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21K WORKING-CLASS INDIVIDUALS TO BENEFIT FROM CAVITE 4PH PROJECTS



4PH PROJECT INSPECTION. Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling (center) reviews site plans with Pag-IBIG Fund Chief Executive Officer Marilene Acosta (right) during the ceremonial first concrete pouring for two housing projects under the Expanded Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino (4PH) Program in Dasmariñas, Cavite on Wednesday (Mar. 5, 2026). The projects are expected to generate over 7,000 housing units for working-class families. (Photo courtesy of DHSUD)

VOLUNTEER GROUPS SCRUB VANDALIZED CAVITE CITY HISTORICAL MARKERS CLEAN

CAVITE CITY, Cavite (PIA) – Known for their pride in Cavite’s role in history, Caviteños are wrapping up the National Arts Month with a series of restoration efforts of historical markers within

the City of Cavite. Last February 27, volunteers from the Cavite Historical Society, Cavite State University, Kabataang Kabitenyo and Temple Street Primera Familia led the city-wide

cleaning and restoration of historical markers within Samonte Park. Led by the City Tourism Office and volunteers from the Manileños for Heritage Group, a non-government organization dedicated

to restoring historical markers and monuments in Manila City, the cleaning and restoration activity included key historical items such as the 1872 Cavite Mutiny marker, Capital Marker, and the Ermita de Porta Vaga Façade and Marker.

In a statement, the city government noted that the project will prioritize the restoration of the Ermita de Porta Vaga replica monument and its marker. “Recognizing our city’s historical value as a cradle of revolutionary heroes and martyrs, they vowed to help the City Government in restoring these markers and monuments to their former glory.”

The Ermita de Porta Vaga has been repeatedly defaced and vandalized over the past year, which captured the attention of civil society organizations. (PB-PIA CALABARZON, City Government of Cavite) **BY PATRICIA BERMUDEZ**

MANILA – At least 21,000 working-class individuals are expected to benefit from two housing projects under the Expanded Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino (4PH) Program, the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) said Thursday.

In a news release, DHSUD reported that Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling and Pag-IBIG Fund Chief Executive Officer Marilene Acosta joined Edgar Saavedra, chief executive officer of Megawide Construction Corporation, during the groundbreaking rites for the projects being developed by PH1 World Developers.

The two developments, located in Barangays Salitran and Paliparan, will consist of 26 multi-storey condominium towers that can generate more than 7,000 housing units under the Expanded 4PH Program.

Earlier, Saavedra committed to deliver 100,000 socialized housing units under the Marcos administration, signaling the private sector’s strengthened participation in the government’s

flagship housing initiative. Aliling described Megawide’s involvement as a strong vote of confidence in the Expanded 4PH and the reforms being implemented by the DHSUD.

He noted that Megawide, a Quadruple A-rated construction firm, is among reputable private developers supporting the program aimed at addressing the country’s housing backlog.

Once completed, the Cavite projects are expected to provide decent, safe and affordable homes to thousands of working-class families.

The Pag-IBIG Fund is supporting both developments, which will feature amenities such as open parks, playgrounds, entrance and exit gates, parking areas and a clubhouse.

Also present during the ceremony were DHSUD Senior Undersecretary Eduardo Robles Jr. and other key officials from DHSUD and Pag-IBIG Fund. **(PNA) BY MA. TERESA MONTEMAYOR**



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MELENDEZ POLICE CAPTURE REGIONAL MOST WANTED FOR DRUG LAW VIOLATION

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — A Regional Level Most Wanted Person was successfully arrested by operatives of the Mendez Municipal Police Station during a police operation conducted at about 8:50 PM on March 3, 2026, along Gen. Trias Street, Brgy. Poblacion 1, Mendez, Cavite.

The operation was carried out by the Warrant Section under the supervision of PMAJ IVAN HOWELL B BAYLA, Officer-in-Charge of Mendez MPS, by virtue of a Warrant of Arrest dated March 2, 2026, for Violation of Section 12 of Republic Act No. 9165, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

The warrant was issued by the Presiding Judge of Regional Trial Court Branch 132 Naic, with Service of Sentence.

The accused was identified as alias "Luigi." Following his arrest, he underwent physical and medical examination prior to his temporary detention at the Mendez Custodial Facility. The copy of the Warrant of Arrest will be returned to

the issuing court for proper disposition.

The entire operation was documented using an Alternative Recording Device (ARD) in compliance with existing policies, in the absence of a Body Worn Camera (BWC). The accused was properly apprised of his constitutional rights in a language known to and understood by him. Meanwhile, PCOLARIEL R RED, Provincial Director of the Cavite Police Provincial Office, commended the operating personnel for the successful implementation of the warrant.

"This successful arrest demonstrates our firm commitment to track down and bring wanted persons before the court of law. We will continue to intensify our operations against fugitives to ensure that justice is served and that peace and order are maintained in the Province of Cavite," PCOL Red stated.

The Cavite Police Provincial Office reiterates its unwavering commitment to sustain aggressive and intelligence-driven operations against wanted persons throughout the province.

REGIONAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON ARRESTED BY INDANG PNP

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — A Regional Level Most Wanted Person was arrested in a joint police operation conducted at about 2:10 PM on March 5, 2026, in Carmona, Cavite. PMAJ IAN JASPER M MONTOYA, Acting Chief of Police of Indang Municipal Police Station, identified the arrested accused as Jenmar, and a resident of Brgy. Sampaloc III,

Dasmariñas City, Cavite. The intelligence operatives of Indang MPS, together with the Tracker Team of CIDG Cavite Provincial Field Unit, conducted a police operation against the most wanted person. The operation was duly recorded through the use of an Alternative Recording Device. He was arrested by virtue of a Warrant of Arrest for Violation of Section 12, Article II of R.A.

TWO DRUG SUSPECTS ARRESTED, PHP176.8K WORTH OF SHABU SEIZED IN SUCCESSFUL OPERATION OF TANZA POLICE

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Two drug suspects were arrested in a buy-bust operation conducted in Tanza, Cavite, at about 10:40 in the evening on March 4, 2026.

PLTCOL CHESTER NOEL R BORLONGAN, Officer-In-Charge of Tanza MPS, identified the arrested suspects as alias "Jef" and alias "Ron" both Street-Level Individuals and residents of Tanza, Cavite.

Personnel of Tanza Municipal Police Station conducted a buy bust operation in Brgy. Amaya II, Cavite in coordination with PDEA which resulted in the arrest of the suspects and confiscation of the following pieces of evidence: three pieces heat-sealed transparent plastic sachets containing white crystalline substance suspected as shabu with an estimated weight of more or less 26 grams and with standard drug price value of Php176, 800.00 and one piece of one thousand peso bill used as

buy-bust money.

The actual physical inventory of pieces of evidence were conducted by the seizing officer at the place of arrest and in the presence of the arrested suspects, media representative and elected brgy. councilor of Brgy. Amaya II, Tanza, Cavite.

The operation was duly recorded through the use of an Alternative Recording Device, and the suspects were apprised of their constitutional rights in a dialect known to them.

PCOL ARIEL R RED, Provincial Director of the Cavite Police Provincial Office, stated, "The Cavite PNP remains relentless in its campaign against illegal drugs. Through sustained and intelligence-driven operations, we will continue to intensify our efforts to eradicate the drug menace in the province."

CITY LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON ARRESTED FOR CHILD ABUSE IN BACOR CITY

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — A City Level Most Wanted Person was arrested by personnel of Bacoor CCPS, identified the arrested accused as alias Lizel, a resident of Bacoor City, Cavite. The arrest was carried out by personnel of the Warrant Section of Bacoor CCPS through a manhunt charlie operation utilizing an Alternative Recording Device. The accused was apprehended by virtue of a Warrant of Arrest for Violation of Section 10(a) of R.A. 7610 (Child Abuse Act) in relation to Section 3(b)(2) issued by the Regional Trial Court Branch 111, Bacoor City, Cavite, dated February 13,

2026, with recommended bail in the amount of Php 80,000.00. The accused is currently detained at the Bacoor Custodial Center pending the return of the warrant to the court of origin for proper disposition. PCOL ARIEL R RED, Provincial Director of the Cavite Police Provincial Office, stated, "The Cavite PNP remains steadfast in its campaign against individuals who commit crimes against children. We will continue to intensify our operations to ensure the protection of the vulnerable sectors of our community and the swift service of justice."

PROVINCIAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON ARRESTED IN DASMARINAS CITY

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — A Provincial Level Most Wanted Person was arrested in a joint police operation conducted, in Dasmariñas City, Cavite, at about 5:00 in the afternoon on March 3, 2026.

PMAJ IAN JASPER M MONTOYA, Assistant Chief of Police of Indang Municipal Police Station, identified the arrested accused as Win, and a resident of Dasmariñas City, Cavite.

The intelligence operatives of Indang MPS, together with the Tracker Team of CIDG Cavite Provincial Field Unit conducted a police operation against the Most Wanted Person. The operation was duly recorded through the use of an Alternative Recording Device.

He was arrested by virtue of a Bench Warrant of Arrest for Violation

of Section 11, Article II of R.A. 9165 issued by the Regional Trial Court Branch 128, Dasmariñas City, Cavite dated February 16, 2026, with recommended bail in the amount of Php200,000.00.

The accused is now under the custody of CIDG Cavite PFU for documentation and proper disposition. A copy of the Warrant of Arrest will be returned to the Court of Origin.

PCOL ARIEL R RED, Provincial Director of the Cavite Police Provincial Office, stated, "The Cavite PNP remains relentless in its campaign against wanted persons, particularly those involved in illegal drugs. Through sustained intelligence-driven operations and inter-unit coordination, we will continue to ensure that offenders are brought before the courts of justice."

GOV'T EYES LOWER CAVITEX TOLL RATES ONCE FULLY STATE-OWNED

MANILA—The government is eyeing lower toll rates at the Manila-Cavite Expressway (CAVITEX) once the tollway becomes fully owned by the state through the PEA Tollway Corporation (PEATC), officials said Thursday.

PEATC President and Chief Executive Officer Delfin Torrecampo Jr. said the tollway operator may reduce toll rates once government ownership reaches 100 percent.

“PEATC is the sole or the only government corporation operating a tollway in the Philippines. So 'yung tanong po natin kanina, PEATC, through the national government, can subsidize the toll revenues because as of now, hindi muna naming pwedeng ipababa ang toll revenue because it is not yet a hundred percent owned by the government, meron pang joint venture partner (So to answer the question earlier, PEATC, through the national government, can subsidize toll revenues, but for now we cannot lower toll rates because the tollway is not yet 100 percent owned by the government as there is still a joint venture partner),” Torrecampo said.

“But once 100 percent owned na ito ng gobyerno, ng PEATC, for sure one of the target po ng aming chairman of the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) is to lower the rate of the CAVITEX compared to other tollways para 'yung 100 pesos and toll rate per TRB, it can be lowered to let's say 80 pesos kung tayo na, ang gobyerno na

ang may-ari nitong tollway (But once the government fully owns the tollway through PEATC, one of the targets of our chairman is to lower CAVITEX toll rates compared with other tollways—for example, a PHP100 toll rate approved by the Toll Regulatory Board could be reduced to around PHP80 if the government fully owns the tollway),” he added.

Torrecampo said PEATC is earning around PHP3.6 billion annually from its existing tollway operations, equivalent to roughly PHP10 million in daily revenue from about 200,000 vehicles using the tollway daily. He added that the opening of the CAVITEX C5 Link Expressway Segment 3B is projected to generate about PHP300 million in additional annual revenue from an estimated 11,500 vehicles daily, raising the tollway's total projected yearly revenue to around PHP4 billion.

Of the projected revenue, about PHP1 billion is expected to be remitted to the national government through value-added tax and corporate income tax. CAVITEX is operated under a public-private partnership arrangement involving the PRA, through its subsidiary PEATC, representing the government's interest in the tollway, while Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC), through Cavite Infrastructure Corp. (CIC), serves as the private concessionaire responsible for financing, construction, and

DOST CAVITE CELEBRATES 2026 NATIONAL WOMEN'S MONTH

In celebration of the 2026 National Women's Month, DOST Cavite proudly joins the nation in honoring the strength, leadership, and contributions of Filipino women under the theme,

development of the expressway.

Under this joint venture framework, the government and its private partner coordinate on tollway operations, expansion projects, and toll rate policies subject to the approval of the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB). Meanwhile, officials said discussions are also ongoing with tollway partners and regulators on possible interventions and considerations that could benefit motorists, especially with fuel prices being expected to rise amid Middle East tensions. Anthony Peter Crisolago, chairperson of PEATC and director of the PRA, said the possibility of a toll holiday similar to the one implemented when Segment 2 opened in July 2024 is under study.

“Because this is a joint venture, we have to discuss with our joint venture partners... So we're not sure yet but I think it's being discussed by TRB, PEA Tollway, and MPTC as well,” Crisolago said.

PRA Assistant General Manager Joselito Gonzales said the government continues to work with regulators and private partners to ensure toll policies remain responsive to economic conditions.

“Kami po sa gobyerno ay kaisa ng Pangulo sa paghanap ng mga magiging solusyon para ma-address po itong mga pupuwedeng mangyari

“Lead Like the Babaylans, Filipinas.” The theme pays tribute to the babaylans of pre-colonial Philippines—women who served as leaders, healers, and keepers of knowledge in their communities.

Today, Filipinas continue this legacy in the fields of science, technology, and innovation. From researchers and scholars to entrepreneurs and public servants, women play a vital role in advancing sustainable development and driving progress in their respective communities.

Through its programs and initiatives, DOST Cavite reaffirms its commitment to promoting gender equality, empowering women, and creating inclusive opportunities that enable women to lead with excellence, integrity, and purpose. **DOST-Cavite**

as a result nitong nangyayaring kaguluhan sa ibang bansa (The government is working with the President in finding solutions to address possible impacts arising from conflicts abroad),” Gonzales said.

He said the PRA, PEATC and private concessionaire Metro Pacific Tollways Corp. regularly hold project committee meetings with the TRB to discuss toll rate petitions and ensure decisions remain sensitive to prevailing economic conditions.

Gonzales added that the presence of a government entity in tollway operations helps temper possible toll rate increases and ensure that the interests of motorists are considered. **(PNA) BY WILNARD BACELONIA**

EDITORIAL

Ang hangganan ng halakhak: bakit hindi biro ang karahasan

Ang pagbibiro ay bahagi na ng ating kultura upang maghatid ng saya, ngunit may mga hangganan na hindi dapat lampasan. Sa kasalukuyan, nakakabahalang makita ang ilan sa mga indibidwal na ginagawang paksa gaya ng pang-aabuso o tinatawag na rape jokes. Sa tingin ba natin maituturing ito biro? Ang pagtanggap sa mga ganitong hirit ay isang anyo ng normalisasyon sa karahasan, isang mapanganib na kalakaran na hindi dapat lumaganap.

Ang bawat tawa mula sa isang rape joke ay tila muling paghalay sa kanilang dangal. Paggamit sa kanilang trauma bilang sangkap ng katatanganan ay maituturing na rin isang uri ng pang-aabuso. Hindi lamang ito simpleng salita, ito ay pananabotahe sa kanilang damdamin at malalang nakakaapekto sa kanilang mental health. Pinatitibay nito ang takot na baka ang kanilang pinagdaanan ay hindi seryosong krimen sa mata ng publiko.

Matutong gumamit ng biro sa wastong paraan, ilugar sa tama. Isaalang-alang ang timbang ng paksa lalo na kung maselan at marahas, huwag maging clout chaser para lang makakuha ng attensyon. Walang sinuman ang nararapat na dumanas ng pang-aabuso, maging sa aktwal na gawa o sa mapanirang salita. Panahon na upang ituldok ang kultura ng bastos na pagbibiro dahil ang dignidad ng tao ay kailanman hindi dapat maging hantungan ng katatanganan.

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PUBLISHING

ANABELLE K. DUMALI
Publisher / Editor in Chief

JOHN RENNIEL K. DUMALI
Circulation Manager

BRYAN V. DE LUNA
Editor Consultant

JO-ANN K. ALCANTARA
Lay Out Artist/Special Project Coordinator

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Contact #: 09954361217

Email: cavitegazette@gmail.com

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PH WANTS TO REPLICATE SINGAPORE MODEL ON PRECONCEPTION HEALTH – DSWD

MANILA – The Philippine government is interested to replicate a Singaporean government model of investing in girls' and women's health even before they start conceiving or having families.

The interest comes following the recent bilateral meeting between Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Secretary Rex Gatchalian and Singapore Social and Family Development Minister Masagos Zulkifli, which concluded with the signing of a memorandum of understanding on child development and women empowerment.

In Singapore, Gatchalian said government welfare programs cover the preconception stage, as studies show that women's overall health is vital for maternal-child health outcomes and, by extension, can sustain economic productivity of citizens in a society.

"Sa kanila, hindi mo aantayin upon conception. Tayo kasi ang concept natin ng first 1,000 days, upon conception (For them, you don't have to wait for conception to provide intervention. Here in the Philippines, the concept is the first 1,000 days starts upon conception)," he said.

"In Singapore, kapag alam nila na childbearing age na or magpa-pamilya na 'yong babae, kailangan subaybayan mo na (support is given once the woman is already at a childbearing age)," he added.

This kind of support, he said, may come not only in the form of financial aid but also through free health screenings and holistic services, such as free courses that teach the

women how to properly rear their children when they become pregnant.

"Medyo bago 'yong paradigm na yun. So nagpapunta na tayo ng mga social workers and we're going to start working on the details already, operationalizing it (That concept is still quite new. That's why we've already sent social workers to Singapore so we can start working on the details already)," he said.

"Sisiguraduhin natin na nauunawaan ng bawat pamilyang Pilipino na ang pamumuhunan o pag-alaga, pag-aruga sa kanila mga kababaihan sa pamilya, even if hindi pa siya nagbubuntis ay pamumuhunan sa ating bansa (We will make sure that every Filipino family knows the importance of investing and caring for women even if they are yet to bear child)," he added.

The Philippine-Singapore MOU on the field of social sector development was formalized on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Socio-Cultural Community meetings in Makati City on Wednesday. The agreement covers the exchange of information and experiences in the implementation of programs on social protection and family and child development, including developments related to the "First 1,000 Days of a Child" and child protection.

Other areas of cooperation include programs for persons with disabilities.

Under the MOU, Singapore and the Philippines will also promote institutional linkages, and conduct institutional visits to facilities and centers that serve the needs of families,

DOE TEAMS UP WITH PNP, DILG VS. FUEL PRODUCTS HOARDING

MANILA – The Department of Energy (DOE) on Thursday said an investigation into alleged petroleum products hoarding is now ongoing to protect the public against erring individuals who take advantage of current supply concerns due to the conflict in the Middle East.

The DOE said it has received reports from its field offices in Luzon and Mindanao about irregularities in fuel supply and retail prices.

Individuals proven to have violated Republic Act 7581, or the Price Act, face fines, imprisonment and product forfeiture, it said.

"We will not tolerate any

attempt to take advantage of the current situation at the expense of Filipino consumers," Energy Secretary Sharon Garin said, as quoted in a news release.

Under the directive of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., she said the government is pursuing a whole-of-government approach "to protect the public and maintain orderly fuel supply and distribution."

Thus, DOE is urging the public to report illegal activities that undermine domestic power supply. **(WITH A REPORT FROM JOANN VILLANUEVA/PNA) BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

DOTR CHIEF ASSURES ACCESSIBILITY OF NEW EDSA-KAMUNING

MANILA – Acting Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez on Thursday assured the public that the new footbridge in EDSA-Kamuning is accessible for all.

In a media interview at the launch of the new footbridge in Quezon City, Lopez said the new structure is well-built and accessible to persons with disabilities, the elderly, and pregnant women.

"Yan po ang utos parati ng Pangulo na bilisan ang mga imprastraktura (That's what President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. always says, fast-track the construction of infrastructures) without sacrificing the quality, and of course within the budget as allowed," Lopez said.

In a message to reporters,

children and persons with disabilities. **(PNA) BY JOYCE ANN L. ROCAMORA**

DOTr press officer Jane Deocampo said the new footbridge cost PHP87,326,815.10, under the initial budget estimate of PHP89 million.

The President attended the launch, accompanied by First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos, Lopez, and Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Secretary Vince Dizon.

Compared to the old, steep "Mount Kamuning" footbridge, the President was happy to see much-improved infrastructure and a better experience for commuters.

He also vowed proper maintenance of the new facilities, particularly their accessibility features.

On the other hand, Dizon said the new footbridge is only a part of the ongoing EDSA rehabilitation project.

"Kung kukumpara mo sa Mt. Kamuning, talagang napakaginhawa ng

LTO: INSPECTION CENTERS ONLY CHECK MUFFLER NOISE, NOT LEGALITY

MANILA – The Land Transportation Office (LTO) on Thursday clarified that vehicles with aftermarket mufflers that pass a Private Motor Vehicle Inspection Center (PMVIC) noise inspection can still be apprehended if they are non-compliant with other applicable rules and regulations.

In a statement, the LTO said PMVICs only check for noise compliance of vehicle mufflers and do not indicate the legality of aftermarket mufflers.

Sound level testing—the allowable limit set at 99 decibels—is part of the mandatory tests done by PMVICs as part of the vehicle inspection process.

PMVICs are not mandated to assess the compliance of mufflers with manufacturer specifications or LTO modification regulations.

"A motorcycle that passes the decibel test may still be subject to apprehension if its muffler has been modified or replaced

pagko-cross nila ngayon at pagpunta sa busway. Umpisa pa lang ito. Kasama na rin ito sa EDSA rehab natin (Compared to Mt. Kamuning, crossing this to the Busway is much more convenient. This is only the start, we still have the EDSA rehab)," he said. Aspartofthemodernization of the EDSA Kamuning Busway Station, the new footbridge features a wider walkway and platform; displays showing the fare matrix, EDSA Busway site map, and wayfinder; two manlifts for wheelchair users; and two elevators.

Other accessibility features include tactile tiles, brighter lights, modern railings, and other necessary facilities such as benches and trash cans. **(PNA) BY RAYMOND CARL DELA CRUZ**

with an unapproved aftermarket version," it said.

Enforcers from the LTO and the Philippine National Police (PNP) – Highway Patrol Group (HPG) may apprehend motorists with vehicles equipped with non-compliant aftermarket parts.

"Motorcycle owners may be required to present valid documentation—such as a Certificate of Road Safety issued by manufacturers or assemblers—demonstrating that any modification or aftermarket replacement conforms with LTO regulations and applicable Philippine National Standards," it said.

The regulations that govern vehicle and parts compliance include DOTr Department Orders 2010-32 and 2023-008, and Republic Act 4136, otherwise known as the Land Transportation and Traffic Code.

"The LTO reminds all motorcycle owners that aftermarket parts and accessories must comply with manufacturer specifications and LTO modification policies. Proper documentation should be readily available at all times to avoid inconvenience during roadside inspections," it said.

The statement is in response to motorists' concerns about the LTO's nationwide crackdown against motorcycles fitted with modified mufflers, with the LTO Central Visayas (LTO-7) impounding 192 motorcycles from January to February 2026 alone.

Other unauthorized motor vehicle modifications include changing the color and alterations not aligned with the standard manufacturer's specifications. **(PNA) BY RAYMOND CARL DELA CRUZ**

'INSIDER THREAT PROGRAM': NSC RESPONSE TO ESPIONAGE

MANILA – A ranking National Security Council (NSC) official said the "Insider Threat Program" is the Philippine government's response to espionage and other similar threats.

"(The) Insider Threat Program of the NSC (was) organized way back in 2023. If we recall, in 2023 we came up with a National Security Policy and ang direction na po natin ngayon is (our direction now is) from internal security to external security," NSC Assistant Director General Cornelio Valencia Jr. said in an interview with PTV Thursday afternoon.

Valencia said that through this measure, the NSC strengthened its capabilities against external threats, including espionage.

He also said counterintelligence operations fall under the purview of the "Insider Threat Program".

"The 'Insider Threat Program' is not only about people; it is also about hardening our systems from cyberattacks, hardening our procedures of how you handle sensitive information. It is also about hardening the organization itself. In communications, we have improved a lot since 2023 and that is part of the 'Insider (Threat) Program'," he added.

Valencia said the "Insider Threat Program" identifies problems in espionage.

"It is (also) an inter-agency program, and it is for protecting our time-sensitive data and information about our operations, and about our national interests," he said. "(And) when we find a threat, they also cooperate with us to provide us the details, the necessary things to be able to lead us and destroy the ring, so to speak, and to find other linkages. So, these

are the roles of the other agencies."

He added that the NSC has been coordinating with other agencies and telling them about espionage and other similar threats.

"More than the security sector, we have to protect our diplomatic information, economic information. They have to know the risk, and they have to establish their own systems," Valencia said.

The NSC official did not give any more details on the "Insider Threat Program" for security reasons.

The government's "Insider Threat Program" surfaced after the NSC announced on March 4 that authorities had uncovered and dismantled an alleged China-linked espionage ring and foreign-directed malign activities.

At least three persons were reported arrested and being questioned.

Regarding these individuals, Valencia said one is employed at the Department of National Defense, another serves in the Philippine Navy (PN), while the third is closely associated with a Philippine Coast Guard officer who has access to "important or sensitive information."

Information acquired by these suspects includes the list of PN personnel, data of those engaged in West Philippine Sea operations, and operational details like the timing and schedule of rotation and resupply missions in Philippine outposts in the vital waterway.

According to the NSC official, these findings were established through Philippine intelligence operations.

Valencia said the three immediately confessed upon arrest and questioning.

"As of now, we cannot disclose the names and locations of the three

PNP EXPANDS QUALITY HEALTHCARE FOR PERSONNEL, DEPENDENTS

MANILA – The Philippine National Police (PNP) has strengthened its commitment to further improve the welfare of its personnel after formalizing a healthcare partnership with the Cardinal Santos Medical Center (CSMC).

The memorandum of agreement (MOA) was signed by Lt. Gen. Bernard Banac, PNP Deputy Chief for Administration, and CSMC president and CEO Raul Pagdanganan at the PNP Officers' Star Lounge in Camp Crame on Thursday.

The agreement improves access to medical services for PNP personnel, retirees, and qualified dependents. It provides diagnostic and treatment benefits with corresponding discounts.

It also includes a PHP1,000,000 credit line for Wounded in Police Operation beneficiaries and for reimbursement claims.

This ensures timely medical assistance for police personnel who sustain injuries in the line of duty while serving the public.

In a statement on Friday, PNP chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said the tie-up aims to improve access to quality medical services for police officers and their families, boosting their morale as they often face dangerous and stressful situations in the line of duty.

This is in line with the directive of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. and Interior Secretary

apprehended Filipinos for national security and their safety," he added.

The NSC official said it is up to their legal department to determine what possible cases can be filed against the three. **(PNA) BY PRIAM NEPOMUCENO**

Jonvic Remulla to strengthen programs that support the welfare, health, and morale of uniformed personnel.

"Our goal is to bring quality health and medical services closer to as many of our personnel, not only in Metro Manila but most importantly those who are in the provinces," he said. In addition to the existing partnerships with reputable hospitals in Metro Manila and other parts of the country, the PNP chief said the partnership with CSMC further boosts the morale and welfare of the PNP personnel.

"Our personnel are in charge of the safety of the Filipino people, it is but logical and necessary to ensure that they are also taken care of, and I, as the Chief PNP, commit to that," he said. "This partnership with Cardinal Santos Medical Center is a step toward ensuring that our personnel and their families have access to quality healthcare." **(PNA)**

BY CHRISTOPHER LLOYD CALIWAN

TESDA TO ROLL OUT INITIATIVES TO EMPOWER MORE WOMEN

MANILA – In line with the observance of Women's Month, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) has lined up activities aimed to benefit women.

Among these is the start-up hub inside the TESDA Complex in Bicutan, Taguig, from March 9 to 31, that will "showcase the products of micro entrepreneurs who are graduates of technical vocational education and training," TESDA Public Information Office Director Floramel Joy Songsong told the Philippine News Agency in an interview on

ELECTRIC LOVE BUSES TO OFFER FREE RIDES IN METRO MANILA

MANILA – Commuters in Metro Manila will enjoy free rides aboard electric buses by the end of April or early May as part of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s Love Bus program.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chair Don Artes signed a partnership with Global Electric Transport (GET) Philippines on Tuesday for the Electric Love Bus program, according to a news release.

The program is part of the Marcos administration's efforts to alleviate the burdens of daily commuters, particularly in metropolitan areas. Corporate sponsors will help sustain costs and expand free services to other cities in Metro Manila. "Through this partnership, we are introducing fully electric buses that are cleaner, quieter and more modern. These buses will help reduce pollution, ease congestion along key routes and provide a more comfortable

riding experience for passengers," Artes said during the ceremonial signing at the MMDA headquarters in Pasig.

Under the partnership, the MMDA will manage the Love Bus routes, provide enforcement support, infrastructure and alignment with public service goals.

On the other hand, GET Philippines will be the operator and maintenance provider for the 10 units.

Each bus is capable of carrying 30 passengers and will make an average of five to six trips per day from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. or 10 p.m., depending on passenger demand along select routes in Pasig City, Quezon City and Mandaluyong City.

As approved by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, the eastbound route will pass along Robinsons Galleria, Estancia Mall, MMDA, Arcovia, Opus Mall, Arcovia Mall and Eastwood City.

On the other hand, the westbound route will have stops at Eastwood City, C5-Eastwood footbridge, C5-Green Meadows footbridge, C5-Green Meadows gate, Tiendesitas, C5-Julia Vargas Avenue, MMDA, Estancia Mall and Robinsons Galleria.

Last year, Marcos launched the program, providing free rides for the entire September using a fleet of 20 electric buses in Metro Manila.

Pilot runs for the program were also held last year in Cebu City and Davao City. **(PNA) BY RAYMOND CARL DELA CRUZ**

and provincial offices as well as TTIs," Songsong said. **(PNA) BY MA. CRISTINA ARAYATA**

ILOCOS NORTE EQUIPS CLOSE TO 400 SCHOOLS WITH INTERACTIVE, SMART TVS

LAOAG CITY – The provincial government of Ilocos Norte continues to empower classrooms with digital technology, distributing at least 111 interactive television and smart TVs to elementary and secondary schools across the province, an official announced Thursday.

Maria Deleilah Felipe Adriatico said the initial distribution occurred at the Capitol session hall, adding that a total of 382 public schools in the province will receive the digital tools to aid in the teaching and learning process.

"The other units are expected to arrive on March 28 and we hope to complete the distribution by then," Adriatico told the Philippine News Agency. The initiative, worth PHP74.6 million from the provincial government's Special Education Fund, aims to equip schools with

modern technology that supports more engaging, interactive and meaningful classroom experiences.

"With these resources, our teachers are further empowered to deliver innovative instruction while our learners gain greater access to dynamic and technology-enabled education," Schools Division Superintendent Renato Balderas Jr. said in a statement.

Gov. Cecilia Araneta-Marcos enjoined teachers and students to take good care of the equipment to boost digital learning.

In previous years, the provincial government has distributed hundreds of computers and books to support the establishment of 21st-century classrooms and to uplift public education through boosting reading and digital literacy among Ilocano learners. **(PNA) BY LEILANIE ADRIANO**

DRILLS DEVELOP 'MUSCLE MEMORY' ON PROPER RESPONSE DURING QUAKES

ILOILO CITY – The Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (RDRRMC) is looking forward to the active participation of local government units and other government agencies and stakeholders in the national simultaneous earthquake drill (NSED) on March 12.

Memorandum Order 16 urged the temporary interruption of schools, offices, and other local activities to give way for the scheduled conduct of the first quarter NSED.

Civil Defense Operations Section chief Melissa Baniyas, in an interview on Thursday, said Western Visayas is, so far, very

compliant and very active in the conduct of NSED, especially schools that are required by the Department of Education.

"We teach them to develop muscle memory on what to do in case of earthquakes," she said.

She said they already saw the impact of the regular drills, citing the reaction of students evacuating school buildings and proceeding to a safer area during the magnitude 4.8 earthquake on Monday.

With the increased awareness, she said, they are already receiving a lot of requests for evaluators and technical assistance.

The regional ceremonial launch of the March

ILOCOS NORTE SEEKS ENERGY-SAVING MEASURES AS POWER RATE HIKE LOOMS

LAOAG CITY – Local residents in this "renewable energy capital" are urged to help conserve energy as ongoing tensions in the Middle East drive oil price volatility, officials said Thursday.

Ilocos Norte Electric Cooperative (INEC) General Manager Cipriano Martinez III warned consumers of an expected double-digit increase in power rates this month due to shipping disruptions and higher insurance premiums.

"We urge our member-consumer-owners to make the necessary adjustments in our use of electricity as we expect a surge to double digits of our electricity rates in our household," Martinez said in a media interview at the INEC main branch in Dingras town.

Based on simulations of the effects of crude oil price increases, Martinez said the February 2026 power rate of PHP9.95 per kilowatt-hour in the province will likely rise

to PHP11.30 in the next billing.

A province-wide energy conservation campaign is ongoing to help mitigate the impact.

"In our own little way, let's conserve electricity. If this stays longer, it will affect us more," Martinez said, expressing hope that the conflict will end and crude oil prices will stabilize.

In a separate interview, Gov. Cecilia Araneta-Marcos said the provincial government is considering daylight-saving measures to conserve energy in government offices. She also noted the continuing implementation of a fuel subsidy program for tricycle and jeepney drivers to cushion the impact of oil price hikes.

"We are going to try as much as possible to help out affected sectors, particularly our public transport groups," Araneta-Marcos said at the Laoag City Centennial Arena. **(PNA) BY LEILANIE ADRIANO**

PHILHEALTH EXPANDS YAKAP CLINIC TO MORE PARTNERS IN MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY – The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) is further expanding the Yaman ng Kalusugan Program (YAKAP) by partnering with additional service providers, notably more privately owned clinics in Misamis Occidental. On Wednesday, PhilHealth Northern Mindanao vice

12 NSED will be in the province of Aklan at 3:30 p.m.

The scenario will focus on the conduct of evacuation during earthquakes with an incidence of fire. **(PNA) BY PERLA LENA**

president Delio Aseron II joined the launching of another YAKAP-partner clinic at Misamis University (MU) in Ozamiz City.

With the YAKAP accreditation, the campus clinic will not only offer free primary care services to its students, teachers and university personnel but also serve community stakeholders.

"We already have 39 clinics - 14 are privately owned, and 25 come from government facilities," Aseron said.

Aseron Cabang, officer-in-charge of PhilHealth's Local Health Insurance Office in Ozamiz City, said all health centers in the

ARTA ROLLS OUT ALBAY'S FIRST AI-POWERED COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

LEGAZPI CITY – The Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA) has launched its Electronic Complaint Management System (eCMS) in Legazpi City during the "Serbisyong Walang Red Tape sa Bagong Pilipinas 2026" town hall meeting on Thursday, making the city the first in Albay to adopt the digital platform.

The eCMS is created to let citizens and business owners submit inquiries and complaints about government services via an online platform. It helps authorities monitor, track and resolve issues more effectively, while also encouraging transparency and accountability in public service.

The system is supported by the TALA (Transparency, Accountability, and Law in Action) app, allowing the public to submit concerns and track the status of their complaints through digital channels in real time.

Secretary Ernesto V. Perez, ARTA director general, said digital platforms such as eCMS and TALA are part of the government's broader effort to streamline procedures and enhance service delivery.

"The best way to do this is to make government services more streamlined and digitalized," Perez said, citing the implementation of Republic Act 11032 or the

province's 14 municipalities and three cities have been accredited under YAKAP. He stated that all clinics and facilities accredited under the program can offer free consultations and laboratory tests, along with an annual medicine allowance of up to PHP20,000 for all members.

MU president Dr. Karen Belina De Leon said the university can improve healthcare access for students, faculty and staff by reaffirming its commitment to their well-being. **(PNA) BY NEF LUCZON**

Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act.

"Long queues are not allowed. Let us remove unnecessary requirements," he added. Perez also recognized Legazpi City for leading reforms in digital governance, noting that among the 18 local government units in Albay, the city is currently the only one compliant with the electronic Business One-Stop Shop (eBOSS) requirement.

Enhanced public service delivery Legazpi City Mayor Hisham Ismail supported the initiative, highlighting digital reforms' role in improving governance and public services.

"Reforms like eCMS and TALA are now important tools. They signal a new governance where trust is heard through transparency and time is respected," Ismail said. He said the initiatives support the city's efforts to improve institutional efficiency and make doing business easier for entrepreneurs.

"First, strengthen institutional efficiency. Second, simplify doing business for entrepreneurs. Third, ensure frontline offices, from the city to barangays, keep the system central to decisions," he said.

During the launch, ARTA Senior Developer Engr. Jericho Labonete gave a system walkthrough and live demo of the eCMS to attendees, aiming to help those with questions and complaints about government services.

TALA is a 24-hour virtual assistant that can communicate in 17 dialects and receive complaints.

The town hall meeting gathered officials, business leaders and service providers to discuss reducing delays and promoting transparent and citizen-focused governance. **(With A Report From Ella Mariz Miña, Pna Intern) BY CONNIE CALIPAY**

PSEI RECOVERS AS PESO SLIPS ANEW VS. US DOLLAR

MANILA – The Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) recovered Thursday despite volatility from the Middle East situation, while the peso weakened for the sixth straight trading session against the greenback.

The benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange index rose 1.15 percent to 6,380.53 points, while the broader PSE All Shares Index gained 1.16 percent to 3,525.99.

All sectoral indices advanced, led by Mining and Oil, up 1.92 percent. Services followed, rising 1.87 percent, along with Industrial, 1.32 percent; Financials, 0.91 percent; Property, 0.71 percent; and Holding Firms, 0.43 percent.

Trading volume reached 1.91 billion shares worth PHP6.3 billion. Advancers outnumbered decliners, 125 to 72, while 59 shares were unchanged.

Meanwhile, the peso weakened further, closing at 58.63 against the U.S. dollar from 58.57 on

Wednesday. It opened stronger at 58.40 from the previous session's 58.50, strengthened to 58.33 during the day, but later slipped to 58.63. The day's average stood at 58.46.

Foreign exchange volume reached USD1.57 billion, down from USD1.77 billion in the previous session.

Michael Ricafort, chief economist at Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation, said another factor in Thursday's forex trading was the acceleration of domestic inflation to 2.4 percent in February 2026 from 2 percent in January. Despite the uptick, Ricafort noted the rate remains within the government's 2-4 percent target band for the year.

He added that the ongoing Middle East conflict could further accelerate domestic inflation and inflation expectations due to rising oil prices, which may push up the cost of other commodities. **(PNA) BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

DOF SECURES FUNDING FOR MRT-3 UPGRADE

MANILA – The Department of Finance (DOF) has secured the funding for the rehabilitation of the Metro Rail Transit Line 3 (MRT-3).

The DOF said the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is providing the third tranche loan for the project through a PHP8.2 billion financing agreement.

The amount will be used to restore the train system to its original condition, improve its performance, and prepare it for future expansion by repairing and upgrading key parts.

"For the Filipinos, this means three important things: First, it means fewer delays. Second, it means shorter waiting times. Third, it means a more comfortable and predictable ride to work, to school, and back home to family," Finance Secretary Frederick Go said in his remarks during the signing

ceremony of the financing agreement on Tuesday.

The DOF said all parts of the system will be repaired, renewed, or upgraded, including tracks, signals, power, overhead lines, communications, and station and maintenance equipment.

This also involves the transition to four-car trains to create space for 394 more passengers per train, reducing waiting time, especially during peak hours.

For his part, JICA Chief Representative Baba Takashi said the signing of the financing agreement "is a testament to the stakes of our vital partnership and shared commitment to delivering safe, efficient, and high-quality infrastructure transportation for the people of the Philippines." **(PNA) BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**



BIZ EXECS BULLISH ON PH ECON RECOVERY DUE TO HIKE IN INFRA SPENDING

MANILA – The government's increased infrastructure investments has improved investors' appetite towards the Philippines, officials of various firms said Wednesday, underscoring chances of economic recovery this year.

In a briefing at the 14th PropertyGuru Philippines Property Awards in Makati City, Japan Balboa, Robinsons Offices Vice President and Head of Corporate Lease, said they "remain bullish and confident" on the growth of the office space sector.

He said that while challenges like U.S. policies and competition remain high, "at the end of the day, we are very encouraged with how the IT-BPM (information technology-business process management) sector has grown through the years."

He said the sector is forecast to have around 2 million employees by the end of this year, which means high demand for office spaces.

He said there are some companies who opted for office spaces for seasonal demand.

Some choose flexible

office spaces as a strategy for their operations, as well as availing of office spaces to test domestic operations.

He said "flexible workspace will be a permanent strategy" among business process outsourcing (BPO) players.

"It see that as a permanent demand of the market, but at the same time, it's also complementary," he said. He said there is no certainty whether the target to have 2 million BPO employees this year could be achieved but for Robinsons, they would focus on what they can control.

"We will control the quality of our projects, taking care of our clients, and continue to promote the Philippines as a viable destination," he said.

For Jan Formalejo, Vice President for Project Delivery of Aboitiz Economic Estates, he said the Philippines is on the right track in terms of really promoting the country as an investment destination by ensuring the businesses are given incentives.

He said the law that allows the 99-year lease of property for foreign investors is a big plus that encourage more foreign

UBS PROJECTS 5% GDP GROWTH FOR PH IN 2026

MANILA – UBS Philippines expects domestic growth to pick up in the first half of 2026, supporting a 5-percent gross domestic

investments.

"This is really encouraging regional players to (the) Philippines. But on top of that, we take pride in terms of the infrastructure that we provide, not only within the economic states, but on how government is really connecting all these economic corridors," he said.

Ambassador Chantal Wong, former U.S. Executive Director to the Asian Development Bank and founder of CW Consultants, said the Philippines became the largest borrower among ADB members in recent years because of its goal to increase infrastructure spending.

"Once these things come online, I would say in the economic corridors, it would be a game changer. And it is going to be opening up huge investment opportunities for, you know, in these corridors," she said. **(PNA) BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

product (GDP) this year.

In a statement Wednesday, the local office of the Swiss investment bank said it believes "growth is near its trough."

"And we expect quarterly sequential momentum to strengthen to 1.4 percent over the next two quarters, and GDP growth to be 5 percent in 2026," it said.

Its projection is at the lower end of the government's 5-6 percent target.

In 2025, domestic output slowed in the second half due mainly to the flood control corruption controversy, while full-year growth was 4.4 percent.

Economic managers said measures are in place to address the issues and restore investor confidence.

UBS noted optimism from private investments, which "were more resilient than expected."

"Private construction, which accounts for roughly 40 percent of construction value-added, expanded 18 percent year-on-year,

BTR RAISES P30-B FROM T-BOND AUCTION

MANILA – The government raised PHP30 billion from a reissued Treasury

supported by gradually declining inventories," it said.

It also cited a 22.8-percent rise in goods exports in Q4 2025, up from 11.6 percent in Q3, due to "stronger electronics shipments—over half of the goods export basket, mostly in assembly, packaging, and testing."

Services exports rose 2.5 percent from 1.3 percent in Q3, driven in part by the business process outsourcing (BPO) sector, particularly information technology and professional services.

Public investment is projected to post "a small uptick" in the first three months of the year, "with spending returning to Q2 2025 levels by Q4 2026," UBS said. **(PNA) BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

bond (T-bond) auction on Tuesday.

The bond, with a remaining term of four years and 10 months, fetched an average rate of 5.717 percent, higher than the 5.557 percent at the previous five-year T-bond auction on Feb. 3.

"The five-year Treasury bond average auction yields was slightly higher amid some market hesitancy on longer-end tenors," Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. chief economist Michael Ricafort said.

The auction was 1.6 times oversubscribed, with total tenders reaching PHP47.8 billion.

With the full award, the Auction Committee met the PHP30 billion program, bringing the series' outstanding volume to PHP215 billion. **(PNA) BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**



SUPER SPIKERS BEAT THUNDERBELLES TO BOOST QUALIFYING ROUND BID

MANILA – Cignal pulled off a 25-18, 25-23, 25-22 victory over ZUS Coffee to fortify its bid for a Qualifying Round berth in the Premier Volleyball League (PVL) All-Filipino Conference at the FilOil Center in San Juan on Thursday.

The Super Spikers relied on Vanessa Gandler, Maria Angelica Cayuna, and Roselyn Doria-Aquino to fend off the gritty Thunderbelles after one hour and 26 minutes.

Gandler led with 20 points and 13 excellent receptions as Cignal improved to 5-2 and stayed on track for a Qualifying Round spot, reserved for the top four teams after the single-round eliminations.

Cayuna recorded 13 excellent sets and four points, while Aquino added 11.

Erika Santos scored nine points, followed by Jacqueline Acuna with eight, while Ishie Lalongsip

had five points, along with 10 excellent digs and six receptions.

Chinnie Arroyo and Thea Gagate scored 11 points each for ZUS Coffee, which slid to 1-6 but is still in contention for the Play-In stage.

Jovelyn Gonzaga scored

eight points, while Cess Robles and Riza Nogales contributed seven and six points, respectively.

Cignal will take a short break before facing Capital1 on March 14 and Creamline on March 21. **(PNA) BY JEAN MALANUM**



POWER. Roselyn Doria-Aquino of Cignal scores against Thea Gagate of ZUS Coffee in the Premier Volleyball League All-Filipino Conference at the Playtime FilOil Center in San Juan on Thursday (March 5, 2026). The Cignal Super Spikers won, 25-18, 25-23, 25-22. (PVL photo)

PH ATHLETES URGED TO LIMIT TRAVELS AMID MIDEAST TENSIONS

MANILA – As the situation continues to worsen in the Middle East, the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) called on all the national teams to limit their travels, especially in countries affected by the ongoing tensions.

In an advisory on Wednesday, PSC chairman Pato Gregorio urged the national athletes not to make the flight to the Middle East if there are no important matters to attend to in the region.

"In view of the escalating conflict in the Middle East and its potential impact on international air routes and transportation corridors, the Philippine Sports Commission strongly discourages national teams, athletes, and sports personnel from

undertaking non-essential travel abroad at this time," Gregorio said.

He cited some cases of national athletes who found themselves stuck either in the Middle East or on the road to the said region, as many flights were canceled due to the heated encounters, highlighted by an attack by American and Israeli military forces in Iran.

One situation was the case of the Philippine chess team at the Russian Chess Crown Standard A Tournament in Moscow. Led by bronze medalist Mark Bacojo, who got his first norm in the road to being a grandmaster in the process, the squad got stuck in the Russian capital after its connecting flight back home from Abu Dhabi

was canceled due to the closure of the United Arab Emirates' airspace.

The PSC saved the day, and the woodpushers booked a flight back to the Philippines on Tuesday.

"We extend our profound appreciation to PSC Chairman Hon. John Patrick C. Gregorio for his leadership and prompt attention to the matter. Our heartfelt thanks as well to Commissioner-in-Charge Hon. Edward L. Hayco for closely monitoring the situation and ensuring that solutions were acted upon without delay, together with Ma'am Anna Faye Lee, Executive Assistant, for her invaluable assistance in facilitating the reroute arrangements and closely coordinating the necessary travel adjustments. We

PH SUFFERS 0-3 LOSS TO S. KOREA IN AFC WOMEN'S ASIAN CUP

MANILA – The Philippines absorbed a 0-3 loss to South Korea in the 2026 Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Women's Asian Cup at the Cbus Super Stadium in Gold Coast, Australia on Thursday.

The Taeguk Ladies secured their second straight win to take the lead in Group A, while the Filipinas suffered their second consecutive defeat.

"They're a classy side. They got world-class players," Filipinas coach Mark Torcaso said.

The Philippines must beat Iran in its next game to qualify as one of the two best third-ranked squads in the group stage.

"And I just think there's no excuse that we did not turn around on the fly. It's no excuse that we're playing against one of the best teams in the competition," said Torcaso.

The first goal came from Jeon Yu-gyeong after she broke through the defense and volleyed over goalkeeper Olivia McDaniel's head.

Jeon's shot went into the bottom right corner of the net for her first international goal in her third cap.

"We made adjustments to make sure that we will score goals in the first half," said Korean coach Shin Sang-woo on the Taeguk Ladies, which secured the

top spot in the knockout stage.

Three minutes later, Park saw her feed Choo down the left and take the return pass on the edge of the area before curling a gorgeous finish into the top right for her maiden goal as well on her fourth Korea Republic appearance.

A third Korean goal was not counted when Jeon Yu-Gyeong's attempt was ruled an offside in the 20th. The Korean, however, rebounded in the second half when Kim Shin-ji unloaded a corner kick towards Mun Eun-ju in the

middle of the penalty box. Kim then slammed in her fifth international goal from a meter out in the 56th.

Filipina Carleigh Frilles provided a silver lining in terms of offense for her squad when she came up with a left-footed volley in the 45th minute. But goalie Kim Min-jung quickly saved it.

The Filipinas played without one of their key players, Jacklyn Sawicki, who sustained a knocked (bruised) knee injury during training. **(PNA) BY JEAN MALANUM**



DEFEAT. Filipina Sara Eggesvik (left) goes against Korean Lee Minhwa in the Asian Football Confederation Women's Asian Cup at the Cbus Super Stadium in Queensland, Australia on Thursday (March 5, 2026). Korea won, 3-0. (Photo courtesy of AFC)

BENILDE, ARELLANO PREVAIL IN NCAA WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

MANILA – The College of St. Benilde (CSB) and Arellano University scored similar wins in the NCAA Season 101 women's volleyball tournament at the Emilio Aguinaldo College gym in Manila on Tuesday.

Zamantha Nolasco scored 28 points built on 18 attacks, eight blocks, and two aces as CSB outlasted San Sebastian College - Recoletos, 25-22, 23-25, 23-25, 25-13, 15-5.

Clydel Mae Catarig contributed 20 points, followed by Shekaina Redge Lleses (15), Camila Amor Bartolome (13), and Cristy Ondangan (10) as skipper Chenae Basarte delivered 26 excellent sets for the Lady Blazers, who

welfare of our athletes remain our highest priority," Gregorio's memo read. **(PNA) BY IVAN STEWART SALDAJENO**

improved to an 8-3 record in Group A.

Juna May Gonzales finished with 27 points for the Lady Stags, who slipped to 5-7.

Meanwhile, Arellano rallied past San Beda University, 22-25, 19-25, 26-24, 25-17, 15-12, to keep the third spot in Group B with a 5-6 card.

Samantha Gabrielle Tiratira scored 15 points, including seven blocks. Cassey Leona Florida and Marianne Lei Angelique Padillon chipped in 14 points each, while Kheisha Alexa Abitria had 11 points for the Lady Chiefs.

Angel Mae Habacon had 21 points, 10 receptions, and seven digs, while Janelle Bachar and Jermaine Ann Joniega added 19 and 12 points, respectively, for the Lady Red Spikers, who remained in second place at 9-3. **(PNA) BY JEAN MALANUM**