

2 NABBED IN CAVITE FOR SELLING 1K SIM CARDS USED FOR TEXT BLASTS



GENTRI POLICE PUSH DRUG-FREE AWARENESS IN SCHOOLS

MANILA – Operatives of Philippine National Police-Anti-Cybercrime Group (PNP-ACG) have arrested in Cavite province two unauthorized dealers selling 1,000 registered subscriber identity module

(SIM) cards online. At a press briefing held at Camp Crame on Thursday, PNP-ACG Director Brig. Gen. Bernard Yang said suspects "Kaye," 23, and "Roy," 27, were both arrested during an entrapment operation on Wednesday in Imus town. During the operation, the ACG seized the 1,000 registered SIM cards which the suspects reportedly bought for PHP15 each. The SIM cards were being sold online for PHP20 each.

"The SIM cards seized are possibly being used for text blaster machines. The illegal sale of registered SIM cards undermines our efforts to trace and prevent cybercrimes. These cards often end up in the hands of scammers and fraudsters," Yang told reporters.

The ACG chief also said they are now coordinating with various telecom companies for an investigation.

Both suspects are facing charges for violation of Section 7 of Republic Act (RA) 11934 (SIM Registration Act of 2022) in relation to Section 6 of RA 10175 (Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012).

Yang commended the ACG operatives for their successful operation. He also encouraged the public to report such posts or offers to the authorities.

"We call on the public to support the enforcement of the SIM Registration Act by refusing to participate in these illegal activities and reporting violators to the nearest ACG office," Yang added. (PNA) **BY CHRISTOPHER LLOYD CALIWAN**

CITY OF GENERAL TRIAS (PIA) — The General Trias Component City Police Station is visiting schools across the city to educate students on the dangers of drug use through its newly launched Project R.E.A.D.Y. (Resistance Education Against Drugs for the Youth) program.

According to Police Master Sgt. Ressie Hernandez, who is leading the education drive, the initiative forms part of the Philippine National Police's (PNP) broader campaign to build a drug-free and safer future for Filipino youth. "Project R.E.A.D.Y. emphasizes that small, everyday actions, such as saying no to peer pressure or encouraging a friend to make better choices, can make a big difference. It's about building a generation that stands united against drugs, grounded in values, and guided by resilience," Hernandez explained.

Along with lectures, Hernandez said they also provide real-life insights on the harmful effects of drugs and other risky behaviors among young people. "Through powerful stories and practical advice, students learn that being ready goes beyond simply avoiding drugs. It's about being aware, making smart decisions, and actively looking out for their peers, families, and communities," the police officer added.

The General Trias Component City Police Station targets to cover all schools in the city to ensure that every student is equipped with the knowledge and values to resist negative influences and make responsible choices. Beyond the school-based initiative, the police are also strengthening their community engagement by visiting barangays to conduct crime prevention lectures and gather suggestions from residents on ways to further enhance peace and order.

"Barangays, being the primary partners of the police force, play a crucial role in maintaining peace and order at the grassroots level," the General Trias Component City Police Station stated.

The station further emphasized that active participation and strong coordination between the PNP and barangay officials are vital to effectively addressing crime and public safety concerns.

It also expressed full support for future joint activities such as community outreach programs, information campaigns, and intensified anti-criminality operations. (RBF, PIA Cavite) **BY RUEL FRANCISCO**



Aug 20, 2025 at 3:20:42 PM
 Cavite
 4126 General Trias
 Philippines
 Ipilán Barrio School

RANK NO. 9 MUNICIPAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON, ARESTADO NG GMA PNP

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite

— Dakong 7:32 ng gabi ng Agosto 28, 2025, matagumpay na naaresto ng mga tauhan ng General Mariano Alvarez Municipal Police Station ang isang Municipal Level Most Wanted Person Rank No. 9 sa isinagawang operasyon sa Brgy. Ipil 1, Silang, Cavite.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL BONNA A OBMERGA, hepe ng GMA MPS, ang naarestong suspek na si alyas "Jasper," residente ng Brgy. Ipil 1, Silang, Cavite.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa ng warrant operatives ng GMA MPS na nagresulta sa pagkakaaresto ng suspek sa bisa ng Warrant of Arrest para sa paglabag sa Section 10 (a) ng R.A.

7610 (Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act), na may petsang Hulyo 31, 2025 at inilabas ng Family Court, Fourth Judicial Region, Branch 3, na may nakalaang piyansa na Php 80,000.00.

Gumamit ng Alternative Recording Device (ARD) ang mga operatiba bilang bahagi ng dokumentasyon sa isinagawang operasyon. Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL Ariel R Red, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, "Ang matagumpay na operasyon laban sa mga most wanted person ay patunay ng ating mas pinaigting na kampanya kontra kriminalidad para sa kaligtasan ng bawat Caviteño."

SAN PABLO EYES GUINNESS RECORD FOR SIMULTANEOUS COCONUT PLANTING

SAN PABLO CITY, Laguna (PIA)

— This city is gunning to set a Guinness World Record for the most number of coconut seedlings planted simultaneously to bolster its standing as one of the country's premier coconut producers.

In partnership with the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), civic groups, teachers, students, and volunteers, the local government will plant more than 11,000 coconut seedlings within just 15 minutes on August 29.

Mayor Najie Gapangada Jr. emphasized that the initiative is not about publicity or self-promotion but marks the start of a three-year, large-scale replanting program aimed at restoring San Pablo's reputation as the nation's leading hub of the coconut industry.

"Many of the coconut trees in San Pablo are already very old, so we need to plant new ones. The partnership between the government and the people is important," Gapangada said in a statement.

The mayor described the project as a "preparedness

measure," noting that the planned development of an agri-industrial park in the city will inevitably result in the cutting of some coconut trees.

"Agri-industrial development is expected to create thousands of jobs for our people. But for the sake of our environment, we are taking the lead by planting thousands of coconut trees in advance to offset the loss that may come once our industrial parks begin operations," he explained during the PCA health caravan in the city on August 22.

Gapangada added that once the newly planted trees bear fruit, they can serve as a primary source of coconuts for the expanded operations of Franklin Baker Company (FBCo), which was recently acquired by businessman Manuel V. Pangilinan.

The company is relocating its plant to San Pablo's planned agri-industrial zone, which is expected to generate additional local employment.

"This is not just about setting a record — we are planting hope, livelihood, and dignity for the people

SHOOTING INCIDENT IN DASMARIÑAS CITY, CAVITE; SUSPECT IDENTIFIED

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite

— The Dasmariñas City Police Station continues its investigation regarding the shooting incident that occurred on August 27, 2025, at around 6:45 AM along Jose Abad Santos, Brgy. Salitran 3, Dasmariñas City, Cavite.

The victim was identified as alias Jonel, and a resident of Molino IV, Bacoor City, Cavite. He sustained a gunshot wound to the head and was immediately rushed to EAC Medical Center for medical treatment. However, at around 8:00 AM of the same date, he was declared dead on arrival by attending physician.

The suspect was identified as alias Jeffrey, and a resident of Brgy. Salawag, Dasmariñas City, Cavite.

The concerned units immediately conducted tracking and follow-up operations to apprehend the suspect, while verification of the vehicle involved in the incident was undertaken to identify its registered owner. At the same time, investigating personnel examined the scene to gather relevant information and identify potential witnesses to aid in the prompt resolution of the case.

PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director of Cavite PPO, commended the Dasmariñas CPS for their prompt response and meticulous handling of the case. He emphasized that the continued cooperation between the police and the community remains crucial in ensuring justice and maintaining peace and order in Cavite.

TAGAYTAY CITY POLICE MATAGUMPAY NA NAARESTO ANG MGA SUSPEKSA PAGNANAKAW NG VAPE PRODUCTS NA UMABOT SA PHP237,770.00

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite

— Muling pinatunayan ng Cavite Police ang kanilang mabilis at epektibong aksyon matapos maaresto ang mga suspek sa kaso ng pagnanakaw sa isang Vape Shop na naganap dakong 6:20 AM ng Agosto 26, 2025, kung saan natangay ang mga merchandise at pera na may kabuuang halaga na

Php237,770.00.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL JEFFERSON P ISON, Chief of Police ng Tagaytay CCPS, ang mga naarestong suspek na sina alyas Michael, Wilfredo at Mark, pawang residente ng Las Piñas City.

Ayon sa ulat, dalawang hindi pa nakikilalang suspek ang gumamit ng vault cutter upang sirain ang lock ng roll-up door ng establisimyento at tinangay ang mga vape merchandise na nagkakahalaga ng Php236,970.00 at cash na Php800.00 bago tumakas sakay ng isang itim na motorsiklo.

Sa mabilis na follow-up operation na isinagawa ng Intelligence and Investigation Section ng Tagaytay CCPS sa ilalim ng pamumuno ni PLTCOL ISON, nasukol ang mga suspek at nabawi ang malaking bahagi ng mga ninakaw na vape products kasama ang ginamit na getaway motorcycle (Honda Click, color black, plate number 732XQG).

Kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng Tagaytay

REGIONAL MOST WANTED SA KASONG SYNDICATED ESTAFA, ARESTADO NG ALFONSO PNP!

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite

— Matagumpay na naaresto ng Alfonso Police ang isang Regional Most Wanted Person matapos isilbi ang warrant of arrest sa Brgy. Molino 2, Bacoor City. Ang operasyon ay naisagawa dakong 8:00 PM ng Agosto 27, 2025.

Kinilala ni PMAJ JULIUS L MOJICA, Acting Chief of Police ng Alfonso MPS, ang akusado na si alyas Hector, na nahaharap sa kasong Syndicated Estafa sa ilalim ng Article 315 Par. 2 ng Revised Penal Code kaugnay ng Section 1 ng PD 1689. Ang warrant of arrest ay inilabas ng Regional Trial Court, National Capital Judicial Region, Branch 260, Parañaque City noong Agosto 20, 2025, na

walang piyansa.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa ng Warrant Section ng Alfonso Municipal Police Station sa pamamagitan ng masusing operational research at naisagawa sa tulong ng Alternative Recording Device (ARD) para sa dokumentasyon.

Kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng BJMP Jail Facility ang akusado para sa kaukulang disposisyon ng korte.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL Ariel R Red, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, "Ang matagumpay na pag-aresto sa isang Regional Most Wanted Person ay patunay ng mas pinaigting na operasyon ng ating kapulisan upang matiyak na ang mga kriminal ay mapapanagot sa batas."

PROVINCIAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON, ARESTADO NG GENERAL TRIAS PNP!

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite

— Dakong 7:20 ng gabi ng Agosto 27, 2025, matagumpay na naaresto ng mga tauhan ng General Trias Component City Police Station ang isang Provincial Level Most Wanted Person sa isinagawang operasyon sa Barangay San Francisco, General Trias City, Cavite. Kinilala ni PLTCOL Bismark S Mendoza, Acting Chief of Police ng General Trias CCPS, ang naarestong suspek na si alyas "Jay," residente ng Brgy. San

Francisco, General Trias City, Cavite.

Ang operasyon ay isinagawa ng warrant personnel ng General Trias CCPS gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD) bilang bahagi ng dokumentasyon, na nagresulta sa pagkakaaresto ng suspek sa bisa ng Warrant of Arrest para sa Violation of Section 11, Article 2 ng R.A. 9165 (Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002), na inilabas ng RTC, Fourth Judicial Region, Branch 131, Trece Martires City, Cavite, na may nakalaang piyansa na Php 200,000.00.

CCPS ang mga naarestong suspek at nakumpiskang ebidensya, habang inihahanda ang kaukulang kaso para sa Robbery with Force Upon Things laban sa kanila.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL Ariel R Red, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, "Muli nating pinatunayan na ang Cavite Police ay mabilis kumilos at may malasakit sa taumbayan. Hindi makalulusot ang mga kriminal sa ating lalawigan dahil sa samasamang pagtutulungan at dedikasyon ng ating kapulisan."

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

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL Ariel R Red, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, "Ang matagumpay na pagkakaaresto sa mga most wanted person ay nagpapakita ng mas pinaigting na operasyon ng ating kapulisan upang masigurong ligtas at mapayapa ang ating mga komunidad."

PHILHEALTH EXPANDS PRIMARY CARE, DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES WITH YAKAP CARAVAN

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA) — The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) Calabarzon continues to intensify the implementation of its Yaman ng Kalusugan Program (YAKAP) Caravan across the region, bringing expanded primary healthcare benefits directly to communities, particularly vulnerable sectors such as persons with disabilities (PWDs).

The YAKAP Program is PhilHealth's enhanced primary care package that now covers more medicines, expanded diagnostic services, and outpatient consultations with the primary goal of strengthening preventive healthcare and reduce the burden of costly hospitalizations.

Philhealth IV-A Public Information Officer Rexelyn Verbo said that the agency is working closely with local government units (LGUs) to effectively implement the program.

"We have close coordination with the LGUs, this continues until now. We also have YAKAP Caravans to spread the benefits of this program and the same goes for the facilities that we partner with," Verbo said during the Usapang PIA radio program on Aug. 22.

Recently, PhilHealth IV-A brought the YAKAP Caravan to island municipalities in Quezon, including the town of Alabat, where residents were given on-site registration, consultations, and orientation on the expanded benefits of the program.

The caravan aims to reach geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs), ensuring that even remote communities have access to preventive healthcare services.

"We have a lot of YAKAP Caravans in Calabarzon, including the one held in Alabat, because we want to reach all communities, including far-flung areas, and introduce the YAKAP program and other services of PhilHealth to them," she said.

The YAKAP Caravan is expected to be

implemented in more areas of Calabarzon within the coming months as part of PhilHealth's nationwide rollout after its launch in July 2025 led by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.

Verbo encouraged the public to register for the program through the eGov PH app, the PhilHealth Member Portal, or by visiting YAKAP-accredited clinics and local offices.

PhilHealth Calabarzon aims to expand the reach of YAKAP, fulfilling the government's commitment to strengthen Universal Health Care (UHC) implementation and provide more Filipinos with access to preventive and affordable medical services. (AM/PIA 4A) **BY ANNA MOLE**

OWWA EXTENDS AID, MEDICAL SUPPORT TO OFW DEPENDENTS IN CALABARZON

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA) — The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) in Calabarzon continues to extend assistance to the families of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) affected by recent severe weather disturbances.

In a statement, OWWA Calabarzon reported that they have assisted around 5,800 immediate family members of OFWs through the distribution of relief packs, hygiene kits, and other essential supplies in different provinces of the region.

In addition to relief goods, the agency also provided free medical consultations and medicines in partnership with the Philippine Red Cross (PRC), ensuring that affected families received both immediate and medical support.

OWWA Calabarzon added that the continuous deployment of aid is part of OWWA's Crisis Assistance Program, which ensures that OFWs and their dependents are prioritized during calamities. "Patuloy na ipinapakita

COCO FARMERS PRAISE PCA, PRIVATE FIRMS FOR PROVIDING FREE HEALTHCARE SERVICES

SAN PABLO CITY, Laguna (PIA) — Around 250 coconut farmers in San Pablo City, Laguna received free healthcare services and medicines through the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) Health Caravan, organized in partnership with civic organizations.

The caravan, held on August 22 at the San Pablo City Multi-Purpose Convention Center, offered First Patient Encounters, medical consultations, optical services, distribution of medical devices, and free medicines under the PhilHealth YAKAP program.

Among the beneficiaries was Marita Vergara, a

coconut farmer from Barangay Santa Catalina, who expressed her gratitude for the program, noting how it eased the burden of healthcare costs.

"This program is a big help for us because, as coconut farmers, many of us experience body pains from our daily work. That's why it's such a relief to be given access to a program like this," she said.

Vergara, who suffers from diabetes and often experiences body pains and shortness of breath from farm labor, said the Health Caravan allowed her and fellow farmers to get much-needed check-ups and free medication.

"That is why I am deeply grateful for programs like this, which make us feel that the government, especially the PCA, truly cares for us. The PCA not only provides healthcare initiatives but also supports us with seedlings and other forms of assistance," she added.

San Pablo City Mayor Arcadio Gapangada Jr. also thanked the PCA for prioritizing the health and well-being of coconut farmers and vowed to complement these efforts with additional city programs.

"If you have any needs that the city government can provide, such as our indigency programs—especially if you get sick and lack sufficient funds for hospital expenses—please come to our office. We have available funds that we can use to help address your needs," the mayor said.

San Pablo City is dubbed the "Coconut Capital of Laguna," being home to iconic coconut industries and thriving farmlands. (CH/PIA-Laguna) **BY CHRISTOPHER HEDREYDA**

response in lessening the impact of disasters. (with reports from OWWA 4A) **BY CHRISTOPHER HEDREYDA**

EDITORIAL

Pagbaba ng Porsyento ng mga Mahihirap sa Bansa, ramdam nga ba?

Isa ang porsyento ng mga Pilipinong nakakaranas ng kahirapan sa mga tinatarget na pababain ng Pangulo ayon sa unang State of the Nation Address nito. Ngayong nangangalahati na ang termino nito, maaari na nga bang masabing naisakatuparan na ito?

Ayon sa Poverty incidence sa Pilipinas, bumaba na sa 15.5% ang porsyento noong 2023 kung ikukumpara ito sa naitalang 18.1% noong taong 2021. Maaaring maganda ang nakikitang pagtala ng pagbaba nito ngunit dapat kasabay ng pagtala ng pagbaba ng porsyento ng mga mahihirap ay dapat na karanasan sa katotohanan ng mga naitalang itong.

Dapat na bigyang pansin ang lahat ng sektor maski ang pinakamaliit na bahagi upang masigurong patuloy ang pagbaba ng poverty rate ng bansa.

CAVITE
GAZETTE
PUBLISHING

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

Contact #: 09954361217

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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

UP SCIENTIST: POOR EIAs, FLOOD PROJECTS MAY WORSEN CLIMATE RISKS

MANILA – While the country spends billions of pesos on flood control and other infrastructure projects, these may worsen the country's climate risks, instead of easing them, if not guided by science and coupled with strict environmental safeguards, a scientist from the University of the Philippines (UP) Marine Science Institute said.

In an ambush interview on Wednesday at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) Project Transform Colloquium in Pasay City, Fernando Siringan warned that many projects continue to bypass or water down the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, undermining climate resilience and exposing communities to greater risks.

Unfortunately, he said that despite having a budget of millions of pesos, most of these projects proceed without a proper impact study.

"Hindi lahat ng proyekto ay may EIA study, at marami sa mga proyekto ng pamahalaan mismo ang walang EIA (Not all projects have undergone EIA study, and many government projects do not have EIA)," Siringan said.

He noted that there are a number of data and methods to guide development, and that the government and the private sector just need to utilize them, emphasizing that the stricter enforcement of EIAs is crucial in preventing flawed projects from being built in the first place.

Siringan warned that the simple dredging of rivers and laying down of concrete floodwalls are but temporary fixes.

He cited the "Room for the River" program in Europe as a global best practice.

"Floods will be less frequent, lower in height, less widespread, and shorter in duration if we give rivers more room to flow instead of just repeatedly dredging them," he said, noting that

widening is better than just dredging.

He also urged policymakers to shift toward nature-based solutions that fit ecosystems.

In his presentation, Siringan noted that tree covers can reduce surface heat by as much as 12°C, intercept rainfall, and allow water to seep into the ground.

"Sponge city" innovations, such as permeable pavements that help floodwater seep through the ground, green roofs, and water-absorbing parks, can ease flash floods in urban centers.

Meanwhile, he said that mangrove belts, with just 100 meters of healthy cover, can slash storm wave energy by half, while shielding coastal communities.

"These measures are not only more sustainable but also provide multiple benefits for ecosystems and communities," he said. Siringan's call comes as President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. widens his probe into alleged anomalous flood control projects, as he ordered a lifestyle check on government executives. Siringan emphasized that flooding is not just an engineering problem, but also an environmental and governance problem.

DENR Secretary Raphael Lotilla, meanwhile, said the way forward lies in integrated river basin and water management programs, which identify the areas where infrastructure is needed and where it must be avoided altogether.

Citing Marikina as an example, he said that clearing riverbanks of settlements reduced risks. He said that housing projects built in hazard-prone areas expose communities to danger.

"But in areas where one has to refrain from, in fact, filling up the waterways, then it's not a case of building, but to protect the waterways and floodplains," he said.

Lotilla admitted that while

JUNIOR HS STUDENTS NOW INCLUDED IN GOV'T INTERNSHIP PROGRAM –DOLE

MANILA – An official of the Bureau of Local Employment (BLE) under the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) on Thursday said beneficiaries of the Government Internship Program (GIP) have been expanded to include junior high school students.

In an interview on Bagong Pilipinas Ngayon, BLE officer-in-charge Assistant Secretary Patrick Patriwirawan said the internship has also been extended to up to one year.

"So far, our regional offices continue to implement the GIP. Among our new features, we have now extended the implementation to our beneficiaries for up to one year, and even junior high school (students), who we did not include previously, are now included in the

the country has had many river basin plans, implementation has been weak.

"What has been lacking is faithful implementation. And we want to be able as well to have better coordination with infrastructure agencies. If one looks back at the river basin plants we have had, what has been lacking is faithful implementation of these," he said.

Lotilla also underscored the significance of better coordination between government agencies and the local government.

"We have received actual complaints where there are infrastructures that have encroached on natural waterways, which they're not supposed to and they're asking for cease-and-desist orders. And in a number of cases, these have been issued, but the enforcement, as I've said, would have to be done in coordination with the infrastructure agencies at the outset and not after the structures have already been built," he said. (PNA) **BY MARITA MOAJE**

implementation of the GIP," he said in Filipino.

The GIP provides monthslong internship opportunity for high school, technical-vocational, or college graduates who want to pursue a career in public service in either local or national government.

The program aims to offer young individuals an opportunity to gain hands-on experience within various government agencies.

At present, the GIP has 43,658 interns, Patriwirawan said.

"One of the steps we are taking is to continue to communicate with other national government agencies, including LGUs (local government units)... where we deploy interns to gain work experience," he added.

Meanwhile, regarding the Special Program for Employment of Students (SPES), Patriwirawan said in the same interview that they have so far recorded 87,588 beneficiaries this year.

"Last year, we hit 102,973 beneficiaries. This year, we are expected to exceed the 100,000 target," he said.

The SPES program provides temporary employment to financially challenged students, out-of-school youth, and dependents of displaced workers during their school breaks. Beneficiaries usually go through screening process based on submitted documents to determine if they really belong to low-income families.

At present, there are 1,200 to 1,400 private sector companies participating in the implementation of SPES.

Patriwirawan said they have been lobbying for a continuous increase in budget so that the program can accommodate more beneficiaries. (PNA) **BY FERDINAND PATINIO**

DENR: SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT IMPROVES, NEARS FULL COMPLIANCE

MANILA – The Philippines has achieved significant progress in solid waste management halfway through the Marcos administration and is close to full compliance with mandated solid waste management (SWM) plans, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said Thursday.

In a news release, the DENR cited data from its Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) showing that from July 2022 to June 2025, a total of 328 local government units (LGUs) had their 10-year SWM plans approved, while 41 others had theirs renewed. This raises the number of compliant LGUs to 1,416 out of 1,592, or 89 percent nationwide.

Environment Secretary Raphael Lotilla said this development advances the Philippine Development Plan's objective of improving waste management at the local level.

"These plans serve as the foundation for maximizing resource recovery and reducing dependence on landfill disposal," he said. Lotilla said the plans also included strategies for a more efficient waste collection, equipment maintenance, and operation of solid waste management facilities.

"Proper implementation of these plans involves segregation at source, waste diversion, and the establishment of local disposal facilities to prevent pollution, especially marine litter," he added.

Republic Act 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, requires LGUs to craft a 10-

year SWM plan for reuse, recycling, composting, and the efficient management of waste within their jurisdiction.

Moreover, they are expected to conduct information drives, establish materials recovery facilities (MRFs) and sanitary landfills (SLFs), and partner with organizations to enhance recycling and waste processing efforts.

The DENR-EMB noted progress in waste infrastructure with the increase in MRFs from 11,779 in 2022 to 12,864 in 2025.

The number of barangays served also increased from 17,636 to 19,464, or equivalent to 49.3 percent of all barangays nationwide.

SLFs also increased from 287 facilities, serving 567 LGUs, to 343 facilities serving 748 LGUs, covering nearly half of all cities and municipalities.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. earlier urged local chief executives to strengthen implementation of waste reduction and disposal measures, warning that improper management contributes to flooding, health risks, and environmental degradation.

He said the government is preparing to launch a waste-to-energy project in Manila as a pilot program to address mounting garbage problems that also worsen flooding, which could also be expanded in other urban areas in case of a positive result.

The President stressed that garbage accumulation renders pumping stations ineffective during heavy rains, leading to urban flooding. (PNA) **BY MARITA MOAJE**

DEPED-HOPE PARTNERSHIP A MODEL OF PBBM'S EDUCATION REFORM DRIVE

MANILA – Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez on Thursday said the Department of Education's (DepEd) partnership with HOPE and other private companies to address the country's massive classroom backlog is a landmark collaboration that advances President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s vision of a whole-of-nation approach to transform the education sector.

DepEd's Generation HOPE program mobilizes the resources of HOPE and partner companies such as SM, Penshoppe, Grab, Aivee, Carmen's Best, Sunnies, and Banco de Oro to construct new classrooms nationwide under a public-private partnership scheme with the education department. In his State of the Nation Address last July 28, Marcos announced that his administration will work hand in hand with the private sector to build 40,000 additional classrooms by 2028, in line with his goal of ensuring at least one college or technical-vocational graduate in every Filipino family.

"Ang proyektong ito ay hindi lamang pagpapatayo ng mga silid-aralan kundi pagbibigay ng konkretong pag-asa sa bawat batang Pilipino. Sa pagtutulungan ng pamahalaan at pribadong sektor, nakapagbibigay tayong mga ligtas, maayos, at mas epektibong kapaligiran para sa kanilang pag-aaral (This project is not only about constructing classrooms, but giving concrete hope to each Filipino youth. With the collaboration between the government and the private sector, we are providing a safer, orderly and conducive environment for their learning)," Romualdez said in a statement.

Established in 2012 by Nanette Medved-Po, the HOPE group -- composed of Generation HOPE, Inc.

and Friends of HOPE -- channels 100 percent of profits from its flagship products, such as Hope in a Bottle and Hope in a Box, into classrooms and other social projects.

To date, the company has built 144 classrooms, benefitting 52,000 learners nationwide. Each classroom, measuring 7 by 9 meters, is designed to withstand strong typhoons, and comes fully equipped with a chalkboard, a teacher's desk, fans, a restroom, and ample ventilation.

Romualdez said the collaboration underscores the private sector's readiness to support President Marcos' commitment to bridging education gaps.

He also praised Education Secretary Sonny Angara for his decisive leadership in rallying both government and private stakeholders behind the program.

"Malinaw na ang direksiyon at malasakit ni Secretary Angara ang nagbibigay ng bagong sigla at kumpiyansa sa ating sektor ng edukasyon. Sa kanyang pamumuno, natitiyak natin na ang mga reporma at inisyatiba ng DepEd ay nakaangkla sa pangarap ng Pangulo na mabigyan ng dekalidad na edukasyon ang bawat batang Pilipino (Secretary Angara's direction and concern gives newfound vitality and confidence in the education sector. Under his leadership, we are assured the reforms and initiatives of DepEd are anchored in the President's aspirations to provide quality education to each Filipino child)," he said.

Romualdez assured that the House of Representatives is fully behind the President's education agenda, and vowed to provide sufficient funds under PHP6.793-trillion proposed budget for 2026.

In the 2026 proposed national budget, PHP28.1

LGU-ISSUED PWD IDS STILL HONORED BY ESTABLISHMENTS – DSWD SPOK

MANILA – The persons with disabilities identification cards (PWD IDs) previously issued by local government units (LGUs) are still honored by business establishments while the unified ID system is still in the pre-pilot stage, the spokesperson of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) said on Thursday. "Sa kasalukuyan, ino-honora pa po ng mga iba't ibang mga establisyemento yun pong mga luma na person with disabilities IDs na issued po ng kanilang mga lokal na pamahalaan (At present, the old PWD IDs issued by LGUs are still being honored by the different establishments)," Assistant Secretary Irene Dumlao said in a statement in response to public queries on the acceptability

billion has been allocated for Basic Education Facilities, which includes the construction of 4,869 new classrooms and the rehabilitation of existing ones.

"Much more should be done to close the gaps and help advance our education system. As we deliberate on the proposed funding for our teachers and learners, we will see to it that every peso from our taxpayers is prudently and wisely spent for the future of our young, many of whom only wish to uplift their families out of poverty," Romualdez said.

"Under a Bagong Pilipinas, we will aim to make Filipino students and their families feel that we in the government are with them, every step of the way, as they work hard to reach their dreams. This is how governance should be -- a commitment to ensuring the future of our next generation of responsible citizens and leaders." (PNA) **BY JOSE CIELITO REGANIT**

of the existing cards.

She said the DSWD and its attached agency, the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA), are currently conducting pre-pilot orientations and technical tests in selected localities to identify possible system errors and areas for improvement on the unified ID system.

"We're still in the pilot run of the unified ID system and we target around 200,000 (persons with disabilities) because we also need to identify if there are any issues or gaps in the system that we need to enhance before we do the nationwide implementation," she said.

The application, verification, and approval of the unified persons with disabilities ID will be done by the LGUs, through their respective Persons with Disability Affairs Offices.

Among the areas which already participated in the pre-pilot orientation and hands-on sessions of the unified ID system were the cities of Pasay and Muntinlupa in the National Capital Region; San Miguel in Bulacan; and Sta. Rosa in Laguna.

The pilot areas include Parang, Maguindanao from the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao; the cities of Dagupan, San Carlos, Urdaneta, and Alaminos in Pangasinan; Solano, Nueva Vizcaya; almost all municipalities in Bulacan province; Cainta, San Mateo, Santa Rosa, Teresa, and Antipolo City in Rizal province; Carmona, Cavite; Pila, Laguna, Daet, Camarines Norte; Kalibo, Aklan; Candijay, Bohol; Malaybalay, Bukidnon; Koronadal City and Surallah in South Cotabato; and the cities of Pasay and Muntinlupa in NCR.

One of the security features of the unified ID system is the digital ID which can be accessed

PH MILK OUTPUT UP 11.4% IN Q2 — NDA

MANILA – The country's milk production grew by 11.4 percent in the second quarter of 2025, driven by herd expansion and government support programs, the National Dairy Authority (NDA) reported Thursday.

"The steady growth in both milk output and dairy herd shows that our current programs are bearing fruit. By expanding the herd and improving productivity at the farm level, we are creating more opportunities for our dairy farmers and increasing the availability of fresh, local milk for Filipino families," NDA Administrator Marcus Antonius Andaya said in a press statement.

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority showed milk output reached 18.16

via the DSWD website, mobile application, the eGov application, or other designated web portals.

The digital ID is equipped with a QR code that enables business establishments to perform swift and reliable online verification.

"We will look at the result of our pilot implementation run para mas maging maayos po yung ating pagpapatupad ng programang ito. And again, yung tinitignan kasi natin at isinasaalang-alang ay yun interes at kapakanan ng atin pong mga (to ensure an orderly implementation of this program. What we are considering here is the welfare of the) persons with disabilities. As much as possible, we want it to be convenient, easy, and more accessible for them," Dumlao said.

The unified ID system is part of the Marcos administration's efforts to combat the proliferation of fake PWD ID cards and ensure that more inclusive programs and policies are available for the vulnerable sector. (PNA) **BY JOSE CIELITO REGANIT**

million liters from April to June, higher than the 16.30 million liters recorded during the same period last year.

Of the total, 14.72 million liters came from areas assisted and monitored by the NDA, while 3.44 million liters were produced by other stakeholders.

For the source of milk, dairy cattle remained the top milk producer at 60.4 percent, or equivalent to 10.98 million liters, followed by goats, with 2.14 million liters.

The Philippine Carabao Center, meanwhile, contributed 2.64 million liters, or 14.5 percent of national production.

Andaya said the sustained growth reflects the impact of the government's herd expansion and farm-level productivity programs.

As of June, the country's dairy herd population rose by 16.4 percent to 166,411 heads, up from 154,252 in June 2024.

This includes 37,369 dairy cattle, 89,907 carabaos, and 39,035 goats.

Andaya was optimistic that the government is on track to meet its milk production targets, especially with the implementation of its programs across 70 provinces and 463 municipalities.

Five stock farms have been established in General Tinio, Nueva Ecija; Ubay, Bohol; Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur; Malaybalay, Bukidnon; and Carmen, Cotabato, with three more in the pipeline.

"We are confident that these facilities will further accelerate the increase in both herd population and local milk output in the years ahead," he said.

To date, the NDA's herd build-up programs and partnerships cover 1,307 dairy entities, which support 2,355 assisted and monitored farmers nationwide. (PNA) **BY STEPHANIE SEVILLANO**

MATERNAL HEALTH CARE STRENGTHENED IN PALAWAN

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY, Palawan (PIA) — The provincial government of Palawan in partnership with the Department of Health (DOH) boosted the maternal health care program to continuously advocate health and welfare of mothers and pregnant women in the province.

The program, under the management of Provincial Health Office (PHO), is designed to lower the maternal mortality rate recorded in the province of Palawan and ensure the safe delivery of every mother, particularly those residing in remote areas.

Maternal health program manager Jenevil Tombaga said that innovations include conduct of review of each case to identify gaps and delays in program implementation.

“Nagkaroon din tayo ng provincial maternal health planning, kasama ang mga LGUs at chief of hospitals

para makagawa ng mas maayos na plano bawat agency at stakeholders,” said Tombaga.

Among the initiatives implemented by the provincial government through PHO include “Akay-Buntis” wherein traditional birth attendants or “manghihilot” are partners in promoting health from prenatal checkup to birth delivery in a facility. They will also have incentives in referring pregnant women to facilities or midwives.

Officials are also working on an ordinance to penalize “manghihilot” who will assist in birth delivery outside proper facilities.

A training on indigenous people’s culture sensitivity is also conducted to explain the importance of good health in time of pregnancy. (RG/JBG/PIA MIMAROPA-Palawan)

BY RACHEL P. GANANCIAL

ABRA TOBACCO SUMMIT FORGES TIES WITH PARTNERS TOWARDS A STRONGER

BANGUED, Abra (PIA) — An enhanced tobacco industry is expected in the province of Abra following the recently held Tobacco Industry Summit on August 20, 2025 at the Abra Sports Complex.

The National Tobacco Administration (NTA)-led event participated by local chief executives, tobacco farmers, partner-agencies, and other stakeholders fleshed out prevailing issues such as the implementation and monitoring of Republic Act 7171 and RA 8240 funds, the illegal trade and smuggling of tobacco, and the modernization of equipment and machineries.

NTA Administrator Belinda S. Sanchez said the summit is a venue to build ties with partners and establish long term initiatives towards a stronger and sustainable

tobacco industry.

“Magsisilbi itong plataporma para sa mga makabago at responsableng inisyatibo tungo sa isang sustainable, competitive at socially responsible na tobacco industry,” Sanchez stated.

Plans were laid out to improve the industry. Among the plans are the creation of a Provincial Tobacco Industry Roadmap and strengthening access of farmers to government programs towards a sustainable tobacco production.

The summit was also attended by RA 7171 author, former Ilocos Sur Governor Chavit Singson, who encouraged the province to revitalize and strengthen the tobacco industry as a pillar in the agricultural economy of Abra by ensuring a long-term viability of the tobacco farming sector.

Singson emphasized that farming is one of the most important aspects of the nation. He added that since the ratification of RA 7171, the tobacco farmers are reaping the benefits of what they fought for from various farm inputs, machineries and infrastructure.

“Maysa daytoy kadagiti adigi ti ekonomiatayo, importante unay ti farming ken education iti gobierno tayo isu nga suportaran tayo ida and I commend the officials of Abra ket dawatko nga agkikibin tayo,” Singson said.

[This is one of the pillars of our economy, farming and education are important to the government so we need to support our farmers and I commend the officials of Abra, let us work together.]

Currently, there are more than 1,900 Abrenians registered as tobacco farmers tilling a total land area of 1,288.12 hectares. (CAGT, PIA-CAR, Abra) **BY CHRISTIAN ALLISTER G. TUBADEZA**

TEEN CENTER 2.0 EXPECTS TO CURB RISING TEEN PREGNANCY

ILOILO CITY (PIA) — Aiming to curb the rising cases of teenage pregnancy and provide holistic support to young people, the Iloilo Provincial Government formally inaugurated the Sentro Kalinga Teen Center 2.0 at Dominador Abang Memorial National High School (DAMNHS) in Barangay Garita in San Enrique town.

The upgraded teen center—dubbed Teen Center 2.0—offers care and developmental programs to 427 students from DAMNHS and its feeder barangays Mapili and Cubay.

The P3.5-million stand-alone facility features services designed to empower adolescents, promote reproductive health, and address pressing youth concerns.

“[This signifies provincial government’s] commitment to the total development of the Ilonggo youth,” said Governor Arthur Defensor Jr. during the inauguration ceremony.

“This facility plays a big part in your life outside of the classroom. This is the extension of your home. This is for your psychosocial welfare,” Defensor added.

Meanwhile, lawyer Ruel Von Superio, Chief of the Iloilo Provincial Population Office, said the facility adopts a multi-faceted approach to tackle the “alarming” rate of teenage pregnancies.

Services include reproductive health coaching, mental health education, peer counseling, life skills training, and legal aid.

“These are not just statistics—these are real lives,” Superio emphasized, referring to recent data from the Commission on Population

and Development (CPD), which revealed cases of 12-year-old girls already on their second pregnancy and 15-year-olds giving birth to their third child.

“That is why let us work together to build a community where no child is forced into motherhood, and every young Filipino is empowered to take charge of their future,” he added.

San Enrique mayor Gian Carlo Niño Fernandez echoed the urgency of the initiative, admitting that teenage pregnancy remains one of the municipality’s most pressing issues. He expressed gratitude to the provincial government for providing a dedicated space for the youth of San Enrique.

For her part, Vice Mayor Rosario Mediatriz Fernandez also emphasized the center’s role in addressing other social challenges, such as violence against women and children, substance abuse, and underage drinking.

The Teen Center 2.0 builds on the foundation of the earlier school-based multi-purpose teen center projects but takes it to the next level with a purpose-built facility aimed at adolescent development and psychosocial welfare.

The launch was attended also by top provincial and municipal officials including Vice Governor Lee Ann Debuque, Fourth District Board Member Rolando Distura, SK Provincial Federation President Esara Javier, DepEd Iloilo Chief Education Supervisor Gilbert Solidum, Principal II Jonney Panizales, and local barangay leaders. (AAL/JNH/PIA Iloilo) **BY JOHN NOEL HERRERA**

DOLE PROGRAM HELPS SIBUGAY YOUTH RISE ABOVE CHALLENGES

IPIL, Zamboanga Sibugay (PIA) — The Special Program for the Employment of Students (SPES) of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) continues to transform the lives of young people by providing temporary employment opportunities during school breaks.

Designed to support students in need, the program helps them earn for their education while equipping them with workplace skills and experiences for future careers.

One of the beneficiaries is 21-year-old Guinevere Cinco from Kabasalan, who came from a modest family and struggled to keep up with school expenses while studying.

“As a student, my journey was filled with financial struggles. My father a government employee and my mother a housewife, it

wasn’t easy to sustain my studies,” she said.

Through SPES, she received the support to continue her education without financial burdens by working as an assistant clerk at the local government of Kabasalan under the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office.

Her tasks, including encoding communications, handling attendance forms, arranging files, and maintaining cleanliness, gave her workplace exposure while building discipline, organization, and adaptability.

The experience allowed Guinevere to strengthen her time management and office skills while instilling in her the confidence to function effectively in a government workplace.

“The program didn’t just help me financially, it helped me grow. It strengthened my time management

skills and taught me how to function effectively in an office setting. More than that, it boosted my confidence and prepared me for my career ahead as an educator,” she added.

With the income she earned, she paid her school fees and completed her studies, leading to her success in passing the licensure exam for teachers and beginning her teaching career at Zamboanga Peninsula Polytechnic State University’s Extension Delivery Unit in Kabasalan. DOLE’s SPES goes beyond a summer job, empowering youth with hope and growth opportunities while building a stronger workforce and ensuring that more students like Guinevere can pursue their dreams despite financial struggles. (EDT/RBI/PIA9-Zamboanga Sibugay)

BY ROMMEL B. IGNACIO

PSEI BACK IN NEGATIVE TERRITORY, PHP FINISHES SIDWAYS

MANILA – Selling pressures partly due to the cut in the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' (BSP) key rates during the day resulted in a decline in the Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) Thursday, but the peso kept its footing against the US dollar. The main stocks gauge shed 1.33 percent to 6,190.19 points, and the All Shares by 0.75 percent to 3,703.07 points.

Most of the sectoral gauges also ended in the red, led by Financials, which dipped 2.41 percent. It was trailed by Property, 1.45 percent; Services, 1 percent; Holding Firms, 0.67 percent; and Industrial, 0.24 percent.

Only the Mining and Oil index gained during the day after rising 0.45 percent.

Volume reached 953.32 million shares, amounting to PHP7 billion.

It is a balance between advancers and decliners at 99 each, while 48 shares were unchanged.

Luis Limlingan, Regina Capital Development Corp. head of sales, said "the market faced some selling pressure."

This was after the BSP

Monetary Board decided to slash the central bank's key rates by 25 percent, bringing the total cuts so far this year to 75 basis points, was announced towards the end of the day's trading, a change in the previous policy of the central bank to announce it after the trading session. The rate reduction was widely expected by the market.

"But now, attention shifts to how investors will react to the BSP's 25 bps rate cut and its implications for equity prices, especially as yields continue to decline while the inflation outlook of the central bank remains steady at 1.7 percent by year-end," Limlingan said. Amid this turnout, the local currency was able to close the day little changed against the US dollar at 57.12 from its 57.16 close on Wednesday.

It opened the day sideways at 57.05, and traded between 57.17 and 56.93. The day's average stood at 57.08.

Volume reached USD1.86 billion, lower than the previous session's USD1.9 billion. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

DBP LENDS P815-M FOR BULACAN SOCIAL HOUSING PROJECT

MANILA – State-owned Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) extended a PHP815-million term loan to a mass housing developer for the construction of three residential buildings in Bulacan province.

In a statement Thursday, DBP President and Chief Executive Officer Michael de Jesus said the funding assistance to Bright Homes & Realty Corporation is under its Credit Facility for the 4PH Program (BAHAY-4PH) specifically designed to mobilize resources for the Bagong Pilipinas - Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino (4PH) Program of the Marcos administration.

Bright Homes & Realty Corporation is a 30-year-old housing firm and specializes in affordable mass housing development.

Its proposed three residential buildings will rise in Sta. Maria, Bulacan and benefit around 900 individuals, primarily from the low and middle-income classes.

"DBP's funding support is consistent with its

thrust of promoting social services and community development, as well as to realize the vision of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. of providing decent and affordable housing for our countrymen, especially those with limited financial resources," de Jesus said. De Jesus said the DBP BAHAY-4PH program is designed to provide financing to local government units (LGUs), housing developers and contractors participating as project proponents in the 4PH program.

"DBP will be more aggressive in seeking partners for the BAHAY-4PH program, especially private developers and LGUs, and help expedite the creation of more sustainable and inclusive communities across the country," he said.

De Jesus said DBP is eyeing to release PHP50-billion in loans under the program by the end of 2030. (PNA) **BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**

BSP CUTS POLICY RATES BY ANOTHER 25 BASIS POINTS

MANILA – The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) on Thursday delivered another 25 basis points cut in interest rates.

The latest cut brings the BSP's reverse repurchase rate to 5 percent and the interest rates on the overnight deposit and lending facilities to 4.5 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively.

The BSP has so far reduced policy rates by a total of 150 basis points since last year.

"Based on the latest data, I think this puts us at our sweet spot for both inflation and output. The projected inflation rate over the next year or so is where we wanted to be. Output is moving to where we think our capacity is," said BSP Governor Eli Remolona Jr. in a briefing at the BSP office in Manila. "The policy rate itself is at our Goldilocks rate, neither too high, not too low. I would characterize this as still dovish but slightly less so than before in terms of the forward guidance. We came to this decision after weighing many different scenarios," he added.

Remolona said the BSP sees the inflation outlook to be "very manageable."

The BSP projects inflation to settle a 1.7 percent this year.

The forecasts stand at 3.3 percent for 2026 and at 3.4 percent for 2027. Remolona said inflation expectations also remain well-anchored.

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

According to the BSP, domestic demand has held firm but the impact of US policies on global trade and investment continue to weigh on global economic activity.

This, it said, could temper the outlook for the

Philippine economy.

Remolona, however, is optimistic that the cumulative rate cuts will help boost economic growth.

"Are the rate cuts significant enough? I think so. As you know, we don't just move the rate and reverse ourselves. Usually it goes in the same direction and the cumulative effect of that is significant enough to strengthen output growth for example," he said.

BSP Assistant Governor Zeno Abenoja, meanwhile, said the policy rate cuts would help attain the lower end of the government's economic growth target.

"Given the cumulative policy rate cuts that we've had since August, we think that the target numbers could be feasible this year. The low end is about 5.5 percent, we think we could be there. The further impact of those policy actions could also be felt moving forward," he said.

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

"I think we have space for one more cut. If the data develops the way we think it will develop, I think maybe one more cut this year. I think that's likely, that's a likely evolution of policy rate. Of course if something bad happens to output that suggest there's a lack of demand, then we cut some more," Remolona said.

The BSP assured that it would safeguard price stability by ensuring monetary policy settings are conducive to sustainable economic growth and employment. (PNA) **BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**

DOE SETS PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS FOR EV CHARGING STATIONS THIS YEAR

MANILA – Consultations on how to efficiently put up around 7,300 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations nationwide until 2028 will start this year, an official of the Department of Energy (DOE) said Wednesday.

In an interview on the sidelines of the pre-event press conference for the 13th Philippine Electric Vehicle Summit in Taguig City, Patrick Aquino, DOE Energy Utilization Management Bureau Director IV, explained that the Electric Vehicle Industry Development Act (EVIDA) does not mandate the government to offer a subsidy program for the private sector to put up

charging stations.

Thus, he said the plan is to "work with our stakeholders (so) that the implementation makes sense."

To date, there are nearly 1,100 charging stations, mostly in urban areas, he said. Registered EVs as of end-July this year are around 29,715.

Aquino said making charging stations commercial in nature will entice the private sector to put up facilities in areas where it has high demand, such as gasoline stations and establishments along expressways and in urban areas.

"I repeat, the government does not subsidize

charging stations, so it has to be commercial. So, the way we are going to implement the provisions of EVIDA is going to be commercial so that a private sector (player) can come in. It will make sense to them to go into this business," he said.

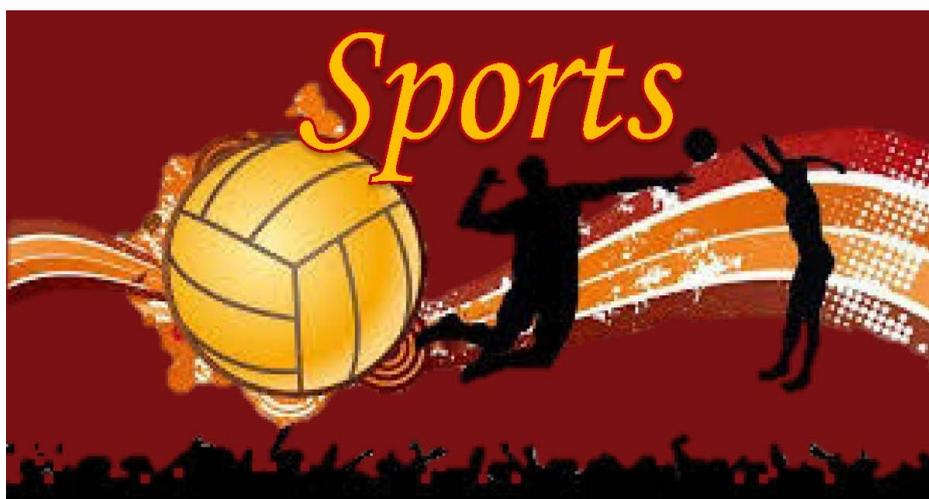
Aquino said priority areas are the National Capital Region (NCR), Calabarzon, Central Luzon, Central Visayas, and Negros Island Region, which registered a notable rise in EV sales.

He said they have already received intentions from a private firm, which he did not identify, that intends to put up around 3,000 charging stations in

commercial areas; and an EV group that plans to put up around 1,000 charging stations in the next two to three years.

DOE data showed that 12 percent of the EV charging stations to date are installed in NCR-based malls, namely SM Malls, 69; Ayala Malls, 31; Megarworld Lifestyle Malls, five; and Robinson's Malls, four.

Outside of NCR, the charging stations are in Cebu City, 14; Davao, seven; and at least one each in Legazpi City, Naga, and Sorsogon in the Bicol Region. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**



TOLENTINO KICKS OFF PREPS FOR ASIAN TRACK CHAMPIONSHIPS

MANILA – Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) president Abraham “Bambol” Tolentino is observing first-hand the conduct of the 2025 Track Asia Cup in Suphan Buri, Thailand, as part of the country’s preparation for hosting the 2026 Asian Cycling Confederation Track Championships.

The ACC Track Championships will be held at the newly-built Tagaytay CT Velodrome in Cavite on March 25-31.

“It will be the first time in 30 years that the Philippines is hosting an Asian-level track championships and we want to make sure on

its success,” Tolentino, who also serves as cycling federation president, said in a press statement Thursday.

Thailand Cycling Association president, Gen. Decha Hemkasri, welcomed Tolentino at the opening ceremony on Thursday at the Suphan Buri Velodrome, which has hosted the same competition several times in the past.

The Suphan Buri Velodrome is a 333-meter concrete and open-air track facility, while the Tagaytay CT Velodrome is wood and indoor, with an International Cycling

Union Olympic and world championship standard length of 250 meters.

Tolentino is also using the ocular to survey the facility that will be the venue of the 33rd Southeast Asian Games track competitions in December.

A total of 28 national and club teams are participating in the Track Asia Cup – set Thursday until Saturday.

“With 28 teams, these competitions approximate the ACC championships where we expect track cyclists from 40 Asian countries to converge in Tagaytay City,” said Tolentino. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

UP'S FERNANDEZ MAKES SEA GAMES SWIMMING ROSTER

MANILA – Palawan pride Quendy Fernandez earned a slot in the national team for this year’s Southeast Asian (SEA) Games during the tryouts at the Teofilo Ydefonso Swimming Center inside the historic Rizal Memorial Sports Complex in Manila on Friday.

The member of the University of the Philippines varsity team qualified in the 50m backstroke, clocking 29.23 seconds behind two-time Olympian Kyla Noelle Sanchez (29.00). Filipino-American Teia Isabella Salvino placed third with a time of 29.85.

Fernandez was named Rookie of the Year and Most Valuable Player for leading the Fighting Maroons to the University Athletic Association of the Philippines or UAAP

Season 86 title in 2023.

Last year, she bagged four gold medals at the Brunei Darussalam–Indonesia–Malaysia–Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area or BIMP-EAGA Friendship Games held in Puerto Princesa City coming from the 50m and 100m backstroke, and 4x50m medley and 200m freestyle relays.

Meanwhile, Sanchez also qualified in the 100m freestyle with 55.00 seconds, surpassing the Qualifying Time Standard (QTS) of 58.23.

Her time was faster than the 55.83 set by Singaporean Quah Ting Wen in winning the gold medal at the 2023 Cambodia SEA Games.

Filipino-British Heather White, the 2024 Asian Age Group silver medalist,

also qualified with a time of 56.23, along with 2023 Cambodia SEAG champion Xiandi Chua (56.95) and 2022 Hanoi SEAG winner Chloe Isleta (58.08).

Micaela Jasmine Mojdeh will also see action in the SEA Games scheduled in Thailand from Dec. 9 to 20 after dominating the 200m butterfly event.

Mojdeh, who twice competed at the World Junior Championships, clocked 2:18.18, surpassing the QTS (2:18.26). Patricia Mae Santor (2:19.45) and Shairinne Floriano (2:25.40) took the silver and bronze medals, respectively.

In the men’s division, Filipino-Japanese Logan Wataru Noguchi won two

MANILA – Filipina tennis ace Alexandra Eala ended her US Open campaign with a 4-6, 3-6 loss to Spanish Cristina Bucsa in the second round early Thursday morning (Manila time) at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in Queens, New York.

Eala, ranked 75th in the world, survived world No. 14 Carla Tauson of Denmark, 6-3, 2-6, 7-6 (13-11), in the first round on Aug. 25.

Meanwhile, Bucsa hit 25

winners and served three aces to conquer Eala in one hour and 22 minutes.

The world No. 95 Bucsa won 65 percent of first serve points and 28 percent of second serve points.

She will now face the winner between No. 19 seed Elise Mertens of Belgium and Lulu Sun of New Zealand in the third round.

Eala’s 6-3, 2-6, 7-6 (13-11) win over world No. 14 Carla Tauson of Denmark last Tuesday made her the

first Filipino to advance to the second round of a Grand Slam tournament.

At the Miami Open last March, Eala defeated Grand Slam champions - Latvian Jelena Ostapenko, American Madison Keys, and Polish Iga Swiatek to reach the semifinal round, eventually losing to American Jessica Pegula, 6-7 (3), 7-5, 3-6.

Eala, a graduate of the Rafael Nadal Academy, won the US Open junior girls’ singles title in 2022. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

UST UNVEILS UAAP SEASON 88 THEME SONG, LOGO

MANILA – Host University of Santo Tomas (UST) on Wednesday unveiled the official theme song and logo for the University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) Season 88, setting the stage for a celebration of unity, resilience, and purpose.

The winning anthem, written by UST Institute of Religion assistant professor Louell Baldoza, was chosen from 13 entries in a competition held last March.

With lines such as “for courage blooms where kindness lies” and “hands will clash yet souls align,” the upbeat, percussive piece echoes the season’s tagline, “Strength in Motion, Hope in Action.”

“There were two judges who wanted a Filipino [anthem], but after deliberation, they really wanted the song of ‘Strength in Motion, Hope in Action’ because of the text that is very Thomasian in spirit. It is very positive, it is very inspiring,” commented UST Conservatory of Music Dean Maria Alexandra Chua, the Season 88 committee head for theme song, during a press conference at the Dr. Robert Sy Grand Ballroom of the Buenaventura Garcia Paredes, O.P. building inside the UST campus.

Rounding out the top three were Thomasian alumnus Eric Advincula’s “Posible ang Lahat” and College of Education assistant professor John Valeroso’s “Di Aatras.”

Pop-rock artist and UST alumnus Kean Cipriano of Callalily performed the anthem live during the

statement Saturday.

“Our elite swimmers are coming off training abroad, while our promising talents have shown improvement from recent tournaments. We expect more QTS performances as the tryouts continue,” he added. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

launch, calling it a “full-circle moment” in his 20-year music career.

“I’ve been in this industry for 20 years, but I can say that this is probably the most nervous performance and song I’ve ever had to interpret. More than the song, it represents a lot of people and milestones. It encompasses everything,” Cipriano said.

Also revealed was the official Season 88 logo, symbolizing solidarity and teamwork among the UAAP’s eight member schools.

The season will formally open on Sept. 19 at the UST Grandstand and Open Field, starting with Eucharistic Mass at 2 p.m. and a main program at 6 p.m.

Festivities will include an athletes’ parade, oath of sportsmanship, lighting of the cauldron, drone and fireworks displays, and a concert featuring a top OPM act.

Organizers expect up to 30,000 attendees, including Thomasians, alumni, stakeholders, and 1,000 delegates per UAAP school.

Should inclement weather occur, the opening will be moved to Sept. 22.

“We want the UAAP community to experience the festive atmosphere of iconic UST traditions like Paskuhan,” said Rev. Fr. Rodel Cansancio, president of the UAAP Board of Managing Directors. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**