

Young artist ng Naic, Cavite wagi sa Regional On-the-Spot Poster Making Contest ng DA-4A

Itinanghal na kampeon ang labing-dalawang taong gulang na si Alexa Rinoa Aguinaldo mula sa Naic Elementary School ng Cavite sa isinagawang Regional On-the-Spot Poster Making Contest ng Department of Agriculture IV-CALABARZON (DA-4A).

Mula sa 215 na nagpasa ng litrato ng likhang sining online sa Kagawaran ay 25 mula sa iba’t ibang paaralan sa rehiyon ang napiling sumabak sa nasabing kompetisyon na isinagawa face-to-face sa Argosino Hall, Lipa Agricultural Research and Experiment Station, Batangas. Dito ay binigyan lamang ang mga kalahok ng mga materyales na ½ illustration board, oil pastel, at pentel pen na kanilang ginamit sa loob ng tatlong oras na pagguhit.

Katuwang ang Department of Education (DepEd) at Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), ang akt

tibidad ay pinangunahan ng DA-4A Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section (RAFIS) sa layon na maipamulat sa mga kabataan ang kahalagahan ng agrikultura at seguridad sa pagkain sa pamamagitan ng sining.

Si Alexa ay nag-uwi ng sampung libong piso (P10,000) bilang Grand Winner na sinundan naman nina Georgina Alexi Salvacion ng Trece Martires, Cavite (1st Place) na may limang libong piso (P5,000) at Zachi



Dominique Nohay ng Batangas City, Batangas (2nd Place) na may tatlong libong piso (P3,000).

Ayon kay Felipe Ryan Duatin na tagapagsanay ni Alexa, hindi nila akalain na maiuwi ng paaralan ang panalo dahil sa rami ng magandang obra ng mga mag-aaral. Buo ang kanyang pasasalamat sa malaking oportunidad na ibinigay ng Kagawaran. Irerepresenta ni Alexa ang CALABARZON sa parehong kompetisyon sa nasyonal na nakatakdang ganapin sa ika-5 ng Oktubre. Ang mga nanalong likhang sining ay ilalagay sa eksibisyon para sa selebrasyon ng World Food Day sa ika-16 ng Oktubre. PR



Media Lakbay Aral 2023 Showcases the Vital Role of Microfinance in Empowering Communities

In an enlightening and insightful three-day event, media professionals from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao gathered to witness the impact and significance of microfinance institutions in the Philippines. The Media Lakbay Aral, organized by CARD MRI PUBLISHING HOUSE, took place from October 18 to 20, 2023, offering a unique opportunity for journalists to explore the realm of microfinance.

Day 1: Welcoming Media Partners from Across the Nation

The event commenced with the arrival of media partners hailing from different regions of the country. Journalists and media representatives found themselves accommodated at the Kabayan Hotel in Pasay. The evening began with a warm Welcome Dinner at Aristocrat Malate, followed by a comprehensive briefing and orientation for the media tour, led by Sir Jeff Tandingan of CARD MRI Publishing.

Day 2: Exploring the Heart of Manila

The second day was dedicated to exploring the cultural and financial heritage of Manila. The media delegation embarked on a tour of Intramuros, immersing themselves in the historical significance of the area. A delightful lunch at the Presidential Grand Palace Restaurant in Binondo allowed them to savor authentic Chinese cuisine.

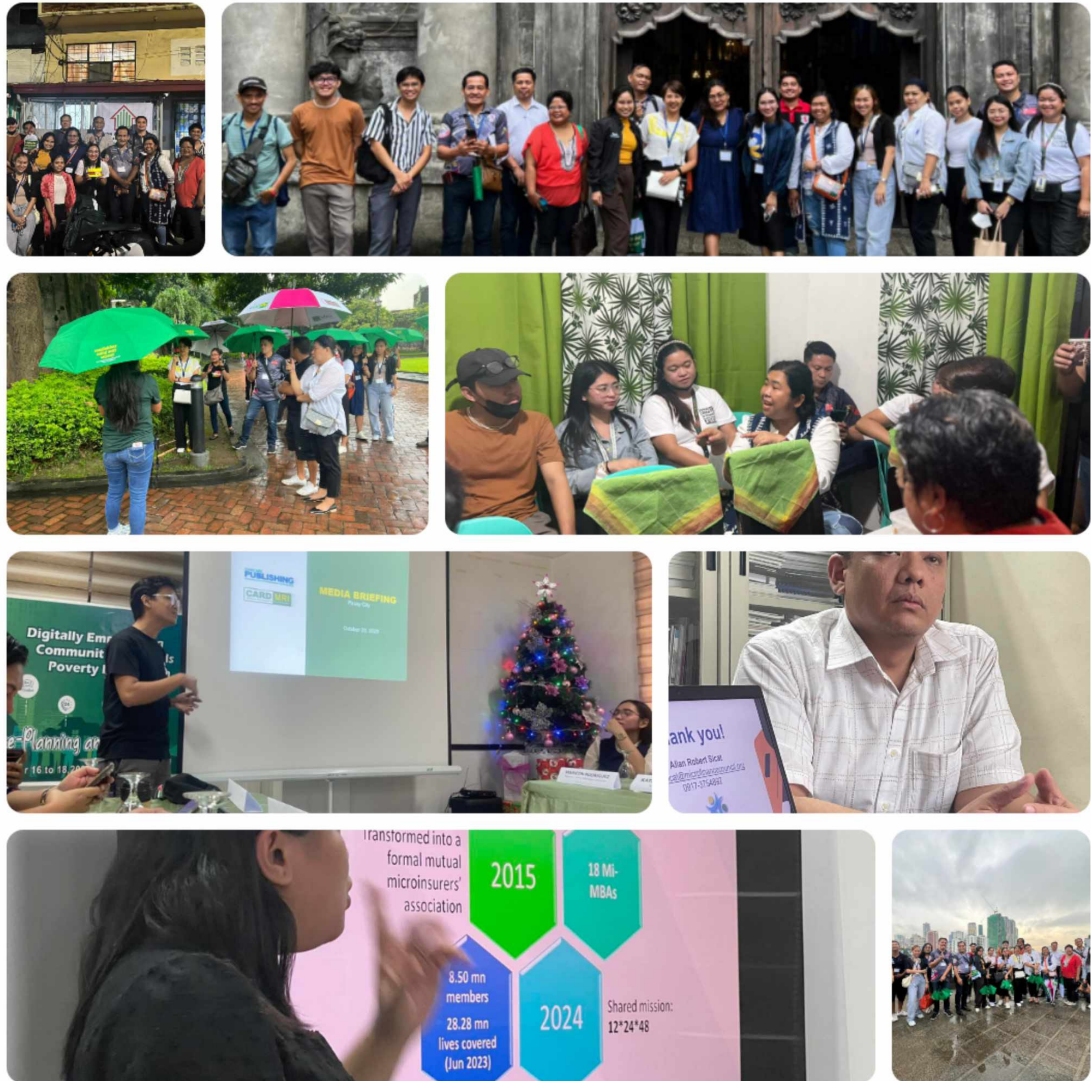
The tour continued

with visits to prominent microfinance institutions, including the Microfinance Council of the Philippines (MCPPI) and the Microinsurance MBA Association of the Philippines (MIMAP). To gain deeper insights, the group concluded the day with a visit to the Microfinance NGO (ASHI) in Pasig City and enjoyed a dinner at SM MOA Seaside.

Day 3: Unveiling the Impact of Microfinance on Communities

The final day of the Media Lakbay Aral was dedicated to witnessing the transformative impact of microfinance at the grassroots level. The media delegation visited the Barangay 146 Malibay in Pasay City, where they attended center meetings and conducted interviews with clients. These interactions shed light on how microfinance institutions have actively contributed to local businesses and social development within their communities.

The day continued with the launch of KOA KAFE, an initiative by CARD MRI PUBLISHING HOUSE, and a visit to CARD CMDI in Pasay. The event reached its conclusion with a Media Briefing attended by representatives from CARD MRI PUBLISHING HOUSE, CARD BANK, CARD INC, CARD SME BANK, Ahon Sa Hirap Inc. (ASHI), ASA Philippines Foundation, K-Coop, and other institutions affiliated



with CARD INC. The discussions were centered on the vital role of microfinance and microinsurance, emphasizing mutual benefits associations.

The Media Lakbay Aral 2023 provided media professionals with an opportunity to witness firsthand the positive changes brought about by microfinance and microinsurance institutions in the lives of individuals and communities. It underscored the importance of financial inclusion and social empowerment, making it clear that microfinance and microinsurance is a powerful tool for fostering growth and development across the Philippines. via Bhal Cabrera



SMC, gov't forge biggest CSR collaboration to clean up, rehabilitate Luzon rivers



Three years after it launched its landmark river cleanup and flood mitigation initiative—which has led to the removal of over 3 million metric tons of silt and solid wastes from the Pasig, Tullahan, and San Juan Rivers—San Miguel Corporation (SMC) is setting its sights on a more ambitious goal: cleaning up and rehabilitating three major river systems as well as other tributaries and waterways throughout Metro Manila, Pampanga, Cavite, and Bulacan.

Dubbed as “SMC’s Adopt-A-River program”,

this initiative is possibly the country’s biggest and most impactful corporate social responsibility (CSR) effort in collaboration with the national and local governments.

The initiative has gained broad-based support from various stakeholders, including national, provincial and city governments, whose localities stand to benefit from the massive undertaking.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyza and Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Secretary Manual Bonoan led national government support for the program at the formal signing of the memoranda of agreement. Also present at the signing and joining the effort were Cavite Gov. Juanito Victor Remulla, Pampanga Gov. Dennis Pineda, and Navotas City Mayor John Ray Tiangco.

“This initiative is unlike anything we have seen before. It is perhaps the most extensive environmental effort involving both government and the

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PANGARAP NA SAPATOS NG MGA MAY POLIO. TINUPAD NA NG AKAY NI SOL

Umabot ng mahigit 100 ang sumailalim sa screening at sinukatan ng Customized na sapatos ngayong araw ang mga PWD na mula naman kay former Congresswoman Sol Aragon ng 3rd. District of Laguna. At dahil dito walang pagsidlal ang kanilang kaligayahan lalo na ang mga may Polio dahil natupad na ang kanilang munting pangarap na magkaroon ng sapatos na mula sa Akay ni Sol Foundation. (KEVIN PAMATMAT)



DISCOVERING LIFE'S TRUE PURPOSE. Senator Kuya Alan Peter Cayetano on Sunday, October 15, 2023 took the stage as the main speaker at The City of The Lord Church's Dominion School for Life Excellence focusing on the theme of 'Discovering Life Purpose'. Cayetano stressed that success, while viewed differently by many, should be anchored in the teachings of God. “Y”ung criteria ng success ay nasa Salita ng Diyos, at ‘yan po ay nakadikit sa purpose Niya sa buhay mo,” he said. The senator reminded everyone to consider the real purpose behind their actions, even in the physical world, saying, “Yes, you have to consider the physical world, but it remains tethered to your purpose.” Cayetano concluded his talk by encouraging attendees to actively “create an atmosphere of good soil in Taguig,” inspiring a sense of community and spiritual nourishment PR

SM Supermalls Launches 100 Days of Christmas Surprising shoppers every day till December 25.



The countdown to Christmas Day begins on September 16 as SM launches a host of fun activities, deals, and surprises for each member of the family.

It starts with surprises each day! From September 16 to December 25, someone lucky will be surprised, one mall at a time, with toys, gifts, groceries and meals on us as SM begins 100 Days of Christmas

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100 HEALTH AND FITNESS TIPS

- 1. Eat a healthy breakfast.**
 - Eating breakfast starts your day off on the right foot and gives you fuel for the day that will help you make better food decisions throughout the day.
- 2. Get moving.**
 - Walk where you can, whenever you can. Walk to a co-worker's desk instead of sending an email. Take a lap around the block. You don't have to take long or intense walks, but try to add a few more steps to your day.
- 3. Find a workout buddy.**
 - It may not be for everyone, but for a lot of people, having a buddy to meet for workouts helps with accountability and enjoyability. If your friends' workout schedules don't work with yours, check out our small group training and group exercise options.
- 4. Make it easier to get a full night's sleep.**
 - Blocking out unwanted noise, keeping your room cooler and making sure your bedroom is dark enough are all ways to help perfect your sleeping environment.
- 5. Play with your pet.**
 - Your furry friend does a great job of reducing stress in your life, and reducing stress in your life makes it easier to keep your fitness goals. Also, putting effort into playtime with your pet may be a great way to get your MEPs for the day!
- 6. Spend time with positive people.**
 - When getting started with a new habit or lifestyle change, it's important to surround yourself with people who support you and can give you encouragement. Make plans with your support system this week to absorb some positivity.
- 7. Review your MYZONE app/emails.**
 - Seeing what you have accomplished will keep you motivated, allow you to see your progress and keep you focused on your goals.
- 8. Make food changes slowly.**
 - Don't try to change everything at once! Instead of making drastic changes all at once, make a few small adjustments every week or month to help you get where you want to be. Try a new food or modify the proportions you eat, and let your body acclimate between changes.
- 9. Eight (8-ounce) cups of water a day.**
 - The amount of water each person needs can vary, but eight cups a day is a good rule of thumb (possibly more depending on your activity level). With all the MYZONE workouts you'll be completing, be sure to stay hydrated!
- 10. Start your day off with positive thoughts.**
 - What are you looking forward to? What fun or exciting things may happen today? We're not telling you to forget any negative or worrisome things you are dealing with in your life, just remind yourself of the things that can and do give you a sense of calm or put a smile on your face. For those interested, we also offer meditation classes at the Staenberg Family Complex as part of our group exercise schedule! Join us on Fridays at 7am.

Reclusado and Dr. Zandro Catacutan.

Dr. Benjamina Pereyra, Chairperson, Happy Homes Housing Cooperative, welcomed the participants and shared some inspirational thoughts and expertise. Meanwhile, Atty. Khervy B. Reyes, Officer-in-Charge of OPCDO, congratulated

the graduates, organizers, and acknowledged the hard work and dedication of all that took part in the said program.

The group from Israel was led by Israel's Ambassador to the Philippines H.E. Ambassador Ilan Fluss, and IAI CEO LiorCrystal. The company specializes in agricultural

te.

During the graduation ceremony, fifteen co-operatives were given certificate of recognition. Best Business Plan award was given to Happy Homes Housing Cooperative with an average score of 96%.

Closing message was delivered by Ms. Janice T. Burgos-Diesta,

Senior Cooperative Development Specialist, highlighting the financial assistance as incentives to all graduates who completed the training.

The resounding success of the event is a testament of mentorship, guidance and perseverance in achieving a specific goal.-Romelyn P. Dones

PDEA DESTROYS CLOSE TO ₱6-BILLION WORTH OF DANGEROUS DRUGS IN CAVITE

The pieces of drug evidence were destroyed through thermal decomposition or thermolysis. Exposed to temperatures of over 1,000 degrees centigrade, all dangerous drugs were completely decomposed or broken down and are impossible to reconstitute.

The burnt dangerous drugs comprised the evidence seized from various anti-drug operations conducted by PDEA, together with the Philippine National Police (PNP), NBI, and other counterpart law enforcement and military units, but were no longer needed as evidence in court.

The expeditious prosecution and disposition of drug cases where said drugs served as evidence, led to its immediate destruction.

PDEA has no destruction provision at its disposal and relies heavily on the use of accredited waste management facilities to destroy illegal drugs.

Support coming from the Congress for the

procurement of additional new technologies in support of PDEA's mandate, including the construction of the new PDEA Academy Facilities in a 11-hectare land area in Tanay, Rizal, complete with all requisite amenities, as well as the availability of a 24/7 thermolysis machine, would speed up the destruction of seized drug evidence.

The burnt dangerous drugs comprised the evidence seized from various anti-drug operations conducted by PDEA, together with the Philippine National Police (PNP), NBI, and other counterpart law enforcement and military units, but were no longer needed as evidence in court.

Present during the destruction activity were: Aurelio "Dong" D. Gonzales Jr., Senior Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives and Pampanga 3rd District Representative; Robert Ace S. Barbers, Surigao del Norte 2nd District Representative and Chairman of the House Committee

on Dangerous Drugs; Dan S. Fernandez, Santa Rosa City Lone District Representative and Chairman of the House Committee on Public Order and Safety; Jorge "Patrol" Bustos, PATROL Party List Representative and Chairperson, House Committee on Veteran's Affairs and Welfare; and Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) Chairman Secretary Catalino Cuy.

The burnt dangerous drugs comprised the evidence seized from various anti-drug operations conducted by PDEA, together with the Philippine National Police (PNP), NBI, and other counterpart law enforcement and military units, but were no longer needed as evidence in court.

Representatives from the Department of Justice (DOJ); the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG); local officials of Barangay Aguado, Trece Martires City; representatives from the PNP and the NBI; non-government organizations (NGOs); and me-

dia partners also joined key PDEA officials in witnessing the destruction activity. Nahaharap ang akusado sa kasong RA 7610 o "Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act" (4 counts).

Samantala, ang arestadong akusado ay kasalukuyang nasa kustodiya ng Calamba CPS. Agad namang inimpormahan ang korteng pinagmulan ng Warrant of Arrest sa pagkakaaresto ng akusado.

The expeditious prosecution and disposition of drug cases where said drugs served as evidence, led to its immediate destruction. The burnt dangerous drugs comprised the evidence seized from

Seven months ago, PDEA orchestrated the destruction of ₱19.9 billion- or 3.7 tons worth of dangerous drugs in Cavite. The destruction was billed as an unprecedented event, making it the largest in terms of volume and value in the country's history of drug law enforcement.

DTI-Laguna Takes Part in Local Products Showcase at "Tara, Pasyal Na!" at Eastwood City



Quezon City — The Department of Trade and Industry — Laguna Provincial Office (DTI-Laguna), together with the Provincial Government of Laguna (PGL), formally opened the 6-day Tara, Pasyal Na! at Eastwood City, Quezon City, Metro Manila, last May 26, 2023. This is the first run of the mall tourism campaign roadshow, which is initiated by the Megaworld Lifestyle Malls together with the Department of Tourism to highlight the Philippines' rich diversity of destinations, cuisine, culture, and one-of-a-kind experiences and promote the country as a premier travel destination, both locally and

internationally. DTI-Laguna and PGL are in-charge for the promotion and showcase of the "Likhang Local" and "Threads of Tradition", as well as in the fashion show. This is to further promote the creativity of Laguna local designers.

Several key personalities witnessed and showed support during the opening ceremony, including DTI Undersecretary Maria Blanca Kim B. Lokin, DTI-4A OIC Regional Director Marissa C. Argente, DTI-Laguna OIC Provincial Director Christian Ted O. Tungohan, and DTI-Rizal OIC Provincial Director Cleotilde M. Duran.

In her inspirational message, DTI USec Lokin congratulated Megaworld Lifestyle Malls, Department of Tourism, Department of Science and Technology, PGL, and DTI-4A and DTI-Laguna for organizing a momentous event where local products and tourist destinations are highlighted and featured.

Furthermore, DTI USec Lokin emphasized that we celebrate not just the beauty of fashion and distinctive taste of food but the opportunity it creates for promoting local tourism. She also recognized the collaborative efforts of DTI-4A, DTI-Laguna, Megaworld Lifestyle Malls,

PGL, Laguna designers, and MSMEs toward achieving a common goal.

She quoted, "the Province of Laguna is fortunate for having the best of Filipino food, travel destinations, fashions and arts, which this event, Tara, Pasyal Na!, is showcasing here at Eastwood Mall. Laguna is known for (1) fashion like footwear from Liliw and Binan, embroideries of Lumban, and fashionable bags and accessories in different parts of Laguna; (2) food such as Puto of Biñan, ensaymada of San Pedro, buko pie of Los Baños, bibingka of Luisiana, duck-based products of Victoria, and so on; (3)

arts like woodcarvings of Paete (the Carving Capital of the Philippines), Paper Mache of Pangil and Pakil, handicrafts of Mabitan to name a few; and (4) travel destinations, such as Enchanted Kingdom of Santa Rosa, water falls of Pag-sanjan, Majayjay, Luisiana and Siniloan, seven lakes of San Pablo City, and hot spring resorts of Calamba and Los Baños."

Toward the end of her speech, DTI USec Lokin urged all stakeholders to maximize opportunity such as presented by this event to promote fashion and local tourism. Tara, Pasyal Na! At Eastwood City run from May 26 to 31, 2023. A separate opening and ribbon cutting ceremony to support Laguna food products and to bring the taste of Laguna to the metro was held on May 29, 2023, at the Eastwood Central Plaza.

Overall, twenty-one (21) MSME exhibitors took part in this event. These MSMEs offered wide variety of products from processed food and other agri-based food products, high-value coconut-based food products, other beverages, innovative Filipino desserts, and coconut-based health and wellness products to furniture and furnishings, gift and household decors, fashion accessories and wearables, and handmade crafts. A total of approximately Php475,000.00 cumulative sales were generated from the event.

Aside from trade fair and selling exhibitions, DTI-Laguna also showcased the incredible pieces made by local artisans and designers from the province of Laguna at the fashion show component of the "Tara, Pasyal Na!" at Eastwood City entitled "Threads of Tradition: A Laguna Fashion Fusion". The fashion show is also in partnership with PGL and Megaworld Lifestyle Malls - Eastwood City and commenced right after the opening ceremony on May 26, 2023, at Eastwood Mall Open Park, Quezon City, Metro Manila.

This year's Top 5 Ginoong Laguna and Top 5 Binibining Laguna walked the runway wearing modern barong, dress and gowns made by Frederick Berches Barong Avenue and Designers Circle Philippines - Laguna Province, handmade footwear by Ai-She Footwear, earrings by Ai-She Handy Crafts, and wooden-inspired bags and accessories from Kath's Handicrafts Trading.

Present during the said fashion show were DTI-ROG Assistant Secretary Leonila T. Baluyut, DTI-4A OIC Regional Director Marissa C. Argente, DTI-4A OIC Assistant Regional Director Revelyn A. Cortez, DTI-Laguna OIC Provincial Director Christian Ted O. Tungohan, Laguna LTCATO OIC Department Head Pamela Baun, and Laguna LE-DIPO Designate Fatima Eleanor Villaseñor. (IM-Flores, DTI-Laguna)



IFST researchers participated in Cacao Stakeholders Investment and Research Forum Mr. Romel M. Felismino, Dr. Sheba Mae M. Duque, and Dr. Katherine Ann C. Israel attended the Cacao Stakeholders Investment and Research Forum for MSMEs of Laguna and Quezon earlier today at DOST IVA. This activity aimed to present the current status of cacao production in the region, latest update on the value chain analysis of cacao industry, and possible research areas for the improvement of cacao processing. This activity was attended by different stakeholders from the industry, different government agencies, and academe. This is also a kick off activity for the upcoming collaboration between IFST and DOST CALABARZON for cacao postharvest processing research.

Global Sports Brand Decathlon Opens New Store in Santa Rosa, Laguna

Decathlon, one of the world's largest sporting goods retailers, continues to expand its presence in the Philippines as it unveils a new store in Santa Rosa, Laguna, at SM City Santa Rosa. This newly-minted retail facility is the ninth in the Philippines.



L-R: Dave Gonda (Decathlon Philippines Expansion Manager), Angel P. Toreja (AVP Laguna Area - SM Supermalls), Vice Mayor Arnold Arcillas (Santa Rosa Laguna LGU), Hon. Mayor Arlene B. Arcillas (Santa Rosa Laguna LGU), Chloe Leonardo (Decathlon Santa Rosa Store Leader), Danzel Fernandez (Congressman First District of Laguna, Board Member), John Jason Terrenal (SAVP, South Division, SM Supermalls), Julius Tan (Decathlon Philippines City Store Leader - Mega Manila), Nic Roxas (Decathlon Philippines Expansion Leader)

In an exclusive pre-opening event held today, Decathlon Philippines led a ribbon cutting ceremony alongside distinguished guests from the Santa Rosa City Government Mayor Arlene B. Arcillas and Senior AVP, South Division of SM Supermalls, Jason Terrenal. The Decathlon Santa Rosa store will officially open on October 20. With its mission to move people through the wonders of sport, the France-based sports brand seeks to serve more sports lovers and fitness enthusiasts from every walks of life, offering quality, innovative, and affordable gear, apparel and items from over 70 sports and outdoor activities.



Hon. Mayor Arlene B. Arcillas, Santa Rosa Laguna LGU

"Santa Rosa has such a vibrant sporting community which makes it a perfect place for our newest location," said Hans Iff, President of Decathlon Philippines. "And by making products for over 70 sports available to everyone, we would also like to be an avenue for first-timers and adventure seekers to discover their sports passion in our new store. Everyone is welcome in Decathlon; we hope to inspire more communities in our mission to move people through the wonders of sport."

Decathlon Santa Rosa is also the fifth mall store in partnership with SM Supermalls, the biggest mall chain in the country. Jason Terrenal, Senior Assis-

tant Vice President for SM Supermalls, South Division, shares: "We are happy to be part of the continued growth of Decathlon Philippines, and their impact to the local sport customers and communities. We extend our warmest congratulations to them."

"At almost 2000 square meters, the new store offers new features to give customers the ultimate shopping experience. "This store is designed to be the go-to meet up for sports communities. It is strategically located at the main mall area so our customers can enter our store from both inside and outside the mall.," Chloe Leonardo, Decathlon Santa Rosa Store Leader, relates. "This concept store will have bigger and more expansive showrooms and display zones for our wide variety of sports products, to encourage sport lovers to test and try out our featured products. Our Decathlon teammates will also be on hand to guide them, or connect them with the product that they

need." Decathlon members will get to enjoy the same perks and benefits in-store and online. Decathlon City Leader Julius Tan shares: "By signing up, Decathlon members can enjoy 1-year return

and refund, 2-year warranty on most items, as well as extended warranties for our bags and bikes that extend to online purchases as well through www.decathlon.ph. Members will also have access to

member-only promos and events, birthday vouchers, and other perks that will customize and enhance their sports experience. Our message to every Decathlon member – make sport yours."



Decathlon Team Santa Rosa with Chloe Leonardo, Decathlon Santa Rosa Store Leader

Visit Decathlon Santa Rosa at the Ground Floor, Expansion Wing, SM City Santa Rosa, Old National Highway, and Brgy. Manila S Rd, Santa Rosa, Laguna. Shop Online at www.decathlon.ph. Follow Decathlon Philippines on Facebook, Instagram and Tiktok.

GRAB THE GREAT GARLIC ROAST AT KENNY ROGERS ROASTERS - SM CITY BACOR



SM CITY BACOR, CAVITE - Introducing Kenny Rogers Roasters' The Great Garlic Roast! Experience the delectable taste of our signature roasted chicken, infused with a unique herb and spice blend that bursts with bold garlic flavors.

Embrace the greatness now, visit us at Level II of SM City Bacoor for dine-in and takeout. For delivery, call 8-555-9000 or visit kennyrogers-delivery.com.ph

PRESERVE GREAT MEMORIES WITH GREAT IMAGE - SM CITY MOLINO



SM CITY MOLINO, CAVITE - Do you want to have your cherished photos shared? Get All Raw Memory File is an ideal choice for you! Come and visit Great Image at SM City Molino today and pose all you want for that perfect profile photo. See you!

EDITORIAL: Fortifying our coastal defenses

The Philippine Coast Guard is taking another step in the right direction by continuing to beef up its workforce so it can more effectively safeguard our territorial waters in the West Philippine Sea.

News reports indicate a total 4,220 new recruits have started training at various regional training centers of the PCG nationwide, bringing its current workforce to more than 30,000.

The new recruits are composed of 400 Coast Guard Officer's Course trainees under Class 30, and 3,820 Coast Guard Non-Officer's Course trainees under Classes 100 to 107.

They undergo training at the PCG regional training centers in Bataan, Taguig, Misamis Oriental, Aurora, Capiz, La Union, Masbate, and Zamboanga.

Another 300 recruits will undergo a six-month training course at the PCG Regional Training Center Dolores in Eastern Visayas later this month focusing on drills, basic soldiery, and Coast Guard rules and regulations.

They will also be given lessons on maritime security, maritime law enforcement, maritime safety, maritime search and rescue, and marine environmental protection.

The PCG plans to recruit 4,000 additional personnel next year and 3,000 more by 2025, which will bring its total workforce to more than 37,000 – a 185-percent increase in its manpower in just six years.

In 2019, the PCG only had about 13,000 personnel. Strengthening the PCG with recruitment of more personnel and acquisition of more patrol vessels has assumed urgency amid tensions between the Philippines and China in the West Philippine Sea.

On October 13, a Chinese Navy warship carried out what our Armed Forces has called "dangerous maneuvers" when it crossed a Philippine Navy transport ship's bow at a distance of 350 yards, the latest aggressive action of Beijing in the West Philippine Sea.

Reports indicate the Philippine Navy's BRP Benguet was at 5.8 nautical miles southwest of Pagasa (Thitu) Island en route to Rizal (Commodore) Reef for a regular rotation and resupply mission when it was shadowed by People's Liberation Army Navy ship 621 at a distance of 80 yards and attempted to cross its bow with a closest point of approach at 350 yards.

We agree with AFP chief Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. that this is another instance of "dangerous and offensive maneuvers by China's PLAN 9 (that) not only risk collision but also directly endanger the lives of maritime personnel on both sides."

The Philippines should now accelerate efforts to strengthen its military outposts on nine reefs and islands in the Kalayaan Island Group in the West Philippine Sea as China's aggressive maneuvers and harassment of our naval vessels are a clear infringement of our sovereign rights and blatant violations of international law. Write to Webster Ace Paginag

SMC...

private sector. In one decisive move, we are cleaning up many major rivers and waterways. We are doing this as a public service, at no cost to the government or taxpayers," SMC President and CEO Ramon S. Ang said.

He added that: "It is important to understand that cleaning up rivers is not a quick fix. It is a very important step in the river restoration process. It paves the way for polluted waterways to heal."

SMC began its river advocacy three years ago spending over P3 billion and removing over three million metric tons of oil and waste from Pasig River, Tullahan River and San Juan River.

The massive initiative covers the following rivers:

- Pampanga River
- Maragondon River and other related tributaries in Cavite
- Waterways in Navotas City, including Muzon River, Batasan River, and the Navotas River
- San Pedro River in Laguna
- San Juan River

DENR Secretary Yulo-Loyza lauded the company for its continuous efforts to clean up major river systems and the expansion of the program, aligned with government's

environmental objectives.

"This partnership enables DENR to achieve three main mandates by investing and allowing water to flow and impound it correctly where it is needed. Most of all, we are able to fulfill a new role assigned to us by our President when he created the Water Resources Management Office... We are very grateful to San Miguel Corporation for its kind and generous support to our government activities," Loyzaga said.

For his part, DPWH Secretary Bonoan said: "We commend SMC for taking this noble initiative, for using your own resources and manpower to rehabilitate rivers that will benefit numerous communities and residents of various provinces. The initiative not only reflects commitment to environment stewardship, but also signifies dedication to preserving our rivers that have suffered the brunt of pollution and neglect and human activities."

The local government partners also extolled the efforts of SMC to clean up waterways in their areas.

"What they plan to do is solve the problem in Noveleta, Rosario, General Trias, and Imus, which comprise maybe 10% of the land area, but 90% of flooding. With JICA and San Miguel, we expect to solve flooding in Cavite 100%," said Cavite Governor Remulla.

"What affects Bulacan affects Navotas, affects Manila, affects Cavite," Remulla continued. "(Ramon Ang) brings us together to realize there is hope for this country if we act together."

For his part, Governor Pineda said: "Noong nakaraang kalamidad, talaga pong namorubla kami kung paano bibigyang solusyon ang baha sa probinsya. Kaya nagpapasalamat po ang mga Kapampangan kay boss Ramon Ang at sa SMC... Alam ko po na ang gastusin ninyo dito bilyon, pero wala po kayong inaa-sahan na kapalit. Hindi po namin makakalimutan

itong tulong na binigay niyo."

Navotas City Mayor Tiangco, who lauded SMC's cleanup of the Tullahan River in support of the rehabilitation of Manila Bay, said: Our ultimate goal is to restore the waters surrounding Navotas to a classification fit for fishing, aquaculture, and other recreational water activities. Hence, we fully support San Miguel Corporation's Adopt-A-River program and its noble endeavor to clean up and rejuvenate bodies of water."

Ang said that while the expanded project already covers the major rivers and waterways that significantly contribute to flooding, the initiative may still be expanded as needed, should government request the coverage of more rivers.

He added that SMC has already started conducting bathymetric studies on the rivers, to determine problem areas that have become shallow due to decades of accumulated silt and garbage. DENR and the company will then develop the appropriate dredging plans.

Over the last three years, as it implemented its ambitious P3-billion cleanup effort for the Pasig River, Tullahan River, and San Juan River, SMC has acquired various specialized heavy equipment that enable it to conduct river cleanup efforts in various conditions more efficiently.

Ang said that its cleanup personnel have also gained significant experience and skill in conducting cleanups efficiently and according to government standards.

SMC's efforts have been credited with lesser incidences of flooding throughout Metro Manila, despite the yearly succession of typhoons, as the removal of millions of tons of solid wastes have deepened and widened once shallow and heavily polluted rivers.

This has complemented the government's continuing flood mitigation efforts, including the putting of pumping stations in critical areas. PR

SM Supermalls

From Page 1

Surprises. Which mall will delight someone today? Come to SM to find out!

WHAT ELSE IS A-HAPPENIN'?

Breathtaking Spectacles, to mark the festive season, will dazzle you at your favorite SM mall. Your favorite malls will all be dressed with a dazzling display of holiday magic and sparkling Christmas centerpieces await shoppers inside the malls for that IG-worthy moment.

Start your holiday gift shopping early on with a trove of artisan products and services from local MSMEs at the Holiday Bazaars. Toys, games, and collectibles are waiting to make this holiday season unforgettable at the Christmas Toy Fairs, in partnership with Toy Kingdom and Toy Kingdom Express.

Santa Claus is coming to town, and he's bringing his merry squad along! Captivating performances, musicales, ensure there's something for everyone at every visit.

Pets are family too, and SM Supermalls knows it! Bring your furry friends to select SM malls for a pawsome Christmas Pawty packed with games

and prizes for furbabies in pet costumes.

Welcome our Overseas Filipino Workers and Families! With the help of BDO Kabayan, SM Supermalls will be bringing holiday cheer to our modern-day heroes at the Pamaskong Handog by BDO Kabayan in SM City Cebu, SM City Fairview, and SM City General Santos with Superstars, prizes, and laughs galore.

Let's not forget that you can make a positive impact on the lives of those in need while enjoying your shopping. Buy one SM Cares' Bears of Joy, and we will donate to one underprivileged child.

And the fun never ends! On News Year's Eve, welcome 2024 with an unforgettable New Year's Eve celebration at SM Mall of Asia, SM Seaside Cebu, SM Lanang, and SM CDO Uptown.

To know more about SM Supermalls' 100 Days of Surprises, visit https://gosm.link/100DaysOfChristmasSurprises for daily surprise videos, www.smsupermalls.com, and follow @SMSupermalls on social media for all the Christmas surprises!

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SEN. LAPID: GASTOS SA CAMPAIGN EXPENSES, DAPAT ITAAS!

Upang matugunan ang epekto ng inflation sa gastusin ng mga kandidato sa electoral campaigns, naghain si Sen. Lito Lapid ng panukalang batas para dagdagan ang campaign expenses sa national at local elections sa bansa.

Sa Senate Bill No. (SBN) 2460, bibigyan din ng mandato ang Commission on Elections (COMELEC) na mag-update o magtakda ng limitasyon sa campaign expenses depende sa pabago-bagong economic condition dahil sa inflation.

Aamoyendahan ng SBN 2460 ang Republic Act No. 7166 o ang "Synchronized National and Local Elections and for Electoral Reforms Act of 1991," na nagtatakdang campaign expenses ng bawat kandidato sa halalan.

"Mahigit tatlong dekada na po mula nang isabatas ang R.A. No. 7166, at ang tatlong piso hanggang sampung pisong limitasyon sa campaign expenses kada botante ay wala na pong halaga ngayon," paliwanag ni Supremo sa Batang Quiapo

Sa nakalipas na ilang taon, sumadsad na ang halaga ng piso dahil sa inflation na nagdulot ng pagtaas sa gastusin sa mga aktibidad sa kampanya, kabilang na rito ang advertising, transportation at campaign materials.

"Sa pamamagitan po ng pag-a-update ng mga gastusin sa kampanya, layunin nating gawing mas makatotohanan ang badyet sa kampanya at sumasalamin sa umiiral na presyo ng mga produkto at serbisyo," dagdag pa ng Senador mula sa Pampanaga.

Katwiran pa ni Lapid na matagal ng nakabinbin ang panukala sa Senado simula pa noong ika-16 na balangkas ng Kongreso.

Kung naisabatas umano ito noon pa, giit ni Lapid na mapapakinabangan sana ito ng mga kandidato sa nalalapit na Barangay and Sangguni-

Empowering Cavite Entrepreneurs through Coop i-CREATE Ladderized Training for Cooperatives



The Provincial Government of Cavite through the Office of the Provincial Cooperatives Development Officer (OPCDO), conducted a comprehensive seminar/workshop on September 5-8, and October 10, 2023, held in Happy Homes Housing Cooperative in Tanza, Cavite. Fifteen cooperatives embarked on the journey of entrepreneurial mind setting, skills development, strategic business plan and business plan presentation in a ladderized training program. The program aims to recognize aspiring entrepreneurs and provide them with comprehensive assistance to improve their abilities and expertise, enabling them to establish and run a sustainable, competitive business and offers individuals who aspire to start their own businesses alternative and profitable employment opportunities.

Dr. Aldrin P. Antivola, Coop i-CREATE Resource Consultant, discussed the Business Plan Presentation Rules, and expressed his astonishment regarding the first ever housing operated by a cooperative, he also shared some invaluable insights



ang Kabataan Elections (BSKE) sa October 30.

Na gaba si Lapid na ang luma ng batas sa "allowable campaign expenses" ay maghihiikayat lang sa mga kandidato at political parties na mag-"underreport" o dayain ang ulat sa kanilang aktwal na gastusin sa kampanya.

Sakaling maging ganap na batas, naniniwala si Lapid na mababawasan ang pandaraya ng mga kandidato o political parties sa pagsusumite ng campaign expenditure reports.

Sa ilalim pa rin SBN 2460, ang campaign expense limits sa bawat botante para sa presidential candidate ay P50, vice-president ay P40 at P30 para sa senator, district representative, governor, vice-governor, board member, mayor, vice-mayor, councilor, at party-list representative.

Hindi naman pinalitan sa ilalim ng panukala ang P5 limitasyon sa mga independent candidate.

Para sa political parties, itinaas ang ceiling cap mula sa P5 ay

gagawin ng P30 sa bawat botante.

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Rizal actively participated in the graduation ceremony of the Kabaliklat sa Kabuhayan (KSK) on a Sustainable Agriculture Program, a commendable initiative by SM Foundation Inc. The ceremony took place at SM Center Angono on November 30, 2023, at 2:00 pm.

Representing DTI Rizal with pride and enthusiasm were OIC Provincial Director Cleotilde M. Duran, along with Senior Trade-Industry Development Specialist (STIDS) Marlene De Luna, TIDS Jonalyn Adaya, and Nego-syo Center Angono Business Counselor Roselle Galcing.

The graduation ceremony was also at-

Establishing roots



Angel Perez stood tall in his farm, showing the greatest result of his unwavering dedication and hardwork.

Agriculture is one of the most important sectors in the Philippine economy since the country has rich land and natural resources; hence, farming has been the main industry.

Angel Perez, 52 and a farmer from Sta. Lucia, Dolores, Quezon, was chosen to be the first president of Atimoya Farmers Association Inc., a group of local farmers assisted by the government. LGUs of Quezon and CALA-BARZON region supported the association and provided free land, seeds, and trucks for harvesting. Since 2017, Angel has been responsible for overseeing the 363 members who own individual and communal farms.

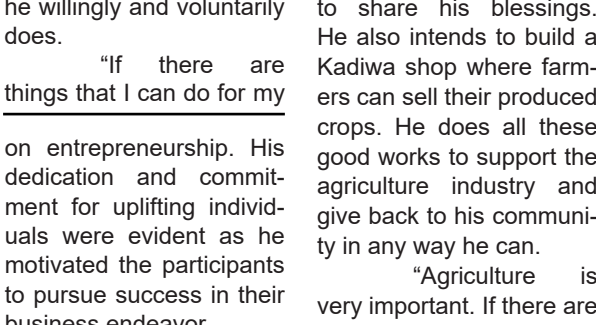
He has shown exemplary leadership in handling farmers with his expertise, in which he said he willingly and voluntarily does.

"If there are things that I can do for my

tended by key partners, including the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Moca Family Rlearning Center, SM Mall and SM Market. These entities played crucial roles in the success of the KSK program, contributing to its holistic approach to sustainable agriculture.

Binibigyan ng mandato ang Comelec, katuwang ang Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) at Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) para magbago ng limitasyon sa campaign expense kada botante base sa inflation rate at consumer price index. (KEVIN PAMATMAT)

Empowering Cavite Entrepreneurs through Coop i-CREATE Ladderized Training for Cooperatives



on entrepreneurship. His dedication and commitment for uplifting individuals were evident as he motivated the participants to pursue success in their business endeavor.

The 5th day of the seminar/workshop was the culmination of the 4-day training program. They presented their business plan to the panelists, showcasing the knowledge they acquired throughout the training. Among the panelists were Ms. Hannah Patetico, Dr. Leo Manansala, Mr. Allan

"The decreasing number of agricultural workers is shaking our country. I'm hopeful that the next generation will continue farming and will view it as a decent job rather than looking down on our hard working farmers," he added.

Cont. on Page 2

October 25-31, 2023

Simple changes, big impact: ACE creating a more water-efficient home with SM

Water security is a very simple concept - it's making sure we and generations to come have enough clean water to last a lifetime.

Reusing water for cleaning or gardening and turning off the faucet when not in use are great, active ways to reduce water usage at home. Another solution? Turn your home into a more water-efficient one!

Sounds complicated? Not really! In fact, it's so easy to do, you can do it yourself with the help of SM and ACE Hardware! Check out this rundown of the best tools and devices you need to make sure your house is a water-saving one:

- Hose Nozzles**
Are you a plantita or plantito using a garden hose to water your greens? Consider adding a shut-off valve at the nozzle end to give you more precision and minimize water wasted when moving across sections of your garden.
- Shower Aerators**
If you still prefer a shower over the trusty tabo, install a water-saving shower head with aerators. These mix air with water, which means 50% less water used without compromising your shower experience.



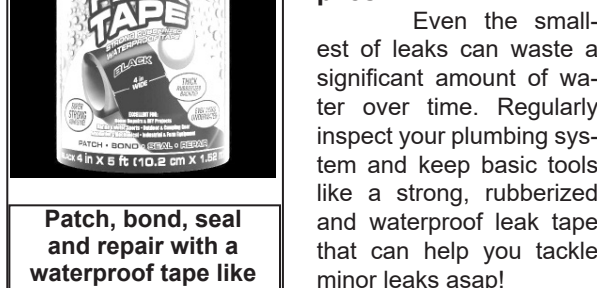
Use any of the nine adjustable spray patterns of this ACE hose nozzle based on your needs.

<https://www.shopsm.com/products/wap-10139172?requestId=87dce899-1657-4434-b47f-3ee97733cb71>

Choose from air-intake shower heads from Rosco, Eco-Sense and Easy Flow at an ACE Hardware near you.

<https://www.shopsm.com/collections/ace-plumbing/products/rosco-water-saving-telephone-shower-set-ro-1808>

3. Leak Repair Supplies



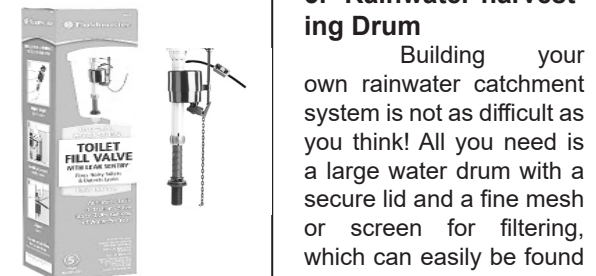
Patch, bond, seal and repair with a waterproof tape like Flex Tape and other sealants.

<https://www.acehardware.ph/products/waterstop-wet-dry-sealant-30g?prprodstrat=copurchase&prrecid=344173634&prrecid=6868084719795&prrefpid=6868053065907&prseq=uniform>

- Toilet Repair Kit**
Toilets are notorious for raising your water bill when they develop leaks that go unnoticed. A simple and cost-effective solution is to install a toilet repair kit. These prevent the endless refilling of a leaky tank, and can even "lock" itself to alert you that something needs fixing.

October 25-31, 2023

Simple changes, big impact: ACE creating a more water-efficient home with SM



Repair kits like the Fludmaster Toilet Tank Repair Valve helps prevent endless refilling of leaky tanks.

<https://www.acehardware.ph/products/wassernison-njcs109-toilet-tank-repair-kit?pos=2&sid=97b16b5c6&ss=r>
<https://www.shopsm.com/collections/ace-plumbing/products/wassernison-njcs109-toilet-tank-repair-kit>

Water efficiency has always been at the forefront of SM group's advocacies under the SM Green Movement. Aside from fulfilling customers' needs for a more water-efficient home, SM properties have been recycling water since the 1990s resulting to an average of 4 million cubic meters of water saved annually. SM Su-

DOH launches framework to combat mental health stigma



CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA) -- The Department of Health (DOH) has launched its Mental Health Strategic Plan 2024-2028, as part of its bid to promote mental health literacy and address the stigma in seeking professional help.

The Mental Health Strategic Plan is a five-year framework in reducing premature mortality, prevent and treat substance abuse, and reduce the vulnerability of individuals and communities to mental, neurological, and substance use disorders.

According to DOH, the plan will deinsti-



IFST researchers participated in Cacao Stakeholders Investment and Research Forum Mr. Romel M. Felismino, Dr. Sheba Mae M. Duque, and Dr. Katherine Ann C. Israel attended the Cacao Stakeholders Investment and Research Forum for MSMEs of Laguna and Quezon earlier today at DOST IVA. This activity aimed to present the current status of cacao production in the region, latest update on the value chain analysis of cacao industry, and possible research areas for the improvement of cacao processing. This activity was attended by different stakeholders from the industry, different government agencies, and academe. This is also a kick off activity for the upcoming collaboration between IFST and DOST CALABARZON for cacao postharvest processing research.



You can transform this 32-Gallon Trash Can into a DIY rainwater harvesting system.

<https://www.acehardware.ph/products/ace-hardware-32-gallon-trash-can-red>

permalls conducts regular maintenance of its fixtures and encourages customers to do the same in their homes to minimize water consumption.

"Water conservation is a helpful way to ensure the entire country is water-secure and has an adequate water supply," said Engr. Liza B. Silerio, SM Cares Program Director for the Environment and SM Supermalls Vice President for Corporate Compliance. "We highly encourage everyone to #SaveWaterWithSM and implement these small changes, because even the smallest habit can have the biggest impact in making water resources available to future generations."

DOH launches framework to combat mental health stigma

tionalize mental health care by easing access to support services in the communities with its collaboration with the Quirino Memorial Medical Center.

"In Calabarzon, many have already adopted the community-based approach on mental health. Municipal and City Health Officers who were already trained are helping diagnose patients," Geneva Calanog, Mental Health Program Outcome Manager of DOH Calabarzon said.

Geneva Calanog, Mental Health Program Outcome Manager of DOH Calabarzon said the community-based approach on mental health helped bring mental health services to the communities by training local health officers diagnose patients. (PB/CO)

Calanog further explains, "It's either sila mismo 'yung tumuturing sa pasyente or minsan bumababa kami na may kasamang psychiatrist from the Quirino Memorial Medical Center and the National Center for Mental Health para mag-supervise. Kasi minsan, kahit trained ka na mayroon pa ring mga agam-agam to diagnose whether this is really a mental health situation."

To further capacitate health workers in addressing the mental health gap in the region, the DOH

said they will also conduct post training supervision in the community.

"[Starting] the first quarter next year, we will conduct post training supervision to see if the Municipal Health Officers are practicing the mental health gap. We also need the masterlist of patients for the allocation of psychotropic drugs."

Calanog believes that although mental, neurological, and substance abuse literacy among the general public is improving, patients are still hesitant to seek professional health due to stigma.

"They are ashamed to seek professional help, in fear that they will be judged. Although times have changed, and mental health is freely discussed, stigma [on the issue] still exists." Calanog said.

Health institutions have reported around 2,015 cases of mental health disorders in the region, with Laguna Province recording the highest number of reported cases with 764, followed by the provinces of Quezon (509), Cavite (278), Batangas (243), and Rizal (222). (PB)

Strengthening Juvenile Justice: Duty-Bearers Ensure Detention Facilities Protect the Rights of CILCs