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BACCOOR SEEKS MALACAÑANG'S HELP IN ADDRESSING FLOODING WOES

CITY OF BACCOOR (PIA)

— The city government of Bacoor has sought the national government's intervention in addressing the city's flooding problem, citing clogged waterways and outdated drainage infrastructures as behind the flooding.

In a letter to Malacañang, Bacoor Mayor Strike B. Revilla requested funding support for the city's drainage and flood control plan through foreign-assisted programs such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) or the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund (NDRRMF). Direct intervention by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), and the Department of Environment and Natural

Resources (DENR) for large-scale dredging were among the assistance sought.

"The dams and rivers that once protected us are now clogged with silt and debris. Without immediate support from the national government, thousands of lives and homes remain at risk," Revilla said in a statement.

The appeal also includes the immediate desilting of rivers and canals in Bacoor, especially in flood-prone barangays according to the City Engineering Office

Under the Bacoor Drainage Plan, the city government proposed main strategies that include: the JICA Master Plan (2022), developed with assistance from JICA, and a supplementary plan from the DPWH, including the Draft Final Master Plan Report from Certeza

Infosys Corporation and a feasibility study for the Bacoor River Improvement Project.

"Despite our ongoing requests to agencies such as the NIA for the transfer of the Molino dams, there has been no clear response. The delays in administrative processes have significantly hampered our ability to act," Revilla added.

The city expressed its readiness to implement and take responsibility for any assistance provided by the national government, in close coordination with relevant agencies.

Revilla stressed the urgency for immediate action, warning that every day of delay increases the risks to residents and property. (RBF/Bacoor CIO) **BY RUEL FRANCISCO**

IMUS REPRESENTATIVE MEETS WITH SENATORS TO PUSH FOR DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT

In a proactive move to advance the progress of Imus City, the district's representative recently met with several senators to present the city's most pressing needs. The meeting served as a platform to discuss key initiatives aimed at improving infrastructure, expanding social services, and uplifting the lives of every Imuseño.

Among the top priorities raised were road expansion projects, modernization of public facilities, and increased funding for education and healthcare. These proposals form part of the

#CONGkretongAJenda—a comprehensive plan designed to deliver efficient, inclusive, and people-centered governance at the local level.

The senators warmly welcomed the delegation from Imus and expressed their full support for the city's development agenda. With national backing, the implementation of these projects is expected to accelerate, bringing tangible benefits to communities across the district.

Under the banner of #AlagangAdvincula, the representative emphasized a commitment to serving

all sectors of society—from the youth and senior citizens to workers and small business owners. The dialogue with the Senate highlighted a shared vision of inclusive growth and responsive leadership.

Gratitude was extended to the senators for their time, openness, and pledge of support. The meeting was not only a productive exchange of ideas but also a symbol of unity in pursuit of a brighter future for Imus.

With strong partnerships and active citizen engagement, Imus continues to rise. Guided by purpose and compassion, the city moves forward—one step closer to becoming a model of progress and resilience.

By R/L



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PROVINCIAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON, NAARESTO SA CARMONA CITY, CAVITE

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Naaresto ng mga tauhan ng Carmona Component City Police Station ang isang Provincial Level Most Wanted Person dakong 11:20 AM ng Setyembre 4, 2025 sa De Salit Compound, Brgy. Bancal, Carmona City, Cavite.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL MELVIN M BALBA, hepe ng Carmona CCPS, ang akusado na si alyas Willy, residente ng Brgy. Bancal, Carmona City, Cavite.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa ng warrant operatives ng Carmona CCPS na gamit ang dalawang (2) Alternative Recording Devices (ARDs), na nagresulta sa pagkakaaresto ng akusado para sa kasong

Acts of Lasciviousness sa ilalim ng Art. 336 ng RPC, as amended, in relation to Section 5(B) of RA 7610 (2 counts). Ang warrant of arrest ay inisyu ng RTC Branch 109, Carmona City, Cavite, noong Agosto 19, 2025, na may kabuuang inirekomendang piyansa na Php360,000.00. Kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng Carmona CCPS ang akusado.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, “Ang matagumpay na pagkakaaresto sa mga most wanted person ay patunay ng ating dedikasyon na mapanatili ang kapayapaan at hustisya sa lalawigan ng Cavite.”

MOST WANTED PERSON, REGIONAL LEVEL, NAARESTO SA BACOR CITY, CAVITE

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Naaresto ng mga tauhan ng Bacoor Component City Police Station dakong 5:20 PM ng Setyembre 4, 2025 sa Brgy. Molino 2, Bacoor City, Cavite ang isang Regional Level Most Wanted Person sa bisa ng warrant of arrest.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL ALEXIE A DESAMITO, Acting Chief of Police ng Bacoor CCPS, ang akusado na si alyas “Busa”, residente ng Brgy. Molino 2, Bacoor City, Cavite.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa ng Warrant Section ng Bacoor CCPS sa ilalim ng Manhunt Charlie operation at naitala gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD). Ang nasabing operasyon ay nagresulta sa

pagkakaaresto ng akusado sa bisa ng warrant of arrest para sa kasong Paglabag sa Seksyon 5 at 11 ng R.A. 9165, inisyu ng RTC Branch 117, Bacoor City, Cavite noong Agosto 15, 2025 na may Service of Sentence.

Kasalukuyang nakapiit ang akusado sa Bacoor Custodial Center para sa tamang disposisyon.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, “Ang matagumpay na pagkakaaresto ng mga Most Wanted Person ay patunay ng dedikasyon ng ating kapulisan upang tuluyang masugpo ang kriminalidad at mapanatili ang kapayapaan sa ating lalawigan.”

MOST WANTED PERSON RANK NO. 7 PROVINCIAL LEVEL, NAARESTO SA GENERAL TRIAS CITY

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Naaresto ng mga tauhan ng General Trias Component City Police Station ang isang Most Wanted Person Rank No. 7 Provincial Level dakong 8:00 PM ng Setyembre 3, 2025 sa Brgy. Pasong Kawayan 2, General Trias City, Cavite.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL BISMARCK S MENDOZA, hepe ng General Trias CCPS, ang akusado na si alyas Christian, residente ng Brgy. Pasong Kawayan 2, General Trias City, Cavite.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa ng Warrant Personnel ng General Trias CCPS gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD) na nagresulta sa pagkakaaresto ng akusado

sa kasong paglabag sa Section 5 at 11, Article II ng R.A. 9165. Ang warrant ay inisyu noong Mayo 21, 2024 ng Family Court, Fourth Judicial Region, Branch 5, Trece Martires City, Cavite, na walang piyansa.

Kasalukuyang nakapiit ang akusado sa General Trias City Custodial Facility, Brgy. Bagumbayan, General Trias City, Cavite, para sa kaukulang dokumentasyon at disposisyon.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, “Hindi titigil ang ating kapulisan sa pagtugis sa mga most wanted person sa lalawigan upang patuloy na matiyak ang kaligtasan at kapayapaan ng ating komunidad.”

DALAWANG HIGH VALUE INDIVIDUALS, ARESTADO SA IMUS CITY, PHP 355,000 HALAGA NG SHABU AT MARIJUANA AT ISANG 9MM PISTOL NAKUMPISKA

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Dalawang High Value Individuals ang naaresto sa isinagawang buy-bust operation ng pinagsanib na pwersa ng PDEU Cavite PPO at Imus Component City Police Station dakong 2:30 AM ng Setyembre 5, 2025 sa Brgy. Palico 2, Imus City, Cavite.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL CHESTER NOEL BORLONGAN, Chief PIU, ang mga suspek na sina @Cris at @Jaja, pawang residente ng Bacoor City, Cavite.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa ng may koordinasyon sa PDEA at nagresulta sa pagkakaaresto ng mga nabanggit na suspek. Ang aktwal na imbentaryo ng mga nakumpiskang ebidensya ay isinagawa sa presensya ng Media Representative at Barangay elected official. Ang buong operasyon ay naitala sa pamamagitan ng Alternative Recording Device (ARD).

Nakumpiska mula sa mga suspek ang

sumusunod na ebidensya: dalawang (2) heat-sealed transparent plastic sachet ng pinaghihinalaang shabu na may kabuuang bigat na 50 gramo na may standard drug price na Php 340,000.00, isang (1) self-sealing dried marijuana (kush) na may timbang na 10 gramo na nagkakahalaga ng Php 15,000.00, isang (1) cal. 9mm Taurus pistol na may serial number, at dalawang (2) piraso ng 9mm live ammunition.

Sa kasalukuyan, ang mga naarestong suspek ay nasa kustodiya ng Imus CPS para sa dokumentasyon at pagsasampa ng kasong paglabag sa R.A. 9165 at R.A. 10591 laban sa dalawa.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, “Hindi titigil ang ating kapulisan sa Cavite sa paghabol sa mga high value target at pagtitiyak na hindi makakalusot ang mga sangkot sa ipinagbabawal na gamot at iligal na armas.”

WANTED PERSON, ARESTADO NG MAGALLANES PNP

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Naaresto ng mga tauhan ng Magallanes Municipal Police Station ang isang Other Wanted Person dakong 5:29 PM ng Setyembre 3, 2025 sa Brgy. Paliparan 2, Dasmariñas City, Cavite. Kinilala ni PMAJ RAYMOND T BALBUENA, hepe ng Magallanes MPS, ang akusado na si alyas Dennies, residente ng Brgy. Paliparan 2, Dasmariñas City, Cavite.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa ng Warrant Personnel ng Magallanes MPS gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD) na nagresulta sa pagkakaaresto ng akusado sa kasong paglabag sa Section 5(A) ng R.A. 9262.

Ang warrant ay inisyu noong Enero 18, 2025 ng Regional Trial Court, Fourth Judicial Region, Branch 129, Dasmariñas City, Cavite, na may inirekomendang piyansa na Php6,000.00.

Kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng Magallanes MPS ang akusado para sa kaukulang dokumentasyon at disposisyon.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, “Ang mabilis na pagtugon at aksyon ng ating kapulisan sa pagpapatupad ng warrant of arrest ay patunay ng ating dedikasyon na mapanatili ang katahimikan at seguridad sa buong Cavite.”

P158,984 HALAGA NG SHABU, NASABAT, 2 SUSPEK ARESTADO SA TANZA, CAVITE

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Naaresto ng mga tauhan ng Tanza Municipal Police Station Drug Enforcement Team ang dalawang Listed Street Level Individuals dakong 10:10 PM ng Setyembre 3, 2025 sa Brgy. Paradahan 1, Tanza, Cavite.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL AL-RIEZA S KINANG, Acting Chief of Police ng Tanza MPS, ang mga naarestong suspek na sina alyas Reymart at Joseph, pawang residente ng Brgy. Bagtas, Tanza, Cavite.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa sa pamamagitan ng buy-bust operation nang may koordinasyon sa PDEA. Sa isinagawang operasyon gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD), nahuli ang mga suspek

at nakumpiska ang mga sumusunod na ebidensya: tatlong (3) piraso ng heat-sealed transparent plastic sachet na naglalaman ng hinihinalang shabu na may kabuuang timbang na 23.38 gramo at may standard drug price na Php158,984.00.

Kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng Tanza MPS ang mga suspek habang inihahanda ang kaukulang kaso para sa kanilang inquest proceedings.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, “Ang pagkakasabat ng malaking halaga ng ipinagbabawal na gamot ay bunga ng mas pinaigting na kampanya kontra droga upang mapanatili ang kapayapaan at kaligtasan ng bawat Caviteño.”

BIR COMMITS TO GOOD GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY THROUGH GUIDING PILLARS

SAN PABLO CITY, Laguna (PIA) – The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) Revenue Region 9B LaQueMar reaffirmed its commitment to good governance and transparency by upholding the “Four Pillars of Good Governance” as the foundation of its operations and reforms.

BIR LaQueMar Regional Director Atty. Michael Remir Macatangay said personnel are guided by the principles introduced by BIR Commissioner Romeo Lumagui Jr., which include: Fearless and Aggressive Enforcement Activities; Excellent Taxpayer Service; Integrity and Professionalism of the Institution and its Employees; and Digitalization.

Macatangay stressed that these pillars are crucial in curbing corruption, noting that digitalization minimizes red tape and reduces reliance on the “palakasan” system in government transactions. “Through those four pillars, the chances of corruption are reduced, because in the past corruption or red tape only happened when the system was not efficient and sufficient.” He added that the bureau is pursuing international audit certifications to further ensure efficiency and effectiveness in its processes.

“It is not yet perfect, but we are working to improve our digitalization until it becomes almost perfect, because with less or no

human intervention, the process becomes faster and the opportunity for corruption is eliminated.”

On enforcement, BIR LaQueMar reported a total collection of Php1.4 billion from operations this year, including Php26.8 million under the 48-Hour Notice and 5-Day VAT Compliance Notice of the Oplan Kandado program. 36 cases have also been filed under the Run After Tax Evaders campaign.

“Our approach is to assist, educate, and monitor businesses before we enforce. We help them comply rather than immediately resort to closure or penalties,” Macatangay explained.

To strengthen taxpayer service, the BIR continues to promote digital platforms such as the Electronic Filing and Payment System (eFPS), eBIRForms, and other accredited online payment channels. E-Lounges have also been established in various offices to assist taxpayers with digital transactions and provide guidance in adapting to online systems.

Macatangay reiterated that taxpayers and the BIR are not enemies but partners in ensuring compliance, emphasizing that the real challenge lies with tax evaders. He stressed that tax collection is a shared national responsibility for the benefit of all Filipinos. (CH/PIA - Laguna)
BY CHRISTOPHER HEDREYDA

COMMUNITY LEADERS IN QUEZON EMPOWERED TO MONITOR FARM-TO- MARKET ROAD PROJECTS

The Department of Agriculture – Philippine Rural Development Project trained community leaders in Catanauan, Quezon on monitoring infrastructure projects as part of its sustainability efforts for its ongoing farm-to-market road subproject in the area.

The DA-PRDP Project Support Office South Luzon and the Regional Project Coordination Office CALABARZON trained leaders from seven barangays within the influence area of the 12.46 km-road: Doongan Ilaya, Doongan Ibaba, Milagrosa, San Antonio Magcopa, San Roque, San Pablo Suha, and Sta. Maria Dao.

They discussed the following: Citizens Monitoring framework, engineering standards, using applied geomapping technology for documentation, social and environmental safeguards, and the roles of the Barangay Implementing Team in monitoring the subproject.

After the discussions, the DA-PRDP and the participants inspected the implementation site of the farm-to-market road. Using the DA-PRDP Citizens Monitoring Notebook, the participants evaluated the compliance of the subproject and contractors to the topics discussed earlier.

Using the PRDP GeoCamera, they geotagged their observations, which can help them locate and track concerns/changes on the subproject easier.

Participants showed great

interest and participated actively in the activity. Moving forward, they plan to hold a joint session to discuss ordinances on weight and speed limit to prevent damages and accidents on the road.

“Napakahalaga po ng aktibidad na ito para po ma-implement nang maayos ‘yung ating proyekto. Sa tulong ng mga itinuro, alam na namin ang tama at mali o kung naaayon ang proyekto sa mga pamantayan ng PRDP. Mas matutugunan at mabibigyang paliwanag na rin namin ang mga komento o pahayag ng mga kabarangay namin tungkol sa proyekto,” said Rolando Conde, barangay kagawad of San Pablo Suha.

The Construction of San Roque-San Antonio Magcopa-San Pablo Suha-Doongan Ilaya Farm-to-Market Road with 2 Bridge Component was approved for funding under the DA-PRDP Scale-Up last August 2024.

To facilitate sustainability, the DA-PRDP conducts CMT which strengthens subproject monitoring efforts, increases the community’s capacities and participation, and promotes community ownership of the subproject.

Currently, the CMT is also being mainstreamed to the DA Regional Field Office IV-A CALABARZON as representatives from the Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Division also participated in the activity. (DA-PRDP CALABARZON) **BY**

DA-PRDPCALABARZON

EDITORIAL

Bagyo Laban sa Kalam ng Tiyan ng mga Pilipino

Ilang residente ng Calumpit, Bulacan, pinipilit na makapasok sa kani-kanilang mga trabaho sa kabila ng mataas na baha para may makain.

Hindi naman lingid sa ating kaalaman na ang Pilipinas ay laging dinaraan ng malalakas na bagyo at ang madalas na apektado rito ay ang mga Pilipinong kapos o kaya nama’y nabubuhay dahil sa trabahong mayroon sila. Marami ang nagugutom sa ganitong klaseng sakuna kaya ang dapat na solusyon na isinasatupad ay pangmatagalan at hindi basta maibigay ang kailangan sa panahon ng mismong sakuna lamang.

Ang matinding pagbaha ay madalas nang nararanasan sa iba’t-ibang panig ng bansa kaya naman dapat bigyang solusyon ang mga bagay na nagdudulot ng pagbaha nang sa gayon ay hindi na ito dadagdag pa sa pproblemahin ng mga mamamayan sa mga susunod pang bagyong darating.

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PCSO DELIVERS 1,297 PATIENT TRANSPORT VEHICLES, NEARS FULL COVERAGE

MANILA – The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) has distributed 1,297 patient transport vehicles (PTVs) nationwide under its Medical Transport Vehicle Donation Program, reaching 75.23 percent of the country's 1,724 local government units (LGUs). PCSO General Manager Melquiades Robles, speaking at the PCSO Charity Summit 2025 on Friday at the Manila Hotel, said the PHP2.5-billion investment ensures that more Filipinos, especially in remote and underserved areas, have access to safe, timely, and life-saving medical transport.

"This marks a significant leap toward achieving universal access to medical transport," he said in his speech, adding that the agency has committed PHP1 billion for the procurement of 375 more PTVs to achieve the 100 percent target coverage by year-end.

"This will mark a new chapter in our nation's healthcare journey, one where no Filipino is left behind in moments of medical emergency," he added.

Each PTV is equipped with a stretcher, oxygen tank, wheelchair, first aid kit, blood pressure monitor, and medicine cabinet.

Robles also shared the agency's major milestones, including the PHP7.97 billion worth of medical assistance extended since 2022, benefitting nearly one million patients nationwide.

These numbers, he explained, represent lives saved, families given hope, and communities better served.

"Behind these figures are stories of lives saved. Lives of patients who were able to undergo bypass and other critical heart surgeries, and

families who no longer had to wonder how they could possibly afford the next hospital bill. Every peso we release is not only financial assistance—it is hope," he stressed.

The agency, he said, also released PHP68.28 million to 122 institutions caring for vulnerable groups under the Institutional Partnership Program.

"Through our Institutional Partnership Program, we help organizations that care for children, orphans, indigent patients, and persons with special needs. This is a powerful reminder that our collaboration multiplies impact, allowing us to reach places and people we could never reach alone," Robles noted.

Under its Medical Equipment Donation Program, PCSO has also delivered PHP103 million worth of medical equipment to 14 hospitals since 2022. In the first quarter of 2025 alone, nearly PHP22 million worth of equipment was turned over to hospitals, strengthening their capacity to serve patients in need.

Amid these accomplishments, Robles said PCSO also plans to expand its reach through new initiatives, including a medical equipment program in partnership with government hospitals, mobile health and dental clinic units, and sea-based patient transport vehicles for island and last-mile communities.

These efforts are aligned with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s directive, as highlighted in his latest State of the Nation Address, to modernize the country's healthcare system.

The summit gathered government, civil society, and private sector partners,

DMW HIGHLIGHTS GAINS IN OFW PROTECTION DURING CALAMITY AID ROLLOUT

MANILA – The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) underscored progress in enhancing the protection and welfare of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) as it awarded calamity assistance fund under the Quick AKSYON Fund in Bulacan on Thursday.

In a news release on Friday, the DMW said Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac presented the agency's accomplishments, including its achievements in curbing illegal recruitment, extending legal and financial aid to distressed OFWs, and providing expanded welfare and health services to their families. He said that through the leadership of Undersecretary Bernard Olalia, the number of illegal recruitment agencies shut down by the DMW has tripled this year, from six closed in 2023; 15 in 2024; and 28 firms as of Aug. 1 this year.

"Sang-ayon ba kayo sa lehitimong proseso sa pag-aabroad? Kontra ba tayo sa mga broker at naniningil ng kung ano? Yan ang ayaw ng ating Pangulo, at ayaw na

also featured open forums, exhibits of PCSO programs, networking sessions, and the symbolic "Handprints on the Commitment Wall," where participants pledged continued dedication to humanitarian work.

"As we gather here, let us take home three important truths: that collaboration makes our mission possible; that every program is not just about numbers, but about lives and families touched; and that together, we can and we will serve more Filipinos in greater and more meaningful ways," Robles said. (PNA) **BY CHRISTOPHER LLOYD CALIWAN**

ayaw din ng DMW (Do you agree with the legitimate process for going abroad? Are we against brokers and other firms that charge for so many things? The President does not want that, and DMW does not want that either)," Cacdac said.

Meanwhile, around 71,000 online illegal recruitment sites from different social media platforms were taken down in 2024 as part of the government's efforts against human trafficking. DMW data shows that as of Aug. 18, the agency has already provided assistance to 1,259 victims of illegal recruitment and human trafficking from Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia, and were given immediate financial assistance through the DMW AKSYON Fund.

Cacdac also highlighted the DMW's direct interventions abroad, citing his visits to detained OFWs in Jordan and Japan where he personally delivered financial aid and ensured access to legal representation.

"Tinutulungan sila ng ating mga abogado sa abroad—may mga hina-hire tayong legal experts para sa mga OFWs na may kaso. Binibigyan din sila ng tulong pinansyal para makabili ng mga pangunahing pangangailangan sa loob ng kulungan (Our lawyers abroad are helping them—we hire legal experts for OFWs with cases. They are also given financial assistance to buy basic necessities inside the prison)," he said.

He also pledged support for children of detained migrant workers, particularly minors in Japan, in line with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s directive to secure their future.

Cacdac said the Quick AKSYON Fund was introduced as a safety net for OFWs in crisis situations, providing legal, medical, financial, and humanitarian assistance to those affected by conflict, abuse, or emergencies.

DA: SUCCESSIVE STORMS PUSH VEGGIE, FISH PRICES UP

MANILA – Successive weather disturbances have driven up the prices of vegetables and fish, contributing to a faster overall inflation rate in August, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said Friday.

The agency issued the statement after inflation rose to 1.5 percent in August from 0.9 percent in July, with food inflation logged at 0.6 percent, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). DA spokesperson Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa explained that heavy rains disrupted fishing activities and flooded vegetable farms, pushing prices higher.

"Dahil iyon sa sunud-sunod na pag-ulan na nakakaapekto talaga sa presyo ng gulay atsaka isda (That's because of the consecutive rains which have affected the prices of vegetables and fish)," he

He also highlighted the OFW Hospital in Pampanga, which provides free medical care to OFWs and their dependents.

Cacdac reaffirmed the DMW's pledge to stand with OFWs and their families.

"Kayo po ang patunay na anuman ang hirap, anuman ang hamon—kakayanin ninyo. Babangon tayong sama-sama. Tayo ay isang pamilya, pinagbuklod ng watawat at ng Diyos. Kahit saan man tayo naroroon, Pilipino ang dugo, ang kulay, ang puso, at ang diwa. Kaya nararapat lamang na kami sa Department of Migrant Workers ay tumulong at magmahal sa inyo (You are proof that no matter the hardship, no matter the challenge—you can do it. We will rise together. We are one family, united by the flag and by God. No matter where we are, our blood, our color, our heart, and our spirit are Filipino. That is why it is only right that we at the Department of Migrant Workers help and support you)," Cacdac said. (PNA) **BY MARITA MOAJE**

said in a phone interview. In particular, vegetable inflation accelerated to 10 percent in August from 4.7 percent deflation in July, while fish inflation increased to 9.5 percent from 6.3 percent.

"Syempre kapag may bagyo, titigil 'yung pangangisda. Sa gulay naman, mabilis naman bahain (Of course, when there's a storm, the fishing is halted. For vegetables, it's easily flooded)," De Mesa said.

Despite a slight decline, meat prices remain elevated and may face renewed "price pressures" during the "ber" months due to higher demand, along with eggs, De Mesa said.

Filipino consumers, meanwhile, will continue to enjoy stable prices of rice amid the 60-day rice importation halt as the country enters the onset of harvest season, the agriculture official assured. In August, rice plummeted further at 17 percent deflation from 15.9 percent in July.

"Dahil sa laki ng production sa ibang bansa, especially India, ganun din sa Vietnam, at other ASEAN countries, tayo rin we are expecting a record-harvest, patuloy na ma-expect natin na bababa ang presyo ng bigas (Because of the huge production internationally, especially in India, as well as in Vietnam, and other ASEAN countries, we are also expecting a record-harvest, we can expect a continuous decline in prices of rice) until next year," de Mesa said.

For the wet harvest season, the DA projected at least 11 million metric tons of palay (unhusked rice) output.

The DA earlier said the Philippines may "easily surpass" last year's record-palay production at 20.06 million metric tons (MT).

It also maintained optimism to hit the 20.4 million MT target output, considering the historic-high harvest of palay of 9.08 million MT for the first half of 2025. (PNA) **BY STEPHANIE SEVILLANO**

SANDIGANBAYAN JUNKS RAPS VS. NGO EXEC TAGGED IN 2008 PDAF CASE

MANILA — The Sandiganbayan has dismissed cases for graft and malversation against an NGO (non-government organization) official who was a co-accused in a case involving the alleged misuse of the priority development assistance fund (PDAF) of a former La Union lawmaker in 2008.

In a 22-page decision promulgated Sept. 2, the anti-graft court's First Division dismissed the four cases against Kabuhayan at Kalusugan Alay sa Masa Foundation, Inc. (KKAMFI) corporate secretary Marilou Ferrer who was co-accused in the alleged misuse of PHP400,000 of the PDAF of former La Union 2nd District Rep. Thomas Dumpit Jr.

The cases against Dumpit and other co-accused

were dismissed by the graft court in 2023. However, Ferrer remained at large at the time and was only arrested in 2024.

In clearing her, the court noted that "the only evidence of Ferrer's supposed participation in the transactions in question is that she noted KKAMFI's project proposal and work and financial plan."

"The act of 'noting' both documents, however, does not convey her approval thereof, nor can it be considered as proof that she had any participation in KKAMFI's selection to implement the projects in question, in the falsification of documents, or in the failure to implement the projects," the court said. (PNA) **BY BENJAMIN PULTA**

PROPOSED INDEPENDENT FLOOD CONTROL PROBE BODY DRAWS SUPPORT

MANILA — Lawmakers on Friday supported President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s plan to create an independent commission that will investigate anomalous flood control projects.

Senator Erwin Tulfo said an independent body would be more appropriate amid allegations that some lawmakers might have benefited from the flood control program by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

"Hindi naman pinapadalan ang mga mambabatas. Kasi po meron tinatawag tayo na interparliamentary courtesy, kaya hindi natin ma-iwasan na magduda ang ating mga kababayan (The legislators are not sent [invitations]. Because we have something called interparliamentary courtesy, so we cannot

avoid our countrymen being suspicious)," Tulfo said in a media interview.

Tulfo also agreed that the commission must have the authority to issue subpoenas to everyone involved in the controversy. Senator Francis Pangilinan also supports the creation of the independent commission, urging Filipinos to be vigilant. He said the ultimate power rests in the hands of the people.

"Keep our elected officials, including myself, on their toes. Hold us to account and organize activities to voice your grievances peacefully," Pangilinan said in a statement.

On Thursday, Malacañang said the issuance of an executive order establishing the independent body on flood control probe is being finalized. (PNA) **BY LEONEL ABASOLA**

MARCOS INAUGURATES NEW IRRIGATION PROJECT IN BOHOL

MANILA — President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Friday inaugurated the Calunasan Small Reservoir Irrigation Project (SRIP) in Barangay Calunasan, Calape, Bohol, a key infrastructure expected to irrigate up to 300 hectares of farmland in the province. The President unveiled the project marker together with National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Administrator Eduardo Guillen.

In his remarks, Marcos said the irrigation system is part of the government's broader effort to expand irrigated agricultural lands nationwide.

"[P]ara sa ating mga magsasaka ay gagawin namin ang lahat para tulungan kayo na 'yung production ninyo at maging mas mataas, at ang kita ninyo ay magiging mas mataas (To our farmers, we will do everything we can to help you increase your production and increase your income)," he said.

"Kaya we are continuing at patuloy nating ginagawa ito para pagandahin ang agrikultura natin, para pagandahin natin ang

hanapbuhay ng ating mga magsasaka (This is why we are continuing to do this to improve our agriculture, to improve the livelihoods of our farmers)," he added. The project is designed to provide consistent, year-round irrigation to at least four barangays in Calape—Calunasan, Abucayan Sur, Lucob, and Bentig—benefiting around 400 farmers.

The infrastructure, primarily aimed at improving farm productivity, also supports aquaculture and flood management.

NIA-Region 7 Acting Manager for Engineering and Operations Division Nelson Doliente said the dam and irrigation facilities are already fully operational and have been serving local farmers since the system's test run on Aug. 20.

The project, amounting PHP813 million, is currently 97.94 percent complete. The remaining works, including slope protection and the construction of a view deck, are scheduled for completion by Nov. 23, 2025. (PNA) **BY JOYCE ANN L. ROCAMORA**

DND RESOLUTE IN UPHOLDING PH SOVEREIGNTY IN WPS

MANILA — Department of National Defense (DND) Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. on Friday reiterated the agency's commitment to protecting Philippine sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea (WPS).

"As we observe this year's MANA Mo, the DND stands with our people in protecting our patrimony. In the face of attempts to undermine our sovereignty and territorial integrity, especially in the WPS, we remain resolute in our stand against coercion and manipulation," he said in his message for the observance of the "Maritime and Archipelagic

Nation Awareness Month" (MANA Mo) 2025 this September.

With the Philippines having rich maritime territories, Teodoro said all Filipinos must unite and defend these to preserve the country's archipelagic way of life.

"Let us be united in defending our Filipino way of life, proud of our heritage as an archipelagic nation, and determined to secure our maritime domain for generations yet to come," he added.

He also said the richness of the Philippines' archipelagic terrain and the expanse of its ocean

P15K WAGE HIKE, MEDICAL DISCOUNT, PENSION FOR TEACHERS PUSHED

MANILA — Senator Risa Hontiveros joined the commemoration of National Teachers' Month by stressing the need for a PHP15,000 across-the-board monthly wage hike for public school teachers and employees, in addition to medical discounts, other benefits and the protection of their pension contributions.

Hontiveros is pushing for the passage of her Dagdag Sahod for Public Basic Education Teachers and Employees Act (Senate Bill 211) and Healthy Buhay at Hanapbuhay Para sa Guro Act (Senate Bill 575) to increase salaries and benefits of teaching and non-teaching personnel.

"Ang mga guro natin, araw-araw nagbubuhos ng oras, pagod, at pagmamahal para sa ating kabataan. Kaya bilang pasasalamat sa kanila, gusto kong mabigyan sila ng umento sa sahod para naman mas guminhawa ang buhay nila (Our teachers, each day, pour in their time, effort and love for our children.

So to thank them, I would like to give them a salary increase so that their lives can be more comfortable)," Hontiveros said in a news release on Friday.

Under Senate Bill (SB) 211, all public school teachers and personnel will receive a PHP15,000 salary increase to be given in three tranches, starting with a PHP6,000 hike in the first year, followed by PHP5,000 and finally PHP4,000.

In addition to proposing a salary increase, Hontiveros also filed SB 575 that would grant all teachers a 10-percent discount and value-added tax exemption on medicines and other essential health products, along with other health benefits.

Hontiveros' bill will provide for teachers' health centers, special wards in Department of Health (DOH) hospitals, government-paid Philippine Health Insurance Corp. contributions, and medical assistance from DOH, Department of Social Welfare and Development, and Department of Education, as well as five days of annual mental health and wellness leave.

Hontiveros likewise expressed her worry over the integrity of public school teachers' pensions, saying that it is crucial that they be assured a comfortable future when they retire from government service.

"Sa pagbibigay umento sa kanilang sahod, pagdadagdag ng kanilang benepisyo at pagbabantay sa kanilang pensyon, mapapakita natin na ang mga guro natin ay pinapahalagahan, hindi lang tuwing Teachers' Day, kundi everyday (By increasing their salaries, increasing their benefits, and safeguarding their pensions, we can show that our teachers are valued, not just on Teachers' Day, but everyday)," she said. (PR)

spaces "are indelible parts of our identity as a people." Proclamation No. 316, issued in 2017, declares September as "Maritime and Archipelagic Nation Awareness Month" or MANA Mo.

The proclamation is in line with Article XII, Section 2 of the Constitution, which stipulates that the State is mandated to protect the nation's marine wealth in its archipelagic waters, territorial sea, and exclusive economic zone, and reserve its use exclusively for Filipino citizens. (PNA) **BY PRIAM NEPOMUCENO**

LA UNION OPENS FIRST TOWN HALL FOR STRONGER CITIZEN VOICES

SAN FERNANDO CITY, La Union (PIA) — The Provincial Government of La Union (PGLU) took a major step toward inclusive and participatory governance with the launch of its first Agkaysa town hall meeting on August 28 at the Bacnotan Public Market Function Hall.

The program brought together about 70 representatives from civil society organizations (CSOs) in San Gabriel, San Juan, and San Fernando City to directly engage with local leaders on community issues.

Participants identified pressing concerns such as limited access to social services, waste management, flooding, traffic congestion, and recurring power interruptions. These were discussed within the framework of the province's five development priorities: governance, infrastructure, environment, economy, and social development.

Governor Mario Eduardo Ortega, through provincial administrator Ramon Torres, stressed that the town hall is not just a one-time activity but a platform for sustained citizen engagement.

"We want our constituents to remain united and involved in the decision-making process and development of programs to improve our province," he said.

CSO representative Armando Narciso said the town hall gave citizens a chance to voice concerns that directly affect their communities, especially farmers and those dependent on natural resources.

"It's important that our issues on agriculture and the environment are heard—like waste management, flooding in our farmlands, and support for small farmers. These consultations make us feel that our concerns will be addressed for the good of

the province," he said.

Insights from the meeting will be consolidated into policy recommendations and long-term development plans aimed at improving government services and strengthening La Union's commitment to transparency, accountability, and integrity under its Agkaysa (together) thrust.

The Bacnotan gathering is the first in a series of town halls to be held in Santol, Tubao, Agoo, and Naguilian, ensuring that more communities across the province can join in shaping their future.

The town hall meeting, which focused on towns in flood-prone watershed catchment areas, will conclude on September 8 in Naguilian town, with the possibility of another session in the future if needed.

By institutionalizing town hall meetings, La Union is showing that citizen voices are not just heard, but acted upon—making governance more people-centered and sustainable. (CCMT/KJCR, PIA La Union) **BY KATHLENE JOYCE C. RAMONES**

US AMBASSADOR HIGHLIGHTS UNBREAKABLE PH-US ALLIANCE

BAGUIO CITY (PIA) — United States Ambassador to the Philippines MaryKay Carlson highlighted the unbreakable bond and alliance of the Philippines and the United States of America.

During the 80th Anniversary of Victory at Camp John Hay, Baguio City on September 3, 2025, Carlson said the alliance forged remains the bedrock of the enduring partnership of the two countries.

It was on Sept. 3, 1945 when Japanese Imperial Army General Tomoyuki Yamashita, the "Tiger of Malaya" was brought to Baguio to formally surrender following his capture by Filipino guerillas and American Forces in Kiangnan, Ifugao a day earlier. He signed the surrender paper at Camp John Hay.

Yamashita, together with Admiral Denshichi Okochi, formally surrendered their forces at Camp John Hay, ending World War II in the Philippines.

"And today, the friendship between the United States and the Philippines is stronger than ever. It is a remarkable testament to

a shared journey that we now stand alongside Japan ... united by our common values of democracy, freedom, and peace in the Indo-Pacific," Carlson stated.

She said that the two nations have entered various partnerships, from security and economic prosperity to cultural exchange and humanitarian efforts ensuring a future of stability and opportunity.

The Ambassador said the City of Pines endured so much during World War II but the city rose from the ashes, demonstrating the resilience and strength of its people.

To honor this legacy, Carlson announced the launching of a virtual tour of the historic US Ambassador's Residence now accessible online to everyone around the world. She said that this serves as a reminder of the sacrifices that shaped the present and a symbol of the partnership that continues to flourish.

"This initiative ensures the proud heritage we share is preserved for the future generations, inviting all to reflect on our past as we

PDIC REPORTS OVER 150-M FULLY INSURED DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS AS OF MARCH 2025

DAVAO CITY—The Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) announced that as of end of March 2025, a total of 151.3 million deposit accounts, representing 93.70 percent of all deposit accounts in the country, are all fully insured under the New Maximum Deposit Insurance Coverage (MDIC) of 1 million pesos per depositor, per bank. Speaking during PDIC 101: Understanding Deposit Insurance with local media in Davao City at a local hotel in Davao City, PDIC officials said insured

build a hopeful tomorrow," Carlson said.

She also moved to further strengthen the alliance of the two countries, addressing the challenges and ensuring that the lessons of history guide them toward a more peaceful and prosperous world.

During the ceremony, four living veterans were recognized, namely; Sixta Fabula, Angelo Andrada, Florence Marasigan, and Ernesto Luis. [DEG-PIA CAR] **BY DEBBIE GASINGAN**

deposits now amount to 20.07 trillion pesos, or 24.76 percent of the total banking system.

PDIC Vice President Jose G. Villaret, Jr. explained that the increase in coverage, which took effect on March 15, 2025, is part of the agency's continuing effort to safeguard the hard-earned savings of Filipinos and strengthen public trust in the banking sector.

He also underscored the advantages of keeping funds in the banks, noting that deposits are protected from physical risks such as theft, fire or deterioration, unlike cash kept at home.

"Kapag meron tayong pera sa banko, alam natin na may deposit insurance. We know our money is protected, hindi ito pwedeng kainin ng anay o manakaw ng tao. And if the bank fails, there's protection for you," he said. (When we place our money in the bank, we are assured that it is covered by deposit insurance. This means our funds are protected—they cannot be damaged by termites, stolen, or lost. Moreover, in the event of bank failure, there is a safeguard in place to ensure our financial security).

Villaret assured that in the rare event of a bank closure, PDIC guarantees deposit insurance coverage of up to 1 million pesos per depositor, per bank, providing both financial security to account holders.

The Davao City leg of the PDIC 101 marks the third run of the program in 2025, following sessions in Naga City in May and Cebu City in July. The initiative aims to raise public awareness on deposit insurance and clarify PDIC's roles as the state deposit insurer, co-regulator of banks, while giving media a platform to engage directly with the agency. (PIA/FRG) **BY FERLIE GUMBOK**

DREDGING OF LAHAR-FILLED WATERWAYS IN NEGOC TOWN TO PROCEED

NEGROS OCCIDENTAL (PIA)—The provincial government here is expected to send heavy equipment into La Castellana town to extract hardened lahar from waterways, which has caused water levels to rise quickly during periods of heavy rainfall.

Provincial Administrator lawyer Rayfrando Diaz told the media, September 1, that dredging of lahar-filled waterways is critical to prevent further flooding in communities, especially amid the monsoon season. Diaz said the provincial government will bring in

backhoes, dump trucks, and an engineering team for dredging and clearing operations in creeks and other water channels in La Castellana.

"We will start with the clearing of the roads then dredge the creek," the official assured, after downpour on August 31 led to the evacuation of many families in La Castellana due to overflowing of waterways.

The capacity of these waterways to hold water has greatly reduced in recent months due to accumulated volcanic materials brought about by

previous Kanlaon Volcano eruptions.

Diaz emphasized, however, that the removed materials will be transported to a nearby Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park (MKNP) facility for stockpiling, as resources from within the Natural Park cannot be sold for commercial use nor hauled outside the protected area. In March, in anticipation of this year's La Niña, the MKNP Protected Area Management Board approved a resolution allowing La Castellana to clear waterways of debris obstructing the natural flow

of water.

The resolution emphasizes, however, that any material removed shall remain within the MKNP to mitigate any potential abuse of the natural park's resources.

Meanwhile, the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) Negros Island Region (NIR) recommends finding a long-term solution to this issue that will be included in the Kanlaon Recovery Plan. (AGP/BPS/PIA Negros Occidental) **BY BERNARD CEASAR SUSBILLA**

AMENDED INVESTORS LEASE ACT TO BOOST EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MANILA – Investments and employment opportunities in the agriculture and industry sectors, among others, are seen to be bolstered by the amended Investors' Lease Act, which extends the lease of private lands to up to 99 years.

Republic Act (RA) 12252, which was signed into law by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Sept. 3, 2025, is an amendment of the 1993 law Investors' Lease Act, otherwise known as RA 7652, that allowed for a 50-year term, renewable once for up to 25 years.

The new law states that it provides for "a flexible and dynamic policy" to allow foreign investors to establish "industrial

factories, assembly or processing plants, agro-industrial enterprises, land development for industrial or commercial use, tourism, agriculture, agro-forestry, ecological conservation, and other similar priority productive endeavors."

It, however, stressed that only investors who have approved and registered investments under the Foreign Investments Act, the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises (CREATE) Act, the CREATE More Act, and similar measures are qualified for the longer-term lease.

It also requires the lease contracts to be registered with the Registry of Deeds where the property is located.

Special Assistant to the President for Investment and Economic Affairs Frederick Go said the new law "is a catalyst for agriculture, industrialization, technology transfer, and investment-led growth."

"We have been uncompetitive relative to regional peers for too long because of short-term land leases and land ownership restrictions. This law opens doors for sustainable, long-term investments and affirms that the Philippines is ready to compete globally," he said in a statement.

"It will help create quality jobs and better opportunities for Filipinos." (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

PSEI TAKES A BREATH, PHP GAINS VS. USD

MANILA – Bargain hunting eventually lifted the Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) on Thursday, and the peso closed sideways at the 56-level against the greenback.

After several days of slide, the local bourse's main index rose by 0.39 percent to 6,106.92 points, and the All Shares by 0.39 percent to 3,677.92 points.

All the sectoral indices also finished with gains, led by the Property and the Mining and Oil, which both rose by 1.08 percent.

Services increased by 0.78 percent, Financials, 0.27 percent; Holding Firms, 0.10 percent; and Industrial, 0.06 percent. Volume reached 1.06 billion shares, amounting

to PHP4.8 billion. Advancers led decliners at 111 to 88 while 53 shares were unchanged.

"The market saw a slight relief as investors engaged in bargain hunting, taking advantage of cheaper stock prices," Luis Limlingan, Regina Capital Development Corporation head of sales, said.

"Moreover, the upcoming inflation report, expected tomorrow, could serve as a key catalyst that may influence how the stock market performs in the coming weeks," he added. The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) is scheduled to report the domestic economy's August 2025 inflation report on Friday, and consensus

is a rate of 1.5 percent, partly on the impact of weather disturbances since last month.

Last July, the rate of price increases slipped to 0.9 percent from month-ago's 1.4 percent, bringing the seven-month average to 1.7 percent.

The local currency also ended on a positive note, finishing at 56.98 to a dollar from its 57.3 close on Wednesday.

It opened the day at 57.3, better than its 57.51 start in the previous session. It traded between 57.32 and 56.98, bringing the average to 57.21.

Volume reached USD1.46 billion, up from day-ago's USD1.37 billion. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

PAGCOR DONATES MORE PATIENT TRANSPORT VEHICLES

MANILA – The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) said it recently turned over seven new Patient Transport Vehicles (PTVs) to local government units across the country.

In a statement Thursday, PAGCOR said the PTV beneficiaries include Las Piñas City, Tacloban City (Leyte) and the towns of Busuanga (Palawan), San Manuel (Tarlac), Mexico (Pampanga), Kibawe

(Bukidnon), and Indang (Cavite).

PAGCOR chairperson and CEO Alejandro Tengco, who led the ceremonial turnover at the agency's corporate office in Pasay City on Wednesday, said the initiative is part of PAGCOR's commitment to improve healthcare access in far-flung and vulnerable areas.

"This is more than just a turnover of vehicles; it is about saving more lives,"

Tengco said.

The PTVs are fully equipped with a GPS navigation system, ambulance stretcher, medical oxygen, wheelchair, and first aid kit, ensuring safe and efficient transport of patients to the nearest hospital or healthcare facility.

PAGCOR has so far donated a total of 51 emergency vehicles to LGUs, public hospitals, frontline agencies, and

GOV'T STEPS UP MEASURES TO MAINTAIN STABLE INFLATION

MANILA – The government is intensifying efforts to ensure sufficient supply and keep the prices of key commodities affordable despite recent weather disturbances, the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev) said.

DEPDev made the assurance after the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported on Friday that headline inflation picked up to 1.5 percent in August from 0.9 percent in July.

In a briefing, National Statistician Dennis Mapa said the latest data brought the year-to-date average inflation to 1.7 percent, still below the lower end of the government's 2 percent to 4 percent target range.

Mapa said weather disturbances contributed to the increase in food prices last month.

While rice continued to post a deflation of 17 percent in August, fish inflation accelerated to 9.5 percent from 6.3 percent, emerging as the top contributor to overall inflation in August.

This was driven by slow import arrivals, adverse weather, and above-normal rainfall that disrupted fishing activities in key areas.

Vegetable inflation also rose to 10 percent from a 4.7 percent deflation in the previous month.

On the other hand, meat inflation decreased to 7.1 percent from 8.8 percent but continued to be a major contributor to inflation.

The PSA reported that the overall inflation rate for the bottom 30 percent of income households at the national level recorded a slower annual decrease of 0.6 percent in August compared to 0.8 percent in the previous month.

This brings the national average inflation rate for this income group from January to August to 0.4 percent.

"While inflation remains

select military units nationwide, in support of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s thrust to strengthen emergency medical services in at-risk and underserved communities. (PNA) **BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**

broadly manageable, the recent figures highlight how adverse weather conditions directly impact prices," DEPDev Secretary Arsenio Balisacan said. Balisacan cited the importance of closely monitoring the country's weather outlook due to its potential impact on agricultural production.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) has forecast seven to 15 tropical cyclones between September 2025 and February 2026.

He also cited how La Niña conditions, which may develop from September to December, could lead to flooding and crop damage in high-risk areas.

"In anticipation of these weather shocks, we must ramp up preparatory activities and proactively ensure sufficient food supply to protect Filipino consumers from price volatility," he said.

To support production and recovery, the Department of Agriculture's (DA) Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Center allocated agricultural inputs to regional field offices.

These include rice, corn, high-value crop seeds, drugs and biologics for livestock and poultry, and fish stocks with the necessary aquaculture equipment.

Registered farmers affected by extreme weather may also access financial and insurance assistance through the Survival and Recovery Loan Program of the Agricultural Credit Policy Council, indemnification under the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp., and rehabilitation funding through the Quick Response Fund.

"We also welcome the Department of Agriculture's upcoming soft launch of a command center in November that will enhance data-driven management of the food supply chain and improve supply-demand forecasting.

Initially focused on the rice value chain, the system will eventually cover high-value crops, livestock, poultry, and fisheries. It will also establish a central registry of food and cold storage facilities and dry

warehouses, including their stock levels," Balisacan said.

The Food and Drug Administration also approved the commercial use of Volvac BEST (Baculovirus Expressed System Technology) AI plus ND, the country's first avian influenza vaccine.

The vaccine provides immunity against the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) subtype H5N1 and velogenic Newcastle disease, both of which pose serious threats to poultry, public health, and food security.

"We remain committed to implementing strategic policies that ease supply constraints and improve market efficiency. Our priority is to protect Filipinos, especially the most vulnerable, from the impact of rising prices while building resilience in our production systems to ensure stable and affordable food commodities for every household," Balisacan said.

Within-target inflation until 2027

In a separate statement, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said inflation is projected to average below the low end of the target range in 2025, primarily due to the continued easing of rice prices.

"The outlook for inflation is broadly unchanged. For 2026 and 2027, inflation is expected to trend higher but will remain firmly within the 3 percent + 1.0 ppt (percentage point) target range," it said.

The BSP said inflation expectations also remain firmly anchored to the target.

Possible electricity rate adjustments and higher rice tariffs could raise inflationary pressures over the policy horizon.

"Emerging risks will continue to require close monitoring. The Monetary Board will determine the monetary policy response based on the evolving outlook for inflation and growth," the BSP said.

"Going forward, the BSP will safeguard price stability by ensuring monetary policy settings are conducive to sustainable economic growth and employment." (PNA) **BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**



STAR-STUDDED INTERNATIONAL SERIES PH GOLF SET OCT. 23-26

MANILA — South African Dean Burmester and Australian Marc Leishman are among the LIV Golf stars joining the International Series Philippines set at the Sta. Elena Golf Club in Santa Rosa, Laguna from Oct. 23 to 26. Burmester is coming off a breakthrough victory at LIV Golf Miami, where he beat heavyweights Jon Rahm and Joaquin Niemann in a dramatic playoff last April. Leishman, a member of the all-Australian Ripper GC, has won six times on the PGA Tour.

Others in the line-up are Cleeks GC's Richard Bland of England, Iron Heads GC standout Jinichiro Kozuma of Japan,

rising star Danthai Boonma of Thailand, and American John Catlin.

Bland is a two-time Senior Major champion and top-10 finisher at the International Series England last year. He had six top 15 finishes this season on the LIV Golf League, including an impressive fifth place in Adelaide, Australia.

Kozuma, who originally earned his spot through the LIV Golf Promotions event in 2023, had three top 10 finishes, including a runner-up result in Dallas this season.

Boonma is currently No. 5 on the International Series rankings and No. 8 on the Asian Tour Order of Merit after a runner-up finish at the International Series

Morocco.

Catlin has a standout 2024 season, ruling the Asian Tour Order of Merit and securing back-to-back wins at the International Series Macau.

Range Goats GC captain Bubba Watson, 4Aces GC's Patrick Reed, Stinger GC's Charl Schwartzel and Louis Oosthuizen, and Filipino Miguel Tabuena are also seeing action in the International Series Philippines, which is the seventh of 10 enhanced events on the Asian Tour.

The 2025 season covers India, Macau, Japan, Morocco, Indonesia, Cambodia, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Saudi Arabia. **(PNA)**

BY JEAN MALANUM

NU LEADS 16 TEAMS IN SHAKEY'S PRESEASON UNITY CUP

MANILA — Defending champion National University (NU) will be facing a strong challenge in the 2025 Shakey's Super League (SSL) Preseason Unity Cup, which unfolds at the Playtime FilOil Center in San Juan City on Sept. 20.

A total of 16 teams, six from UAAP and all 10 from the NCAA, will fight for the crown in the fourth edition of the league's centerpiece event.

De La Salle University, last year's runner-up, and the University of the East are skipping the tournament as both squads are still rebuilding their core after the departure of some key players.

"Even though we only have 16 teams, we still have a good lineup of

up-and-coming teams with new players on their rosters. We want to showcase, for the very first time, how these players play with each other and against their respective opponents in their respective leagues," said Dr. Ian Laurel, chairperson of SSL organizer Athletic Events and Sports Management, Inc. (ACES), during Wednesday's press conference at the Shakey's Buendia branch.

Also present were Shakey's Pizza Asia Ventures, Inc. (SPAVI) president and chief executive officer Vic Gregorio, SPAVI general manager Oliver Sicam, SPAVI marketing head Regina Asa, PLDT and Smart Communications head of sports Jude

Turcuato, ACES director Ariel Paredes, as well as coaches and key players of participating teams.

The 16 squads will be divided into four groups to play in a single-round robin format in the preliminaries. Four-time champion NU is in Pool A together with Emilio Aguinaldo College, San Beda University, and Lyceum of the Philippines University.

"We will do our best and try to defend the title," said NU head coach Regine Diego.

Pool B is composed of Far Eastern University, Arellano University, Adamson University, and Jose Rizal University.

University of Santo Tomas, University of the Philippines, Mapua University, and Letran are

in Pool C, while College of Saint Benilde, Ateneo de Manila University, San Sebastian College, and University of Perpetual Help System Dalta are in Pool D.

The top two teams in each pool will advance to the next round, where they will be divided into two groups for another round-robin play to determine their rankings in the quarterfinals.

The top two squads after the round will be armed with a twice-to-beat advantage in the crossover quarterfinals. The semifinals and battle for bronze are knockout affairs, while the championship round is a best-of-three series.

All players listed in a team's roster will be fielded under the tournament's

unique all-to-play format.

"The all-to-play rule will be in effect because that's the trademark of our preseason," Laurel said. "This is what the coaches are also looking out for. These will be the combinations they can use in preparation for their mother leagues. And we're excited to have this competition again."

The preseason Unity Cup is the culmination of another successful SSL season. SSL started the year with the record-setting staging of the Shakey's Girls Volleyball Invitational League, which saw the participation of 30 high school squads.

The league then brought elite collegiate volleyball action closer to fans with the three-leg National

EALA ADVANCES TO GUADALAJARA 125 OPEN SEMIS

MANILA — Filipino tennis ace Alex Eala defeated Italian Nicole Fossa Huergo, 7-6 (2), 6-2, Friday morning (Manila time) to reach the Guadalajara 125 Open semifinal at the Panamerican Tennis Center hardcourt in Zapopan, Mexico.

The second-seeded Eala will face American Kayla Day, who ousted third seed and world's No. 84 Emiliana Arango of Colombia, 7-5,

6-2, in the other quarterfinal match of the tournament, also known as the Abierto Zapopan.

Eala, ranked No. 75 in the world, defeated Dutch Arianne Hartono, 6-2, 6-2 (1st round) and American Varvara Lepchenko, 6-7 (3), 7-6 (3), 6-3 (2nd round).

Meanwhile, the other semifinal match features Russian Maria Kozyreva against Hungarian Panna

Udvardy.

Kozyreva beat American Alana Smith, 7-6 (10), 6-4, while Udvardy stunned fourth seed British Francesca Jones, 6-4, 4-6, 6-3.

Top seed Russian Kamilla Rakhimova, the 2024 champion, was eliminated by 2020 Australian Open Junior champion Victoria Jimenez Kasintsev of Andorra, 1-6, 6-7 (2), in the first round. **(PNA)**

BY JEAN MALANUM

YBAÑEZ EAGER TO LEARN FROM FIVB MEN'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP CAMPAIGN

MANILA — For Josh Ybañez, competing in the FIVB Men's Volleyball World Championship 2025 is an opportunity to hone his skills and learn from the experience.

The 5-foot-7 pride of General Santos City, who is among 21 players in the Alas Pilipinas pool, vows to perform well in the 32-nation event set at the SM Mall of Asia Arena and Smart-Araneta Coliseum on Sept. 12 to 28.

"I will just focus on doing my best in every game and learning from each match. That's the only way I can grow," the 22-year-old Ybañez said in a press statement issued by the Philippine National Volleyball Federation

(PNVF) on Thursday.

As an outside hitter at the collegiate level, the two-time UAAP champion from the University of Santo Tomas, is used to pressure every time he steps on the court.

"Pressure is constant. It's always there, even if it's not the World Championship. There's always pressure. So, I just embrace it and focus on loving what I do," said Ybañez, who has been embracing a defensive role under Italian coach Angiolino Frigoni.

The SEA V.League Best Libero embraces every moment with focus and determination, letting his passion for the sport guide him through every challenge as Alas Pilipinas

prepares for the world meet.

"It's an honor for us to represent the Philippines for the first time at the World Championship, and as they say, this is history. I'm happy, and for sure, I'm going to learn so much from our opponents and from the tournament itself," said Ybañez.

The Philippines will kick off the tournament against Tunisia — match time moved to 4:30 p.m. from the original 6 p.m. — at the MOA Arena, following a festive opening ceremony headlined by K-pop group BOYNEXTDOOR and Cebuana singer-songwriter-actress Karencitta.

Fans can secure their seats for the historic event, which will see Alas Pilipinas face Egypt on Sept. 16 and Iran on Sept. 18, by purchasing tickets online at the official website: <https://www.philippineswch2025.com>.

"I hope all Filipinos will support us, because of course, there are teams like the USA and others that are also favorites among Filipinos. So, I hope they cheer for us too," Ybañez said. **(PNA)**

BY JEAN MALANUM

Invitationals held in Mindanao, the Visayas, and Luzon. The winners were NU (Davao), Adamson (Cebu), and FEU (Batangas).

"Together, let's make sure the preseason Unity Cup becomes a tremendous success and will be better than before, better than others and better than others," Gregorio said. **(PNA)**

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