# CONCEPCION: USE DIGITAL TECH TO BENEI

efforts towards economic

digitalization is there; we

just have to use it," he

said. "It's time that we real-

ly focus on the objective of

greater prosperity, espe-

cially for those at the bot-

tom of the pyramid, using

whatever tools we have,"

emerged as the world's

fastest-growing internet

market, with a 40 percent

2016 and 2021. Further,

"The power of

The ASEAN has

integration.

of digital adoption in the ASEAN bodes well for the region's economies, but its growth must be inclusive, with micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) being crucial to a sustainable growth, to fully realize the expanding opportunities presented by digital transformation.

ASEAN-BAC Philippines Chairman Joey Concepcion expressed this opinion during a panel discussion on ASEAN's Digital Powerhouse at the Nexus of Connectivity and Transformation. The session was held on the first day of the ASFAN Business Investment Summit in lems especially for those even the one-man busi-Jakarta, Indonesia last who are at the bottom of nesses-also known as September 3, 2023. The the pyramid," he said, as nanopreneurs-who now session gathered some of he pointed out that four have a better chance at the region's biggest tech of the ten countries in the succeeding because they stakeholders from lead- of their populations still liv- tools and digital payment ing multinational companies, global financial institutions, and government organizations. The sis pushed people to use brace the MSMEs in our session delved into the these tools and this is one value chain this is going development of strategic of the reasons we in the to take a long time ... That policies - including finan- ASEAN BAC Philippines is our mission as ASEAN cial technology, e-Trade, proposed to sign an MOU BAC heads, to see to it

tools are important to uplift the lives of our people.



Go Negosyo founder and ASEAN BAC Philippines Chairman Joey Concepcion speaks with fellow panelist Kok Ping Soon, CEO of Singapore Business Federation at the ASEAN Business Investment Summit last September 3.

That's why we are here: pointed out that digitaliza- ance to boost ASEAN's how do we solve big prob- tion will stand to benefit ASEAN have nearly a fifth have access to marketing

"The power of of these will bring development,

solutions.

"We are the big digital has to be used. Cri- brothers ... Unless we emwith each ASEAN country that greater prosperity is annual growth in the value to focus on sectors that achieved," he said. The of e-commerce between ASEAN BAC was orgaspecifically agriculture and nized to provide private it is set to become the sector feedback and guid- world's fastest growing

and the rapid adoption of social commerce platforms by its population.

This growth must be inclusive in order to unlock the benefits, said Concepcion, and emphasized that it must be used to enable MSMEs. He cited the Philippines case as an example of how digital technology has helped MSMEs compete with big corporations, and gave birth to a thriving digital economy that was further hastened by the pandemic lockdowns.

"We must enable MSMEs to use digitaliza- zation Chairman Ishigtion to their advantage," he said. Digital growth is seen to boost cross-border e-commerce by providing MSMEs with access to new markets, and is hoped to promote financial

With Concepcion

during the sessions were Sam Myers, Deputy Trade Commissioner for Asia Pacific (Southeast Asia) at the UK Department for Business and Trade; Haslina Taib CEO of Dynamic Technologies: Yuem Kuan Moon, CEO of Singtel; and Kok Ping Soon, CEO of Singapore Business Federation

Bank of Indo-

nesia Governor Dr. Perry Warijjyo, Temasek Holdings CEO Dilhan Pillay Sandrasegara: and Japan External Trade Organiuro Norihiko delivered keynote remarks, while ASEAN-BAC Indonesia Policy Manager for Digital Transformation Yohanes Lukiman gave a policy presentation. PR



## **CARD** Astro Laboratories mark 4th Anniversary

4th anniversary, an institu- (for men), Anie (for womtion under the CARD Mu- en), and Lorenze (for men tually Reinforcing Institutions (CARD MRI), CARD MRI Astro Laboratories offered various exclusive deals and discounts on all essential products to its honor for us," said Contreclients on August 6 to 7, ras. 2023.

"We deeply appreciate our loyal clients staff for their significant who have steadfastly supported the CARD Astro brand," stated CARD Astro President Maria Gracia Q. Contreras. "While we may be relatively new to this industry, the trust you place in our brand means everything to us. Rest assured. our commitment to enhancing our offerings and introducing products you'll love remains unwavering." added Contreras.

CARD was established in 2019. months before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country and has since then assisted and provided CARD MRI facilities with disinfecting items such as hand sanitizers. dishwashing solutions, alcohol, and dish soap amid health regulations. It also

To celebrate its has perfume brands Aris and women).

"Continualmaintaining safety on CARD facilities is both an accomplishment and an

mended the CARD Astro contribution to the growth and development of the organization: hence, she encouraged them to continue offering their consumers the best products.

Meanwhile, Contreras said that while it is the company's main goal to keep all the facilities under CARD MRI clean and safe, it is also part of their long-term goal to uplift more economically and socially disadvantaged households in the next few vears, in line with the mission of CARD MRI to erad-

As of April 28, 2021, the institution received its License to Operate (LTO) from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), allowing its products to be sold in markets

cont. on page 2

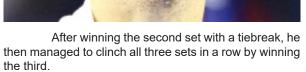
# Novak Djokovic wins 2023 US Open men's singles title

ANKARA - Novak Diokovic won the 2023 US Open men's singles title by beating Daniil Medvedev 6-3, 7-6(7-5), 6-3 in the finals on Sunday.

The Serbian legend bagged his fourth US Open singles title at Arthur Ashe Stadium in New York after wins in 2011, 2015, and 2018.

Djokovic started the match fast after he gave only two points to his Russian opponent in the first three





The 36-year-old, who also became the oldest US Open champion, bagged his third major championship this year and with a total of 24 Grand Slam titles, he equaled Margaret Court's all-time record.

Djokovic celebrated his newly achieved record and commemorated the late NBA star Kobe Bryant by wearing a special T-shirt with a portrait of Kobe and a "24" printed on it.

Medvedev couldn't repeat his 2021 US Open title success against the same opponent in this year's

Djokovic, who has played a record 36 Grand Slam singles finals, will be named as the new world No.1 after winning the competition by passing Spain's Carlos Allockdowns and stringent caraz in the rankings. (Anadolu)



THE MONETARY BOARD IS



PRO CALABARZON Regional Director PBGEN CARLITO M GACES warmly welcomes BGEN JOSE AUGUSTO V VILLAREAL, Assistant Division Commander, 2ID Philippine Army held at PRO4A Kiosk Camp BGen Vicente P Lim in Calamba City, Laguna. PRO4A

There is hope in palay farming

Gov't workers get free MRT-3, LRT-2 rides next week



St. Peregrine Pastoral Center in Sta. Cruz, Cavite City, witnessed a remarkable medical mission thanks to the support of Governor Jonvic Remulla and the unwavering dedication of Cavite Provincial Government's medical mission team. City Councilor Jet Barera and former Cavite City Mayor Totie Paredes joined forces, ensuring the success of this noble

endeav or. Vice Governor Athena Bryana Tolentino's heart warming gesture of sponsoring free lugaw for all part icipants added a heartwarming touch. A total of 151 patients received essential medical care, reaffirming the power of unity and compassion in serving the community. - CK Torres



# VOL. I · NO. 12 POINT OF 27 NATURAL HEALTH

## AND NUTRITION TIPS THAT ARE **EVIDENCE-BASED**

9. Don't eat heavily charred meats

Meat can be a nutritious and healthy part of your diet. It's very high in protein and a rich source of

However, problems occur when meat is charred or burnt. This charring can lead to the formation of harmful compounds that may increase your risk for certain cancers

When you cook meat, try not to char or burn it. Additionally limit your consumption of red and processed meats like lunch meats and bacon as these are linked to overall cancer risk and colon cancer risk

#### 10. Avoid bright lights before sleep

When you're exposed to bright lights which contain blue light wavelengths — in the evening, it may disrupt your production of the sleep hormone melatonin.

Some ways to help reduce your blue light exposure is to wear blue light blocking glasses cespecially if you use a computer or other digital screen for long periods of time — and to avoid digital screens for 30 minutes to an hour before going to 🕻 bed

This can help your body better produce ; melatonin naturally as evening progresses, helping 🕻 you sleep better.

#### 11. Take vitamin D if you're deficient

Most people do not get enough vitamin D. While these widespread vitamin D inadequacies are not imminently harmful, maintaining adequate vitamin D levels can help to optimize your health by improving bone strength, reducing symptoms of depression, strengthening your immune system, and lowering your risk for cancer.

If you do not spend a lot of time in the sunlight, your vitamin D levels may be low.

If you have access, it's a great idea to have : your levels tested, so that you can correct your levels : through vitamin D supplementation if necessary.

#### 12. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables

Vegetables and fruits are loaded with prebiotic fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, many of which have potent health effects.

Studies show that people who eat more vegetables and fruits tend to live longer and have : a lower risk for heart disease, obesity, and other ill-

#### 13. Eat adequate protein

Eating enough protein is vital for optimal health, as it provides the raw materials your body needs to create new cells and tissues

What's more, this nutrient is particularly important for maintenance of a moderate body weight. High protein intake may boost your metabolic rate or calorie burn — while making you feel full. It may also reduce cravings and your desire to snack late at night to be cont. for next issue

### \_\_\_\_September 20-26, 2023 Himlayan ng mga Bayani inaugurated

CAMP CAPIN-

PIN. Rizal - In honor of Angelina "Dokthose who sacrificed their tora Helen" Tan as part of lives fighting for peace, the government's efforts the Himlayan ng mga to honor the fallen CAA Bayani was inaugurated in heroes who sacrificed Tagkawayan, Quezon on their lives defending the Thursday, September 7, peace and security of their community. Shortly after, It comes after a public viewing was also five CAAs were brutally held at the Tagkawayan

killed while one soldier Gymnasium for the fallen and two more CAAs were CAA heroes iniured in an ambush by Among NPAs using anti-personwho extended their sympanel mine, which is a thies were Gov. Tan, Tagviolation of the United kawayan Mayor Hon. Luis Anti-Personnel Nations Oscar T. Eleazar, Jomalig Mine Ban Convention, Mayor Hon, Nelmar T. the boundary of Sarmiento, Guinayangan Labo, Camarines Norte Mayor Hon, Maria Marieand Tagkawayan, Quezon den M. Isaac, Southern last September 1. The Luzon Command Comceremony, held at the Tagmander Lt. Gen. Efren kawayan Public Cemetery. P. Baluyot, 2nd Infantry was led by Quezon Gover-"Jungle Fighter" Division

Roberto S. Capulong, 201st Infantry "Kabalikat" Brigade Commander Brig. Gen. Erwin A. Alea, and 85th Infantry "Sandiwa" Battalion Commanding Officer Lt. Col. Joel R. Jon-

The families of

the fallen CAA heroes also received financial assistance from the Quezon provincial government. Gov. Tan mentioned that the NPAs tested the SIPS status of the province but vowed that the collaborative peace efforts of the LGUs, security forces, and various stakeholders will be stronger to ensure the safety and security enioved by the peace-loving Quezonians.

in Quezon

killed while one soldier and two more CAAs were injured in an ambush by NPAs using anti-personnel mine, which is a violation of the United Nations Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, near the boundary of Labo, Camarines Norte and Tagkawayan, Quezon last September 1.

The ceremony, held at the Tagkawayan Public Cemetery, was led by Quezon Gover

Mayor Eleazar encouraged the community members to be strong and continue working with the government to ensure the NPAs will not be able to sow terror in our com-It comes after munities again. 2ID





Sa pangunguna nina DOH Usec. Eric Tayag; Carmona City Mayor Dahlia Loyola; RAISE co-convenor at Philippine Foundation for Vaccination (PFV) Executive Director Dr. Lulu Bravo; DOH-4A Representative Dr. Maria Beatrix Duzon at Senior Citizens Partylist representative Ding Latoja ay nagsanib pwersa para sa Raising Awareness on Influenza to Support Elderlies (RAISE) upang mabigyan ng libreng flue vaccine ang mga lolo at lola sa selebration ng Grandparent's Day na may kabuuang 6,500 na ang nabakunahan at layunin pa nila na mapalawak ito at patuloy na mapangalagaan ang kalusugan ng mga senior citizens na ginanap sa lunsod ng Carmona. IRINE GASCON

September 20-26, 2023 ......

STRAIGHT NEWS **Q3** National Earthquake Drill Simulation at SM City San Pablo



SM Supermalls actively participated in the third quarter Nationwide Simultaneous Earthquake Drill (NSED) held last September 7.The actual earthquake drill, participated by shoppers, tenants, and employees, took place during regular mall operating hours. Evacuation and rescue drill simulations were carried out to enhanced the mall's Emergency Response Team preparedness and coordination among tasked units. Working hand in hand, Medical as well as Search & Rescue Team gave first aid treatment to a simulated trauma victim at the mall. Staged at exactly 2pm, the drill demon-

strated various crisis scenarios of an earthquake to raise public awareness about the proper emergency response during and after this hazard. Employees and tenants were evacuated to the open spaces of the mall. In addition to simultaneous nationwide earthquake drill, SM malls in Laguna also conducts an annual refresher course for its employees, tenants, and affiliates on fire and earthquake preparedness. Topics like worstcase scenarios during fire and earthquake, evacuation routes, and first aid treatment were all being discussed to help the the mall handle crisis if ever it will happen. #earthquakedrill2023 #beready #smcitysanpablo #Onewiththecommunity #NSED

# KATINKO, NOW OPEN AT SM CITY BACOOR



SM CITY BACOOR, CAVITE - NEW STORE ALERT! Katinko Store is now open here at the SM City Bacoor! Thinking of a perfect gift for grannies, titos, titas, and yuppies? Well, worry no more! Katinko is now here at SM City Bacoor with its different sets of gift kits specially made for the inner titas and titos within. Drop by at the lower ground floor of SM City Bacoor and gift yourself or grab one for your loved ones!



Produktong agrikultural, patuloy na isinusulong ng DA-PRDP RPCO CALABARZON etc., mga problemang nararanasan sa industriya, at mga oportunidad tungo sa pag-unlad. Katuwang ng DA-PRDP ang DA Regional Field

Pag-aaral sa daloy ng mga

laan, at iba pang ahensya sa pagbuo o pag-update ng mga VCAs. Nakapagsagawa na ang DA-PRDP RPCO ng 15 VCAs sa mga sumusunod na produkto: dairy cattle, coffee, virgin coconut oil, banana, mangga, seaweeds, pineapple, cacao, chicken egg, broiler chicken, lowland vegetables, beef cattle, abaca, goat, at coconut oil. Dito lahat naka-angkla ang mga Patuloy na isinasagawa ng Departproyektong pinopondohan at ipinament of Agriculture - Philippine Rural Develpatupad ng DA-PRDP. Nakabatay opment Project (DA-PRDP) Regional Project rin sa mga ito ang Provincial Com-Coordination Office (RPCO) CALABARZON modity Investment Plans o PCIPs ang pag-aaral nito sa mga daloy ng produktong na naglalaman ng mga interbenagrikultural o Value Chain Analysis (VCA). Ito syon, proyekto, o programa para sa

Office IV-A, mga lokal na pamaha-

Ngayong taon, ina-update ng RPCO CALABARZON Ang VCA ay isang masusing pag- ang VCAs nito tungkol sa chicken aaral na nagpapakita ng mga pinagdaraanang egg at cacao base sa mga naging proseso ng isang produktong agrikultural mula pagbabago sa industriya. Inaasahsa pagkuha ng inputs hanggang sa marketing, ang matatapos ito sa katapusan ng ugnayan ng mga prodyuser, trader, processor, taon. PR

ay upang patuloy na magabayan ang mga lokal pagpapaunlad ng sektor ng agrikul-

na pamahalaan, publiko at pribadong sektor, at tura sa kanilang mga lokalidad.

mga magsasaka sa pagbuo ng mga proyekto, o

programa patungkol sa agrikultura.

# PNP urges public cooperation in election checkpoints

Laguna (PIA) - The Laguna Provincial Police Office (PPO) has appealed to motorists to cooperate the implementation of election checkpoints across the region in line with the Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections on October 30.

Officer-in-Charge Police Colonel Harold Depositar of the Laguna PPO also reminded motorists to always carry their vehicle documents as part of the security procedures.

"To our fellow

and everyone driving public and private vehicles. please be prepared (when passing through checkpoints in the province of Laguna). These checkpoints are implemented to maintain a peaceful and secure election," Depositar said in a radio forum with the Philippine Infor-Agency-CALA-BARZON.

He added: "The police officers will identify the type of vehicle - whether it is a motorcycle, car.

CALAMBA CITY, commuters and motorists the road - to check if they special permit from the have the necessary docu- Commission on Elections ments such as the official receipt, certificate of reqistration, and their driver's

Philipcheckpoints Comelec across the Calabarzon August 28 and will be implemented until November 29, also the period of election and gun ban.

The Laguna police chief also reminded the public that car-

(Comelec) is strictly prohibited under the Omnibus Election Code

In a press briefing, PNP Chief Information pine National Police and Officer PBGen. Redrico Maranan said the "plain view doctrine" will be obregion were activated on served in checkpoints which means that motorists only need to lower their windows and turn on the lights inside their vehicles when passing through the checkpoints.

Maranan also re-

SM CITY MOLINO, CAVITE - Double the awesomeness with 2 boxes for P160 promo! Head on now at Kenny Rogers Roasters at SM City Molino and bring home these all-time favorite muffins! For delivery, visit www.kennyrogersdelivery.com.ph or call 8-555-9000. Also available via Grabfood and Foodpanda, Promo runs until September 24, 2023 ONLY. Per DTI Fair Trade Permit No. FTEB-175034 Series of 2023.

SM CITY MOLING

checkpoints to respect the human rights of motorists by honoring their decision to refuse a body search or enforce an inspection of their vehicle and compartments without consent

Meanwhile. Depositar assured Laguna residents that his office is open to any reports or concerns from the public and called for their cooperation and support in ensuring a peaceful election.

"Let us be vigilant and inform the police immediately if they find out about any problems involving cantruck, or any other used on rying firearms without a minded those conducting didates or disturbances in the barangays," he said.



MANILA - Despite the uptick in headline inflation in August, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Eli Remolona Jr. ther supply shocks beyond on Thursday said there is that uptick in August, then no need to raise interest it won't be necessary to rates if there are no further hike the policy rates," he supply shocks.

"If it's just an uptick, food prices and oil picked up to 5.3 percent in caused the uptick, these kinds of supply shocks, they dissipate usually very quickly," Remolona said during a briefing at the sidelines of the 2023 Alliance for Financial Inclusion (AFI) Global Policy we're really, really serious overnight lending rate at Forum at the Philippine about price stability. In de-

International Convention Center, Pasay City.

"So, if that's all there is, if there are no fursaid

Headline inflation August due to higher inflation of food and non-alcoholic beverages

The BSP has an inflation target of 2 to 4 percent.

"As you know

farmers (that included per-

riculture, funded by the

flourish in our country.

school, the Myriad Farms

Agribusiness Skills Train-

"graduated" last Sept. 7

from their 14 weekend

sessions with clearly half

of them young boys and

girls who took interest in

palay farming from their

training program's theme

is "Strengthening Filipino

farmers through modern

The

farming technologies."

relatives and

TESDA

parents.

neighbors.

There is, after

In one such

RCEF program.

ciding on what to do with the policy rate, we look at whether we're comfortable with the target range," the RSP chief said.

"So far, we've been hit by what we call supply shocks. The supply shocks are especially harmful to the poor. That's the main reason why we have (a) price stability objective. We're really, really committed to achieving that objective," he said.

Remolona said if there are no more supply shocks, the inflation target range could be hit by Oc-

During its last policy meeting on August 17, the BSP's Monetary Board kept policy rates unchanged.

The BSP's overnight reverse repurchase facility remained at 6.25 percent, overnight deposit rate at 5.75 percent, and 6.75 percent.

### Palay...

MANILA - Many voung boys and girlssome of them still pursuing high school or techvoc (technical-vocational) courses - have been religiously attending training courses under the Rice Competitiveness sonal allowances which hancement Fund (RCFF) in private farm schools achave earned) and the excredited by the Technical panded training programs Education and Skills Development Authority (TES-

For a long while, farming was said to have reached its deadendwhich is the backbone of with children of old farmthe Philippine economy, to ers preferring to go to the urban centers to pursue work in construction and other blue collar jobs, rather than toil the soil and risk exposure to harmful Center in Guimba, Nuechemical fertilizers and pesticides that their elders va Ecija, over 50 farmers

They viewed farming as an unattractive calling as farmers were regarded as unlettered and unclean. The graduates were urged to apply the new skills and scale them to their neighbors and relatives so that such technologies and skills won't

> But in recent

years, there have been Myriad is an increasing numbers of 11-hectare farm school youngsters interested in and technology training farming that is based on facility that has a pending science and technoloapplication as a farm-tourgy. Their eyes had been ism site with the Departopened wide to TFSDA ment of Tourism vocational scholarships for

Nueva Ecija has one of the biggest scholarship allocations from TESthey could otherwise not DA for 120 farm schools; llocos Norte with 25: La Union, 31 and Mt. Provof the Department of Aq- ince with 13, said Dr. Alvin Ytorralde, TESDA provincial director.

They trained on all, hope in palay farming, production of high quality inbred rice, seed certification and farm mechanization with 50 graduates; and pest and nutrient management with 25 graduates. A third module is digital agriing and Assessment culture, which is slated for October

Agriculture the topmost priority of the Marcos administration especially with farm schools training, Ytorralbe said.

The first farmers training school in Nueva Ecija was set up in 1993 by the Department of Agriculture, recalled Acting Provincial Agriculturist Dr. Joebeat Agliam.

TESDA bestowed them with QR-coded graduation

#### ∞September 20-26, 2023 DTI-Laguna and SAPC Conduct a How to Start an E-Commerce Business Seminar

tonio de Padua College (SAPC) Foundation of Pila, Laguna Inc. "College Week" with a theme "Kita-Kita", the Department of Trade and Industry aguna Provincial Office (DTI-Laguna) has conducted Seminar on How to Start an E-Commerce Business and Consumer Education for the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and ABM Senior High School Students at the Music and Arts Hall, n SAPC, Barangay San Antonio, Pila, Laguna.

In celebration of San An-

Pila, Laguna —

A total of sixty-two (62) students participated in the said activity. The topic on how to start an e-commerce business was discussed by Ms. Edelyn Aireen Muñoz, a Negosyo Center Business Counsellor at DTI-Laguna. During the seminar, she first introduced the topic

from page 1

certificates that could be their gateway to work in farms abroad or become themselves tools for transferring technological skills as well as hold training for those that have not undergone such but have interest to adapt technologies and better farming

Deputy Executive Director Karen Barroga of the Philippine Rice Research Institute (Phil-Rice) said Nueva Eciia is the province with the most certification for good agricultural practices (GAP) which is needed to compete in the global market

She urged farmer-graduates to apply their learnings on their farms and teach their neighbors and relatives the new

strategy behind the Masagana Rice Industry Development Program lies in clustering the farmers so that all government interventions (of inputs, nutrients, credit, extension and marketing support) will be channeled to the group's leadership and for banks and private sector partners to deal with just one group instead of individual farmers. (DA-PR)

on how to start a business sized the power of using which mainly focused on social media platforms

the competencies that a successful entrepreneur must have followed by how to generate a business idea, business planning, financial requirements, implementation of business projects, and evaluating a business.

lowed by a discussion of the main topic which is about starting an e-commerce business wherein Muñoz explained in detail every step in starting an e-commerce business as follows: (1) researching and validating a business idea; (2) product sourcing; (3) choosing an online selling channel; (4) setting up an online store; and lastly (5) marketing and promotion of their business. She also empha-

like Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok and many others in marketing their product or services which will eventually help them to attract customers to land on their e-commerce websites.

As part of DTI-Laguna's mandate of empowering consumers, Negosyo Center Business Counsellor Julie Flor Garcia discussed Consumer Education which provided the students with insights on their rights and responsibilities as a consumer.

This activity is part of the continuous commitment of DTI-Laguna to provide business and consumer information to potential and existing entrepreneurs in Laguna. (EAPMuñoz, DTI-Lagu-

# **CIVIL SERVANTS GETS DEALS AT ACE HARDWARE – SM CITY BACOOR**



SM CITY BACOOR, CAVITE - Dear government employees, this one's for you! Exclusive ACE Civil Service Sale on Sept 20-25! Up to 50% OFF on great finds + EXTRA 10% OFF (min. 2K spend) with your government ID & ACE Rewards or SMAC. T&Cs apply. See you at ACE Hardware - SM City Bacoor!

For inquiries and reservations, contact Ace Hardware at 0917-8246152/ 0998-5914368 / 0998-5384021. September 20-26, 2023------

# **P7.43 billion down the drain**

Health experts do not necessarily make 2 good budget or financial managers.

That's one takeaway from the recent Commission on Audit (COA) report that said the Department of Health (DOH) wasted medical supplies worth P7.43 billion last year.

The state auditing agency found medicines and drugs that were "expired and/or near-expiry, damaged, overstocked, excessive, understocked, slow-moving, undistributed, distributed late and/or accepted below 18 months.

The wastage of government funds and resources, COA said, was due to "deficient procurement planning, poor distribution and monitoring systems, and weakness in internal controls.

The COA pointed out this was not the first time the Health Department had been called out for the same reasons, since it had expired, near-expirv. and damaged medicines worth P2.20 billion in 2019, P95.15 million in 2020, and P85.21 million • in 2021

"The presence of overstocked and slow-moving inventory items evidenced excessive spending as the procured items comprised [a] volume of inventory far more than what the Centers for Health Development and Operating Units presently need." the agency said.

Government auditors lamented that "overall, the problem exposed management's inability to safeguard, manage, and utilize health funds and resources economically and effectively.

If that wasn't a bad enough indictment of the health department, the state auditing agency warned that overstocked or slow-moving drugs are exposed to the risk of possible wastage because of a poor conditions in warehouses.

Moreover, the maintenance of excessive supplies entails additional costs in terms of manpower and warehouse space which could have benefited the government's health programs for the poor.

Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa, however, said there are really losses every year, stressing that "a certain percentage of your supplies will ! really end more than the shelf life

He promised that the DOH would look into how they can mitigate the wastage and loss of essential medical supplies

Health NGOs, such as the Council for Health and Development and the Coalition for People's Right to Health, are correct in saving that the problems encountered by the DOH in the handling of medical supplies have clearly shown how inequality has worsened and is making life tougher for millions of Filipinos already struggling with povertv.

Indeed, as the two health groups emphasized, when one gets sick and requires medical intervention, the rising costs of medicines can easily drive a family into debt or financial crisis.

If the DOH has to deal with the problem of expired and undistributed drugs year after year, and last year sent P7.34 billion worth of drugs and medicines down the drain, shouldn't there be accountability on the part of those responsible for the criminal wastage? 

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STRAIGHT NEWS

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**Published Weekly by: STRAIGHT NEWS** 

comelec.

DOLE programs exempted from election ban

Commission on Elections (Comelec) has granted the request of the Depart The ment of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) to suspend several local officials during the election In a memorandum dated September projects ahead of the 2023

STRAIGHT NEWS

MANIIA - The

13, Comelec Chairperson George Erwin Garcia approved the recommendation of the agency's Law Department to allow the the recommendation of the suspension of Clarin, Bohol Mayor Eugeniano Ibarra; San Simon, Pampanga Mayor Abundio Punsalan Jr.; Tabuk, Kalinga Mayor Darwin Estrañero: and Goa, Camarines Sur Mayor Racquel Lim.

Lim was subjected to a one-vear suspension without pay due to grave abuse of authority/ oppression, and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service, while Punsalan and seven other Sangguniang Bayan members were given six simple neglect of duty and simple misconduct

Estrañero also suspended for six tablished and are continumonths for simple misconduct, while Ibarra was suspended for a month dishonesty.

their suspension during the election period, the officials "do not involve violation of the Anti-Graft from the Commission is ties.

of the Omnibus Election Code prohibits the suspension of any elective provincial, city, municipal or barangay officer without prior approval of the Comelec. "unless said suspension will be for purposes of applying the An- hand, is DOLE's youth ti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act."

DILG Undersecretary Juan Victor Llamas requested the exemption last September 4, which stemmed from the decisions of the Office of the Ombudsman.

Comelec has also granted the request of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to exempt five of its programs from the ban on the implementation of barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections

Garcia approved

poll body's Law Depart-Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/ Displaced Workers Program (TUPAD), Special program for Employment of Students Government Internship Program, Job-Start Philippines Program. and Integrated Livelihood Program or KABUHAYAN Program, following the reguest of Labor Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma.

In his request, Laguesma cited the absolute necessity to conmonths suspension for tinuously implement the programs even during the period of election ban as these have long been esing in nature

The DOLE chief said the utmost urgency without pay due to simple to disburse public funds to the target beneficiaries, In allowing for while assuring that there are measures in place to ensure that the programs Comelec noted that the are properly implement- ber 30, as these require cases against the elective ed according to the prescribed guidelines, and the funds to be disbursed and Corrupt Practices will not be used to engage programs or aid distribu-Act, hence prior authority in partisan political activi-

> TUPAD is a com-Section 261 (x) munity-based package of barangay incumbent offiassistance that provides emergency employment for displaced workers, underemployed and season- priations Committee Vice

> > The Special program for Employment of Students, on the other employment-bridging program which aims to provide temporary employment to poor but deserving students. out-of-school youth, and dependents of displaced or would-be displaced workers.

provides three to six month's internship opportunities for high school, technical-vocational. or college graduates who want to pursue a career in public service in either local or national govern-

JobStart enhances employability of youth by reducing their iob-search period and increasing their employability through training (life skills and technical skills paid internship and full-cycle employment facilitation

services. The Kabuhayan Program seeks to reduce the vulnerability to risks of the poor, vulnerable and marginalized workers by providing them access to grant assistance for capacity-building on livelihood ventures either for individual or group undertakings

To date, around 1.173.484 individuals are among the beneficiaries of the said programs.

In recommending the approval of DOLE's request, the Comelec Law Department said the programs shall not in any manner influence the 2023 BSKE and the request shall not involve any distribution of Assistance to Individual in Crisis Situation from October 20 to Octobarangay certification.

Garcia reminded the DOLE to conduct its tions on a municipal level to avoid providing platforms or opportunities to

#### Moral compasses

House Appro-Chairperson Bienvenido Abante urged the National Youth Commission (NYC) to create programs that will develop the moral compasses of SK leaders "so that they become beacons of good who will light the way and serve as sterling examples for the youth in their communities.

"This is one of the first steps that need to The Government Intern- be taken to make the Ba-

from page ship Program meanwhile gong Pilipinas campaign

> successful," he said. Abante said experience has shown that "the reality is that SK leaders are exposed to temptation in the course of their

"The tragedy is that many of them give in to temptation." he said.

Abante said that aside from providing SK officers with the technical know-how to perform their duties, they should constantly be reminded that ment to exempt DOLE's required by industries), they are expected to serve as examples for their fellow youth.

> Garcia approved the recommendation of the poll body's Law Department to exempt DOLE's Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged Displaced Workers Program (TUPAD), Special program for Employment of Students Government Internship Program, Job-Start Philippines Program, and Integrated Livelihood Program or KABUHAYAN Program, following the request of Labor Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma.

> The DOLE chie said the utmost urgency to disburse public funds to the target beneficiaries. while assuring that there are measures in place to ensure that the programs are properly implemented according to the pre scribed guidelines, and the funds to be disbursed will not be used to engage in partisan political activi

The Special program for Employment of Students, on the other hand, is DOLE's vouth employment-bridging program which aims to provide temporary employment to poor but deserving students out-of-school vouth, and dependents of displaced or would-be displaced workers.

"The vouth are often referred to as the hope of our nation; as a grandfather with young grandchildren. I pray that this is true so that their generation grows up in a country where they can look up to their leaders,' he added. (with reports from Zaldy De Layola/

### VOL. I • NO. 12 DILG ...

partment of the Interior ments and progress. and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Benja- almost synonymous with min Abalos Jr. on Wednesday called on local government units (LGUs) to pass ordinances to help rice karoon ng investment dealers and traders in their localities. a bad peace and order sit-

During the 35th anniversary celebration of the Metro Manila Councilors League (MMCL) in Pasay City, Abalos enjoined city and municipal councilors to enact an ordinance to cushion the effect of rice price ceiling under Executive Order (EO) 39 on the livelihood of traders

"Baka puwedeng magpasa kayo ng ordinansa to empower the mayor na magbigay ng diskwento sa mga may pwesto sa palengke na rice retailers o ilibre ninyo na yung kanilang stalls (Maybe you can pass an ordinance to empower the mayors to give discounts on stall rental for rice retailers or waive the rental fees) for a month." he said in a state-

Abalos, a former Mandaluyong City may- to PHP15,000 cash grant or, said the city is one of the first local government units that passed an ordinance to help rice retail-

The city government suspended the assessment and collection of market stall fees from rice united Metro Manila "in retailers at the Mandaluvong Public Markets 1 and 2 from Sept. 5 to Oct. 5.

Earlier, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. authorized the distribution of PHP5,000 to PHP15.000 cash grant to qualified small rice retailers and sari-sari store owners selling rice affected by EO 39.

ucation (DepEd) for the Meanwhile, printing and issuance of DILG chief encouraged the MMCL to strengthen who have finished technipublic order and safecal-vocational courses in tv within the metropolis senior high school so they the Technical Education through the implementation of a unified closed-circan actually find work after cuit television (CCTV) graduation system and other technological advancements to noon[g ginagawa pa lang fight and solve crimes. ang K-12], the TESDA

Abalos said the unified approach of Metro Manila councilors in the fight against crime can

(Attracting investments

uation)," he added.

would be hard if we have

ordinansa to empower

ordinance to empower the

on stall rental for rice re-

tailers or waive the rental

fees) for a month." he said

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nance to help rice retail-

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dent Ferdinand R. Mar-

cos Jr. authorized the

distribution of PHP5,000

to qualified small rice re-

tailers and sari-sari store

owners selling rice affect-

and Caloocan City coun-

cilor Carolyn Cunanan

to achieve the vision of a

terms of service and leg-

islative excellence for our

ter Cayetano on Wednes-

day urged the Department

of Budget and Manage-

ment (DBM) to give funds

to the Department of Ed-

certificates for students

certification will be passed

to the DepEd kasi DepEd

doesn't have the mon-

promise

constituents". (PNA)

**Sen. Alan ...** 

MMCL president

ed by EO 39

Abalos, a former

Presi-

"Baka puwe-

MANILA - De- lead to improved invest-

"Development is peace and order. Kung masama and peace and order, mahihirapan mag-

In separate advisories, the management of the two rail lines said eligible riders only need to show a valid government ID from 7 a.m.-9 a.m. and 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

deng magpasa kayo ng Assistant Secretary for the mayor na magbigay Railways and MRT-3 offing diskwento sa mga mav cer in charge Joriette Aguipwesto sa palengke na no said the giving of free rice retailers o ilibre ninrides is a way to thank civil yo na yung kanilang stalls servants for their services. (Maybe you can pass an "Kami po sa mayors to give discounts

kikiisa sa pagdiriwang ng anibersaryo ng Philippine Civil Service. Ang handog naming libreng sakay simpleng pasasalamat sa lahat ng mga sakripisyo ng bawat kawani ng gobyerno upang magampanan nang tapat at maayos ang kanilang mga tungkulin (We at MRT-3 are one in the celebration of the Philippine Civil Service anniversary. This is our simple way of saying thank you to the sacrifices of our civil servants in carrying out their

MANILA - Government workers will get free rides at the MRT-3 and LRT-2 from Sept. 18said they would work hard 20 in celebration of the 123rd civil service anniver-

sories, the management

that. And somehow hindi

natupad," Cayetano said

during the second briefing

of the Development Bud-

get Coordination Commit-

tee (DBCC) at the Senate

on the proposed National

dent senator said since

and Skills Development

Authority (TESDA) gets

a budget increase of P1

billion every fiscal year.

part of the amount could

be given to DepEd for the

The indepen-

Budget for 2024.

MANILA - Government workers will get free rides at the MRT-3 and LRT-2 from Sept. 18-20 in celebration of the 123rd civil service anniver-

Transportation

MRT-3 ay taos-pusong naduties)," she said.

In separate advi-

### Gatchalian...

of the two rail lines said eligible riders only need to show a valid government ID from 7 a.m.-9 a.m. and 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

**STRAIGHT NEWS** 

In separate advisories, the management of the two rail lines said eligible riders only need to show a valid government ID from 7 a.m.-9 a.m. and 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

Transportation Assistant Secretary for Railways and MRT-3 officer in charge Jorjette Aquino said the giving of free rides is a way to thank civil servants for their services. Transportation

Assistant Secretary for Railways and MRT-3 officer in charge Jorjette Aquino said the giving of free rides is a way to thank civil servants for their services.

"Kami po sa MRT-3 ay taos-pusong nakikiisa sa pagdiriwang ng anibersaryo ng Philippine Civil Service. Ang handog naming libreng sakay simpleng pasasalamat sa lahat ng mga sakripisyo ng bawat kawani ng gobyerno upang magampanan nang tapat at maayos ang kanilang mga tungkulin (We at anniversary. This is our simple way of saying thank you to the sacrifices of our civil servants in carrying out their duties)," she said.

The MRT-3 line runs from Taft Avenue in Pasay City to North Avenue in Quezon City while the LRT-2 stretches from Recto in Manila to Antipolo in Rizal province. (PNA)

the DBCC and fellow law-

Senator

Gatchalian, chairperson of

the Senate Committee on

Basic Education, Arts and

Culture, and Senator Juan

Edgardo Angara, chairper-

son of the Senate Com-

mittee on Finance, both

Angara

agreed with Cayetano.

ulum was implemented.

"Maybe this year graduates that false prom-

"We gave our

Senator

Gatchalian sought the creation and filling of more plantilla positions under the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Council to ensure the effective implementation of ECCD programs in the To date there are

only 15 plantilla positions under the ECCD Council. Gatchalian pointed out that the limited number of plantilla positions prevents the body from effectively engaging local government units (LGUs) in the implementation of ECCD

Under Republic Act No. 10410 or the Early Years Act of 2013, the ECCD Council is mandated to implement the National ECCD System, which covers the full range of health, nutrition, early education, and social services development programs for the basic holistic needs of children until the age of four.

In a Senate Committee on Finance hearing on the proposed budget of the Department of Education (DepEd) and its attached agencies, the Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Basic Education pressed the need for the ECCD Council to have enough manpower in fulfilling its mandate.

"We need to increase plantilla positions so we can engage local government units faster.

Without the manpower, we cannot mobilize our local government units to strengthen ECCD in the country, to achieve universal coverage, and to produce high-quality child development teachers and workers," said Gatchalian, noting that the delivery of ECCD programs is a function devolved to LGUs.

Gatchalian also

proposed to reallocate

some of the ECCD Council's funds for the creation of plantilla positions. He said that while the construction of National Child Development Centers (NCDCs) is not a mandate of the ECCD Council under the Farly Years Act (Republic Act No. 10410). the National Expenditure Program 2024 allocates P170 million under the ECCD Council's Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE). The senator suggested using some of these funds to create plantilla positions for the ECCD Council.

To date, there are only 15 plantilla positions under the ECCD Council. Gatchalian pointed out that the limited number of plantilla positions prevents the body from effectively engaging local government units (LGUs) in the implementation of FCCD

Under Republic Act No. 10410 or the Farly Years Act of 2013. the ECCD Council is mandated to implement the National ECCD System, which covers the full range of health, nutrition, early education, and social services development programs for the basic holistic needs of children until the

Gatchalian previously filed the Basic Education and Farly Childhood Education Alignment Act (Senate Bill No. 2029) to strengthen ECCD in the country. The proposed measure seeks to align the basic education curriculum and the FCCD curgreater responsibilities on LGUs on the implementation of ECCD programs, including the provision of facilities and resources.

Senator Alan Pe- but TESDA does have pang-certification," he told but the truth is that they will not unless they have that certification." he said.

Cayetano urged the DBM to increase the budget limit for DepEd to accommodate this and other necessities, in the same way the budget cap for the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) is being in-

"Kung said an lang din naman natin DepEd has never had ang cap ng DPWH, taasfunding for the certification an na rin natin ang cap of vocational graduates ng DepEd," he told the riculum. It also mandates ever since the K-12 curric-

Cavetano said he will also take the matter up once the budget briefing ey to buy the equipment ilipat natin y'ung 1 billion ise that they will find work, with DepEd comes.

pines. The simple things in life are oftentimes taken for granted. To some people, tangible objects like clothes, bags, or shoes are normal commodities that they can easily buy and eventually dispose of at will Meanwhile millions of people around the world, specifically children,

walk barefoot as they lack

According to a 2017 article by William Blischke, an American Sociology professor at the California State University Dominguez Hills. 14% of the earth's inhabitants lack shoes or have inadequate footwear. He adds that in some develchildren cannot attend

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FILIPINO CHILDREN IN NEED THROUGH THE SHARE SHOES CAMPAIGN

communicate and contract diseases from their foot sores. This is why some international non-profit organizations claim that shoes, or the lack thereof, are one of the most visible signs of poverty. In the Philip

pines, there is no availfinancial resources to avail able academic study that themselves of decent footiustifies Filipino children's actual lack of shoes. However, this phenomenon can be substantiated by the 2023 report of the Department of Education. which states that one of the most pressing issues in the basic education system is the lack of access oping countries, shoeless shoes are an integral part of a student's uniform even

difficult for less-privileged no choice but to either use their old and ill-fitting shoes, or worse, walk their education

This is the challenge that the SM Store intends to address through the Share Shoes campaign to the poverty-stricken students of the Philippines. In line with the celebration help of its dedicated customers and partner-organizations, SM Store aims to resources. Since school to donate more than sixpairs of shoes to the last-

school because they may in public schools, it will be mile schools and commu- ipino children who need they can confidently step. nities in the country. With families to purchase them. a minimum of Three Thou- generosity of our custom- towards their individual Thus, leaving children with sand Pesos (P3,000) single-receipt-spend at any SM Store, a customer is entitled to donate a pair barefoot – just to complete of shoes, which originally retails for P299 for only Sixty Five Pesos (P65.00) and shall be considered as a Share Shoes Champion.

September 20-26, 2023 VOL L-NO. 12. 5
SM STORE CELEBRATES ITS 65TH

STRAIGHT NEWS
FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY BY HELPING

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a statement. - to provide school shoes Mr. Dhinno S Tiu, Executive Vice President of SM Store, exemplifies the value and symbolism of of SM's 65th founding an- shoes for both SM and its niversary and through the advocacy to support the "Shoes

been the core of our business for over 65 years. teen thousand (16,000+) Thus, giving out thousands of shoes to the Fil-

them the most through the walk, run, and even leap ers is a symbolic desture of our commitment to continue to live the legacy of sharing and giving back to our partner communities." More than a ma-

terial donation, SM Store hopes that these pairs simple act of giving, these underprivileged children will be able to learn, play, by protecting their young FTEB-172377, Series of feet, time will come when 2023) PR

vember 15, 2023 to support a child in need. For only P65, you can help transform a life by being of shoes would help the a Share Shoes Champichildren's journey towards on! Help us put shoes on a better life. Through a a child's feet and together. let us witness how they walk through life with smiles on their faces. (Per and flourish in school. And DTI Fair Trade Permit No.

goals and dreams

Shop at your

favorite SM Store from

September 1, 2023 to No-

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weekend date at Classic Savory - SM Center Imus and enjoy

this with the family. Promo runs until February 29, 2024,

also available at all Classic Savory stores in SM Malls nation-

wide. Let's Celebrate Sarap together!

# It was a Groovy Grandparents Day Celebration at SM Malls in Laguna

Satisfy your Japanese food cravings with Takoyadon. Dig into the mouthwatering selection of Takoyaki, Ya-





Here at SM, we celebrate the incredible love, wisdom, and warmth that our grandparents bring into our lives. They are the keepers of cherished stories, the source of endless laughter, and the embodiment of unconditional love. To all the grandparents out there, your presence is a gift beyond measure. Your guidance has shaped us, your stories have inspired us, and your love has warmed our hearts. Thank you for being the pillars of our families and for showering us with love! Happy Grandparents Day and Happy Sunday, everyone!! #smcitysanpablo #smcitycalamba #smcitysantarosa #GrandparentsDay #grandparentsday2023 #grandma #grandpa #loloandlola