



GENTRISEÑOS RECEIVE FREE HEALTH SERVICES DURING PGC'S MEDICAL MISSION

A total of 450 residents from Brgy. Panungyanan, General Trias City benefited from a medical and dental mission conducted by Provincial Government of Cavite on

October 23. Spearheaded by Office of the Provincial Governor and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, the activity was successfully carried out in collaboration with the local

government unit.

Of the total beneficiaries, 339 individuals received medical consultations and treatments, while 69 availed the free dental extractions, 11 underwent

x-rays and 31 received ECG services. Additionally, maintenance medicines and essential supplements were distributed to help support the overall health and well-being of the

recipients.

Sixth District Board Member Kerby Salazar graced and supported the event, together with City Councilor Kyle Salazar. The initiative underscores the commitment of the provincial government in delivering accessible healthcare services to its constituents. — **R. DONES/ CAVITE PIO**

The Provincial Government of Cavite, under the leadership of Governor Abeng Remulla, brought the Ugnayan sa Barangay program to Barangay Pag-Asa II, City of Imus on October 21, as part of its ongoing efforts to deliver government services directly to the people.

Together with Governor Abeng were Vice Governor Ram Revilla Bautisa, 3rd District Board Members Lloyd Jaro and Arnel Cantimbuhan, City Mayor Alex Advincula, Vice Mayor Homer Saquilayan, and the City Councilors of Imus.

Through the event, the provincial government reinforces its ties with local communities by directly engaging with residents. The initiative demonstrates the province's dedication to responsive and inclusive governance, ensuring that services, support, and development reach every community across the province.---**R.TANAEL / CAVITE PIO**



MAGALLANES SENIORS RECEIVE FREE MEDICINES IN CELEBRATION OF ELDERLY WEEK

In celebration of Elderly Week in Magallanes, Cavite, a medical mission was held on October 24 at Barangay San Agustin, offering free medicines and health assistance to senior citizens.

A total of 244 elderly beneficiaries received free medicines during the activity, which

aimed to promote the health and well-being of the community's senior residents. The event was successfully conducted through the collaboration between the local government unit (LGU) and the Provincial Government of Cavite (PGC). — **R. DONES / CAVITE PIO**

PRESO, SINILBIHAN NG WARRANT OF ARREST SA KULUNGAN

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, City of Imus, Cavite — Sinilbihan ng Warrant of Arrest ng mga tauhan ng General Mariano Alvarez (GMA) Municipal Police Station ang isang preso na nasa listahan ng Most Wanted Person (Provincial Level) sa loob ng kulungan sa GMA, Cavite dakong alas-6:30 ng gabi ng Oktubre 30, 2025.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL BONNA A OBMERGA, Hepe ng GMA MPS, ang akusado na si alyas “Ardy,” residente ng GMA, Cavite. Isinagawa ng mga Warrant Operatives ng GMA MPS ang pagsilbi sa Warrant of Arrest laban

sa suspek para sa kasong paglabag sa Republic Act 10591 (Comprehensive Firearms and Ammunition Regulation Act) para service of sentence. Ang operasyon ay naisagawa gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD) bilang dokumentasyon.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, “Ang matagumpay na pagpapatupad ng warrant of arrest laban sa mga wanted person ay bunga ng walang humpay na dedikasyon ng ating kapulisan na ipatupad ang batas at panatilihin ang kapayapaan sa Cavite.”

REGIONAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON, NAARESTO NG GENERAL TRIAS CCPS

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Isang Regional Level Most Wanted Person ang naaresto ng mga tauhan ng General Trias City Component Police Station sa matagumpay na operasyon laban sa mga wanted person sa Brgy. San Juan 1, General Trias City, Cavite, dakong alas-11:00 ng umaga ng Oktubre 30, 2025.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL BISMARCK S MENDOZA, hepe ng General Trias CCPS, ang naarestong akusado na si alyas John, at residente ng Trece Martires City, Cavite.

Ayon sa ulat, nagsagawa ng operasyon ang mga warrant personnel ng General Trias CCPS laban sa mga wanted person gamit ang Alternative Recording Device na nagresulta sa pagkakaaresto ng akusado na may kinahaharap na mga kaso sa Lascivious Conduct sa ilalim ng Section 5(b) ng Republic Act 7610 (Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act) at Statutory Rape, na inilabas ng Family Court, Fourth Judicial Region, Branch

5, Trece Martires City, Cavite noong Setyembre 1, 2025. Ang kaso ng Lascivious Conduct ay may inirekomendang piyansa na ₱200,000.00, habang ang Statutory Rape ay walang piyansa.

Sa kasalukuyan, ang akusado ay p a n s a m a n t a l a n g nakakulong sa General Trias City Custodial Facility, Brgy. Bagumbayan, General Trias City, Cavite, habang inihahanda ang kaukulang dokumento para sa pagsumite sa korte.

Pinuri ni PCOL ARIEL R. RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite Police Provincial Office (PPO), ang mga tauhan ng General Trias CCPS sa ilalim ng pamumuno ni PLTCOL BISMARCK S MENDOZA, sa kanilang mabilis at epektibong aksyon sa pag-aresto sa isa pang Most Wanted Person sa rehiyon.

“Ang pagkakaaresto sa akusado ay patunay ng walang tigil na kampanya ng Cavite PNP laban sa mga kriminal at wanted person. Patuloy ang ating paninindigan para sa hustisya at kaligtasan ng mamamayan,” ani PCOL Red.

ARESTADO NG CARMONA CCPS ANG REGIONAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON SA LAGUNA

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Matagumpay na naaresto ng mga tauhan ng Carmona City Component Police Station ang isang Regional Level Most Wanted Person sa isinagawang operasyon sa Biñan City, Laguna dakong alas-5:00 ng hapon ng Oktubre 29, 2025.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL MELVIN M BALBA, hepe ng Carmona CCPS, ang naarestong suspek na si alyas “Reynald”, at residente ng Biñan City, Laguna.

Batay sa ulat, sa nabanggit na oras at lugar, ang mga operatiba ng Carmona CCPS, at gamit ang dalawang (2) Alternative Recording Devices, ay nagsagawa ng operasyon laban sa nasabing wanted person na nagresulta sa matagumpay na pagkakaaresto nito.

Ang warrant of arrest ay inilabas labansa akusado para sa mga kasong Sexual Assault sa ilalim ng Article 266-A (2) ng Revised Penal Code kaugnay ng Section 5(b) ng Republic Act 7610

(3 counts), at Rape sa ilalim ng Article 266-A (1) kaugnay ng Article 266-B ng RPC, na inamyendahan ng RA 11648.

Ang warrant of arrest ay inisyu ng Regional Trial Court, Branch 109, noong Oktubre 22, 2025, na may kabuuang bail recommended na Php 600,000.00 para sa tatlong bilang ng Sexual Assault, at walang piyansa para sa kasong Rape.

Kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng Carmona CCPS ang akusado habang ang warrant of arrest ay nakatakda ng isauli sa korte na naglabas nito.

Pinuri ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite Police Provincial Office. “Ang matagumpay na pagkakaaresto sa isang Regional Level Most Wanted Person ay patunay ng mas pinatibay na kampanya ng Cavite PNP laban sa lahat ng uri ng kriminalidad. Patuloy ang ating malasakit at dedikasyon sa paghahatid ng hustisya at seguridad sa publiko,” ani PCOL Red.

ARESTADO NG GEN. TRIAS PNP ANG ISANG PROVINCIAL MOST WANTED PERSON

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Isang matagumpay na operasyon ang isinagawa ng mga tauhan ng General Trias Component City Police Station na nagresulta sa pagkakaaresto ng isang Provincial Level Most Wanted Person, dakong alas-9:00 ng gabi noong Oktubre 27, 2025.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL BISMARCK S MENDOZA, Acting Chief of Police ng General Trias CCPS, ang akusado na si Arsenio, at residente ng Gen. Trias City, Cavite.

Batay sa ulat, nagsagawa ng operasyon ang mga Warrant Personnel ng Gen. Trias CCPS laban sa mga wanted persons gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD) na nagresulta sa pagkakaaresto ng nasabing akusado sa bisa ng Warrant of Arrest para sa kasong Acts of Lasciviousness under Art. 335 of the Revised Penal Code in relation to Sec. 5 (b) of R.A. 7610, na inisyu ng Family Court, Fourth Judicial Region, Branch 5, Trece Martires City, Cavite, na may Php180,000.00 na

piyansa.

Ang naarestong akusado ay panandaliang nakapiit sa General Trias City Custodial Facility, Brgy. Bagumbayan, Gen. Trias City, Cavite.

Sa pahayag ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite Police Provincial Office, kaniyang pinuri ang mabilis na aksyon ng mga tauhan ng Gen. Trias CCPS at binigyang-diin ang kahalagahan ng patuloy na kampanya laban sa mga wanted persons sa lalawigan. “Ang bawat pagkakaaresto

MAHIGIT ISANG MILYONG PISO HALAGA NG SHABU, NASAMSAM; DALAWANG HIGH-VALUE INDIVIDUAL, ARESTADO NG DASMARINAS CCPS

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Dalawang high-value individual (HVI) ang naaresto sa matagumpay na buy-bust operation na isinagawa ng mga tauhan ng Dasmariñas City Component Police Station sa Dasmariñas City, Cavite dakong alas-2:40 ng hapon ng Oktubre 29, 2025.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL REGINO L OÑATE, hepe ng Dasmariñas CCPS, ang mga naarestong suspek na sina alyas “Cel” babae at alyas “Peter” lalaki, na pawang residente ng Famy, Laguna.

Ayon sa ulat, nahuli ang mga suspek matapos nilang bentahan ang isang pulis na nagkunwaring poseur buyer. Sa pagkakaaresto, nakumpiska mula sa mga suspek ang mga sumusunod na ebidensya: lima (5) pirasong heat-sealed transparent plastic sachets at isang (1) knot tie-sealed transparent plastic bag

na naglalaman ng puting kristal na substansiya na hinihinalang shabu na may kabuuang tinatayang timbang na 150.00 gramo at standard drug price na ₱1,020,000.00; isang (1) pirasong Php500.00 (genuine) bill; 37 piraso ng Php1,000.00 boodle money; at isang (1) Honda Civic na kulay pula, na ginamit ng mga suspek sa kanilang ilegal na gawain.

Ang mga operatiba ng Dasmariñas CCPS sa ilalim ng koordinasyon sa PDEA, ay nagsagawa ng buy-bust operation gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD).

Ang mga suspek ay agad na binigyan ng kanilang Miranda at Anti-Torture Rights at kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng Dasmariñas CCPS para sa pagsasampa ng kaukulang kaso sa paglabag ng Sections 5, 11, at 26, Article II ng Republic Act 9165 (Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002).

Ayon kay PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite Police Provincial Office, kanyang pinuri ang mahusay na operasyon ng Dasmariñas CCPS sa ilalim ng pamumuno ni PLTCOL REGINO L OÑATE. “Ang tagumpay na ito ay patunay ng patuloy na dedikasyon ng ating kapulisan sa Cavite sa pagsugpo sa kalakalan ng ilegal na droga. Patuloy nating palalakasin ang operasyon laban sa mga HVI upang mapanatiling ligtas at maayos ang ating mga komunidad,” ani PCOL Red.

ng mga wanted persons ay tagumpay ng ating komunidad. Patuloy nating ipatutupad ang batas upang mapanatili ang kapayapaan at seguridad sa buong Cavite,” ani PCOL Red.

CAVITE ENTREPRENEURS EMPOWERED THROUGH TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Over 150 participants composed of local entrepreneurs, members of various cooperatives across Cavite, Public Employment Service Office (PESO) Managers from different local government units, and representatives from various Provincial Government of Cavite offices gathered on October 24, 2025, for the event "Empowering Cavite Entrepreneurs Through Technology."

Held at the Admin Function Hall of the New Provincial Government Center, the program was spearheaded by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) in partnership with Board Member Camille V. Del Rosario, Chairperson of the Committee on Transportation and Communications, and the Provincial Information and Communications Office (PICO).

In her welcome remarks, BM Del Rosario underscored the significance of information technology as an essential tool in daily life and business. She emphasized that "technology is no longer optional—it is a necessity that drives productivity, efficiency, and innovation."

A video message from Dir. Emelita Bagsit, Regional Director of DOST CALABARZON, inspired participants to see the value of science and technology in community and economic development. "Science works best when it works for the people," she said, adding that "small innovations can spark big changes."

Provincial Administrator Engr. Gilbert V. Gandia

also delivered an inspirational message, encouraging participants to fully embrace technological advancements to further improve and grow their businesses. "Let us continue to explore and use technology to enhance productivity and competitiveness," he said.

The event featured in-depth discussions on DOST programs and initiatives designed to support and empower local entrepreneurs.

During the program, Provincial Director Gilda S. De Jesus presented the StartUp Program, highlighting how innovation serves as a key driver in accelerating enterprise growth. This was followed by Ms. Verjo Angelie M. Sisante, who discussed the Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program 4.0 (SETUP 4.0) and Innovation for Filipinos Working Distantly from the Philippines (iFWD PH), emphasizing the importance of innovation-driven solutions in strengthening small businesses. Meanwhile, Ms. Anna Marie S. Daigan elaborated on DOST's Community-Based Project Grants-in-Aids (GIA), Community Empowerment thru Science & Technology (CEST), and the iSTART and SMART Cities and Sustainable Communities Programs, all of which aim to build resilient and sustainable communities through the effective use of science and technology.

An open forum followed the sessions, providing an avenue for participants to engage directly with the speakers and explore opportunities for partnership and support.

The highlight of the event

COOP I-CREATE EMPOWERS COOPERATIVE LEADERS THROUGH PROGRESSIVE MANAGEMENT TRAINING

The Provincial Government of Cavite, through the Office of the Provincial Cooperatives Development Officer (OPCDO) in partnership with the PAMANA Development Cooperative Federation successfully conducted the Capacity Training Seminar for Cooperatives, Coop i-CREATE: A Ladderized Training for Cooperative Managers and Chairperson, from September 17, 18, 23, October 6 and 22, 2025 at the New Provincial Government Center.

was the sharing of success stories from Cavite-based entrepreneurs Mr. Noriel Bergonio of Daine 1 & 2 Farmers Association, Inc. and Mr. Harry Binos, of Fish2Go, who both shared how government assistance and DOST programs helped them expand and sustain their businesses.

Member Lloyd Emman D. Jaro, Chairperson of the Committee on Cooperatives and Rural Development, delivered the Closing Remarks, commending DOST and all participants for their commitment to empowering local entrepreneurs. He emphasized the importance of continuous collaboration between the government and the private sector to ensure inclusive and sustainable growth in Cavite's business landscape.

Through initiatives like this, Cavite continues to strengthen its position as a hub for innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship — paving the way for a smarter, more progressive province. ---**A. CABRERA/ CAVITE PIO**

This capacity building seminar is a structured professional development program designed to equip cooperative leaders and managers with essential management skills and knowledge to effectively sustain and grow their organizations.

The program featured a progressive curriculum, beginning with foundational concepts and advancing to specialized areas of cooperative management. Topics included Organizational Assessment, Business Model Design, Strategic Business Planning, Organizational Design and Human Resource Management, Sales and Marketing Management, Operations Management, and Financial Management.

Dr. Aldrin Antivola, the resource speaker, guided participants through interactive discussions and workshops, emphasizing practical applications of each topic. The training culminated in the presentation and defense of participants' strategic plans, highlighting their understanding and commitment to applying learned concepts within their respective cooperatives.

The activity concluded with a graduation ceremony, recognizing the dedication and achievements of the participants who completed the comprehensive program.

Through initiatives like Coop i-CREATE, the Provincial Government of Cavite continues to promote sustainable cooperative growth, enhance leadership capacities, and strengthen the cooperative movement as a key driver of inclusive local economic development. — **R. TANAEL/ CAVITE PIO**

EDITORIAL

Pagbabalik-Tanaw sa kasaysayan, maranasan na rin

Mga namamasyal sa Luneta, maaari nang mag-arkila ng mga tradisyunal na kasuotan simula sa Disyembre. Sa pamamagitan nito, hindi ka na lamang basta nagbabalik-tanaw sa nakaraan, para ka na ring nakapaloob sa nakaraang iyong binabalik tanaw.

Isang magandang proyekto ang bagay na ito gayong mappreserba ang ating nakaraan bilang mga Pilipino. Maaaring mahaming ito sa mga aktibidad na maaaring gawin sa ibang bansa gaya ng Japan at Korea upang ipakita at iparanas ang kanilang kasaysayan kaya naman upang maipakita naman ang sariling atin, isa itong magandang hakbang upang ipamahagi ang kaalaman at kagandahan ng kultura ng Pilipinas.

Ngunit kung sakaling maging matagumpay ang proyektong ito, sana ay hindi lamang sa Luneta Park ang maaaring magkaroon ng ganitong aktibidad. Sana ay magkaroon din sa iba't-ibang lugar na naipreserba ang kasaysayan ng bansa nang sa gayon ay hindi lamang sa Luneta maipapamahagi ang kaalaman at pagpaparanas ng nakaraan ng ating bansa.

CAVITE GAZETTE PUBLISHING

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

Ang **CAVITE GAZETTE PUBLISHING** ay inilalathala tuwing araw ng Martes na may tanggapan sa 217 Ligas 1, Bacoar, Cavite.

Contact #: 09954361217

Email: cavitegazette@gmail.com

PAUNAWA: Ang dyaryong ito ay natanggap ng kontribusyon na balita, artikulo sariling pananaw o opinyon ng mga kolumnista ang nilalaman ng kanilang mga artikulo ay wala pong kinalaman at pananagutan dito ang pamunuan ng publishing

ADVERTISING RATES
COMMERCIAL - - - - P200/COL.CM
LEGAL NOTICES - - - P160/COL.CM

DMW: DEATH OF FILIPINO CREW MEMBER OF CRUISE SHIP UNDER INVESTIGATION

MANILA – The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) assured that the death of a Filipino crew member of MV Arvia, a cruise ship operated by P&O Cruises, is now under investigation. In a statement on Thursday, the DMW confirmed the death of the Filipino seafarer whose identity is still on hold, as it expressed deep condolences to the bereaved family.

"The licensed manning agency that deployed the seafarer reported that the circumstances surrounding the crew member's death are still under investigation and that they are in ongoing coordination with the vessel owner to ensure a thorough and transparent process," the DMW said.

"We join the family in mourning and send our heartfelt sympathies. May our kababayan's (compatriot's) soul rest in peace."

Reports stated that the Filipino crew member died while on board the vessel

on Sunday during its voyage from Southampton to Tenerife.

The cruise ship is on a 14-night transatlantic crossing to the Caribbean after leaving Southampton on Friday and is scheduled to arrive in Barbados on Nov. 7.

The DMW said all necessary support is provided to the seafarer's family, including regular updates on every development of the case.

"This loss is profoundly mourned throughout the maritime community. Our seafarers serve with dedication and bravery in international waters, and we honor their service, professionalism, and sacrifice. The department remains committed to protecting the welfare, safety, and dignity of every Filipino worker abroad, especially during times of grief and hardship," it said. (PNA) **BY MARITA MOAJE**

DEPED MULLS LEASING CLOSED PRIVATE SCHOOLS TO EASE CLASSROOM SHORTAGE

MANILA – The Department of Education (DepEd) is exploring the feasibility of leasing closed private schools and other underutilized private properties as part of its innovative approach to ease the country's classroom shortage, which reached over 165,000 in 2022.

In collaboration with the Student First Coalition (SFC) and various government agencies, DepEd recently conducted a Classroom Market Scoping Activity to assess available properties and potential partnership models with the private sector.

The initiative aims to make classroom leasing a scalable and cost-effective strategy nationwide.

"We need to think creatively if we want to move fast," DepEd Secretary Sonny

Angara said in a statement on Thursday.

"If there are schools or buildings sitting idle that can be used, let's open them for the benefit of our learners who need classrooms now."

The market scoping activity presented DepEd's Standard Classroom Specifications, current classroom needs, and details of its Leasing Pilot Program, followed by a forum with property developers and government partners.

Among those who participated were major real estate firms including Colliers, Santos Knight Frank, Leechiu, Jones Lang LaSalle Inc., Lobien Realty Group and REBAP Inc.

Key government agencies such as the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development, Bases Conversion and Development Authority, Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Armed Forces of the Philippines Corps of Engineers also took part in the discussion.

"This effort turns the classroom shortage crisis into an opportunity for collaboration and innovation," DepEd Undersecretary for Strategic Management

Ronald Mendoza said.

"Instead of waiting two to three years for new classrooms to be constructed, we are identifying existing facilities that can be adapted within six months to meet students' needs."

One of the first properties being considered for lease is the Pita Property, formerly the Rainbow Institute of Learning, Inc., in Laguna. The 1,385-square-meter campus, closed since 2020, sits only two kilometers from Don Manuel Rivera Memorial Integrated National High School, which currently lacks 22 classrooms.

The property includes seven classrooms, cafeteria, an office and a covered court with a stage

2 FIRMS PARTNER TO OFFER MALL-TO-MALL TRAVEL TO COMMUTERS

MANILA – The commuting public will have an alternative mode of travel to and from the city/province they plan to visit, especially during holidays, such as Undas, and school and Christmas breaks.

Two private companies, Park-Solutions, Inc. (PSI) and Del Monte Land Transport Bus Co., Inc. (DLTB), partnered through a memorandum of agreement (MOA) to provide an efficient, reliable, and organized travel experience for the public.

Under the partnership, mall-to-mall travel from the National Capital Region (NCR) to some parts of Luzon will be made available.

"This is a game-changer with regard to the riding public. It's a mall-to-mall operation between SM Malls in Metro Manila and SM Malls at the outskirts of Metro Manila," Don Morales, DLTB Co. executive vice president, said during the recent signing of the MOA in Pasay City.

The PSI operates public transport terminals in all SM malls nationwide.

Morales said they are operating at SM North EDSA, going to Batangas, and in the coming days, they will start operations at

— facilities that DepEd believes could be quickly repurposed for immediate use.

DepEd clarified that the leasing initiative will complement, not replace, its ongoing infrastructure programs such as the Flexible School Building Implementation Plan and public-private partnerships for school construction.

Insights gathered from the market scoping activity will be presented at the upcoming Classroom Summit, where DepEd aims to consolidate reform proposals and design new models for school infrastructure delivery. (PNA) **BY MA. TERESA MONTEMAYOR**

SM Fairview, going to SM Lucena.

He also said that under the partnership, they are planning to expand operations in the first quarter of next year, with routes from Metro Manila to Southern Luzon and Northern Luzon and vice versa.

"And furthermore, going to the north, SM North EDSA going to SM Clark, and SM Fairview going to the south, going to SM Naga and SM Legaspi," the DLTB Co. official said.

He also said there are plans to acquire about 100 new buses and those with comfort rooms for long trips.

"This is very convenient for the passengers. Instead of going to bus terminals, they would rather go to SM malls and, in return, increase the foot traffic of mall goers," Morales said.

"This is very new for the landscape of the transport industry. We're looking forward and rest assured that we will give the best and efficient service to the riding public."

According to Ferdinand Oroza, PSI chief executive officer/president, aside from providing the facility, they will also operate the automated purse system.

"We will handle the automated purse system where they can book a mall-to-mall ride. It will be very convenient to the public since they will only have one stop – they can go to the mall, and wait for their ride," he said.

"For example, if they are at SM MOA and decide to go to Baguio. They can utilize the mall, go shopping while waiting for their scheduled trip."

During peak seasons, such as Undas, or the All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, summer vacation, and the Christmas and New Year holidays, bus terminals, airports, and seaports in the National Capital Region are packed with people going home to their provinces to celebrate the occasions. (PNA) **BY FERDINAND PATINIO**

DHSUD ORDERS PRIVATE DEVELOPERS TO COMPLY WITH BALANCED HOUSING LAW

MANILA – The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) on Thursday directed private real estate developers to strictly comply with the Balanced Housing Development Program (BHDP), as mandated under Republic Act 10884.

DHSUD gave the order after it found out that around 600 private development projects are non-compliant with the law's requirement on balanced housing over the past four years.

DHSUD Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling said the violations were uncovered amid the agency's ongoing Zero Backlog Program, which reviews pending and existing projects across all regional offices.

"We discovered these alleged violations recently as we pursue the department-wide Zero Backlog Program. We intend to correct this soonest to enhance production of socialized housing projects for the benefit of underprivileged Filipinos," Aliling said.

Under RA 10884, which amended the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992 (RA 7279), developers of new residential subdivision and condominium projects are required to provide socialized housing, equivalent to at least 15 percent for subdivisions and 5 percent for condominiums.

Developers may comply through onsite construction, development of new socialized housing settlements, joint ventures or contributions to the socialized housing fund under the incentivized compliance scheme.

The law also imposes penalties for violations, including a fine of up to PHP500,000 for the first offense and the issuance of cease-and-desist orders (CDOs) against non-compliant developers.

"In compliance with the law and existing rules, we already started sending orders against these developers for them to start complying," Aliling said.

He added that on average,

erring developers face around PHP600,000 in penalties aside from the CDOs, which suspend the sale of housing units until the orders are lifted.

DHSUD Senior Undersecretary Sharon Faith Paquiz, who leads the Zero Backlog Program and oversees the Housing and Real Estate Development Regulation Bureau, said non-compliance cases surfaced during the backtracking of pending regulatory processes in regional offices.

"We need to strictly implement the law and our guidelines. We will continue to issue the necessary orders to the concerned developers for their compliance," Paquiz said.

To further strengthen coordination, Aliling is set to meet with leaders of major real estate developer groups for a dialogue aimed at reinforcing awareness and cooperation in implementing the balanced housing program. (PNA)

BY MA. TERESA MONTEMAYOR

GUTIERREZ TAKES OATH AS NCSC CHAIR

MANILA — Former Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez on Thursday took her oath as chairperson of the National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC) before Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo.

The first female Ombudsman and former acting Secretary of the Department of Justice (DOJ) was accompanied by her three children.

Gutierrez dedicated her career to public service, with significant achievements as chief presidential legal counsel and in various capacities within the DOJ.

Her extensive experience and commitment to justice, transparency and the welfare of Filipinos are expected to guide her leadership as she undertakes the crucial responsibility of addressing the rights and needs of senior citizens in the country.

As chairperson of the NCSC, Gutierrez aims to champion policies and programs that will enhance the lives of senior citizens, ensuring their voices are heard and their contributions to society are recognized. (PNA) **BY BENJAMIN PULTA**

SOTTO VOWS PRUDENCE AS ICI SEEKS CHARGES VS. SENATORS

MANILA — Senate President Vicente Sotto III on Wednesday said the chamber would prudently act and uphold due process after the Independent Commission for Infrastructure (ICI) recommended the filing of cases against Senators Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada and Joel Villanueva before the Office of the Ombudsman over alleged irregularities in flood control projects.

The ICI's referral — its second since starting its investigation on Sept. 19 — also named former Department of Public Works and Highways Undersecretary Roberto Bernardo, former Representatives Zaldy Co and Mitch Cajayon-Uy, and Commission on Audit Commissioner Mario Lipana among those recommended for prosecution.

"There are constitutional, legal, and political issues to these investigations. And there will be as many opinions as there are lawyers," Sotto said in a Viber message to reporters. He said the Senate would adhere to the rule of law and avoid prejudging any of its members while the Ombudsman and Sandiganbayan evaluate the ICI findings.

"I would rather be prudent and follow the rule of law and avoid putting the Senate in the line of fire. We have due process in law and a system of

check and balance in the government to balance and protect the rights of individuals and institutions as well," he added.

Estrada, meanwhile, denied receiving any funds for the questioned flood control projects, saying the allegations against him were unfounded.

"Wala akong tinanggap na anumang pondong nakalaan para sa mga flood control projects, at kaya kong patunayan ito sa hukuman. Ang mga paratang laban sa akin ay pawang hearsay o batay lamang sa sabi-sabi (I did not receive any funds intended for flood control projects, and I can prove this in court. The allegations against me are mere hearsay or based on gossip)," Estrada said in a statement.

He said he is ready to defend himself in the proper forum and vowed to clear his name through due process.

"Justice must be served not through speculation, but through truth and due process," Estrada said.

Villanueva, meanwhile, said he has yet to receive a copy of the ICI referral and would let his lawyers study the basis of his inclusion.

"Records of the Senate will show that I have been against flood control projects from the very beginning. I was the one who exposed and questioned these projects that have not been implemented," he said. (PNA) **BY WILNARD BACELONIA**

GSIS HIGHLIGHTS TRANSPARENCY IN P1.92-T FUND

MANILA — The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) assured the public on Thursday that its investment operations are governed by stringent standards and robust safeguards to ensure the responsible management of its members' contributions.

Speaking at The Agenda media forum, GSIS President and General Manager Wick Veloso said transparency and discipline are the foundation of the pension fund's investment strategy.

"There are no shortcuts, and no single person decides. Every investment proposal is vetted by our internal research office, an Assets and Liabilities Committee, and a Board-

level Risk Oversight Committee before it can ever be presented to the full Board for a vote. This system of checks and balances is non-negotiable," Veloso said.

He said this rigorous process helped the GSIS maintain financial stability, with total assets reaching PHP1.92 trillion and a net income of PHP112 billion as of September.

"Our members can be confident that a robust governance framework is in place to protect their fund. Our singular focus is on managing their money with the highest level of professionalism and integrity to guarantee their pension when they retire," Veloso added. (PNA) **BY WILNARD BACELONIA**

MARCOS EYES EXPANDED COOPERATION WITH US, UN, OTHER PARTNER COUNTRIES

MANILA — President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Wednesday reaffirmed his commitment to advancing the Philippines' bilateral relations with foreign partners such as the United States and the United Nations.

Marcos said he seized the opportunity to raise the Philippines' intent to expand areas of cooperation with its partner countries during his participation in and on the sidelines of the 47th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit and Related Summits in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

In his arrival statement,

Marcos noted that he met with his counterparts from the U.S., Japan, India, China, South Korea, the U.N., New Zealand and Australia during the summit.

"I highlighted the progress of our dialogue partnerships and how we envision the way forward together," Marcos said in a video message.

On the sidelines of the summit, Marcos met with the leaders of Cambodia, Canada, Thailand, Japan, the European Union, Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand, as well as with U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres.

Marcos said they

DA TO TAKE OVER FARM-TO-MARKET ROADS CONSTRUCTION STARTING NEXT YEAR

MANILA — The Department of Agriculture (DA) will assume responsibility for the development of farm-to-market roads (FMRs) starting 2026, taking over from the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to ensure a more focused, agriculture-centered approach in building rural infrastructure.

In a news release on Wednesday, the agency disclosed that DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. and Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Secretary Vince Dizon met on Tuesday to review audit results of completed FMR projects and discuss pending constructions scheduled for 2025.

The DPWH has proposed a catch-up plan to finish about 1,000 kilometers of remaining FMRs before the

transition.

"These roads are badly needed by our farmers and fisherfolk. They will ease livelihoods, lower production costs, and give farmers more time with their families," Tiu Laurel said.

Meanwhile, Dizon said innovative measures will be adopted to expedite completion.

"We must think outside the box to ensure these roads are completed as quickly as possible. Local government units will be engaged, similar to our approach with classrooms," he said.

The shift follows President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s directive to deliver infrastructure projects efficiently and cost-effectively. The 2025 catch-up plan will serve as the template for DA's implementation once the turnover is completed.

At a recent Senate hearing, Tiu Laurel noted that the country faces a backlog of about 60,000 kilometers of FMRs, an undertaking that could take six decades to complete at the current pace.

He said the DA is exploring new construction technologies that could significantly reduce costs and accelerate development.

The DA also plans to collaborate with the Department of National Defense to enlist the support of the Army Corps of Engineers for road construction and rehabilitation.

Dizon, meanwhile, noted that 4,000 kilometers of FMRs have been built in recent years. Of which, almost 1,000 kilometers include short stretches that may be subject to administrative and legal action. (PNA) **BY MA. TERESA MONTEMAYOR**

PNP WANTS 'TECH-SAVVY' APPLICANTS

MANILA — The Philippine National Police is raising its recruitment standards to meet the demands of modern policing.

In a statement on Tuesday, PNP acting chief Lt. Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said to meet their 2025 Attrition Quota, the organization is prioritizing applicants who possess not only physical readiness but also digital competence and analytical skills.

"This initiative ensures that our future police

officers are not just strong and disciplined but also capable of operating in a digital environment. We are looking for individuals who can contribute to our growing efforts in cybercrime investigation, digital forensics, and information and communications technology," Nartatez said. He noted that the PNP, in coordination with the National Police Commission, now actively seeks professionals with backgrounds in computer

science, engineering, information systems, and data analytics to strengthen the institution's cybercrime units, digital investigations and command center operations.

"Modern policing requires officers who can navigate both the physical and digital frontlines of law enforcement," he added. PNP spokesperson and public information chief Brig. Gen. Randulf Tuaño previously said applicants for the 6,500 slots available for 17 regional offices and

various support units may drop off their application requirements at their local police station or submit them online.

Meanwhile, Nartatez assured the public that the entire recruitment process will be conducted under the PNP's digitized and merit-based selection process designed to eliminate "padrino" (influence or backer) culture, bias, and personal interference in hiring. (PNA) **BY CHRISTOPHER LLOYD CALIWAN**

AKLAN PUBLIC MARKETS GO CASHLESS WITH PALENG-QR PH PLUS

KALIBO, Aklan (PIA) — The local government of Kalibo, in partnership with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), has officially launched the Paleng-QR Ph plus Program, a digital payment initiative designed to promote cashless transactions in public markets and local transport sectors.

The Paleng-QR Ph plus aims to empower vendors, consumers, and tricycle drivers by utilizing QR Ph, the national standard for quick response (QR) code payments, to ensure safe, fast, and secure digital transactions.

Through the program, market vendors and transport operators can now receive payments directly via QR codes using any participating financial institution or e-wallet.

Kalibo Mayor Juris Sucro welcomed the rollout, saying it represents a key step toward digital transformation and financial inclusion in Aklan.

"May this program continue to inspire collaboration between the government and the private sector as we work together to build a more resilient, connected, and progressive country," Sucro said.

DILG-Aklan Provincial Director Dindo Ponsaran delivered the message of Juan Jovian E. Ingeniero, Regional Director of DILG Region VI, who reaffirmed support for promoting cashless transactions as a step toward building efficient, inclusive, and sustainable financial systems.

"As we move toward a future where cashless transactions become the norm, we are making progress in building systems that are not only efficient but also inclusive and sustainable," Ponsaran said.

Vendors and tricycle drivers are encouraged to register with participating financial institutions or electronic money issuers

to generate their own QR Ph codes for digital payments. Meanwhile, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas—Roxas Branch conducted a Digital Financial Literacy session as part of the program launch.

During the briefing, participants learned how to use their mobile phones and various digital tools to manage their finances more efficiently.

Doreen M. Santerya, BSP-Roxas Acting Area Director, said the session aimed to strengthen public confidence in digital finance.

She noted that through digital financial literacy, participants can gain the knowledge and skills needed to use financial tools safely and wisely. (AGP/SQP/PIA Aklan with reports from Justin Robert Idolog/DOLE-GIP) **BY SHEILA PATOZA**

24 FARMERS' GROUPS GET P178M WORTH OF MACHINERY

NEGROS OCCIDENTAL (PIA) — The Department of Agriculture-Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (DA-PHilMech) has awarded ₱178.57 million worth of farm machinery to 24 farmer cooperatives and associations, and local government units in the province.

This provision of farm machinery is under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) Mechanization Program of DA-PHilMech, which aims to enhance farm productivity, reduce production costs, and boost the overall competitiveness of rice farmers.

In coordination with the Provincial Government of Negros Occidental (PGNO), distributed farm assets include four-wheel tractors, rice combine harvesters, drying systems, rice mills, and precision seeders.

Governor Eugenio Jose

SAN FERNANDO CITY, La Union (PIA) — The provincial government of La Union is crafting a comprehensive West Philippine Sea (WPS) Action Plan that seeks to strengthen coordination among local government units (LGUs), national government agencies (NGAs), and community stakeholders in protecting marine resources and sustaining the livelihoods of coastal communities.

Governor Mario Eduardo Ortega, chairperson of the Provincial WPS Council, said the initiative supports the national position of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. in upholding the country's rights and interests in the WPS.

"[This is] to show support to the national movement led by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. in our stand and position in the West

Lacson thanked DA-PHilMech for the continued support extended to Negrense farmers, emphasizing that the initiative will greatly improve their productivity and efficiency through access to modern technologies and sustainable farming practices.

Lacson led the turnover ceremony held at the Bago City Community Center, joined by Mary Ann Duran Dino, representative of Senator Francis 'Kiko' Pangilinan—chairperson of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food, and Agrarian Reform; and Alejandro E. Rafal, Regional Technical Director for Operations and Extension of DA-Negros Island Region.

Bago City Mayor Marina Javellana-Yao, DA-PHilMech Chief Science Research Specialist May Vile B. Castro, and Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPA) Officer-in-Charge Dina Genzola

Philippine Sea," Ortega said.

He added that the province's WPS initiative affirms La Union's firm stance and commitment to protecting the economic lifeline of its coastal communities.

"We came up with this initiative to affirm our position politically and economically," Ortega said.

"The economic side of this endeavor is important because many of our citizens rely on the WPS for their livelihood."

Aligning action with national priorities

The move reflects La Union's commitment to translate national WPS policies into local action, ensuring that grassroots initiatives contribute to broader goals of environmental protection, maritime security, and economic resilience.

Once finalized, the La Union WPS Action Plan will serve as a coordinated framework guiding the province's 12 coastal LGUs—the City of San Fernando and the municipalities of Rosario, Santo Tomas, Agoo, Aringay, Caba, Bauang, San Juan, Bacnotan, Bangar, Balaoan, and Luna—in implementing programs that promote sustainable fisheries, improve coastal governance, and protect the marine environment. Framework for sustainable, inclusive action

The draft plan includes provisions to update and harmonize local fishery ordinances, prevent illegal quarrying, and provide relocation sites for informal settlers in coastal areas. It also aims to empower fisherfolk associations, reorganize the Provincial La Union Baywatch Task Force, and establish maritime sub-stations and a provincial Marine Protected Area network.

In addition, the plan emphasizes livelihood diversification and encourages civil society organizations (CSOs) to take part in local policy-making to ensure inclusive

DOLE LAUNCHES 'BENTENG BIGAS' PROGRAM FOR SIBUGAY WORKERS

IPIL, Zamboanga Sibugay (PIA) — The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) launches the 'P20 Benteng Bigas Meron Na!' program in Barangay Good Year, Kabasalan town, promoting affordable rice and supporting workers' food security and welfare.

The initiative marks a significant step in the government's continuing effort to make affordable rice accessible to minimum-wage earners and their families.

DOLE Zamboanga Sibugay Provincial Director Elamsalih

participation.

Updates on framework targets and implementation progress will be tackled in the upcoming quarterly meeting of the La Union WPS Council, which will oversee and synchronize development efforts in line with environmental, security, and economic objectives.

Strengthening inter-LGU collaboration

Bacnotan Mayor Divine Fontanilla, vice chairperson of the La Union WPS Council, highlighted that the drafting process fosters stronger collaboration among local governments in addressing both environmental and economic challenges along the WPS.

"This is a very good movement, and appropriate interventions shall be drafted through this council so we can address the existing opportunities we have in the WPS," Fontanilla said. The council's work is being carried out in close partnership with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine National Police-Maritime Group, and the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

Other key partners include the Department of Agriculture, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Tourism, and academic and civil society institutions such as Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University

Ungad highlighted that the program exemplifies DOLE's mission to protect the welfare and advance the economic well-being of workers.

"Each grain we distribute tells a story of shared responsibility. It tells our workers: you matter, you are seen, and you are not forgotten," he said.

It serves as a concrete manifestation of the department's commitment to advancing food security and poverty reduction through a whole-of-government approach anchored on service and compassion, he added.

The program underscores President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s strong commitment to inclusive growth, food security, and social protection for Filipino workers.

Further, the initiative brought together national government agencies, local partners, and cooperatives, highlighting teamwork and unity in addressing community development issues, he said.

DOLE underscored that the P20 Benteng Bigas program stands as proof of the government's steadfast resolve to confront the daily struggles of workers and their families.

"Together with our partners, we continue to strengthen the bridge between government programs and the everyday lives of Filipino workers," Ungad added. (MLE/RBI/PIA9-Zamboanga Sibugay) **BY ROMMEL B. IGNACIO**

and Tanggol Kalikasan Inc. Coordinated, science-based coastal governance Through the WPS Action Plan, La Union positioned itself as a province committed to collective, science-based, and sustainable action in support of national interests and coastal resilience in the West Philippine Sea.

As the plan nears completion, the province hopes to set a model for how local governments can transform national maritime priorities into concrete, community-driven action that safeguards both livelihoods and the environment. (AMB/CCMT, PIA La Union) **BY CHESTER CARLO M. TRINIDAD**

NEVER TOO LATE, TOO EARLY FOR INLIFE RETIREMENT PLANS

MANILA – Either you die early or you live long -- that's the reality of life.

Another reality: Most Filipinos do not plan for a comfortable life after retirement, either because they are not aware how or due to factors beyond their control.

A recent survey by mutual life insurance company InLife showed Generation X (aged 45 to 60) scored the highest at 54 out of 100 in the retirement index, although it is still deemed far from ideal as they may not have enough to last them through their advanced years.

The younger, single or childless groups have lower retirement preparedness, with Gen Z (13 to 28 years) understandably scoring the lowest at 36 because of a different set of priorities. Some also face financial constraints because they support parents, siblings or other family members.

Gen Z and millennials (29 to 44), however, are more open to and aware about what they must do post-retirement.

A total of 1,000 respondents aged 18 to 59 participated in the InLife retirement index survey that took into consideration life stage, personal finances, health, pension program participation, retirement sentiment and social support.

"The Retirement Index shows us that Filipinos need to see retirement in a new light. It's not just a financial milestone. It's an emotional, social, and even cultural journey," InLife chief marketing officer Gae Martinez said during a media briefing in Quezon City on Tuesday.

"If we only focus on money, we miss out on the other pillars that make retirement truly secure and meaningful."

To help Filipinos plan their retirement, InLife has come up with Retire Assure, which it calls the "first true retirement insurance product in the country."

Retire Assure provides a guaranteed monthly income from age 60 or 65, until age 100. It is payable in five or 10 years, or until the age of 59 or 64, depending on one's

preference.

It is further enhanced by cash dividends that have the potential to increase over the years to keep up with the increases in living expenses.

Another option is Retire Assure 2, a two-pay variant recommended for professionals who are transitioning to senior positions in their careers and who want a lasting security instead of market-driven uncertainty.

It is for individuals aged 48 to 73 years old and is payable in two annual installments. The insured will start receiving a monthly income until age 100, after the second premium is paid.

Upon death, the insured's beneficiaries receive the higher of either 110 percent of premiums paid (less payouts already received) or the guaranteed cash value, whichever is greater. Brokerage company secretary "Lucy," 58, is retiring in two years.

Her husband retired five years earlier and their three children are already working, with the two younger ones still living with them.

"We have just enough but I hope we don't get sick because it might deplete our savings," she told the Philippine News Agency. "I don't want to burden our children."

She said they have insurance plans, which are "death" benefits for their children. Aside from her company's retirement payout, she will rely on the monthly pension from the state's Social Security System.

"I can still work, given the chance. Companies are more open to hiring senior citizens these days," she said.

Lucy's mindset is what InLife advocates for: Real love.

"The kind of love that breaks intergenerational dependence. Many Filipinos say, 'my family loves me. I can rely on my children when I retire. But true love means ensuring your children's financial freedom by taking care of yourself first,'" Martinez said.

She said families,

PH SEEKS HIKE IN GEOTHERMAL ENERGY CAPACITY – GARIN

SINGAPORE – Use of new technologies and government support will further bolster the Philippines' geothermal energy production and help meet the government's bid to increase the share of renewable energy (RE) in the total mix.

To date, geothermal energy accounts for only around 8.5 percent of the country's power generation mix, the bulk of which is accounted for by coal, at over 60 percent.

Energy Secretary Sharon Garin, in an interview with journalists on the sidelines of the Singapore International Energy Week (SIEW) earlier in the week, underscored the need to support geothermal energy exposure as part of the move to increase the share of RE in the country's energy mix.

Under the Philippine Energy Plan (2023-2050), the share of RE is targeted to increase to 35 percent by 2030 and 50 percent by 2040.

Last June, the Department of Energy (DOE) announced that under the third green energy auction (GEA-3), a total of 27.218 MW of geothermal energy was awarded.

Amidst the low level of share of geothermal energy in the country, to date, industry data show that the Philippines is the third largest producer of geothermal energy in the world, with an installed capacity of around 1,935 megawatts (MW), next to the U.S. and Indonesia.

Garin said measures are being put in place

communities and institutions must normalize talking about retirement.

"At InLife, that is what we are doing because we want our fellow Filipinos to be aware, more confident and prepared so they can retire without worries," she said. "InLife, at 115 years old, continues to find solutions to Filipinos' most pressing concerns. We are committed to empowering our fellowmen across generations." (ROMINA S. AUSTRIA/PNA)

to encourage more geothermal energy projects, citing the inclusion of geothermal power in the Green Energy Auction and the planned derisking facility that will address the cost of new projects.

She said officials of DOE have proposed higher funding for the gradiometric survey in the Visayas and Mindanao to determine what areas have the capacity to produce geothermal power.

"We are really pushing for it. It's a very expensive endeavor, but the returns are big," she said.

Future investments are seen to be encouraged by the derisking facility to be provided with the help of the Land Bank of the Philippines (Landbank) that will likely be in place by December this year, she added.

The said facility, earlier, reported to be managed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and is said to amount to around USD250 million, will provide funding for geothermal energy exploration in way of a grant if the project is deemed unsuitable, or a loan once it is proven to be viable.

Jay Joel Soriano, First Gen Corporation vice president and head of Strategy and Planning, said the derisking facility is an assurance that the government is committed to support the sector.

Asked for a projection on the untapped geothermal capacity of the country, he said this probably runs to "a few thousand megawatts" but stressed that this depends on what technology will be used for the power plant's operation.

"If we just simply look at high enthalpy, the traditional ones, I suspect the number will be quite limited. But if we start opening up to new technologies - low enthalpy wells, closed loop cycles, (and) all of these other technologies, I suspect the number will be much bigger. I just don't have the firm number right now," he said.

"But to expand, to retain our leadership position, I think we need to start looking at other technologies. Technologies

ABOITIZPOWER ACQUIRES 25% STAKE IN COAL-FIRED POWER PLANT IN VIETNAM

MANILA – Publicly-listed Aboitiz Power Corp. announced Thursday its purchase of a 25 percent stake in Vietnam's Van Phong Power Co. Ltd. (VPCL) from the shares of Sumitomo Corp.

The 1,320-megawatt (MW) high-efficiency, low-emission coal-fired power plant is located in Khan Hoa province and began operations in 2024. It has a 25-year power purchase agreement with Vietnam Electricity.

It is the power plant in the Van Phong Special Economic Zone that has the biggest foreign investment.

AboitizPower did not mention how much it spent for this acquisition but said "it represents the company's first significant investment outside of the

Philippines."

"With this venture, AboitizPower remains on track to deliver sustainable returns to its shareholders, maintaining a well-balanced portfolio of energy technologies. This investment is in parallel with our renewable investment program and is aligned with our aspiration to ensure a balanced long-term energy transition, contributing to reliable and affordable energy systems," the disclosure said.

The power producer added that the "closing of the transaction is subject to customary closing conditions, including securing the necessary regulatory approvals." (With a report from Joann Villanueva/PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

PSEI SLIPS, PHP ENDS WEAKER AHEAD OF ECONOMIC REPORTS

MANILA – Both the Philippine peso and the Philippine Stock Exchange index ended Thursday weaker ahead of some economic reports.

The local currency finished the day at 58.85 against the U.S. dollar from 58.69 Wednesday.

It opened the day stronger at 58.73 from 59.15 a day ago. It traded between 58.98 and 58.58, bringing the day's average to 58.77. Volume rose to USD2.22 billion from the previous session's USD2 billion.

On the other hand, the local bourse's main index shed 0.57 percent to 5,929.68 points, and the All Shares by 0.33 percent to 3,593.28 points.

Only the Mining and Oil index gained during the day after rising by 0.99 percent.

The Financials index, in turn, posted the biggest drop at 0.99 percent, and was followed by the

Property, 0.72 percent; Holding Firms, 0.53 percent; Industrial, 0.30 percent; and Services, 0.16 percent.

Volume thinned to 655.71 million, amounting to PHP4.97 billion.

Decliners led advancers at 95 to 82, while 64 shares were unchanged.

"The Philippine market slipped lower as selling pressure persisted throughout the session," said Luis Limlingan, Regina Capital Development Corporation head of sales. He explained that "traders remained cautious as they are waiting the release of GDP (gross domestic product) and inflation data next week."

"Moreover, corporate earnings are also being closely monitored by investors, as these could determine the market's next direction," he added.

The Philippine Statistics Authority is scheduled to report the October 2025 inflation rate on Nov. 5 and the third quarter GDP performance on Nov. 7. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

that are still quite nascent. Technologies that have a potential in the Philippines," he added. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**



MANILA BACK ON TOP OF BATANG PINOY NAT'L CHAMPIONSHIPS

GENERAL SANTOS

CITY – Manila grabbed three more gold medals in swimming Thursday to regain the overall leadership in the penultimate day of the Batang Pinoy National Championships at the Antonio Acharon Sports Complex pool in Calumpang.

Shiblon Montero clocked 2:01.60 to prevail over Sta. Rosa City's Ashton Clyde Jose (2:01.93) and San Fernando City's Anton Paulo Dominick Della (2:03.46) in the boys' 16-17 200m freestyle event. Jordane Porche Sales, Aoki McKenzie Teng, Elyzah Shayne Son and Aesha Sharine Pesy topped the girls' 12-13 4x50m medley relay with a time of 2:15.69, while Kristine Jane Uy,

Naomi Sy, Patricia Mae Santor and Eliana Isabel Rodriguez dominated the girls' 14-17 4x50m medley relay event in 2:08.86.

As of 6 p.m., Manila has amassed 32 gold, 28 silver and 24 bronze medals in the tournament organized by the Philippine Sports Commission.

The boys' 14-17 4x50m medley relay team of Roland Aaron Seprado, Kaden Gabriel Sy, Antonio Joaquin Reyes and Gabbriel Medenilla won the gold medal for defending champion Pasig, which slid to second with 29 golds, 17 silvers and 24 bronzes. Baguio City kept the third spot with 29 golds, 17 silvers, and 22 bronzes. Baguio City's Chass Mhagiven Colas claimed his fourth gold in archery after ruling the boys'

individual 60m 17 under division at the Notre Dame of Dadiangas University.

Quezon City, which won the boys' 12-13 4x50m medley relay (Titus Rafael Sia, Andrei David Pingol, Cross Acal, and Jeshwa Castiel Garduque), ranked fourth with 20 golds, 19 silvers and 23 bronzes.

Zamboanga City is at No. 5 with 16 golds, 12 silvers and four bronzes followed by Davao City (14-20-31), General Santos City (14-15-8), Santa Rosa City (14-13-8), Cebu City (10-10-13) and Rizal (9-3-7).

A PHP15-million prize pool is at stake, with PHP5 million earmarked for the overall champion, PHP4 million for second, PHP3 million for third, PHP2 million for fourth, and PHP1 million for fifth place. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

ABABA WINS ICTSI SOUTH PACIFIC BY 1 STROKE

MANILA – Sarah Ababa fired a 65 to post a one-stroke victory over hometown ace Florence Bisera in the ICTSI South Pacific Classic in Davao City Thursday.

Ababa, who edged out Chanelle Avaricio in two playoff holes to win the Del Monte leg two weeks ago, trailed by three shots with nine holes to play.

Bisera seemed to have the tournament all wrapped up with a blistering seven-under 29 built on five straight birdies from No. 5. "I also started to have a little self-doubt after her front nine. But Dad said,

'No one wins after nine holes. There are still plenty of chances to make up for it.' So I just held on with it," said the daughter of veteran tour player Edgar Ababa.

She had a birdie on the par-4 12th and another one on No. 14 to cut Bisera's lead to one.

On the 17th, after splitting the fairway with a laser drive, Ababa stood 70 yards out. She lofted a wedge that landed inches past the cup, spun back, and nearly dropped for eagle. A tap-in birdie tied her with Bisera at 10-under, setting up a heart-stopping

finish.

"The match was very tight, but my yardage on the last two holes was great. The 70 yards on 17 and 110 yards on 18 – those are really my comfort distances. I'm confident in that," said Ababa.

She played the par-5 18th like a champion. Another precise approach shot – this time from 110 yards – landed softly and stopped inches from the hole. She calmly tapped in her second straight birdie to take the outright lead at 11-under.

Bisera's final birdie attempt slid by. Her equally brilliant

PH LOSES IN VOLLEYBALL, JIU-JITSU, CYCLING IN ASIAN YOUTH GAMES

MANILA – Alas Pilipinas lost to Thailand, 24-26, 20-25, 24-26, in the Asian Youth Games girls' volleyball battle for the bronze medal Wednesday night at the Isa Sports City-Hall C in Bahrain.

Rhose Almendralejo had a match-high 15 points to lead the Philippines, while Harlyn Serneche and Samantha Cantada had eight points apiece.

Natthawan Phatthaisong scored 13 points followed by Sasithorn Jatta with 12, while Nattharika Wasan and Wisaruta Sengna chipped in 11 and 10 points, respectively, as Thailand claimed victory after one hour and 29 minutes.

"As we can see, we were close, but in the end, the situation happened again and again where we let go. Our lapses and our errors are visible, these are coming out in the end," said Jai Adrao, who had five points, including two blocks.

Despite the loss, Adrao said the team remained proud of its effort and thankful for the opportunity

to compete.

"I'm grateful to the Philippine National Volleyball Federation, the Philippine Sports Commission, and the Philippine Olympic Committee, and of course, to the management of the National University because we also prepared for this league, and to my teammates and to the Lord because we worked together on this," she added.

Adrao also thanked the Filipino fans there for lifting up the team's spirit.

"We felt like at home even though we're abroad. There are so many Filipinos who supported us and sent us messages, especially when we lost, they were there to support us, win or lose," she said.

The Philippines also failed to medal in jiu-jitsu and cycling.

Adam Fernani of Saudi Arabia beat Zeus Babanto in the battle for bronze by submission with 1 minute and 19 seconds left in the boys' -85kg class at Exhibition World Bahrain in Sakhir.

Sachi Khonghun defeated Mongolia's Munkhjin

Batbold, 3-0, in the girls' -52kg category, and Jin Gabriel Ong bowed Kyrgyzstan's Abdusomad Thnchtyk Tynchtykbekov in the boys' -56kg division.

Over at the Nasser bin Hamad loop south of Zallaq, CJ Cabrejos was part of the main group that finished 21 seconds off the winner in the boys' road race.

Hong Kong's Lee Wan Chun won the 99.6-km race in two hours, 23 minutes and 54 seconds, beating Thailand's Kittaphat Homkajorn, who submitted the same time.

Saudi Arabia's Taha Alkhalifah was third after crossing the finish line 10 seconds off.

Cabrejos was part of the seven-man group that clocked 2:24:15, ending up 12th on the leaderboard, while Carl Laurence Espinosa and Joelian Abdul Hamid did not finish. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

PASIG CITY LEADS BATANG PINOY WITH 21 GOLD MEDALS

GENERAL SANTOS

CITY – Defending champion Pasig City claimed two golds in swimming Wednesday to grab the overall lead

in the Batang Pinoy National Championships at the Antonio Acharon Sports Complex pool in Calumpang here.

Roland Aaron Seprado dominated the boys' 14-15 100m backstroke and 14-17 4x50m freestyle relay with Rafael Miguel Ubiadas, Ricardo Felipe Delgado and Gabriel Medenilla) for Pasig City, which has collected 21 golds, 14 silvers and 22 bronzes, as of 7 p.m.

Manila secured four golds in swimming, including two from Patricia Mae Santor. Santor ruled the girls' 16-17 200m butterfly and the 14-17 4x50m freestyle relay with Jamie Aica Summer Sy, Eliana Isabel Rodriguez and Kristine Jane Uy to hike her gold medal haul to five.

Santor's earlier victories were in the 50m and 100m butterfly, and 200m Individual Medley mixed age group 12-17 years old. Manila, which also topped the girl's 12-13 4x50m

freestyle relay (Chirsten Euane Sy, Elyzah Shayne Son, Jordan Porche Sales and Aesha Sharine Pesy) and boys' 16-17 200m butterfly (Shiblon Montero), ranked second in the medal tally board with 19 golds, 18 silvers and 16 bronzes. Baguio City skidded in third place with 18 golds, 12 silvers and 16 bronzes.

The City of Pines grabbed six golds in judo coming from the juvenile boys and girls team, Zack Joseph Joven (boys' cadet 15-17 -50kg), Josh Mayuga (boys' juvenile 12-14 -46kg), Alayne Joy Albion (girls' juvenile 12-14 -57kg) and Jan Samuel Dino (boys' cadet 15-17 -60kg).

Quezon City is in fourth place with 15 golds, 16 silvers and 20 bronzes followed by Davao City (14-17-25), Santa Rosa City (13-11-5), Zamboanga City (13-8-3), Cebu City (9-9-6) and General Santos City (8-7-4). (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**