

Resilience amidst adversity

With grit and determination, Ma. Ruby Bullag, together with her husband Rino, started a business venture and successfully found the restaurant to be a perfectly fit business for them.

Life's challenges can either make or break one's determination. While some may falter when confronted with adversity, for some reasons, Ma. Ruby Bullag remains resilient and brave.

Ma. Ruby, the eldest of eight siblings, left Negros Occidental to find work in Iloilo City. Starting as a store bagger, she later became a saleslady in a boutique. When the store branched out to Boracay, she immediately moved there.

A year later, she married Rino Bullag, a Boracay-based hotel staff. Despite Rino's steady income, it was still insufficient to make ends meet, so she sold siopao and pancit molo and built a sari-sari store for an additional income.

Through her store, Ma. Ruby met CARD Bank in 2010. She will never forget her initial loan of PHP 5,000.00 on October 27, 2010, because that money, along with their house and belongings, was burned into ashes that same night due to a neighborhood fire.

She was left with nothing but the courage and strong will to start over. By God's grace, a lot of people, including Bo-



racay citizens and CARD Bank provided essential necessities, which greatly aided their re-recovery.

She utilized the gathered funds from kind-hearted people to acquire a siopao steamer and continue her business. They slowly got back on track, producing 300-400 pieces of siopao daily.

Despite the setbacks, she stayed positive, believing in eventual success. "Life has been constantly re-volving. We may experience failure, and a lot might be a reason for us to quit, but I am positive that in perfect timing, we would achieve the success that we are aiming for," she said.

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Cayetano: Maaari tayong biguin ng mga institusyong pantao, ngunit walang kabiguan sa Salita ng Diyos

Ang bawat institusyon ng tao ay mawawala, ngunit ang Salita ng Diyos ay mananatili magpakailanman, kaya dapat itong gamitin bilang batayan ng mabuting pamamahala.

Bahagi ito ng panalangin ni Senador Alan Peter Cayetano sa pagbubukas ng sesyon sa Senado noong Lunes, January 29, 2024, na pagdiriwang din ng National Bible Day.

"The Lord God is the same today and tomorrow. When we put our trust in people and

in institutions, even in a very good institution, we can get disappointed. But when we put our trust in the Word of God, there is no disappointment," wika ni Cayetano sa kanyang panalangin.

Sa gitna ng kasalukuyang isyu ng pag-amiyenda sa konstitusyon, itinanong ng senador: "Will some pro-visions of our Constitution pass away? Will the Senate pass away? We do not know, but we do know that the Word of God will not."

Binigyang diin ni Cayetano ang pag-ibig ng



MANILA – CJ Perez of San Miguel Beer was the runaway winner of the Best Player of the Conference (BPC) for the PBA Commissioner's Cup.

Perez received the top local award for the season-opening tournament before Game 4 of the conference finals between Magnolia and San Miguel at Smart Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City on Friday night.

Perez topped the voting among the media and the players, which catapulted him to his first BPC award.

The San Miguel winger got all but one of first-place votes from the media for 505 points and

18 out of 28 first-place votes from the players for 86 points.

He finished with a total 1,055 points, way ahead of runner-up Christian Standhardinger.

The Ginebra big man, who was number one in the statistical points up to the semifinals, amassed 777 points.

NorthPort's Arvin Tolentino was third with 559 points, TNT's Calvin Oftana was fourth with 472, and Ginebra's Scotie Thompson finished fifth with 446.

Meanwhile, in a huge shocker, Phoenix's Johnathan Williams got the better of conference finalists Tyler Bey of Magnolia and Bennie Boatwright of San Miguel in a tight Best Import race.

The media votes turned out to be the deciding factors as Williams, a National Basketball Association veteran, got 30 first-place votes for 424 points.

Williams was second in the stats race and only finished third in the player votes without a first-place vote but he topped the race with 1,017 points.

Williams became the first import since Meralco's Arinze Onuaku in the 2016 Commissioner's Cup to win Best Import honors even if his team did not make the finals.

CALAX Silang (Aguinaldo) Interchange Toll Collection Starts Feb 10, 2024



DILG, REACH Foundation ink accord to help physically challenged kids



EMPOWERING DISABLED KIDS. DILG Secretary Benjamin Abalos Jr. (2nd from right) and Rehabilitation and Empowerment of Adults and Children with Handicap Foundation Inc. (REACH Foundation) president Prof. Abelardo Apollo David Jr. (2nd from left) show a copy of the signed memorandum of understanding (MOU) in Camp Crame, Quezon City on Feb. 8, 2024. Under the pact, CWD beneficiaries would have access to free occupational, physical and speech therapy services through teletherapy. (Photo courtesy of DILG)

Children with disabilities (CWDs), especially those living in poor and remote communities, can now have access to free occupational, physical, and speech therapy services through teletherapy. This, after the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Rehabilitation and Empowerment of Adults and Children with Handicap Foundation Inc. (REACH Foundation) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) aimed at providing assistance to CWDs through teletherapy.

Teletherapy is any remote therapy that uses technology to help the therapist and patient communicate using the

DTI-Laguna Starts Weekly Price Monitoring of Basic Necessities and Prime Commodities



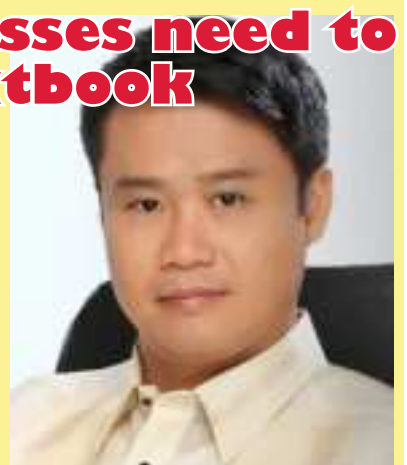
Comelec: Voter's certification free of charge starting Feb. 12

House bill allowing GSIS member to designate beneficiary pushed



Gatchalian presses need to streamline textbook procurement

As the year-one report of the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II) revealed the extent of issues in public school textbook procurement, Senator Win Gatchalian emphasized the need for the Department of Education (DepEd) to streamline its processes and ensure that all learners have books.



LAGING HANDA SI KAP



Nilahukan ng 47 Barangay Captain sa lungsod ng Bacoor ang Incident Command System Executive Course (ICS EC) na isinagawa ng Bacoor Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Office noong Pebrero 9, 2024. Layon ng kurso na mapalalim ang kaalaman ng mga barangay ukol sa systematic and strategic disaster risk reduction and management. Dito rin hinasa ang kasanayan ng mga Barangay Captain sa pangangasiwa ng mga insidente, maging ito man ay planado o hindi inaasahan. Ayon sa Bacoor DRRMO Office, inaasahan nilang sa pamamagitan ng pagsasanay na ito ay magiging mas handa ang mga barangay na rumisponde at umalalay sa kanilang komunidad sa mga kritikal na sitwasyon at kalamidad. | via City Government of Bacoor



HEALTH HINTS FOR ELDERLY FROM AGES 45 TO 100 YEARS

Cont. from last last week issue

- (1)Fasting
 - (2)Smiling/laughing
 - (3)Trek/exercise
 - (4)Eating more fruits/ vegetables
 - (5)Enjoying fresh air
 - (6)Reduce your weight.
 - (7)Communing with God everyday
- ~~~~~
- Six things you don't have to do:
- (1) Don't wait till you are hungry to eat
 - (2) Don't wait till you are thirsty to drink
 - (3) Don't wait till you are sleepy to sleep
 - (4) Don't wait till you feel tired to rest
 - (5) Don't wait till you get sick to go for medical check-ups otherwise you will only regret later in life
 - (6) Don't wait till you have a problem before you pray to God.
- ~~~~~
- One thing you must do after reading this health tips:
- (1) Forward this to your loved ones and friends, and as you do so, may God bless U.
- =====
- While you go about your normal business please let's remember to always check our body to know how fit you are. Health is wealth.

Gatchalian... FROM PAGE 1

The Failed System of Philippine Education, the EDCOM II pointed out that since 2012, only 27 textbooks for Kindergarten to Grade 10 have been procured. The report also revealed that from 2018 to 2022, P12.6 billion has been allocated for textbooks and other instructional materials, 35.3% (P4.5 billion) of which was obligated and 7.5% (P952 million) was disbursed. The EDCOM further revealed that since the K to 12 curriculum was introduced, only textbooks for Grades 5 and 6 were successfully procured.

Citing consultations with the National Book Development Board (NBDB) and private publishers, the EDCOM also pointed out that insufficient development time and a prolonged review process are among the bottlenecks of textbook procurement.

While the NBDB said that the development of textbooks usually takes 18 months, the DepEd gives only six months for the textbook call, which pushes publishers to submit premade drafts with minor revisions to match DepEd requirements. This

results in a prolonged revision and editing process. The DepEd also lacks dedicated staff for reviewing textbooks, while publishers said they receive conflicting comments from different reviewers.

Gatchalian, Co-Chairperson of EDCOM II, previously urged the DepEd to consider the pre-selection of textbooks like private schools do, adding that the government should aspire to give books to all learners.

The EDCOM's findings align with results of the 2019 Southeast Asian Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM), which showed that at least one out of five Grade 5 learners shared textbooks with another student or more.

"Ang edukasyon ng ating mga kabataan ang napapabayaan kung patuloy ang mga suliranin sa pagkakaroon ng sapat at dekalidad na mga textbooks," said Gatchalian.

The senator also plans to seek an oversight review on the Book Publishing Industry Development Act (Republic Act No. 8047) to assess whether the country's publishing industry is keeping up with rapid digitalization.

Bill...

MANILA – Deputy House Speaker and Las Piñas City Rep. Camille Villar on Monday urged her col-leagues to pass a bill seeking to protect and provide health and financial assistance to waste workers throughout the country.

"They play a vital role in solid waste management and contribute greatly in protecting the environment. Despite their importance, waste workers are some of the most under-appreciated and unprotected work-ers," Villar said in a statement.

Under her House Bill (HB) 9806 or An Act Establishing the Waste Workers Health and Welfare Act Pro-gram, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) will be tasked to handle the program designed to safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of waste workers in the country.

"We should all work together to promote the health, safety, and welfare of waste workers throughout the country. Let us recognize the critical role that they play in maintaining the cleanliness and sustainability of our communities," Villar said.

The waste workers, under HB 9806, shall be referred to persons engaged in the collection, transportation, processing, and disposal of solid waste, including garbage collectors, waste pickers, recyclers, and landfill and dumpsite workers.

They shall be provided with health coverage and benefits, occupational safety training, personal protective equipment, educational and financial assistance,

Cayetano...

have the kind of institutions that will have healthy debate, where all ideas are welcome, where we'll come before You and really repent and first seek Your kingdom and righteousness," wika ng sena-dor sa kanyang dalangin.

Isinamo ni Cayetano ang lahat ng nasa gobyerno — Malacañang, House of Representatives, Senate, lokal na lider, lider ng negosyo, at ulo ng mga pamilya — na bigyan sila ng karunungan ng Diyos.

"We pray Lord God that at this crucial time that we are at a crossroad, we would depend not on people but on Your Word," wika niya. PR

FROM PAGE 1

The program shall also have a Registration and Monitoring System where the names of all waste workers in the country will be saved in a database for purposes of coverage under the program.

All beneficiaries shall be granted a package of healthcare benefits, including free annual check-ups, vaccinations, and hospitalization assistance, in partnership with the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (Phil-Health).

Regular training programs on methods, techniques, and the proper use of personal protective equipment to minimize the risks associated with waste handling shall also be made available to all beneficiaries, who will also be provided with suitable and adequate personal protective equipment free of charge by their employers or agencies.

Villar also proposed under her bill that waste workers and their dependents be given priority access to educational assistance programs and scholarship grants.

The DOLE, in collaboration with qualified financial institutions, shall also provide waste workers with low-interest loans for housing, emergency situations, or the establishment of sustainable livelihood businesses.

Funding for the proposed Waste Workers' Health and Welfare Act shall be included in the annual budget of the labor department, as well as grants, donation, contributions, and other forms of assistance. (PNA)

FROM PAGE 8

House bill...

MANILA – Lanao del Sur 1st District Rep. Zia Alonto Adiong on Monday urged his colleagues to pass a measure allowing Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) member to designate beneficiaries in the absence of primary or secondary recipients.

Under his House Bill (HB) 9792 or "An Act Amending Presidential Decree 1146 as amended by Republic Act (RA) 8291 or the Government Service System Insurance Act of 1997," Adiong seeks to empower certain GSIS members to pick someone who deserves to be his or her designated beneficiary.

RA 8291 allows only the primary and secondary beneficiaries to receive the survivorship pension.

"Through this measure, which has been pending with the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization, since January 23, we tend to acknowledge the single government employees that because of their devotion to public service, they were denied of an opportunity to have time for themselves to build their own families," Adiong said in a statement.

Jailed NPA rebel rear-rested on new murder charges

CAMP CAPINPIN, Rizal - In a surprising turn of events, a New People's Army member was rear-rested by the combined forces of the 59th Infantry "Protector" Battalion and the Batangas Provincial Police Office following the issuance of a new warrant of arrest for murder in Batangas City on January 25, 2024. Soldiers and police served a Warrant of Arrest for Murder to Karla Mae Monge, known by the alias Ching, an intelligence and medical officer of Sinag 2 from the Southern Tagalog Regional Party Committee. Monge is currently detained at the Provincial Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Batangas City, after she was initially apprehended on November 20, 2023 by a Warrant of Arrest issued under the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 on January 12, 2023. But

Adiong said these GSIS members usually act as breadwinners not only for his immediate family, but also for his extended relatives.

"There are persons they love who depend on them for financial and other support for daily needs," he added.

The proposal aims to expand the definition of secondary beneficiaries under the GSIS Law, like a certain provision stated under the Social Security Act of 2018 (Republic Act 11199) Section 8 (k), which says: "Any other person designated by a member shall be his/her secondary beneficiary."

Adiong said despite having no parents and legitimate descendants, the member can still pick and designate the person to receive assistance from the fruits of his annual hardship and sacrifice while catering public service to the people.

The measure, he said, also aims to enhance and improve the member-centric accommodation of the GSIS, that will allow the member to make personal decisions regarding the distribution of benefits. (PNA)

February 14-20, 2024 House ...

from page 3

these inequalities and urban dysfunctions.

He also highlighted that the solutions contained in this bill also form a roadmap to green economic recovery, as well as a robust post-pandemic economic growth.

Under the bill, all cities and municipalities, classified as urban, shall be mandated to conform with and implement plans, programs, and activities guided by Ambisyon 2040, as well as the Philippine Standards for Sustainable Cities and Communities.

The bill also mandates the creation of a National Housing and Urban Development Sector Plan (NHUDSP) to provide short-term, medium-term and long-term strategic plans to achieve the goal of developing sustainable cities and communities.

The measure has been approved on second reading by the House of Representatives. (PNA)

Sudoku Puzzles

				6	5		
	2	1		7			
3				8			
4				9	6		
	5	2			7	9	
		3	1				8
				4			5
				5		8	7
		4	2				

				5			
			4	2	1		
		3	7		8	9	
	4	9			2	7	
3	1					6	4
5							9
				1			
			2	3	4		
		5	6		7	8	

did you know?

Pineapples were a status symbol in 18th century England. They were so expensive that you could rent them by the night and take them to parties with you.

PHOTO: GREENGLANDER

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HOTEL

ホテル ソウゴ

SOUGO



Crossword Puzzles

ACROSS

1. Sneeze or streak

5. Sayings of Jesus

10. Marshmallow munchies

14. Prefix with harp or pilot

15. Get up

16. Word on a dollar's edge

17. Collegiate coffee sweetener

19. Shipboard racket, perhaps

20. Coalitions

21. ___-fairs

23. Troubled

24. Collegiate stationer's supply

26. Watches over

28. State bordering Arizona

29. They're present at a hearing

32. Young haddock

33. Collegiate transportation need

37. "Cold ___" (Foreigner hit)

39. Nordic maker of Thunderbolts

40. Like some words or worst

42. Cameo

48. Collegiate security items

51. Tactician's traps

52. Swedish rubber?

53. Petty

54. Places for flowers or coral

55. Collegiate headgear

57. "Thanks for clearing that up!"

58. Site of a Herculean task

59. Pierre's pals

60. Where subs might reside

DOWN

1. Tries to dry, as a spill

2. Compound of gold

3. Like some bases or kisses

4. "Sniff!"

5. Burns! baau

6. Tulsa ech. named for a televangelist

7. Adfield film that won 6 Razzies in 2003

8. Stern with a bow

9. High homes

10. An attractive one may cause lawsuits

11. Written up

12. Frigidaire competitor

13. "Let me think..."

18. Capital city sluggers, for short

22. "Jes" think..."

24. Emulates Niagara

25. Grumpy to the max

27. It helps you start driving a round

30. Cape Town's home: abbr.

31. Attempts

33. Infamous el Queda leader

34. Bypasses security, perhaps

35. Boat bottoms

36. Shea stat

37. "Rohab" Grammy winner Winslowe

38. Like some twins or cats

41. "Any way the wind blows ___ really matter..." Bohemian Rhapsody

43. The magi, e.g.

44. New York county containing the Donald J. Trump State Park

45. Bronchodilator's target

46. Fixed the bathroom tiles

47. African blood sucker

49. More likely to be picked from the pound

50. Krippy ___

53. Hurdle before the bar: abbr.

54. Call from North, South, East or West

56. It gets warm, then it

SUPERSTITION PRESCRIPTIONS

Be strong get beyond all superstitions, and be free

SOME FEAR ARE JUST SUPERSTITIONS, For instance, why fear the number thirteen? In Judaism a boy or girls thirteenth birthday is a day to celebrate and have a bar or bat mitzvah.

So what is superstition? Many of us still hold to superstitions in our daily lives. such as when we avoid walking under a ladder or when we worry about a black cat crossing our path. The dictionary says. superstition 1. A belief or notion not based on reason or knowledge, in or of the significance of a particular thing, circumstance, occurrence, proceeding, or the like 2. A system or collection of such belief 3. A custom or act based on such beliefs.

There are enough real fear in life, we do not need to add to them by bringing in what are just superstitions.

Soulution of the Day :

How often do you let superstition run your life

CALAX Silang

CALAX UPDATED TOLL FEES (Starting February 10, 2024)				
ENTRY POINT	EXIT POINT	Class 1 (0-5.99)	Class 2 (6-11.99)	Class 3 (12-17.99)
Greenfield	Silang (Aguinaldo)	\$1.00	\$2.00	\$3.00
	Silang East	\$4.00	\$10.00	\$15.00
	Sancti Rosa-Tagaytay	\$4.00	\$8.00	\$12.00
Laguna Technopark	Laguna Boulevard	\$2.00	\$4.00	\$6.00
	Silang (Aguinaldo)	\$4.00	\$10.00	\$15.00
	Silang East	\$4.00	\$10.00	\$15.00
Laguna Boulevard	Silang East	\$2.00	\$4.00	\$6.00
	Silang (Aguinaldo)	\$4.00	\$10.00	\$15.00
	Silang East	\$2.00	\$4.00	\$6.00

MPCALA Holdings Inc., the concessionaire of the Cavite-Laguna Expressway (CALAX), announces the implementation of toll rates for the Silang (Aguinaldo) Interchange, as approved by the Toll Regulatory Board. These rates will be effective

starting 12:01 AM on February 10, 2024. "The implementation of these toll rates aids in the continuous maintenance and enhancement of our toll road while ensuring efficient and safe travel for our users. The Silang (Aguinaldo) Interchange has

PGC brings healthcare services closer to Cavitenos



On February 7, 2024, the medical mission led by Office of the Provincial Governor and Office of the Provincial Health Officer had a significant impact on the residents of Barangays Bacao 1 and 2, in the city of Gen. Trias, demonstrating community support and healthcare outreach. The mission sought to deliver vital medical services to around 600 people in the area. Medical professionals from OPHO and Gen. Trias City Health Office provided the services which include general medical consultations, dental check-ups and tooth extraction, diagnostic imaging through X-ray and electrocardiogram

(ECG). Likewise, essential vitamins and prescription medicines were also given for free. Sixth District Board Member Kerby Salazar and Gen. Trias City Councillor Kyle Javier Salazar attended the event, showing their support to the initiative. Their presence underscored their commitment to supporting such endeavors aimed at improving community health and well-being. The success of the health event serves as a testament to the power of community engagement and collective action in improving healthcare access and outcomes to create a healthier and more resilient society. – JDP

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	Laguna Boulevard	\$2.00	\$4.00	\$6.00

become a vital part of our network, significantly enhancing the connectivity and economic landscape of the region," said Mr. Raul L. Ignacio, President and General Manager of MPCALA Holdings Inc. The Silang (Aguinaldo) Interchange, a critical section of CALAX, connects directly to Aguinaldo Highway, facilitating smoother and faster travel to key tourism destination areas in Cavite, including Tagaytay and Silang. It was opened to motorists last November 8 with a

The Office of the Provincial Governor - Medical Mission Team, in collaboration with the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, organized an impactful health outreach event on February 8, 2024, at Barangay Sapang, Ternate. The event aimed to address the healthcare needs of the local community, bringing essential medical and dental services to those who may not have easy access to such facilities. One noteworthy addition to the mission was the Lab For All (LFA) truck, which played a crucial role in delivering specialized services to the residents. The LFA truck provided free Electrocardiogram (ECG) services for 30 patients, enabling early detection and monitoring of heart-related issues. Additionally, 23 individuals availed free X-ray examinations, a valuable diagnostic tool in identifying various health conditions. Furthermore, the medical mission extended its services which include free consultation and provision of medicines to 275 individuals, dental check-ups and tooth extraction to 52 patients. This comprehensive approach aimed to address various health concerns and provide immediate relief to those in need. The community members, spanning different age groups, were grateful for the opportunity to receive professional healthcare services at their doorstep. - Axel A. Sarte

“HANGGAT MAY LUPA TAYO NA GUSTONG PATUBIGAN, NANDITO ANG NIA”

Ito ang siniguro ni National Irrigation Administration (NIA) CBIMO Division Manager, Engr. Romulo Angeles, sa mga magsasaka sa bayan ng Magallanes sa Magallanes Onion Harvest Festival at Onion Production seminar sa Barangay Pacheco noong Pebrero 5, 2024.



Matatandaang taong 1999 nang makumpleto ang Pacheco Solar Pump Irrigation System na nakapagbigay ng patubig para sa 45 hektaryang lupain. Ayon sa NIA, nasa 24 Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) ang nakinabang sa nasabing proyekto. | via National Irrigation Administration Calabarzon

Sa kanyang mensahe, binigyang pansin ni Angeles ang kahalagahan ng pinagsama-samang inisyatibo upang lubos na mapakinabangan ng mga magsasaka ang kanilang mga serbisyo.

Ang mga magsasaka ay nakapagbigay ng patubig para sa 45 hektaryang lupain. Ayon sa NIA, nasa 24 Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) ang nakinabang sa nasabing proyekto. | via National Irrigation Administration Calabarzon

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(Aguinaldo) Interchange Toll Collection Starts Feb 10, 2024

CALAX has surpassed its targeted daily traffic for the recently inaugurated subsection, with an impressive daily count of 12,000 vehicles—well beyond the projected 5,000 cars and has become an essential component of the region's infrastructure. Looking ahead, CALAX is set to reach a total length of 45 kilometers by 2025, featuring eight strategically positioned interchanges: Technopark, Laguna Boulevard, Santa Rosa-Tagaytay Road, Silang East, Silang (Aguinaldo), Governor's Drive, Open Canal, and Kawit Interchange. CALAX will seamlessly connect with the Manila-Cavite Expressway (CAVITE) in Kawit, further unifying key regions. Presently, operational segments span from

Mamplasan Rotunda up to the Silang (Aguinaldo) Interchange. MPCALA Holdings Inc., a subsidiary of Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC), is the leading mobility infrastructure and solutions provider in the Philippines. As the toll road development arm of Metro Pacific Investments Corporation (MPIC), MPTC's portfolio includes the concession rights for North Luzon Expressway (NLEX), NLEX Connector Road, Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX), and Cebu-Cordova Link Expressway (CCLEX) in Cebu, in addition to CALAX and CAVITE. For questions about this press release, please email us at corp-comm@mptsouth.com.

EDITORIAL: Needed: Traffic czar

If the private sector, including business enterprises, are among those adversely affected by horrible and monstrous traffic congestion in Metro Manila, shouldn't government at least listen to what they have to say? The Management Association of the Philippines recently called on the government to appoint a traffic czar to oversee the transport situation in Metro Manila, describing the current traffic situation in the metropolis as having reached 'crisis' levels. The 73-year-old business group believes the government must realize the crisis has been the result of a failure in traffic management and a change in road and traffic management policies and practices is essential. "For this paradigm shift to happen, the MAP recommends, as a first step, the declaration of a traffic crisis and the appointment of a new traffic management team to be headed by a traffic czar appointed by the President," MAP said. The designated traffic czar, the influential business group pointed out, must be vested with full powers and authority to mobilize, direct and deploy existing government resources, both on the national and local levels. The group also recommended a holistic approach that includes organizing Metro Manila into four traffic management zones, each to be headed by a qualified traffic manager. These traffic managers would report to and be accountable to the traffic czar. MAP also proposed the designation of new "Mabuhay lanes," or secondary streets serving as alternate routes to main arterial roads such as EDSA, C4, C5 and other radial roads. It proposed the direction of traffic flows on Metro Manila streets be revised to minimize conflicts at intersections. This could be done by limiting left turns and crossings as well as prohibiting U-turns except only in suitable locations. MAP also recommended complying with the 2017 National Transport Plan drafted by NEDA prioritizing policies for mass public transport over the use of private vehicles. There's more: the government must complete the EDSA busway system and privatize the operation and maintenance of the Metro Rail Transit Line 3 and the Light Rail Transit Line 2, among others. In 2017, the Japan International Cooperation Agency estimated the Philippine economy lost P3.5 billion daily due to traffic in Metro Manila. with a dire warning that this would balloon to P5.4 billion per day in 2035 without government intervention. It's the government's move, from where we sit, and it shouldn't wait anymore for the abominable traffic in the National Capital region to descend into utter chaos and descend into what's been described as nothing less than "Carnageddon."

Commemorating the 60th Death Anniversary of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo



On the solemn occasion of the 60th Death Anniversary of General Emilio Aguinaldo, the people of Kawit, Cavite, along with esteemed guests and representatives from various sectors, gather on February 6, 2024, at the historic Aguinaldo Shrine to pay tribute to the memory of one of the Philippines' most illustrious leaders. The commemorative program commenced at 8:00 in the morning with a Holy Mass, officiated by Reverend Father Efrén Bugayong, parish priest of St. Mary Magdalene Church, highlighting the spiritual aspect of this significant occasion. Following the mass, the Philippine Navy, accompanied by the Naval Base Cavite Band and the Kawit Police Force/Cavite Tourist Police Unit, orchestrate the hoisting of the Philippine Flag - a symbol of unity and patriotism. As part of the

Comelec...

MANILA – The Commission on Elections (Comelec) announced on Friday that the issuance of voter's certification would be free of charge starting Feb. 12. In a statement, Comelec spokesperson John Rex Laudiangco said the PHP75 fee for securing the document would be scrapped starting Feb. 12, which has been declared "National Voter's Day" or "Pam-bansang Araw ng mga Botaneng Pilipino" by the Comelec en banc. "Comelec made this declaration of National Voter's Day to emphasize the importance of being a registered voter and explain the processes of registration and elections to the Filipino people," the poll body official said in a statement. A voter's certificate is a document that can serve as a temporary voter's ID card upon the request of the registered voter. It is valid for one year from the date of its issuance. The poll body official noted that those who belong to the vulnerable sector would continue to enjoy the said privilege. At the same time, Laudiangco also announced that all Comelec offices nationwide would have various activities on Feb. 12 to entertain the registrants, pique the interest of their constituents to encourage them to register and spread awareness about voter registration. "This welcoming development is part of Comelec's dynamic and continuous service to the Filipino people. The Comelec Resolution promulgating this development will be issued as soon as possible," he added. Aside from being declared the day as National Voter's Day, it also marks the start of the voter registration period for the 2025 National and Local Elections (NLE) which will last until Sept. 30. During the voter registration period, the Offices of the Election Officer (OEOs) nationwide will go out and immerse the Filipino people in the course of the following: --Offsite/Satellite Registration: to be conducted in barangays, malls, educational institutions, and other establishments --Mail Registration --Register Anywhere Program (RAP): to be conducted in all Capital Cities and Towns and Highly Urbanized Cities --Special Register Anywhere Program (SRAP): to be conducted in national government offices and agencies, schools and universities, and other public/private places. He said the transfer of voter registration venue outside of the Comelec offices and closer to the Filipino people provides accessibility, convenience, and comfort with an end goal of ensuring massive voter participation. A Filipino who is at least 18 years of age on election day on May 12, 2025, a resident of the Philippines for at least one year, and in the place wherein he/she proposes to vote for at least six months immediately preceding the 2025 midterm polls, and not otherwise disqualified by law, can register as a voter. (PNA)S

DLIG.. FROM PAGE 1

phone, videoconferencing, and other online platforms. DILG Secretary Benhur Abalos said the partnership is a sustainable way to help CWDs and their families get the support they need. "May bayad ba ito? Meron. Anong bayad? 'Yung magulang dadalhin ang anak niya, ito-therapy at tuturuan ang magulang. Pag-uwi nila, ulit-ulitin sa bahay nila," he said. "Ang bayad dun ay yung susunod na batch, yung magulang na iyon, ia-assist yung susunod na magulang. It's moving forward," Abalos elaborated. "Kung makikita niyo, it's very sustainable. And it's not only intervention of the young children, but empowering also the parents," he continued. Abalos likewise expressed his gratitude to REACH Foundation for being a long-time partner organization of the DILG in helping CWDs and their families. "These are our heroes. Our experience should be shared all over the country and, of course, what REACH is doing." He added they will explore the possibility of including the care and support being provided by LGUs to CWDs as one of the assessment points in handing out DILG's Seal of Good Local Governance award. REACH Foundation President Prof. Abelardo "Archie" Apollo I. David, Jr. said that teletherapy is an innovative approach to therapy that lets CWDs receive needed care through a secure video connection. He pointed out that there are approximately 270,000 CWDs, or one child under 15 years old, for every five PWDs in the Philippines. REACH Foundation is a non-stock, non-profit organization established in 2005 in response to the need for adequate and appropriate rehabilitation services for less privileged PWDs. DILG.GOV

Enchanted Kingdom shares magic, love and prosperity this February



Enchanted Kingdom, the first and only world class theme park in the Philippines, announces its Chinese New Year and Valentine's offerings for the month of February.

EK welcomes back "Enchanting Dinner in the Sky" featuring a Japanese themed dinner for couples and groups while riding the Wheel of Fate. Enjoy magical views, bring home photo souvenirs and red string bracelets as you create your enchanted story with us. The Enchanting Dinner in the Sky also includes regular day pass tickets and will run on all weekends of February and on Valentine's Day.

In celebration of the Year of the Dragon, EK brings their EnChinese New Year Promo. Family and friends will feel the magic of prosperity as they savor an EKsclusive Chinese lauriat set meal good for four per-sons, inclusive of four regular day pass tickets starting February 9 to 29. Book this promo now through the EK Online Store.

Meanwhile, Asia's Got Talent Grand Finalist Power Duo will headline EK's Chinese New Year Celebration on Saturday, February 10. They will be joined by IOX Dancers and EK's very own Victoria's Way and Kingsmen. Park guests will witness the traditional



Unmasked: An exhibit of photos from the field by Howie Severino and Atom Araullo at SM City Dasmariñas

Veteran Journalists Howie Severino and Atom Araullo shared photos of their I-Witness journey in a photo exhibit called UNMASKED at SM City Dasmariñas on January 28 to February 4, 2024.

UNMASKED photo exhibit features the stories Atom and Howie encountered during the coverage and shoot for I-witness. The exhibit brought the public into the



"Unmasked" will run until May 26, 2024. The public can also catch the exhibit at SM City San Pablo, SM City Calamba, SM City Tanza, SM City Molino, SM City Trece Martires, SM City Batangas, SM City Lipa, SM City Lucena, SM City Daet, SM City Naga, SM City Legazpi, and SM City Sorsogon.

#LuckInLoveAtSMCityCalamba this Valentine's Day!

If you are looking for a great way to spend Valentine's Day then come visit SM City Calamba for a unique and romantic celebration for everyone.

Indulge your loved ones with a shopping spree or give them that pamper day kind of date. Cele-brate love as you enjoy the great discounts and amazing deals on your favorite food tenants. Get ready to be serenaded with the romantic ambient instrumentals of the Love Playlist on Feb 14. What great way to end the day and capture these memories than to have your photos taken at the Boo Day Valentine installation.

Have a romantic and memorable Valentine's Day celebration only at SM City Calamba!



real world, make them disconnected from gadgets and interact with other people at the exhibit area at the main mall event center.

The exhibit launch was attended by the journalists themselves, Mr. Atom Araullo and Ms. Howie Severino. Both of them spoke about the exhibit and their lives as journalists. They also had a tour around the exhibit with the participating students from different colleges and universities in Cavite.



SM City Dasmariñas was honored to open the Unmasked exhibit with journalists (right to left) Mr. Howie Severino, Mr. Atom Araullo and SM Dasmariñas Assistant Mall Manager Mr. Charles Yap.

February 14-20, 2024

Strawberry Ice Cream at Snack Time! Busan PH at SM City Rosario is now open!



Unique Samgyupsal vibe is now set to be experienced at SM City Rosario with the recent opening of BUSAN PH. They offer variety of Korean noodles and stew, samgyup and Korean street food for a very reasonable price. Aside from the Korean food experience, you can also enjoy the restaurant's Busan Train centerpiece that brings you to a complete Korean experience. Visit BUSAN PH at the first floor of SM City Rosario. (Photos by Lakwa-tsero Caviteño Travels)

House panel directed to review PhilHealth charter to enhance benefits

MANILA — The House Committee on Health will conduct a thorough review of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) charter to expand patients' benefits.

Speaker Martin Romualdez on Tuesday directed the review that specifically targets an increase in benefits, including coverage of at least 50 percent of the cost in private hospital wards and free examinations for the early detection of deadly diseases, such as cancer.

Early cancer detection measures would include critical diagnostic exams like X-rays for lung cancer, mammography for

breast cancer, and the human papillomavirus vaccine to prevent cervical cancer, among others.

In a statement, Romualdez said there is a need for PhilHealth to function as a health maintenance organization, focusing its resources on safeguarding the health of the populace rather than investing in commercial banks and bonds.

"With substantial annual allocations from Congress and regular contributions from private employees, there is no excuse for PhilHealth to scrimp on coverage. The effectiveness of the Universal Health Care system depends on our ability to

provide for our citizens, ensuring they receive the medical attention and preventive care they deserve," he said.

The directive reflects the government's commitment to improving health services and making healthcare more accessible and affordable for all Filipinos.

The review is not just about increasing coverage but also about reevaluating PhilHealth's investment strategies to ensure that funds are utilized in ways that directly benefit the health and well-being of the Filipino people, added Romualdez.

The hearing will start Wednesday. (PNA)

DTI-Laguna Starts Weekly Price Monitoring of Basic Necessities and Prime Commodities

Victoria, Laguna — Trade and Industry Laguna Provincial Director Christian Ted Tungohan orders the weekly monitoring of the price and supply of basic necessities such as, but not limited to, canned sardines, processed milk, powdered milk, coffee, bread, instant noodles, salt, detergent soap, bottled water, and candles including other prime commodities such as, but not limited to, canned meat, vinegar, patis, soy sauce, toilet soap, paper, school supplies, batteries, flour, cement, G.I. Sheets, hollow blocks, construction nails, light bulbs, electrical supplies, and steel wires.

Republic Act No. 7581, as amended by R.A. 10623, or the Price Act gives the Department of Trade and Industry and other implementing agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture, Department of Health, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and Department of Energy, the mandate of ensuring the availability of basic necessities and prime commodities at reasonable prices at all times without denying legitimate businesses a fair return on investment.

Thus, the DTI Laguna Office encourages consumers to report retailers, distributors, and manufacturers that sell basic necessities above their suggested retail prices or uncertified items by calling 09175004317 or through email at r04a.laguna@dti.gov.ph (TFTawingan, DTI-Laguna). PR



P7.2-M halaga ng tulong-pinansyal, ipinamahagi ng DA Calabarzon sa maliliit na magpapalay ng unang distrito ng Quezon



Higit sa Php7.2-M ang kabuuang halaga ng tulong-pinansyal na ipinamahagi ng #DACalabarzon sa mga maliliit na magpapalay ng unang distrito ng Quezon noong ika-18 ng Enero, 2024.

Ito ay sa pagpatuloy ng programang Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund-Rice Farmers Financial Assistance (RCEF-RFFA) alinudod sa Rice Tariffication Law.

Pinangunahan ang pamamahagi nina Regional Executive Director Milo delos Reyes, Quezon 1st District Representative at House Committee Chairman on Agriculture and Food, Cong. Wilfrido "Mark" Enverga, Quezon Governor Angelina Tan Representative: Vice Governor Anacleto "Third" Alcala III, at iba pang bahagi ng lokal na pamahalaan at DA-4A.

Kasabay din nito ang pagkakaloob sa limang magsasaka ng limang four-wheel tractor at dalawang combine harvester sa pangunguna ni DA-PhilMech Director III Joel Dator. PR