

**PGC's UGNAYAN SA BARANGAY GOES TO BARANGAY SAMALA-MARQUEZ IN KAWIT, CAVITE**



# MEDICAL EXPERTS WARN OF 'HOLIDAY HEART SYNDROME'

**TAGAYTAY CITY, Cavite (PIA)** — With the holiday season only a few days away, medical experts have warned that lack of

sleep, binge drinking, and overeating during festivities can lead to implications, especially to the heart. Dr. Maria Encarnita

Limpin of the Philippine Heart Center dubbed the sensation of erratic heartbeat as 'holiday heart syndrome', which

can be experienced even by individuals without a history of heart problems. "This can happen when you drink more alcohol

than the normal limit." Limpin cited social drinking, which is a common Filipino custom during holidays and celebrations, as a primary cause of holiday heart syndrome.

"We are expecting that the holiday heart syndrome will be seen this season. The fact that a lot of Filipinos drink alcohol means that cardiac specialty centers in the country can have problems."

With the drinking age getting younger, Limpin warned that the "holiday heart syndrome" can be experienced by individuals of any age, especially those opting for hard liquor. Despite it being a new finding, the holiday heart syndrome is the onset of irregularities in heart rhythm in patients without a history of heart ailments. It is associated with alcohol consumption and binge drinking.

Among the early symptoms of the holiday heart syndrome are rapid

The provincial government of Cavite through the Office of the Provincial Governor, under the leadership of Governor Abeng Remulla, continued its Ugnayan sa Barangay program in Barangay Samala-Marquez, Kawit on November 26, 2025. The activity served as a meaningful platform to bring the government closer to residents, strengthening the connection between local leaders and the community they serve.

Among the key figures who joined the event were First District Board Member Jgys Gandia, Board Member Junbie Samala, as well as other local leaders, who actively participated in the program's activities and helped ensure its smooth implementation.

Through Ugnayan sa Barangay, the Provincial Government of Cavite continues to strengthen its partnership with grassroots communities, ensuring that public service remains accessible, inclusive, and people-centered. ---F. Tamio / Cavite PIO

## HOLIDAY HEART SYNDROME

...PRESENTS WITH PALPITATIONS CHARACTERIZED BY RAPID AND ... HEARTBEAT.

...SYMPTOMS: CHEST PAINS, SHORTNESS OF BREATH, DIZZINESS ... COPE

...SIS RELY ON CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS ... RELATIONSHIP ... THE TIMING BETWEEN ALCOHOL INTAKE ... TOMS.



and irregular heart rate, pulsing sensations in the neck.

"Of course, there are other, more frightening arrhythmias, going as high as 160 (bpm) or more."

Without emergency treatment, the 'holiday heart syndrome' can lead to chest pain, even cardiac arrest.

In 2024, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported cardiovascular diseases, including ischaemic heart diseases, neoplasms, and cerebrovascular diseases, were among the common causes of death in the country. (PB-PIA4A) BY PATRICIA BERMEDEZ

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## WANTED SA BACOR CITY, ARESTADO NG PULIS BACOR

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite** — Matagumpay na naaresto ng Warrant Section ng Bacoor Component City Police Station ang isang City Level Most Wanted Person sa Brgy Queensrow East, Bacoor City, Cavite, dakong 4:30 ng hapon ng December 4, 2025.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL ALEXIE A DESAMITO, hepe ng Bacoor CCPS, ang naarestong suspek na si alyas "Eric" na residente ng Bacoor City, Cavite. Sa bisa ng warrant of arrest na inilabas ng RTC, Branch 115 - Bacoor City, Cavite, ang akusado ay inaresto sa kasong Frustrated Homicide na may

pyansang Php 72,000.00. Ang operasyon ay naitala gamit ang Body Worn Camera at Alternative Recording Device. Kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng nasabing pulisya ang suspek habang ang warrant ay ibabalik sa korte ng pinagmulan para sa nararapat na disposisyon.

Ayon kay PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, "Hindi tayo titigil sa pagsugpo sa mga wanted persons, patunay ito ng patuloy na determinasyon ng Cavite Police sa pagpapatupad ng batas at pagpapanatili ng kapayapaan sa lalawigan."

## CALABARZON'S MOST WANTED PERSON, ARRESTED BY AMADEO POLICE

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite** — Personnel of Amadeo Municipal Police Station successfully arrested the Regional Level Most Wanted Person in Barangay Dagatan, Amadeo, Cavite at around 9:10 PM on December 3, 2025.

PMAJ JULIUS R MARQUEZ, Chief of Police of Amadeo MPS, identified the accused as alias "Jean," a resident of Amadeo, Cavite. She was arrested by virtue of warrant of arrest issued by Regional Trial Court, Fourth Judicial Region, Branch 133, Tagaytay City, Cavite for Violation of Section 5, 11 and 12, Article II of RA 9165 with no bail recommended.

The operation was properly documented using an Alternative Recording Device (ARD). The accused is currently detained at Amadeo MPS while the copy of the warrant of arrest will be returned to the court of origin.

In his statement, PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director of Cavite PPO, said: "This successful operation is

proof of our police force's unwavering dedication to the campaign against wanted persons. We will continue to ensure that our community becomes safer and more secure."

## PROVINCIAL MOST WANTED PERSON ARESTADO NG ROSARIO PNP

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite** — Isang Provincial Most Wanted Person ang naaresto sa pinaigting na manhunt operation ng Cavite Police Provincial Office. Nagsagawa ng operasyon ang mga tauhan ng Rosario Municipal Police Station, gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD), sa Rosario, Cavite, bandang 3:30 ng hapon noong Disyembre 3, 2025.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL LARDIE O BAGAMAN, Hepe ng Rosario MPS, ang akusado na si alyas "Roberto," residente ng Rosario,

## CITY'S MOST WANTED PERSON, ARRESTED BY DASMARINAS PNP

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite** — Warrant Personnel of Dasmariñas Component City Police Station successfully arrested the City Level Most Wanted Person in Barangay Zone 1, Dasmariñas City, Cavite at around 3:20 PM on December 4, 2025.

PLTCOL REGINO L OÑATE, Chief of Police of Dasmariñas CCPS, identified the accused as alias "Greg," a resident of Dasmariñas City, Cavite. He was arrested by virtue of warrant of arrest issued by Regional Trial Court, Branch 128, Fourth Judicial Region, Dasmariñas City, Cavite for the crime of Acts of Lasciviousness Under Article 336 of the revised Penal Code in Relation to

Violation of Section 5(B) of R.A. No. 7610 with bail recommended of Php 180,000.00.

The operation was properly documented using an Alternative Recording Device (ARD). The accused is currently detained at Dasmariñas CCPS while the copy of the warrant of arrest will be returned to the court of origin.

In his statement, PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director of Cavite PPO, said: "This successful operation is proof of our police force's unwavering dedication to the campaign against wanted persons. We will continue to ensure that our community becomes safer and more secure."

## WANTED SA CAVITE, ARESTADO NG NOVELETA PULIS

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite** — Naaresto ng mga tauhan ng Noveleta Municipal Police Station

ang Provincial Level Most Wanted Person sa Sitio Buro, Tejeros Convention, Rosario, Cavite bandang 7:30 PM ng December 3, 2025.

Kinilala ni PMAJ MARK ANTHONY D SARNO, OIC ng Noveleta MPS, ang akusado na si alyas "Ramil", residente ng Rosario, Cavite.

Isinagawa ng mga tauhan ng Noveleta MPS, gamit ang Alternative Recording Device (ARD) ang operasyon na nagresulta sa pagkakaaresto ng akusado para sa paglabag sa Violation of Art II Sec 11 of RA 9165 na inilabas ng RTC 4th Judicial Region, Branch 16, Cavite City, Cavite na may piyansang Php 200,000.00.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO:

"Ang mabilis at matagumpay na pag-aresto sa Provincial Level Most Wanted Person ay patunay ng walang humpay na determinasyon ng Cavite Police na tugisin ang mga nagtatago sa batas at tiyaking ligtas ang ating komunidad."

## BABAENG MAY PATONG-PATONG NA KASO, ARESTADO NG MAGALLANES PULIS

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite** — Matagumpay na naaresto ng Magallanes Municipal Police Station ang isang babaeng nagtatago sa batas at may patong-patong na kaso sa Brgy. Medina, Magallanes, Cavite, bandang 11:20 ng umaga noong Disyembre 3, 2025.

Kinilala ni PMAJ RAYMOND T BALBUENA, Hepe ng Magallanes MPS, ang akusado na si alyas "Geline," residente ng Magallanes, Cavite.

Ang pag-aresto ay isinagawa sa bisa ng mga Warrant of Arrest na inilabas ng Regional Trial Court, Branch 15, Naic, Cavite para sa mga kasong Illegal Recruitment, An Act Amending R.A. 8042, otherwise Known as The Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipino Act of 1995 (R.A. 10022) at para sa kasong Estafa

Art. 315 Par. 2(A) of RPC, na may mga pyansang Php24,000.00 bawat isa. Ang naturang operasyon ay maayos na naidokumento gamit ang Alternative Recording Device. Agad na ipinaalam sa akusado ang kaniyang mga karapatang pangkonstitusyon habang siya ay inaresto at kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng Magallanes MPS para sa dokumentasyon at wastong disposisyon.

Sa kanyang pahayag, pinuri ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite Police Provincial Office, "Ang matagumpay na operasyon na ito ay patunay ng walang-sawang dedikasyon ng ating kapulisan sa kampanya laban sa mga nagtatago sa batas. Patuloy nating titiyakin na ang Cavite ay magiging mas ligtas at payapa."

## ILLEGAL FIREARM NASAMSAM SA PAGPAPATUPAD NG SEARCH WARRANT SA IMUS CITY

**Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite** — Nasamsam ng mga tauhan ng Provincial Intelligence Unit at Imus Component City Police Station ang isang ilegal na baril at mga bala sa isinagawang Search Warrant Operation sa Imus City dakong 1:40 ng hapon ng December 2, 2025.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL CHESTER NOEL R BORLONGAN, Chief PIU, ang suspek na si alyas DIONISIO, residente ng nasabing lugar.

Isinagawa ng PIU, sa ilalim ng direktang superbisyon ni PLTCOL CHESTER NOEL R BORLONGAN, Chief PIU, ang implementasyon ng Search Warrant para sa paglabag sa RA 10591 "Comprehensive Firearms and Ammunition Regulation Act." Sa

naturang operasyon, nasamsam ang mga sumusunod na ebidensya: isang (1) unit Taurus PT945 caliber .45 pistol; isang (1) magazine para sa nasabing baril; pitong (7) pirasong live ammunition ng caliber .45; at isang (1) black belt bag. Ang lahat ng ebidensya ay maayos na na-markahan at nilagdaan.

Sa kanyang pahayag, sinabi ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director ng Cavite PPO, "Ang patuloy na pagpapatupad ng Search Warrant laban sa mga lumalabag sa RA 10591 ay pagpapakita ng determinasyon ng Cavite Police na labanan ang pagkalat ng mga hindi rehistradong baril upang mapanatili ang kapayapaan at kaayusan sa lalawigan ng Cavite."

## CAVITE PPO HOLDS SEND-OFF CEREMONY FOR INTERNSHIP PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The Cavite Police Provincial Office successfully conducted the Send-Off Ceremony for Criminology students and Grade 12 students embarking on their Internship Program on December 3, 2025.

The program was presided over by PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director, and duly represented by PLTCOL WILLY B SALAZAR, Deputy Provincial Director for Administration.

The ceremony commenced with an invocation, setting a solemn and meaningful tone for the program. It was followed by PCPT EDGARDO M ABLANDO II, Assistant Chief of the Provincial Administrative and Resource Management Unit (PARMU), who officially welcomed the participants. In his message, he expressed appreciation for the partnership between the Cavite Police Provincial Office and the participating academic institutions, emphasizing the importance of the internship program in molding future law enforcers. He also led the formal turnover of interns, marking the start of their immersive learning experience within various police units.

To guide the students in their upcoming assignments, PSSg Andrew S Alapad, PSD PNCO, delivered an informative discussion on the Do's and Don'ts during the Internship Program. His talk highlighted the importance of discipline, adherence to PNP protocols, respect for authority, and maintaining professionalism and integrity while performing their duties. The orientation aimed to ensure that interns understand their responsibilities and the ethical standards expected from them throughout the duration of their field training.

Messages of support and encouragement were delivered by representatives from partner schools, including

Ms. Carolina P. Baylen, Campus Manager of NCST Dasma; Mr. Tredor Mavrick Punzalan, OJT Coordinator of Cavite West Point College; Ms. Dona B. Furing, SHS Coordinator of New Generation International School; Ms. Rachiel Anna D. Reduca, SHS Learning Team Leader/Coordinator of Our Lady of the Pillar Catholic School, Inc; Mr. Ariel Y. Almasco Jr., Work Immersion Focal Person of Senior High School within Bacoor Elementary School; Mr. Jomar B. Enero, OJT/Culminating Teacher of St. Michael's Institute of Bacoor, Inc; Ms. Bernadette S. Dumayas, SHS Coordinator of Tagaytay City Science National High School - Integrated Senior High School; Ms. Emelen A. Verano, SHS Coordinator of Ternate West National High School and Ms. Lorelie N. Carzon, SHS Dept. Head/Immersion Coordinator of The Valley Cathedral Academy, Inc. An inspirational message and words of guidance were delivered by PLTCOL WILLY B SALAZAR, Deputy Provincial Director for Administration of Cavite PPO, who underscored the vital role of discipline, professionalism, and dedication in the journey of every aspiring law enforcer. He reminded the students that entering the field of law enforcement is not merely a career choice but a lifelong commitment to serve and protect the community with integrity and compassion. PLTCOL Salazar encouraged the interns to take the opportunity to learn from the experiences of uniformed personnel, to uphold the core values of the Philippine National Police, and to always act with honesty and respect for human rights. He further emphasized that their internship would serve as the foundation of their character and work ethic as future members of the law enforcement community.

## MEDICAL & DENTAL MISSION SERVES RESIDENTS OF SAN MIGUEL I, DASMA

The Provincial Government of Cavite, under the leadership of Governor Abeng Remulla, successfully spearheaded a Medical and Dental Mission in Brgy. San Miguel I, City of Dasmariñas on November 28, providing free healthcare services to a total of 528 patients. Of the beneficiaries, 408 residents received medical consultations, 67 availed of dental services, 28 underwent ECG procedures, and 25 received X-ray examinations, ensuring

accessible and quality care for the community.

In addition to these services, free medicines and vitamins were also distributed by the medical mission team to support the continued recovery and wellness of the beneficiaries.

The initiative reflects the provincial government's strong commitment to promoting public health and enhancing the well-being of every Caviteño through sustained, community-centered health programs. --R. Tanael / Cavite-PIO

## DOST CAVITE CONDUCTS COURTESY VISIT AND PRESENTATION OF DOST PROGRAMS AT LGU TANZA

On December 2, the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Cavite conducted a Courtesy Visit and Presentation of DOST Programs to the LGU Tanza Department Heads, led by Municipal Administrator Mr. Luisito V. Dela Cruz. The meeting aimed to introduce and discuss ongoing and potential Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) initiatives, and explore

collaborative opportunities that will support Tanza's development goals.

During the presentation, Provincial Director Ms. Gilda S. De Jesus highlighted DOST's major programs and services such as the Community-Based Projects (CBP), Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP), Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) initiatives, the iSTART Program, and the Smart and Sustainable Cities and Communities Program.

She also introduced various DOST-developed and funded technologies, particularly those supporting environmental protection and waste management, including solutions for water and wastewater treatment, waste-to-resource technologies, and composting and biodegradation innovations. These technologies can be adopted by LGU Tanza to strengthen its environmental initiatives and enhance sustainability efforts across communities.

The engagement opened avenues for deeper collaboration between DOST and LGU Tanza—especially in leveraging science and technology to improve public services, support local industries, and build a more resilient, clean, and innovation-driven municipality. **DOST-CAVITE**

## EDITORIAL

### P500 Noche Buena challenge

Sa isang simpleng hapag kainan ng ordinaryong mamayan, kaya naming pagkasyahin ang halaga na iyan dahil may mga produkto naman na may swak na presyo para mapagkasya yan.

Pero bilang isang mamamayan na buong taon na nagtitiis sa pagbubudget ng sapat na pera lang sa pangangailangan nila.

Normal lang na naisin nila na sa okasyon gaya ng pasko at bagong taon ay magkaroon ang kanilang hapag kainan ng sagana.

Dahil para sa kanila mas sagana ang hapag kainan sa bisperas ng pasko at bagong taon, Magiging masagana din ang papasok na taon.

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## PBBM VOWS STRONGER SUPPORT FOR TROOPS, TIGHTER SECURITY IN MINDANAO

**MANILA** – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Thursday reaffirmed his commitment to bolstering support for government troops and strengthening security operations in Mindanao.

Marcos made the commitment during his visit to the Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom) at Camp Panacan in Davao City, the Presidential Communications Office (PCO) said in a Facebook post.

In a security briefing, Marcos was updated on Eastmincom's anti-insurgency operations, maritime patrols, and disaster response efforts, underscoring its crucial role as a steadfast pillar of national security.

"Sa pagbisita ni Pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. sa Eastern Mindanao Command sa Camp Panacan, Davao City, iniulat ng mga opisyal ang peace and order situation, kasama ang estado ng internal at external security at ang pag-usad ng kanilang operasyon laban sa natitirang banta sa rehiyon (During President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s visit to the Eastern Mindanao Command headquarters in Camp Panacan, Davao City, officials briefed him on the peace and order situation, including updates on internal and external security and the progress of operations against remaining threats in the region)," the PCO said.

After the security briefing, Marcos also met with the troops, promising continued support for all military and uniformed personnel (MUP).

The PCO said Marcos vowed to provide the necessary equipment and training to enhance the troops' operational

capabilities.

"Pinuri rin ng Pangulo ang mga sundalo sa pagpapanatili ng kapayapaan at seguridad sa rehiyon, lalo na sa mga lugar na may natitirang banta (The President also commended the soldiers for maintaining peace and security across the region, especially in areas that continue to face residual threats)," the PCO said.

On Wednesday, Marcos issued Executive Order 107, increasing the MUP's base pay and daily subsistence allowance to PHP350.

The pay increase is scheduled to take effect on Jan. 1, 2026, and will be implemented in three tranches. (PNA) **BY RUTH ABBEY GITA-CARLOS**

## DOTR DISTRIBUTES DISCOUNT BEEP CARDS TO PWDs

**MANILA** – The Department of Transportation (DOTr) has distributed white Beep cards with personalized discounts during the Philippine Disability Expo (PDE) 2025 to help ensure persons with disability (PWD) will be able to enjoy discounts at the three metro rail lines in Metro Manila.

In a statement on Thursday, DOTr Acting Secretary Giovanni Lopez said the white Beep card caravan is part of the government's effort to ensure more commuters can enjoy a 50 percent discount at the Metro Rail Transit Line 3 (MRT-3), the Light Rail Transit Line 1 (LRT-1), and the LRT-2.

"Sobrang convenient nung issuance ng beep cards at saka with the rising cost of expenses and

## NPA STRENGTH DOWN TO 780, SAYS NTF-ELCAC EXEC

**MANILA** – From tens of thousands during their heyday, the number of New People's Army (NPA) rebels all over the country has dwindled to less than 1,000, a ranking official of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) said Thursday, citing a "recent report."

"A recent report that we have received [indicates that] there are only 780 NPAs all over the country," NTF-ELCAC Executive Director Undersecretary Ernesto Torres Jr. said in a media briefing marking the 7th founding anniversary of the task force.

"That's relatively small because at their peak [in the 1980s], they numbered to about 25,000," he added.

Torres did not identify the source of the report

nor give additional details regarding its contents. But according to him, these NPA remnants are holed up in the mountains, with some curious about the various programs the government is offering to former rebels.

"That's why we need the support of the media, for us to tell the public in general so that it (programs) would reach 'yung mga kapatid natin na nasa bundok pa (our countrymen who are still in the mountains)," Torres said.

Among these government initiatives are the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP), which assists former rebels in their reintegration into mainstream society, and the amnesty program.

"The Barangay Development Program (BDP), which is our flagship initiative, stands as the clearest proof that development is the most enduring path to peace," Torres said, referring to the task force's initiative aimed at bringing development to conflict-affected communities.

"Over the past seven years, we have seen how communities once isolated by conflict are now emerging as centers of hope, partnership and opportunity," he said.

Torres said there are more than 4,800 formerly conflict-affected barangays that have benefited from BDP in the form of roads, classrooms, water systems, electrification, health stations, and livelihood support.

"The gains we celebrate are real, but they must be protected. We cannot afford complacency," the NTF-ELCAC official said. "Sustaining peace requires unity of purpose, good governance and continued support from all sectors, especially from the communities who stand to benefit the most." (PNA) **BY PRIAM NEPOMUCENO**

## SAFEGUARDS IN SCHOOL BUILDING CONSTRUCTION PUSHED AMID NGO ROLE

**MANILA** – Senate President Pro Tempore Panfilo Lacson is pushing for safeguards to ensure that the speedy construction of classrooms and school buildings are not marred by irregularities.

During his interpellation of Senate Bill (SB) 1482 on Wednesday, Lacson raised the possibility of another "pork barrel scam" happening due to too much involvement of non-government organizations (NGOs) in such projects.

"If we involve NGOs and they will actively participate in bidding, monitoring, etc., [there is the] conflict of interest," he said, as quoted in a news release Thursday.

"Pork barrel scam," which made the headlines in 2010, refers to the use of fake NGOs as conduits to steal billions of pesos in public funds.

Filed by Senator Bam Aquino, SB 1482, also known as the Classroom-Building Acceleration Program Act, seeks to address the classroom shortage in the country by empowering local government units (LGUs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) to undertake construction projects.

According to Lacson, there are issues regarding the extent of participation of NGOs and CSOs that need to be resolved.

"Probably [we can include a] caveat, that provided they (NGOs) will not monitor themselves. At the proper time, maybe we can use the proper language to clarify that particular issue," he said.

He also noted that under Republic Act 12009 or the Government Procurement Act of 2024, NGO and CSO participation in the procurement process is limited to avoid conflict of interest.

"Kasi kung i-involve natin ang CSOs sa construction ng building, one way or another, indirectly or directly, at na-interchange ang definition ng NGO and CSO, baka ma-

Napoles tayo dito (If we involve CSOs in the construction of buildings, one way or another, directly or indirectly, and the definition of NGOs and CSOs are interchanged, we might have a Napoles situation here)," Lacson said, referring to Janet Lim Napoles, the businesswoman convicted in connection with the "pork barrel scam."

Despite his qualms, Lacson said he has no objection to allowing NGOs to have a hand in the school building program of the government, and that he fully supports the initiative to accelerate the construction of classrooms and school buildings.

In pushing for his bill, Aquino said only LGUs and CSOs "with proven track records" to construct classrooms using national government funds in compliance with the Department of Education's (DepEd) standards and guidelines will be tapped under his bill.

"Previously, DPWH (Department of Public Works and Highways) lang iyong gumagawa ng classroom (only DPWH constructs classrooms), and that led to only 60 classrooms being finished for this year. So what are the different modalities? LGUs, CSOs, but LGUs will have a much bigger share," Aquino said during the interpellation.

He lamented that 60 classrooms in 2025 is "simply unacceptable," although he clarified that the DPWH will not be completely out of the picture as the DepEd will still allocate a portion of its budget to the agency for classroom construction.

"(DPWH) Secretary (Vince) Dizon has spoken to DepEd and said they want to, with a renewed effort and better systems, they want to engage again," Aquino said. Aquino said public-private partnership (PPP) is also part of the modality under SB 1482. (PNA) **BY LEONEL ABASOLA**

## DFA CONFIRMS RELEASE OF 9 FILIPINOS HELD BY HOUTHIS

**MANILA** – The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) on Thursday confirmed the release of nine Filipino crew members of M/V Eternity C after successful mediation by the Sultanate of Oman.

“Yes, they have been released,” the DFA’s Office of the Spokesperson told reporters.

In a statement, the Omani Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it facilitated the return of 11 seafarers, composed of Filipino and Indian nationals, as part of its continuing humanitarian efforts.

The group was flown from Sana’a to Muscat aboard a Royal Omani Air Force aircraft, where preparations are underway for their repatriation to their home countries.

The Sultanate of Oman also acknowledged the cooperation of concerned parties that contributed to the completion of the repatriation efforts.

DFA Undersecretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro thanked Omani Foreign Minister Badr Albusaidi for the country’s help.

“I thank Foreign Minister @BadrAlbusaidi for Oman’s invaluable assistance in the safe return of the Filipino crew members of M/V Eternity C, who were held by the Houthis in Yemen since July,” she said in a post on X.

The crew had been held since July 7, after Houthi forces attacked and seized the M/V Eternity C in the Red Sea amid a string of maritime incidents tied to the Gaza conflict and the broader regional tension.

Their release brings closure to months of uncertainty for their families and Philippine authorities, who have been working with diplomatic partners and regional intermediaries to ensure the seafarers’ safe return. (PNA) **BY MA. TERESA MONTEMAYOR**

## P579-M CONTRABAND SEIZED, 432 STOLEN CARS RECOVERED IN 3 MONTHS - PNP

**MANILA** – The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Thursday said it has seized PHP579 million worth of contraband nationwide in the past three months, from Aug. 26 to Nov. 27.

In a statement, PNP acting chief Lt. Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said the confiscated illicit goods included PHP512.6 million worth of smuggled cigarettes, PHP1.29 million in petroleum products, PHP6.8 million in agricultural items and PHP58.8 million in assorted contraband.

“Smuggling hurts our economy and puts honest businesses at a disadvantage. That’s why we are pushing hard—we will keep tightening our efforts, coordinating closely with partner agencies, and making sure that those who break the law are held accountable,” Nartatez said.

The suspects are now detained and facing appropriate charges.

Anti-carnapping drive In the same period, the PNP- Highway Patrol Group recovered a total of 432 stolen motor vehicles.

The recovered motor vehicles included 326 four-wheel cars and 106 motorcycles, and arrested 113 suspects behind carnapping, highway robbery and “rent-tangay” scams.

The police also seized nine firearms which are among the pieces of evidence presented in the filing of 92 cases.

With the holiday season causing heavier traffic and increased vehicle rental activity, Nartatez, meanwhile, reminded the public to travel safely and stay alert.

Nartatez advised the public to be cautious when renting out vehicles, noting that “rent-tangay” and similar scams often spike during the holiday rush. (PNA) **BY CHRISTOPHER LLOYD CALIWAN**

## LTO SUMMONS VLOGGER OVER MULTIPLE TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS CAUGHT ON VIDEO

**MANILA** – The Land Transportation Office (LTO) on Thursday summoned Norman Mangusin after the social media vlogger was caught violating several traffic laws while driving a Ford Expedition in a video that went viral.

In a statement, LTO Chief Markus Lacanilao said Mangusin has been issued a show cause order (SCO) to appear in a hearing with the LTO Intelligence and Investigation Division at the LTO Central Office in Quezon City.

“Sa naturang viral na video, makikitang minamaneho ng vlogger ang sasakyan gamit ang pekeng plaka, hindi nakasuot ang seatbelt at gumagamit ng mobile phone habang nagmamaneho. Ang mga paglabag na ito ay itinuturing na distracted driving at nagsapanganib sa ibang motorista (In the viral video, the vlogger was seen driving a vehicle with fake plates, not wearing a seatbelt, and using

a mobile phone while driving. These violations are considered distracted driving, which endangers other motorists),” Lacanilao said.

Mangusin’s driver’s license has been temporarily suspended for 90 days, in addition to his vehicle being placed on alarm to prevent any transactions with the LTO.

He was also ordered to submit a verified comment or explanation as to why he should not be charged with violation of Failure to Attach Authorized Motor Vehicle License Plate, Mandatory Use of Seatbelt, Distracted Driving, Reckless Driving, and Improper Person to Operate a Motor Vehicle.

Lacanilao warned that failure to appear before the LTO will waive his right to defend himself, and the LTO will deliberate on his case based on available information. (PNA) **BY RAYMOND CARL DELA CRUZ**

## DND BEEFS UP CYBER SECURITY CAPABILITIES WITH 2-DAY DRILLS

**MANILA** – Select Department of National Defense (DND) personnel underwent “cyber exercises” earlier this week to beef up the agency’s cybersecurity readiness against looming threats from cyberspace.

In a news release on Thursday, the DND said participants in CYBEX 2025 engaged in “rigorous cyber simulations” throughout the two-day event held on Tuesday and Wednesday.

During the event, the participants were faced with realistic attack scenarios, pressure-driven decision points, and challenges designed to expose vulnerabilities – “situations aimed to mirror the threats confronting defense organizations worldwide,” the DND said.

Among the threats the DND mentioned were ransomware incidents, targeted intrusions, disruption attempts, and the exploitation of human and technical weaknesses. “This gathering reflects our collective recognition that cybersecurity is now a core component of national defense,” lawyer Odessa

Rossilyz Magisa, head executive assistant to DND Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. and officer-in-charge of the Office for DND Information Security, said. She added that threat actors are becoming “more aggressive, sophisticated and persistent,” noting that these groups are not only targeting government cyber systems but also the trust and stability that hold institutions together.

“Cyber resilience is not achieved by technology alone,” she said. “It demands unified action, disciplined processes, and seamless coordination across all elements of the defense establishment. No single office, service, or unit can stand alone in the face of modern cyber threats. Collaboration is no longer an option; it is a requirement for survival in the digital battlespace.”

CYBEX 2025 participants came from the DND’s various cyber offices and units and those of its bureaus and attached agencies.

The event also saw the presence of observers from the Canadian Armed

## COMELEC ACTIVATES IREHISTRO FOR OVERSEAS VOTER'S REGISTRATION

**MANILA** – Filipinos overseas who would like to register as voters may start accomplishing applications digitally, as the Commission on Elections (Comelec) has opened its iRehistro program.

In an advisory on Thursday, the poll body said those who want to be a registered voter may visit <https://irehistro.comelec.gov.ph/ovf1> and accomplish their overseas voter’s form 1 or OVF1.

“iRehistro is not an online registration system. It is only used to fill out and generate the OVF1 form with QR (quick response) code,” it added.

After providing all the needed information, applicants have to save a copy of the system-generated PDF (portable document format)

file containing the accomplished OVF1 form on their device and print it on folio-sized (8.5 x 13 inches) paper.

“This printout will serve as your OVF1 form, which you still need to personally submit at the nearest overseas voter registration site for the processing of your application,” said the Comelec in its advisory.

The overseas voter’s registration has resumed on Dec. 1 and will run until Sept. 30, 2027.

Qualified to apply as overseas voters are Filipino citizens at least 18 years old, and will be abroad come the May 2028 polls, such as overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), immigrants and dual citizens.

They need present their valid Philippine Ppassport, or Seafarer’s Record Book (for seafarers), or Certificate of Approval for Retention/Reacquisition (for dual citizens) to register.

Applications may be filed at the nearest Philippine post abroad, such as embassy, consulate, cultural office; or

## NEW TRANSPARENCY MECHANISMS INTRODUCED FOR DA, NIA

**MANILA** – New transparency mechanisms and digital governance initiatives have been introduced for the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) to strengthen accountability in the agricultural and irrigation sectors, Senator Francis Pangilinan said Thursday.

In a statement, Pangilinan, who introduced the mechanisms, said the DA and the NIA will soon launch an infrastructure transparency dashboard where every farm-to-market road and bridge project can be verified against its budget and timeline.

“Mas madali nang makita ng tao kung saan napupunta

ang pera nila (It will now be easy for the people to see where their taxes go to). That is evidence of good governance (and) transparency,” Pangilinan, who chairs the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform, said.

The DA, according to Pangilinan, will also launch a citizen participatory audit program of the Commission on Audit (COA) to give the public a role in real-time monitoring of projects.

Pangilinan said he welcomes efforts to strengthen internal audit mechanisms, expand public access to procurement and project data, and adopt digital tools aimed at reducing red tape and curbing irregularities in project implementation.

He said these underscore the importance of sustained transparency reforms to ensure that government programs deliver real, measurable benefits to farmers, fisherfolk and urban communities. (PNA) **BY LEONEL ABASOLA**

at the Office for Overseas Voting (extension office) in Intramuros, Manila.

There were some 1.24 million registered overseas voters in the May 2025 polls. (PNA) **BY FERDINAND PATINIO**

## LA UNION FARMER PROMOTES YEAR-ROUND LEMON TREE FARMING

**MALASIQUI, Pangasinan** – A La Union farmer is encouraging others to switch from seasonal crops to lemon trees, citing year-round harvests and resilience against weather disruptions.

Lope Bautista of L&D Citrus Farm in Naguilian said Thursday (Dec. 4, 2025) that lemon trees provide non-stop income compared to traditional rice and vegetables.

"This is the best in agriculture even if you are sending children to school, because it is year-round, the income is non-stop," Bautista said.

He started the farm in

2019, initially struggling to sell green lemons until demand surged during the pandemic. The family now processes lemons into bottled drinks and markets them online, at pasalubong centers and trade fairs.

His daughter, Lopemae, a recent finance graduate, joined the business and won a national young farmers award for their "Perr-Res" lemon products.

With 480 trees yielding 500 kilos each annually, Bautista credits training and support from the Department of Agriculture and Department of Trade and Industry for their success. (PNA) **BY HILDA AUSTRIA**

## PH ARMY REMAINS ALERT VS. NPA SMALL ATTACKS IN NEGROS ORIENTAL

**DUMAGUETE CITY** – The Philippine Army in Negros Oriental is not letting its guard down against the remnants of the communist New People's Army (NPA), who may still carry out liquidation tasks.

Capt. Marlon Mopiang, public information officer of the Army's 302nd Infantry Brigade of the Philippine Army based in Tanjay City, Negros Oriental, confirmed on Thursday that at least four deaths in Negros Oriental this year are linked to the NPA.

The incidents took place in July and September in Tayasan, Guihulngan City, and Canlaon City.

One case has been filed in court, another is awaiting a subpoena to be issued to the respondent, while the families of the two other victims are not interested in pursuing a complaint.

Brig. Gen. Jason Jumawan, the Army's 302nd brigade commander, said the NPA has claimed responsibility for the killings.

Jumawan said that while the peace and order situation in Negros Oriental is relatively peaceful, some northern portions of the

province are still affected by the NPA.

"The guerrilla fronts operating in these areas were already dismantled, but there are remaining elements of the CTG (communist terrorist group) who can make some limited tactical offensives," he said.

Most of the targeted personalities are individuals believed to be associated with the military or police or have committed crimes against the NPA, he added.

Meanwhile, the Army is ramping up its counter-insurgency efforts as the anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines on Dec. 26 approaches.

Jumawan noted that just recently, an encounter between government troopers and suspected NPA remnants took place in Himamaylan, Negros Occidental.

According to him, the insurgents are always on the move between the Negros provinces because government forces are constantly pursuing them. (PNA) **BY MARY JUDALINE PARTLOW**

## PCG INAUGURATES NEW SUBSTATION IN ZAMBOANGA SUR

**ZAMBOANGA CITY** – The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) has officially inaugurated a new substation in Zamboanga del Sur province on Thursday.

The newly constructed PCG substation and billeting quarters are located in Barangay Poblacion in the coastal town of Lapuyan.

The inauguration of the facility marked an important milestone in improving maritime safety, security, and public service in Zamboanga Peninsula, as it will serve Lapuyan and its neighboring municipalities.

"Let this new substation be a symbol of our commitment to safeguarding our maritime

domain and serving our fellowmen with sincerity and excellence," Capt. Anuar Inidal, deputy commander of the Coast Guard District Southwestern Mindanao (CGDSWM), said in a statement.

Inidal represented Commodore Rejard Marfe, commander of CGDSWM, during the inauguration of the new PCG facility.

He thanked the municipal government of Lapuyan for its unwavering support and collaboration with the PCG. Joining the event were Lt. Commander Vincent Bryan Marcos, head of CGS-Zamboanga del Sur, and Lapuyan Mayor Nelsa Sulong, among other officials. (PNA) **BY TEOFILO GARCIA, JR.**

## VIOLENT EXTREMISM PREVENTION PROGRAM LAUNCHED IN BASILAN

**LAMITAN CITY, Basilan** – Basilan Governor Mujiv Hataman led the launch of the Prevention Against Violent Extremism (PAVE) 2.0 Kaelluman (Livelihood) Program in this city on Thursday, marking an important step in the area's commitment to sustainable peace and development.

More than 400 people attended the program launch, including former violent extremists (FVEs), security officials, religious leaders, and local government officials.

The program, anchored on the theme "Itaguyod ang Masaganang Buhay," aims to strengthen community resilience and prevent violent extremism through economic empowerment and community engagement.

The activity also included the signing of a pledge of commitment from various agencies, religious groups, and community leaders, reaffirming their dedication to peace and development in Basilan.

"By empowering our communities with sustainable livelihoods, we are not only promoting peace but also ensuring

that every Basileños can enjoy a prosperous and dignified life," Hataman said in his keynote address.

The event included compelling testimonies from former extremists Muhsir Saib and Nurhasan Jamiri, who shared their personal stories of change and the positive influence of government support.

Following their testimonies, Hataman led the distribution of PHP3,000 cash assistance to each FVE, providing them with the resources to start their own livelihood projects.

PAVE has been a cornerstone of Basilan's community-driven approach to peace-building.

The program's origin dates back to Hataman's time as governor of the defunct Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), where he supported community-based projects to address the root causes of conflict and foster reconciliation.

"Sustainable peace relies on stable, inclusive, and dignified livelihoods. PAVE 2.0 Kaelluman emphasizes

## CHR ASSURES NEGOR MEDIA OF STRONGER SAFETY NETS VIA ACTION PLAN

**DUMAGUETE CITY** – The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) on Friday assured media practitioners in Negros Oriental that their concerns will be addressed as it advances the Philippine Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists.

Marc Louis Siapno, head of the CHR's Strategic Communication Division, said at a stakeholders' dialogue here that he would raise the concerns of the Negros Oriental media with an inter-agency group overseeing the action plan's development and implementation.

"The first step is listening to you now, and then we will find solutions in the next steps forward," Siapno told more than 10 journalists during the dialogue initiated by the CHR in partnership with the Presidential Task Force on Media Security (PTFoMS).

Siapno outlined five flagship programs of the Philippine Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists: integrity and professionalism, conducive working conditions, protection mechanisms, the criminal justice system, and public information, journalism education, and research.

"We will take a look at your concerns and determine which of the flagship areas are relevant and how we can help you through the Philippine Plan of Action," he said.

Veteran journalist Fernando Sepe Jr., project director with the Photojournalists' Center of the Philippines, provided the overview of the dialogue alignment to the action plan and facilitated the workshop on risks and challenges faced by the media.

The activity included a workshop where the

livelihood as a key strategy to prevent extremism by offering economic opportunities to vulnerable communities," he said. (PNA) **BY TEOFILO GARCIA, JR.**

participants were made to identify and write down their experiences or those of media colleagues on attacks, assaults, and other forms of threats.

They also documented the status of these incidents or cases, along with suggested recommendations to resolve these issues.

The most common concern raised by reporters was physical and verbal threats and "attacks" by politicians related to news reporting.

Meanwhile, Gazelene B. Corsame-Fuentes, officer-in-charge of the CHR in Negros Oriental, emphasized the importance of inter-agency coordination.

"The CHR, as part of its mandate, is committed to protecting and fulfilling the rights of everyone, especially our media practitioners in terms of their safety and security," Fuentes, a lawyer, said.

Additionally, lawyer Francis Rupert Mangrobang of PTFoMS stated that they are sharing information and cases with the CHR and collaborating with the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the National Bureau of Investigation regarding media safety.

Mangrobang noted that no matter which agency manages and addresses an incident, the PTFoMS will consistently be available to respond whenever needed or requested.

He also assured that although online attacks are not yet part of their mandate, the PTFoMS can coordinate with certain agencies, such as the PNP Cyber Crime Unit, to assist media practitioners facing threats.

The CHR announced that upcoming activities, including online training sessions, will be available to help the media enhance and practice their skills in a safe environment.

At least three broadcast journalists were killed in this capital city in 2018, 2019, and 2020. (PNA) **BY MARY JUDALINE PARTLOW**

## DTI WORKS WITH WB TO BOOST EXPORT SECTOR

**MANILA** – Noting the need to further capacitate the Philippines' export sector, an official of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) on Friday said a support program is being formulated with the World Bank (WB) to boost exporters' competitiveness.

The partnership is among the programs lined up by the DTI for 2026, as announced during the Exporters' Week event in a hotel in Mandaluyong City. Export Marketing Bureau (EMB) Director and Export Development Council (EDC) Executive Director Bianca Pearl Sykimte told journalists in an interview that they have weekly meetings with WB representatives to polish the program, which will provide technical and financial aid.

No amount has been determined yet for this program, but Sykimte said, "it's going to be a sizable support for our exporting community."

"We want to field course consultants and experts to guide them (exporters) through the process. We want them to be able to improve their quality management systems and how they would be able to comply with certification. And then, of course, when you comply with the certifications, there is also the investment process, it may require upgrades

of technology (and) more training for the people. We're looking at a mix of grants and concessional loans," she said.

During her presentation, the DTI official said Philippine exporters have access to around 200 markets globally, but only 10 markets account for about 81.6 percent of the total.

These are the U.S., 16.6 percent; Japan and Hong Kong, both at 14.1 percent; China, 12.9 percent; South Korea, 4.9 percent; Thailand and Singapore, both at 4 percent; the Netherlands, 3.9 percent; Taiwan, 3.7 percent; and Germany, 3.4 percent.

Also, the number of exporters has declined, and while DTI has not done any in-depth study to assess the situation, Sykimte traced this partly to consolidations, wherein smaller companies tie-up with bigger players; and to investors' decision to just focus on the local market.

"Again, we don't have an in-depth study on this, but in terms of export figures, you can see that there's growth," she said.

Preliminary data from the Philippine Statistics Authority show that exports grew by 19.4 percent on an annual basis in October 2025 alone to USD7.39 billion, while the 10-month level rose 13.8 percent to USD70.43 billion. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

## PESO, PSEI DOWN ANEW DUE TO BSP RATE CUT EXPECTATIONS

**MANILA** – The Philippine peso weakened to the 59-level against the U.S. dollar on Thursday due to expectations for further cut in the central bank rates, negatively affecting the Philippine Stock Exchange index.

The local currency ended the day's trade at 59.02 to a dollar, from its 58.92 close a day ago, nearly a two-week low from its 59.05 close on Nov. 20.

Its weakness showed early on when it opened the day at 58.95 from its 58.55 start in the previous session.

It traded between 58.92 and 59.17, bringing the day's average to 59.07.

Volume reached USD1.29 billion, lower than the USD1.41 billion on Wednesday.

Aside from expectations for a Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas rate cut this month, Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation chief economist Michael Ricafort said other factors that contributed to the peso's weakness include the negative sentiments in the local bourse, lower domestic growth outlook, and higher government bond sale.

These factors, however,

are seen to be countered by the seasonal hike of remittances from overseas Filipino workers during the Christmas season and expectations for sustained manageable domestic inflation rate, he said in a statement.

"Local financial market sentiment also partly supported recently after some progress related to good governance such as the recent progress/developments on cases filed/litigated, formal judicial process started already related to the anomalous flood-control projects and other high-profile cases/violations in recent months," Ricafort said.

The peso's performance was mirrored by the local bourse's main index after it fell 0.31 percent to 5,887.58 points, and the broader All Shares by 0.18 percent to 3,458.65 points. Most of the sectoral gauges also ended the day on the red: Industrial, 0.60 percent; Holding Firms, 0.54 percent; Financials, 0.48 percent; and Property, 0.31 percent.

On the other hand, Mining and Oil rose 1.49 percent and Services, 0.44

## GCG CITES PAGCOR FOR PERFORMANCE, SUSTAINABILITY

**MANILA** – The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) earned two major honors at the Governance Commission for GOCCs (GCG) Awards Ceremony on Dec. 1, reaffirming its status as one of the country's leading Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations.

PAGCOR received a 99.92 percent score on its 2024 Performance Evaluation Scorecard and was also awarded the Sustainability Award for its "exemplary efforts in upholding sustainability values and best practices in corporate governance."

PAGCOR Chairman and CEO Alejandro Tengco said the recognitions reflect the agency's progress in steadily improving operations, enhancing regulatory systems and ensuring that its revenues continuously support essential public programs. "Our strong 2024 Performance Evaluation Scorecard rating and the Sustainability Award highlight not just operational excellence but also our commitment to transparency, good governance, and nation-building," he said as quoted in a news release on Thursday.

"These awards from the GCG affirm the work we have done to make PAGCOR a transparent, accountable, and high-performing GOCC. It also

strengthens our resolve to serve with integrity."

Tengco added that PAGCOR "will continue to raise the bar of government service by ensuring that our revenues support essential social services and uplift communities that need help the most."

In 2024, PAGCOR further enhanced its contributions to national development by remitting PHP68.20 billion to nation-building, supporting programs that directly benefit communities through infrastructure projects and disaster response, among others.

Complementing these efforts are PAGCOR's consistent and substantial dividend remittances to the National Treasury, funding priority government programs and bolstering national resources for health care, sports development and renewable energy programs.

"PAGCOR remains an active partner of the government not only in revenue generation but also in laying the foundation for a stronger nation," Mr. Tengco said.

"Good governance must translate to real service for the Filipino people. That is why we ensure that every peso generated by PAGCOR is channeled to programs that protect livelihoods, enhance public infrastructure, and support nation-building."

The GCG Awards annually recognize GOCCs that demonstrate outstanding performance, accountability, and impact through rigorous evaluation standards.

PAGCOR's dual recognition this year underscores its sustained operational improvements and unwavering commitment to responsible gaming and national development. (PR)

## EDC CUTS PH EXPORT TARGETS DUE TO EXTERNAL FACTORS

**MANILA** – Trade officials cut the Philippine Export Development Plan (PEDP) export targets for 2025 until 2028, citing the need to have realistic goals amid the impact of US tariff policies and disruptions in global routes.

Based on the presentation of Export Marketing Bureau (EMB) Director and Export Development Council (EDC) Executive Director Bianca Pearl Sykimte at the Exporters' Week event in Mandaluyong City on Thursday, the target for this year is between USD110.8

billion and USD113.4 billion.

For 2026, the range is from USD116.1 billion to USD120.2 billion; for 2027, from USD123.3 billion to USD127.4 billion; and for 2028, from USD132.8 billion to USD135.1 billion.

Previously, these were at USD163.6 billion for 2025; USD186.7 billion for 2026; USD212.1 billion for 2027; and USD240.5 billion for 2028.

Sykimte, in an interview on the sidelines of the event, said the latest figures are more realistic given the

impact on global trade of global political tensions, the hike in US tariffs, the impact of drought in the Panama Canal, and attacks by Houthis rebels on commercial vessels at the Red Sea.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) data, which was processed by the Department of Trade and Industry - EDC, showed that total exports in 2024 reached USD106.6 billion, higher than the previous month's USD103.7 billion. Preliminary data released by the Philippine Statistics

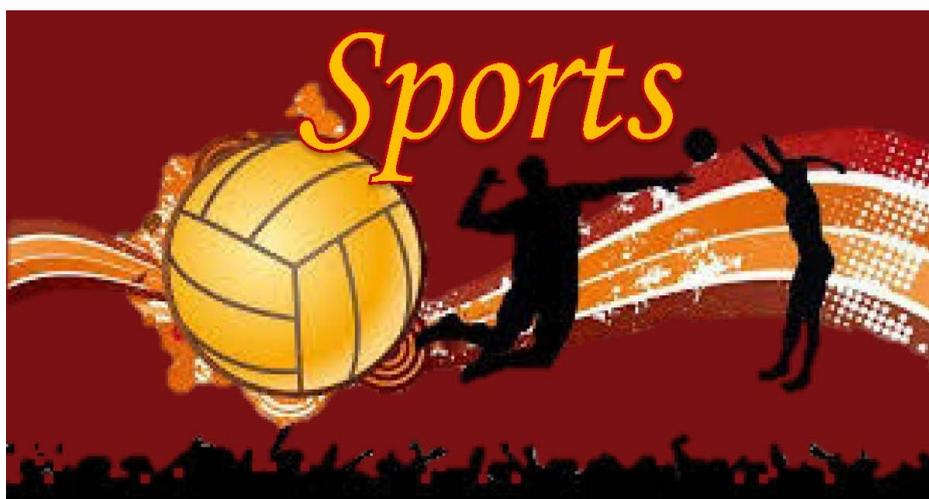
Authority (PSA) show that exports grew by 19.4 percent on an annual basis in October 2025 to USD7.39 billion, up from the previous year's USD6.19 billion and the previous month's USD7.27 billion.

In the first 10 months this year, total exports reached USD70.43 billion, 13.8 percent higher than the previous year's USD61.9 billion.

Asked for a full-year outlook for exports, Sykimte expressed optimism, citing the

sustained improvements in recent months.

Possible drivers of growth in the last two months of the year are electronics and semiconductors, she said, but added that "growth is spread across many sectors." (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**



## GILAS FINALLY COMPLETES SEA GAMES TEAM AFTER 'TEDIOUS' PROCESS

**MANILA** – The Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas (SBP) described the process of forming the Gilas Pilipinas final men's 5x5 basketball team for the Southeast Asian Games as "tedious."

Gilas already had a 12-man lineup set for the SEA Games as early as September, but when Thailand's eligibility rule began confusing everyone, the team was forced to make major adjustments.

Adding to the tough situation was when Abra, led by its "Big 3" of initial Gilas call-ups Geo Chiu, Jason Brickman and Dave Ildefonso, made it to the Maharlika Pilipinas Basketball League (MPBL) National Finals, whose schedule coincides with the SEA Games men's 5x5 basketball event, which starts on Dec. 13.

After a mad scramble to build a new complete roster, Gilas finally secured the commitments of Jamie Malonzo, Dalph Panopio, Thirdy Ravena, Matthew Wright, Ray Parks, Ced Manzano, Justin Chua, Robert Bolick, Von Pessumal, Allen Liwag, Abu Tratter, and Veejay Pre.

Ravena, Wright, Parks, and Pre were the holdovers from the original 12-man lineup, which was supposedly also consisting of Brickman, Ildefonso, Justin Brownlee, Ange Kouame, Remy Martin, Mike Phillips, Kymani Ladi, and Brandon Rosser.

Brownlee and Kouame, though, were suddenly barred from joining Gilas after Thailand imposed a "no naturalized player rule".

The SBP was forced to

assign Kouame to the men's 3x3 team instead, since naturalized players are allowed there.

Kouame, one of two Meralco's naturalized players in the East Asia Super League, will be joined by Magnolia's Joseph Eriobu, Mindoro's Joseph Sedurifa and Far Eastern University's Janrey Pasaol, the soon-to-be-named University Athletic Association of the Philippines Most Valuable Player, in a rare setup that would see one player representing the mother league he is in.

The naturalized player restriction also includes players of mixed descent, but only got their local passports after turning 16, forcing the SBP to leave out Martin, Phillips, Ladi and Rosser from the men's 5x5 team, too.

This led the SBP to call up Malonzo, Bolick, Pessumal, Tratter and initially Chiu.

However, following the Weavers' three-game sweep of the Pangasinan Heatwaves in the MPBL North Division Finals, the SBP had to let go of Brickman, Ildefonso and Chiu, and the basketball governing body only had a few days left to find four more players to complete the Gilas SEA Games team.

Just in time, Panopio, Manzano, Chua and Liwag signified their Gilas commitment.

There was even a reported pitch to include Poy Erram in the team before coach Norman Black, currently San Beda's team consultant, decided to instead bring in Liwag, his National Collegiate Athletic

Association (NCAA) semifinal opponent at College of St. Benilde.

"After a tedious back and forth due to initially unclear and constantly changing rules in player eligibility, we at the SBP have submitted this list to the local organizing committee, and it has been vetted and has undergone pre-approvals," the SBP said in a statement on Thursday, hours after the Philippine Olympic Committee confirmed Gilas' "Final 12" to Bangkok.

The SBP, though, is aware that both the Red Lions and Blazers are embroiled in a heated Final 4 battle, and the Bolick-led NLEX Road Warriors are going after a twice-to-beat advantage in the PBA Philippine Cup quarterfinals.

Yet, the SBP still thanked Black, Liwag, Bolick and the rest of the Gilas team for choosing country over club as well as their respective mother leagues for ensuring their players' commitments.

"We extend our deepest appreciation to all the players for dropping everything to compete for Gilas. We thank our partners from the PBA, UAAP and NCAA, and our friends from the Japanese B-League for allowing their players to compete for flag and country. The SBP wishes our basketball teams and the entire Philippine contingent all the best in Thailand," the SBP's statement concluded.

Gilas joins Malaysia and Vietnam in Group A.

Gilas will take an opening day bye before fighting Malaysia and Vietnam on back-to-back nights on

## DIAZ, ALUDO SQUARE OFF IN ITF J30 MANILA SECOND LEG QUARTERFINAL

**MANILA** – Batang Pinoy back-to-back champion Jana Jelena Nicole Diaz advanced to the ITF J30 Manila 2 girls' singles quarterfinal after eliminating No. 8 Korean Rae Youn Kim, 7-6 (2), 6-4, Thursday at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center hardcourt.

Diaz, No. 1 (U16) and No. 3 (U18) in the Philippine Tennis Association (Philita) rankings, will face compatriot Stefi Marithe Aludo for a place in the Final Four.

Aludo, the No. 2 seed, clobbered Singaporean Tanisha Kantam, 6-2, 6-2. Meanwhile, top seed Tennielle Madis whipped Chinese He Yuling, 6-0, 6-0, to advance against

No. 6 Singaporean Emma Lam Singh, who conquered Taiwanese qualifier Tzu-Yi Hsueh, 7-6 (5), 6-1.

Third seed Korean Seojin Park defeated local Louraine Jallorina, 6-2, 6-9, while No. 4 Thai Pimlaphat Lim prevailed over Taiwanese Meng Tung Chi, 6-2, 1-6, 6-2, to also secure quarterfinal slots.

Park will be up against No. 7 Thai Paweenon Nualsri, who beat Taiwanese Pei-Hsuan Chi, 6-1, 7-6 (4).

Lim will face No. 5 Korean Gyuree Nam, who survived Thai Pimpisa Wongwanitkajon, 6-1, 4-6, 7-5.

In the boys' division, first leg champion Aoi Ishizaki of Japan stunned third

seed Ariyaphol Leekul of Thailand, 6-2, 6-1.

Ishizaki will battle compatriot Shun Monetoh, who eliminated No. 8 Ethan Matthew Koh of Singapore, 6-2, 7-6 (5).

Ishizaki downed Munetoh, 7-5, 6-2, in the final last Sunday.

No. 1 Korean Gyeom Do won over local Kenzo Marcus Brodeth, 7-5, 6-7 (5), 6-1, and No. 2 Chinese Ruochen Gao, outplayed Taiwanese Ziche Chen, 6-3, 6-2, to also advance along with No. 4 Napat Pattanalertphan of Thailand; and No. 5 Kango Edoh, No. 6 Kuranosuke Suzuki, and Lyoma Hotelier of Japan. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

## UP MARCHES TO UAAP MEN'S BASKETBALL FINALS

**MANILA** – University of the Philippines booked a championship berth Wednesday night following an 82-81 win over University of Santo Tomas in the UAAP Season 88 men's basketball

Dec. 14-15.

The top team per group will get an outright seat in the semifinals, while the next two teams per group will play in the crossover quarterfinals to determine the last two semifinalists.

This effectively means no one from Group A will be eliminated immediately after the group stages, while only one team from Group B contenders Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore and Myanmar will get the early boot.

The knockout semifinals will also follow a crossover format, with the winners battling for the gold and the other two teams disputing the bronze.

As a means for the losing quarterfinalists to get a chance to end their campaign on a high note, a fifth-place game will be played on the final day of competition on Dec. 19 before the medal matches. (PNA) **BY IVAN STEWART SALDAJENO**

tournament at the Smart Araneta Coliseum.

Terrence Fortea played the hero's role, sinking a three-pointer in the final 48.5 seconds that sent the second-seeded Fighting Maroons to the finals for the fifth straight season.

UP will face the winner between National University and De La Salle University, who are set to meet in a rubber match on Saturday.

Fourth-seeded La Salle pulled off a 87-77 victory over top-seeded and twice-to-beat NU in the semifinals last Wednesday.

"I'm very proud of the team. A team like UST, we really respect their program. We know going to this game that it will not be easy for us, but then seeing Terrence, Harold (Alarcon), the whole team responding sa situation makes me proud as a coach," said UP head coach Goldwin Monteverde.

The Growling Tigers were up, 81-79, following Forthsky Padrigao's basket before Fornea delivered the game-winning shot.

Nic Cabañero tried to score with a layup, but

was blocked by Francis Nnoruka, 46 seconds remaining. His next basket missed its mark again, 13 seconds to go.

"Trust in the whole team, that's what made us win. Each one of us really worked to get the win," commented Fortea, who had eight points, six assists, and five rebounds in 13 minutes of action.

Alarcon paced UP with 22 points followed by Nnoruka with 19 points, nine rebounds, three blocks, and two steals.

Rey Remogat chipped in nine points, four rebounds, four assists, and two steals, while Gerry Abadiano added eight points and five assists.

Cabañero led UST with 24 points, three rebounds, three assists, and two steals.

Gelo Crisostomo had 15 points and seven rebounds; Collins Akowe contributed 11 points, 11 rebounds, six assists, and three blocks; and Kyle Paranada made 10 points, four rebounds, two assists, and two steals. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**