

# Globe unveils game-changing 5G-connected robots for improved operational efficiency

Leading digital solutions platform Globe once again achieved a significant technological milestone as it successfully showcased 5G-connected robots at the recent INNOVANIA: Technology and Innovations Day held at The Globe Tower in BGC.

The event served as a platform for Globe teams and vendor partners to introduce their latest technological advancements and innovations that hold immense value for both the company and its customers.

In a collaborative effort with MySolutions, the authorized distributor of Pudu Robotics in the Philippines, Globe presented a series of robots, all successfully connected to the 5G network, enabling them to perform their designated tasks with precision and efficiency.

For one, the concierge robot effortlessly guided attendees to various booths and meeting rooms, the delivery robot flawlessly transported materials throughout the event, and the cleaning robot maintained a pristine environment within the venue.

These demonstrations clearly showed the power of 5G-connected robots in boosting productivity in many industries. This innovative solution encourages businesses to use automation, proven to improve operations and increase customer satisfaction.

The developments also underscore Globe's strategic positioning in leveraging its technological capability to enable and deploy 5G-connected robots across diverse sectors.

"Globe has always been a purveyor of innovations and new technology solutions, consistently emerging as a key enabler of diverse 5G use cases. These advanced robots are capable of executing various use cases spanning across industries, including hospitality and logistics. They represent a significant leap forward in leveraging 5G technology to drive efficiency and effectiveness in diverse operational scenarios," said Gerhard Tan, Director and Head of Technology Strategy and Innovation at Globe.

"With our extensive network infrastructure and cutting-edge technologies, we empower individuals, businesses, and industries to unlock the transformative potential of 5G," he added.

Tan said through seamless connectivity, Globe facilitates groundbreaking applications in various domains such as autonomous vehicles, smart cities, immersive virtual reality experiences, and revolutionary Internet of Things (IoT) deployments. Its recent accomplishment with the 5G-connected robots is yet another testament to the company's commitment to propelling society into a future defined by limitless possibilities.

With the advancement of artificial intelligence (AI), robots are increasingly being deployed across industries to automate processes. As Globe continues to enhance its capabilities, it remains at the forefront of the Industry 4.0 revolution, consistently championing technological advancements that significantly contribute to both business and societal growth.

To learn more about Globe, visit <https://www.globe.com.ph/>.

# LANDBANK ensures success of new law writing off P57.74-B agrarian debt



The Land Bank of the Philippines (LANDBANK) ensures that it will be working closely with government partners for the seamless and immediate implementation of the new law that frees agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs) nationwide from agrarian debts, in line with efforts to boost and modernize the agriculture sector.

The National Government is writing-off land amortizations managed by LANDBANK amounting to P57.74 billion as of 30 June 2023—effectively relieving over 649,000 ARBs tilling 1.17 million hectares of land debt.

The condonation is part of the landmark Republic Act No. 11953 or the New Agrarian Emancipation Act signed by Philippine President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. on 7 July 2023.

Of the P57.74 billion, the National Government will condone outright P14.56 billion in principal loans of over 263,000 ARBs upon the effectivity of the law. The Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), in coordination with LANDBANK, will also expedite the processing of the remaining P43.17 billion principal loans of over 385,000 ARBs.

"We are proud to be part of this landmark initiative of the Marcos Administration to free farmers from debt and help them start anew. LANDBANK will likewise continue to pour investments and extend support initiatives for farmers nationwide to boost their productivity and income," said LANDBANK President and CEO Lynette V. Ortiz.

The New Agrarian Emancipation Act condones all loans, including interests, penalties, and surcharges incurred by ARBs from land awarded to them under Presidential Decree 27 (Tenant Emancipation Decree issued in 1972), Republic Act No. 6657 (Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988), and Republic Act No. 9700 (An Act strengthening the CARP and extending the acquisition and distribution of agricultural lands, issued in 2009).

The DAR will issue the implementing rules and regulations of the new law, in coordination with the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council Executive Committee (PARC ExCom) and with the technical expertise of LANDBANK, within 60 days from the issuance of the Act.

For his part, Agrarian Reform Secretary and LANDBANK Board Member Conrado M. Estrella III lauded Congress for the immediate passage of the law, and expressed gratitude to LANDBANK for its consistent support to ARBs over the years.

"Nagpapasalamat din po kami sa mga



## DA-4A, RAFC isinusulong ang mobilisasyon ng SUCs sa pagpapaunlad ng agrikultura; unang career orientation sa Quezon, isinagawa

Isinusulong ng Department of Agriculture IV-CALABARZON (DA-4A) at Regional Agriculture and Fishery Council (RAFC) ang mobilisasyon ng State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) sa pagpapaunlad ng agrikultura.

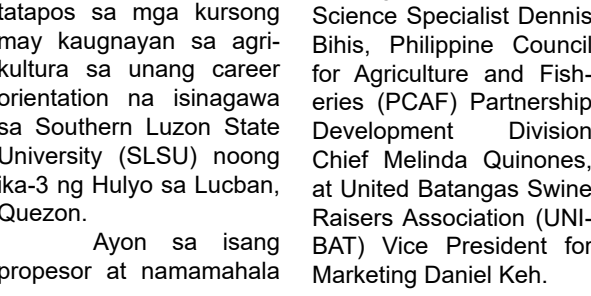
Ito ay sa pamamagitan ng layuning makapagsagawa ng career orientation sa mga edukasyonal na institusyon sa rehiyon bilang inisyatibo sa mga mag-aaral na mamulat sa industriya ng agrikultura. Dito ay ilang teknikal na kawani at eksperto ang inaanyayahan upang makapagbigay ng kaalaman ukol sa AFC at sa iba't ibang programa ng DA-4A.

Kalakip nito, tampok ang paglahok ng mga mag-aaral na magtatapos sa mga kursong may kaugnayan sa agrikultura sa unang career orientation na isinagawa sa Southern Luzon State University (SLSU) noong ika-3 ng Hulyo sa Lucban, Quezon.

Ayon sa isang propesor at namamahala

taga-LANDBANK sapagkat sila po ay very active na nagbibigay po ng credit assistance sa ating mga ARBs," he said.

LANDBANK has extended P2.7 billion in loans to 2,356 individual ARBs and 469 ARB co-operatives and farmers' associations nationwide. Apart from credit assistance, LANDBANK also provides financial literacy and capability-building seminars to make sure borrowers are equipped with basic financial knowledge to manage their finances and boost their income. End



PRRD confirms attendance to PBBM's 2nd SONA



# Remulla says PH won't engage with ICC any longer

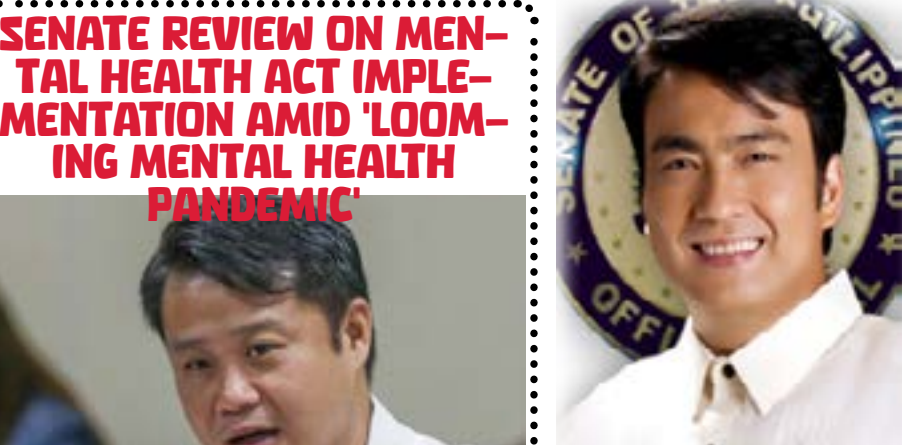
## PAPER Cavite Chapter holds election of new officers



SENATE REVIEW ON MENTAL HEALTH ACT IMPLEMENTATION AMID 'LOOMING MENTAL HEALTH PANDEMIC'



BEST OF MSMEs. Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin, on behalf of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., joins Go Negosyo founder and MSME Development Council Vice Chair Joey Concepcion (right) and Department of Trade and Industry Sec. Alfredo Pascual (left) onstage at the 2023 National MSME Summit last July 18 at The Manila Hotel. Twenty nano, micro, small, or medium entrepreneurs were named Most Inspiring MSMEs, and the launch of Presidential Award for Outstanding MSMEs was announced during the annual event.



ICC's interest 'obviously not justice': Revilla



## EDITORIAL:

A sudden downpour — and Metro Manila is mired in hours of grid-lock.

Such is the state of traffic on the roads of the urban capital region during the rainy season.

There seems be no immediate solution to the logjam facing commuters of the 17 cities and towns that comprise Metro Manila.

Toll roads and railways are designed to speed up the movement of vehicles and people—but they are not enough to catch up with the travel demand of the ever-increasing population.

The monstrous traffic jams we saw in the past two days as a result of thunderstorms will certainly not be the last, even without the heavy rains.

The congestion will get worse as more Filipinos from the provinces migrate to Metro Manila for jobs, and as vehicle sales continue to increase.

For one, there is no more road space to accommodate additional vehicles in the capital region.

Total car sales sales in the Philippines grew 30.7 percent in the first half of 2023 to 202,415 units from 154,874 in the same period in 2022.

Metro Manila's roads are expected to be swamped with more vehicles, assuming half of the yearly sales are accounted by buyers living or working in the metropolis.

Authorities blame several flash floods for the heavy traffic on

## Metro logjam

Wednesday that prompted one toll road operator to apologize to the public.

A poor drainage system leads to flash floods that slow down road traffic, although it is only one of the causes of the gridlock that has become a standard fare in a fast-developing economy like ours.

Decongesting Metro Manila is the only way out of the traffic mess.

Policymakers should work out incentives to lure business establishments, including mega malls, away from the capital region.

They should deter proposals that would only exacerbate the current traffic situation.

One case is the offer from the private sector to modernize the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, or NAI.

An upgraded and bigger NAI that can accommodate more air travelers will aggravate Metro Manila's gridlock, unless the project incorporates a railway component.

Modern urban centers in the world build and design their airports with a rail link to improve the accessibility of passengers to downtown areas or, in some cases, suburbs or distant cities.

The railway connection provides air passengers an option to avoid chaotic road traffic conditions in getting to their next immediate destination.

American and European airports complement their airports with metros, or subways.

If policymakers, thus, are not serious in decongesting Metro Manila, Filipino commuters for the meantime should bear the unpleasant ride.

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## CAVITE...

local government units took part in the competition, showcasing their talents and enchanting the audience with their euphonious voices. Their performances transcended limitation and amplified the extraordinary abilities of persons with disabilities.

Afterwards, the Tanza Persons with Disability Affairs Federation was recognized for being the first registered federation in the Province under OPDAO.

In closing, Mr. Florian Deborja, Federation Vice President of Per-

sons with Disability Cavite Inc., expressed his utmost gratitude to everyone who joined in the celebration that empowers the PWD sector.

The event's highlight was the announcement of the Top 10 finalists who will advance to the Grand Finals on July 25, 2023. However, contestants who failed to move on to the final round were given a consolation prize for their courage in showcasing their musical abilities.

Cavite Councilors League President Francis "Kiko" Barzaga, attended the event and extended his congratulations for the successful event.

As the program ended, everyone was reminded to uplift one another and work together

## TIP LEADS TO ARMY-PNP FOILING NPA BOMB PLOT IN QUEZON

CAMP CAPIN-

PIN, Rizal - A tip led to the troops of the Philippine Army and the Philippine National Police foiling bomb plans of the New People's Army (NPA) following the recovery of antipersonnel mines in Calauag, Quezon on Monday, July 17, 2023. Acting on information from concerned citizens regard-

ing buried anti-personnel mines, the 85th Infantry "Sandiwa" Battalion and the Calauag PNP have unearthed five anti-personnel mines believed to be from Platoon Reymark of the Southern Tagalog Regional Party Committee. In a statement, the 2nd Infantry "Jungle Fighter" Division Commander Maj. Gen. Roberto S. Capulong

commended the bravery and cooperation of the members of the community which led to this development. He also reiterated their continuous commitment to working with their partner agencies and valued stakeholders to ensure the communities will be more resilient against the Communist Terrorist Groups. 2ID

## PRO CALABARZON



PRO CALABARZON under the leadership of the Regional Director, PB-GEN CARLITO M GACES joins the Simultaneous Community Outreach Program during the 2nd State of the Nation Address (SONA) of President Ferdinand R Marcos, Jr. A total of 250 beneficiaries from Brgy. San Vicente, Sto. Tomas City, Batangas were benefitted from said program on July 24, 2023, conducted by the Regional Community Affairs and Development Division together with Sto. Tomas City Police Station.

The activity is also part of the 28th Police Community Relations Month Celebration with the theme "Serbisyonag Nagkakaisa para sa Ligtas at Maunlad na Pamayanan". PRO4



The Office of the Provincial Governor — medical mission team in partnership with the City Government of Imus and Congressman AJ Advincula, conducted a successful Operation Tuli for the young males of the city held at Imus Sports Complex on July 18, 2023.

A total of 206 beneficiaries availed the free circumcision rendered by the medical professionals from the City Health Office and Office of the Provincial Health Officer. Mayor Alex Advincula and some Sangguniang Panglungsod members were also present and expressed their support for the healthcare initiative. - Axel A. Sarte

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## PAMAYPAYAN FESTIVAL 2023: A COLORFUL SHOWCASE OF QUEZON'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND CULTURE ON LOPEZ'S 167TH FOUNDATION ANNIVERSARY

The Pamaypayan Festival in Lopez, Quezon, held on April 26, 2023, marked the 167th foundation anniversary of the town with a vibrant celebration of local culture, creativity, and entrepreneurship. This event brought together local officials, business leaders, and representatives from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Quezon, including the DTI STIDS, Ma. Cristie J. Avio, CFIDP Project Coordinator, Lawrence Joseph Velasco, and Negosyo Center Lopez-Business Counselor, Ms. Ma. Isabel C. Hirang.

The festival was a dynamic showcase of the town's rich cultural heritage and entrepreneurial spirit. Attendees were treated to a colorful display of intricately woven handicrafts, mouth-watering local cuisine, and stylish fashion items, all crafted by local entrepreneurs. The highlight of the



festival was the grand display of the town's handwoven palm leaf fans, known locally as "pamaypay," which came in a dazzling array of sizes, shapes, and colors.

Honorable Cong. Mike Tan and Mayor Rachel Ubana also attended the event, emphasizing the importance of promoting and celebrating local culture and products to boost the local economy and create job opportunities. The event was a

great opportunity for local entrepreneurs to connect with potential customers and partners.

The festival was not only a showcase of local craftsmanship but also a celebration of the town's resilience and creativity in the face of adversity. The DTI Quezon's unwavering commitment to supporting and empowering local entrepreneurs played a significant role in the event's success.

Overall, the Pa-

maypayan Festival was a vibrant and joyful gathering of the local community and its supporters. It was a testament to the hard work and dedication of everyone involved in organizing the event and showcased the best of what Lopez, Quezon, has to offer. With the town's 167th foundation anniversary marked in such a colorful and festive manner, it's clear that the future of Lopez, Quezon, is bright and full of promise. **PR**

## REMULLA...

MANILA — Justice Secretary Jesus Crispin Remulla on Wednesday said the Philippine government will no longer engage with the International Criminal Court (ICC) following the tribunal's decision to reject the Philippines' appeal on the continuation of the investigation into the alleged excesses of the last administration's drug war.

"Hindi na tayo makikipag-usap sa kanila (We will no longer talk to them). What they will be doing will be usurpation of public functions," Remulla said referring to the ICC.

He said the government's appeal with the ICC was merely part of the policy of comity between nations and does not mean the government is submitting to the tribunal's jurisdiction.

Remulla added that while the tribunal has no power of compulsion if it decides to issue arrest warrants in the Philippines, it may be prudent for those named in the ICC

case not to go to countries where the ICC may have power to enforce an arrest.

"My advise is [for those named in the ICC case] not to go to countries where the ICC will be able to influence the judicial system. 'Wag kayo punta sa lugar na maaring makialam ang ICC. Dito, hindi sila pwedeng makialam talaga rito (Don't go to a place where the ICC can interfere. Here, they can't really interfere)," Remulla said adding that these may include European countries.

For his part, Solicitor General Menardo Guevarra said the question of jurisdiction over the proceedings may still be cited by the individuals who may be investigated by the ICC.

"The gaping hole in the ICC decision was its failure to rule on jurisdiction. The majority [3] did not tackle it, and the minority [2], including the presiding judge took a strong position that the ICC had

already lost jurisdiction over the Philippines when the ICC prosecutor sought to commence his investigation. This unresolved issue of jurisdiction will be a powerful argument for any person who may be investigated or charged by the ICC," Guevarra said.

Meanwhile, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said it will take the lead of the national government in dealing with the ICC.

"We will fully support and acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Philippine government as to the nature of the investigation," PNP spokesperson Col. Jean Fajardo told reporters when sought for a comment in a press briefing at Camp Crame in Quezon City on Wednesday.

Fajardo's statement was in response to the decision of the ICC to reject Manila's appeal to stop the investigation of the international court into the drug war.

"The Philippine

National Police is under the Executive department and we will follow the lead of the national government that there is a question with respect to the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the ICC," she added.

The PNP was at the forefront of the campaign against illegal drugs wherein more than 6,000 people linked to drug activities died during various police operations under the administration of former President Rodrigo Duterte.

"As to the extent and nature of cooperation of your national police, we will take the lead on what our national leadership would say, then the PNP will follow," Fajardo said.

On the part of the PNP, Fajardo said they took the initiative of reviewing the drug war which resulted in the submission of 52 cases of possible police abuses in the campaign against illegal drugs.

These cases involve more than 100 cops

## ICC's...

MANILA — Senator Ramon Revilla Jr. on Thursday came to the defense of his fellow senator, Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa, and former president Rodrigo Duterte, following reports that the International Criminal Court (ICC) could be issuing warrants of arrest for some duly elected Philippine officials over the country's "war on drugs."

The international court decided to pursue its investigation on the Philippines' drug war with three judges voting in the affirmative, and two others, including ICC Chief Judge Mark Perrin de Brichambaut, voting negative.

In a press statement, Revilla said he is perplexed by the ICC's pursuit of the "obvious baseless persecution" while legitimate concerns and crimes against humanity are being "perpetrated in other parts of the world as we speak."

"It is obvious the ICC's interest here is not justice but something else entirely. Binobomba at pinapatay ang mga sibilyan, guro, mga bata, at mga musmos sa ibang pang ng mundo pero si Bato at Duterte ang pinanggigigilan nila (Civilians, teachers, children, and the innocents are being bombed and killed in various parts of the world, but they are focusing their attention on Bato and Duterte)," he said.

"The ICC, with its patent partiality, which is so manifestly politically motivated, has totally lost its credibility. These bullies are driven by their own selfish interests, and they

cannot fool us into thinking that they can discharge justice."

Revilla echoed Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri's pronouncement that the Senate would extend its protection over its members and would not in any way surrender its integrity and independence, "especially to foreign interests."

He also emphasized that if anybody should be held liable, it should be under Philippine laws and not foreign jurisdiction.

"Hindi tayo papayag sa malinaw na panghimasok na susubukang gawin ng ICC sa ating bansa (We will not allow the blatant interference that the ICC is trying to do to our country). We do not need to remind them that we are a free, independent, and sovereign nation governed by our laws," Revilla said. "Kung mayroong pananagutan, sa batas ng ating bansa dapat managot, hindi sa mga dayuhan (If someone is liable, he or she should answer before the law of our country, not before foreigners)."

From Page 1

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In a previous statement, he said Duterte's unwavering war on drugs was backed by the Filipino people and was credited by communities for the restoration of peace and order.

In March, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. announced that the Philippines would completely "disengage" from the ICC after the Hague-based tribunal rejected the Philippine government's initial request to suspend the drug war probe. (PNA)

Fajardo also assured that all the documents pertaining to the campaign against illegal drugs are with the PNP.

"All the operations from the station to provincial to regional are forwarded particularly at the office of the DIDM (Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management). So if there is really a need to produce these case folders then the PNP is ready to provide if directed to submit," Fajardo said. (with Lloyd Caliban/PNA)

# Let your kids shine the brightest at SM Little Stars 2023



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 Nhkizy Calma, 2014 Girl Grand Winner Chun Sa Jung, 2013 3rd Runner-Up Esang De Torres, and 2017 Grand Girl Winner Gaea

undoubtedly the biggest kiddie talent search in the country, which will be held in 70 malls from Baguio and Tuguegarao to Davao and Cagayan de Oro in Mindanao. The kids who will make the Grand Finals will be trained by celebrity mentors in a series of workshops to develop their talents and confidence on stage. The workshops will also encourage them to bond and make new friends with their co-participants.

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-presso Special Edition MT MC worth over P600,000; one-year talent contract at Sparkle GMA Artist Center; 100% Discount on college tuition fee and miscellaneous fees at National University; a five-day and four-night trip for two (2) to Hong Kong; a total of Php100,000 worth of cash and SM gift certificates (Php50,000 cash and Php50,000 worth of SM gift certificates); Php 30,000 worth of Toy Kingdom gift cards; an annual pass certificate for

Salipot.

"SM is and will always be a safe and nurturing place for the kids. Through SM Little Stars, we are staying true to our commitment to making the kids' malling experience fun, memorable, and rewarding for them and their families. We want to make sure that this will be worth remembering for them," said SM Supermalls Senior Vice President for Marketing Joaquin San Agustino.

SM Little Stars Project Head Hanna Carina Sy also said, "After an absence of three years, we are happy to be together again to launch what is

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 nationwide. 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://www.smsupermalls.com/smlittlestars/register>.

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](https://www.smsupermalls.com) or follow @SMSupermalls on social media



## SM COFFEE FEST HIGHLIGHTS FILIPINO COFFEE ART AT SM CITY SANTA ROSA



The audience are all smiles as they learn coffee art from Master Visual artists Ren Tuzon, His artworks feature coffee portraits of famous celebrities and pop culture.



Coffee Art And Music at SM City Santa Rosa

SM City Santa Rosa and all SM Malls nationwide conducts Coffee Festival this month of July to highlight the vibrant coffee culture in the Philippines.

"This year's Coffee Fest will showcase chill vibes, art and coffee where people can come together. Filipinos love their coffee! It's a staple beverage among Pinoys" said Ms. Niña Wong PR Manager of SM.

With today's generation, coffee has not only become a part of our morning ritual, but an everyday anytime routine. SM continues to support the prevalence of this culture as bonding over coffee has always had that interconnection with deeper bonding and fonder conversation.

## POINT OF VIEW Health tips on how to live well

### 1. Sit on the floor

OK, it may not be as comfy as your super-squashy sofa, but according to studies of the world's longest-living populations, sitting on the floor can help us stay healthier for longer. For example, in Okinawa in Japan, home to the longest-living women in the world, most sitting, whether to read, eat or talk, is done on the floor. The reason it's so beneficial? Repeatedly standing from a seated position on the floor is good for flexibility, strength and co-ordination, which are all known to have favourable influences on life expectancy.

### 2. Drip with health

A small knob of butter or light drizzle of oil on veggies isn't just delicious, but can be health helpful, too. "Some nutrients, such as vitamins A, D, E and K (found in green vegetables and sweet potatoes) are fat soluble so a smidgen of fat, such as olive oil, helps with nutrient absorption," says Ian Marber, a leading independent nutrition therapist ([ianmarber.com](https://ianmarber.com)).

### 3. Wean off wine o'clock

A glass of wine in the evening might help you fall asleep, but can impact the quality of your slumber, leaving you sluggish the following day. To help prevent this, avoid drinking close to bedtime to give your body time to process the alcohol. As a rough guide, it's thought to take one hour for your body to process one unit of alcohol, although this varies between individuals. To find out more about the units in your drink – and to ensure you're not exceeding the maximum 14 units a week – use the Unit Calculator on [drinkaware.co.uk](https://drinkaware.co.uk).

### 4. Cuddle up

In one study, volunteers who had regular hugs over a two-week period were found to be less likely to catch a cold. It's believed this is because hugs are one of the fastest ways to get the feel-good chemical oxytocin flowing in the body, which helps to reduce stress and, in turn, protect immunity.

to be cont. fo next issue

## CAVITE...

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Cavite Councilors League President

## PBBM leads nationwide launch of 'Kadiwa ng Pangulo'; DILG, other gov't agencies team up for more Kadiwa Centers

President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., on Monday morning, led the nationwide launching of "Kadiwa ng Pangulo", a direct marketing platform for farm producers and small business owners at the Provincial Capitol Grounds in the City of San Fernando, Pampanga.

The launching was formalized through the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with national government agencies, including the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), to assist local government units (LGUs) and facilitate the establishment of Kadiwa centers in their respective localities.

Marcos, who concurrently sits as Sec-

retary of the Department of Agriculture (DA), said the MOA signing is part of his government's whole-of-nation approach to strengthening the agriculture sector to aid the country's economic recovery.

"Ito'y isa na namang magandang halimbawa na kapag nagtutulungan ang bawat sangay ng gobyerno, ang national government at local government units, ay talagang makakatu-long (tayo) at magiging matagumpay ang ating mga ginagawang programa. Kaya asahan pa po ninyo na palalakasan natin ang ating produksyon ng agriculture products," the President said.

All 82 provinces in the country and 16 LGUs

of the National Capital Region (NCR) participated in the nationwide simultaneous grand launching of the KNP, while Cabinet members from the DA, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Presidential Management Staff (PMS), and Presidential Communications Office (PCO), also attended the event.

In his opening message, DILG Secretary Benhur Abalos said expanding the KNP program across the country indicates the steadfast commitment of the government to help workers in the agriculture sector and

ensure food security.

"Nananawagan tayo sa lahat ng gobernador at mayors, panatilihin at paramihin pa natin ang ating mga Kadiwa Centers. At sana'y hindi lamang ito maitayo sa ating mga munisipyo at City Hall, kundi maging sa ating mga barangays upang ating mga marami tayong maabot na kababayan," Abalos said.

Kadiwa is a market linkage facilitation program aimed at making agri-products and other basic commodities accessible and affordable to the poor. It also seeks to establish an additional market for farmers and fisherfolks to directly sell their products and increase their income.

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Velasco said they will seek clearance from both Dutertes to determine their preferred seats in the VIP section at the House gallery.

"Kailangan kasi may clearance sa dalawa. Mapapansin niyo, ngayon kini-clear kasi namin sa mga VIP kung okay sa 'yo na katabi mo ito, ganyan. As much as possible we want them to be comfortable (We need clearance from the two. If you notice, we are asking for clearance from the VIPs,

checking with them if they are okay to sit with a particular person. As much as possible we want them to be comfortable)," Velasco said.

Velasco earlier said former presidents Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and Joseph Estrada have confirmed their attendance to the event.

Around 2,000 guests are expected to attend this year's SONA.

"All preparations have been done. Physical arrangements, (and) security. We are confident by Friday everything will be all set," Velasco said.

Health protocols for this year's SONA will be relaxed, but House Deputy Secretary General (DSG) for Inter-Parliamentary and Public Affairs Department (IPAD) lawyer Grace Andres explained that those who will register a temperature of 37.2 in the morning and 37.8 in the afternoon need to undergo antigen testing.

"If they test negative, then they will be allowed entry," she said. (PNA)

## THREE CPP-NPA-NDF SUPPORTERS WITHDRAW SUPPORT IN QUEZON

CAMP CAP-INPIN, Rizal - Three supporters of the CPP-NPA-NDF from the municipality of San Francisco in Quezon made the commendable decision to withdraw their support from the communist party on Monday, July 24, 2023. The initiative was successfully carried out through the collaborative efforts of the Municipal Task Forces to End Local Communist

Armed Conflict in San Francisco, along with the invaluable assistance of the 85th Infantry "Sand-iwa" Battalion and San Francisco PNP. These joint forces facilitated the withdrawal of support from three residents hailing from Sitio Cabiao Ilaya in Barangay Sto. Nino. According to the 2nd Infantry "Jungle Fighter" Division Commander Maj. Gen. Roberto S. Ca-

pulung, as more individuals choose to break ties with extremist groups, the province moves closer to a brighter and more secure future for all its residents. He then reiterated that 21D remains resolute in its pursuit of sustainable peace and progress, and stands ready to assist other communities seeking to separate themselves from the influence of the Communist Terrorist Groups. 21D

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Francis "Kiko" Barzaga, attended the event and extended his congratulations for the successful event.

As the program ended, everyone was reminded to uplift one another and work together towards a sustainable future where no one is left behind.

The National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week Celebration is an annual festivity to commemorate the birthdate of Apolinario Mabini, known as the Sublime Paralytic. - Jam Elisse M. Reyes



## Pag-IBIG Fund lowers home loan

Pag-IBIG Fund made home financing even more affordable for its members as the agency lowered the interest rates on its housing loan, top officials announced Tuesday (July 18).

"We are keenly aware of the need to provide affordable housing to our members who dream of having their own homes. With Pag-IBIG Fund's strong performance and robust fiscal standing, we are happy to announce that we have reduced the interest rates on our housing loan, making home-ownership even more attainable for all Filipino workers. This is in line with the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. to address the country's housing backlog and help our fellow Filipinos gain better and dignified lives under the Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino Housing or 4PH Program,"said Secretary Jose Rizalino L. Acuzar, who heads the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DH-SUD) and the 11-member Pag-IBIG Fund Board of Trustees.

Under the new rates, the Pag-IBIG Housing Loan now carries a lower interest of 6.25 percent per annum under a 3-year repricing period from the previous 6.375 percent. Interest rates for the 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30-year repricing periods have also been reduced to 6.5 percent from 6.625 percent, 7.125 percent

from 7.375 percent, 7.75 percent from 8.00 percent, 8.50 percent from 8.625 percent, 9.125 percent from 9.375 percent and 9.75 percent from 10.00 percent, respectively. The new rates came to effect on July 01.

Meanwhile, the agency's home loan rate under its 1-year repricing period remains at 5.75 percent per annum, while its special interest rate for home loans of minimum-wage earners under its Affordable Housing Program remains at 3 percent per annum, the lowest in the market.

According to Pag-IBIG Fund Chief Executive Officer Marilene C. Acosta, the agency was able to reduce its home loan rates due to its strong fiscal standing, record-high collections and high performing loans ratio.

"We at Pag-IBIG Fund take to heart our responsibility to provide our members with affordable home financing. With our performing loans ratio at a high 92.53% and collections from both membership savings and loan payments at a record-high, we are able to effectively fund the high demand for our home loans without the need to borrow from the market. As a result, we were able to reduce the interest rates on our housing loan, despite the upward market trend. This is truly Lingkod Pag-IBIG, Tapat na Serbisyo Mula Puso, at work,"Acosta added. (END)



Two of the country's event experts were recently tapped by the Los Baños Science Community Foundation, Inc. (LB-SCFI) to conduct the training, "Introduction to Event Management and Events in the New/Now Normal" last June 23, 2023 held at

the Centennial Center for Digital Learning Auditorium, University of the Philippines Open University. One of the two experts, Cynthia Reantas-Bernabe, introduced the concepts of professional event management and Meetings, Incentives,

## PAPER...

B A C C O R , CAVITE - The Prime Alliance of Publishers, Editors, and Reporters (PAPER) Inc. welcomed a new set of officers for its Cavite chapter during an election event on July 18, 2023. The event, held at Mercan Resort in Bacor, was graced by several national officers, including Chairman of the Board of Trustees Bonifacio C. Dacayanan, National President Luisito C. Angeles, and National Vice President Joy V. Estrellado, who served as the chief moderator.

The democratic process resulted in the election of Heidelita L. Paginag as President, Florando C. Cacactin as Vice President, Edna B. Cuyno, represented by her daughter Zerryvi C. Octavio, as Secretary, Nenita Bermudez as Treasurer, Reyland Lopez as Auditor, and Bayani Zoleta as the Public Relations Officer (PRO).

In addition to the change in leadership, the event also saw the inclusion of new members. Reyland Lopez, who was elected as the new Auditor, Rodrigo Fabro, and Don Russell Nava took their oath of membership before National President

## LBSCFI TAPS EVENT EXPERTS TO CONDUCT TRAINING FOR MEMBER-AGENCIES

Conferences, Exhibitions (MICE) at the training.

"The power of events is it builds and rebuilds communities," she

Luisito C. Angeles. This ceremony represents a commitment to uphold the values and mission of PAPER Inc., expanding the alliance and driving its cause forward.

Outgoing President and current National Auditor, Jerry C. Ancheta, delivered a heartfelt message of continuous support to the Cavite chapter. Despite not serving in his previous role, he assured his availability and readiness to contribute to the organization's initiatives.

The elected officers are poised to take on their roles for the next year, working to uphold the principles of journalistic integrity, freedom of the press, and support for their members. Under the new leadership, the Cavite chapter of PAPER is anticipated to carry on its efforts in defending and promoting the rights of publishers, editors, and reporters.

PAPER Inc. stands strong in its pursuit of fostering unity, integrity, and service among its members, reinforcing its stature as a pillar for the press. The new members and officers are keen to embark on their journey, adding to the rich legacy of the alliance. JOY ESTRELLADO

the nation's growth," she said, referring to the Foundation's annual Syensaya Festival.

"Events are major economic drivers," she emphasized to the 52 participants of the training who are representatives of the Foundation's 23 member-agencies. Bernabe is a Senior Fellow of the Royal Institution for Event Management of Singapore and is a Certified Event Management Executive. She is a multi-awarded college professor, author, speaker, and consultant on event management. She is a graduate of Event Leadership from the Temple University School of Tourism and Hospitality Management in Philadelphia,

stated. "You don't know the transformation that you are creating, the process of changing the mindsets of people through your scientific events. You don't know how much participation, or how much contribution you are giving to

## Senate...

Following the increase in the number of deaths by suicide in recent years, Senator Win Gatchalian has filed a resolution seeking a Senate inquiry into the implementation of the Mental Health Act (Republic Act No. 11036).

"Considering a looming mental health pandemic, it is crucial for the government to urgently intervene by improving and investing in mental health services across healthcare, protection, education, and welfare," Gatchalian said.

In filing Proposed Senate Resolution No. 671, Gatchalian highlighted the significance of COVID-19 as a wake-up call to prioritize public mental health services in the country. Despite the initiation of national and local mental health programs during the pandemic, a February 2021 policy brief from De La Salle University revealed sporadic efforts and a lack of comprehensive collaborative approach.

Citing data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), Gatchalian sounded the alarm on the 74% increase in suicide incidents from 2019 to 2020, which then made it the 28th leading cause of death in the country. In 2019, suicides ranked as the 39th leading cause of death in the Philippines. There were 4,892 recorded cases of death

Pennsylvania, USA.

Bernabe is the author of the book "Events" published by Fully Booked and is the lead author and principal reviewer of the Professional Event Management Guide to MICE, a Commission on Higher Education-compliant textbook.

Bernabe also defined events in the context of the new normal as an introduction to the assigned topics of the training's other expert, Antonio V. Magpantay.

For his part, Magpantay cited the techniques he employs and the technologies he uses in conducting events in the new normal, as well as the challenges that come with it. He also shared

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## ENCHANTED KINGDOM CELEBRATES ELДАР THE WIZARD'S BIRTHDAY

Enchanted Kingdom, the First and Only world class theme park in the Philippines, announces two limited time offer in celebration of its beloved character's birthday this month.

Eldar the Wizard is a home-grown, jolly character in EK known to teach children to uphold virtues of kindness, humility, patience, honesty, diligence, generosity, and love of God and family.

**Eldar's Birthday Bash Promo – July 16 to August 13**

The grand celebration will kick off with the EK online store exclusive Eldar's Birthday Treat promo of one (1) Regular Day Pass bundled with one (1) Eldar's hat for a discounted price of 1,200 pesos. Guests can avail this promo exclusively at the EK Online Store until July 30 and experience the enchanting world of Eldar while donning this iconic hat until August 13.

**Eldar's Birthday Bash Promo – July 30, 2023**

Meanwhile, EK's



Eldar's Birthday Bash promo entitles guests with access to Eldar's Birthday Bash and one (1) EK Regular Day Pass on July 30 at the Enchanting Events Place. Guests will be captivated with the performances by Enchanted Kingdom characters and talented musicians, magicians, and dancers. Kids and adults alike will also enjoy face-painting and other fun and

interactive games and activities. Eldar will also treat his guests with scrumptious snacks and give away magical souvenirs.

To attend Eldar's Birthday Bash promo on July 30, guests can book tickets from July 16 to 30 at the EK Online Store, Front Gate ticket booths, and Makati Sales Office. Non-members of the EK-sperience the Magic Card



(EKMC) pay for only 1,500 while EKMC members can get this for only 500 pesos. For more infor-

mation, guests can visit [www.enchantedkingdom.ph](http://www.enchantedkingdom.ph) or visit EK's official Facebook Page.

## SM Prime taps Citicore Renewables for the supply of Clean Energy



(From left to right) SM Prime Energy Consultant Jaime Patinio, SM Prime Chief Finance Officer John Nai Peng Ong, SM Prime President Jeffrey Lim, CREC Chairman Edgar Saavedra, CREC President & CEO Oliver Tan, CREC Sr. Manager Sales & Energy Trading Jerard Garcia

SM Prime Holdings, Inc. (SM Prime) and Citicore Renewable Energy Company (CREC) signed a Memorandum of Agreement on 11 July 2023 as a joint commitment to champion renewable energy.

Through this partnership, SM Prime will source its energy requirements of up to 90-Megawatts (MWac) from CREC's upcoming Lumbangan Solar Power Plant in Tuy, Batangas. The long-term agreement will commence in the first half of 2024. This is in line with the Retail Competition and Open Access (RCOA) policies of the Department of Energy.

This development further strengthens both CREC and SM Prime's commitment to the Department of Energy's program of moving up the renewable energy supply component of the Philippines to 35% by the year 2030.

"This partnership marks our strong commitment to providing sustainable operations in our developments nationwide. It is aligned with SM Prime's target of achieving net zero by the year 2040. SM Prime ensures that its risk-informed investments catalyze sustainable development and positive change in the communities where it operates,"

said Mr. John Ong, SM Prime Chief Finance Officer.

The agreement with SM Prime adds to CREC's long list of blue-chip company partners, attesting to the company's solid performance and service excellence.

"We are happy to partner with SM Prime in providing clean and safe renewable energy for their power requirements," said Mr. Oliver Tan, CREC President. "We believe that their support and trust in us through this partnership reflects our commitment as a renewable energy provider, and we are glad that SM Prime shares in our vision of a sustain-

able future," Mr. Tan added.

**ABOUT SM PRIME:** SM Prime is one of the largest integrated property developers in Southeast Asia that offers innovative and sustainable lifestyle cities with the development of malls, residences, offices, hotels, and convention centers.

**ABOUT CITICORE:** Citicore Renewable aims to lead the renewable energy revolution by empowering Filipino communities through positive energy. With a projected 5 Gigawatts of green capacity addition in the next five years, Citicore Renewable is committed to powering a First-World Philippines with Pure Renewable Energy.

## CAVITE CELEBRATES THE TALENTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



The Office of Provincial Persons with Disability Affairs Officer (OPDAO) facilitated the celebration of 45th National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week at SM City Dasmariñas, on July 14, 2023.

With this year's theme "Persons with Disabilities Accessibility and Rights: Towards a Sustainable Future where No One is Left Behind", the event aimed to promote inclusivity and uphold the rights of Cavite differently-abled individuals through a Singing Contest.

Ms. Richelle Valdez signaled the start of the program with her opening prayer song. In her welcome remark, Ms. Editha Tayko, SM City Dasmariñas Mall Manager, gave encouraging words to the attendees, emphasizing that their disabilities should never hinder from accessing their rights and pursuing their goals for a sustainable future.

Ms. Shiela Marie Haloc, Provincial Disability Affairs Officer, ensured the fairness and transparency of the competition by reading the contest mechanics for the information and benefit of everyone. Additionally, she introduced the esteemed board of judges comprised of Mr. Armin Arañas from the Office of the Provincial Tourism Officer, Mr. Ral Foz Rodriguez from the Office of the Provincial Information Officer, Ms. Jay Ann-Sabalo from the Office of the Provincial Veterinarian, and Ms. Ellen Callalero, Surplus Store Manager.

Fifteen (15) representatives from various

Likewise, Ms. Arlene Clemente, OPDAO Disability Program Coordinator, acknowledged the stakeholders who made efforts for the success of the celebration. Aside from that, Ms. Beth Go and Ms. Sarah Sta. Ana were also present as sign language interpreters.

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Fifteen (15) representatives from various