the enhanced southwest monsoon.

Acting Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer Maximo Sta. Maria III, Assistant Postmaster General for Operations Benjie Yotoko, Area Operations Director IV Gilbert Javier, and Express

to help provide necessary power supply to the Roman Tantiogco Memorial Elementary School in Sitio Wawa, Barangay San Juan in Morong, Rizal, which is now being used as an evacuation center and needs a generator set.

To ensure sufficient fuel supply in Metro Manila, the Toll Regulatory Board was tapped to help ensure that tollways are unhampered for delivery of the needed supplies from the storage facilities in Subic in Zambales and Bataan.

The National Electrification Administration (NEA) was also tapped to closely monitor and validate power status in areas affected by the weather disturbances.

"Off-grid areas were also checked and are continuously being monitored, including small communities that may face limited access to emergency services," the press release reads.

The National Power Corporation's (Napocor) dam operations unit was also reminded to have "proof of its compliance with existing dam spilling protocols, including but not limited to visual documentation that upholds safety thresholds." (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

Mail Manager Boyet Delito were present during the hauling operations. PHLPost said it is in constant coordination with the Office of Civil Defense Operations Center and the DSWD for the possible deployment of additional trucks, if needed.

It also assured the public that postal operations continue despite work suspensions in several areas due to the inclement weather.

Sta. Maria has instructed all area directors, especially those in affected regions, to submit comprehensive situational reports on the damage caused by tropical cyclone Dante. (PNA) **BY MA. TERESA MONTEMAYOR**

CDO COUNCILOR PUSHES FOR IP CUSTOMS IN PUBLIC OFFICES

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY

— The city government is advancing plans to integrate indigenous customs into its bureaucracy to honor its cultural heritage.

Second District Councilor Joyleen Mercedes Balaba said Thursday that a way to reintroduce the city as a culturally diverse community is by observing indigenous practices, even through small gestures like greeting "Maayad" in government offices.

"It's not just a greeting but a way of life; speak with kindness, walk with humility, and build a future where no one is left behind," she said.

Balaba, who heads the Committee on Tourism, has proposed an ordinance to adopt local traditional and indigenous customs in government bureaucracy.

"Maayad" is a greeting commonly used by the Higaonon, one of

Northern Mindanao's main indigenous groups, meaning good, peaceful, and beautiful, conveying well-being and positive intent.

Councilor Roberto Cabaring, the Indigenous Peoples' Mandatory Representative, welcomed the move, stating it would help promote indigenous culture in the mainstream.

Alongside the cultural greeting, Balaba is also advocating for the official recognition of "Kolon," the local term for clay, as a unique product identity of Cagayan de Oro, specifically from the village of Bulua.

Bulua has a history of pottery-making spanning over five decades. It is home to rich clay deposits found in three of its sitios, making it the only known source of natural pottery clay in Northern Mindanao.

(PNA) BY ERCCEL MAANDIG

MINDANAO GROUPS SEEK RENEWABLE ENERGY GROWTH

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY

— Civil society groups in this city and the Northern Mindanao region have expressed their readiness to collaborate with government agencies to facilitate Mindanao's transition to renewable energy sources.

In an interview Thursday, Ben Cyrus Ellorin, head of the Consumers for Renewable Energy Action in Mindanao (Cream), cited the importance of accelerating the energy transition as crucial for developing resilient communities, especially as climate change impacts become more frequent and intense.

"There are low-hanging fruits in Mindanao's energy transition," Ellorin said, explaining that the island's dependence on clean and

affordable hydropower shifted to coal and diesel only in the past nine years.

He pointed out that the current energy situation forces industries and businesses in resource-rich Mindanao to pay high electricity rates, with energy costs accounting for 20 percent to 50 percent of their operating expenses due to excessive reliance on imported fossil fuels like coal.

One proposed solution is the rehabilitation and uprating of the Agus-Pulangi Hydropower Complex (APHC). The generation cost at the APHC is projected to be less than PHP2 per kilowatt-hour, making it a viable "low-hanging fruit" for the energy transition.

David Tauli, director of the Institute of Power Sector Economics who is also with the Konsumanteng Kagayanon, noted that some groups are aiming for renewable energy parity by 2030 and implementing Electricity Decarbonization Programs (EDPs).

Tauli explained that EDPs aim to "democratize" renewable energy, allowing consumers to shift some of their current supply from coal power plants to rooftop solar systems. He added that they aim for at least 10 million households to participate by 2030.

In a policy brief released earlier this month, Konsumanteng Kagayanon stated its goal of achieving a 50 percent to 60 percent share of renewable energy by 2030, advocating for green energy to become as affordable as conventional sources.

Meanwhile, Al Brito, president of the Cagayan de Oro Chamber of Commerce, stated that the immediate rehabilitation

DA-CORDILLERA TO DEPLOY KADIWA TRUCKS TO AID FARMERS AMID FLOOD IMPACT

BAGUIO CITY

— The Department of Agriculture (DA) in the Cordillera region said it is ready to deploy Kadiwa trucks to assist farmers in transporting unsold vegetables, as trading activity in Benguet remains low due to flooding in Metro Manila and other lowland provinces.

"We are prepared to dispatch our Kadiwa trucks to deliver vegetables directly to buyers and prevent spoilage, which could cause heavy losses for farmers. If rescue operations are needed, we will act," DA-Cordillera Director Jennilyn Dawayan said in a phone interview with the Philippine News Agency on Thursday.

The Benguet Agripinoy Trading Center in La Trinidad, Benguet, a government trading facility, recorded 115 farmers' trucks that arrived on Thursday, carrying assorted vegetables, with 38 traders' trucks ready

to transport the produce to markets outside the province.

Vegetable prices dropped earlier in the week due to limited buyers and transport issues caused by the heavy rains. Recent reports, however, said that wholesale prices rose slightly by PHP 1 to PHP 11 per kg. on Thursday.

Dawayan said the DA is ready to help farmers experiencing difficulty selling their produce to avoid spoilage.

She recalled that in January, when a similar situation arose, the department connected farmers to both local and regional buyers and used Kadiwa trucks to assist in transporting the vegetables.

"As long as farmers coordinate with us, we are willing to help, just as we've done in the past by linking them to buyers and deploying Kadiwa trucks," she added.

So far, the DA-Cordillera has not received reports of farmers unable to sell their produce.

Meanwhile, Dawayan said the department is also working on acquiring equipment for drying, processing, and dehydrating vegetables and other farm products to help address dumping caused by oversupply or lack of buyers.

"That's the direction we're heading. We just need the right machines for specific products so we can provide farmers with another option for unsold produce," she said. **(PNA) BY LIZA AGOOT**

DAR TO AWARD INDIVIDUAL LAND TITLES TO 93 FORMER REBELS IN NEGOR

DUMAGUETE CITY

— The Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) will award individual land titles to 93 former rebels (FRs) of the New People's Army (NPA) in Negros Oriental after proper documentation and compliance with local government requirements, an official said Thursday.

In an interview, DAR-Negros Oriental Provincial Agrarian Reform Program Officer Manuel Galon told the Philippine News Agency that the land titles cover part of a 13-hectare property under the government's land reform program in Barangay Bongalonan in Basay town. The property is the site of a housing project for FRs, funded by the provincial government through the Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (TF-ELCAC) with an initial budget of PHP60 million.

The housing project intends to build 100 housing units in 200 square meter lots, with a communal farm to be shared by the FRs.

Galon said the awarding

of the land titles to the FRs was initially set on June 3, but was deferred due to a resolution issued by the Basay town council.

The resolution requested the provincial TF-ELCAC, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the DAR to cease the implementation of the housing project until after a memorandum of agreement has been signed with Basay's local government, citing security concerns and other "risks" of disagreement in the community.

"Their reason was that the FRs might cause trouble and disturbance of peace and order in Basay, given their backgrounds and history," Galon said.

"But these FRs have been properly documented and are now peace-loving people."

The DAR official said the TF-ELCAC, project stakeholders, and Basay officials met with Governor Manuel Sagarbarria on Wednesday to resolve the

issue.

Galon said the Basay officials promised to facilitate a meeting to assure their constituents that it is necessary to support the FRs in implementing Executive Order (EO) 75.

EO 75 directs all departments, bureaus, offices, and instrumentalities of the government to identify lands owned by the government devoted to or suitable for agriculture for distribution to qualified beneficiaries.

He said Sagarbarria also promised to allocate additional funds for the housing project.

"It should be a whole-of-nation approach to give the FRs a chance to integrate into mainstream society. This is just a temporary snag, but the project will be implemented," Galon said, adding that the awarding of individual titles would be held within the year. **(PNA) BY MARY JUDALINE PARTLOW**

DICT EYES CREATION OF 8M DIGITAL JOBS BY 2028

MANILA — The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) is looking to create more than 8 million digital jobs by 2028 as part of the new "Trabahong Digital" policy roadmap.

In a statement on Thursday, the DICT said the initiative is a "national call to action" that seeks to provide Filipinos with the opportunity to thrive in the digital economy.

"The initiative seeks to expand access to digital infrastructure, equip Filipinos with future-ready skills, support homegrown innovation, and foster a regulatory environment that is responsive and inclusive," it said.

The new policy roadmap was announced during a public seminar organized in partnership with the regional think-tank, the Tech for Good Institute (TFGI), in Makati on Thursday.

During the event, DICT Assistant Secretary Celine Dee highlighted the human impact of digital transformation.

"The dynamism of the Philippines' digital landscape lies in the resilience and creativity of Filipinos. With the right support systems, Filipino ingenuity can be a catalyst for economic growth," Dee

said.

On the other hand, TFGI program director Citra Nasruddin highlighted the importance of having a balance between promoting the digital economy and protecting the digital society.

"We are grateful for our collaboration with DICT, which champions forward-thinking approaches that put people and progress at the center of digital transformation," Nasruddin said.

The event followed the release of TFGI's 2024 report, "The Evolution of Tech Governance in Southeast Asia-6," which maps out how regulatory frameworks can foster sustainable tech-driven growth across the region.

The report emphasizes the importance of aligning global best practices with local realities, ensuring that tech governance empowers, rather than excludes, the Filipino people.

"Tech governance will continue to evolve. While we learn from international best practices, it is crucial to carefully consider the Philippines' local context in shaping effective, relevant, and future-ready policies," TFGI program lead Keith Detros said. **(PNA) BY RAYMOND CARL DELA CRUZ**

ABOITIZ RENEWABLES GETS NGCP NOD FOR GRID CONNECTION

MANILA — Aboitiz Renewables Inc. has received the Final Certificate of Approval to Connect (FCATC) from the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) for its Calatrava Solar Power Plant (SPP) in Negros Occidental.

The 137.4 megawatt alternating current (MWac) solar power plant in San Isidro, Calatrava, Negros Occidental, which supports the government's bid to increase renewable energy (RE) sources in the country, is the largest operating solar and variable renewable energy (VRE) facility in the Visayas.

"Aboitiz Renewables is

able to complete great projects like the Calatrava SPP with the strong collaboration from NGCP.

We appreciate NGCP for working closely with us to bring this project online, and helping us progress our humble mission to deliver affordable, reliable, clean energy to customers," Aboitiz Renewables president Jimmy Villaroman said in a press release on Thursday.

"This milestone adds significant capacity to the grid, helps electricity suppliers meet their Renewable Portfolio Standards obligations, and is another step forward for the country as far as our nationwide energy

TARIFF ISSUES REVERSE PSEI'S RISE BUT PESO KEEPS FOOTING

MANILA — The Philippine peso sustained its strength against the US dollar but concerns on tariff on Philippine exports to the US continue to impact investors' sentiments, resulting in the negative close of the main equities index Thursday.

The local currency ended the day at 56.65, way better than its 56.88 close against the greenback a day ago.

Its strength showed early on after opening the trade at 56.68, from the previous session's 56.85.

It traded between 56.73 and 56.6, resulting to a 56.66 average for the day. Volume reached USD1.37 billion, lower than day-ago's USD1.51 billion.

On the other hand, the Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) shed 0.28 percent to 6,444.16 points, but the broader All Shares managed to end with a 0.03 percent increase to 3,808.39 points.

Only the Services index tracked the main gauge after it slipped by 1.13 percent.

Mining and Oil, meanwhile rose by 1.36 percent, and was followed by the Financials, 0.40 percent; Property, 0.29 percent; Holding Firms, 0.05 percent, and Industrial, 0.003 percent.

Volume reached 1.1 million shares amounting to PHP6.35 billion.

Decliners surpassed advancers at 99 to 97 while 56 shares were unchanged.

Luis Limlingan, Regina Capital Development Corporation head of sales, said investors remain worried on global trade developments after trade officials on Thursday said talks will continue with their US counterparts, and wait-and-see stance remains for the effects of similar issues in other countries. **(PNA)**

BY JOANN VILLANUEVA

BSP, BTR SIGN PACT TO STRENGTHEN PAYMENTS, SETTLEMENTS SYSTEMS

MANILA — The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr) signed Thursday a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to further strengthen the resilience of their payments and settlements systems. The MOU, signed at the BSP office, aims to promote safety and resiliency of the interconnected financial market infrastructures operated by the BSP and the BTr.

transition objectives are concerned."

Aboitiz Renewables Inc. is the RE arm of Aboitiz Power Corporation (AboitizPower).

The government has been approving RE projects as it bids to increase the share of RE in the country's energy mix to about 35 percent by 2030 and 50 by 2040. **(PNA) BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

In particular, it covers the BSP's Peso RTGS (PhilPaSSplus) and the BTr's National Registry of Scripless Securities or NROSS, including other systems related to or interlinked with these financial market infrastructures (FMIs), such as the Delivery versus Payment (DvP) system and Intraday Settlement Facility (ISF).

"As the operator of the National Registry of Scripless Securities, or we all know as NROSS, which is the Central Securities Depository and Security Settlement System for all government securities and BSP securities, the Bureau of the Treasury recognizes the vital role we play in ensuring the integrity of our system and maintaining financial market confidence and stability," said National Treasurer Sharon Almanza.

Almanza said NROSS and the BSP's Peso RTGS

PH RECORDS P215-B GROSS GAMING REVENUE IN 1H 2025 – PAGCOR

MANILA — The Philippines' gaming industry recorded PHP215 billion in gross revenues during the first half of 2025, the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (PAGCOR) disclosed Thursday.

Speaking at the Philippine Hotel Connect 2025 in Pasay City, PAGCOR Chairman and CEO Alejandro Tengco said licensed casinos within the so-called integrated resorts or IRs across the country generated PHP93.36 billion out of the total gross gaming revenues (GGR).

Of this, PHP16 billion was remitted to PAGCOR as license fees, helping fund government social programs and economic initiatives.

Integrated resorts are multi-use properties consisting of hotel, retail, dining, and recreation facilities, including casinos licensed by PAGCOR.

Beyond generating revenue for the government, Tengco said, IRs are a vital component in

positioning the Philippines as a competitive tourism destination.

In the same forum, PAGCOR Assistant Vice President Ma. Vina Claudette Oca said more IR projects are set for completion in the next five years in Metro Manila, Clark, Cebu, and Boracay. "With these projects, more non-gaming and hospitality facilities will further boost tourism and economic growth," she said.

Kevin Tan, president and CEO of Alliance Global Group, said Megaworld Corp. intends to invest "almost USD2 billion" in expanding its integrated resort developments, with two underway in Boracay and Cebu.

"In any integrated resort, one of the biggest requirements of PAGCOR is for us to build luxury hotel rooms. So, we're committed to doing that. Part of our investments also will be going to other components of tourism, like entertainment," he said.

Alongside strengthening the industry, PAGCOR would ensure that gaming in the country is conducted "ethically, transparently, and responsibly," Tengco said.

Earlier this month, gambling ads were removed from areas with minors, and a ban on prime-time TV gaming ads between 5:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. is forthcoming.

"These are all part of a broader effort to reposition gaming within the proper boundaries so that it becomes regulated entertainment and not a reckless distraction," he said. **(PNA) BY JOYCE ANN L. ROCAMORA**

The BTr earlier partnered with GCash for the sale of government bonds, making government securities more accessible to the investing public.

"I think this MOU is not just a document. It's to tell us that we have work to do. And we have to work together to do that work," Remolona said. **(PNA) BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**

BSP Governor Eli

Remolona Jr. said the BSP is closely working with the BTr to deepen the capital markets.

"We're also, of course, working with Sharon on deepening our capital markets, and this initiative of G-bonds is part of that, extending the deepening of capital markets to the retail level," Remolona said.



NEW TAIPEI KINGS QUALIFY FOR 2025-26 EASL SEASON

MANILA – The New Taipei Kings will compete in the 2025-26 East Asia Super League (EASL) season after winning back-to-back domestic titles.

The Kings won the 2023-24 P. LEAGUE+ and the 2024-25 Taiwan Professional Basketball League (TPBL) crowns.

"New Taipei is a proven winner and has reached the top time and time again in our league. EASL is the champions league of Asian basketball, and with New Taipei, we're adding another true champion. They've shown they're one of the best teams in Asia, and we're excited to see what they do this season," said EASL chief executive officer Henry Kerins in a statement Thursday.

Two other teams from Chinese Taipei, Taoyuan Pauian Pilots and Taipei Fubon Braves of the P. LEAGUE+, will also see

action in the EASL this year.

"Given the recent collaboration between the P. LEAGUE+ and TPBL, we're pleased to welcome the TPBL's New Taipei Kings into our long-standing partnership with EASL and its upcoming season," said P. LEAGUE+ chief executive officer Blackie Chen.

New Taipei has one of the most consistent records among all participating teams in the EASL, making it to the semifinals twice.

"We are very excited to participate for a third consecutive season in the EASL. As the league continues to grow with more elite teams, we look forward to the challenge of competing at the highest level in Asian basketball," New Taipei Kings general manager James Mao said. In the 2023-24 season, the Kings finished second in

Group B to reach the Final Four. They lost to eventual champions Japan's Chiba Jets in the semifinals, then fell to South Korea's Anyang Jung Kwan Jang Red Boosters to finish fourth.

The Kings secured their first podium last year after beating the Ryukyu Golden Kings in the battle for third place. They lost in the semifinals to Japan's Hiroshima Dragonflies, the eventual champions.

New Taipei, with an all-time EASL record of 9-7, also got individual honors in 2024-25, with forward Sani Sakakini and guard Jeremy Lin named to the All-EASL Team, presented by Spalding.

Lin is the first player in league history to earn All-EASL recognition in back-to-back seasons. **(PNA)**
BY JEAN MALANUM

PBA TO HOLD GAMES IN BAHRAIN

MANILA – The Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) is set to give its fans in Bahrain an early Christmas gift as the league will hold two games in the country this December.

Set for Dec. 16 and 18 (Philippine time), the games will be part of the PBA's 50th anniversary, all the more so that they will fall under the league's landmark 50th season.

"We are very happy to host these games in Bahrain. We've done it in the past. A few national teams came to Bahrain, but this time, we have PBA teams coming to Bahrain for the fans to enjoy watching them, especially the Filipinos who are in the

area, who cannot come to the Philippines to watch these games. That will be a very good chance for them to watch these live," said Alaa Mudara, president of the Bahrain Basketball Association (BBA).

Mudara said the games would coincide with Bahrain's National Day celebrations.

"It would be a great time to have these games. It will be a holiday, so even the basketball fans will have a great time watching the games during the holidays," he added. "I hope it wouldn't be the last. The BBA and PBA will be partners for the future."

Mudara and some other delegates from the BBA, including former Bahrain

national team member and La Salle player Bader Malabes, met with PBA commissioner Willie Marcial on Wednesday night to make the scheduling official and also watched Game 5 of the Philippine Cup Finals between TNT and San Miguel at the Smart Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City.

Marcial said three teams, to be announced in due time, would travel to Manama to play the games there, with one of them needing to play twice.

"We will check the schedule first, but we already signed the contract," he said. "We've been so grateful that Bahrain invited us. This is the first time that

PTA'S ALUDO REACHES J60 PHINMA-ITF 2 QUARTERFINALS

MANILA – Philippine Tennis Academy player Stefi Marithe Aludo defeated Australian Ashlee Lessue, 6-3, 6-1, Thursday to reach the girls' singles quarterfinals in the second leg of the J60 PHINMA International Junior Tennis Championships at the Manila Polo Club shell court in Makati City.

The sixth-seeded Aludo, runnerup in the first leg, will meet the winner between No. 3 Taiwanese Yu-Ning Tsai and Hong Kong's Lara Rauti.

Unranked Japanese Kimika Fukui also advanced after eliminating No. 5 Indian Haritha Shree Venkatesh, 6-2, 6-1.

In other matches, No. 7 Russian Elizaveta Nalesnik outclassed Hong Kong's Hiu Lam Ella Wong, 6-1, 6-2, while No. 8 Taiwanese Yen-Ni Chiang downed

Korean Rae Youn Kim, 7-5, 6-0.

Meanwhile, first leg champions Aludo and Tennifer Madis triumphed over Taiwanese pair Yu-Wen Chen and Chiang, 6-2, 6-1, to arrange a quarterfinal duel with Fukui and Korean Mi Na Lee, who prevailed over Thai Natheeya Chalinski and Singaporean Emma Lam Singh, 6-1, 6-4.

No. 1 Yesung Choo of Korea and Yu-Ning Tsai of Taiwan blanked local Mikaela Rose Ngu and Indian Dakshanasree SR, 6-0, 6-0, to advance against local Jana Jelena Nicole Diaz and Chinese Yuhang Chen.

Diaz and Chen won over local Sabine Dasha See and Hong Kong's Hiu Lam Ella Wong, 6-0, 6-0.

No. 3 Seojin Park of South Korea and Haritha Shree

Venkatesh of India and No. 4 Elizaveta Nalesnik of Russia and Taylah Lessue of Australia also earned quarterfinal berths.

Park and Venkatesh clobbered locals Louraine Jallorina and Arriana Reign Maglana, 6-3, 6-0, to advance against local Erynne Francesca Ong and Australian Ashlee Lessue, who survived Hong Kong's Han Frida Siu and Lara Rauti, 6-3, 5-7, 10-3.

Nalesnik and Australian Taylah Lessue downed local Ave Maria Policarpio and Swedish Christina Hansman, 6-0, 6-1, to advance against Koreans Rae Youn Kim and Seo-Youn Kim, who rallied past locals Jayden Reece Ballado and Dania Bulanadi, 5-7, 6-1, 10-3. **(PNA)**
BY JEAN MALANUM

NATIONAL ATHLETES, COACHES TO GET ADDITIONAL P5-K MONTHLY ALLOWANCE

MANILA – National athletes and coaches will receive a PHP5,000 increase in their monthly allowances starting next month, the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) announced Thursday.

Chairman John Patrick Gregorio had informed the athletes, coaches, and representatives of the various national sports associations (NSAs) of the increase during a general assembly at the Ninoy

Aquino Stadium on July 8. The former PBA chairman said it's about time the athletes and coaches get an increase in their allowances.

"Why? Because we realized that so many athletes still get PHP10,000 per month, which is lower than the minimum wage," Gregorio said.

Together with Commissioner Edward Hayco, the PSC chief visited athletes and coaches from baseball, softball, wushu, wrestling, and hockey, staying at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex on Wednesday.

"We distributed food for the athletes who can't leave the complex due to flooding," Gregorio said.

The PSC officials also listened to the athletes' "kwentong buhay" (life stories) and their dreams of pursuing higher education.

Gregorio said the "kumustahan" (casual conversation) with the athletes only strengthened the PSC's commitment to plot academic sponsorships for national athletes through the Philippine Sports Institute.

"As long as they share their stories, the PSC is here to listen. Then we will find ways to help make their dreams come true. Here's

to not just celebrating wins but creating winning moments for our athletes," he added.

Meanwhile, national team members are no longer required to sign and submit a daily time record together with a comprehensive activity report.

"In place of these documents, the NSAs are now required to submit the newly adopted monthly training attendance certification," said PSC acting Executive Director Guillermo Iroy Jr., who issued the advisory on July 22.

"This certification must be duly signed by the NSA president or secretary general and notarized, and shall serve as the official basis for qualified members of the national training pool to receive their allowance for the particular month," he explained.

The move "aims to enhance efficiency, streamline administrative requirements, while maintaining accountability in the disbursement of government support."

"It's a blessing considering the rising cost of living," said Henry Lopez, a member of the Philippine para-chess team. **(PNA)**
BY JEAN MALANUM