

CAVITE STRENGTHENS COMMUNITY HEALTH THROUGH MEDICAL AND DENTAL MISSION



MULA SA BAYAN, PARA SA BAYAN

TAGAYTAY JOINS NATIONWIDE DRIVE TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

CITY TO TAGAYTAY, Cavite (PIA) – The City Government of Tagaytay has stepped up its advocacy for women’s rights as it joined the annual

18-Day Campaign to End Violence Against Women (VAW) with a series of community-wide activities aimed at raising awareness and strengthening local

protection efforts. In partnership with the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) and the Local Committee on Anti-

Trafficking and Violence Against Women and Their Children (LCAT-VAWC), the city held a motorcade across major roads to signal the start of the campaign.

Streamers bearing this year’s call, “United for a VAW-free community!”, were installed in key areas, while Information, Education, and

Communication (IEC) materials were distributed to residents to help broaden public understanding of women’s rights and available support services. Social workers from the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO) also led a seminar highlighting key laws that protect women and children, including Republic Act 9262 or the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004, and Republic Act 11930, the law against Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) and Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials (CSAEM).

The orientation emphasized both the gravity of these offenses and the government’s ongoing efforts to prevent abuse and support survivors.

City officials underscored that the campaign reflects Tagaytay’s continued commitment to building a safe, respectful, and gender-responsive community.

“Together with our barangays and partner departments, we stand strong in promoting respect, protection, and empowerment of women,” the local government said, urging the public to stay vigilant, report cases of abuse, and extend support to victims and survivors. (RBF/with reports from Tagaytay CSWDO) **BY RUEL FRANCISCO**

A community-centered medical and dental mission spearheaded by the Provincial Government of Cavite, through the Office of the Provincial Governor in partnership with the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, delivered vital healthcare services to residents of Brgy. Tartaria, Silang on Wednesday, December 3, 2025.

Throughout the one-day activity, residents availed themselves of free medical consultations, dental procedures, and diagnostic examinations, benefiting a total of 359 patients. Free medicines were likewise distributed to all beneficiaries through the assistance of OPG staff, ensuring that patients received both immediate attention and essential follow-through support.

Local officials, led by 5th District Board Member Ivey Jayne Reyes, supported the activity, while the provincial health team, together with the PNP dental group and Silang RHU dental team, collaborated closely to ensure the smooth, organized, and efficient delivery of services. The strong turnout underscored the community’s continued need for accessible healthcare and reaffirmed the Provincial Government of Cavite’s unwavering commitment to providing inclusive, reliable, and responsive health programs across the province. — **R. Dones / Cavite-PIO**



REGIONAL LEVEL MWP ARRESTED IN GENERAL TRIAS, CAVITE

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, City of Imus, Cavite- Personnel of the General Trias Component City Police Station apprehended a regional level most wanted person, at around 10:15 AM on December 10, 2025 in General Trias City, Cavite. The operation was conducted as part of the General Trias CCPS's ongoing campaign to apprehend wanted persons and enforce the law pursuant to the warrant of arrest issued by the Presiding Judge of RTC Branch 131, Trece Martires City, Cavite. The accused was arrested for violation of Sec. 11, Art. II of RA 9165 and is now temporarily detained at the General Trias City Custodial Facility, Brgy.

INDANG POLICE ARREST LOCAL FARMER FOR ILLEGAL FIREARM SALE

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, City of Imus, Cavite — Police operatives from Indang Municipal Police Station apprehended a farmer during a buy-bust operation against loose firearms early morning of December 10, 2025, in Indang, Cavite. The suspect, alias Jun, and a resident of Indang, Cavite, was arrested at around 12:30 AM after he sold a Cal. .22 rifle (unknown make and model) together with seven live rounds to a poseur buyer for ₱3,000.00. The transaction involved one powder-dusted ₱500 bill and five pieces of ₱500 boodle money. The entire operation was documented through an Alternative Recording Device and the suspect was informed of his constitutional rights upon arrest.

This buy-bust operation was conducted by the Intelligence Operatives of Indang MPS, under the supervision of PMAJ IAN JASPER M MONTOYA, Officer-in-Charge of Indang MPS, as part of the intensified implementation of the Simultaneous Anti-Criminality Law

Bagumbayan, pending the return of the warrant to the Court of Origin and subsequent issuance of a Commitment Order.

In his message, PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director expressed his appreciation for the operation and the dedication of the General Trias police team. "This arrest reflects the unwavering commitment of our personnel to uphold the law and maintain public safety. Every wanted person brought to justice strengthens the trust of our communities in the PNP. The Cavite Police assured the public that our efforts to enforce the law will continue with fairness, integrity, and respect for human rights," PCOL RED said.

REGIONAL MOST WANTED PERSON ARRESTED IN SILANG, CAVITE

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, City of Imus, Cavite- In a joint law enforcement operation conducted, personnel of Silang Municipal Police Station, in collaboration with the personnel of Provincial Intelligence Team-Cavite and Regional Intelligence Unit 4A, apprehended a regional level most wanted person on December 10, 2025 in Silang, Cavite.

The accused was arrested by virtue of an Alias Warrant of Arrest issued by the Presiding Judge of RTC Branch 3, Family Court, Tagaytay City, Cavite, for violation of Sec. 5, Art. II of RA 9165 and not bailable.

Following his arrest, the suspect is scheduled for the return of the warrant to the Court of Origin for further legal proceedings.

PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director commended the joint operation, stating: "This arrest demonstrates the PNP's commitment to pursue those who pose threats to public safety. I commend the Silang MPS and all collaborating units for their professionalism, dedication, and strict adherence to legal procedures. Operations like these send a clear message that criminality will not be tolerated in Cavite," he said.

REGIONAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON NABBED BY ROSARIO POLICE

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — In a law enforcement operation conducted at around 12:30 AM on December 10, 2025, personnel of the Rosario Municipal Police Station successfully arrested a Regional Level Most Wanted Person in Tramo, Barangay Tejeros Convention, Rosario, Cavite.

The suspect, alias "CODIE," a resident of Rosario, Cavite, was apprehended by the Warrant and Patrol personnel of Rosario MPS under the direct supervision of PLTCOL ARDIE O. BAGAMAN, Chief of Police of Rosario MPS.

The arrest was carried out by virtue of a Warrant of Arrest issued for the accused's alleged involvement in illegal drug activities, specifically for violations of Section 5 and Section 11, Article II of Republic Act 9165, also known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002. The warrant, dated December 9, 2025, was issued by the Presiding Judge of the 4th Judicial Region, Regional Trial Court Branch 16 in Cavite City. Notably, no bail was recommended, underscoring the gravity of the charges and the serious nature of the offenses attributed to the

accused.

Upon his arrest, the accused was duly apprised of his constitutional rights, which he clearly understood. The operation was also recorded using an Alternative Recording Device (ARD) in line with standard police procedures.

The arrested individual was transported to the Rosario MPS Jail Facility for proper documentation, booking procedures, and further processing in accordance with standard operating protocols. Following these procedures, the Warrant of Arrest will be formally returned to the court of origin, signifying the completion of police action and enabling the judiciary to proceed with the next steps of the legal process. PCOL ARIEL R RED, Acting Provincial Director of the Cavite Police Provincial Office, commended the operating personnel for their professionalism and unwavering dedication.

"This successful operation serves as another testament to the strong resolve of the Cavite Police to relentlessly pursue individuals who evade the law. Our commitment to maintaining peace and order is strengthened by the dedication of our men and women on the ground. We assure the public that Cavite PPO will continue to uphold the rule of law and ensure that criminals are

JOINT POLICE OPERATION LEADS TO ARREST OF CITY LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON IN BACOR, CAVITE

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, City of Imus, Cavite- In a joint law enforcement operation conducted by the personnel of Imus Component City Police Station, together with the personnel of 401st A Maneuver Company, Regional Mobile Force Company 4A, arrested a city level most wanted person in Bacoor City, Cavite, on December 10, 2025.

PLTCOL CHEY CHEY I SAULOG, Chief of Police of Imus CCPS, identified the accused as alias Grasya and a resident of Imus City, Cavite. She was arrested pursuant

to a Warrant of Arrest for Qualified Theft (Article 310, RPC) issued by Presiding Judge of RTC Branch 119, Bacoor City, Cavite, dated December 9, 2025 with recommended bail fixed at Php120,000.

Following her arrest, the accused is set to be returned to the Court of Origin for proper documentation and further legal proceedings.

In his statement, PCOL ARIEL E RED, Acting Provincial Director highlighted the importance of vigilance and public service: "This arrest reflects our unwavering commitment to bring wanted individuals to justice and ensure the safety of our communities. I commend the personnel of Imus CCPS and RMFB4A for their professionalism, teamwork, and dedication. Let this serve as a reminder that the PNP will continue to act decisively, fairly, and transparently to uphold the law," PCOL RED said.

held accountable for their actions."

The Cavite Police Provincial Office remains steadfast in its commitment to pursuing wanted persons and ensuring that justice is served throughout the province.

City Level Most Wanted Suspect Apprehended at Dasmariñas City Jail

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, City of Imus, Cavite- In a coordinated police operation, personnel of Dasmariñas Component City Police Station served a warrant of arrest against a city level most wanted person on December 10, 2025 at the Custodial Facility of BJMP Dasmariñas City Jail, Brgy. Buro 2, Dasmariñas City, Cavite, where the accused was already detained for a separate case under RA 10591.

PLTCOL REGINO OÑATE, Chief of Police of Dasmariñas CCPS, identified the accused, as alias Renan and a resident of Dasmariñas City, Cavite. The warrant of arrest for the case of Murder, issued by the Presiding Judge of RTC Branch 128, Fourth Judicial Region,

Dasmariñas City dated November 5, 2025 with no bail recommended against the accused was served at BJMP Dasmariñas City Jail while the warrant will be returned to the Court of origin for proper documentation and further legal proceedings.

In a statement, Provincial Director, PCOL ARIEL R RED, commended the Dasmariñas police team for their professionalism and diligence. "The successful service of this warrant reflects the dedication of our personnel to ensure that wanted individuals are held accountable under the law. Every operation strengthens public trust and reinforces our commitment to community safety," he said.

CAVITE SCHOLARS GATHER IN A NIGHT OF MUSIC, UNITY AND CELEBRATION UNDER ISKOLAR NG LALAWIGAN PROGRAM

The Caviteño youth lit up the CvSU Main Campus in Indang on December 5, as thousands of scholars came together for the Iskolar ng Lalawigan ng Cavite Music Festival – a vibrant celebration of talent, youth empowerment, and the Provincial Government of Cavite’s unwavering support to education.

From the moment the gates opened, the venue pulsed with excitement. Students filled the grounds with cheers, laughter, and shared anticipation as they proudly gathered as beneficiaries of the Iskolar ng Lalawigan program. As night fell, the stage came alive with performances from December Avenue, Sunkissed Lola, Soapdish, and other guest artists, transforming the campus into a sea of waving lights and joyful voices singing in unison.

The program opened with welcome remarks from CvSU President Dr. Ma. Agnes Nuegro, who expressed pride in the scholars and appreciation for the government’s commitment to education. In his message, Governor Francisco Gabriel “Abeng” Remulla reaffirmed the provincial government’s continued commitment to ensuring that Caviteño learners receive sustained support to pursue their dreams.

He was joined by 7th District Congressman Crispin Diego “Ping” Remulla, who encouraged students to stay motivated, value their education, and strive to become future leaders and nation-builders.

Beyond the music and festivities, the event became a meaningful space for scholars to connect, celebrate milestones, and feel the tangible support of the government behind them. The energy of the crowd, the unity among young Caviteños, and the shared sense of pride made the evening more than just a concert—it was a reminder that education

opens doors, and that the province stands firmly behind its learners.

The Iskolar ng Lalawigan program has already benefitted more than 85,000 students provincewide, reflecting the provincial government’s ongoing investment in developing future leaders and nation-builders.

As the Iskolar ng Lalawigan program continues to roll out across Cavite, thousands more students are set to receive educational assistance in the coming days. With every gathering, every stage, and every milestone, the provincial government strengthens its mission to uplift Caviteño scholars — nurturing not only careers and aspirations, but also confidence, community, and hope for a brighter future. — Office of the Provincial Information Officer

PGC EXTENDS VITAL HEALTHCARE SERVICES TO GMA RESIDENT

The Provincial Government of Cavite strengthened its commitment to community-focused healthcare through a medical and dental mission conducted on December 9, 2025, in Brgy. Poblacion 4, benefitting a total of 277 residents.

The initiative, spearheaded by the Office of the Provincial Governor – Medical Mission Team delivered an array of essential services aimed at addressing immediate medical concerns and promoting overall well-being. Of the total beneficiaries, 227 residents received medical consultations, 50 underwent dental extractions, 13 availed of x-ray services, and 14 accessed ECG examinations, reflecting the wide-ranging support extended during the one-day activity.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM EMPOWERS CSOS FOR STRENGTHENED LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS

The Office of the Provincial Planning and Development Coordinator (OPPDC), headed by Engr. EnP. Lorna R. Leyran, successfully spearheaded the Capacity Development Program for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the Local School Boards on December 3, 2025, at the New Provincial Government Center in Trece Martires City. The initiative was conducted in close collaboration with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), bringing together CSO representatives to enhance their awareness and understanding of their role and function in the Local Development Council.

The learning session featured six comprehensive modules designed to deepen participants’ understanding of the local education landscape and strengthen their roles within the Local School Board (LSB).

5th District Board Member Aidel Paul Belamide graced the mission, expressing full support for the province’s continuing efforts to ensure that quality healthcare reaches every community, particularly those with limited access to routine medical services.

The dedicated medical and dental team from General Emilio Aguinaldo Memorial Hospital (GEAMH) played a central role in the activity, offering their expertise and professional care to address the health needs of local residents. Their collaborative work with barangay health workers—who provided on-ground assistance and helped manage the flow of participants—ensured that the mission was orderly, accessible, and responsive to the community’s needs. — R. Dones/ Cavite -PIO

LGOO II Amiel D. dela Rosa opened the sessions with the topic “Education as an Empowerer: The State of Education in the Philippines,” providing a nationwide overview of challenges and opportunities in the education sector. He also discussed “Learning from the Best: The Valenzuela City LScB,” showcasing model practices and innovative strategies that have significantly improved local education outcomes. LGOO III Beverly V. Villaruel presented “Local School Boards as Catalysts of Education in the Philippines,” emphasizing how LSBs serve as vital platforms for collaboration and decision-making that directly impact learners and communities.

A deeper look into participatory governance was delivered by LGOO II Amiel D. dela Rosa through the module “The Role of CSOs in the LScB,” highlighting the importance of CSO involvement in ensuring transparency, accountability, and shared leadership in education programs.

Financial management for education was tackled by LGOO VI Marren E. Juangco-Bautista with the session “The Finance of Education and the SEF Budget,” equipping participants with essential knowledge on budget allocation, utilization, and the Special Education Fund.

The program concluded with an action planning session facilitated by LGOO III Niña Norisa C. Maranga, enabling CSO representatives to craft strategies and initiatives that will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of Local School Boards in their respective areas.

Through this capacity development program, the Provincial Government of Cavite continues to champion inclusive and participatory education governance empowering CSOs to play an active role in shaping a brighter future for learners across the province. — OPIO

EDITORIAL

Recycled Christmas Displays, Patok Ngayong Nalalapit ang Kapaskuhan

Christmas displays na gawa sa mga recycled materials gaya ng mga nakumpiskang tambutso, patok ngayon sa iba’t-ibang lugar sa Pilipinas na siyang pinailawan ngayon nalalapit na ang kapaskuhan.

Isa sa mga pangunahing problema sa ating bansa ay ang mga basura at ang mga daan upang masugpo ang ganitong klaseng isyu. Kaya naman bilang isang bansa na mayroong pinakamahabang selebrasyon ng kapaskuhan ay naipapamalas ng mga Pilipino ang kanilang katalinuhan sa arts and crafts.

Magandang hakbang ang paggamit ng mga recycled materials bilang mga christmas

decorations upang sa gayon ay hindi na kailangan pang gumamit ng mga materyales na maaaringitapon din natin kapag ito ay nasira na. Gawin nating makabuluhang ang kapaskuhan at gamitin itong susi upang maiwasan ang pagdami ng basura sa ating kapaligiran.



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DA, CIDG RAID NAVOTAS WAREHOUSES WITH 'UNSAFE' AGRI GOODS

MANILA— The Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Philippine National Police-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (PNP-CIDG) raided Solid Sea Products' cold storage warehouses in Navotas City following reports of unsanitary and unsafe conditions.

Initial inspections by the DA's Inspectorate and Enforcement, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS) revealed improper handling of meat and fish products in two warehouses.

In a statement on Thursday, DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. stressed that the operation is necessary to ensure public health safety.

"We need to make sure that both our consumers and food producers are protected from these injurious acts," he said, warning that such practices could lead to "dangerous cross-contamination from harmful bacteria."

Based on earlier inspections, the BFAR said the facilities were found to

have mixing of processed and unprocessed fish and meat products, including frozen yellow croaker, Pangasius fillet and half-shell scallops.

Unsanitary conditions were also noted due to unpacked items, wooden pallets, foul odors and poor hygiene practices; while other expired fishery commodities were also found.

The NMIS also found many expired meats and aquamarine products such as pork trotters, loin, intestines, ribs, collar, spare ribs, suckling pigs, chicken breasts, goose and duck wings.

The CIDG-backed operation, conducted under two search warrants, uncovered "voluminous assorted frozen meat and agri-fishery products," with the total quantity yet to be determined.

Solid Sea Products may face charges under the Food Safety Act of 2013 and the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act if the confiscated goods exceed PHP10 million. (PNA) **BY STEPHANIE SEVILLANO**

SANDIGANBAYAN DECLARES ZALDY CO 'FUGITIVE FROM JUSTICE'

MANILA — The Sandiganbayan has ordered the cancellation of the passport of former Ako Bicol party-list Rep. Zaldy Co and formally declared him a fugitive from justice. In an eight-page resolution dated Dec. 10, the anti-graft court ordered the Department of Foreign Affairs to immediately cancel Co's Philippine passport.

"It is the court's view that the deliberate refusal to submit to the lawful authority of the court, unless his demands are met, confirms his clear intent to remain outside the jurisdiction of the court," the court said in its ruling. "It must be emphasized that accused left the country at

the time investigations into alleged corruption in flood control projects were active and when formal charges against him were imminent. His strategically time flight, therefore, provides sufficient ground for the reasonable inference that his action constituted a deliberate attempt to flee from justice," it added.

In a separate resolution, the Sandiganbayan likewise granted the prosecution's plea to declare three members of the board of directors of Sunwest Inc. — Aderma Alcazar, Cesar Buenaventura and Noel Co — as fugitives from justice and also ordered the cancellation of their passports. (PNA) **BY BENJAMIN PULTA**

SCAM WATCH PILOTS ANTI-SCAM ROADSHOW IN PARANAQUE

MANILA — Scam Watch Pilipinas piloted its "On-the-Go Anti-Scam Training Roadshow" in Parañaque City as part of the civilian cybersecurity group's efforts to strengthen community-level defenses against online fraud.

In a statement on Thursday, Scam Watch Pilipinas co-founder Jocel De Guzman said Parañaque was selected as the program's inaugural site because of the city government's willingness and commitment to fight scams at the grassroots level.

"This is our first on-ground roll-out, made possible through the strong support of the Parañaque City government under Mayor Kuya Edwin Olivarez," De Guzman said.

The program aims to bring scam prevention training directly into communities — from barangays to local organizations — to establish an anti-scam reporting desk in every barangay hall.

"If someone needs to report a scam, they can immediately call for help through 1326 and the CICC. The goal is to make scam prevention accessible and part of everyday community life," he said.

The anti-scam training roadshow began on Dec. 5, with 103 Parañaque City employees so far completing the program's

behavior-based anti-scam training.

These city employees now serve as volunteer watchers and front-line advocates who help families and barangay communities in detecting, resisting, and reporting fraudulent activities.

During the event, Olivarez highlighted the importance of the program in combating online scams as a day-to-day problem of the average Filipino.

"Our partnership with Scam Watch Pilipinas is the first step in educating Parañaqueños across various sectors and barangays. We are proud to be the first city to host this Anti-Scam Training Roadshow," he said.

The roadshow is led by Scam Watch Pilipinas and supported by the Cybercrime Investigation and Coordinating Center (CICC), PNP Anti-Cybercrime Group, Whoscall/Gogolook Philippines, Meta, WISAP, Bayan Academy, the Global Anti-Scam Alliance (GASA), and the Parañaque PIO.

After the roadshow, Scam Watch eyes a broader nationwide rollout of community-based anti-scam education to empower more Filipinos to become vigilante defenders against online fraud. (PNA) **BY RAYMOND CARL DELA CRUZ**

NEARLY 1M FILIPINOS BENEFIT FROM 'BENTENG BIGAS' IN 7 MONTHS

MANILA — Nearly one million Filipinos across the country have benefited from the government's "Benteng Bigas Meron (BBM) Na" program since its rollout seven months ago, the Department of Agriculture (DA) reported. Speaking at the Saturday News Forum in Quezon City, DA Assistant Secretary Genevieve Guevarra said the PHP20-per-kilo rice initiative of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., launched in May, has so far reached close to 900,000 beneficiaries.

"Almost a million have benefited since we launched on May 13, 2025. Politically correct, more than 900,000," she said.

Guevarra said the DA is now looking to modernize the program's registration

system to ensure that the intended beneficiaries are the ones purchasing the subsidized rice.

The improved system is expected to help monitor where and how often beneficiaries buy the PHP20 rice.

"We are looking to modernize registration system nationwide to be more direct to our target beneficiaries. At the same time, to monitor where they buy and how often," Guevarra said.

She added that the agency is targeting to reach 15 million households under the program by 2026.

PHP500 Noche Buena achievable Guevarra likewise supported the Department of Trade and Industry's estimate that PHP500 would be enough for a family's Noche Buena,

LTFRB TO PENALIZE TNVS BOOKING CANCELLATIONS

MANILA — The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Thursday issued a memorandum penalizing driver-initiated cancellation of transport network vehicle service (TNVS) bookings.

In a statement, LTFRB Chair Vigor Mendoza II said the memorandum circular (MC) is in line with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s instruction to prioritize the welfare of commuters.

Specifically, Mendoza said the memorandum seeks to address the complaints of commuters about the rampant cancellations of bookings by TNVS drivers, especially in areas with heavy traffic.

Under LTFRB MC 2025-055, booking cancellations initiated by TNVS drivers are classified as a violation under "Refusal to Convey Passengers" penalized under Section IV. 2 of Joint Administrative Order 2014-01.

The penalties for its violation are a fine of PHP5,000 for the first offense, PHP10,000 fine and 30-day vehicle impoundment for the second offense, and a fine of PHP15,000 and cancellation of the Certificate of Public Convenience for subsequent offenses.

He noted that cancellation

of bookings is tantamount to refusal to convey passengers, especially when the booking has already been accepted and confirmed in the TNVS platform.

"Matindi ang epekto ng biglaan at garapalang booking cancellation sa mga TNVS dahil ang pinag-uusapan dito ay kahalagahan ng oras ng mananakay na maaring makompromiso ng ganitong modus (The sudden and blatant cancellation of TNVS bookings is a serious matter because such modus wastes the time of passengers)," he said.

Under the memorandum, the cancellation of a booking is penalized when it was done to avoid short-distance trips or non-profitable trips in favor of a higher fare trip; involves discrimination, especially against senior citizens and persons with disability; those that are already in transit without a valid reason; and a pattern of behavior of TNVS drivers showing unjust cancellation of bookings.

The LTFRB will make use of the logs of transport network companies (TNC) to decide whether there is deliberate refusal to serve certain areas, time periods, or passenger profiles without just cause.

Under the same MC, the LTFRB ordered TNCs to submit a monthly report containing the number or percentage of cancellations categorized by driver-initiated, passenger-initiated, and system-initiated; and a list of drivers with unjustified cancellations and corresponding actions taken by the TNC.

Exceptions to these penalized cancellations include natural calamities like floods, car maintenance issues, and passenger behavior.

Moreover, the MC also provides penalties for TNCs for failing to monitor, control, and take corrective action against identified drivers with a history of unjustified cancellations or who fail to comply with reporting and data-sharing obligations.

Penalties for TNCs include fines, suspension, or cancellation of accreditation.

The MC will take effect immediately after its publication in at least one newspaper with general circulation. (PNA) **BY RAYMOND CARL DELA CRUZ**

PH ARMY RECEIVES LOCALLY DESIGNED AUTOMATED GUN MOUNT FROM DOST

MANILA – The Philippine Army (PA) on Thursday received an automated weapon system capable of mounting .50 caliber machine guns from the Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

With the turnover of the locally designed Controller-Operated Battle Ready Armament (COBRA), Filipino troops "will no longer be exposed to heavy fire when operating heavy weapons," PA commander Lt. Gen. Antonio Nafarrete said.

He added that COBRA is not only a product for national defense but also a symbol of the Philippines' collective pursuit of a self-reliant posture through science, technology and innovation.

The COBRA is an output of the Research & Development implemented by the DOST-Metals Industry Research and Development Center (MIRDC), with which the

PA signed an agreement on Nov. 23, 2022 regarding the weapon's development. The turnover was held at the headquarters of the PA Armor Division in Camp O'Donnell, Capas, Tarlac.

Following the turnover, a capability demonstration was witnessed by officials from PA, DOST and the Department of National Defense.

In a statement, the PA said the development and subsequent manufacture of COBRA is a testament to its collaborative approach in support of the government's Self Reliant Defense Posture.

"It also aligns with Armed Forces of the Philippines Modernization program which will provide means and resources for soldiers to accomplish every mission effectively and support the military's active transition to external security operations," it added. (PNA) **BY PRIAM NEPOMUCENO**

MRT-3 IMPROVES LIGHTING, SECURITY IN ALL 13 STATIONS

MANILA – The Metro Rail Transit Line 3 (MRT-3) has improved lighting and added more security in all its 13 stations as part of government efforts to intensify the safety and security of commuters.

In a statement on Thursday, acting Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez said enhanced lighting systems in MRT-3 stations would be paired with additional security personnel from the Philippine National Police (PNP) during the holiday season.

"Ang kautusan po ng ating Pangulo na pailawan ang 13 stations ng MRT-3. Hindi pa po ito nangyayari sa kasaysayan ng MRT-3. Sa iba maaaring ito ay simpleng proyekto, pero kadalasan ang ganitong simpleng proyekto – ito po ay masalong nagbibigay ng makabuluhang epekto sa ating mamamayan (The President ordered improved lighting in all 13 stations of the MRT-3. This is a first in MRT-3's history. This may look like a simple project to some, but oftentimes projects

like this are what benefit commuters the most)," Lopez said.

The new lighting systems improved visibility both inside MRT-3 stations and on the road outside the stations.

The launch of the new lighting systems was led by Lopez, Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte, and Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Lt. Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. on Wednesday.

During the event, Nartatez assured the PNP's support in providing more police to ensure peace and order in all three metro rail services in the National Capital Region.

"The PNP is committed to supporting the MRT and LRT, especially since this is a convergence about peace and order and even public safety. We are always in coordination with the different (rail line) station managers, to improve (peace and order), and just like this Christmas, we need to have good lighting," he said. (PNA)

BY RAYMOND CARL DELA CRUZ

NGCP LIFTS YELLOW ALERT STATUS FOR VISAYAS GRID

MANILA – The yellow alert status for the Visayas grid has been lifted as of 1 p.m. Thursday after demand went down, ensuring an adequate margin of supply. In an advisory, the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) said capacity rose to 2,760 megawatts (MW) while demand went down to 2,421MW.

NGCP earlier placed the Visayas grid under yellow alert, which is being down when the supply margin is thin, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. This, after a 35MW uptick in demand earlier in the day, with available capacity pegged at around 2,578 megawatts (MW) while peak demand was around 2,535MW.

Supply was affected since

10 power plants in the Visayas are already on forced outage, while 16 power plant units were on derated capacity.

Other factors that affected the supply are the unavailability of the 103-megawatt coal-fired power plant unit 2 of the Cebu-based KEPCO SPC Power Corporation (KSPC), and the 49MW rise in demand in the Mindanao grid, which decreased by 207MW the capacity being transferred to the Visayas through the Mindanao-Visayas Interconnection Project (MVIP).

NGCP said the Agus 6 Hydroelectric Power is also on derated capacity at 66.5MW during the day. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

CFO BOOSTS SUPPORT FOR FILIPINOS IN JAPAN AMID MENTAL HEALTH WOES

MANILA – The Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) is reinforcing its support mechanisms for Filipino communities in Japan after a dialogue with the Japanese Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA) revealed alarming mental health concerns and persistent legal hurdles faced by non-worker migrants.

"The CFO is currently conducting a series of study visits across Japan. These activities aim to bring the Commission closer to its constituents and better understand the specific needs of Filipinos in Japan," the CFO said in a press release on Thursday. JFBA is Japan's national, mandatory organization for all lawyers, serving as the governing body that protects human rights, ensures social justice, regulates legal professionals, and promotes legal advancement, while acting as the central voice for the entire Japanese legal community both domestically and internationally.

JFBA lawyers Suzuki Masako, Keiko Sugawa, Takashi Ito, and Yayoi Hasagawa briefed the CFO on growing cases of sadness, depression, and

social isolation among Filipinos, noting limited access to mental health services and community support for this vulnerable sector.

Another concern raised was the long-standing problems involving children born to Filipino-Japanese parents who remain unrecognized by the government, leaving them without proper legal status or protection.

The lawyers also noted a high number of foreigners, including Filipinos, whose residency status changes while in Japan, expressing concern over the new political landscape, observing that Japan is pushing for stricter rules on foreign nationals and migration.

Based on CFO data, there are 39,066 overseas Filipinos residing in Japan as of 2022.

Meanwhile, the CFO said that overseas Filipinos in Japan encouraged the agency to expand its initiative during the recent "Ugnayan" community engagement at the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo, which drew significant interest from Filipinos seeking clarity on Japan's legal processes. (PNA) **BY MARITA MOAJE**

INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DUE TO NATURAL CALAMITIES - DOLE

MANILA – The increase in unemployment rate was due to natural calamities that hit some parts of the country in the past months, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) said Thursday.

Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma said the hike recorded in October 2025 is attributed to typhoons and earthquakes that were experienced in some parts of the country.

"The increase was attributed to reported natural calamities such as southwest monsoon and tropical cyclones plus the effects of the earthquake that hit Cebu and Davao Oriental," he said in a Viber message.

"While there's an uptick on the unemployment rate from 3.9 percent in October 2024 to 5 percent, the increase is still within the target 4.8 to 5.1 (percent) for 2025."

However, Laguesma is hopeful that the number will change this holiday season. "Hopefully, the stats for November and December

will reflect a rebound in our economy due to the Christmas season," he said.

Asked if he was surprised over the Philippine Statistics Authority's (PSA) latest data, the DOLE secretary said, "If we consider historical trends when the 'ber' months would set in, the unemployment rate should be downed, underemployment will see an increase due to the onset of seasonal and part-time jobs."

On Wednesday, the PSA reported that the number of jobless Filipinos grew in October, with at least 2.54 million people unemployed that month.

There were 1.96 million unemployed Filipinos in September.

On the other hand, the employment rate is at 95 percent in October 2025, slightly lower than September's 96.2 percent or 48.62 million people employed, compared to 49.60 million in September. (PNA) **BY FERDINAND PATINIO**

PCG GOES ON ALERT FOR HOLIDAY TRAVEL RUSH

MANILA – The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) is on alert for the nationwide implementation of "Oplan Biyaheng Ayos: Pasko 2025" to ensure the safety and security of the millions of land and sea passengers during the holiday season. In a statement Thursday, PCG commandant Admiral Ronnie Gil Gavan, placed all PCG districts, stations, and sub-stations on heightened alert from Dec. 20, 2025 to Jan. 4, 2026, to manage the anticipated surge of travelers during the Christmas and New Year holidays.

The policy is in line with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s directive to intensify safety and security measures in ports and maritime tourism nationwide.

The PCG will work closely with the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), and the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) to implement the policy.

PCG Spokesperson, Captain Noemie Cayabyab, said PCG personnel will augment DOTr Malasakit Help Desks to provide travelers with immediate assistance and emergency response in major seaports.

"To uphold passenger welfare, PCG medical teams will ensure the 24/7 availability of medical support. Coast Guard K9 teams will also inspect vessels and baggage to deter prohibited items and ensure full compliance with safety regulations," Cayabyab said.

In addition, PCG responders will patrol beaches, island resorts, and other areas frequented by local and foreign tourists during Christmas and New Year celebrations.

"We continue to remind the public to stay vigilant and follow safety advisories to help ensure peaceful and orderly holiday celebrations," she said. (PNA) **BY RAYMOND CARL DELA CRUZ**

DAR SET TO DISTRIBUTE 1,465 HECTARES IN NEGROS ORIENTAL

DUMAGUETE CITY – The Department of Agrarian Reform in Negros Oriental is preparing to distribute 1,465 hectares of land to agrarian reform beneficiaries on Dec. 22, officials said Thursday.

This follows the recent distribution of individual land titles to 1,566 farmers from the province during a Negros Island Region ceremony in Bago City, Negros Occidental on Dec. 4.

Manuel Galon, DAR-Negros Oriental provincial director said the agency is still consolidating data on the total number of beneficiaries and titles for the upcoming Dec. 22 distribution. The move

aligns with a directive to expedite individual land title distribution before year-end.

During the Bago City event, graced by DAR Secretary Conrado Estrella III, the department distributed 127 Certificates of Land Ownership Award and 3,066 e-titles covering over 2,559 hectares through Project SPLIT, an initiative to convert collective titles into individual ones.

Galon clarified that several beneficiaries received multiple titles corresponding to separate land parcels they now individually own. (PNA) **BY MARY JUDALINE PARTLOW**

3 ILOCOS NORTE STUDENTS TO COMPETE IN NATIONAL YOUNG FARMERS CHALLENGE

LAOAG CITY – Three agribusiness students from the state-run Mariano Marcos State University in Batac City will represent the school in a national competition with their innovative enterprise that transforms an underutilized agricultural by-product into a delicious and value-added snack.

Sheena Shane Dacanay, Danica Layan and Shina Marie Calderon bagged a PHP250,000 cash grant and plaques of recognition during the recently concluded Regional Intercollegiate Competition under the Young Farmers Challenge (YFC) program of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

The trio won for their outstanding performance and the viability of their proposed agribusiness innovation, a healthy, crispy and flavorful snack made from banana pseudostem they branded as SAHA Crunch.

"It is affordable, nutritious and ideal for students, health-conscious consumers and anyone looking for a tasty alternative to regular chips," the team said of

their product during the competition.

"By utilizing banana pseudostem, SAHA Crunch not only promotes sustainability but also supports local farmers while offering a guilt-free, 'Saha-licious' snacking experience."

Michael Vincent Veja, team coach of the students, told the Philippine News Agency on Thursday that the three plan to utilize the grant to further improve SAHA Crunch.

The YFC program highlights the youth as the nation's hope and key to achieving a Masaganang Bagong Pilipinas (Progressive New Philippines), which also forms part of the advocacies of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. and DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

Open to Filipino youths who wish to venture or already venturing into farming, fishing, animal raising and other agriculture-based activities, the YFC is a competitive financial grant assistance program that aims to support and empower young Filipinos who are interested in

BACOLOD CITY FILES RAPS VS. 33 EMPLOYEES FOR FORGING GSIS LOAN PAPERS

BACOLOD CITY – The city government here has filed administrative complaints against an assistant department head and 32 workers of the General Services Office (GSO) involved in the alleged mass falsification of documents in their application for Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) loans.

In an interview on Thursday, City Legal Officer Karol Joseph Chiu said Mayor Greg Gasataya has approved the investigation report, which includes the recommendation of filing formal complaints against those involved.

"The City Legal Office (CLO) has been appointed as the hearing officer of the administrative cases," he said.

The CLO started the investigation last month after GSO department head Gilda Luisma submitted an incident report regarding the 32 employees who falsified

their pay slips and net pay certifications to qualify for GSIS loan.

The said employees are facing administrative complaints for serious dishonesty, grave misconduct, and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service.

Tiu said GSO assistant department head Franklin Andre Familiaran, who signed the supposedly falsified documents, has also been charged for 32 counts each of the stated administrative cases.

He said the mayor also ordered Familiaran to serve a 60-day preventive suspension without pay.

"This is pursuant to the constant follow-up of GSIS with regards to the reported mass falsification in the GSO department. The incident has reached them and they are following up and making the city explain about it," Tiu said. (PNA) **BY NANETTE GUADALQUIVER**

DAR BICOL DISTRIBUTES LAND TITLES, CONDONES P248.8-M DEBT

LEGAZPI CITY – The Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) in Bicol distributed a total of 6,960 land titles and Certificates of Condonation with Release of Mortgages (CoCRoMs) to agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs) in the region on Thursday.

DAR Secretary Conrado Estrella III led the distribution of a total of 3,497 land titles to 2,697 ARBs, covering 5,929.36 hectares of agricultural land at the Fuerte Camsur Sports Complex in Pili, Camarines Sur.

Estrella said the initiative

engaging in new agribusiness enterprises.

It includes various components such as Start-Up, Upscale and Intercollegiate, offering financial grants, mentorship, development support, market linkages and exposure. (PNA) **BY LEILANIE ADRIANO**

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s directive to expedite the issuance of land titles before the end of his term. "All that's left is 800,000 titles, and we still have two and a half years. This year, we completed 300,000. We thank the Lord because we are finding solutions, and you can expect us to finish this," he said in an interview.

Estrella noted that claims currently in court will need to await judicial decisions. He also assured Bicolano farmers of ongoing assistance and support services for agrarian reform beneficiaries to enhance food production and security.

The distributed titles included 1,286 Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOAs) and 2,211 electronic titles (e-titles) generated under the Support to Parcelization of Lands for Individual Titling (SPLIT) Project.

Under the New Agrarian

BAGUIO'S 16 SPECIALTY CENTERS TO BE FULLY OPERATIONAL BY 2028-2030

BAGUIO CITY – The Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center (BGHMC) expects all 16 of its specialty centers to be fully operational between 2028 and 2030 as it works toward expanding its capacity from 600 to 1,500 beds to serve patients from Regions 1, 2, 3 and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR).

BGHMC Medical Center Chief Dr. Larry Haya said in an interview on Thursday that the ongoing construction involves "massive, multi-story structures" across the hospital compound, leading to a phased completion timeline extending to 2030.

Despite this, several specialty services — including heart, kidney, lung, eye, mental health, geriatrics, rehabilitation medicine, cancer, and trauma — have already begun operating in partially completed areas to ease the burden on patients and their families.

He clarified that while some subspecialty clinics are not

yet open, core departments such as internal medicine and pediatrics remain fully functional.

"Our patients do not have to go to Metro Manila for various medical services. They can receive them here," Haya said.

BGHMC, a Department of Health-run hospital, currently serves an average daily load exceeding its 600-bed capacity, operating at around 110 percent occupancy.

Its outpatient department accommodates about 1,000 patients daily, while 300 to 500 patients seek care at the emergency room.

Patient numbers have further increased following President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s announcement of zero balance billing (ZBB) for basic accommodations.

Haya thanked private hospitals for helping absorb some of the overflow as BGHMC undergoes expansion. (PNA) **BY LIZA AGOOT**

Emancipation Act (R.A. 11953), 3,429 CoCRoMs were also distributed, effectively condoning PHP 48.8 million in unpaid land amortizations and related debts of ARBs.

Sonny Orias, a beneficiary from San Fernando, Camarines Sur, said that the condonation is a significant help for his daily livelihood, as they are now free from the debt that used to keep him awake at night. "The PHP 90,000 that was forgiven by DAR is a blessing from heaven for us," he said.

"In my 50 years of farming, it is only now that we have felt the genuine concern and love of the government for us farmers. To our beloved Secretary Conrado Estrella III, Manong Conrado, thank you very much! We can feel your love for the agricultural sector.

Because of your service in DAR, you have proven that we farmers are the true heroes of the Bagong

Pilipinas," he added.

Camarines Sur Gov. LRay Villafuerte expressed gratitude to Marcos for the distribution of land titles to farmers.

"The land titles are not just pieces of paper; they are symbols of dignity, security, and a better future. This is the answer to the prayers of many Bicolano farmers," he said.

As part of the event, 34 Agrarian Reform Beneficiary Organizations (ARBOs) were issued Certificates of Registration (CORs), reflecting ongoing support for their development under the Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Development and Sustainability Program.

Seven units of farm machinery and equipment, valued at PHP7,908,000, were turned over to six ARBOs in Camarines Sur to further enhance their productivity and enterprise development. (PNA) **BY CONNIE CALIPAY**

BSP CUTS INTEREST RATES ANEW, HINTS END OF EASING CYCLE

MANILA – The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) on Thursday reduced by another 25 basis points its target reverse repurchase (RRP) rate to 4.50 percent, the eighth for the year, as it continues to see inflation remaining manageable.

BSP Governor Eli Remolona, in a briefing, said this might be the last for their easing cycle “depending on the data.”

“It may have ended already. This maybe the last cut, but depending on what else you see, you can still consider another cut,” he said, citing inflation, domestic demand, and impact of governance issues, and global developments.

He, however, pointed out that “the cut will revive economic activity a bit at a time when painful governance issues around infrastructure investments have weakened government spending, business confidence, and domestic demand.”

This, as the policy-making Monetary Board (MB) cut the BSP’s inflation outlook for this year to 1.6 percent from 1.7 percent previously.

However, the 2026 forecast was hiked to 3.2 percent, from 3.1 percent;

and the 2027 to 3 percent from 2.8 percent

Amidst these upward revisions, Remolona said inflation expectations remain firmly anchored.

Remolona also said “domestic demand is expected to rebound slowly as the full impact of monetary policy easing works its way through the economy and as the pace and quality of public spending improves” even with the impact of global trade concerns and issues on government flood control projects.

“Looking ahead, the BSP will ensure that overall policy settings remain consistent with maintaining price stability conducive to sustainable economic growth,” he said.

Monetary officials project growth next year to be around 5.3 percent but Remolona expects a recovery in the second half, partly as the government addresses governance issues.

“We reduced our projections for the first half of 2026, so we hope that there will be some recovery, and we’re hoping by 2027 we will be more or less back on target,” he said. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

BRITISH CHAMBER EXEC CITES NEED TO CONSIDER POPULATION ON MAV POLICIES

MANILA – An official of the British Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines (BCCP) on Wednesday cited the need to base any adjustment in the minimum access volume (MAV) for pork imports on the country’s latest population level to ensure food security and inflation stability.

This was after Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. earlier said they were studying the possible revision of the MAV rules since the figures are already outdated, as they were put in place in 1996

when the population was about 70,000 million.

For now, the DA has changed import allocations, increasing the share of pork processors to 50 percent, to prevent significant upticks on the price of processed meats when supply declines.

Previously, 70 percent of MAV allocations were given to the largest importers.

BCCP Executive Director Chris Nelson, in a briefing on Wednesday, noted that pork supply in the country is affected by the African swine fever (ASF), and recovery is expected to be slow given the volume of

ADB EXTENDS USD400-M LOAN TO IMPROVE EASE OF DOING BUSINESS IN PH

MANILA – The ease of doing business in the Philippines was boosted after the Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a USD400 million policy-based loan to assist the country to become a top investment destination.

ADB, in a press release, said the Business Environment Strengthening with Technology Program (BEST) Program 1 aims to help the private sector to streamline and enhance the transparency of regulatory requirements and business processes.

It will also help facilitate investment in priority sectors “with strong development impact and strengthen digital delivery of government services to businesses and investors”, such as renewable energy and digital infrastructure.

“The private sector is an important engine of growth and job creation. Their role in the country’s overall economic development cannot be overstated,” ADB Country Director for the Philippines Andrew Jeffries. “We are committed to assisting the Philippines in finding innovative ways to create an enabling environment that would spur a more dynamic business sector—one

that will help drive faster economic growth.”

Citing the 2024 ranking in the International Institute for Management Development’s World Competitiveness Ranking last year, ADB said the Philippines ranked 52nd out of the 67 economies in terms of the operational efficiency pillar of the World Bank’s Business Ready framework.

Because of this, ADB said “the government has prioritized addressing existing barriers in doing business to boost the country’s competitiveness and drive increased investments and job creation.”

With the loan, there will be “better legal, regulatory, and institutional frameworks to facilitate starting and operating a business, including faster permit and licensing procedures and government approval of new ventures.”

“The program supports whole-of-government solutions to raise investments and support sustainable economic growth in the country. It aims to improve investor experience through strengthening investment facilitation. It will also provide clear, updated, and reliable information via online investors’ guidebooks and a digital database of business regulations through the Philippine Business Regulations Information System launched by the Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA),” it added. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

supply.

“We will be one of the countries supplying it. Not the only one, we’re not the largest, but what we want to do is create long-term relations,” he said.

Citing data from the DA Trade System, Nelson said the Philippines imported about 16.99 million kg. of meat from the UK as of the end of September. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

DOE EXEC CITES PROJECTION FOR LOWER FUEL PRICES IN Q1 2026

MANILA – Fuel prices are expected to decline in the coming weeks due to expected oversupply amidst geopolitical risks, an official of the Department of Energy (DOE) said Tuesday.

Citing reports of the International Energy Agency (IEA) on its 2026 outlook released last November and the US Energy Information Administration, DOE Oil Industry Management Bureau Director Rino Abad, in a Bagong Pilipinas Ngayon interview, said the two agencies forecast an oversupply of oil by next year.

Abad said oil prices have been on a downtrend in the last two weeks, and there is a big chance this will continue vis-a-vis the projection of oversupply in the first quarter of 2026.

He, however, cited two major risks namely the geopolitical issues between Russia and Ukraine and the economic issues in Venezuela.

He said the Russia-Ukraine conflict has resulted in sanctions by the US and Europe, thus, the forecast of JPMorgan that around 1.4 million barrels

of oil per day are not being released from Russia.

He said IEA earlier forecasted that around three to 4 million barrels of oil supply in the first quarter next year may be at risk due to the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Amidst this factor, Abad said there is a general forecast that the higher supply of oil in the first three months of next year will persist.

He said speculations that the sanctions against Russia will be implemented result in an uptick in prices even with supply remaining high, but this is not sustained since the fundamentals are not affected.

This week, only gasoline prices were adjusted, up by PHP1.20 per liter, and Abad said they are still determining why this is happening.

“So, what we can do is really go to the trend of the crude oil saka natin in-apply sa (before we can apply this on the) finished product,” he said, adding that the real changes is based on the movement of the crude oil prices. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

SEC IMPROVES SERVICE DELIVERY VIA IMESSAGE

MANILA – All services of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) can now be processed through its upgraded online ticketing system, which also allows the public to check in real-time the status of their inquiries or complaints.

SEC, in a press release Monday, said the public can access iMessage, launched last Dec. 4, through <https://imessage.sec.gov.ph/>.

Users can access it using their account under the Electronic SEC Universal Registration Environment, or eSECURE.

It said the upgraded online system allows users to, among others, track the status of their tickets in real-time and also allows them to directly check with the department or division processing their request/s.

“Streamlining our requirements and processes has been one of our top priorities as part of

our commitment to further improving the ease of doing business in the country and elevating the quality of the public services we deliver,” SEC Chairperson Francis Lim said.

Lim explained that iMessage helps the Commission “process requests, inquiries, reports and complaints in a more organized and efficient manner, allowing us to deliver our services to our stakeholders without delays while promoting transparency and accountability in every step.”

“At the same time, iMessage allows the transacting public to track the status of their inquiries, requests or complaints in real time, and ensure that their transactions are processed within the prescribed periods and in accordance with the established procedures.” (JOANN VILLANUEVA/PNA)



BRYAN BAGUNAS: CARRYING THE FLAG, CHAMPIONING CLIMATE ACTION

Professional volleyball player and climate advocate Bryan Bagunas proudly carried the Philippine flag at the opening ceremony of the 32nd Southeast Asian Games (SEA Games), alongside tennis star Alex Eala, at the Rajamangala National Stadium in Bangkok.

More than a ceremonial honor, Bagunas' role as flag bearer represents a broader victory for the Philippines—one where athletic excellence converges with purpose-driven advocacy. A committed climate advocate, Bagunas is one of the Filipino athletes who are using their platforms to advance the intersection of sports and climate action, while promoting sustainability within sporting communities.

By leading the Philippine delegation, Bagunas embodies resilience, discipline, and collective responsibility—values that echo the country's continuing push for climate action and sustainable development. His presence on the international stage sends a powerful message: Filipino athletes can be champions not only in competition, but also in advancing causes that protect people, communities, and the future.

Reflecting on his journey, Bagunas underscored the growing impact of hosting and participating in international tournaments in the Philippines.

"Actually, *sobrang* naging malaking impact yung pagdadala ng mga international tournaments sa ating [bansang] Pilipinas," he shared. "Siyempre, nagpapasalamat tayo sa PNVF at sa lahat ng sumusuporta sa Philippine volleyball. Kung hindi dahil sa kanila, hindi tayo

mapapansin."

Bagunas began his volleyball career with the National University (NU) Bulldogs, leading the team to back-to-back championships in the University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) Men's Volleyball League in Seasons 80 and 81. He was named Finals Most Valuable Player in both seasons, earned the Best Server award three consecutive times from Seasons 79 to 81, and capped off his UAAP stint in Season 81 as Season MVP.

Beyond the collegiate stage, Bagunas made his mark in the regional arena as a key member of the Philippine Men's Volleyball Team, contributing to the country's historic silver medal finish at the SEA Games 2019—its first podium finish since 2005. His performance drew international attention, leading to a stint with Oita Miyoshi Weiss Adler in Japan in mid-2019. In August 2022, he joined Taichung Win Streak, where he earned the Most Valuable Player award in Taiwan's Top Volleyball League (TVL) Season 2022–2023 as an outside hitter.

Beyond volleyball, the 6-foot-5 outside hitter has emerged as a passionate advocate for climate action. Having witnessed firsthand the devastating impacts of typhoons across the Philippines, Bagunas continues to highlight the urgent need to address improper waste management and strengthen climate resilience in communities—anchoring his advocacy as a climate champion in the making.

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) stands with Filipino athletes like

Bryan Bagunas, whose moments on the global stage demonstrate how sports can amplify climate awareness, inspire collective action, and rally Filipinos toward a more sustainable and climate-resilient future. **PIA (BY CCC)**

PH POSTS BIG MEDAL JUMP AT ASIAN YOUTH PARA GAMES

MANILA — The Philippines wrapped up a strong campaign at the Asian Youth Para Games, which concluded Sunday in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

While the official overall medal tally still being finalized as of posting time, Filipino athletes collected eight gold, 14 silver and eight bronze medals. The haul was a significant leap from the country's one gold, one silver and two bronze finish at the 2021 edition in Manama, Bahrain.

"I'm very proud of them because we have outdone our medal tally in Bahrain more than five times," said Philippine Paralympic Committee (PPC) president Michael Barredo. "There may be sports where we didn't get medals, but I think this is a good start for our youth program. We are headed in the right direction and this is a good showcase of what our youth can do," he added.

The swimming team, coached by the father and son tandem of Tony and Brian Ong, delivered six gold, six silver and two

MANILA — De La Salle University banked on Jacob Cortez's triple to beat University of the Philippines, 74-70, Wednesday in Game 1 of the UAAP men's basketball finals at Mall of Asia Arena in Pasay City.

The No. 4 seed Green Archers will try to wrap up the best-of-three series on Sunday at the same venue.

De La Salle defeated UP, 72-69, in the first round, and 87-82 in the second round.

"Knowing that this is gonna be something that is an emotionally-packed game, we're just fortunate and blessed that we were able to sustain the onslaught of Harold Alarcon, he really

took over. We just didn't stop when UP was making those big runs," La Salle coach Topex Robinson said.

Alarcon scored on a layup to put the Fighting Maroons within 70-71, 46.5 seconds remaining.

Cortez, coming off the bench, fired a three-pointer in front of Reyland Torres with 27.4 seconds left, giving the Green Archers a 74-70 advantage.

"I just like to give credit to Kean and Doy. Doy stayed ready ... Kean did a good job playing off the bench for me. I'm just so proud of them," Cortez, who finished with 21 points, said.

Doy Dungo had 15 points, followed by Kean Baclaan with nine points and six

assists, Mike Phillips with seven points and nine rebounds, and Luis Pablo with seven points, six rebounds, three blocks, and two steals.

Alarcon scored a career-best 34 points -- the most by any player in a finals since Ateneo's Thirdy Ravena tallied 38 in the title-clinching 99-81 win over UP on Dec. 5, 2018.

Meanwhile, National University Nazareth School defeated FEU-Diliman, 82-72, to rule the inaugural boys' U16 division.

Malian center Moussa Diakite, Jaypee Yanga, and David Sabareza displayed their awesome forms for the Bullpups, who also won the demonstration event in Season 86.

"This is really good because it was our sacrifice. I was left behind for China, for Korea, just to prepare for this U16. The result was okay. Even though they always leave me, as long as we win the championship," NUNS coach Leo Pujante said.

"Next season will be a real challenge for us because Moussa is gone, but we will still try to defend the crown. We will not let it be taken away from us."

Sabareza finished with 17 points, six assists, three rebounds, and three steals. He was named finals Most Valuable Player (MVP).

"Maybe for me, being the [finals] MVP, it wasn't just for me because I wasn't the only one who worked on the court. We all worked to get this championship and we helped each other on the court," he said.

Diakite chipped in 21 points, 17 rebounds, five blocks, four assists, and three steals; Yanga had 20 points and six rebounds; and Dean Tria added 14 points, seven rebounds, four assists, and two steals for NUNS, which won the opener, 79-49.

Prince Cariño delivered 19 points, 11 rebounds, three blocks, and two assists, Dwayne Cañete contributed 10 points, three assists and three steals, while Andrei Chavez and Dwyne Enriquez had nine and eight points, respectively. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

Class 9, while Ramces Tuala, Barge Cabañero and the mixed doubles pair of Tuala and Manginsay contributed bronze medals. Additional silver medals came from Daniela Catacutan in boccia (individual BC1 female) and the badminton SH6 doubles pair of John Cyrus Maclang and Chinese Taipei's Lin Jia Shang. Archer Jannah Ballesta secured a bronze medal in women's W1 Open U21 archery.

Barredo noted that several medalists were identified through the Palarong Pambansa, underscoring the importance of expanding para sports in the national games.

"We should push for more para sports to be included in the Palaro so we can develop more athletes who can win medals for the Philippines," he said.

He also lauded the efforts of coaches nationwide for identifying and nurturing young para athletes, citing growing awareness and development of para sports across the country. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

bronze medals courtesy of Ric Daniel Pasadilla, Mary Hannah Diesto, Raemond Adefuin, Zach Lucas Obsioma and Bladimir Sebastian Gonzales.

The 13-year-old Pasadilla, who studies at Pototan National Comprehensive High School in Iloilo, won three golds (boys' 12-16 200m Individual Medley SM10, 100m backstroke S10 and 100m butterfly S10), one silver (100m freestyle S10) and one bronze (100m breaststroke SB9).

The athletics contingent produced two golds coming from John Rey Diano (men's long jump U20 T20) and RJ Brucal (men's long jump U17 T20), five silvers from Mark Lorence Suarez (men's long jump U20 T20), Edwina Aquino (women's 100m U20 T12), Lexia Sianen (women's javelin throw U20 F46) and Charmel Bada (women's 400m T20 and long jump T20), and two bronzes from Jolly Poquiz (men's long jump U20 T20) and Kyle Norte (men's 100m U20 T20).

In table tennis, Lhey Manginsay claimed silver in the women's U23 singles