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DPWH, JICA-LED IMUS RETARDING BASIN EASES FLOODING WOES IN CAVITE

IMUS CITY, Cavite (PIA) — Marked by land conversion and flooding due to heavy rains, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) have formally turned over the Retarding Basin project to the City of Imus.

During the turnover ceremony of the Imus Retarding Basin on September 1, Mayor Alex Advincula expressed his optimism that the project will lessen rain-induced flooding especially during monsoon seasons.

“Napakalaking tulong nito [dahil] matagal na itong

project nina Sec. Jonvic [Remulla] at Sec. Vince [Dizon]. Ricefield kasi lahat dito. Ngayon, nagkaroon ng maraming subdivision,” Advincula said.

Over the years, Imus City saw expansive land conversions where rice fields were transformed into subdivisions and housing projects which slowly contributed to the increasing flooding especially in communities near rivers.

“Dahil sa mga subdivision, mabilis nang bumaba ang tubig papuntang along kaya nagkaroon ng retarding basin na ito na napakalaking tulong to hold the water,” the mayor

added.

Designed to solve flooding problems in the province, Dizon noted that the Imus Retarding Basin will hold excess water and prevent rivers from overflowing.

“Dahil nga ‘yung tubig sa main river, sa Imus River, ay mayroon nang pinupuntahan at hindi na nag-o-overflow sa mga kalye, sa mga bahay, sa mga komunidad. Dito na iimbak at wala nang halo na baha sa areas ng Imus na dati ay [umaabot] hanggang ‘dibdib,’ the Public Works and Highways secretary said.

Interior and Local Government Secretary Remulla, who, in his tenure

as Cavite governor saw the retarding basin project at its early stages, expressed his hopes that the project can be replicated in other parts of the country.

“This was technology perfected in Japan, and the Japanese government generously provided us with. Kung magagawa lang natin sa buong Pilipinas ito, sa lahat ng mga grabeng binabaha, mawawala ang baha dito sa Pilipinas. Pero kailangang magkaisa tayo mula local hanggang national,” he said.

Funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the 35-hectare Imus Retarding Basin expansion includes

an 84-meter overflow dike whose surrounding dike stands at an average of 1.3 kilometers, and a 1.1-kilometer separating dike. It aims to make flood-prone areas in the province more resilient during the rainy season.

It can hold up to 1.12 million cubic meters of rainwater, or equivalent to 448 Olympic-size swimming pools. (PB-PIA CALABARZON) **BY PATRICIA BERMUDEZ**

Fire Senior Superintendent Nonilon Macasadia II, DCS, Provincial Fire Marshal, underscored the fire bureau's commitment to work closely with Carmona LGU in ensuring public safety.

“By enabling swift response, the app strengthens multi-agency collaboration and response, ensuring a safer and more responsive environment for everyone. The BFP Cavite commends the City Government of Carmona for this forward-thinking project and reiterates its strong commitment to working hand-in-hand with the local government to serve and protect the community.”

The LGU will soon roll out a series of information drives, orientations, and other activities to help residents maximize the application. (PB-PIA CALABARZON) **BY PATRICIA BERMUDEZ**

CAVITE CITY HEALTH OFFICIALS SOUND ALARM ON RISING LEPTOSPIROSIS CASES



CAVITE CITY, Cavite (PIA) — Health officials in Cavite City are warning the public against entering floodwaters which pose a risk of contracting leptospirosis.

At an emergency meeting with the Liga Ng Mga Barangay last September 2, Dr. Jeffrey dela Rosa,

head of the City Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit (CESU), sounded the alarm about the rising leptospirosis cases in the city. In a statement, CESU Cavite City advised residents to refrain from getting into floodwater to prevent contracting the virus.

As of September 1, the city has reported eight (8) leptospirosis cases, with three (3) currently being treated in local hospitals and one (1) in recovery. Meanwhile, four (4) have already died due to complications.

The Department of Health – Center for Health Development (DOH CHD) CALABARZON has also advised the public against bathing or playing in floodwaters to avoid risk exposure to leptospirosis. In cases where exposure and getting

submerged in floodwater will become unavoidable, the DOH advises consultation at health facilities within 24 to 48 hours. Although a known antibiotic for preventing and treating mild leptospirosis, the DOH reminds that patients must first consult with a doctor for proper dosage and drug administration. (PB-PIA CALABARZON, with reports from Cavite City Health Office Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit and DOH CHD CALABARZON) **BY PATRICIA BERMUDEZ**

CARMONA CITY'S 'SOS: BML COMMUNITY APP' MAKES REPORTING

CARMONA CITY, Cavite (PIA) — Reporting emergencies and incidents in Carmona City is expected to become faster and easier with the help of the local government unit's (LGU) own SOS: BML community app.

Launched last August 28, the Safety and Order Service: Bayan Muna Lagi (SOS:BML) Community App is a community safety and emergency reporting platform that gives residents direct and faster access to authorities and report incidents.

Mayor Dahlia Loyola said the application is part of their bid to incorporate technology into local governance, ensuring that “nobody is left behind”.

“We want our constituents to feel and see that their city government is accessible, that we are listening, and that we are ready to take action when it matters most.”

Through this application, Loyola said the public can report various incidents such as fire, crimes, accidents, and violence. Users can also report daily emergencies including those that involve senior citizens and Persons With Disabilities (PWD), solid waste, road obstruction, fallen posts and dangling telephone and electricity lines, noise complaints and more.

“We want this mobile application to become a working tool for our community na kokonekta sa tao at gobyerno para makatulong nang mas mabilis para makabuo ng mas ligtas at inklusibong lungsod.”

It also features daily updates on weather, traffic and even lost and found items.

The Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) lauded the city's initiative for creating a community app for reporting emergencies.

Fire Senior Superintendent Nonilon Macasadia II, DCS, Provincial Fire Marshal, underscored the fire bureau's commitment to work closely with Carmona LGU in ensuring public safety.

“By enabling swift response, the app strengthens multi-agency collaboration and response, ensuring a safer and more responsive environment for everyone. The BFP Cavite commends the City Government of Carmona for this forward-thinking project and reiterates its strong commitment to working hand-in-hand with the local government to serve and protect the community.”

The LGU will soon roll out a series of information drives, orientations, and other activities to help residents maximize the application. (PB-PIA CALABARZON) **BY PATRICIA BERMUDEZ**



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PROVINCIAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON SA KASO NG PAGLABAG SA ILIGAL NA DROGA, ARESTADO SA TANZA

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Arestado ang isang Provincial Level Most Wanted Person matapos isilbi ng mga operatiba ng Tanza Municipal Police Station, katuwang ang Cavite MARPSTA, ang warrant of arrest laban sa kanya dakong 6:10 PM noong September 2, 2026 sa Brgy. Bagtas, Tanza, Cavite.

Nakilala ni PLTCOL CHESTER NOEL R BORLONGAN, hepe ng Tanza MPS, ang akusado bilang si alyas "Henry" at residente ng Tanza, Cavite. Ang warrant of arrest ay para sa Violation of Section 11 of Republic Act No. 9165, na inisyu ng Regional Trial Court, Fourth Judicial Region, Branch 130, Trece

Martires City, Cavite, noong August 24, 2026, na may inirekomendang piyansa na ₱200,000.00.

Agad namang ipinaalam sa akusado ang kanyang mga karapatang konstitusyonal. Dinala ang akusado sa Tanza MPS para sa kaukulang dokumentasyon, habang ang warrant of arrest ay ibabalik sa court of origin para sa wastong disposisyon.

Ayon kay PCOL ARIEL R RED, Provincial Director, Cavite PPO, patuloy na paiigtingin ng Cavite Police ang kanilang manhunt operations laban sa mga wanted person upang matiyak na ang mga may kinakaharap na kaso ay mapanagot sa ilalim ng batas.

REGIONAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON SA KASONG ROBBERY, ARESTADO NG CARMONA PULIS

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite — Matagumpay na naaresto ng mga tauhan ng Carmona Component City Police Station, ang isang Regional Level Most Wanted Person sa isinagawang police operation bandang alas-5:25 ng hapon noong Setyembre 2, 2026 sa Barangay Bancal, Carmona City, Cavite.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL RENE JOY L MOSQUIZA, hepe ng Carmona CCPS, ang akusado na si alyas "Homer" at residente ng Carmona City, Cavite.

Batay sa ulat, nagsagawa ng operasyon ang mga warrant operatives, katuwang ang duty patroller ng Bancal Sector ng Carmona CCPS, na nagresulta sa kanyang pagkakaaresto.

Ang pag-aresto ay isinagawa sa bisa ng Alias Warrant of Arrest para sa kasong Robbery, na inisyu ng Regional Trial Court,

Branch 217, Quezon City, noong Nobyembre 19, 2008, na walang inirekomendang piyansa.

Matapos ang pag-aresto, ipinaalam sa akusado ang kalikasan at dahilan ng kanyang pagkakaaresto at ipinaunawa ang kanyang mga karapatang konstitusyonal alinsunod sa Republic Act No. 7438 at Anti-Torture Act, sa wikang nauunawaan niya.

Ang akusado ay kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng Carmona CCPS para sa kaukulang dokumentasyon at disposisyon, habang ang Warrant of Arrest ay ibabalik sa issuing court.

Ayon kay PCOL ARIEL R RED, Provincial Director ng Cavite Police Provincial Office, "Patuloy nating paiigtingin ang ating mga operasyon laban sa mga wanted persons upang matiyak na ang mga nagtatago sa batas ay mananagot sa kanilang mga isinampang kaso. Ang

NAIC POLICE NAB REGIONAL MOST WANTED PERSON FOR RAPE

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite

— A Regional Most Wanted Person was arrested by personnel of the Naic Municipal Police Station during a police operation conducted at about 4:05 in the afternoon of September 1, 2026, at Barangay Ibayo Silangan, Naic, Cavite.

The arrested person, identified as alias RONALD, was apprehended by Warrant Officers of Naic MPS under the supervision of PLTCOL LOUIE DC GONZAGA, Chief of Police, Naic MPS, by virtue of a Warrant of Arrest for Rape under Article 266-A, Paragraph 1 of the Revised Penal Code, in relation to Article 266-B of the same Code, as amended by Republic Act No. 11648.

The warrant was issued and signed by Hon. Ralph S. Arellano, Presiding Judge of the Regional Trial Court, Branch 132,

Naic, Cavite, dated January 30, 2024, with no recommended bail.

The arrested person was duly apprised of his constitutional rights and was brought to Naic MPS for proper documentation and appropriate disposition.

"The successful arrest of this Regional Most Wanted Person demonstrates our unwavering commitment to bring wanted individuals before the bar of justice. We will continue to intensify our manhunt operations and ensure that the rule of law prevails in Cavite," said PCOL ARIEL R RED, Provincial Director, Cavite Police Provincial Office.

The Cavite PPO remains steadfast in its mandate to locate and apprehend wanted persons and ensure that they face the appropriate legal proceedings for the offenses charged against them.

KAWIT PNP APPREHEND A REGIONAL LEVEL MOST WANTED PERSON

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, City of Imus, Cavite

— A Regional Level Most Wanted Person was apprehended by the personnel of Kawit Municipal Police Station during a focused law enforcement operation in Kawit, Cavite on September 1, 2026.

PLTCOL KRISTINE V PARAS, Acting Chief of Police of Kawit Municipal Police Station identified the accused as alias JB, 28 and presently residing in General Mariano Alvarez, Cavite.

The accused was apprehended by a virtue of a Warrant of Arrest issued and signed by the Presiding Judge of the Regional Trial Court,

bawat warrant of arrest na naipatutupad ay hakbang tungo sa pagpapanatili ng seguridad at paghahatid ng hustisya sa ating komunidad."

Branch 109, Carmona, Cavite, dated September 22, 2023. The warrant was issued for the case of Rape under Article 266-A (1), in relation to Article 266-B, Paragraph 2 of the Revised Penal Code, as amended by Republic Act No. 11648 with no bail recommended. Following his arrest, he was placed under the custody of the Kawit Municipal Police Station for proper documentation and processing. The Warrant of Arrest will thereafter be returned to the Court of Origin for appropriate legal disposition.

PCOL ARIEL R RED, Provincial Director commended the operating teams for their persistence and coordination in locating wanted persons, particularly those who have remained at large despite the issuance of warrants by the courts.

"Every warrant served is a step toward

CAVITE POLICE NAB ALLEGED LOOSE FIREARM HOLDER AMID SPECIAL ELECTION GUN BAN

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite

— A police operation led by the Cavite Police Provincial Office resulted in the arrest of one (1) individual identified as alias "Emman" for violation of Republic Act No. 10591, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Law on Firearms and Ammunition, and violation of the Omnibus Election Code Gun Ban in relation to the Special Election in Dasmariñas City, Cavite.

At about 4:30 in the afternoon of September 1, 2026, at Fatima Proper Road, Barangay Fatima 1, Dasmariñas City, Cavite, personnel of the Provincial Intelligence Unit (PIU), as the lead unit, under the direct supervision of PMAJ SANDIE D. CAPARROSO, together with personnel of the Dasmariñas City Police Station, conducted a police operation against loose firearms through a buy-bust operation.

The operation resulted in the arrest of alias "Emman," presently residing in Barangay Molino 4, Bacoor City, Cavite. Recovered from his possession were one (1) unit LLAMA GABILONDOY CIA VICTORIA ESPAÑA, LLAMA MAX-I 45 L/F, caliber .45 pistol, with an inserted magazine loaded with two (2) pieces of live ammunition; one (1) extra magazine loaded with two (2) pieces of live ammunition; one (1) pistol holster; one (1) sling bag containing one (1) pistol holster,

accountability. We will continue to strengthen our coordination and pursue wanted individuals through lawful and well-coordinated operations. At the same time, we remain committed to observing due process and ensuring that every person arrested is treated with dignity and in accordance with the law," PCOL Red said.

one (1) wallet, two (2) Android cellular phones, and four (4) assorted identification cards; one (1) genuine Php1,000.00 bill used as buy-bust money, incorporated with twenty-nine (29) pieces of Php1,000.00 boodle money; and one (1) Yamaha motorcycle, blue and black in color.

The arrested suspect will be turned over to the Dasmariñas Custodial Facility for proper disposition. Meanwhile, pertinent documents are being prepared for the filing of appropriate charges through inquest proceedings before the Office of the City Prosecutor of Dasmariñas City, Cavite.

PCOL ARIEL R RED, Provincial Director of Cavite PPO, commended the operating personnel for their vigilance and effective law enforcement efforts, emphasizing that the police will remain relentless in preventing the proliferation of loose firearms, particularly during the implementation of the election gun ban.

"The Cavite Police Provincial Office remains committed to enforcing our firearms laws and the election gun ban without fear or favor. We will continue to intensify our operations against individuals who unlawfully possess or carry firearms, especially during this critical period. Our objective is clear: to help ensure a safe, peaceful, and orderly special election in Dasmariñas City. Let this operation serve as a warning that violations of the law will not be tolerated," PCOL RED said.

The Cavite PPO reiterates its call for the public to remain vigilant and immediately report any information regarding illegal possession, carrying, or selling of firearms to the nearest police station or through official police channels.

WeLoveU HOLDS 941st WORLDWIDE BLOOD DRIVE IN DASMARINAS THE BLOOD DRIVE HELPS SAVE THE LIVES OF THOSE IN NEED OF BLOOD AND PROMOTES A CULTURE OF VOLUNTARY, NON-REMUNERATED BLOOD DONATION

The International WeLoveU Foundation (Chairwoman Zhang Gil-jah, hereinafter referred to as WeLoveU), a global welfare organization, held the 941st Worldwide Blood Drive at Emilio Aguinaldo College Medical Center-Cavite (EACMC-C) in Dasmariñas, Cavite, on August 31. Through this blood drive, WeLoveU has helped people who need blood for surgery, childbirth, cancer treatment, and other types of medical care, contributing to the spread of a culture of voluntary non-remunerated blood donation. The Worldwide Blood Drive is actively being carried out in the Philippines and many other countries, including the Republic of Korea, the United States, Peru, Colombia, Kenya, and Australia.

A representative from WeLoveU said, "The Worldwide Blood Drive is a life-sharing initiative that helps save people suffering from blood shortages, because blood can only be obtained through donation." He added, "To bring hope to our neighbors with the heart of a mother

who loves her family, our members and citizens from Cavite and Laguna have come together without hesitation. We hope many people will be able to return to their happy everyday lives."

From the morning, a steady stream of people arrived at EAC Medical Center-Cavite to donate blood. They underwent a pre-donation health screening, including blood pressure checks and blood tests. 68 out of approximately 200 participants successfully donated a total of 29,716 mL of blood. A single blood donation can help save up to three lives. Therefore, their donations could help give the gift of new life to 204 people. EAC Medical Center-Cavite helped ensure that the entire blood donation process was carried out safely, contributing to the success of the Worldwide Blood Drive. It also provided refreshments for every donor.

At the opening ceremony held before the blood drive began in earnest, Dasmariñas City Councilor Fernando Laudato expressed his gratitude to

the participants, saying, "I thank the International WeLoveU Foundation for conducting this meaningful act that gives life to those who are in need of blood." Dasmariñas City Bureau of Fire Protection SF03 John Bryan T. Afionuevo emphasized that blood is needed in various rescue situations happening in the community, and expressed his appreciation.

Juan Carlos De Jesus Faylona (20) said he was happy to take part in volunteer work for his neighbors. He smiled and added, "One person's blood donation can save the lives up to three people. So, I'm so excited and happy for being able to join this meaningful event through which I can practice a mother's love." John Edison Collado (30) pledged to volunteer again at future events, saying, "It's fulfilling to do something that benefits the community."

The Worldwide Blood Drive is a global life-saving movement that creates a virtuous cycle of sharing, where a small act of blood donation by one person spreads to two people,

then four, and beyond. Since its launch in Korea in 2004, the blood drive has attracted over 151,000 participants in 67 countries, approximately 67,000 of whom have successfully donated blood (as of June 2026). The blood drive has potentially saved more than 200,000 lives. It has also been held regularly across the country since 2012. In grateful recognition of its outstanding contributions, WeLoveU has received certificates of recognition from Emilio Aguinaldo College Medical Center - Cavite.

In addition to blood donation, WeLoveU actively carries out a wide range of welfare initiatives across the country. In June this year, WeLoveU repaired the typhoon-damaged school building at Biasong Elementary School in Talisay City, Cebu, and held an international cooperation seminar to discuss how to ensure sustainable education, based on the project. In August last year, WeLoveU renovated the restrooms at Camp Crame High School in Quezon City and conducted handwashing education to improve personal hygiene at Macabud Elementary School in Montalban, Rizal. This helped students lead healthier school lives.

WeLoveU's environmental welfare initiative called "Clean WORLD Movement," which aims to promote well-being by creating cleaner and more pleasant environments, has also been carried out in various locations across the country, including Seminary Road in Bahay Toro, Quezon City, and Tanza Marine Tree Park. In recognition of its dedicated efforts across a wide range of activities, WeLoveU has received certificates of recognition and appreciation from Secretary of Social Welfare and Development, Governors of Laguna and Oriental Mindoro, Member of the House of Representatives of the Philippines from Tarlac, Mayor of Quezon City, Director of the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) National Blood Services, and many others.

EDITORIAL

Mas mahigpit na parusa, mas ligtas na paaralan

Ang paghihigpit ng Department of Education sa mga parusa laban sa bullying ay isang mahalagang hakbang upang mapanatili ang kaligtasan sa mga paaralan. Sa ilalim ng bagong patakaran, maaaring patawan ng mas mabigat na kaparusahan ang mga mag-aaral na mapatutunayang sangkot sa malulubhang paglabag.

Narapat lamang na maging malinaw at makatarungan ang pagpapatupad nito upang matiyak na napoprotektahan ang mga biktima at nabibigyan ng pagkakataong magbago ang mga nagkasala.

Mahalaga rin ang pakikipagtulungan ng mga guro, magulang, at tagapayo sa paghubog ng wastong asal ng mga mag-aaral.

Hindi sapat ang parusa lamang sapagkat kailangan ding tugunan ang mga dahilan ng bullying sa pamamagitan ng paggabay at edukasyon.

Sa pamamagitan ng maayos at patas na pagpapatupad ng mga alituntunin, mas mapapalakas ang paglikha ng isang ligtas at maayos na kapaligiran para sa lahat ng mag-aaral.

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DBM: TEACHERS TO GET HIGHER PAY, BETTER CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN 2027

MANILA – Public school teachers will receive higher salaries, PHP10,000 annual teaching allowance, expanded career opportunities and additional benefits under the proposed 2027 national expenditure, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said on Saturday.

The DBM said the Marcos administration puts teachers at the center of its nearly PHP1-trillion allocation for the Department of Education (DepEd).

DepEd is set to receive PHP975.96 billion under the 2027 National Expenditure Program (NEP), 5.11 percent higher than the 2026 level.

Of the net increase, PHP61.02 billion will go to higher Personnel Services funding, providing additional resources for teachers and other DepEd personnel.

DBM Acting Secretary Kim Robert de Leon, in a media interview, said teachers account for a significant portion of the government workforce, making their welfare a major component of the proposed budget.

"Kapag tiningnan natin ang plantilla ng gobyerno, karamihan d'yan ay ang ating public school teachers. At napakalaki ng inihanda natin para sa kanila na kasama sa 2027 budget (When we look at the government plantilla, public school teachers form part of the majority. And we have prepared something very big for them that's included in the 2027 budget)," he said.

Among the benefits teachers will receive next year is the fourth tranche of the salary adjustment under Executive Order No. 64, translating to an average increase of around five percent in the monthly compensation of government workers.

For a Teacher I at Salary Grade 11, the monthly basic salary will increase from PHP31,705 in 2026 to PHP33,387 in 2027.

De Leon said teachers in Salary Grades 11, 12, and

13 will particularly benefit from the adjustment as these positions account for a large portion of the government workforce.

Beyond their basic pay, PHP38.78 billion was also proposed for benefits under the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers and other personnel benefits.

This includes PHP25.04 billion for the Personnel Economic Relief Allowance, PHP5.80 billion for the Special Hardship Allowance for teachers assigned to beneficiary areas, PHP648.10 million for teaching overload honoraria, and PHP7.30 billion for medical allowance of up to PHP7,000 for qualified civilian personnel.

Teachers will continue to receive their PHP10,000 annual Teaching Allowance, with PHP10.36 billion proposed to cover 1.036 million teaching and teaching-related positions nationwide.

The government is also nearly doubling funding for the Expanded Career Progression program to PHP12.09 billion from PHP6.15 billion provided this year.

The allocation is expected to support 135,063 position reclassifications, giving more teachers opportunities to advance in their careers.

De Leon said the program addresses the long-standing challenge for teachers remaining in the traditional Teacher I, II, and III positions for much of their careers.

"Napakalinaw. Una, walang magre-retire na teacher (It is very clear. First, no teacher will retire) as Teacher I," he said.

"Next year, iyang PHP12 billion, mga 135,000 teachers. Ma-promote (Next year, with the PHP12 billion allocation, around 135, teachers will be promoted) under the expanded career progression program," he said.

Another PHP3.02 billion would be allotted for the training of DepEd personnel, including

PHP1.86 billion for in-service training and other learning and development interventions.

The proposed budget also provides PHP840.59 million for the creation of 2,135 additional positions, including School Principal I, Project Development Officer I and Administrative Officer II positions.

De Leon said the additional non-teaching personnel will help help teachers' administrative workload and allow them to focus more on instruction.

"Hindi lang teaching pati non-teaching, dahil nga nabalitaan natin ang pangangailangan sa mga school guidance counselors and counselor associates, 'yung mga non-teaching na tumutulong sa ating mga guro na gawin ang mga admin functions para sila ay maka-concentrate na sa talagang pagtuturo (It's not just about teaching personnel, but also non-teaching personnel, given the need for school guidance counselors and counselor associates, as well as other non-teaching staff who can assist our teachers with administrative functions so they can concentrate on their primary task of teaching)," he said.

The DBM is also reviewing its internal processes to speed up the release of salary-related funding and other benefits, provided agencies maintain updated personnel master lists.

"Dahil sa direktiba ng ating Pangulo na talagang kapag benepisyo ng mamamayan, ng empleyado, ay hindi dapat nade-delay, we are also reviewing our internal process para lalo pang mas mapabilis (Following the President's directive that benefits due to citizens and employees should not be delayed, we are also reviewing our internal process to make their release even faster)," De Leon said. **(PNA) BY RUTH ABBEY GITA-CARLOS**

GOV'T, MILF STEP UP NORMALIZATION AHEAD OF BARMM POLLS

MANILA – The Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) are stepping up joint efforts to complete remaining commitments under their peace agreement as the Bangsamoro region prepares for its first parliamentary elections on Sept. 14.

GPH Peace Implementing Panel Chair and Presidential Peace Adviser Mel Senen Sarmiento said the two sides have resumed substantive engagements under both the political and normalization tracks of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB).

While the first regular Bangsamoro Parliamentary Elections on Sept. 14 will advance the political track, Sarmiento said the normalization track will continue beyond the polls.

The normalization track covers security, decommissioning, socioeconomic development, camp transformation and transitional justice.

"Since my appointment as GPH Panel Chair in July, we have actively reached out to our partners in the

MILF to demonstrate the national government's utmost sincerity and commitment to accelerate the implementation of the CAB's political and normalization Tracks," Sarmiento said in a statement Saturday.

He said MILF leadership has likewise demonstrated its commitment to fulfilling its obligations under the agreement following his recent meeting with MILF Chair Ahod Balawag Ebrahim.

The GPH and MILF panels resumed formal joint engagements during their Aug. 4 meeting, where they signed a declaration reaffirming their partnership and agreed to continue implementing the CAB's remaining commitments.

Since then, joint mechanisms have resumed work on key normalization activities.

The Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities and the Ad Hoc Joint Action Group, for instance, signed guidelines on Aug. 31 governing ceasefire-related functions during the Sept. 14 elections.

Other joint bodies have also convened to discuss peace and security, small arms and light weapons, international

monitoring, support for decommissioned combatants and their communities, camp transformation, and transitional justice.

Sarmiento said the government has also established an Information Operations Coordinating Center to monitor developments before, during and after the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) elections and help ensure that the polls are safe, orderly and credible.

The normalization track remains a major unfinished component of the CAB as the political transition approaches its next milestone.

The Third Party Monitoring Team has previously cautioned against assuming that the peace process is nearing completion, noting that substantial normalization commitments remain to be fulfilled.

Sarmiento said the renewed GPH-MILF engagement demonstrates the parties' determination to sustain the gains of the peace process and complete their remaining obligations under the agreement. **(PNA)**

BY DARRYL JOHN ESGUERRA

MORE KUSH FOUND IN SEIZED YACHT; TOTAL VALUE RISES TO P366-M

MANILA – The Bureau of Customs (BOC) – Port of Subic in Zambales has uncovered an additional 109 packages of kush (high-quality marijuana) weighing approximately 123.91 kilograms and with an estimated street value of PHP204.44 million, following continuing inspection on a yacht previously subjected to enforcement action.

In a news release on Saturday, the BOC said the latest discovery was made after a composite team with Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), Department of Justice, Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine National Police, and Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Law Enforcement Department conducted a thorough

examination of the vessel. During the initial inspection and search at the Subic Bay Yacht Club on Wednesday, the BOC seized PHP162.2 million worth of kush.

With the latest find, the BOC said the total haul recovered now stands at 198 packages of kush, with a combined estimated street value of approximately PHP366.65 million.

BOC District Collector Geniefelle Lagmay underscored the Port of Subic's resolve to remain vigilant in carrying out its border protection mandate.

"This additional discovery shows that our work does not stop with the initial apprehension. Together with our partner agencies, the Port of Subic remains relentless in protecting our

borders and preventing illegal drugs from reaching our communities," she said.

BOC Commissioner Ariel Nepomuceno added that the operation supports the directive of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to strengthen border security and intensify government efforts against illegal drugs and other threats to public safety.

"The BOC remains committed to protecting our borders and supporting the administration's efforts to disrupt the illegal drug trade," he said.

The seized items were turned over to PDEA for proper custody and disposition in accordance with existing procedures. **(PNA) BY FERDINAND PATINIO**

NLEX RECOGNIZED BY DENR FOR PROMOTING PUBLIC ACCESS TO REAL-TIME AIR QUALITY DATA

NLEX Corporation was recognized by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) Region III during the Environmental Summit 2026 on August 19 for its partnership with the agency in providing the public free access to real-time Air Quality Index (AQI) data through an outdoor LED billboard along NLEX in the City of San Fernando, Pampanga.

The recognition, presented during the summit held in Clark Freeport Zone, Pampanga, acknowledges NLEX's contribution to the public dissemination of real-time AQI data from four Regional Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations through its LED billboard.

Through the partnership, the digital billboard displays real-time air quality data from monitoring stations in San Fernando, Meycauayan, Clark, and Zambales, making environmental information more visible and accessible to motorists and the public.

"We thank the DENR for this opportunity. Accountability starts with awareness, and by utilizing the LED billboard, we are making vital environmental data highly visible and accessible to everyone," said NLEX President and General Manager Luis S. Reñon.

The initiative forms part of NLEX Corporation's continuing commitment to environmental sustainability and public awareness. Among its other efforts are the "Road to Less Waste" initiative, which promotes proper waste disposal and recycling, and tree-planting activities that have resulted in more than 200,000 trees planted across the NLEX corridor. NLEX also continues to work with government agencies and local government units on various environmental initiatives.

NLEX Corporation is a subsidiary of Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC), the toll road arm of Metro Pacific Investments Corporation (MPIC).

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From L-R: Atty. Linel Manayang, Officer-in-Charge, Environmental Monitoring and Enforcement Division; Atty. Norlito Eneran, Assistant Secretary for Legal Affairs, Enforcement, Human Resources and Field Operations – Luzon; Toti Palileo, MPTC Assistant Vice President for Road Access and Mobility Services; Luis S. Reñon, NLEX President and General Manager; Kiko Dagohoy, NLEX Stakeholder Engagement Senior Manager; Allan Jeffrey Ang, NLEX Assistant Vice President, QESH; Ralph Pablo, Regional Executive Director; and Martin Jose Despi, Regional Director, Environmental Management Bureau Region 3.

DPWH WORKING ON DETAILED FLOOD MANAGEMENT MASTER PLANS

MANILA – The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) is laying the technical foundation for future, science-backed flood management infrastructure to strengthen long-term disaster preparedness across the country.

In line with the directive of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to enhance nationwide flood resiliency, Public Works Secretary Vince Dizon has ordered the updating of all flood management master plans to protect the Filipino people from massive flooding year after year.

According to a Facebook post on Friday, the

department is collaborating with the University of the Philippines – Project Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazards (NOAH), local government units (LGUs), and key partner agencies to integrate detailed hazard mapping and scientific data before implementation to ensure that these master plans reflect current climate realities.

Based on the DPWH flood management master plans, detailed engineering designs (DED) are ongoing in 10 areas.

These are in the Apayao-Abulug River Basin in the Cordillera Region,

Pampanga River Basin (Central Luzon), Bicol River Basin (Bicol Region), Panay River Basin (Western Visayas), Jalaur River Basin (Western Visayas), Buayan-Malungon River Basin (Davao Region and Soccsksargen), Agusan River Basin (Davao Region and Caraga), Agno River Basin (Ilocos Region), Ilog-Hilabangan River Basin (Western Visayas and Central Visayas), and Mindanao River Basin (Northern Mindanao, Soccsksargen, and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao [BARMM]).

The department said that in six areas, the updated master plans have been completed and designs are finished: Abra (Cordillera), Tagoloan (Northern Mindanao), Cagayan de Oro (Northern Mindanao), Agus (Northern Mindanao), Davao (Northern Mindanao and Davao Region), and Tagum-Libuganon (Davao Region).

Master plans and feasibility studies in at least seven areas are also being updated to match current needs, such as water shift and climate change.

These are in Cagayan (Cagayan Valley and Cordillera), Agno (Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, and Cordillera), Metro Manila and surrounding areas (Pasig-Marikina/National Capital Region [NCR] Laguna Bay), Davao (Northern Mindanao and Davao Region), Ilog-Hilabangan (Western Visayas and Central Visayas), Mindanao (Northern Mindanao, Soccsksargen and BARMM), and Metro Cebu (Central Visayas).

Meanwhile, the following

master plans have been implemented or are ongoing: those in Tagoloan (completed in 2019); Cagayan (completed in 2019); Cagayan de Oro (completed in 2024); Metro Cebu (partially completed); Pampanga (Integrated Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Stage 1 already completed); DED of Central Luzon Floodway (ongoing); Metro Manila and surrounding areas (Pasig-Marikina/NCR Laguna Bay), ongoing implementation of Pasig-Marikina River Channel Improvement Project Phase IV; Tagum-Libuganon (ongoing preparatory works under Integrated Flood Resilience and Adaptation Project Phase 1 [InFRA-1]); Agus (ongoing civil works under InFRA-1 Project); and Abra (ongoing civil works under InFRA-1 Project).

The DPWH reported that master plans were formulated as early as November 1982 for Tagoloan, and up to November 2022 for Pampanga and Bicol.

The master plan for Metro Manila and surrounding areas (Pasig-Marikina/NCR Laguna Bay) was formulated in March 1990; Cagayan (August 1987); Abra (June 2018); Agno (December 1991); Apayao-Abulug (June 2018); Cebu (June 2015); Ilog-Hilabangan (July 1991); Panay (November 1985); Jalaur (June 2018); Mindanao (March 2017); Cagayan de Oro (June 2011); Agus (June 2018); Davao (November 2018); Tagum-Libuganon (June 2018); Buayan-Malungon (June 2018); and Agusan (May 2008). **(PNA) BY FERDINAND PATINIO**

BCDA UPDATES CENSUS IN AREA EYED FOR CLARK MANUFACTURING PARK

MANILA – The Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) are updating the census in Sitio Sapang Kawayan, Capas, Tarlac as part of preparations for the proposed Clark Advanced Manufacturing Park (CAMP) at New Clark City.

In a news release Friday, the BCDA said the initiative aims to have a more accurate picture of the communities in the proposed project area before further development plans move forward.

It is part of preparations for CAMP and is not specifically a Pax Silica activity, the BCDA said, referring to the United States-led international initiative designed to secure supply chains for artificial intelligence, semiconductors, and critical minerals.

CAMP is the proposed physical advanced manufacturing ecosystem that is intended to attract and host advanced manufacturing and technology-related investments.

"We are building the foundation of the Clark Advanced Manufacturing

Park on a principle of shared progress. True development means no community is left behind," BCDA president and chief executive officer Joshua Bingcang said.

The BCDA clarified that the current activity is an updating and validation of the existing community census, rather than a new enumeration exercise.

It is part of a broader process that includes identifying and validating communities, conducting joint surveys and documentation, reviewing existing agreements, and eventually processing and releasing appropriate assistance, the BCDA said.

"By validating our community baseline early on alongside the NCIP, we want to assure the community that every family receives the exact support, protection, and opportunities they deserve as this vision comes to life," Bingcang said.

The BCDA has also been conducting dialogues with Tarlac government leaders, local officials, members of the clergy, academe and other stakeholders to discuss the proposed CAMP, and hear their concerns and priorities. **(PNA) BY MARITA MOAJE**

EXTRA-JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT OF ESTATE OF GERARDO SACNAHON PAUG

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late **GERARDO SACNAHON PAUG**, a resident of **Section 1, Block 34 Lot 10 Sunny Brooke II Subdivision, Brgy. San Francisco, General Trias, Cavite 4107** who died on August 04, 2024 at Las Pinas General Hospital & Satellite Trauma Center, Diego Cera Avenue, Bernabe Compound, Pulang Lupa I, Las Pinas City, Metro Manila, 1742 Philippines left one (1) parcel of land located in Sunny Brooke II, San Francisco City of General Trias Cavite, covered by **TCT No. 057-2025046977** of the Registry of Deeds Province of Cavite was extra-judicially settled by the legitimate heirs, executed before Notary Public Atty. Emmie C. Sanchez as per Doc.No.89; Page No. 18; Book No. XIV; Series of 2026.
Publication: **CAVITE GAZETTE PUBLISHING**
September 1, 8 & 15, 2026

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." — John 14:27

DA PROJECT BACKS P273-M RUBBER ENTERPRISE TO BOOST ZAMPEN FARMERS' INCOME

TUNGAWAN, Zamboanga Sibugay — In line with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s directive to strengthen the agriculture sector, promote value-adding, and create greater economic opportunities for farmers, rubber farmers in the Zamboanga Peninsula are poised to benefit as a proposed ₱273-million Rubber Consolidation, Processing and Marketing Enterprise moves closer to implementation, paving the way for locally produced rubber to be processed into higher-value products and potentially generate better returns for farmers.

Proposed by the Provincial Local Government Unit (PLGU) of Zamboanga Sibugay under the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) Scale-Up, the enterprise will establish stronger local capacity to consolidate, process, and market rubber, creating an avenue for farmers to move beyond selling raw materials and participate in a higher-value segment of the industry.

Under the business plan, the PLGU of Zamboanga Sibugay is the implementing proponent and has committed a ₱55-million counterpart to the ₱273-million enterprise. The initiative is expected to strengthen market opportunities, support value-adding activities, and potentially generate better returns for rubber farmers and other stakeholders across the Zamboanga Peninsula.

A key step toward realizing the enterprise is underway: drilling a water source at the proposed project site in Purok Agro 2, Timbabauan, Tungawan. The reliable water supply is a critical requirement under the Social and Environmental Safeguards of the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) Scale-Up, supporting the safe and efficient operation of the planned processing facility.

The proposed enterprise is expected to strengthen the local rubber industry by moving farmers toward value-adding activities, including producing semi-

processed crumb rubber, rather than merely selling raw materials. This could open opportunities for improved market access, stronger local processing capacity, and increased income for rubber-producing communities.

The project underwent a two-day Joint Technical Review (JTR), following the initial drilling activity witnessed by personnel from the DA-PRDP Scale-Up Mindanao Cluster Project Support Office, Regional Project Coordination Office 9, and the Provincial Project Management and Implementation Unit of the Provincial Government of Zamboanga Sibugay. The National Project Coordination Office participated online and provided technical findings and recommendations for the proposed enterprise.

Rubber is among Zamboanga Sibugay's major industrial crops and has been identified as a priority commodity for value-adding under the province's Provincial Commodity Investment Plan (PCIP). It is likewise included among the priority commodities in Region IX's Regional Agri-Fishery Investment Portfolio (RAFIP), underscoring its potential to drive agricultural development and strengthen the region's rubber value chain.

The Timbabauan Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Cooperative (TIMARBENCO) will co-manage the consolidation and marketing operations, bringing more than two decades of experience in rubber trading, a 157-hectare rubber plantation, and an established network of rubber farmers across the Zamboanga Peninsula.

The initiative supports President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s directive to strengthen agricultural productivity, promote value-adding, and create greater economic opportunities for farmers. By building local processing capacity, the project seeks to help ensure that a larger share of the value generated from rubber production stays within farming communities. (MLE/JPA/

SAGADA OPENS IT HUB STRENGTHENING ACCESS TO DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

SAGADA, Mountain Province (PIA) — The local government unit of Sagada is stepping up efforts to strengthen access to digital technology and information with the inauguration of its Information Technology (IT) Hub on August 27, 2026.

The facility, located on the second floor of the old Municipal Building, will serve as a shared facility for information and communications technology (ICT) training, digital skills development, data management, e-governance initiatives, and access to online government services.

It will also provide LGU personnel and community members greater access to technology and opportunities to participate in digital initiatives in line with the government's continuing efforts to deliver more efficient, inclusive, and responsive public services through the use of technology.

The Sagada LGU, on February 27, 2026, signed a memorandum of agreement with Catalyst+ for the establishment of the IT Hub under the Innovative Leadership for Equitable and Accessible Democracy (i-LEAD) Project.

This is implemented in partnership with the Department of

Trade and Industry-Mountain Province and the Egovernance for Institutions Inc.

Boosting the town's digital technology initiatives is the ICT and electronic equipment donation of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR).

The donation consisted of 10 units of 43-inch Digital Smart TV LED Sets with remote controls and wall brackets, and 10 Desktop Computer Sets each consisting of a desktop computer, a 21.5-inch Full HD LED monitor, a USB keyboard, and a USB optical mouse with mouse pad.

Mayor Felicito O. Dula, with Association of Barangay Captains president Pio Wadingan along with Councilors Joseph Aclopen and Manarley Bowaken, received the IT donation on Aug. 28, 2026.

The LGU expressed gratitude to PAGCOR for this assistance which helps provide much-needed equipment to their intended recipients, together with support initiatives that promote access to digital technology and information. (PIA Mountain Province with reports from the Municipality of Sagada) **BY PIA MOUNTAIN PROVINCE**

BARANGAY MABINI USES SCPF ALLOCATION FOR OFFICE, PUBLIC SERVICE EQUIPMENT

ODIONGAN, Romblon (PIA) — Barangay Mabini in San Andres, Romblon used part of the funds it received under the Socio-Civic Projects Fund (SCPF) to purchase equipment for barangay operations and community programs.

Barangay Captain Isaac Vicente said the barangay used its ₱100,000 allocation for priority community needs to purchase a laptop, printer and projector.

"Yung natanggap naming ₱100,000 ay ibinili namin ng laptop, printer at projector. Napakahalaga na mayroon nito kasi magagamit namin ito sa tamang paggamit kapag

may mga programa," Vicente said.

The funding forms part of the Bawat Barangay Makikinabang Program, under which each barangay receives ₱200,000 from the Office of the President through the SCPF.

Half of the allocation, or ₱100,000, may be used for priority barangay needs, including public service and office equipment, disaster risk reduction and management equipment, and other community requirements.

The remaining ₱100,000 is allocated for the Bagong Pilipinas Barangay Scholars Program, under which five qualified students from each barangay may receive ₱20,000 each in financial assistance or a "Finisher Fund" to help them

NIR WRAPS UP MEASLES-RUBELLA IMMUNIZATION DRIVE

DUMAGUETE CITY, Negros Oriental (PIA) — The Department of Health-Negros Island Region (DOH-NIR) vaccinated 149,640 children against measles and rubella in the first 12 days of its region-wide immunization drive, or 34.2% of the 437,586 children it set out to reach.

The Ligas Tigdas 2026 Measles-Rubella Supplemental Immunization Activity (MRSIA) ran from Aug. 10 to 28 and covered children aged 6 to 59 months.

By Aug. 21, Negros Occidental accounted for 106,153 of those vaccinated, Negros Oriental 25,316, Bacolod City 16,628, and Siquijor 1,543, according to partial DOH-NIR figures. The agency had set targets of 244,757 children for Negros Occidental, 136,717 for Negros Oriental, 48,839 for Bacolod City and 7,273 for Siquijor.

That left 287,946 children in the region still unvaccinated as of Aug. 21.

DOH-NIR set up fixed vaccination sites at local health units and health centers in every city and town, and temporary sites at public transport terminals and seaports.

DOH-NIR Assistant Regional Director Adrian Hort Ramos said vaccination prevents deaths and complications from both diseases.

"This disease can cause

serious complications. Pwedeng ma-hospital, pwedeng maging masama at lumala ang pakiramdam [ng bata] (The child could be hospitalized, or could feel worse and deteriorate) and even death. This can lead to a fatal condition, but they are preventable. Immunization is one of the most effective ways we can protect our children," Ramos said.

Unvaccinated children can also transmit the infection to family members and to the wider community, Ramos said.

Deab Eltanal, acting chief of the DOH-NIR Local Health Division, said the vaccines used in the campaign have been shown safe and effective through clinical trials.

Eltanal also addressed a common misconception — that children who had already received a measles-rubella dose should skip the supplemental round.

"In a supplemental immunization activity, regardless of immunization status whether you got it from public centers or sentro sa munisipyo (municipal center), or whether you got it from a private physician you should still get the vaccine during the supplemental immunization," Eltanal said.

Yoradyl Zyra Matugas-Dizon, head of the DOH-NIR Family Health Cluster, said a supplemental dose is safe for children who have completed their routine vaccinations, provided at least four weeks have passed since the previous dose.

"We can consider it as a booster of the complete immunization given," Matugas-Dizon said.

DOH-NIR officials said suspected measles-rubella cases had been rising in the region and nationwide.

The cases remain under investigation, and no outbreak has been declared.

Immunization also helps communities reach herd immunity, the officials said.

The World Health Organization defines herd immunity as indirect protection from an infectious disease that occurs when a population becomes immune, either through vaccination or through immunity from previous infection. (RAL/PIA NIR-Negros Oriental) **BY ROI LOMOTAN**

MIMAROPA-Romblon) **BY PAUL JAYSENT FOS**

PIA RO9/Photos courtesy of DA IX) **BY JOCELYN P. ALVAREZ**

DMCI MINING ON TRACK TO HIT 3M TONS OUTPUT TARGET FOR 2026

ABORLAN, Palawan –

The Consunji-led DMCI Mining Corp. is nearing its 3 million wet metric ton (WMT) production target for 2026, driven by rapid shipments from its Palawan and Zambales operations.

"If you talk about the group, we're at 3 million tons right now. We're on track for this, for 3 million. That was our target," DMCI Mining president and chief operating officer Tulsí Das Reyes said in a briefing late Wednesday.

"Well, we were able to ship out 1 million tons in three months in Palawan. And Zambales is already at 1.6 million tons for the year. So, yeah, that's all up. We're almost to where we want to be. We're not too far away."

DMCI Mining operates two mines in Santa Cruz, Zambales through subsidiaries Zambales Diversified Metals Corp. (ZDMC) and Zambales Chromite Mining Co. (ZCMC).

Last year, mining subsidiary Berong Nickel Corp. (BNC) signed a mineral production sharing agreement (MPSA) with the Mines and Geosciences Bureau for its Long Point

mine in Aborlan.

The MPSA covers about 2,177.34 hectares.

It grants BNC the exclusive right to explore, develop, and utilize mineral resources within the contract area.

The MPSA has an initial term of 25 years, renewable for another 25 years.

Reyes said the favorable weather in Palawan allowed BNC to push through with its shipment.

"The weather's been somewhat good so far, but Zambales has been raining quite hard. So, we have a seasonal stop, which we normally do in the month," he said.

"And then we'll start up in the fourth quarter again. Palawan will be high tide, so we'll naturally stop. And maybe a few shipments left to end the year. But I'm quite confident we'll hit our 3 million."

Reyes said DMCI Mining is eyeing the expansion of its mining operations.

"We (fore)see continuously exploring our Long Point assets and its surroundings," he said. **(PNA) BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**

PSEI FALLS, PESO HITS RECORD LOW AS MIDDLE EAST TENSIONS FLARE

MANILA – The Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) closed lower on Wednesday as renewed military conflict in the Middle East pushed oil prices up and the peso to a record low.

The local bourse's main index shed 0.67 percent to close at 6,053.23 points, while the broader All Shares index fell by 0.31 percent to 3,352.61 points.

Only the industrial sector gained during the day, rising by 0.38 percent.

Meanwhile, services led the decliners with a 1.46 percent drop. It was followed by financials, down 0.41 percent; property, 0.34 percent; holding firms, 0.29 percent; and mining and oil, 0.16 percent.

Trading volume was thin at 610.46 million shares, amounting to PHP5.69 billion.

Decliners outnumbered advancers 101 to 79, while 65 shares remained unchanged.

"The local market pulled back due to the rise in global yields and oil prices amid the renewed military exchanges between the US and Iran. The fall of the peso to a new record low also contributed to the market's decline today," Philstocks Research said in a market report.

The local currency weakened further against the US dollar, closing at 62.56 from Tuesday's finish of 62.40.

It opened the trading

BICOL CACAO EYED AS PREMIUM REGIONAL MARKET BRAND FOR EXPORT

LEGAZPI CITY – Albay 3rd District Rep. Raymond Adrian Salceda is pushing to develop Bicol's cacao as a premium regional brand with strong export potential, while welcoming the support for his proposed measure seeking to declare cacao development a priority program for the region.

"We welcome the strong support of the Bicol Cacao Industry Council (BCIC) and the Philippine Cacao Industry Association (PCIA)-Bicol Chapter for HB (House Bill) 4219. More importantly, we appreciate their concrete recommendations on how we can strengthen the measure and ensure that the industry itself plays a meaningful role in shaping the future of cacao development in Bicol," Salceda said in a statement.

Salceda said the measure should ultimately help Bicolano farmers and enterprises capture more value from the industry, from production and post-harvest processing to chocolate manufacturing and market development.

"When the system is well organized and stakeholders are meaningfully involved, I believe we can build a cacao industry that will create more jobs, provide additional income to farmers, strengthen local businesses, and put Bicol on the map as a source of quality cacao and chocolate," he said.

HB 4219 establishes the Bicol Cacao Development Program Office under the regional office of the Department of Agriculture.

The proposed office will serve as the regional focal point for cacao initiatives and coordinate programs on production, research, processing, market development, and other interventions needed to help scale up the industry.

The BCIC and PCIA-Bicol expressed support for the

session at 62.40 and traded between 62.40 and 62.69. The day's weighted average stood at 62.61.

Volume rose to USD1.83 billion from the USD1.31 billion recorded the previous day. **(PNA) BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

bill while recommending amendments that would institutionalize public-private participation in its governance and implementation.

Among their proposals are the creation of a Bicol Cacao Development Governing Board, formal representation for farmers, processors, and industry organizations, and recognition of BCIC as a principal regional private-sector coordinating partner.

"Our goal is not just to create another program, but to establish a sound framework and system where the government, farmers, investors, industry groups, research institutions, and other partners can work together to build a cacao industry in Bicol that is competitive and sustainable," Salceda added.

The measure also carries particular significance for Salceda as chair of the House Special Committee on Food Security. Strengthening the industry can contribute to food security by improving farmers' incomes, creating more resilient agricultural livelihoods, encouraging value-adding and rural enterprise development, and diversifying economic opportunities for farming communities. **(PNA) BY CONNIE CALIPAY**

SEPTEMBER LPG PRICES DOWN AS FREIGHT COSTS DROP

MANILA – Lower freight expenses helped reduce domestic liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) prices for September by PHP0.40 per kilo, offsetting an uptick in international contract prices, the Department of Energy (DOE) said Tuesday.

In a news release, the DOE said households using a standard 11-kilogram LPG cylinder will see a PHP4.40 reduction in their LPG expenses this month.

The international LPG contract price rose to USD649.50 per metric ton this month from USD634 per metric ton in August, while the freight cost went down from USD120.82 to USD94.41 per metric ton.

Another favorable factor for domestic LPG prices

LIPACITY, Batangas – The Philippines aims to regain the second spot worldwide in terms of geothermal energy production as the government shifts to renewable energy (RE), with the help of a PHP10.7 billion de-risking facility.

In her speech during the 7th Philippine International Geothermal Conference in Lipa City, Batangas on Thursday, Energy Secretary Garin said the country has a potential 2,100 megawatts (MW) geothermal energy to be explored and developed.

To date, the country has around 2,057 MW installed geothermal capacity, accounting for around 6.4 percent of electricity generation in 2025.

Garin said that while the country currently places third in the world, after the United States and Indonesia, there is a chance to improve since the Philippines has the biggest geothermal facility in Asia, referring to the Unified Leyte Geothermal Power Plant at the boundary of Kananga, Leyte and Ormoc City.

"Under the leadership of President Ferdinand (R.) Marcos Jr., our goal is clear to regain that position by accelerating exploration in frontier areas and bringing new geothermal capacity into development," she said.

The Department of Energy (DOE) and the Land Bank of the Philippines signed a memorandum of agreement in December 2025 for the USD170-million Philippine Geothermal Resource De-Risking Facility, financed through a sovereign loan from the Manila-based multilateral lender.

The facility provides capital for geothermal exploration. Once the exploration project proves successful, the funding will be treated as a loan, but if it fails, it will be considered a grant.

Garin, in a briefing on the sidelines of the event, said the funding is adequate to boost domestic geothermal capacity by around 300 MW, with the projects to be assessed first by the DOE.

Department of Energy (DOE) Chief Science Research Specialist Rainier Halcon, during the same briefing, said a public consultation will be held by October to inform interested parties about the facility, with a call for proposals also set for next month.

Halcon said the actual drilling implementation is expected to begin by 2028 as the first call for proposals is needed next month.

"If we finish the 300 megawatts (additional installed capacity) to be supported by the de-risking facility, hopefully, we'll be at number two –as long as the Indonesian power plants are not online," he said.

"Based on our projections, the de-risking facility will help those priority projects reach their commercial date by at least three years earlier. So if our target within this de-risking facility is from 2028 until 2033, then add (an) additional three years after that period, they should already have a power plant."

Garin said the current derisking facility fund level is enough for now to increase the share of geothermal power in the energy mix to the "ideal level" of 10 percent.

"I think if we do it (the assessment and eventual operation of the projects) properly, and most of these are successful, we won't have a problem accessing other funds," she added.

(PNA) BY JOANN VILLANUEVA



EALA ADVANCES TO US OPEN SECOND ROUND

MANILA – Alexandra Eala marched to the second round of the US Open after beating American qualifier Mary Stoiana, 6-1, 6-2, at the Louis Armstrong Stadium in Flushing Meadows, New York on Wednesday morning (Manila time).

The No. 17 seed Filipino won the final five games in the second set to wrap up the match.

Eala will try to reach the second round on Thursday, playing against Ukrainian Oleksandra Oliynykova, who scored a 6-4, 6-4 victory over American Reese Brantmeier.

Oliynykova and Eala first met at Strasbourg last May 18, with the Ukrainian prevailing, 3-6, 7-5, 6-3, in

the Round of 32.

Eala debuted at the 2025 US Open, beating Danish Carla Tauson, 6-3, 2-6, 7-6, in the first round before bowing to Spanish Cristina Bucsa, 4-6, 3-6.

In August, Eala won the WTA 500 Mubadala DC Open. It was her second singles title after also

winning the Guadalajara 125 Open in Zapopan, Mexico.

Eala, the reigning Southeast Asian Games champion, will see action in the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, set for Sept. 19 to Oct. 4. **(PNA)**

BY JEAN MALANUM



Alexandra Eala at the 2026 Wimbledon Open (Contributed photo)

CEBU CITY TO HOST PVL, SPIKERS' TURF SEASON 10 OPENING

MANILA – The Premier Volleyball League (PVL) and Spikers' Turf will kick off its 10th season on Oct. 10 at the newly opened SM Seaside Cebu Arena.

Choco Mucho and Capital1 will kick off festivities at 1 p.m., followed by the Creamline-Akari clash at 6 p.m.

The organizing Sports Vision Management Group, Inc. (SVMGI) is expecting the opening to draw a record crowd and set the tone for another major year

of Philippine volleyball.

The decision to bring the season-opening festivities to Cebu highlights the province's deep volleyball roots and its continuing contribution to the development of the sport.

The province has produced established stars, promising young players and a steady stream of athletes who have made their mark in both the PVL and Spikers' Turf.

Among the prominent Cebuanos are Choco

Mucho's Sisi Rondina, Deanna Wong and Isa Molde; Farm Fresh players Lorene Toring and Pierre Abellana, Nxled's Krich Macaslang and PLDT's Shiela Kiseo in the PVL, and former Cignal standout Edward Ybañez and VNS' Jayvee Sumagaysay in the Spikers' Turf.

Cebu's growing volleyball culture has been reinforced by Sports Vision's grassroots and developmental initiatives.

Last year, Sports Vision launched the V-League Visayas, a regional collegiate competition featuring six men's and six women's teams, all based in Cebu and affiliated with the Cebu Schools Athletic Foundation, Inc. (CESAFI). The league expanded its reach further last July with the staging of the Panay-Negros tournament in Passi City, Iloilo, providing another platform for emerging volleyball talent



CEBU PRIDE. Sisi Rondina of Choco Mucho (center) in action during the Premier Volleyball League (PVL) last year. The league will open its 10th season on Oct. 10, 2026 at the newly opened SM Seaside Cebu Arena. (PVL photo)

ASIAN GAMES-BOUND SEPAK TAKRAW TEAM CHALLENGED TO DELIVER

MANILA – The Pilipinas Sepak Takraw Association, Inc. (PSTAI) has challenged its athletes to win medals in the 20th Asian Games or resign.

In a media forum, PSTAI president Karen Tanchanco-Caballero disclosed the agreement she had with members of the national team pending their departure for Nagoya, Japan for the Sept. 19 to Oct. 3 tournament.

"I'd like to share that there is already a courtesy resignation on all athletes if they do not come home with a medal," Caballero said during the Philippine Sportswriters Association Forum at the Philippine Sports Commission media room.

"They are ready because they have to give way also. I mean, we have given them all the support they needed for so many years. So, it's only fair for the Filipino taxpayers who pay for their allowances and support. We only expect the best performance from

our athletes and coaches." Caballero, however, said she is confident that the team would deliver like it did at the recent ISTAF World Sepak Takraw Championship – 39th Thai King's Cup in Bangkok, where the men's regu team (3-on-3) won a historic silver medal, and the women's quadrant (4-on-4) got the bronze medal.

The Philippines also scored its first podium finish in 33 years during the 2022 Hangzhou Asiad when it won a pair of bronzes in the men's regu and the men's quadrant.

Combined with the extensive training the team has undergone leading up to the Asian Games, Caballero is certain the Filipino takraw players will deliver against the "best of the best in Asia."

"They have extensively prepared for this, and I'm confident as for the preparations of our coaching team," she said.

"It's the same challenge presented to them by the

NSA (National Sports Associations) during the Kings' Cup. They come home with no medal, no one's going to the Asian Games. Simply because if you can't beat anybody in the World Cup, you won't beat anyone at the Asiad, either. We are not going to be tourists when we go to Japan. So, we mean business."

Towering Jom Lerry Rafael, a member of the team that won the silver in the World Cup and bronze in Hangzhou, will again spearhead the country's campaign, along with Jason Huerte, Reynaldo Asilum, Ronsited Gabayeron, and Glindel Phori.

Joining them are Mary Ann Lopez, Kristine Lapsit, Rachelle Palomar, Nieva Jane Salon, Heart Makiling, and Rhea Mae Dela Cruz.

The men's regu has been grouped with powerhouse teams Thailand and host Japan, while the women's quadrant is with Vietnam, Thailand, and India. **(PNA)**

BY JEAN MALANUM

PH WOMEN'S BASEBALL TEAM VOWS TO DO BETTER NEXT TIME

MANILA – National women's baseball head coach Isaac "Saki" Bacarisas is optimistic that his team will be able to reach the Finals if given another chance to compete at the WBSC Women's Baseball World Cup.

In a news forum on Tuesday, Bacarisas said he believes that the Philippines will surpass its maiden performance in the tournament held recently in Tainan, Taiwan where it ended up with a 2-3 record, including a 6-0 stunner over Cuba.

Losing to host Chinese-Taipei (2-8) and Venezuela (0-10) hurt the country's chances of advancing to the 2027 Finals set in Rockford, Illinois.

"We've already gauged their level of skill. Hopefully, by the next time around – now that we know their weaknesses – we'll be able to reach the world

stage. I hope we can come back next time," Bacarisas said during the Philippine Sportswriters Association Forum at the Philippine Sports Commission media room.

Also present were team captain Veronica Velasco, Martine Francisco, Richelle Toledo, Cassandra Inot, Nichole Padasas, Mharnie Dela Cruz, Mery Ann Ramos, and Chastene Jover, and Philippine Amateur Baseball Association secretary general and team manager Michael Asuncion.

"It makes us incredibly proud that the Philippines' first World Cup victory was achieved by women. It feels amazing to be a part of history," Velasco said.

After bowing to powerhouse and defending champion Japan (3-0), the Philippines won over world no. 7 Cuba (6-0) and world no. 15 Great Britain (6-0) to post a 2-1 record in Group B, and a perfect shot of clinching a berth in next year's finals.

If not for the losses against Chinese-Taipei and Venezuela, Bacarisas felt the Philippines could have made it all the way to Illinois.

"Against Taipei, we were running a bit low on energy, but I still think we can pull it off," the former national player said.

The Philippines earned a wild card entry in this year's WBSC tournament. **(PNA)**

BY JEAN MALANUM



OPTIMISTIC. Head coach Isaac Bacarisas (center) with members of the team which competed at the WBSC Women's Baseball World Cup during the Philippine Sportswriters Association (PSA) Forum at the Philippine Sports Commission media room on Tuesday (Sept. 1, 2026). Bacarisas is optimistic that his team will be able to reach the Finals if given another chance to compete at the WBSC. (PSA photo)