

# CAVITE GAZETTE

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## IMUS CITY PUSHES CITYWIDE CLEANUPS TO ADDRESS FLOODING

**CITY OF IMUS, Cavite (PIA)** — In anticipation of the effects of the ongoing rainy season, the City Government of Imus has intensified its citywide cleanup and infrastructure maintenance operations to reduce the risk of flooding and safeguard public safety.

Spearheaded by the City's Action Engineering Team, efforts include canal digging, drainage clearing, and the excavation of new canal systems in flood-prone areas. New canal systems were excavated in Brgy. Carsadang Bago I and Green Estate, while heavily clogged waterways were cleared in Brgy. Alapan I-B, Alfonso Village, La Terraza P.C., Bucandala 1, and Anabu 2-B.

Flushing operations were also conducted in flood-prone areas, including Plaridel Health Center, Malagasang 2 Elementary School, Estanislao Villanueva Elementary School, Marycris Homes Bucandala 3, Hamilton Homes Bucandala 3, La Terraza Phase B, Palanas, and Anabu I-A.

To further ensure public

safety, tree pruning was carried out in Brgy. Toclong I-C, Bayan Luma 4, Bucandala I, and Medicion 2-A to prevent falling branches during storms. The city also mobilized its river rangers for large-scale and regular cleanup operations in key tributaries across Brgys. Pag-asa 3, Anabu I-G, Toclong I-B, and Toclong II-B. The weekly river cleanup initiative is a long-standing program of the local government in partnership with the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO).

To support the city's efforts, the City Government of Imus urges all residents to properly dispose of waste and avoid throwing garbage on the streets or into waterways to prevent blockages and further flooding.

Alongside flood prevention efforts, the Engineering Action Team has been actively inspecting and maintaining public infrastructure, including electrical systems, streetlights, and roads. Several public facilities were also repaired

to restore safety and functionality. In support of road safety, the team repaired and fabricated materials for manholes, center islands, steel barriers, and ramps. Vandalized utility posts and public structures were cleaned and repainted, and tarpaulins were installed as needed.

These ongoing efforts reflect the City Government's strong commitment to maintaining public infrastructure, promoting disaster resilience, and ensuring a clean, safe, and orderly environment for all Imuseños. (RBF, PIA Cavite) **BY RUEL FRANCISCO**



## CAVITE GOV'T BLOOD DONATION DRIVE GARNERS SUPPORT



**TRECE MARTIRES CITY, Cavite (PIA)** — In a strong demonstration of unity and compassion, the Provincial Government of Cavite (PGC), through its Workplace Organization Committee (PGC-WOC), successfully organized a blood donation drive at the New Provincial Government Center on July 31.

The initiative, held as part of the PGC's monthly theme celebration for July, was organized in collaboration with the Philippine Red Cross – Cavite Chapter and led by PGC-WOC Chairperson Ms. Luzviminda S. Amparo.

Provincial Administrator Engr. Gilbert V. Gandia and Provincial Board

Secretary Ms. Michelle F. Alcid delivered messages of encouragement at the event's opening. Ms. Alcid emphasized the importance of making the bloodletting drive a regular annual activity of the provincial government, expressing hopes for its institutionalization.

Representing the Philippine Red Cross – Cavite Chapter, Board Member and Treasurer Ms. Lucy Beltran acknowledged the productive partnership between the Red Cross and the PGC. She commended the local government for its continued support in advancing community health and promoting voluntary blood donation. Under the medical supervision of the Red Cross Cavite Chapter team, the donation process, which yielded a total of 87 bags was conducted efficiently and safely.

The PGC-WOC extended sincere thanks to all donors, volunteers, and partner agencies who contributed to the event's success.

"The drive not only increased local blood supplies but also showcased Cavite's public servants' ongoing dedication to health, service, and the spirit of bayanihan. This initiative reflects the PGC's enduring commitment to health, civic engagement, and solidarity," the provincial government said in a statement. (RBF, PIA Cavite) **BY RUEL FRANCISCO**

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## PROVINCIAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON NAARESTO NG DASMARIÑAS CITY PNP

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite** — Isang Most Wanted Person sa Provincial Level ang naaresto ng Dasmariñas Component City Police Station dakong 7:30 ng gabi ng Agosto 7, 2025 sa kahabaan ng Congressional Avenue, Brgy. Sta. Fe, Dasmariñas City, Cavite.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL REGINO L OÑATE, Acting Chief of Police ng Dasmariñas CCPS, ang naarestong suspek na si alyas “Joey Aisah”, residente ng Brgy. Victoria Reyes, Dasmariñas City, Cavite.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa ng Warrant Personnel ng Dasmariñas CCPS sa bisa ng Warrant of Arrest para sa kasong Paglabag sa Section 11 ng R.A. 9165 (Possession of Dangerous Drugs) na inilabas ng Regional Trial Court, Branch 90,

Fourth Judicial Region, Dasmariñas City, Cavite noong Hunyo 19, 2025, na may inirekomendang piyansa na P200,000.00 para sa bawat bilang.

Ang operasyon ay naisakatuparan sa tulong ng Body-Worn Camera (BWC) at Alternative Recording Device (ARD) bilang bahagi ng dokumentasyon.

Kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng Dasmariñas Component City Police Station Custodial Facility ang akusado.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, “Hindi natin titigilan ang pagtugis sa mga pinaghamanap ng batas. Ang ating tagumpay ay tagumpay ng mamamayang naghahangad ng kapayapaan at hustisya.”

## MOST WANTED PERSON (REGIONAL LEVEL) NAARESTO SA ROSARIO, CAVITE

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite** — Naaresto ng mga operatiba ng Rosario Municipal Police Station ang isang listed Most Wanted Person sa Regional Level dakong 3:20 ng hapon ng Agosto 7, 2025 sa Brgy. Wawa 2, Rosario, Cavite.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL ARDIE O BAGAMAN, Acting Chief of Police ng Rosario MPS, ang naarestong suspek na si alyas “Miguelito”, residente ng AC Mercado St., Brgy. Wawa 2, Rosario, Cavite.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa ng mga tauhan ng Warrant and Patrol Section ng Rosario MPS sa bisa ng Warrant of Arrest para sa kasong Sexual Assault sa ilalim ng Par. 2, Article 266-A ng Revised Penal Code kaugnay ng Section 5(b) ng R.A. 7610, at Statutory

Rape sa ilalim ng Article 266-A (1) kaugnay ng Article 266-B ng RPC, na may Criminal Case Nos. 549-2025 at 550-2025, inilabas ng Regional Trial Court, Fourth Judicial Region, Cavite City, noong Hulyo 3, 2025.

May inirekomendang piyansang Php 200,000.00 para sa kasong Sexual Assault at walang piyansa para sa kasong Statutory Rape. Ang suspek ay maayos na naipabatid ang kanyang mga karapatang konstitusyonal na lubos niyang naunawaan. Ang operasyon ay naisagawa gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD) bilang dokumentasyon.

Kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng Rosario MPS Jail Facility ang akusado. Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO: “Isang hakbang na naman

## REGIONAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON, NASAKOTE NG KAWIT MPS SA BACOR CITY

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite** — Naaresto ng mga tauhan ng Kawit Municipal Police Station ang isang indibidwal na kabilang sa Regional Level Most Wanted Person list sa bisa ng ikinasagang operasyon dakong alas-7:10 ng gabi noong Agosto 5, 2025 sa Brgy. Zapote 2, Bacoor City, Cavite.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL RESTY E SORIANO, OIC ng Kawit MPS, ang naarestong suspek na si alyas “Jayson”, residente ng Brgy. Zapote 2, Bacoor City, Cavite.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa ng Warrant Personnel ng Kawit MPS gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD)

tungo sa hustisya ang pagkakaaresto sa isang Most Wanted Person. Magpapatuloy ang ating intensyong sugpuin ang kriminalidad sa lalawigan ng Cavite.”

bilang dokumentasyon, na nagresulta sa pagkaaresto ng nasabing akusado sa bisa ng Warrant of Arrest para sa paglabag sa Section 12, Article II ng Republic Act 9165 o Possession of Equipment, Instrument, Apparatus and Other Paraphernalia for Dangerous Drugs (2 counts), na may Criminal Case Nos. 27345-23 at 27346-23, na inilabas ng Regional Trial Court, Fourth Judicial Region, Branch 22, Imus City, Cavite, noong Marso 14, 2025 para sa Service of Sentence.

Kasalukuyang nakapiit ang akusado sa custodial facility ng Kawit MPS.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL Ariel R Red, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, “Ang pagkakaaresto sa mga most wanted person ay bunga ng tuluy-tuloy at mas pinaiting na kampanya ng ating kapulisan para sa kapayapaan at hustisya sa ating lalawigan.”

## KAWIT POLICE NAB REGIONAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, City of Imus, Cavite** – In a decisive and well-coordinated law enforcement operation, personnel of the Warrant Section of Kawit Municipal Police Station, under the leadership of PLTCOL RESTY E SORIANO, Officer-In-Charge, successfully apprehended a Regional Level Most Wanted Person at about 9:10 PM on August 7, 2025 in Barangay Manggahan-Lawin, Kawit, Cavite.

The arrested individual, known by the alias “MARK”, is a resident of Barangay Manggahan, Kawit, Cavite and has long been the subject of intensive police monitoring and surveillance due to his standing as one of the most wanted persons in the region.

The arrest was conducted through the use of an Alternative Recording Device to ensure operational transparency and compliance with legal procedures. It was carried out by virtue of a Warrant of Arrest for the crime of Violation of the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002 – Possession of Dangerous Drugs (RA 9165, Article II, Section 11) issued and signed by Presiding Judge of the Regional Trial Court, Fourth Judicial Region, Branch 21, Imus City, Cavite dated August 7, 2025, and involves the Service of Sentence imposed upon the accused.

Following his arrest, the suspect was placed under the custody of the Kawit MPS Custodial Facilities

for proper disposition and further legal proceedings. PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director, lauded the dedication and professionalism of the operating personnel, stating that the successful arrest underscores the Cavite Police Provincial Office’s strong commitment to apprehend fugitives of the law and maintain public safety. He also urged the public to support law enforcement efforts by providing timely and accurate information that could lead to the arrest of other wanted individuals.

The Cavite Police Provincial Office reiterates its steadfast commitment to eradicating illegal drugs and safeguarding the welfare of the community.

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, City of Imus, Cavite** – In a successful police operation, personnel of the Warrant Section of the Imus Component City Police Station, under the direct supervision of PLTCOL CHEY CHEY ILANO SAULOG, Chief of Police, in coordination with the 401st A Maneuver Company, RMFB4A, arrested a Regional Level Most Wanted Person at around 11:30 AM on August 5, 2025, in Brgy. Malagasang 2B, Imus City, Cavite.

The suspect, identified as alias JOY ANN, a resident of Brgy. Malagasang 2B, Imus City, was arrested by virtue of a Warrant of Arrest for violation of The Securities Regulation Code (Section 26.3 in relation to Section 6 of R.A. 10175 and R.A. 8799) with 27

counts.

The warrant was issued by HON. MARITA IRIS BRIONES LAQUI-GENILO, Presiding Judge of the Regional Trial Court, Branch 111, National Capital Judicial Region, Pasay City, dated May 28, 2025, with a recommended bail of Php126,000.00.

The operating team was properly equipped with Body Worn Cameras (BWC) and Alternative Recording Devices (ARD) throughout the duration of the operation. The use of these devices ensured transparency, accountability, and proper documentation of police actions, particularly during the serving of the warrant and the actual arrest.

PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director of Cavite PPO, commended the operating team for

their professionalism, operational readiness, and unwavering commitment to duty. He lauded their swift and coordinated action that led to the successful apprehension of a high-profile fugitive, emphasizing that such accomplishments reflect the PNP’s relentless pursuit of justice and dedication to public safety.

This arrest underscores the unwavering commitment of the Cavite Police Provincial Office to its mandate of enforcing the law without fear or favor. By ensuring that wanted individuals are held accountable for their crimes, the Cavite PNP continues to demonstrate its resolve to maintain public safety, uphold the rule of law, and strengthen the trust and confidence of the community it serves.

## REGIONAL MOST WANTED NABBED BY IMUS CITY POLICE

## TAGKAWAYAN REMAINS PEACEFUL AMID FOILED NPA INCURSION, SAYS MAYOR

**TAGKAWAYAN, Quezon (PIA)** — The municipal government of Tagkawayan affirmed that its community remains under a stable internal peace and security situation following a foiled attempt by the communist terrorist group New People's Army (NPA) on Saturday, August 2.

Condemning the presence of NPA members, which resulted in an armed encounter, Mayor Carlo Eleazar emphasized that the swift response of the Philippine Army, in coordination with local citizens, was key in thwarting the threat posed by the armed group to revive insurgency in Tagkawayan.

"Tagkawayan continues to enjoy stable peace and internal security. The New People's Army attempted an incursion, but it was intercepted and repelled by our security forces with the help of our citizens. The people of Tagkawayan firmly stand against this — we want to put an end to more than fifty years of insurgency in our town," Mayor Eleazar said in a statement.

One NPA terrorist was killed, and three high-powered firearms were seized during the encounter between the 2nd Infantry Jungle Fighter Division (2ID) and the communist terrorist group in Barangay Maguibay, Tagkawayan, Quezon on Saturday.

According to reports from the 201st Infantry Brigade, the clash erupted during a security operation by the 16th Infantry Battalion, which was prompted by information from residents regarding the presence of armed elements in the area.

Mayor Eleazar stated that the local government unit has been in close coordination with the Philippine Army and the Philippine National Police to maintain peace, order, and development in the community and to ensure the safety of all citizens.

"The Municipal Government of Tagkawayan sincerely expresses its support and gratitude to the Philippine Army, particularly the 16th Infantry (Maglilingkod) Battalion of the 2nd Infantry Jungle Fighter Division, for their continued efforts to safeguard the peace and security of our town," he said.

He added that the incident was not just an attempt to disrupt Tagkawayan but also an attack on the peace in the entire province of Quezon, especially now that the month of August marks the second anniversary of the declaration of a Stable Internal Peace Situation in Tagkawayan.

He urged residents to remain vigilant and immediately report any suspicious movements or presence of armed groups in their areas.

"There is no need to worry. The situation is under control, and the local government continues to work closely with concerned agencies to maintain order and calm in our community," he said.

Meanwhile, MGen. Ramon P. Gazala, 2ID's Acting Commander, said the successful operation highlights the strong collaboration between the 2ID and the people in putting an end to decades of insurgency in Southern Tagalog.

"We don't take pride in any loss of life. Every fallen Filipino is a tragedy. It's heartbreaking to see lives wasted in the service of a group that spreads only fear, violence, and suffering. No one truly wins in this kind of fight—only families and communities are left to bear the pain," Gazala said.

Citing the government's support programs, he also urged individuals involved in the armed struggle to lay down their weapons, return to their families, and help build a peaceful future. (FC, PIA 4A) **BY FREDMOORE CAVAN**

## SLEX SAN PEDRO INTERCHANGE NOW OPEN TO MOTORISTS, COMMUTERS

**SAN PEDRO CITY, Laguna (PIA)**—After years of planning, development, and construction, motorists can now access the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) San Pedro Northbound Exit Interchange, which finally opened following the successful inauguration ceremony of the toll road on Friday, August 1.

The development of the interchange was initiated to address the persistent clamor of San Pedro residents for a northbound exit, given that a southbound exit exists in the expressway.

According to Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Secretary Manuel M. Bonoan, the project serves as a clear example of what can be achieved when the government, private sector and the community collaborate to build a more connected and resilient nation.

"This is one of San Miguel Corporation's modern tollways, and I'm amazed at how it turned out. I appreciate my colleagues' hard work in making this project a reality. This reflects the projects we prioritize under our president's administration to address the needs of our citizens," Bonoan stated.

Vince Dizon, Secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOTr), also stated that the project is not only a response to the resident's long-standing request for an entry point to Metro Manila, but it will also reduce travel time to Manila by 45 minutes and help alleviate local traffic congestion in the city.

"The situation for our motorists is very challenging because there is no way out of San Pedro, there are roads leading into the city, but none for going out. This is the essence of the 'Build Better More' initiative of our president, it's at the core of this project. We really need

to make the lives of our motorists and commuters more convenient," he said. According to Laguna First District Representative Ann Matibag, after several years of preparation and construction, she ensured the continuation of what other legislators had started for the benefit of their constituents, allowing them to have a proper and reliable road out of the city.

"I know that our constituents are happier than anyone else, I know that our citizens, our fellow San Pedrenses, are the happiest. This is our gift to all of you, this project is part of a broader initiative of Bagong Pilipinas," Matibag said.

The DOTr and the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB), with SLEX operation San Miguel Corporation (SMC) Tollways, will oversee the day-to-day operations of the interchange.

The project is expected to improve road network connectivity and regional mobility, particularly within the CALABARZON region. This interchange will accommodate 5,000 to 10,000 vehicles daily and reduce travel time for San Pedrenses heading to Metro Manila, providing them with direct expressway access.

The new expressway interchange was implemented by the DPWH Regional Office IV-A and the Laguna 2nd District Engineering Office through multi-year contracts beginning in 2018, at a cost of P915 million.

Following the State of the Nation Address of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., the project seeks to enhance the comfort of Filipino commuters and travelers and to ensure wider connectivity to places for continued progress and development. (CH, CO/PIA4A) **BY CHRISTOPHER HEDREYDA, CHARMAINE ODONG**

## EDITORIAL

### Suspensyon sa Pag-aangkat ng Bigas, magsisimula na sa Setyembre

Pangulo, iniutos na isuspinde ang pag-aangkat ng bigas sa loob ng 60 na araw na magsisimula sa September Layon ng suspensyon na ito ang protektahan ang mga magsasaka ngayong panahon ng anihan.

Isang magandang bagay ito para sa mga magsasaka gayong maaari nilang mabawi ang kanilang gastos sa mga pananim at maibenta ang kanilang palay sa malaking halaga. Dapat lamang na bigyang proteksyon ang mga magsasaka ng bansa gayong ang bigas ang isa sa mga pangunahing pagkain ng mga Pilipino.

Sana naman ay mabigyan sila ng pansin at magkaroon ng sapat na tulong upang mapaunlad ang agrikultura ng bansa. Dahil sa panahon ngayon, nalulugi ang mga magsasaka dahil sa mahal ng binhi ngunit sa murang halaga lamang nabibili ang mga ani mula sa kanila.

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## NEW LAW GRANTS PRESIDENT AUTHORITY TO STREAMLINE EXECUTIVE AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI** – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. has signed into law a measure granting him authority to reorganize and streamline executive branch agencies, in a bid to create a more responsive and efficient bureaucracy.

Republic Act (RA) 12231, or the Government Optimization Act, was signed and published into the Official Gazette Monday as Marcos flew to India for a five-day state visit here.

The new law, a priority measure of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC), authorizes the President to strengthen, merge, or abolish agencies and functions deemed redundant or misaligned, while protecting the welfare of civil servants.

The law seeks to "promote efficiency, equity, and ethical accountability" in government operations and improve frontline services by eliminating duplication, simplifying procedures, and pushing digitalization and e-governance.

Under the law, the President may scale down programs better carried out by local governments or the private sector and transfer functions across agencies as necessary.

It also allows the creation

or deactivation of agencies, upon recommendation by a newly created Committee on Optimizing the Executive Branch (COEB), chaired by the Executive Secretary.

The COEB will conduct studies on the mandates, functions, programs, projects, operations, structures, and manpower complement of different government agencies; and develop and prepare the Optimized Organizational Structure and overall change management program of these agencies. The law covers all agencies of the executive branch, which includes departments, bureaus, offices, and other entities under a department's supervision, and government owned or controlled corporations (GOCC) not covered by RA 10149 or the GOCC Governance Act of 2011.

Teaching and teaching-related positions, as well as military and uniformed personnel, are excluded from the new law.

The legislature, judiciary, constitutional commissions, Office of the Ombudsman, and local government units may optimize their respective offices on an optional basis. (PNA) **BY DARRYL JOHN ESGUERRA**

## AFP REITERATES STANCE VS. HAZING, ALL FORMS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

**MANILA** – The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Tuesday reiterated its stance against hazing, physical abuse, and all forms of degrading treatment.

"The AFP is a professional institution built on discipline, integrity, and respect for human dignity. We do not and will never tolerate hazing, physical abuse, maltreatment or any form of degrading treatment," the AFP said in a statement.

The military issued the statement following the death of 22-year-old rookie soldier Pvt. Charlie Patigayon in Maguindanao del Norte last week.

Patigayon was reportedly undergoing reception rites with other soldiers at the 6th Infantry Battalion headquarters in Barangay Capiton, Datu Odin Sinsuat when he collapsed on July 30 and died the following day.

Reception rites are a series of exercises new

## HIGH-LEVEL NAVAL DRILLS MARK FIRST PH-INDIA MARITIME ACTIVITY

**MANILA** – The first bilateral maritime cooperative activity (MCA) between the Philippines and India featured high-level naval maneuvers between the participating units, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said Monday night.

"Among the key drills conducted were rendezvous operations, communication checks, air defense exercises, and maneuvering drills with photo exercise," the AFP said in a statement issued at the conclusion of the two-day MCA held from Aug. 3 to Aug. 4.

Aside from these, the MCA also included complex warfare simulations such as screening exercise, over-the-horizon targeting, naval surface interdiction and clearance integrated with a publication exercise, anti-submarine warfare exercise, replenishment at sea, passing exercise, and steaming fast, the AFP added.

The MCA aimed to strengthen tactical coordination and joint maritime capability between the Philippine and Indian navies, and highlights the growing security collaboration between the two countries.

"The series culminated with a hotwash and a final evaluation through a final exercise, underscoring both forces' commitment

to achieving operational synergy in multilateral maritime environments," the AFP said.

The MCA spanned strategic waters from Masinloc, Zambales to Cabra Island in Lubang, Occidental Mindoro.

Participating AFP units included the guided missile frigates BRP Jose Rizal (FF-150) and BRP Miguel Malvar (FFG-06), a Philippine Air Force search-and-rescue aircraft, and a C-208B reconnaissance plane.

Meanwhile, the Indian Navy deployed a task group consisting of the guided missile destroyer INS Delhi (D-61), the anti-submarine warfare corvette INS Kiltan (P-30), and the fleet replenishment tanker INS Shakti (A-57).

The AFP said these surface vessels were supported by two multi-role naval helicopters, enhancing operational flexibility during the joint drills.

It added that the successful execution of the MCA underscores the two nations' readiness to work together in promoting maritime domain awareness and supporting a peaceful, stable, and secure region.

"It also lays the groundwork for sustained maritime collaboration in the years ahead," the AFP added. (PNA) **BY PRIAM NEPOMUCENO**

soldiers are instructed to do when reporting to their units.

Two officers and 19 enlisted personnel have already been relieved from their posts following Patigayon's death, which is already under investigation.

The AFP said Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr., its chief of staff, has already issued a "clear and uncompromising directive" to all units to uphold the highest standards of military conduct and

discipline, and reject all forms of hazing, physical abuse, maltreatment, and degrading treatment.

"The AFP remains fully committed to cultivating a culture of professionalism, mutual respect, and accountability. All

personnel, regardless of rank or tenure, must be treated with dignity in every setting whether in training, duty, ceremonies, or daily interactions," it said. (PNA) **BY PRIAM NEPOMUCENO**

## BIGGEST 'SERBISYO' CARAVAN SERVES FILIPINO WORKERS IN DUBAI

**MANILA** – The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) reported over 10,000 government transactions delivered during the Serbisyo (Service) Caravan for Filipino workers in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, marking the largest turnout so far in the program's international rollout.

The DMW said 10,765 transactions were completed for over 4,000 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) at the Bagong Bayani ng Mundo-OFW Serbisyo Caravan held at the Dubai World Trade Center on Sunday.

"Napakalaki po ng naging turnout dito sa Dubai. Pinakamalaki sa lahat ng ating Serbisyo Caravan sa iba't ibang bansa tulad ng Hong Kong, Japan, Qatar at Riyadh (The turnout here in Dubai was huge, the largest of all our Serbisyo Caravans in various countries such as Hong Kong, Japan, Qatar and Riyadh)," DMW Undersecretary Jainal Rasul Jr. said, as quoted in a news release late Monday.

"Ito po ay malinaw na patunay ng pangangailangan ng ating mga OFWs para sa direktang serbisyo ng gobyerno (This is clear proof of the need of our OFWs for direct government services)," he added.

The Serbisyo Caravan is part of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s directive to bring government services closer to the people, including OFWs, under the administration's One Country Team Approach, a whole-of-government strategy for overseas Filipinos.

Among the government services availed of were the issuance of Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) E-cards, National IDs, and civil registry documents such as birth, marriage, death certificates, and

Certificates of No Marriage Record.

The high volume of clients and high demand for services prompted OWWA and the Philippine Statistics Authority/Philippine Identification System to extend their services and continue processing of registrations at the Migrant Workers Office in Dubai until Tuesday.

Other services offered were business and financial literacy programs, franchising opportunities, psychosocial counseling, and legal assistance.

Philippine Ambassador Alfonso Ver, meanwhile, expressed gratitude to the UAE for its inclusivity toward Filipino workers, while reiterating the Philippine government's commitment to look after the welfare and protection of the rights of the OFWs.

"Lubos po kaming nagpapasalamat sa bansang ito sa pagiging bukas at mapagbigay. Dito, nabibigyan ang bawat Pilipino ng pagkakataong magtagumpay at maabot ang kanilang mga pangarap. Kaya naman minarapat ng inyong pamahalaan, sa pangunguna ni Pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., na ilapit sa inyo ang mga serbisyo ng gobyerno at ipadama ang pagkalinga at pagmamahal ng Inang Bayan (We are deeply grateful to this country for being open and generous. Here, every Filipino is given the opportunity to succeed and achieve their dreams. That is why your government, led by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., has taken upon itself to bring government services closer to you and make you feel the care and love of our motherland)," he said.

The DMW said more rounds of caravans are being planned for Filipino communities in the UAE and other countries in response to the growing demand for government services. (PNA) **BY MARITA MOAJE**

## LACSON BACKS PBBM IN DISOWNING ALLIES LINKED TO FLOOD CONTROL ANOMALY

**MANILA** – Senator Panfilo Lacson on Tuesday expressed full support for President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s recent pronouncement to dissociate from political allies allegedly involved in corruption surrounding flood control projects.

"The President is on a roll and we should encourage him some more. When he called out the members of Congress with his now most-quoted 'Mahiya naman kayo' remark, followed by his announcement that the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has submitted its report on the defective and anomalous flood control projects, the ball is now in his hands to make good on his promise to hold accountable all those involved—erring contractors and their cohorts in government," Lacson said in an interview with DZBB.

Lacson said he is conducting his own investigation into questionable flood control programs.

"For the past 15 years, more than PHP2 trillion has been allocated for flood control projects—including drainage and desilting efforts," he said. "But dredging is difficult to audit, and corruption often goes undetected," he added.

He stressed that the President must now prove he is serious about his promise to pursue accountability, including against his political allies. "Ang bola nasa Pangulo na. Pero ako, kumpiyansa akong 'mahihya naman ang Pangulo' kung hindi niya ito tutuparin (The ball is now with the President. But I'm confident the President will not let this pass)," he said.

Lacson also welcomed the possibility that the DPWH would next submit lists of other questionable infrastructure projects such as road construction,

repairs, and maintenance.

"We started with flood control projects. I hope this will be followed by reports on other suspicious infrastructure activities," he said.

He added that his team is continuing its own fact-finding and will report additional anomalies if found.

"If there are questionable projects not included in the DPWH report but we are able to identify with sufficient evidence, I will expose them—whether through a privilege speech or other appropriate venues. And we will submit our findings to the DPWH or the Office of the President," he said. (PNA)

**BY WILNARD BACELONIA**

## LAWMAKER CALLS FOR STOP TO ONLINE GAMBLING 'EPIDEMIC'

**MANILA** – Cagayan de Oro City 2nd District Rep. Rufus Rodriguez on Tuesday urged the House of Representatives to muster enough courage "to put an end to the silent epidemic of online gambling."

In a privilege speech, the Mindanao lawmaker told his colleagues that he could not remain silent as Filipino families are being torn apart and devastated by the digital plague of online gambling, including e-sabong.

"The numbers and stories paint a disturbing reality. Gambling, once confined to casinos and cockpits, now hides in our mobile phones -- accessible 24/7 to our people, including children and the youth, often with no age restrictions, and just a click away from financial ruin. Today, any person, even a minor, can register on a gambling app, fund it through an e-wallet, and lose everything within minutes," he said.

He cited a 2025 study by Digital Risk Observatory showing that an estimated 34 million Filipinos -- roughly one in three adults

Gatchalian said the high turnout of patients shows the "urgent" need to broaden the NBB policy—which ensures that indigent patients pay nothing for services covered by PhilHealth—beyond national hospitals. "Such a situation demands the need for the national government to expand the NBB policy to include all local government hospitals by downloading subsidies to LGUs," Gatchalian said. Expanding the coverage would serve as a "strong safety net" for poor Filipinos who often face barriers in accessing medical services due to financial constraints, he added.

"Ang mas malawak na programa ay magsisilbing matibay na panangga para sa ating mga kababayan, upang masigurong ang bawat Pilipinong

nangangailangan ng gamutan, lalo na ang mga mahihirap nating kababayan, ay hindi mapagkakaitan ng serbisyong medikal dahil lang sa kakulangan sa pera (A broader program will serve as a strong safety net for our people to ensure that every Filipino in need of medical treatment—especially our poor countrymen—will not be deprived of healthcare services simply because of lack of money)," he said.

The senator earlier expressed support for additional funding for PhilHealth, including a proposed PHP74.4-billion supplemental budget, to fully implement the Universal Health Care law and sustain the NBB program in public health facilities. (PNA)

**BY WILNARD BACELONIA**

-- have participated in online gambling.

He said some 64 percent of surveyed users admitted to betting online, with many of them doing so daily.

"Around 30 percent of users are between the ages of 15 and 24, and many of them started playing before reaching the age of 18. Our laws and our digital systems are failing to protect our youth," Rodriguez said.

The Mindanao lawmaker expressed alarm over how gambling is being vigorously promoted online.

"We see celebrities, influencers, even beauty queens, endorsing apps like Bingo Plus, ArenaPlus, OKBet, and Stake.com, enticing millions of Filipinos with promises of instant wealth. As of this year, over 15 top Filipino celebrities are directly or indirectly promoting gambling platforms," he said.

He said the celebrity endorsements "are often packaged as lifestyle content, making gambling appear harmless and aspirational."

However, Rodriguez

said behind the flashy promotions lie broken homes, ruined lives, exhausted savings, and shattered futures.

He pointed out that no amount of money is worth the life of a Filipino or the happiness of a family.

Rodriguez acknowledged that the government is earning billions from e-sabong and other online gambling activities, but at a cost -- from broken families, mental health issues, domestic abuse, and youth addiction.

"A financial gain for the few must not justify suffering for the many. Gambling is not a sustainable driver of development -- it is a trap for the poor and a poison to our culture," he said.

He urged his colleagues to act with courage and resolve and ban all forms of online gambling.

"We must act decisively. For the poor families in the barangays, for the children lured by flashy apps, for the victims of digital vice. We owe it to them to ban online gambling now," he said. (PNA) **BY JOSE CIELITO REGANIT**

## 45 TO 60-DAY RICE IMPORT BAN SOUGHT IN SEPT. TO PROTECT PALAY FARMERS

**MANILA** – The Department of Agriculture (DA) on Tuesday said it proposed the temporary ban on rice importation in September to protect local palay (unhusked rice) farmers. In an interview, DA spokesperson Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said they have made the request to President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to ensure better farmgate prices of palay during the upcoming wet harvest season.

"Very timely kasi mid-August, mag-start na iyong harvest sa ilang bahagi ng Nueva Ecija. Kaya iyong proposal ni Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na mag-start ng Sept. 1 ang ban (because by mid-August, the harvest will start in some parts of Nueva Ecija. That's why the proposal of Sec. Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. to start the ban on Sept. 1), can last say 45 to 60 days," he said. He said the measure would be helpful to farmers as local palay harvest from wet cropping is set to peak from September to October.

The proposed ban was done considering the high volume of the rice stock inventory, which influences retail prices of rice, and "eventually" the farmgate prices of palay across the country.

"Napakarami ng pumasok na import, 2.5 million metric tons (MT) na bigas. Plus record-harvest tayo ng palay first semester (A lot of rice imports entered, 2.5 million metric tons (MT). Plus, we have a record harvest of rice in the first semester)," de Mesa said.

The historic high harvest hit 9.077 million metric tons (MT) from January to June, surpassing the previous all-time high of 9.026 MT for the same period in 2023, and last year's 8.53 million MT, based on the latest data of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). With this, de Mesa said the government intends to strike a "balance" in measures to ensure stability of both retail rice prices and farmgate prices of palay.

"Gusto natin magkaroon ng balanseng aksyon sa ating mga magsasaka at sa ating mga (We want to have a balanced action for our farmers and) consumers,"

he said.

Meanwhile, the average farmgate prices of rumble fresh palay, as of July 31, range from PHP8.33 per kg. to PHP17 per kg., while the price of rumble dry ranges from PHP15 per kg. to PHP22 per kg. across the regions in the country, according to the Philippine Rice Research Institute (Philrice).

"Nakikita natin na mababa na masyado iyong farmgate price ng palay... Hindi PHP20 na bigas ang reason kundi masyadong maraming bigas sa Pilipinas ngayon (We see that the farmgate price of rice is very low... The reason is not PHP20 rice but there is too much rice in the Philippines right now)," de Mesa said.

The Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SINAG) earlier flagged the "flooding" of imported rice, citing reported drops of farmgate prices, with the lowest buying of wet palay plunging to as low as PHP5/kg. in Nueva Ecija on July 17.

The imposition of a temporary import ban is allowed under Republic Act (RA) 12078 or the Agricultural Tariffication Act.

Under Section 9 of the law, the President has the power to "suspend or prohibit" importation for a limited period or a specific volume when there is "an excessive supply of imported or locally produced rice resulting in an extraordinary decrease in local rice prices."

Earlier, de Mesa said a reasonable farmgate price of palay should not be lower than the average production cost.

In 2024, the average palay's production cost rose to PHP14.52/kg. according to the PSA, higher than the PHP13.54/kg. in 2023.

For its part, the National Food Authority (NFA) has been implementing its Price Range Scheme (PRICERS), with a buying price ranging from PHP23/kg. to PHP30/kg. for clean and dry palay, while PHP17/kg. to PHP23/kg. for fresh and wet palay to help farmers secure a reasonable income. (PNA) **BY STEPHANIE SEVILLANO**

## AKLAN VICE MAYOR SHOT DEAD BY MUNICIPAL COUNCILOR

**SAN JOSE DE BUENAVISTA,** Antique – The vice mayor of the Municipality of Ibajay, Aklan was shot dead Friday morning by an incumbent municipal councilor.

In an interview, Ibajay Deputy Chief of Police Lt. Melvin Cunanan said Mihrel Senatin, 43, without any provocation, suddenly fired his gun at Vice Mayor Julio Estoloso, 50.

Estoloso had just arrived in his office to report to work while the suspect was having his ordinances recopied.

"We are still investigating the real motive of the shooting incident, operatives from the Scene of the Crime Operations (SOCO) are still processing the crime scene," Cunanan

said.

He said initial reports gathered only showed that the suspect approached the vice mayor and asked him if he had any grudge against him, and suddenly withdrew his firearm.

There was also no known animosity between the suspect and the victim, he said.

Cunanan said investigators are still clueless on the possible motive as Senatin remains quiet inside the Ibajay custodial facility.

He said the incident is only an isolated case, and murder charges are being readied against the suspect. (With report from Jun Ariollo Aguirre/PNA)

**BY ANNABEL CONSUELO PETINGLAY**

## ILLEGAL MINING OPS IN MISOR DRAW MGB PROBE

**CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY** – The Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Northern Mindanao (MGB-10) said it will deepen its probe into alleged illegal mining activities in Misamis Oriental.

In a Thursday interview, MGB-10 director Rodante Felina said they received reports indicating that public officials may have operated some mines they had previously responded to.

The move was prompted by a joint anti-illegal mining operation in Barangay Nangcaon in Opol town which revealed extensive illicit activities.

"The operation resulted in the arrest of a person and the confiscation of heavy equipment, raising serious concerns about abuse of authority and environmental damage,"

Felina said.

Confiscated from the site were three hydraulic excavators, ten water pumps, several hoses, sluice mats and boxes, a wooden gold pan and a sack containing receipts and transaction records allegedly documenting the sale of extracted minerals. Drone surveillance and ground verification confirmed that the operation disturbed about 4.88 hectares of land, with excavation depths reaching up to three meters, highlighting the scale and long-term environmental impact of the illicit activity.

Poultry farms probe

Meanwhile, Alubijid town Vice Mayor Rhandy Akut said local government leaders will hold an emergency meeting with poultry operators

## E. VISAYAS LOGS RECORD LOW JULY INFLATION DUE TO FOOD PRICES DROP

**TACLOBAN CITY** – Drops in food prices in Eastern Visayas resulted in a further slowdown of the inflation rate (IR) from 0.7 percent in June to negative 0.2 percent in July 2025, the lowest in nearly six years.

It was the first time since November 2019 that the region logged a negative IR, Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) Eastern Visayas Supervising Statistical Specialist Zonia Salazar said in a press briefing here on Friday.

Salazar said the decline of the regional IR last month was largely influenced by a 0.9 percent annual price drop in food and non-alcoholic beverages from zero inflation in June.

"The downtrend of the food inflation in July 2025 was primarily influenced by the slower IR of vegetables, tubers, plantains, cooking bananas and pulses at 3.6 percent in July 2025 from 9.2 percent in June 2025," Salazar told reporters.

The annual price of rice further dropped to 15.5 percent in July from 14.4 percent a month earlier, according to the official. Also contributing to the downtrend was housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels with zero inflation in July, down from 2.2 percent in June.

The slower IR of education services at 0.8 percent from 8.3 percent in the previous month likewise contributed to the decrease of the region's IR.

Slower IRs were also recorded in restaurant and accommodation services (0.9 percent from 1.1 percent), alcoholic beverages and tobacco (3.8 percent from 4 percent), and clothing and footwear (0.7 percent from 0.8 percent).

Inflation rate is the annual rate of change or the year-on-year changes in the consumer price index. It indicates how fast or slow the price changes over two times.

Contrary to common knowledge, the PSA said low inflation does not necessarily mean a decrease in the prices of commodities.

Instead, it means that prices continue to increase but at a slower rate, Salazar said.

The PSA came up with the data by establishing baseline information for the prices of the items in the base year 2018 and monitoring their prices regularly.

## ARMY VOWS TO HUNT DOWN BASILAN GRENADE ATTACKERS

**ZAMBOANGA CITY** – The Army's 101st Infantry Brigade (101Bde) on Thursday strongly condemned a grenade attack by unidentified armed men that injured three soldiers in Lamitan City, Basilan province.

The attack occurred at 7:35 p.m. Wednesday when two men riding in tandem on a motorcycle tossed a grenade at the headquarters of the 18th Infantry Battalion (18IB) in Barangay Campo Uno.

The victims were two privates and a corporal, all personnel of the 18IB.

"Such violence threatens the hard-won peace and progress we have made,

and the perpetrators of this attack will be relentlessly pursued and held accountable," the 101Bde said in a statement.

The 101Bde said it has increased security measures and launched an intelligence operation as troops remain on high alert. "This attack, though alarming, only strengthens our resolve and determination to protect the gains of peace and development in Basilan," the 101Bde said.

The wounded troopers were brought to a hospital in Lamitan City for treatment. (PNA) **BY TEOFILO GARCIA, JR.**

## SEARCH ON FOR MISSING FARMER IN ILOCOS NORTE

**LAOAG CITY** – Rescuers continue to search for a missing farmer who was last seen heading toward the Padsan River to secure his carabao amid a sudden rain-induced rise in the water level on Aug. 6.

The missing farmer was identified as Alejandro Gaba, 59, a resident of Barangay Hilario in Banna, Ilocos Norte.

"He was not seen returning to his residence and has since been considered missing," the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO) of Banna said in its incident report.

The search operation

is being conducted by MDRRMO personnel, with assistance from the Bureau of Fire Protection, Philippine National Police, Philippine Marines, and volunteer rescue divers.

"The search remains difficult due to the strong and continuous flow of water," Banna Mayor Mary Chrislyn Abadilla said in a statement on Friday.

The local government has sought assistance from communities near the river, as well as the media, regarding the missing farmer.

"The public is urged to report any helpful information to authorities immediately," Abadilla said.

Ilocos Norte has been experiencing light to moderate rains over the past few days.

On Friday, a low-pressure area being monitored west of Batac, Ilocos Norte has developed into Tropical Depression Fabian. (PNA) **BY LEILANIE ADRIANO**

Data collection for the consumer price index is done by the PSA provincial office twice a month, except for petroleum products which it monitors every Friday. (PNA) **BY SARWELL MENIANO**

## PHP UP VS. USD ON GDP RISE, PSEI DECLINES

**MANILA** – Domestic output in the second quarter of 2025 picked up to 5.5 percent from 5.4 percent in the previous quarter, boosting the Philippine peso but not the Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) on Thursday.

The local currency strengthened to the 56-level and closed the day at 56.97 from 57.47 on Wednesday.

It opened the day's trade at 57.33, better than its 57.6 start in the previous session.

It traded between 56.97 and 57.35, resulting in an average of 57.19 for the day.

Volume rose to USD2.71 billion from day-ago's USD2.5 billion.

On the other hand, the PSEi shed 0.09 percent to 6,364.69 points, and the All Shares by 0.10 percent to 3,776.06 points.

Most of the sectoral counters also ended on the red, led by the Industrial, which fell 1.53 percent.

It was trailed by the Holding Firms, 1.38 percent; Property, 0.24 percent; and Mining and Oil, 0.006 percent.

Services and Financials, meanwhile, rose by 2.05 percent and 0.62 percent, respectively.

"Some investors might have expected stronger (domestic growth) results following the solid performance of the agriculture sector," Luis Limlingan, Regina Capital Development Corporation's head of sales, said.

Other factors that contributed to investors' sentiment during the day include earnings reports by listed companies, developments on Wall Street, and expectations for monetary policy adjustments, he said.

"However, broader sentiment remains watchful amidst evolving trade dynamics," he added. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

## KOREAN AIR TAPS US FIRM FOR CO-DEV'T OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

**MANILA** – South Korea's flag carrier Korean Air announced on Thursday its partnership with US defense technology firm Anduril Industries for the co-development of autonomous aircraft for Korea and the Asia-Pacific region.

The two have agreed to co-develop unmanned aircraft systems based on Anduril products.

They will also team up to license-produce Anduril products and any localized variations in Korea for export across the Asia Pacific.

They will also explore establishing manufacturing and production capabilities in South Korea.

"This partnership combines Korean Air's proven expertise in unmanned aircraft systems with Anduril's cutting-edge AI (artificial intelligence),"

Jin Kyu Lim, senior vice president and head of Korean Air's Aerospace Business, said in a statement.

He added that the collaboration would enhance the carrier's capabilities and represent a significant milestone in the global unmanned systems market.

As a developer of unmanned aerial vehicles, Korean Air is expected to accelerate the advancement of its systems through this partnership. Korean Air will hold rights to license-produce portions of Anduril's defense systems for regional exports.

Anduril specializes in AI-driven autonomous systems. It is also known for its Lattice software, an advanced platform that integrates unmanned systems, command-and-

## AGILA SUBIC CHIEF BULLISH ON SHIPYARD'S POSITIVE OUTPUT

**SUBIC BAY, Zambales** – An official of Agila Subic Compass expressed optimism about the growth of the business three years after it commenced operations, saying they have reached full capacity. To date, the 310-hectare shipyard has four lessors namely world-leading shipbuilder HD Hyundai Heavy Industries Philippines, Subcom, manufacturer and installer of subsea fiber optic cable with global operations; V2X, a logistics firm listed with the New York Stock Exchange, and the Philippine Navy.

In a briefing here Thursday, Agila Subic general manager Mark Millan declined to give any figures on their revenues but said "it's growing".

"We cannot provide a general figure as of now, but it's something that will be supportive to the conditions that we have with SBMA (Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority) as far as our lease agreement with them is concerned, and as far as our commitment to the taxes we need to pay to the government," he said.

The leasing firm is a subsidiary of the New York-based alternative investment firm Cerberus Capital Management, which is investing additional PHP15 billion for domestic operations as announced by the government following the official visit of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. in the US last month.

Milan declined to talk about the additional investment, saying it was not Agila Subic Compass that made the announcement.

"Agila Subic per se, on its own, will have expansion

control networks, and real-time data analysis.

The partnership was announced during Anduril's Korea office launch in Seoul. (PNA) **BY MA. CRISTINA ARAYATA**

opportunities that people would like to look into, but it's only within the vicinity of our facility," he said.

Milan said they expect investments in the ongoing upgrades in the facility to hit USD1 billion (around PHP57.12 billion).

The multi-use facility lessor targeted to generate around 10,000 jobs, through its locators, by 2027, and Milan said they already have around 3,000 to date.

"We are pleased to see that we are on track in achieving that vision after only three years of operations through partnerships with our locators and with support from the Philippine government," he added. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

## BCDA POSTS 64% JUMP IN INVESTORS AS OF END-JULY

**MANILA** – Approved investments under the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) rose 63.82 percent to PHP53.5 billion on an annual basis in end-July, boosting economic growth contribution.

In a statement Thursday, the agency said the approved investments in the first seven months this year are seen to generate about 7,000 new jobs, up 6.2 percent from the same period last year, in BCDA-managed economic zones in New Clark City in Tarlac and Camp John Hay in Baguio City.

"These numbers represent opportunities for thousands of Filipinos and signal the private sector's trust in our vision of building resilient, smart, and inclusive cities," BCDA president and chief executive officer Joshua Bingchang said.

Among the investors that inked contracts with BCDA during the period are the Science Park of the Philippines, Inc., Sta. Clara International-Saekyung Realty, and Bangko

## BSP EXEC UNDERScores FINANCIAL LITERACY FOR RTB DEMAND

**MANILA** – The strong take-up on the government's retail treasury bond (RTB) offerings may be partly attributed to the sustained financial literacy programs, with a central bank official underscoring the need to ensure the Filipinos' financial health.

RTBs are intended for retail investors, thus the PHP5,000 minimum placement, and multiples of PHP5,000 thereafter.

The Bureau of the Treasury (BTr) started the offer period for the 31st tranche of RTB on Aug. 5, which will run until the 15th of the month. The public may invest in this government-guaranteed debt paper through the BTr website and several banks and mobile apps tapped to sell the securities.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Deputy Governor

Bernadette Romulo-Puyat, in a reply to questions from the Philippine News Agency on Thursday, said the number of tranches of the RTB offering "reflect growing public interest in saving and investing."

"At the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, we see this as a positive sign that more Filipinos are recognizing the importance of building their wealth and securing their future," she said.

The BSP has yet to release the results of the 2023 Consumer Finance and Inclusion Survey but Puyat, citing the results of the 2021 Financial Inclusion Survey, said "the proportion of adult Filipinos who invest rose to 36 percent from 25 percent in 2019."

"Being a data-driven central bank, results of our surveys help guide our policy, education, and program design," she said. While available data on Filipinos' financial know-how show improvements, Puyat said "financial literacy and overall financial health remain ongoing goals," highlighting the need to teach more Filipinos about saving, budgeting, and investing to help them make better financial decisions.

"Beyond literacy, the BSP is committed to promoting financial health. This includes the ability to manage daily finances, prepare for financial shocks, and make informed long-term financial choices that build resilience as the country moves toward upper middle-income status," she said.

She said they have partnered with other government agencies and schools, among others, for several initiatives, such as the BSP e-Learning Academy (BELA), and financial education roadshows.

"Together, these efforts reflect the BSP's holistic approach that not only advances financial literacy but also prioritizes financial health, protection, and inclusive access to foster a more financially resilient and economically secure Filipino society," she added. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

Sentral ng Pilipinas for developments in New Clark City; and Ayala Land, Inc., Stern Real Estate, Top Taste and Trading, Inc., Amare La Cucina, and Prime Collective Corp. for developments in Camp John Hay.

BCDA said this development backs the government's bid for sustained domestic growth, job creation, regional development, and improving the investment climate.

"As we drive progress in Central and Northern Luzon, we are proving that government-led development can attract private capital, unlock economic potential, and transform entire regions," Bingchang said.

The agency's end-July output "underscores the growing momentum behind public-private partnerships in transforming government-owned developments into engines of economic growth," he added. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**



## ALCANTARA REACHES MEN'S DOUBLES QF IN ITF BALI

**MANILA** – Filipino tennis player Francis Casey Alcantara continues his preparation for this year's Southeast Asian Games, joining as many tournaments as possible to stay in top form.

Teaming up with Indonesian Christopher Rungkat, the third seeds downed Indians Kabir Hans and Maan Kesharwani, 7-6 (2), 6-4, to reach the quarterfinals of the Amman Mineral Men's World Tennis Championships in Bali, Indonesia.

"First rounds are always tough, I'm so happy we got to win this tough first round," said the Cagayan de Oro City-born Alcantara in an interview Thursday. Alcantara and Rungkat

will be up against Japan's Kokoro Isomura and Yusuke Takahashi, who survived Indonesian wild cards Gunawan Trismuwantara and Tegar Abdi Satrio Wibowo, 6-0, 3-6, 10-8.

Alcantara and Korean partner Park Ui Sung were runners-up at the ATP Challenger 50 President's Cup in Astana, Kazakhstan last week, losing to third seeds Taisei Ichikawa and Kokoro Isomura of Japan, 5-7, 6-2, 5-10.

On their way to the finals, Alcantara and Park defeated Kazakhstan wild cards Ivan Denisov and Amir Omarkhanov, Korean Woobin Shin and Indian Parkshit Somani, and fourth seeds Luca Castelnuovo of

Switzerland and Clement Chidekh of France.

"I'm super happy that finally, I reached the finals this year. It's been a rough year, but I'm still hoping to play better and better for the SEA Games this December," said the 33-year-old Alcantara, who is currently No. 226 in the ATP men's doubles rankings.

Alcantara and Filipino-American Ruben Gonzales won the men's doubles gold medal at the 2023 Southeast Asian (SEA) Games in Cambodia.

This year, the SEA Games will be held in Bangkok, Chonburi and Songkha provinces in Thailand on Dec. 9 to 20. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

## PH FALLS TO CHINESE TAIPEI IN FIBA ASIA CUP OPENER

**MANILA** – The Philippine team fell prey to Chinese Taipei again, 87-95, at the start of its FIBA Asia Cup campaign at King Abdullah Sports City in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia early Wednesday (PH time).

Kevin Quiambao proved to be a solid contributor for Gilas Pilipinas down the stretch, but his efforts were not enough to overcome a hot night from Chen Ying-Chun.

With Justin Brownlee hampered by foul trouble, Gilas leaned on Quiambao's stellar second half to keep the Filipinos within striking distance.

"He came out and played with a lot of energy. He hit

some big shots for us, but we just still came up short," coach Tim Cone said of Quiambao, whom he later described as the "highlight of the team" in a game with a bunch of lowlights, like foul troubles to Brownlee, Scottie Thompson and Chris Newsome; 16 turnovers; and 8-for-28 from beyond the arc.

Chen was the thorn for Gilas, especially after Brownlee fouled out, as he carried the Taiwanese team to victory.

"Coach [Gianluigi Tucci] gave us a great game plan and we executed it really well," Chen said, as he finished with 34 points on 10-of-17 field goals,

including 6-of-8 from long range, two rebounds, two assists, and two steals.

Brandon Gilbeck added 16 points on a perfect 4-for-4 from the field and nine rebounds to dominate the paint against veteran June Mar Fajardo.

Chinese Taipei also beat Gilas at home during the qualifying phase in February.

Brownlee still led Gilas with 19 points on 8-of-15 shooting, seven rebounds, and two assists, while Quiambao added 17 points on 6-of-10 field goals, all within the final 16 and a half minutes. (PNA)

**BY IVAN STEWART SALDAJENO**

## PSC TO BUILD REGIONAL TRAINING CENTERS

**MANILA** – The Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) is planning to build training centers in strategic cities across the country to further boost grassroots development.

Among the places being considered are Laoag City in Ilocos Norte, Clark in Pampanga, Tayabas in Quezon Province, Ormoc City in Leyte, Bacolod City in Negros Occidental, and urbanized areas in Mindanao like Bukidnon, Zamboanga City, and General Santos City.

PSC Chairperson Patrick Gregorio on Friday said there is also a plan to build a water sports training center in Siargao, one of the popular surfing destinations in the south.

"We must develop these centers to give young athletes an equal chance of honing their talents and avoid them being taken away from their families," Gregorio said in a news release.

Gregorio arrived on Wednesday in Chengdu, China, to support the 47 athletes competing in the World Games.

"There is already a directive from the Office of the President to put up regional training centers. It is now all about creating a framework which will work for both the PSC and the stakeholders," added Gregorio, who met with Muay president and Team Philippines chef de mission Stephen Arapoc before the opening ceremony at the Tianfu International Convention Center on Thursday.

The PSC chief stressed that the training centers must adopt a sport specific to the needs and assets available.

"Aside from the help of the local government and the schools, these provinces must cater to a sport they are known for," said Gregorio, who served as PH delegation chef de

mission at the 2022 World Games in Birmingham, Alabama where Filipino-Japanese Junna Tsukii won gold medal in the women's kumite 50kg. in karate.

"For example, Zamboanga has plenty of weightlifters because of Hidilyn Diaz, so the city should serve as the key training center for that sport, much like Muay Thai in Baguio City, or boxing in Cagayan de Oro and GenSan, or football in Bacolod," he explained.

Meanwhile, the PSC and the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) will sign a memorandum of agreement on Aug. 13, designating New Clark City in Capas, Tarlac as a training center.

The PSC-run National Academy of Sports is inside the NCC Sports Complex, which has world-class athletics and aquatics facilities. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

## BILLIARD ICON BIADO LEADS PSA MONTHLY ACHIEVERS FOR JULY

**MANILA** – The Philippine Sportswriters Association has named two-time World Pool Championship winner Carlo Biado as top achiever for July.

He defeated American Fedor Gorst, 15-13, in the final of the event held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia last July 27, eight years after topping the most prestigious 9-ball tournament.

Biado, known as "The Black Tiger", became the first Filipino to win the 9-ball crown twice, moving ahead of legends Efren "Bata" Reyes (1999), Ronnie Alcano (2006), and Francisco 'Django' Bustamante (2010).

The other PSA monthly achievers were boxing icon Manny Pacquiao, Strong Group Athletics, the Philippine women's

football team Filipinas, and the Philippine rugby squad Volcanoes.

The 46-year-old Pacquiao returned to the ring after four years and challenged WBC welterweight champion Mario Barrios in Las Vegas. The fight ended in a draw, allowing the American to regain the belt.

The Strong Group Athletics (SGA) basketball team coached by Charles Tiu retained the William Jones Cup title in Taiwan via a sweep, duplicating its 2024 shutout.

The Philippines also made history as the tournament's first back-to-back champion in 44 years. The Filipinas triumphed over Saudi Arabia (3-0), host Cambodia (6-0) and Hong Kong (1-0) in Group G of the AFC Asian

Women's Cup Qualifiers in Cambodia. They advanced to the Continental meet offering slots for the FIFA Women's World Cup.

The Volcanoes, back from a six-year hiatus, claimed the 15-a-side rugby title at the 2025 Unions Cup in Kaohsiung, Chinese Taipei. The Philippines dethroned Singapore (37-20) and Thailand (23-6).

Young athletes also performed well abroad, securing two gold medals, seven silvers and seven bronzes at the Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships in Astana, Kazakhstan and grabbing two golds, five silvers and 13 bronzes at the Asian Junior Taekwondo Championships in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**