

Death toll from S. Korea rains climbs to 32

M A S S I V E FLOODING. The death toll from flooding and landslides caused by heavy rains in South Korea has reached 32. The heavy rains have also injured several others. (Anadolu) **ANKARA** — The death toll from flooding and landslides caused by heavy rains in South Korea has shot up to 32 as rescuers recovered six more bodies from a bus trapped in a flooded underground tunnel in the central town of Osong, Seoul-based Yonhap news reported on Sunday, citing government and rescue authorities. Over 10 people are missing while thousands evacuated their homes due to rain dam-

age. The death toll from the underpass flooding stood at seven, as of Sunday morning, and is expected to rise further as several people are believed to be trapped inside the tunnel. Most fatalities were reported in the southeastern province of North Gyeongsang, where 17 people died due to landslides and housing collapses, and nine others are missing. One more person was reported missing in Busan, the office said. Thirteen people have also been injured nationwide as a result of the recent downpours. Over 7,000 peo-

ple from 13 cities and provinces have so far evacuated their homes. Heavy rains have also left 211 roads closed. All train operations have been suspended, although KTX bullet trains on some sections resumed operations. The central Chungcheong provinces and the southern Jeolla and Gyeongsang provinces may experience up to 300 mm of additional rain through Tuesday, according to the state-run weather agency. Landslide warnings across the nation have also been upgraded to the highest level of “grave.” Prime Minister

Han Duck-soo has vowed “prompt” government efforts to rescue the missing people. In neighboring Japan, a man died and more than 2,000 people were evacuated as heavy rain pounded the north-eastern Akita Prefecture over the weekend, local authorities said Sunday. The man was found in a flooded car on farmland in Gojome at around 7:10 a.m. and was later confirmed dead, Tokyo -based Kyodo News reported. Around 2,100 people were staying at 77 evacuation centers in the city of Akita as of Sunday morning. (Anadolu)

DOF to British biz community: Infra – centerpiece of PBBM admin’s growth strategy

The British Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (BCCP) hosted “A Year After: Build, Better, More” on July 13, 2023 at the Fairmont Hotel Makati and brought Philippine government and British business representatives together to discuss the key achievements and economic developments a year into the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. Department of Finance (DOF) Undersecretary Alu C. Dorotan Tiuseco delivered a presentation on behalf of Finance Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno on the high-impact projects and fiscal reforms that will drive economic growth in the medium and long term. “Smart, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure, with its high multiplier effects, will serve as the centerpiece of our growth strategy,” she said. On March 9, 2023, the PBBM administration approved 194 high-impact infrastructure flagship projects (IFPs) on irrigation, water supply and flood management, digital connectivity, health, power and energy, and agriculture among others. Some of these projects include the Tarlac-Pangasinan-La Union Expressway (TPLEX) Extension Project, Metro Ma-

nila Expressway C6, Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Expressway, and the North-South Commuter Railway (NSCR). With the goal of maintaining infrastructure spending at 5 to 6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) annually, the government will bank on the strategies laid out in the country’s first-ever Medium-Term Fiscal Framework (MTFF) to reduce the fiscal deficit, promote fiscal sustainability, and enable robust growth. Undersecretary Dorotan Tiuseco shared that to further liberalize high-growth sectors, the Philippines opened up its renewable energy (RE) sector to full foreign ownership in order to speed up the transition to a sustainable energy mix and raise the share of RE in the power generation mix to 35 percent by 2030 and 50 percent by 2040. Companies engaged in solar, wind, hydro, and tidal energy can now invest in the Philippines’ RE sector. Furthermore, the amendments to the Retail Trade Liberalization Act (RTLA), Foreign Investments Act (FIA), and the Public Service Act (PSA) relaxed foreign restrictions on investments in the country.

During the event,



Ronaldo earns Guinness Record as highest-paid athlete of 2023

MOSCOW — Portuguese football player Cristiano Ronaldo has earned a Guinness World Records title for the highest annual earnings for an athlete in 2023, according to a statement released on the organization’s website. “For the first time since 2017 (and third time overall), Cristiano Ronaldo has topped Forbes’ list of the world’s highest-paid athletes, earning himself a Guinness World Records title for the highest annual earnings for an athlete in 2023,” the statement reads. Afterwards, the guest speakers participated in a moderated panel discussion on advancing the infrastructure program to expound on the strategies and initiatives that can further boost economic resilience and sustainable development in the Philippines. The BCCP is a non-profit organization that represents the British business community in the Philippines, with over 300 member companies and individuals and a membership network of over 1,200 entrepreneurs and senior executives of multinational corporations and SMEs. The Chamber supports the development of business and social interests between the British and Philippine communities. DOF.GOV

DBM approves release of P48M for completion of Cavite Drug Rehabilitation Center

MANILA -- Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman approved on July 7 the release of over P48.8 million to the Department of Health (DOH) to complete the implementation of additional construction works of the Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Center (DATRC) in Trece Martires, Cavite. “Among the priorities of the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. is to not just fully enforce the law when it comes to illegal drug use and abuse but also on rehabilitation of victims or drug users,” Secretary Pangandaman said. The fund will be chargeable against the Grant Proceeds from the Japan International Cooperation Agency – Program for Consolidated Rehabilitation of Illegal Drug Users (JICA – CARE), Automatic Appropriations under FY 2023 of the General Appropriations Act (GAA). “The government will see to it that the upkeep of the country’s existing facilities on drug abuse treatment and rehabilitation will continue by allotting necessary budget for that purpose,” the Budget Secretary added. (DBM)



PH positivity rate dips to 5.6% as of July 15

Bacoor, Comelec hold confab for merger plebiscite

Silang reports 1st year of accomplishments



Arrival Honors was accorded to PBGEN FLYNN E DONGBO, Team Leader, Field Evaluation and Validation Team accompanied by PRO4A Regional Director, PBGEN CARLITO M GACES during the Field Evaluation and Validation for CY 2023 Best Police Regional Office held today July 14, 2023 at Camp BGEN Vicente P Lim, Calamba City Laguna. PRO4



CARD MBA, CIC ink partnership to share microinsurance expertise



In this Photo (from left to right): CIC Life Assurance Ltd. Managing Director Mr. Meshack Miyogo, CARD MRI Founder and Chairman Emeritus Dr. Jaime Aristotle B. Alip, CARD MBA Chief Executive Officer Ms. Group Chairman Dr. Nelson Kuria, and CARD MBA Deputy Director for Admin and Finance Ms. Janet D. Caneco. Jocelyn D. Dequito, CIC Insurance Group Chief Executive Officer Mr. Patrick Nyaga, CIC Insurance

CARD Mutual Benefit Association (MBA), Inc., a member institution of the CARD Mutually Reinforcing Institutions (CARD MRI) and the CIC Insurance Group Plc. of Kenya, Africa, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on June 1, 2023, at the CARD MBA Head Office, San Pablo City, Laguna. The MOU aims to share knowledge and expertise on microinsurance where both parties will complement. CIC is the largest insurance group in Kenya, Africa, while CARD MBA remains as the biggest mutual microinsurance in Philippines. CARD MBA shall support CIC with the establishment of a Microinsurance Academy, operationalization of a Microinsurance Company, and development of life and non-life microinsurance products. On the other hand, CARD MBA shall learn from CIC’s expertise on non-life insurance and asset management. Ultimately, a continuous learning exchange program between the parties shall be established. The partnership was conceptualized and facilitated during the two parties’ attendance to the 100th year anniversary celebration of the International Cooperative and Mutual Insurance Federation (ICMIF) Foundation spearheaded by its President, Mr. Sabbir Patel in Rome, Italy. The MOU shall be in effect for three years (2023-2026) and shall be renewed based on mutual agreement of the parties.

EDITORIAL: Rising to El Niño's challenge

Reassuring that the government is prepared for El Niño, a warming of the ocean surface, or above-average sea surface temperatures, in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.

National Economic and Development Authority Undersecretary Rosemarie Edillon said with preparations and mitigation measures in place, the country is expected to be up to the challenge of the weather phenomenon.

In 1982-1983, El Niño-related droughts affected 450,000 hectares of farmland in the Philippines and the most severe El Niño occurred in 1997-1998, when rainfall fell to half of historical levels, causing drought in two-thirds of this basically agricultural economy..

As early as March this year, climate monitoring and analyses by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration or PAGASA suggested the unusual warming of sea surface temperatures along the equatorial Pacific.

On twinkle toes, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ordered government agencies to prepare for the possible impact of El Niño, ensure "protocol-based and scientific" long-term solutions, and come up with a campaign to generate public awareness of water and energy conservation.

According to Undersecretary Edillon, "We always have El Niño. Three years in, three years out,...Its

impact really depends on how well we prepare for it. The people already know how to deal with it with help from government agencies."

For one, the Department of Agriculture is mapping out the areas that could be negatively affected by the dry spell while the Department of Social Welfare and Development said it has stockpiled food and non-food items, ready to be augmented by local government units.

Edillon added some areas in Luzon are already experiencing dry spell, and 36 more provinces across the country are expected to be hit by dry spell by December.

Moderate El Niño is seen by the end of 2023 and there is an 86 percent probability that El Niño will become moderate between November 2023 and January 2024.

PAGASA climate monitoring chief Ana Liza Solis told a public briefing those with health condition should take precaution against high temperatures and advised the public to conserve water and check for water leaks, as well as to save energy.

She added if the El Niño prolongs, "there is a possibility that it [2024] could be one of the highest (hottest) year on record."

Currently, weak El Niño persists, and this could possibly result in dry spell or drought in the next two months.

Officials have noted that reduction in rainfall is likely, and, if this prolongs, high temperature will prevail, especially towards next year.

DA-4A hinihimok ang mga magsasaka na maging PhilGAP Certified ang kanilang sakahan

Patuloy ang paghimok ng Department of Agriculture IV-CALABARZON (DA-4A) sa mga magsasaka na maging Philippine Good Agricultural Practices (PhilGAP) certified ang kanilang sakahan. Kaugnay nito, nagsagawa ang DA-4A ng PhilGAP information caravan noong ika-4 ng Hulyo, 2023 sa Lipa City, Batangas.

Layunin nito na maipabatid sa mga magsasaka at mga samahan ang kahalagahan ng food safety habang tumutugon sa pangangailangan ng merkado at mga konsumer sa dekalidad at ligtas na pagkain sa pamamagitan ng pagkuha ng sertipikasyon mula sa mga kinatawan PhilGAP.

Ang naturang sertipikasyon ang magpapatunay na ang isang sakahan ay sumunod sa mga alituntunin patungkol sa kalidad ng produkto, food safety, pangangalaga sa kapaligiran, at kalusugan o kapakanan ng mga mangagawa.



Ayon kay Regional Executive Director Milo delos Reyes, ang agrikultura ang pag-asa ng paglago ng ekonomiya, sa pamamagitan ng pagkuha ng sertipikasyon at pagsunod sa alituntunin ng PhilGAP, mas tataas ang ani kasabay ang presyo nito at makakasigurado na ligtas ang pagkain ating kakainin.

Samantala, nagkaroon pakikipag-ugnayan ang mga dumalong samahan ng mga magsasaka sa posibleng pagbebentahan ng kanilang GAP-Certified products tulad ng Mama Sitas, 7-Eleven, Dizon Farms at ang Longwoods Agri Farms. Ito ay sa pangunguna ng Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division. PR

ABALOS:PHL COMMITTED TO ACHIEVING SENDAI DISASTER RISK REDUCTION FRAMEWORK GOALS

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said the Philippine government is committed to implement decisive actions to achieve the goals of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) 2015-2030 in support of global actions to reduce disaster risk and mitigate the effects of climate change.

During the courtesy visit of the United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Chief Marco Toscano-Rivalta recently, DILG Secretary Benhur Abalos said the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. is bent to carry out priority actions to ensure that the country is on track in achieving the goals of SFDRR.

"Governments and states should work together and act with dispatch on disaster risks and climate change issues. The Philippines takes these issues seriously and vows to prioritize actions on the Sendai Framework," he said.

The Sendai Framework provides member states with concrete actions to protect development gains from the risk of disaster. It recognizes that the State has the primary role to reduce disaster risk, but that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders, including local government units (LGUs).

Abalos said the Philippine government, through the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), launched the Sendai Framework Monitoring in March 2018 to monitor and track the progress of the implementation of the targets and priorities of the Sendai Framework. A Technical Working Group was also created, of which the DILG is a member, to address data gaps and propose measures to streamline available data for SFDRR reporting.

On the part of the DILG, he said the Department will provide LGUs with capacity development interventions continuously to strengthen their implementation of DRRM policies and plans; strengthen local leadership governance; empower communities; highlight local DRR practices for replication; and emphasize all available science including indigenous knowledge.

During the courtesy visit, Abalos also shared updates on the country's preparations for the Philippines' hosting of the 2024 Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR).

The APMCDRR is the primary regional forum for strengthening DRR coordination and cooperation in Asia and the Pacific and putting the Sendai Framework into effect.

With the DILG Secretary during the meeting in Camp Crame were Undersecretaries Lord A. Villanueva, Oscar Valenzuela and Serafin Barretto Jr.; Assistant Secretary Lilian De Leon; LGA Executive Director Thelma T. Vecina; and Central Office Disaster Information Coordinating Center Chief Edgar Allan Tabell. DILG GOV

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51 CALABARZON MSMEs graduate from DTI 4-A's 2023 KMME-MME Program

51 CALABARZON micro, small, and medium enterprises graduated from the Department of Trade and Industry Region 4-A's KAPATID Mentor ME-Money and Market Encounter (KMME-MME) Program on July 11, 2023 via Zoom. In partnership with the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship-Go Negosyo, KMME-MME Online Multisectoral Batch Graduation was conducted after the mentees' successful presentation of their Business Improvement Plan (BIP) to an expanded panel of evaluators composed of representatives from the banks, online market platforms, and other business support organizations.

"This year marks the 8th year of the KMME Program, and it has never been this fulfilling to witness how this program produced so many successful entrepreneurs over the years. I am proud to say that this is where we get our champions, our future successful businessmen and women, and of course, our future mentors. More than the success, it is the story behind it that makes everything worth it—the failures

that built your character, the hard-learned discipline, and your courage along the way. I hope these shape your whole entrepreneurial journey, spreading contagious positivity to your fellow entrepreneurs and inspiring those that are still dreaming," said DTI 4-A OIC-Assistant Regional Director Revelyn A. Cortez in her welcome remarks.

The KMME-MME Online is designed to integrate MME into the regular KMME Program. This aims to provide a platform for existing and aspiring MSMEs to learn and be inspired by the entrepreneurial journey as mentors online, adapt their business strategies in responding to the challenges of the new normal business environment, be the channel for capacity building on an online platform using the KMME modules and canned lectures via webinar, and provide an avenue for business mentorship of the waitlisted MSMEs across the regions and enhance their resiliency through a crisis.

"I am so proud of the hardwork, dedication, and willpower demon-



strated by our MSMEs to reboot their business in order to recover from the pandemic and face the new normal. I'm sure that the KMME-MME Program has again produced graduates with the mindset and values of successful entrepreneurs. As graduates of KMME, you are among those who know the secret of the power of mentorship. Under the KMME program, you learn from the best and you benefit from the past mistakes and successes of our mentors," said DTI Regional Operations Group Undersecretary Blesila A. Lantayona in her congratulatory message.

The graduate-mentees completed

the 10-module program: entrepreneurial mind-setting; marketing mindset; business model canvas; operations management; digitalization; supply and value chain; enterprise accounting/financial management; human resources/organization management; product development and marketing expansion and internationalization; and good governance & ethics.

"After closing my computer shop business because of the pandemic last 2020, I decided to take a risk, try again, and open up a new business to adopt to this new normal. Dahil sa KMME-MME Program, nabigyan ako ng lakas na loob na hara-

pin ang mga challenges. Marami akong natutunan sa mga pamamaraan sa pagnenegosyo. Dahil sa DTI, nagbago ang tingin ko sa gobyerno. Dahil sa programang ito, nabigyan ng pag-asa ang maliit na negosyo na gaya namin," said Mr. Chicoi Gonzales, owner of Kuku Express Solutions, Inc. in Cavite, in his testimonial.

Another MSME from Laguna, Mr. Tyrone Jasper Reodica, owner of Let Eat Go Food and Beverage House in Laguna, expressed his gratitude to the DTI for the assistance and guidance in his start-up business.

"Natulungan po ako ng DTI to realize the importance of having a

business plan and applying digitalization in my business. Starting a business is not easy. However, when having both a plan and passion in everything that you do, nothing is impossible," added Reodica.

"We are elated that another batch of talented and hardworking mentees were able to graduate this year. We cannot wait to witness what's in store for you after applying all your learning from the program. But one thing is for sure, lots of wonderful opportunities await you," said DTI 4-A OIC-Regional Director Marissa C. Argente.

This is the fourth year of KMME-MME Online in CALABARZON. Overall, there are 750 graduate-mentees from 2016-2023 in the region.

The KMME-MME Online is a public-private partnership program between the DTI and the PCE-Go Negosyo to provide business coaching and mentorship for entrepreneurs across the country. If you want to be a mentee of the KMME-MME Online, visit your nearest DTI Regional and Provincial Office or Negosyo Center nationwide.

US-Canada...

nance institution FinDev Canada; pension funds Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, OPTrust, Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System, and Healthcare of Ontario Pension Plan; and investment management companies Black Creek and the Vanguard expressed keen interest in the Philippines'

public-private partnership opportunities in infrastructure, investments in sustainability and energy transition, and sovereign issuances in the pipeline.

Closing the roadshow activities, Secretary Diokno and Secretary Pangandaman led the market close ceremony at the Toronto Stock Ex-

change (TSX), the largest exchange in Canada, on July 14, 2023. During a meeting before the market close, TSX Head of Government Affairs David Clarke presented opportunities to deepen capital in mining – a major industry in Canada – in the Philippines and talked about the huge presence of TSX-listed companies with mining activities in Asia and the Philippines.

The non-deal roadshow was organized and supported by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas-Investor Relations Group (BSP-IRG), Department of Finance (DOF), BofA Securities, Canada-ASEAN Business Council, Global Affairs Canada, Citi, Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs, HSBC, Morgan Stanley, Philippine Embassy in Canada, Standard Chartered Bank, Sun Life, Manulife, and UBS. DOF.GOV

Editorial Office

CAVITE OFFICE : Bldg. 5 Lot 69 Barcelona Ph. 2, Buhay Na Tubig, Imus, Cavite
Mobile No. ----- 09556586520 / 0916473126
TIN NO. ----- 237765418-000

Email ad: newssraight172@gmail.com
soberanmavic@gmail.com

EDITORIAL BOARD

Publisher : Maria Victoria S. Soberano
Editor-In-chief : Dominador "RAEL" Soberano
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Published Weekly by: STRAIGHT NEWS



From Page 3

From Page 1

PH...

MANILA – The country's positivity rate, or the number of people testing positive for the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), has decreased to 5.6 percent as of July 15.

Over Twitter on Saturday night, OCTA Research Group fellow Dr. Guido David noted the figure was a 0.8-percent decline from last week's (July 8) 6.4 percent.

"The Department of Health (DOH) reported 283 new cases, two deaths, 431 recoveries. About 56 of the new cases are from the National Capital Region, projecting 200 to 300 new cases the next day (July 16)," he said.

To date, the country's overall tally of Covid-19 infections has reached 4,169,644 with 5,879 active cases.

The total number of Covid-19 deaths stands at 66,510.

The DOH's latest bio-surveillance report showed 850 samples were sequenced on June 30 to July 7 by the Philippine Genome Center. It logged that 92 percent of cases were XBB types.

"The XBB 2.3 or Acrux is the most dominant nationwide 30 percent followed by XBB 1.16 or Arcturus at 24 percent," David said.

The two were followed by XBB 1.9.1 or Hyperion at 16 percent or 135 cases; XBB 1.5 at 8 percent or 65 cases; XBB 1.9.2 at 4 percent or 35 cases; and BA 2.3.20 at 2 percent or 20 cases.

Meantime, the remaining 11 percent or 90 cases were other XBB types. (PNA

Purefoods Hormel Company, Inc. takes part in HACCP Training



The Department of Science and Technology - CALABARZON (DOST-CALABARZON), through its Provincial Science and Technology Office in Cavite (DOST-PSSTO Cavite) conducted training in Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) for 28 employees of Purefoods-Hormel Company, Inc. – Cavite Plant (Purefoods), through a combination of lectures and workshops. DOST-CALABARZON Food Safety Team members, Ms. Anna Marie S. Daigan and Ms. Niña Sherylle S. Giron, trained the participants on HACCP during the two-day activity. The speakers discussed the details of the process of HACCP and recommended ways to prevent, control, and reduce hazards in all stages of food production: from purchase, receipt, and storage to production, handling, and packaging. At the end of the 2-day training, one of the participants, Mr. Soza shared that the HACCP training is very useful in their work. He cited that through HACCP they were able to learn the prevention and control measures to eliminate and minimize food safety risks on the product.

At DOST, we provide programs and activities that will inspire action to prevent, detect and manage foodborne risks, contributing to food security, human health, economic prosperity, market opportunity, and sustainable development, thus, we assist SMEs, cooperatives, associations, and micro-enterprises engaged in food processing on their journey in providing quality and safe food.

For more information, send us an email at cavite@ro4a.dost.gov.ph.

Business-FriendlyValenzuelaCityWelcomesGoNegosyo's3MOnWheels

Valenzuela City lived up to its reputation as one of the Philippines's most business-friendly cities when hundreds of its active and aspiring entrepreneurs trooped to Go Negosyo's 3M on Wheels last July 1, 2023 at the SM City Valenzuela.

"The vibrancy of the MSMEs in Valenzuela only shows how important local government support is to encouraging small businesses to thrive," said Go Negosyo founder Joey Concepcion, who also thanked the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Valenzuela Inc. for advocating for the growth of the city's MSMEs.

The city's MSMEs lined up as early as 3 a.m, outside the mall to avail of the free entrepreneurship coaching from seasoned entrepreneurs and businessmen on how to start their own business



or improve their existing ones.

In his welcome address, Valenzuela City Mayor Wes Gatchalian shared how the city worked to achieve ease-of-doing-business for both big and small businesses. "Entrepreneurs are not afraid to open businesses here," he told the audience. "Walang fixer,

hindikailangan ng fixer because we are fully digitalized." He shared that the city has its Paspas Permit program, which can issue business permits in a matter of seconds, with a post-audit thoroughly providing assessment of these permits.

Veteran mentor and The French Baker

founder/CEO Johnlu Koa delivered an inspirational speech, and encouraged attendees to continue their learning journey as they pursue their businesses.

Yolly Dela Cruz, President of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Valenzuela Inc., inspired the active and aspiring entrepreneurs

to continue growing their businesses. "Don't be contented with what you are now; learn to fly high and go global," she said. She, along with Tess Ngan Tian and Gene Sy of PCCI Valenzuela Inc., personally mentored some of the small entrepreneurs.

Content creator Queen Hera, who owns

Heera Glow and Heera Company, delivered an informative lecture on How to Be a Brand Influencer, sharing her own tips and tricks on how small businesses can maximize digital technology promote and market their products and services. The event also featured an expo where attendees can consult in-person about funding solutions as well as market opportunities.

All active and aspiring entrepreneurs went home with Go Negosyo shirts and copies of the popular entrepreneurship book "21 Steps to Start and Grow Your Business", while lucky attendees went home with cash prizes from the raffle draw. One lucky attendee went home with a livelihood package worth Php20,000 from Valenzuela City-based food manufacturing company, CDO Foodsphere. PR

Statement of Skyway O&M Corp. on the heavy flooding at Skyway At-Grade Bicutan

We would like to express our sincerest apologies to motorists affected by the heavy flooding at the Skyway At Grade (ground level) Bicutan in Parañaque City following continuing moderate to heavy rains since 6:00 PM of Wednesday, July 12 until today, Thursday, July 13 resulting in heavy traffic on both directions of the expressway.

Historically, this portion of the Skyway System has remained flood-free and we have consistently strived to maintain a smooth and reliable traffic flow for our valued users. Our maintenance teams conduct regular inspections at the drainage system to remove all obstructions such as sludge and garbage.

But over the past few months, the rise in floodwaters at the carriageway has become evident.

These incidents

were primarily due to a drainage system problem outside of the Skyway system, which we traced in February this year, due to ongoing construction works in the area that are unrelated to our operations and outside our direct control.

Since then we have been in constant co-ordination with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and other government and private sector stakeholders in the area to find a way to address the issue together.

In fact, we lent some of our equipment to help drain floodwater faster and deployed our maintenance teams to siphon off water from the carriageway.

One of the stakeholders in the area is also currently working on the portion of the affected drainage system within their property, with

the contractor committing to finish the outfall this month.

We are hopeful that this corrective action will restore the smooth flow of floodwaters to the nearby creek and put an end to the flooding at Skyway At-Grade Bicutan, which has disrupted the traffic flow and greatly inconvenienced our riding public.

In the meantime, we will continue to work with all involved stakeholders in the area to resolve the issue in the soonest possible time and ensure efficient and safe traffic flow on the expressway.PR



Ugnayan sa Barangay in City of Baco



Fostering community unity and empowerment. In an effort to promote community development and strengthen bonds among residents, the Cavite Provincial Government has launched again the Ugnayan sa Barangay program in the City of Baco on July 6, 2023 at the Strike Gymnasium. This program serves as a platform for fostering unity,

empowering individuals, and enhancing the overall quality of life within the barangay and aims to create a thriving and harmonious community.

During the program, Governor Jonvic C. Remulla actively interacted with the residents of Barangay Talaba 4, 5, and 6, together with the local officials headed by Mayor Strike Revilla. Also in at-

tendance were 2nd District Representative Lani Revilla and Agimat Party-list Representative Bryan Revilla.

In summary, through its active engagement of residents and promotion of open communication, the program has emerged as a powerful catalyst for driving positive transformation within the barangay. JDP

POINT OF VIEW 100 ways to Improve Mental Health

- 73.Be aware of your triggers and avoid them.
- 74.Listen to inspirational and uplifting TED Talks.
- 75.Take a quick nap. (Try not to nap after 3 PM, so you do not interfere with your sleep schedule)
- 76.Join a team sport.
- 77.Take a continuing education class.
- 78.Get educated about your mental health to feel more empowered.
- 79.Say no to things you do not enjoy, and yes to the things that bring you joy.
- 80.Make your well-being a priority.
- 81.Have an accountability partner check in with regularly.
- 82.Attend group therapy and / or support groups in your community.
- 83.Practice deep breathing exercises to reduce stress and anxiety.
- 84.Practice progressive muscle relaxation to release physical tension.
- 85.Limit exposure to news and negative media content.
- 86.Engage in laughter therapy, such as watching a comedy show or funny videos.
- 87.Volunteer for a cause that aligns with your values and passions.
- 88.Practice acts of kindness towards others, fostering a sense of connection and purpose.
- 89.Set healthy boundaries with toxic or draining relationships.
- 90.Try aromatherapy with calming scents like lavender, chamomile, or eucalyptus.
- 91.Practice visualization techniques for relaxation and goal setting.
- 92.Engage in grounding exercises to stay present and centered.
- 93.Practice assertiveness to express your needs and feelings openly.
- 94.Engage in a digital detox day to reduce screen time and promote mindfulness.
- 95.Practice the 5-4-3-2-1 technique during moments of anxiety: Identify five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste.
- 96.Practice forgiveness meditation to let go of past grievances and find inner peace.
- 97.Engage in grounding exercises, such as walking barefoot on grass or soil, to connect with the earth's energy.
- 98.Set healthy boundaries with work or school commitments to avoid burnout.
- 99.Use a weighted blanket to promote relaxation and improve sleep quality.
- 100.Spend time with animals, whether you have a pet or volunteer at an animal shelter.
- 101.Engage in breathing exercises before bed to improve sleep and reduce nighttime anxiety.

Silang...

SILANG, Cavite: Mayor Kevin Anarna presented before the local leaders, local government staff, teachers, local investors, and leaders of 64 villages here the town's achievements during their first year of service in his first State of the Municipality Address on Friday, July 14, at the Cavite State University gymnasium in Barangay Biga 1.

Anarna cited the Commission on Audit report 2022, in which government revenue collection recorded P431,428,000, an increase of 13 percent from the previous collection.

The employment rate increased by 80 percent in the first half of 2023 compared to 25 percent in 2022.

In his 24-page report, Anarna stated the establishment of "Iskolar ng Bayan" which will provide financial assistance to selected scholars of 50 students who will receive P60,000 per school year grant.

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vacy Policy.

"We have strengthened micro, small and medium enterprises, or MSMEs, for more opportunities to earn a living. We were able to send 161 Silangeños for seasonal farm workers in South Korea, which we visited recently," Anarna added.

"In my first year of leadership as the new mayor of our town, Bagong Silang, we have overcome many trials and problems. What used to be abandoned is now a town that is looked up to. It's only the first year of our administration but we have come a long way. The whole Silang can feel the change," Mayor Anarna said.

He noted the local government unit (LGU) issued and gave away 37,000 sets of school supplies, from school bags to notebooks and pens, plus 10,000 hygiene kits.

In terms of social services, there were 5,035 Silangeños who benefited from their door-to-door strategy of providing financial assistance to senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

"We will also con-

tinue to give 4Ps (Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program) which has reached 1,982 and it will be increased soon. We are organizing the Pamilihang Bayan for a decent and clean public market to be pleasant for consumers," he added.

Silang also increased the equipment of the local police force. The LGU bought additional weapons, ballistic shields, and above all, six units of Philippine National Police (PNP) patrol cars and a SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics) van that police can use to quickly respond to any situation. The mayor revealed the reconstruction of the pending PNP building and Rural Health Office left behind by the previous administration. The crime rate in the area decreased by 389 from January-June 2023 compared to January-June 2022 with 705 cases.

He also presented the procurement of new uniforms for the personnel of the local Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) and Bureau of Fire Protection. Additional fire trucks of high-quality

were also given that will help the BFP staff for faster response in putting out fires in case of an emergency.

Anarna said when he assumed the mayoral seat, there were 192 CCTVs that were installed but only 22 were working due to last year's onslaught of Typhoon "Paeng."

"This is very little in a town with 64 villages. That's why the LGU immediately increased it, and right now, there are 140 CCTVs that are working and actively monitored by the traffic monitoring team, road safety, and surveillance in public areas," the mayor said.

For tourism promotion, the LGU's Public Information Office came up with promotional videos dedicated to promoting local businesses and industries in Silang.

The recognition of the town increased with the Guinness World Record set with the longest line of candles lit in a relay with 621 candles during the town's fiesta celebration — the Sumilang Festival in January 2023.

US-Canada investor roadshow concludes, kindles interest in PH investment opportunities



The economic managers successfully brought their US-Canada non-deal roadshow to a close on July 14, 2023 (Eastern Daylight Time). Composed of a series of roundtable meetings in New York (July 10-12) and Toronto (July 12-14), the non-deal roadshow served as an opportunity for investors to learn more

about the Philippines' growth outlook, economic and fiscal policy environment, investment opportunities, and growth engines in the medium and long term.

"The Philippines has a very interesting story to tell. The meetings we had in New York and Toronto gave us the opportunity to share with current

and potential investors the country's robust growth outlook and the engines that will drive this growth, such as the recently reopened mining industry, the rebound of tourism, and the ambitious Build Better More program," Finance Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno said.

Secretary Diokno, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Eli M. Remolona, Jr., National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan, Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Secretary Ameh F. Pangandaman, and Treasurer of the Philippines Rosalia V. De Leon led in-depth discussions

on the country's priority high-growth sectors, the reopening of the mining industry, tourism, manufacturing, the growth of business process outsourcing (BPO), renewable energy and green investments, environmental, social and governance (ESG) issuances, overall growth outlook, and the Maharlika Investment Fund (MIF).

The economic team met with a mix of fixed-income and infrastructure funds, institutional investors, development finance institutions, mining companies, and asset management companies.

Select funds, including development fi-

LET YOUR KIDS SHINE THE BRIGHTEST AT SM LITTLE STARS 2023



SM Little Stars Project Head Hanna Carinna Sy
2017 Grand Girl Winner Gaea Salipot
2013 Boy Grand Winner Nihkzy Calma
2013 3rd Runner-Up Esang De Torres



From left to right: 2017 Grand Girl Winner Gaea Salipot, 2013 Boy Grand Winner Nihkzy Calma, 2013 3rd Runner-Up Esang De Torres, Sam Concepcion, Teacher Georcelle Dapat-Sy of G-Force, SM Little Stars Project Head Hanna Carinna Sy, SM Supermalls President Steven Tan, SM Supermalls Senior Vice President for Marketing Joaquin San Agustin, Sparkle GMA Artist Center Vice President for Talent Development and Management Joy Marcelo, and National University Assistant Director of Admissions Alessa Shainne Hostalero.

SM Supermalls' search for the next biggest, brightest, and most talented kids in the country is back!

On July 6, SM Supermalls opened the pre-registration for SM Little Stars— the annual nationwide talent search for kids aged four to seven. Now in its 14th year, SM Little Stars has become a platform for some of the country's biggest stars who are excelling in singing, acting, and modeling including 2013 Boy Grand Winner Nihkzy Calma, 2014 Girl Grand Winner Chun Sa Jung, 2013 3rd Runner-Up Esang De Torres, and 2017 Grand Girl Winner Gaea Salipot. Stakes are higher in this year's SM Little Stars with over P9 Million in cash and prizes starting with a brand new Suzuki S-preso Special Edition MT MC worth over P600,000; one-year talent contract at Sparkle GMA Artist Center; 100% discount on college tuition

and miscellaneous fees at National University; a five-day and four-night trip for two (2) to Hong Kong; a total of P100,000 worth of cash and SM gift certificates (P50,000 cash and P50,000 worth of SM gift certificates); P30,000 worth of Toy Kingdom gift cards; an annual pass certificate for unlimited bowling game and skating admission valid for one (1) year; 30 regular ride tickets at SM by the Bay Amusement Park / Sky Ranch, and gift vouchers for a two-night stay with breakfast for two (2) at Radisson Blu Cebu await one lucky boy and lucky girl winners!

To register, the parent/guardian must bring their child's original and photocopy of their birth certificates as well as two (2) copies of 4R size of their photo taken with light make-up only with one (1) close-up shot and one (1) whole body shot to select SM Supermalls nation-

wide. This will be attached to their application form which should be filled up and signed by the parents and/or legal guardians. To apply online, go to: <https://smsupermalls.com/smlittlestars/>.

SM Little Stars 2023 will run from July 15 to August 27 so hurry and register your talented little ones! To know more about SM Little Kids and the full list of prizes, visit smsupermalls.com or follow @SMSupermalls on social media.



Judge Sam Concepcion shares his advice for aspiring SM Little Stars singers.
Judge Teacher Georcelle Dapat-Sy of G-Force gives dancing tips for would-be SM Little Stars dancers.
SM Supermalls Senior Vice President for Marketing Joaquin San Agustin and Sparkle GMA Artist Center Vice President for Talent Development and Management Joy Marcelo seal the partnership between SM Supermalls and Sparkle GMA Artist Center for Little Stars winners.

The Power of Call Center Outsourcing: Enhancing Customer Support with the Philippines

In the modern business landscape, providing exceptional customer support has become a critical differentiator for companies across industries. To meet evolving customer expectations while managing costs effectively, many businesses are turning to business process outsourcing (BPO). The Philippines has emerged as a prominent destination for companies seeking to enhance their customer support capabilities. Let's explore the reasons why the Philippines is a preferred choice for call center outsourcing.

The Philippines boasts a strong reputation for its call center industry, which has earned global recognition for delivering high-quality customer service. By outsourcing customer support operations to the Philippines, companies can leverage the country's extensive experience and expertise in the field. Call center agents in the Philippines are trained to handle a wide range of customer inquiries, provide technical support, and address concerns with professionalism and efficiency.

Language proficiency is a key advantage that the Philippines offers

for contact center outsourcing. English is widely spoken and understood in the country, making it an ideal choice for companies targeting English-speaking markets. Filipino agents possess excellent verbal and written English communication skills, enabling them to provide clear and effective assistance to customers. This linguistic advantage ensures seamless interactions, resulting in enhanced customer satisfaction and loyalty.

The Philippines' multicultural society also allows for the provision of multilingual call center services. Businesses operating in global markets can benefit from the country's diverse workforce proficient in languages such as Spanish, French, German, and more. Multilingual call center agents can cater to the specific needs of customers from different regions, providing personalized support and building strong rapport.

Another compelling factor is the favorable business environment in the Philippines. The government has implemented policies and incentives to support the growth of the BPO industry, ensuring a

conducive ecosystem for call center outsourcing. The country offers robust telecommunications infrastructure, reliable internet connectivity, and a stable political climate, all of which contribute to seamless operations and uninterrupted customer support.

Call center outsourcing to the Philippines also brings cost advantages for businesses. The lower labor costs compared to Western countries enable companies to reduce operational expenses significantly without compromising on service quality. This cost-effectiveness allows businesses to allocate resources strategically, invest in growth initiatives, and maintain a competitive edge in the market. Contact center outsourcing to the Philippines empowers businesses to enhance their customer support capabilities and deliver exceptional experiences. The country's renowned call center industry, language proficiency, multicultural workforce, favorable business environment, and cost advantages make it an attractive choice for companies seeking to optimize their customer service operations.

SM CITY BAGUIO SET TO CONVERT RAINWATER TO POTABLE WATER



BAGUIO CITY – SM City Baguio launched today the first of its kind in a mall-setting facility that will convert rainwater to potable water and help contribute to the city's water conservation and recycling efforts.

"The mall's Rainwater Filtration facility will supply the mall with enough potable water that can be redistributed to mall tenants for various uses including washing, cleaning and safe for drinking, to help reduce sourcing from the communities' water table, leaving more water supply for the Baguio community to use," SM Supermalls Senior Vice President Bien C. Mateo disclosed. While SM has been recycling water for decades since the 1990's, the water-saving innovation is part of SM Prime's sustainability program towards responsible consumption and

carbon footprint reduction, according to Mr. Mateo. "We invest in water conservation technology to eliminate water wastage and adopt stricter measures to reduce consumption. More innovations are being done to recycle more water and filter more rainwater across the properties and estates of SM Prime."

In 2022, the real estate developer has recycled a total of 3.58 million cubic meters of water across its properties in the Philippines.

As of June 2023, SM Prime has already installed water catchment basins in 25 malls to help prevent flooding as well as soil erosion during sudden high volumes of rainfall. The rainwater catchment system installed in SM City Baguio can draw and store a total of 51 million liters of rainwater in a year, based on 2022 PAGASA



rainfall volume for Baguio City. This is equivalent to 20 Olympic-size swimming pools, 13.4M gallons of drinking water, 373,510 full baths and 672,318 10-minute showers.

How does it work? During rain fall, rainwater is collected in the tank and treated for reuse within the mall. To make rainwater safe for use, the harvested water goes through a 6-step treatment processes – Multimedia Filtration, Water Softener, Activated Carbon, Ultra Filtration, Reverse Osmosis and Ozonization - the treated rainwater from the tank will be re-distributed as supply for the mall tenants for various uses including washing, cleaning and safe for drinking.



Working towards a better tomorrow for its communities, officials from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of Cordillera Administrative Region (DENR-CAR) have acknowledged the efforts of the mall in providing a long-term solution amidst the growing concern on water security. "We are grateful for your attention to the predicament on water scarcity in Baguio City," DENR Regional Director of CAR Engineer Jean Borromeo in a message to SM Prime. "Water scarcity is one of the biggest issues that Baguio is facing today because deep wells have already dried up the city's water table. It is good to see how SM Prime is



taking its responsibility to the environment seriously, practically addressing the biggest environmental threat to Baguio City."

"This will greatly help reduce sourcing from the city's water table and more water supply for the community to use. Not only does SM considers what's best for its shopping customers, but also take into consideration the importance of water security as one of its priorities," RD Borromeo added.

The Rainwater Filtration facility is one of SM Prime Holding's initiatives to its commitment

towards sustainable development in the communities it serves. SM Prime is committed to supporting the United Nations in achieving its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), including SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production and SDG 13: Climate Action which aims to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.



Bacoor...

TRECE MARTIRES CITY, Cavite (PIA) – The Bacoor City government and the Commission on Elections gathered key stakeholders in a joint security command conference ahead of the July 29, 2023 plebiscite that seeks to merge and reduce the number of Bacoor City's barangays.

The conference on July 4 gathered officials, experts, government organizations, and representatives from political parties to address concerns and lay down preparations for the plebiscite.

The plebiscite is pursuant to City Ordinance No. 275-2023, seeking to merge 44 barangays into

18 villages and rename five barangays.

Chairman George Erwin Garcia discussed the plebiscite process highlighting the legal framework, voter registration procedures, and voting protocols.

Bacoor Mayor Strike Revilla assured the city government's commitment to a fair and successful plebiscite.

"This plebiscite is important for the city's future," said Revilla.

He urged everyone to cooperate and contribute to the city's future by exercising their right to vote.

During the conference, the Police Re-

From Page 1

gional Office in Calabarzon provided briefings on safety and security and updates on assessment and threat situations in Bacoor including security preparations for the upcoming plebiscite.

BGen Carlito Gaces, Calabarzon Police Director, called on stakeholders to embrace the opportunity to demonstrate democracy and the spirit of unity in the community.

"Together, we must prioritize the safety of our citizens, protect their rights, and ensure a peaceful and successful plebiscite," he added.

ANTA BASKETBALL, NOW OPEN AT SM CITY BACOOR

SM CITY BACOOR, CAVITE - NEW STORE ALERT!
The long wait for ANTA Store to open is finally over. The first Anta Store to open in Cavite focusing mainly on Basketball is now at SM City Bacoor!
Visit Anta Store located at the mall's 3rd Level with your athletic buddies and get that Boujee Kicks & Fits today.

