

OSPITAL NG IMUS OPENS FREE CHEMOTHERAPY CENTER



IMUS CITY, Cavite (PIA) – More Caviteños will have access to free chemotherapy treatment, following the inauguration of the Imus Chemotherapy Center at the Ospital ng Imus on Monday, October 22.

In partnership with Dr. John Paul Aclan of the Aclan Group, this initiative of the City Government aimed to help PhilHealth members who are battling cancer gain access to free treatment.

During the inauguration ceremony, Mayor Alex Advincula thanked the Aclan Group, adding that the facility will help significantly ease the financial burden for his kababayans who are seeking cancer treatment.

“Chemotherapy is very expensive—one session can cost around ₱100,000, and many patients require up to nine sessions. For those who cannot afford treatment, this center provides a real solution.”

Advincula noted that they have started accepting patients even before the Chemotherapy Center formally opened. The local chief executive added that 676 PhilHealth members have already been approved to receive free treatment in the coming months.

Able to accommodate up to 20 patients simultaneously, the Imus Chemotherapy Center promises timely treatment for those in need. (Ruel Francisco – PIA Cavite) **BY RUEL FRANCISCO**

CAVITE STUDENTS SHOWCASE COOPERATIVE KNOWLEDGE IN PROVINCIAL KOOP QUIZ BEE 2025

In celebration of Cooperative Month, the Office of the Provincial Cooperative Development Officer (OPCDO) successfully spearheaded the Provincial Koop Quiz

Bee 2025 on October 18, at the Function Hall of the New Provincial Government Center, Trece Martires City. The annual event brought together 15

Grade-10 students from various schools across Cavite, each showcasing their knowledge and understanding of cooperative principles, history, and practices.

The program formally opened with a warm welcome message delivered by Ms. Myrachel P. Cuadra, OIC - OPCDO, who commended the students for their enthusiasm and encouraged them to value the spirit of cooperation and teamwork – the essence of every successful cooperative. An overview of the activity was presented by Ms. Dianne April V. Matel, setting the tone for the exciting competition ahead.

Serving as quiz master, Ms. Kyla Joryz B. Ramos facilitated the quiz bee proper, which tested participants through several rounds of challenging questions designed to assess both speed and accuracy.

After an engaging competition, Maverick Janvier A. Añonuevo of St. Thomas More Academy in Bacoor City emerged as Champion, earning 94 points. Following closely behind was Ulydycy Zhoey

Shan L. Barzaga of Gov. DM Camerino Integrated School in Imus City, who secured the 1st Runner-Up title with 91 points, while Erna Marie M. Tanquion of Holy Family Academy of GMA Inc. in General Mariano Alvarez took the 2nd Runner-Up spot with 88 points.

To conclude the activity, Ms. Nelia Cotoner-Vidallion, Treasurer - Provincial Cooperative Development Council - Cavite delivered her closing remarks, congratulating all participants and expressing appreciation to the schools, teachers, and organizers for their support in promoting cooperative education among the youth.

The Provincial Koop Quiz Bee continues to serve as an engaging platform to promote cooperative awareness among the youth, nurturing future advocates of the cooperative movement in Cavite.---**JDP / Cavite PIO**



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MOST WANTED PERSON SA LALAWIGAN NG CAVITE, ARESTADO SA TANZA

Camp BGen. Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Isa na namang Most Wanted Person sa listahan ng Cavite PNP ang naaresto ng mga alagad ng batas sa matagumpay na operasyon na isinagawa ng General Trias Component City Police Station dakong alas-3:00 ng hapon ng Oktubre 22, 2025, sa Tanza, Cavite.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL BISMARCK S. MENDOZA, hepe ng General Trias CCPS, ang naarestong suspek bilang si alyas Rafael, at residente ng Tanza, Cavite. Siya ay nakalista bilang Most Wanted Person sa antas panlalawigan.

Batay sa ulat ng pulisya, nagsagawa ng operasyon laban sa mga wanted person ang mga tauhan ng General Trias CCPS Warrant Personnel gamit ang isang alternative recording device, na nagresulta sa pagkakaaresto ng

nasabing akusado.

Ang nasabing suspek ay may kinahaharapang kaso sa Carnapping sa ilalim ng Section 3 ng Republic Act No. 10883, na inisyu ng Regional Trial Court, Fourth Judicial Region, Branch 126, Imus City, Cavite, na may itinakdang piyansang ₱300,000.00.

Kasalukuyang nakakulong ang akusado sa General Trias City Custodial Facility, habang isinasagawa ang kaukulang dokumentasyon para sa kanyang kasong kriminal.

Ang matagumpay na operasyon na ito ay bahagi ng pinaigting na kampanya ng Cavite Police Provincial Office laban sa mga Most Wanted Persons, bilang pagpapatupad ng direktiba ng pamunuan ng Philippine National Police na tiyaking mapanagot sa batas ang mga taong may kinahaharapang kaso.

BANYAGA NA NASA LISTAHAN NG MOST WANTED SA CALABARZON, ARESTADO NG SILANG PULIS

Camp Bgen. Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Naaresto ng mga tauhan ng Silang Municipal Police Station ang isang Regional Level Most Wanted Person sa isinagawang operasyon sa Silang, Cavite, dakong 3:30 ng tanghali noong Oktubre 22, 2025.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL LOUIE DC GONZAGA, hepe ng Silang MPS, ang suspek bilang si alyas "Kwon" lalaki, at kasalukuyang residente ng Silang, Cavite.

Batay sa ulat, ang operasyon ay isinagawa ng mga Warrant Personnel ng Silang Municipal Police Station, gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD). Ang operasyon ay nagresulta sa pagkakaaresto ng suspek sa bisa ng Warrant of Arrest na inilabas ng Regional Trial Court Branch 18, Tagaytay City, para sa kasong Rape (RPC ART 266-A) (7 Counts) na walang pyansa at para sa kasong Sexual Assault (RPC ART

266-A) (7 Counts) na may kaukulang pyansang ₱120,000.00, parehong inilabas noong October 20, 2025

Sa kasalukuyan, ang Warrant of Arrest ay ibinalik sa korte ng pinagmulan para sa nararapat na disposisyon.

Pinuri ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite Police Provincial Office, ang mabilis at matagumpay na operasyon ng Silang MPS at ng Pasay CPS:

"Patuloy na pinaigting ng Cavite Police Provincial Office ang kampanya laban sa mga wanted persons na pinaghahanap ng batas para sa matatag na paninindigan sa kapayapaan at kaayusan at nang mabigyan ng katarungan ang mga biktima ng pang aabuso at karahasan. Sa pamamagitan ng walang humpay na operasyon at dedikasyon ng ating mga kapulisan, titiyakin nating walang makapagtatago sa kamay ng batas."

REGIONAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON NAARESTADO SA CALAMBA CITY

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Matagumpay na naisagawa ang pag-aresto sa isang babae na nakalista bilang Regional Level Most Wanted Person dakong 5:00 ng hapon ng Oktubre 21, 2025 sa Calamba City, Laguna.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL REGINO L. OÑATE, hepe ng Dasmariñas City Component Police

Station (CCPS), ang naaresto bilang si alyas "Karen" na naninirahan sa Dasmariñas City, Cavite.

Ayon sa ulat, ang nasabing pag-aresto ay isinagawa ng Warrant Personnel ng Dasmariñas CCPS sa pamamagitan ng Service of Warrant of Arrest para sa kasong Illegal Recruitment (2 counts). Ang warrant ay inilabas noong Oktubre 1, 2025 ng Regional Trial Court, Branch 12, Sanchez Mira, Cagayan. Itinakda ang piyansa sa halagang ₱120,000.00 para sa isang kaso, habang walang piyansa naman ang isa.

Isinagawa ang buong operasyon sa

ang mga pwersa upang masugpo ang kriminalidad at panagutin ang mga nagkasala."

OPPEM CONDUCTS LOCAL RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY

The Office of the Provincial Public Employment Service Manager (OPPEM) successfully conducted a Local Recruitment Activity on October 20, at the New Provincial Government Center in Trece Martires City in partnership with Iwantclean Incorporated, a manpower agency providing employment opportunities in the health service sector.

Applicants from different localities participated in the activity which aimed to connect job seekers with immediate employment opportunities. Three were hired on the spot and will be deployed at the Gentri Doctors Medical Center,

reflecting the program's continuing success in facilitating local job placements.

Through initiatives like this, the OPPEM remains steadfast in its mission to promote gainful employment and strengthen collaboration with partner companies to address the province's workforce needs. The office continues to encourage Caviteños to participate in upcoming job fairs and recruitment activities as part of the Provincial Government of Cavite's efforts to uplift lives through accessible employment programs.---

JDP/Cavite PIO

MEDICAL AND DENTAL MISSION IN GENERAL MARIANO ALVAREZ

Residents of Brgy. Nicolas Virata in General Mariano Alvarez were beneficiaries of the Provincial Government of Cavite's continuing health outreach programs as a well-organized medical and dental mission delivered vital services on October 17.

A total of 422 residents availed of the free services, which included 334 medical consultations, 43

pamamagitan ng Body Worn Camera (BWC) at Alternative Recording Device (ARD).

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, "Ang matagumpay na pagpapa-aresto kay alyas 'Karen' ay nagpapakita ng patuloy na dedikasyon ng kapulisan sa paghahabol sa mga wanted individuals at pagsasakatuparan ng hustisya."

dental procedures, 19 ECG examinations, and 26 X-ray services, complemented by the distribution of free medicines facilitated by the Office of the Provincial Governor (OPG) staff.

The medical teams from General Emilio Aguinaldo Memorial Hospital (GEAMH) and CARSIGMA District Hospital shared their expertise to provide medical services to the residents, while the GEAMH dental team extended their specialized care – bringing brighter smiles to the community through their dental services.

The initiative reflects the Provincial Government's steadfast commitment to bringing essential healthcare closer to Caviteños.---**R. DONES / Cavite PIO**

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF CAVITE STRENGTHENS HEALTH RESPONSE AMID FLU SEASON

Amid the increase in cases of Influenza-Like Illness (ILI), the Provincial Government of Cavite (PGC) continues to strengthen its public health efforts. On October 17, the PGC, through the Office of the Provincial Governor's Medical Mission Team, in partnership with the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the Rotary Club of Cavite Uptown, conducted a medical

mission in Barangay Pagasa 2, Imus, Cavite.

A total of 227 residents received free medical services, including consultations, basic health check-ups, and prescribed medicines.

This initiative reflects the government's continued commitment to promoting health and wellness among Caviteños, especially during the flu season.---

F. TAMIO / Cavite PIO

CAVITE ANIMAL HEALTH CONGRESS 2025 UNITES EXPERTS TO STRENGTHEN ANIMAL DISEASE PREVENTION

The Office of the Provincial Veterinarian (OPV), in coordination with the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences of Cavite State University (CvSU), spearheaded the Cavite Animal Health Congress 2025 on October 15, held at the International Convention Center, CvSU Indang, Cavite. The event gathered veterinarians, researchers, and stakeholders to discuss updates and innovations in

animal health management and disease prevention.

The program opened with an invocation and messages of support from Governor Francisco Gabriel D. Remulla, Dr. Constanse J. Palabrica, Undersecretary for Livestock - Department of Agriculture, Dr. Ma. Agnes P. Nuegro, CvSU President, and Dr. Christian P. Dauqigan, OIC Director of the Bureau of Animal Industry. Dr. May M. Magno, MPA, Provincial Veterinarian, presented the rationale of the event, emphasizing the province's commitment to ensuring animal health and food safety through video message.

Experts shared valuable insights on various topics such as Rabies Updates by Dr. Jeffrey L. Cruz, Human Rabies and Animal Bite Management by Ms. Charlene E. Rosanes, RN, MPH, and Avian Influenza Program Updates by Dr. Jhoanna Marie F. David. International collaboration was highlighted through a presentation by Dr. Paula Leona C. Fletcher on laboratory diagnosis of avian influenza virus from South Korea.

In the afternoon, discussions centered on African Swine Fever Updates by Mr. Marcial T. Malana Jr., and antimicrobial resistance in poultry and swine presented by Dr. Dei Anne G. Adona. Ms. Marian Lovella A. Parot of the Agricultural Training Institute IV-A shared programs and services supporting local farmers and veterinarians.

The congress concluded with an awarding of certificates and closing remarks from Dr. Rezin C. Bahia, Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

The Cavite Animal Health Congress 2025 served as a vital platform for collaboration and knowledge-sharing, reinforcing Cavite's dedication to safeguarding animal welfare and public health. ---**A. SARTE / Cavite PIO**

EDITORIAL

Ang Bagong Imbensyon na Tinatawag na Smart Cane

Smart cane, isang tungkod para sa mga may visual impairment ang inimbento ng ilang mga estudyante mula sa University of Cebu kung saan kaya nitong magbabala at maglarawan ng mga nasa paligid.

Patuloy ang pag-unlad ng mundo pagdating sa teknolohiya at nakakatuwang isipin na nagagamit upang matulungan ang mga taong may kapansanan. Isa itong magandang imbensyon upang makatulong sa mga may visual impairment na nais lumabas mag-isa o kaya naman ay wala nang katuwang sa buhay.

Kung mailabas man ito sa market ay mabigyan lahat ng mga may visual impairment ng kakayahan na mabili ito. Gayong mas matutulungan sila nito na makaiwas sa disgrasya o panganib kapag ninais nilang lumabas at pawang magkaroon na rin ng paningin gamit ang smart cane.

CBMS PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DATA TURNOVER TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL PLANNING IN CAVITE

Following the Provincial Product Accounts (PPA) Dissemination Forum held on October 14 at the Bayleaf Hotel in the City of General Trias, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) also conducted the 2024 Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) Presentation of Results and Data Turnover Ceremony for local government units (LGUs) in Cavite.

The event was attended by officers and staff from the PSA Regional and Provincial Offices, along with Local Chief Executives, Municipal/City Planning and Development Coordinators (MPDCs), and Barangay Officials from various cities and municipalities across Cavite.

Participants were welcomed by Ms. Raquel C. Ronario, Supervising Statistical Specialist and Officer-in-Charge of PSA Cavite.

Keynote messages were delivered by Ms. Lucia Iraida A. Soneja, former Provincial Statistics Officer of Cavite, Atty. Nathaniel De Leon on behalf of Vice Governor

Ramon Vicente "Ram" H. Bautista, and 7th District Board Member Camille Del Rosario who represented Governor Francisco Gabriel "Abeng" D. Remulla. She conveyed the governor's expression of gratitude to all participants and the PSA for their dedication and meaningful contributions.

A key part of the program was the presentation of the Highlights of the 2024 CBMS Result in the province of Cavite by Ms. Liberty Q. Jacob, Senior Statistical Specialist, and Mr. Gerald L. Amoroso, Statistical Specialist II. The presentation showcased key accomplishments such as 98.68% household electrification, 99.63% access to basic drinking water, and 99.67% secure housing tenure. The event also included the official turnover of CBMS data to local government units in Cavite.

Engr. Mildred M. Purificacion, City Planning and Development Coordinator of the City Government of Carmona, delivered an inspiring and informative presentation titled "Harnessing CBMS

Data for Responsive Multi-Sectoral Planning and Decision-Making: Carmona's Journey" during the event.

An open forum followed the presentations, providing participants with the opportunity to raise inquiries, share insights, and discuss ways to further utilize data for effective planning and project development. The session underscored the collective commitment to advancing data-driven governance across the Province of Cavite.

LGOO III Ms. Beverly V. Villaruel of DILG Cavite delivered the message of OIC-Provincial Director Marcial A. Juanco, emphasizing that "Good governance begins with good data."

The program concluded with the awarding of certificates to all participants from the municipalities of Cavite. Ms. Liberty Q. Jacob, Senior Statistical Specialist of PSA Cavite, delivered the closing remarks, expressing gratitude to all attendees for their active participation and continuing support for data-driven local governance initiatives.--**F.TAMIO/ Cavite PIO**

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DSWD: CASH AID MADE MORE RESPONSIVE TO NEEDS OF DISASTER-HIT FAMILIES

MANILA – The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has issued revised guidelines on the implementation of the Emergency Cash Transfer (ECT) program to make it more responsive amid the multiple disasters in the country.

Assistant Secretary Irene Dumlao of the DSWD's Disaster Response Management Group (DRMG) said the new guidelines make the ECT program more aligned to disaster response and early recovery efforts for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

"At the impact and immediate post-impact phase of a disaster, the ECT may be provided to IDPs for their relief and early recovery needs. The cash assistance provided can be used to buy nutritious food, hygiene items, medicine, clothing, and other supplies, which are not included in the relief packages provided by the DSWD," Dumlao said in a news release on Thursday.

The ECT may also be used to help defray hospital expenses, transportation, educational support, and livelihood, so long as the affected family has not received any form of livelihood assistance from other agencies.

Dumlao pointed out that the ECT assistance may also be given as support during the crucial rehabilitation and recovery stage of the disaster operations, as indicated in the Rehabilitation and Recovery Plan.

"Ninety days after a disaster, the provision of ECT may be extended to form part of the rehabilitation and recovery efforts for IDPs. The cash assistance at this stage is usually to support livelihood recovery and other income-generating activities of the disaster-affected families," she said.

Under the new guidelines, the ECT can be rolled out based on three important triggers, the first of which is the declaration of a state of calamity in a certain locality by the President, the provincial board, or the municipal/city local government council.

Another trigger is the

market operability in the affected area based on the national/regional/local disaster risk reduction and management council's situation report.

"This is important because we need to assess whether local markets in disaster-affected areas are functional and able to supply goods and services to meet the needs of the families. This ensures that the cash assistance interventions are appropriate and will indeed be of help," Dumlao said. The third trigger relies on the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) report.

"The need for the ECT assistance must be included in the PDNA as the basis for determining the extent of damages, and in identifying the recovery needs," she said.

The DSWD also laid out the coverage and classification of the ECT beneficiaries under the revised guidelines.

ECT beneficiaries include severely affected and slightly affected families by disasters and calamities, including typhoons, landslides, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, armed conflicts, and health outbreaks.

"When we say severely affected, this pertains to families with totally damaged houses, displaced families in evacuation centers for medium- and long-term displacements, and families with significant loss in their income or livelihood source," Dumlao explained.

"The slightly affected include families with partially damaged houses, those in evacuation centers for a short period of time, as projected. We also include in this category those who suffered minimal loss of income or livelihood and those families with sick or injured family members as an effect of the disaster."

The amount of cash assistance also differs based on beneficiary category and is also subject to the assessment of the needs of the affected families.

"We assure the public that the DSWD's ECT program is implemented in accordance with the needs of the target

CACDAC: PROTECTING OFWS RIGHTS AT CORE OF PH MIGRATION POLICY

MANILA – The Philippines earned praises at a migration forum held in Vienna, Austria, reaffirming its global leadership in ethical and strategic labor migration governance and for putting the rights and welfare of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) at the heart of its migration policies.

Sitting as a resource speaker during a high-level panel titled "Migration as an Engine of Development in Countries of Origin – What Is Needed?" at the 10th Vienna Migration Conference on Wednesday, Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac underscored that the Philippines' migration framework is built on three pillars that include protection, empowerment, and reintegration, ensuring that OFWs are supported before departure, while abroad, and upon their return.

He said the Philippines' approach to labor mobility is not about exporting labor, but empowering people through protection, skills, and opportunity.

"We have a strong legal heritage and history of compassion insofar as labor is concerned. We have a 90-year-old constitutional provision that was reiterated in subsequent versions of our Constitution, 1935. We vowed to protect labor, a forward protection to labor clause in our Constitution. We're one of the first, as I understand, to put this in

beneficiaries. Although we are dealing with consecutive disasters and their massive destructive effects, the DSWD affirms that the cash assistance will be given to the affected families to aid them in their early recovery and rehabilitation," Dumlao said.

The DSWD has rolled out the ECT for those affected by the Cebu and Davao quakes, as well as by Typhoons Opong and Ramil in Masbate and Capiz, respectively. (PNA)
BY JOSE CIELITO REGANIT

our supreme law," Cacdac said.

He said the Philippines' development policy is not exporting labor, but rather, the OFWs themselves are the ones who create employment opportunities abroad, especially with the reputation of Filipino workers as compassionate and hard-working.

"Our role is to ensure that deployment is rights-based, welfare-focused, and development-oriented for the worker and for the nation," he added.

Cacdac highlighted the Philippines' strong and comprehensive labor migration framework, stressing the country's steadfast dedication to protecting, empowering, and supporting Filipino migrant workers throughout their migration journey.

He also stressed that when labor mobility is responsibly and strategically managed, it serves as a catalyst for inclusive growth, international cooperation, and the preservation of migrant dignity.

Cacdac said the Philippines' Department of Migrant Workers' (DMW's) rights-based system is anchored on ethical recruitment, quick welfare response mechanisms, and lifelong learning programs that equip workers with skills in digital literacy, language proficiency, and global standards certification.

He said these initiatives help OFWs succeed abroad while safeguarding their rights and preparing them for reintegration at home.

Meanwhile, Cacdac also underscored the importance of strong bilateral cooperation with countries hosting OFWs.

"International cooperation back as far back as the 1970s and the 80s we've been talking to countries hosting OFWs, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait in the Middle East of course, and in Asia, with the ASEAN, our Southeast Asian grouping, and there we have laid the basis for discussions on how else to enhance labor mobility in terms of safety and ethical recruitment, as well as protection of our

SWEDISH GOV'T EXTENDS P74-M GRANT FOR LUZON ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

MANILA – The Swedish government has extended a 12 million Swedish krona (around PHP74 million) grant for the Luzon Economic Corridor's (LEC) flagship Subic-Clark-Manila-Batangas (SCMB) railway project.

The Office of Special Assistant to the President for Investment and Economic Affairs (OSAPIEA), in a press release on Wednesday, said the agreement was signed between the Government of Sweden, through Swedfund International, and the Department of Transportation (DOTr), and the document for the grant was presented at the Malacañang Palace on Wednesday.

"Swedfund's grant will fund a feasibility study on signaling systems and operational models for the SCMB railway - the anchor infrastructure initiative of the LEC that will connect the major ports of Subic,

nationals abroad," Cacdac said

"Needless to say, a combination of all these factors, whether it's protection, whether it's regulation or skills development, if you combine all of those, we laid the basis for successful OFW integration."

Cacdac said that for the Philippines, skills and welfare protection go hand in hand, and so, the Philippines also invests in lifelong learning and future skills because preparation is protection.

"When workers are skilled and informed, they are empowered," he added.

At the conference, participants lauded the Philippines as a model for other labor-sending nations, with one delegate calling it "a superpower among labor-sending countries."

Cacdac said the recognition highlights the country's growing influence in shaping humane and sustainable migration policies worldwide. (PNA)
BY MARITA MOAJE

Manila, and Batangas, strengthening logistics and trade across Luzon," it said.

It said the Manila-based "Asian Development Bank will oversee procurement of the consultant for the main feasibility study."

SAPIEA Secretary Frederick Go and Swedish Ambassador to the Philippines Anna Ferry led the group during the presentation.

They were joined by Sweden's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department Head for Asia, the Pacific and Latin America Daniel Wolvén, Sweden's Trade Commissioner to the Philippines Johan Lennefalk, DOTr officials led by Acting Secretary Giovanni Lopez, and representatives from the Department of Finance and the Department of Foreign Affairs.

"This partnership between the Philippines and Sweden advances the President's vision of developing globally competitive logistics infrastructure that will drive investment and inclusive growth," Go said in his keynote address during the event.

Ferry, in turn, welcomed the partnership, saying: "This additional agreement with the Department of Transportation is a remarkable example of synergies and cooperation between public and private efforts."

"We are proud to support the Philippines' development goals with Swedish technology and expertise in transportation and provide a boost for sustainable growth and opportunities," she said.

OSAPIEA said the Swedfund International's support "complements the June 2025 funding from the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, which supports parallel studies on transport modeling, port-rail integration, and institutional planning." (With a report from Joann Villanueva/PNA)
BY JOANN VILLANUEVA

PBBM TOUTS HOUSING PROGRAM MILESTONES, VOWS CONTINUED EXPANSION

MANILA — President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Thursday reaffirmed his administration's resolve to provide every Filipino family with a safe, decent, and affordable home, underscoring the government's major strides in expanding the national housing program. Speaking during the opening of the National Housing Expo 2025 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City, Marcos noted the government's collaboration with the private sector and housing agencies in delivering comprehensive housing services from design planning and financial assistance to housing loan processing.

"Ngayong araw, muli nating pinagtitiyay ang ating pangarap: na ang bawat pamilyang Pilipino ay magkaroon ng ligtas, maayos, at sariling tahanan (Today, we reaffirm our dream: that every Filipino family get a safe, orderly, and their own home)," Marcos said.

He, however, acknowledged that despite the gains in housing programs, homeownership remains a challenge for many Filipinos, with some families still renting or frequently relocating. He cited the urgent need to expand and accelerate housing initiatives to ensure a stable, affordable, and secure home for all.

"May mga pamilyang taon nang nangungupahan, palipat-lipat ng tirahan, laging may pangamba na baka sila'y mapaalis (Many families have been renting for years, moving from one place to another, always anxious that they might be forced to leave their homes)," Marcos said.

"Kaya naman nagsusumikap ang pamahalaan na palawakin ang ating programa, pabilisin ang mga proseso, at palalimin ang suporta sa sektor ng pabahay (That's why the government is

working hard to expand our programs, streamline processes, and strengthen our support for the housing sector)."

Housing partnerships and progress Marcos emphasized the success of the government's collaboration with the private sector and housing agencies in delivering comprehensive housing services.

He recognized the Pag-IBIG Fund as one of the government's steadfast partners in housing development, noting that about PHP75 billion in cash loans had been released to nearly three million members, providing much-needed financial relief.

"Ngayong taon lang, sa pamamagitan ng Pag-IBIG, mahigit limampu't pitong libong miyembro ang nabigyan ng pagkakataon na makalipat sa sariling bahay o mapaayos ang kanilang tinitirahan (Just this year, through Pag-IBIG, more than 57,000 members were given the opportunity to move into their own homes or improve their current ones)," he said.

Marcos also mentioned the Green Lane Program, which ensures that housing projects are climate-resilient and can withstand environmental challenges.

"Makikita natin ang bunga ng pagtutulungan ng gobyerno, pribadong sektor, at ng mga tinatawag nating housing agency (We can see here the fruit of cooperation among the government, the private sector, and our housing agencies)," he said.

Expanded housing program Under the Expanded Pambansang Pabahay Para sa Pilipino (4PH) Program, the administration continues to increase affordable housing opportunities through the Pag-IBIG Fund, Marcos said.

He vowed that the government's housing efforts would continue until

DAR FAST-TRACKS DISTRIBUTION TO MEET 400K-HECTARE TARGET FOR 2025

MANILA — The Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) is intensifying its nationwide operations starting this October as it accelerates the distribution of about 400,000 hectares of land

every Filipino had a home they could call their own.

"Sa pamamagitan ng Pag-IBIG Fund, maaari nang makakuha ng abot-kayang housing loan, kabilang na ang alok na tatlong porsiyentong interest rate kada taon para sa mga kababayan nating maliit ang kita (Through Pag-IBIG Fund, low-income Filipinos can now avail of affordable housing loans with an annual interest rate of only 3 percent)," Marcos said.

He said overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), as well as beneficiaries and graduates of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), are also eligible for assistance under the expanded initiative.

During the event, Marcos also led the turnover of Notices of Approval and Certificates of Entitlement to select housing beneficiaries.

The household beneficiaries from Los Baños, Laguna; Lucena City; Iloilo City; and Caloocan City were granted ownership of the lands they have long occupied.

"Sa wakas, pormal nang mapapasainyo ang mga lupang matagal na ninyong tinitirahan (At last, the land you have been living in will formally be yours)," he said.

The President thanked the private sector, housing developers, financial institutions, and other stakeholders for their steadfast partnership in realizing the government's housing goals. (PNA)

BY RUTH ABBEY GITA-CARLOS

to meet its target for 2025.

In a news release on Wednesday, Agrarian Reform Secretary Conrado Estrella III said the efforts are in line with the directives of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to uplift the lives of Filipino farmers and strengthen the country's food security.

"DAR is now in full operational swing to meet the target within the year, following the President's directive to fast-track the implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP)," Estrella said.

"October is a crucial month for DAR as we speed up land validation, documentation, and titling activities across the country. We are determined to fulfill our commitment to Congress to distribute 400,000 hectares of land this 2025 and help more farmers finally own the lands they have long been tilling," he added.

Estrella said that regional DAR offices nationwide are now conducting simultaneous field validations, land surveys, and title distributions in coordination with the Land Registration Authority, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Land Bank of the Philippines and local government units.

He said that this is to fast-track documentation and issue individual land titles to agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs) under the Support to Parcelization of Lands for Individual Titling Project more efficiently.

Estrella said that DAR has already distributed a total of 242,883 land titles to 232,098 ARBs, covering 305,944 hectares of farmland from July 2022 to August 2025.

AFP: HIGH PUBLIC TRUST, SATISFACTION RATINGS DUE TO PROFESSIONALISM

MANILA — The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Wednesday welcomed the results of the latest OCTA Research survey showing high public trust and satisfaction ratings for the military.

Moreover, it has also distributed 401,001 Certificates of Condonation and Release of Mortgage (COCROMs) totaling PHP41 billion in unpaid amortizations to 322,200 ARBs, covering 434,216 hectares of land. The condonation has freed farmers from decades-old debts and granted them full ownership of their awarded lands.

Estrella said that DAR will hold a series of nationwide distributions of land titles and the awarding of COCROMs, as well as the distribution of farm machineries and equipment (FMEs) for both ARBs and ARB organizations from October to December, to ensure that land ownership is complemented by support services.

Meanwhile, Estrella said the DAR's continuing reforms are anchored on transparency, efficiency, and accountability, ensuring that agrarian reform translates to inclusive growth and lasting rural development.

"Every title distributed and every case resolved represents a family's hope for stability and progress. Our performance reflects the dedication of the entire DAR organization to deliver on its promises.

We will continue to work relentlessly to ensure that our 400,000-hectare target for 2025 is fully realized," he said. (PNA) **BY MARITA MOAJE**

In a statement, the AFP attributed the overwhelming public support to the "professionalism and selfless service" of its members.

"The AFP leadership extends its gratitude to every soldier, airman, sailor, and marine whose professionalism and selfless service have earned the respect and trust of our people," it said.

OCTA's third quarter "Tugon ng Masa" survey, conducted on Sept. 23 to 30, showed 73 percent of adult Filipinos trust the AFP and are satisfied with its performance, resulting in a net trust rating of +66 and net performance rating of +68.

The same survey also showed 83 percent of Filipinos recognize the importance of defending the West Philippine Sea, with 78 percent believing that the military is capable of protecting the country against external threats, and 80 percent expressing support for strengthening partnerships with the United States and other like-minded nations.

The survey utilized 1,200 male and female probability respondents aged 18 and above.

"The AFP noted with particular appreciation the strong public support across all regions and social classes, including high trust levels in Mindanao, the National Capital Region, and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao," the AFP said.

It vowed to continue building a "strong, modern, and credible Armed Forces that our nation can always rely on." (PNA) **BY PRIAM NEPOMUCENO**

39 CORDILLERA COOPERATIVES LEVEL UP, 14 REACH BILLIONAIRE STATUS

BANGUED, Abra (PIA) — Thirty-nine cooperatives in the region have leveled-up from micro to small, small to medium, and medium to large categories while 14 cooperatives have already reached billionaire status. During the 2025 Regional Cooperative Month Culmination at the Abra Provincial Gymnasium in Bangued from Oct. 20-21, 2024, Cooperative Development Authority (CDA)-Cordillera director Felicidad Cenon reported that the Cordillera currently has an inverted pyramid structure when it comes to the number of micro, small, medium, and large cooperatives with micro cooperatives having the highest number.

"In totality, gumaganda naman ang operation kasi one we have ti recognize yearly is yung graduation of these micro cooperatives to a higher category. This year 39 ang nag-graduate from micro to small, small to medium, and medium to large," she said.

Cenon added that three were added to the billionaire cooperatives in the region for a total of 14 billionaire cooperatives in the Cordillera for 2025. Billionaire cooperatives in the region are the Benguet State University and Community Multipurpose Cooperative, Benguet Electric Cooperative, Tabuk Multipurpose Cooperative, Abra Diocesan Teachers and Employees Multipurpose Cooperative, Baguio-Benguet Community Credit Cooperative, Bokod Sulphur Spring Multipurpose Cooperative, Lagawe Multipurpose Development Cooperative, Treasure Link Cooperative Society, Texins Multipurpose Cooperative, Tabuk Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative, La Trinidad Vegetable Trading Post Multipurpose Cooperative, Lamut Grassroots Savings and Development Cooperative, All Saints Credit Cooperative, and the Taloy Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative.

Micro cooperatives which improved to small category

include the Abra Mountain Credit Cooperative, Baguig Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative, Calayucay Agriculture Cooperative, DPWH Conner Credit Cooperative, Camp 7 Transport Cooperative, MARGEN Credit Cooperative, Sagadian Tourist Transport Cooperative, Unified Family Credit Cooperative, San Luis Proper Credit Cooperative, Baguio-Pico-Puguis-Wangal-Strawberry Farm Transport Cooperative, Lubo Farmers Agriculture Cooperative, Oilbank Society Credit Cooperative, OSCAPA Multipurpose Cooperative, Rainbow Circle Credit Cooperative, United Family Multipurpose Cooperative, Kalinga Rice Terraces Farmers Agriculture Cooperative, Rang-ay Sandigan Credit Cooperative, Cadaclan Agrarian Reform Cooperative, and the Sagada Healthcare Pharmacy Consumers Cooperative.

Small cooperatives which graduated to medium category are Casigamman Agriculture Cooperative, 7-700-7 Livingstone Communities Credit Cooperative, Bakakeng Norte Sur Multipurpose Cooperative, Cordilleran Entrepreneurs Credit Cooperative, Loakan Jitney Transport Cooperative, University of the Philippines-Baguio Multipurpose Cooperative, Bakun Central Multipurpose Cooperative, Bentico Multipurpose Cooperative, Binga Multipurpose Cooperative, Kapangan Municipal Employees Multipurpose Cooperative, Kibungan Arabica Coffee Growers Multipurpose Cooperative, Kalanguya Agriculture Cooperative, One Lamut Agriculture Cooperative, and the Rizal Multipurpose Cooperative.

Five medium cooperatives also leveled-up to large category including the Trusted BLISTT Alliance of Transport Multipurpose Cooperative, United Resources Credit Cooperative, Kibungan Employees Multipurpose

Flashy masks and costumes, floats bedecked with colorful lights illuminating city streets, parades of dances, and smiles everywhere painted a moving tableau of the festive scene in the highly urbanized City of Bacolod as it celebrated MassKara Festival 2025 this month.

With the theme "One Smile, One City, One Heart," this year's celebration was not only for tourists to enjoy but also a source of hope and pride for locals.

At the Barangay Trade Fair in Megaworld The Upper East, local communities proudly displayed products born out of perseverance and partnership, from artisanal crafts to handmade goods that reflect Bacolod's creativity and resilience.

Participating booths came from Barangays 1, 2, 5, 18, 22, 39, Alijis, Cabug, Estefania, Singcang, Taculing, Villamonte, and Sum-ag.

Cooperative, Tomay Credit Cooperative, and the Trinidad Based Agawa Multipurpose Cooperative.

Micro cooperatives have assets of P3,000,000 and below, small cooperatives have assets of more than P 3,000,000 but less than P15,000,000, medium category cooperatives have assets of more than P15,000,000 but less than P100,000,000, and large cooperatives have assets of P100,000,000 and above.

During the program, partners and other stakeholders such as provincial and municipal government units, the Department of Agrarian reform, and Department of Agriculture were also given appreciation tokens.

CDA Chairperson Undersecretary Alexander Raquipo, CDA-CAR Director Felicidad Cenon, CARCDC officials headed by chairperson Victor Luacan, Bangued Mayor Perfecto Cardenas, and Atty. Jeanelle Seares representing Cong. JB and Cong. Ching Bernos led the awarding ceremony. (JJMT, PIA-CAR, Abra) **BY JAMIE JOIE P. MALINGAN**

FACES THAT PAINT THE COLORS, SMILES OF MASSKARA FESTIVAL 2025

MassKara 2025 Festival Director Rodney Ascalon emphasized that the trade fair is a celebration of the city's commitment to community empowerment and inclusive local economic growth.

"We aim to not only showcase the talents of each barangay but also promote livelihood projects, local economies, and what special products that we can see in every barangay," Ascalon said, noting that the initiative was made possible through the efforts of Bacolod First Lady Maita Tionko-Gasataya with the support of the city government.

And beyond the colorful displays, the fair stood as a testament of empowerment and inclusion, revealing faces often masked by marginalization: Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and women.

Trade of fair chances For Mary Joy Dimanalata, 33, president of the Sum-ag Persons with Disabilities Association (SPWDA), the barangay trade fair was a chance to show that their association exists and that people like her deserve the same opportunities as everyone else.

"Ang MassKara Festival mas nagahatag sa amon kalipay nga mga PWDs kay parehos sini nga trade fair, dako nga bulig sa association nga mas makilala pa gid ang [Barangay] Sum-ag PWDs; nga hindi lang kami persons with disabilities nga ginabulig-buligan pero kaya namon magtindog sa amon kaugalingon," Dimanalata said.

(The MassKara Festival brings us, persons with disabilities, great joy because events like this trade fair are a big help to our association in making the [Barangay] Sum-ag PWDs more recognized; that we are not just persons with disabilities who need help, but people who can stand on our own.)

A bone cancer survivor since 2015, Dimanalata triumphed over the disease at the cost of her left limb. Yet such loss did not immobilize her to move forward in life, empowering not only herself but her fellow PWDs as well.

With more than 170

members now under her leadership, SPWDA continues to be empowered through a livelihood program supported by its barangay.

They produce handmade bags, wallets, rags, accessories, and made-to-order bamboo furniture, all of which were showcased during the fair.

Akin to the origin of the festival, however, Dimanalata shared that behind their colorful masks are real faces of struggle, often shaped by discrimination.

"Isa na da ang bullying kag ang naga-left behind sa amon sa obra. Inditanan nga company or business establishment gina-hire ang persons with disabilities," she shared.

(Bullying and being left behind at work are among the challenges we face. Not all companies or business establishments hire persons with disabilities.)

Yet, true to the vibrant spirit of the MassKara Festival, she added that being seen is already enough.

"Ang gapanghimo sang amon mga products, grabe ila kalipay kay syempre ma-explore naman ang ila product. Biskan wala kami ya benta, lipay na kami ya nga makilal-an nga amon association; nga may amo ni gali sa Barangay Sum-ag," Dimanalata said.

(Those who make our products are very happy because they get to showcase what they can do. Even if we don't make any sales, we're already glad that our association is recognized; that people now know there's something like this in Barangay Sum-ag.)

Win for women The same spirit of empowerment resonated across the stall of Barangay 1, where mothers proved that they are more than homemakers—they are entrepreneurs in their own right.

For Jessica Pahayahay, 53, chairperson of Moms Across Philippines-Negros Inc., Barangay 1 Chapter, the barangay trade fair has become a safe and empowering space where women like her find strength, support, and shared purpose.

Formed in 2022 with 72

members, the group has since grown into a small yet thriving community of mothers united by their livelihood initiatives.

Their booth at the fair brimmed with neatly labeled bottles of chili garlic, sweet packs of pastillas, and bundles of rice, among others, reflecting their creativity and perseverance.

"Nami nga makajoin kami sa mga amo ni nga trade fair para ma-showcase man namon amon nga product kag makabulig man sa iban nga mga iloy kag maka-enjoy. Mapakita namon sa mga tawo nga amo ni ang products sang Barangay 1," said Pahayahay, smiling proudly behind their display.

(It's nice that we can join trade fairs like this to showcase our products, help other mothers, and have fun as well. We can show people that these are the products of Barangay 1.) Through their association, these mothers have turned homegrown skills into sustainable, income-generating ventures with proceeds going directly to the group to fund more livelihood projects and help more women.

Lasting smiles Ascalon shared that the festival is Bacolod's way of presenting itself to the Philippines and to the world.

"Tourism is a long-term commitment. If nami ang tourism (if tourism is good), everyone wins in tourism," Ascalon said.

For women-led enterprises in Barangay 1 to the empowered PWDs of Barangay Sum-ag, the fair proved that winning is most meaningful when it uplifts all sectors.

And just like how one smile can spark another, that same contagious joy filled the entire city during the festival.

Such is a reminder that the MassKara Festival is not only about celebration, but also about inclusion, where no one is left behind in the pursuit of a better life, and the brightest smiles often come from those who are at the peripheries in the margins. (AGP/PSP/PIA Negros Occidental) **BY PAULO S. PAJARILLO**

P1-TRILLION NAT'L TAX ALLOTMENT BOOSTS LGU'S HEARTS PROJECTS – DOF

MANILA – Health, education, agriculture and environment, roads and infrastructure, technology and security and social protection (HEARTS) projects of the local government units (LGUs) have been ensured as their share in the National Tax Allotment (NTA) has been increased.

Citing the 2019 Mandanas-Garcia ruling of the Supreme Court (SC), the Department of Finance (DOF) on Wednesday said LGUs' share in the NTA has been increased to 40 percent of all national taxes, instead of those only collected by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).

"This means greater capacity for LGUs to improve the delivery of essential services to their constituents and strengthen the government's commitment to devolution under the Local Government Code of 1991," the press release said.

DOF said around 43,634 provinces, cities,

municipalities and villages received a total of PHP1.03 trillion in NTA this year, higher by 18.73 percent from the year-ago's PHP871.38 billion.

LGUs in the National Capital Region that received the highest share include Quezon City (PHP8.53 billion), City of Manila (PHP5.35 billion), Caloocan City (PHP4.90 billion), Taguig City (PHP3.74 billion) and Pasig City (PHP2.61 billion).

Among the regions, Region 4-A received the biggest share at PHP122.68 billion in 2025, which is projected to increase to PHP141.15 billion next year.

DOF said the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) is also being supported through an annual block grant of PHP83.42 billion in 2025. This will increase to PHP93.98 billion in 2026. It said NTA for next year will increase by 15.07 percent to PHP1.19 trillion. **(PNA)**

BY JOANN VILLANUEVA

BSP SIMPLIFIES ISLAMIC BANKING UNIT RULES

MANILA – Rules governing the operation of Islamic Banking Units (IBUs) have been amended to encourage more players and help boost the country's Islamic banking sector.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), in a press release on Wednesday, clarified that IBUs need not have a separate capital requirement since these are just a division or department of a conventional bank, even if it follows the principles of Shari'ah banking, which, among others, prohibit the imposition of interest on borrowings.

It also said that "processing fee for an IBU license will also follow the fees corresponding to the

bank's category."

BSP said the new rules "also institutionalize the three-year observation period, starting from the launch of Islamic banking operations, for submitting prudential reports on Islamic banking operations" and these units "are no longer required to submit a separate liquidity report" on top of the ones submitted by the mother bank.

"This gives industry players time to get familiar with the reportorial requirements," it said.

BSP Governor Eli Remolona said these changes are aimed "to encourage more players to enter and help develop the Philippine Islamic finance market."

PESO WEAKENS VS. US DOLLAR, PULLS PSEI DOWN

MANILA – The lack of catalysts and continued weakness of the Philippine peso against the US dollar resulted in a drop in the Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) on Wednesday, a day after recovering.

The main equities gauge shed 1.03 percent to 6,030.87 points, and All Shares by 0.83 percent to 3,627.38 points.

Only the Holding Firms index gained during the day after rising 0.06 percent, while Mining and Oil posted the biggest drop at 5.91 percent, followed by Financials, 1.62 percent; Services, 1.42 percent; Property, 1.14 percent; and Industrial, 0.95 percent.

Volume reached 12.06 billion shares, amounting to PHP10.81 billion.

Decliners led advancers at 150 to 57, while 48 shares were unchanged.

"The market went down as it struggled to find new catalysts, coupled with the depreciation of the PHP against the USD. Moreover, the dip in gold spot prices also contributed to the negative sentiment in the market," said Luis Limlingan, head of sales of Regina Capital Development Corp.

The local currency depreciated to 58.41 against the greenback from its 58.22 close on Tuesday.

Its weakness showed early on after opening the trade at 58.3 from the previous session's 58.15.

It traded between 58.43 and 58.28, bringing the day's average to 58.34.

Volume of trade also declined to USD1.29 billion from the previous day's USD1.43 billion. **(PNA)**

BY JOANN VILLANUEVA

AUTHORITIES DESTROY P4.6-M WORTH OF UNREGISTERED PRODUCTS

MANILA – A Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) official on Wednesday expressed optimism that the agency will exceed its 2024 total of approximately PHP300 million worth of confiscated unregistered products, as enforcement operations continue this year.

DTI Assistant Secretary lawyer Regino Mallari Jr. declined to give the amount of substandard products they confiscated so far this year, but said monitoring continues nationwide.

"Mahigit isang taon na po yan kasi continuous po ang monitoring sa NCR [National Capital Region] at mga regions natin. Tapos iniipon natin,

tapos kinakasuhan natin ng formal complaint. Pagkatapos ng kaso ay maari nang i-destroy ng gobyerno. (These have been confiscated for over a year already because we have continuous monitoring in NCR and in the regions. Then we gather it and file a formal complaint. Once the cases have been filed, that's the time we destroy the confiscated items)," he said, referring to the items they destroyed during the day.

Mallari led the destruction of around PHP4.6 million worth of unregistered ceramic sanitary wares and steel products at the DTI-Fair Trade Enforcement Bureau warehouse in Marikina City as part of the Consumer Welfare Month. He said these products put the public's welfare in danger since these have not undergone proper standards assessments and do not have the mandatory Philippine Standards (PS) and Import

Commodity Clearance (ICC) markings, in violation of Republic Act (RA) 4109, otherwise known as the Products Standards Law. He also noted that confiscation of substandard steel products is timely, given the series of earthquakes that have rocked several parts of the country in recent weeks.

Aside from ceramic sanitary products and steels, other products under mandatory certification from the DTI's Bureau of Philippine Standards are household appliances such as electric fans, electric iron, electric blender, rice cooker, air pot, electric coffeemakers and television; lighting and wiring devices such as electronic ballasts, fuses, lamp holders, plugs, socket outlets, and Christmas lights; plastic pipes, cement and other construction materials, and chemical products such as motor vehicle brake fluid and fireworks. **(PNA)**

BY JOANN VILLANUEVA

PH, JAPAN PARTNER TOWARDS ENERGY RESILIENCY BID

MANILA – The Philippines and Japan have teamed up to help each other in their energy transition bid as part of their commitment towards the use of clean energy and to ensure energy resilience.

The Department of Energy (DOE), in a news release on Tuesday, said Energy Secretary Sharon Garin and Japanese Trade Minister Muto Yoji signed a memorandum of cooperation (MoC) on the sidelines of the 3rd Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC) Ministerial Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Oct. 17.

It said the partnership is "grounded in shared values and a commitment to ambitious climate action" and is aligned with the AZEC principles, which underscores "the need for diverse energy

options and tailored transition pathways for each country."

It explained that "AZEC, a regional initiative promoting cooperation towards achieving net-zero emissions in Asia, recognizes that diverse pathways are necessary to achieve carbon neutrality based on each country's unique circumstances."

"By diversifying energy sources and embracing innovative technologies, the Philippines and Japan seek to enhance energy resilience and security, support low-carbon development, and contribute to climate change mitigation efforts under the Paris Agreement," it said.

Part of the MoC is the "encouraging of exchange of technological expertise and best practices from Japan to the Philippines, encouraging clean-energy investment and support skills development in emerging energy industries, driving economic transformation, and enhancing competitiveness in both nations."

"Ultimately, this partnership not only addresses critical energy and environmental challenges but also deepens bilateral relations, fostering mutual trust and cooperation," the DOE said.

Garin called the partnership "a long-term investment in a sustainable future."

"It reflects our unwavering commitment to addressing climate change and building a resilient energy sector that will power our economies for decades to come. This is not just about reducing emissions; it's about creating jobs, fostering innovation, and improving the quality of life for our citizens. A sustainable energy sector is a foundation for a thriving economy and a healthy society," she said. (With a report from Joann Villanueva/PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**



SIGNAL SNAPS PLDT'S STREAK IN PVL REINFORCED CONFERENCE

MANILA – Undermanned Signal pulled off a 25-17, 25-22, 25-21 victory over PLDT Tuesday night in the Premier Volleyball League (PVL) Reinforced Conference at the Smart Araneta Coliseum.

Minus injured top hitter Vanie Gandler, the Super Spikers snapped the High Speed Hitters' 15-0 run. "I really wanted to bounce back – I missed that winning feeling," said ace playmaker Gel Cayuna. "I just couldn't find my rhythm in those first two games."

She dished out 20 excellent sets and contributed six points in the one-hour, 22-minute win.

"We worked hard to make up for what we lacked in our first two games, and all that effort finally paid off," added Cayuna.

Signal improved to 1-2 and kept its hopes alive for a Top 3 finish in Pool A.

"This win is incredibly fulfilling – it really showed our mindset and how much we wanted this," said Cayuna. "We want to

win more, and we're going to work even harder for it." Erika Santos and Ishie Lalongisip chipped in 17 and 15 points, respectively for Signal, which will face winless Nxled on Saturday at the Ynares Center in Montalban, Rizal.

Savi Davison led PLDT with 14 points, followed by Nastya Bavykina with 10 points and Kim Dy with seven points.

PLDT's loss allowed Farm Fresh to take the lead in the pool at 3-0. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

ATENEO POCKETS UAAP MEN'S BADMINTON TITLE

MANILA – Ateneo de Manila University defeated University of the Philippines, 3-0, in the UAAP Season 88 men's badminton final at the Rizal Memorial Badminton Hall in Malate, Manila on Wednesday.

The Blue Eagles banked on rookie JR Pandi to sweep the season and claim their sixth title overall.

Pandi, who just returned from the World Junior Championships, won the first singles match over Jelo Albo, 21-15, 21-19.

After Season 86 co-MVP Lyrden Laborte prevailed over Kervin Llanes, 17-21, 21-15, 21-8, in the second singles match, the 18-year-old Pandi

and Arthur Salvado Jr. downed Albo and Mark Anthony Bernal, 24-22, 21-11, to seal the win.

"I'm happy that in my first year with the team, we won again. Even though I wasn't able to play in the earlier ties, it's okay. At least, everyone contributed with the help of the coaches, we were able to get this win," said Pandi, a graduate of Ragayan National High School.

"Our mindset is really, we need to think about what our goal is this season, and with the help of the coaches. Our sacrifices are waking up early, and after training we have classes. We are thankful that our sacrifices have

paid off," added the Interdisciplinary Studies freshman.

Ateneo coach Kennie Asuncion-Robles said the team really wants to avenge last season's loss.

"Definitely, it was one of the factors in this win because the players took it to heart. They really said, 'that's what we're gonna work for'," said Asuncion-Robles.

"We never took anything for granted, even going into the Final Four, even if with the No. 1 position. We knew upsets could happen, and we were prepared for every challenge that came our way. So, I think our preparedness helped us

VALKYRIES MARCH TO WMPBL FINALS

MANILA – New Zealand Bluefire-Batangas whipped Tagaytay-Tol, 80-64, Wednesday night to reach the 2025 Women's Maharlika Pilipinas Basketball League (WMPBL) Finals at the Ynares Center in Montalban, Rizal.

Afril Bernardino finished with 22 points, 10 rebounds, three assists and three steals, while Khate Castillo added 20 points, including six triples.

Pringle Fabruada had 10 points and six rebounds, while Snow Peñaranda

and Rizza Lozada chipped in seven and six points, respectively.

"We had a winning mentality right from the start. We didn't want to give any kind of life to Tagaytay-Tol because it's a very dangerous team. They have a lot of good players, quality players so we just wanted to really start aggressively against them," said New Zealand Bluefire-Batangas head coach Cholo Villanueva.

"When we made stops, we were able to run on the other end. We

dictated the tempo of the game," he added.

Stefanie Berberabe led the Patriots with 20 points, 10 rebounds, eight assists and three steals.

Luisa San Juan, returning from suspension, scored 13 points while Monique Del Carmen had six points, five assists, and three rebounds.

The Valkries will face the winner between Discovery-Rizal and San Juan DN-Steel for the title. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

LIQUID PH, TNC ADVANCE TO MPL PH TOP 4 ROUND

MANILA – Team Liquid Philippines (TLPH) and TNC booked their places in the upper bracket semifinals of the MPL Philippines Playoffs after ousting their respective opponents in the play-in round on Wednesday night at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay.

Both teams clinched their place in the Final 4 in style, bringing to a close memorable runs by Team Falcons Philippines (FLCN) and Twisted Minds Philippines (TWIS).

TLPH first clinched a place in the next round by eliminating FLCN with a 3-1 win.

In effect, TLPH, seeded third in the playoffs, kept its bid to complete the Golden Road alive.

TLPH quickly imposed its championship caliber in

Game 1, bouncing back from Rowgien "Owgwen" Unigo's First Blood to go 16-0 the rest of the way in kills.

TLPH continued its dominance in Game 2 with solid macro gaming, eventually leading by more than 13,000 golds before securing a 2-0 lead.

FLCN struck back in Game 3 and tried to keep things close in Game 4, but Liquid PH, already up big in Game 4, sealed a solid endgame clash win that eventually iced the match.

TLPH will next face Onic Philippines on Thursday night in a rematch of last season's MPL Philippines grandfinals earlier this year.

On the other hand, despite falling short, FLCN's late rise from last place to the last playoff spot remains one of the most remarkable clutch runs in league history.

Later in the night, TNC escaped with a 3-2 win against TWIS.

The deciding moment came in Game 5 when Justine "Zaida" Palma

got his hands on his trademark Fanny during the draft.

Palma eventually went 8-0-0 to set up the dominating series clincher for TNC.

TNC, the only lower-seeded team to make the Final Four as the fifth seed, will face top-seeded Aurora Philippines next, also on Thursday night.

Twisted Minds PH, on the other hand, exited the season in the play-in round despite starting the season 3-0, losing nine of its next 12 matches in the end.

However, the promising start was also a remarkable feat for a team that elevated almost all members of the MDL Philippines Season 5 champion Onic Nine Lives to MPL Philippines. Three TWIS members, Carlo "Caloy" Roma, Miguel "Sionnn"

Alcantara, and Mico "Nosia" Guevarra, are the frontrunners for Rookie of the Season honors. (PNA) **BY IVAN STEWART SALDAJENO**