

Cayetano, gusto mas maraming cyber security experts na sumali sa gobyerno



Hinimok ni Senador Kuya Alan Peter Cayetano nitong Miyerkules ang Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) na kumuha ng mas maraming cybersecurity experts sa gitna ng lumalalang banta ng hacking at data breaches sa bansa.

to ay matapos ang DICT at ilang website ng gobyerno gaya ng PhilHealth, House of Representatives, at Philippine Statistics Authority ay magkasunod na tinira ng hackers sa loob ng buwan

tor,” sabi ni Cayetano.

Sumagot naman si DICT Spokesperson Renato Paraiso na ito ang realidad dahil sa malaking pagkakaiba sa suweldo sa pagitan ng mga empleyado ng gobyerno at ng mga pribadong sektor.

Inamin ni Cayetano na ito ay isang lehitimong isyu dahil may mga taong pipiratahin para sa mas magandang suweldo.

“We can’t blame them for wanting to provide for their family. It’s not for everyone, but there are really hot career choices na kung hindi tayo makipag agawan sa gobyerno ay mapupunta sila sa private sector o abroad,” wika niya.

Sa pagtatanong sa Philippine National Police tungkol sa kanilang cybersecurity personnel, natuklasan din ni Cayetano na malayo sa ideal ang kanilang budget sa programa dahil ang kanilang 2024 budget para sa Information System Strategic Plan (ISSP) para sa 2023-2025 ay hindi bababa sa P100,000 kada rehiyon lamang.

“In general, kulang pa rin hindi ba? At kahit may mga ICT expert, it’s another issue of getting them into government dahil maraming nagpupunta abroad at sa private sec-

start... pero mas kump-



likado rin pala [ang hining] sa PNP. Ang sweldo kasi nila ay parallel to the rank. Kung may cyber expert sila pero major, hindi naman pwedeng mas mataas ang sweldo niya sa general. That would be a complication for both. Let’s have a separate discussion on this,” sabi ng senador.

Gayunpaman, binigyang-diin ni Cayetano ang pangangailangan ng gobyerno na pondohan ito para sa PNP at militar dahil ang “future wars will

be fought in cyberspace.”

Sa pagtatapos ng talakayan, inalok ng senador ang DICT at mga ahensya ng gobyerno na magsumite ng kanilang mga plano, na kinabibilangan ng pagkuha ng mas maraming cyber expert sa gobyerno upang tugunan ang mga alalahaning ito, bago ang Senate 2024 budget deliberations sa Nobyembre.

“We can include in our committee report these other resources that you need,” alok niya. PR

DTI-Laguna, Calamba City Cooperatives and Livelihood Development Department Collaborate in Empowering Client-Entrepreneurs



Calamba City, Laguna — The Laguna Provincial Office of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI-Laguna), in collaboration with the Cooperatives and Livelihood Development Department (CLDD) of the City Government of Calamba City, recently organized an SME Roving Academy on the basic principles of good manufacturing practices and consumer education which was held at the CLDD Training Room, located at Mercado de Calamba, Calamba City, Laguna, last June 09, 2023.

A total of fifty-seven (57) participants from various barangays in Calamba City attended the said seminar. The topic on the basic principles of good manufacturing practices was delivered by Ms. Lovely Anne A. Rome, a business counsellor at DTI-Laguna. During the seminar, she discussed the proper manufacturing procedures including but not limited to creating, implementing, documenting



27.9K villaes ‘drugcleared’ as of Oct. — PDEA

2,061 mamamayan, tumanggap ng mga inter-bensyon mula sa DA-4A sa Bagong Pilipinas Ser-bisyo Fair sa Laguna



Aabot sa 2,061 mamamayan ang nabigyan ng interbensyon at serbisyo ng Department of Agriculture IV-CALABARZON (DA-4A) sa ginanap na Bagong Pilipinas Serbisyo Fair (BPSF) noong ika-4 hanggang ika-5 ng Nobyembre sa Laguna SportsComplex, Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

Ang BPSF ay proyekto ni Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. na naglalayong tipunin ang iba’t ibang ahen-sya ng pamahalaan upang sama-samang magbigay ng benepisyo sa mga komunidad sa bansa. Pangunahing ipinaparating dito ay mga programang pangkabuhayan, pang-edukasyon, pangkalusugan, pang-agrikultura, at iba pa.

Kaugnay nito, sa pangunguna ni DA-4A Regional Executive Director Milo

MPTC backs UNICEF's Child Road Safety Program to benefit children in more cities



Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC) recently inked a multi-year partnership agreement with UNICEF in support of the child rights agency’s existing Child Road Traffic Injury Prevention Program (CRTIP). The program aims to scale up models for improved road safety and a safe journey for school-children in high-risk areas, with contributions to road safety awareness, health systems strength-ening, child responsive urban planning, and enhanced child rights principles in business practices. In photo are (L-R, front) Carli Snyman, UNICEF Chief of Private Fundraising and Partnerships; Malalay Ahmadzai, UNICEF Chief of Health and Nu-trition; Rodrigo Franco, MPTC President and CEO; J. Luigi L. Bautista, NLEX Corporation President and General Manager; and Roberto V. Bontia, MPT South Man-agement Corporation President and General Manager. The signing was witnessed by Christine Salvania, MPTC Corporate Governance Assistant Manager; Miguel Luis Cabais, MPTC Sustainability Assistant Manager; Cynthia Maria Casino, MPTC VP for Corporate Governance and Risk; Mariella Castillo, UNICEF Health Specialist; Maria Margarita Uy-Baula, UNICEF Corporate Fundraising Officer; Angelito Umali, UNICEF Program Officer; and Christopher Daniel Lizo, MPTC Chief Corpo-rate Governance Officer and Chief Finance Officer.

Cayetano: Palakasin ang dating curriculum kaysa ipagpatuloy ang K-12

SSS, NAKIISA SA BAGONG PILIPINAS SERBISYO FAIR

Nakiisa ang Social Security System (SSS) sa Bagong Pilipinas Serbisyo Fair (BPSF) na ginanap noong Nobyembre 4 at 5, 2023 sa Laguna Sports Complex.

Nagsanib pw-ersa ang mga kawani ng SSS Calamba, San Pablo at Sta. Cruz sa pangunguna ng SSS Acting Vice President ng Luzon South 1 Division Engr. Edwin S. Igharas upang magkagpaghatid ng iba’t ibang online services gaya ng issuance ng Social Security (SS) Number, pagrehistro sa My.SSS Portal at pag-reset ng password, pag-update ng SSS records, disbursement account enrollment, pag-verify ng benefit claims status at mag-comply sa Annual Confirmation of Pensioners (ACOP).

“ N a g i n g



matagumpay ang proyektong ito dahil sa loob ng dalawang araw ay maraming natulungan ang SSS. Patuloy ang aming pakikiisa sa lahat ng proyekto ng pamahalaan para maserbisyohan ang ating mga miyembro, pensyonado at kanilang benepisyaryo,” sabi ni Igharas.

Umatob sa 458 katao ang naserbisyohan ng SSS sa loob ng dalawang araw.

Ang BPSF ay itinuturing na pinakamalaking service caravan sa bansa na inilunsad ng pamahalaan sa ilalim ni Pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. Layunin nito ang magbigay ng mga pampublikong serbisyo sa ating mga kababayan sa malalayong komunidad ng bansa. Sa ngayon, 42 ahensya ng gobyerno ang nakiisa sa BPSF dito sa Sta. Cruz, Laguna na pinangunahan ni Governor Ramil L. Hernandez.

delos Reyes, isang booth ang inihanda ng Kagawaran tampok ang pagkakaloob ng mga interbensyon, partikular ang mga punla ng cal-amansi, mangga, lanzones, binhi ng gulay, pataba, at iba pa.

Dito ay kalakip ang pagpapakilala ng mga programa at serbisyo ng Kagawaran at ang pamimigay ng mga babasahin tungkol sa pagtatanim, paghahayupan, at mga programa ng ahen-sya para sa mga in-teresa-do sa sektor ng agrikultura-ra.

Bahagi rin ng aktibidad ang pagtatayo ng KADIWA ng Pangulo kung saan ilan sa mga Farmers Cooperatives and Associations (FCAs) sa rehiyon ay direktang nakapagbenta sa mga mamimili sa Laguna ng mga produkto sa mas murang halaga.



Ayon kay Irene Arban, isang residente mula sa Laguna, maaga pa lamang ay bukas na ang KADIWA kaya nakapamili agad sila ng kanyang anak ng mga gulay. Nagpasalamat din siya sa naiuwing punla ng calamansi, mga binhi ng gulay, at mga babasahin tungkol sa mga pananim na madaling anihin at mag-agamit niya para sa munting taniman sa kanilang bahay.

POINT OF VIEW

100 HEALTH AND FITNESS TIPS

19. Make sure you are using proper form.

- You've probably heard this from our trainers before, but this is a super important tip. The lack of proper forms makes you more likely to get injured, less likely to get stronger, and guarantees that you will look silly on the fitness floor. Before starting a new exercise, double check the proper form. And, remember, our trainers are here to help! Inquire at the fitness desk.

20. Get organized and set priorities and deadlines.

- Stress makes sticking to your fitness and diet plan even harder, and a lack of organization can add to your stress. So, outline some projects (home, monetary, work, etc.) that can help you organize pieces of your daily life and help you reduce stress.

21. Stop smoking.

- We're sure you've heard it before, but we have to remind you. Quitting smoking can not only help you increase your fitness level but also your day-to-day health as well. We know this is a challenge, so it's important to find resources that can support you in this process. Check out these tips from the American Lung Association.

Saint Benilde...

From Page 1

MANILA — The College of Saint Benilde (CSB) bowed to Emilio Aguinaldo College (EAC), 69-77, but still managed to secure the last semifinal berth in the NCAA Season 99 men's basketball tournament at the Filoil EcoOil Arena in San Juan City on Wednesday.

The Blazers slid to the fourth spot with an 11-7 win-loss card but advanced to the Final Four when the Jose Rizal University Heavy Bombers lost to the Mapua University Cardinals, 74-77, and fell to fifth place at 10-8 later in the day.

Mapua (15-3) and Lyceum of the Philippines (13-5) enjoy the twice-to-beat advantage as the Top 2 teams with San Beda University taking No. 3 with an 11-6 record.

The Red Lions have one more game left in the elimination, against

the Letran Knights at 3:30 p.m. on Friday.

The other match at 1:30 p.m. will pit San Sebastian College-Regis against Arellano University.

Meanwhile, Nat Cosejo had 26 points, 10 rebounds, three assists, and one steal while JP Maguliano had 12 points, 10 rebounds, three assists, two steals, and two blocks in leading EAC to its ninth win in 18 outings.

Miguel Cortez led CSB with 19 points followed by Mark Sangco with 12 points and nine rebounds, while Robi Nayve and Will Gozum added 10 points each.

Clint Escarmis finished with 25 points, five steals, four assists, and four rebounds for Mapua, while Agem Miranda and Joshua Guiab scored 16 points apiece for Jose Rizal University. (PNA)



2023 PASASALAMAT: Year-End Appreciation Event for Media Partners. Masayang nagpakuna ng litrato na may heart signed mula sa puso ang makikita sa larawan hatid ng METRO PACIFIC TOOLWAYS CORPORATION CALAX team para sa dalawampung apat (24) na miyembro ng CAVITE ASSOCIATION OF PUBLISHERS, and EDITORS INCORPORATED (CAPEI) matapos ang dalawang araw na masaya, makabuluhan at puno ng sorpresa na media tour at fellowships para sa grupo. Patunay lamang eto ng mas matatag at mas malalim na ugnayan ng MPTC CALAX sa mga pahayagan sa lalawigan ng Cavite upang lalo pa ipaabot sa mamamayan ang mga proyekto at magandang balita na naaayon sa panahon. WEBSTER ACE PAGINAG

DA-PRDP 4A, pinag-ugnay ang FCAs, publiko at pribadong sektor sa industriya ng poultry

Nagsagawa ng isang business conference (BizCon) ang Department of Agriculture – Philippine Rural Development Project Regional Project Co-ordination Office Calabarzon (DA-PRDP 4A) upang tipunin at pag-ugnayin ang mga farmers cooperatives and associations (FCAs) at mga kinatawan ng publiko at pribadong sektor sa industriya ng poultry.

Bahagi ito ng paghahanda ng DA-PRDP 4A sa pagpondo ng mga proyektong pangnegosyo sa ilalim ng DA-PRDP Scale-Up, ang mas pinalawak na bersyon ng DA-PRDP.

Tinalakay sa BizCon ang mga sumusunod: ano ang PRDP Scale-Up, kalagayan ng industriya ng poultry sa rehiyon ng CALABARZON, at mga oportunidad at stratehiya na magpapatibay at magpapalakas dito.

Hinikayat ni DA-PRDP National Deputy Project Director Shandy Hubilla ang mga kinatawan ng publiko at pribadong sektor na lumahok sa DA-PRDP Scale-Up. Ayon sa kanya, ang DA-PRDP Scale-Up ay isang oportunidad upang mas paigtingin at gawing mak-

abuluhan ang ugnayan ng mga magsasaka sa mga publiko at pribadong sektor tungo sa mas maunlad na sektor ng agrikultura.

"In DA-PRDP, we are catalyzers. We bring in all the major players of this industry. We hope that through the PRDP Scale-Up, we will be able to unlock the potential of the chicken and egg industry here in your region," ani DA-PRDP National Deputy Project Director Hubilla.

Dumalo sa pagtitipon sina DA Undersecretary for Finance Agnes Catherine Miranda at maging ang mga kinatawan ng World Bank. Dumalo din ang mga sumusunod sa BizCon: Regional Agriculture and Fishery Council – CALABARZON, LandBank of the Philippines, Development Bank of the Philippines – Lipa Lending Center, Quezon Poultry and Livestock Corporation, APT Health Inc., Agro-digital PH, Cavite Livestock and Poultry Raisers Association, Siniloan Livestock and Poultry Raisers Association, Batangas Egg Producers Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Batangas Egg Producers Association Inc., at ang Rizal Poultry and Livestock Association.

DILG to youth officials: Exemplify good governance

MANILA — Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Benjamin Abalos Jr. on Wednesday reminded youth officials to serve as examples of good governance.

The DILG chief's statement was released after the nationwide mandatory training for newly-elected Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) officials and the National Youth Commission (NYC).

The training encompasses five key sessions covering topics such as Decentralization and Local Governance, SK History and Salient Features, Meetings and Resolutions, Planning and Budgeting, and Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards.

After the full completion of the training, a separate mandatory bookkeeping training is being developed to be administered by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority to appointed SK treasurers, which complies with the new guidelines set by the DILG on the qualifications of SK secretaries and treasurers. (PNA)

The SK mandatory training, pursuant to

Section 28 of Republic Act 11768 or the SK Reform Act of 2015, serves as a comprehensive knowledge and skills orientation for newly elected youth officials which is jointly administered by the DILG and the National Youth Commission (NYC).

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IT TAKES A 'CHRISTMAS VILLAGE' TO SHARE HOLIDAY CHEERS

BAGUIO CITY

— Gaye Vergara, a native of this city who has been working as a medical technologist for 27 years in the United States, has been collecting Christmas houses since she started working abroad in 1996.

"When I went to the States I started to buy collectible Christmas houses. I told myself they are beautiful and soon I will display them in a diorama but because I stay alone in a small condominium apartment and the busy life I had did not allow me to fix them, they stayed in boxes," she said.

Her collections have been in boxes until during the pandemic when she remembered how happy Christmas is in the Philippines.

To cope with the loneliness of being alone during the holidays, and in the middle of the pandemic at that, Gaye, who did not want to meet with friends and families given her exposure to the virus because of her job, the Baguio native brought out her collections accumulated for decades.

"I made mini bricks, miniature roads, and walls for the Christmas diorama I had in mind inspired by the happy Filipino Christmas mood. I used to enjoy doing artwork that takes time, and the activity made me get lost in the idea of celebrating alone," she shared.

"My Christmas village diorama became my companion at home," she said.

Gaye, however, pointed out that since she did not allow visitors in her place during that time she cannot share the enjoyment brought by the Christmas houses.

"So, I took a video of them. Because they (my friends and families) were also locked down in their homes, I entertained them with my videos. It also made me happy seeing comments from people on social media about the beauty of my creation and

the joy it gives to others," she shared.

Gaye again made a Christmas diorama in 2021.

She decided to send her collection to the Philippines and arranged it at her parents' house in this city in December 2022.

"My mom, who loves collecting Christmas houses but simply places them on top of tables or on top of the piano, said I should put it up in public and share the joy that it gave me and those who see the videos," she said.

Coming home again to Baguio in the third quarter of this year, Gaye started to conceptualize the diorama, which she decided to be displayed in the hallway of 237 Avenue Building along Bonifacio Street, near major universities and academic institutions, for everyone to see.

Along with her parents and siblings, Gaye opened the two diorama displays to the public last November 4.

"I'm sharing it because it gave me happiness amid spending Christmas alone to prevent the possible transmission of Covid to other people. I invite them to see it. It is free," she said.

"I invite everybody to see the two dioramas of Christmas village. These were the source of joy for me and the others

when people were not allowed to be together and enjoy the season. It is not just a collection, it is happiness shared while people are worried and alone," she said.

The dioramas depict different scenes — one containing the collectible houses, which is one of each kind released every year, showing an old colonial town that has a sentimental tone, while the other is more for the young people since it is interactive and has many moving elements.

"I did them in three months. Some parts, like the rivers and waterfalls, are made of plastered tissue papers that I colored using watercolor," Gaye said.

Missing the Filipino Christmas

Gaye went to the US two years after graduating from Saint Louis University in 1994 and a year after passing the board examination for medical technologists.

Living outside of the Philippines for almost 30 years, she only spent holidays in the Philippines about two to four times since becoming an overseas worker.

"I suddenly missed the Christmas feeling with my family, especially since my parents are already old. I want to be with them during the season," Gaye shared.

She said spending Christmas in the US is fun but enjoying it with her family in the Philippines gives her a different degree of happiness. (PNA)



CHR, idineklara na ang anti-abortion stance matapos sitahin ni Senator Alan Peter Cayetano

Opisyal nang inihayag ng Commission on Human Rights (CHR) ang kanilang pagtutol sa decriminalization ng abortion isang araw matapos batikusin ni Senator Alan Peter Cayetano ang komisyon dahil sa hindi malinaw na pahayag nito sa isyu.

"CHR considers paramount the right to life. The Commission similarly adheres to the 1987 Philippine Constitution specifically, to equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception, and is therefore, against abortion, save for extreme circumstances," saad ng komisyon sa ipinadalang sulat kay Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri noong Miyerkules, November 15, 2023.

Naantala ang diskusyon sa inihain na budget ng CHR para sa 2024 noong Martes matapos magpahayag ng pagkadamay sa Cayetano sa naunang pahayag ni CHR Executive Director Atty. Jacqueline Ann de Guia na sumusuporta sa decriminalization ng abortion sa bansa.

Binigyang-diin ng independent senator na malinaw na ipinahayag ng 1987 Philippine Constitution na ang estado ay may tungkuling protektahan ang buhay ng ina at ng hindi pa isinilang na anak. Sa madaling salita, hindi dapat maglabas ng pahayag ang CHR na salungat dito.

"Our constitution is quite unique kasi sinabi na 'life starts at conception'... Meaning [to say], the executive director of a very sensitive commission is giving her own opinion which is contrary to the Philippine Constitution. How come there is no outrage from the commission that there is such a statement?" sabi ni Cayetano.

Binigyan niya ng pagkakataon ang CHR na linawin ang kanilang posisyon sa isyu sa Senado, ngunit ang komisyon ay hindi nakapagbigay ng malinaw na pahayag.

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Binigyan niya ng pagkakata



With the convergence of over 300 members of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) councils, national government agencies, academe, industries, and other stakeholders nationwide, the 15th National ICT Confederation of the Philippines (NICP) Summit unfolded its transformative narrative in this city.

Focused on fostering synergy through Making Academe, Government, and Industry Collaboration (MAGIC) for sustainable innovation, the summit aimed to advance digital innovation, enhance digital governance, and empower the digital workforce.

The NICP spearheaded the summit in collaboration with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) and the city government of Iligan.

The summit featured insightful panel sessions that covered topics such as exploring self-development strategies tailored for aspiring digital champions, the evolution of digital cities, and the exploration of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), and data analytics.

Iligan City holds special significance as the birthplace of the inaugural NICP Summit. The NICP was established in 2008 by 10 ICT Councils originating from Metro Clark, Legazpi, Quezon, Bacolod, Cebu, Iloilo, Cagayan de Oro, Davao, Iligan, and General Santos.

NICP serves as the national platform for collaboration, fosters the growth of member organizations through the exchange of best practices, and acts as the collective voice for ICT in the country.

Unlocking digital frontiers

DICT Secretary Ivan John Uy acknowledged the pivotal role of

local ICT councils and advocates in shaping the ICT landscape, both in urban and rural areas. He also emphasized the government's commitment to building a digitally empowered nation through programs like the Digital Cities Program, focusing on institutional development, talent attraction, infrastructure, and marketing.

Furthermore, Uy said the summit in Iligan City symbolizes the city's potential as an information technology and business process management industry hub, positioning Northern Mindanao at the forefront of digital transformation.

"We envision this summit as an opportunity not just for networking and knowledge sharing but as a catalyst for change. It is also an annual reminder for us to take a stand on how far we have come in fulfilling the promise to digitalize our country and the work that needs to be done to further deepen the collaboration of industry, civil society, academe, and government," he said.

The DICT secretary also highlighted the unique opportunity with President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., as a digital champion who truly understands ICT's transformative impact. He also underscored the importance of adapting to emerging technologies like IoT, blockchain, and AI, emphasizing the need for upskilling.

He also pointed out the country's advantage of having a young, tech-literate population. He also shared that the government is investing in digital transformation centers and training programs for cybersecurity and other technologies.

Championing ICT-based countryside development

DICT Undersecretary for ICT Industry Development Jocelle Batapa-Sigue highlighted five significant aspects driving their participation in the

NICP summit. The summit served as a symbolic homecoming, expressing gratitude to NICP founders for their contributions to the organization's growth from 10 ICT councils in 2008 to over 100 today.

Additionally, it acted as a reflective reminder of NICP's initial mission in 2008 to champion ICT countryside development and encouraged a return to the organization's foundational spirit. The new ICT councils were also encouraged to continue the legacy.

Furthermore, the spotlight was on Iligan, acknowledging its role as a digital freelancing capital and one of the 25 digital cities listed by DICT. Batapa-Sigue also advocated for collaboration, investment in human talent, and the strategic use of technology for the growth of cities and communities.

"This event is a homecoming, a reminder for all of us, a challenge, a chance to also help Iligan and the whole of Mindanao, and to know new opportunities where we can all help our cities and communities grow," she said.

Furthermore, Batapa-Sigue also shared the significant milestones that the new administration has achieved within 15 months. One notable accomplishment is the long-awaited approval of the Philippines Skills Framework, encompassing various sectors such as healthcare information, contact centers, global in-house centers, super development, and data analytics and intelligence, which is set to be completed by next month.

Additionally, 10 startups have been selected to receive up to P1 million each, signaling a positive development in supporting entrepreneurial ventures in the country.

According to Iligan Mayor Frederick Siao, collaboration among academe, government, and industry is essential for development.

"The 15th NICP Summit Iligan 2023 is a unique opportunity to set the stage for a more collaborative, innovative, and sustainable future. By fostering synergy among academe, government, and industry, we can overcome

the challenges of today and shape the technological landscape of tomorrow," he said.

Iligan Mayor Frederick Siao underscores the importance of collaboration among academe, government, and industry for development. (ADD/PIA-10/Lanao del Norte)

Digital aspirations and collaborative success

Participants at the NICP Summit conveyed gratitude for the invaluable support received and shared insights into the booming ICT industry in their respective areas.

Nur Fahad Dimacisil, representing the ICT Council of Cotabato City, shared their aspiration to transform into a digital city, as it could attract business opportunities, especially in the IT industry, and generate more jobs. He mentioned the city's plan to craft a "super citizen" application that will enable residents to report incidents easily.

Expressing gratitude for the support from DICT, Dimacisil mentioned their cooperative relationship, especially in DICT's initiative to position Cotabato City as a leading digital city in the BARM area. He highlighted various programs and initiatives, such as free WiFi, Tech4Ed, and digital marketing and education programs, that DICT is actively collaborating on with the city.

Meanwhile, DICT Regions Calabarzon and Mimaropa Director Cherry Ortega shared the challenges and successes of her region. Despite the connectivity challenges in Mimaropa's island provinces, efforts have been made to provide internet connectivity services through the "Free Wi-Fi for All" program of DICT, ensuring that no one is left behind.

She also highlighted the pioneering role of DICT Calabarzon in the joint memorandum among DICT, the National Economic and Development Authority, and the Department of the Interior and Local Government in encouraging the establishment of ICT councils in local government units. She hopes that this will be replicated across the country.

"ICT is a universal technology, but its application will depend on an island group's perspective. What can be applied in my region has not been applied in other regions. In that way, if there is an information exchange, we get to learn from each other, collaborate, and network. From there, bright ideas and new ideas can emerge, and we can eventually work together again," she said.

Meanwhile, Michelle King, corporate secretary of ICT Davao City, highlighted the booming ICT industry, attributing its success to NICP. She pledged continued support for NICP and emphasized the importance of collaboration among different ICT councils.

The 15th NICP Summit served as a platform for fostering collaboration, innovation, and

Pag-IBIG Fund and Lalamove work together to give benefits to riders



Pag-IBIG Fund and Lalamove signed two agreements last week to make it easier for riders to save a portion of their earnings every month, and eventually buy a home. With a Collection Servicing Agreement (CSA) between Pag-IBIG Fund and Lalamove, riders may now pay their monthly Pag-IBIG savings through Lalamove without any fees! Meanwhile, the signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) makes it easier for Lalamove employees and partner-drivers to answer their home financing needs with the help of Pag-IBIG Fund. Pag-IBIG Fund CEO Marilene C. Acosta and Lalamove Head of Regulatory and Strategy Atty. Josephine Joy Caneba (center) pose for a photo after signing the agreement. Joining them are Pag-IBIG Fund Deputy CEO Alexander G. Aguilar, and Pag-IBIG Fund Senior Vice President Atty. Marie Antoniette D. Diaz.

Profriends...

Road to 25 is a series of events for the people and community in celebration of Profriends' 25th year in the property development business.

Profriends is one of the fastest growing property developers in the Philippines, having built and delivered over 60,000 houses to Filipino families since 1999. For

sustainability in the digital realm. The shared commitment to shaping a brighter digital future among participants fostered a synergy that will contribute to the continued growth of the ICT sector in the country. (LELA/PIA-10/Lanao del Norte)

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From Page 7

more than two decades in property development, Profriends has evolved to be a values-driven community builder that continues to transform the lives of Filipino families. Its strong presence in Cavite and Iloilo is manifested through its projects, Lancaster New City and Parc Regency Residences, respectively.

EDITORIAL: No one left behind

What can P670 million do? On the part of the legislative and executive branches of government, plenty.

Working in tandem, the House of Representatives and the Department of Social Work and Community Development recently launched a program to distribute P670 million worth of financial and rice assistance to an initial 335,000 poor Filipino families in Metro Manila and Laguna.

According to Speaker Martin Romualdez, the program, called the Cash and Rice Distribution (CARD) plan, has been started simultaneously in Metro Manila's 17 localities as well as in Biñan and Sta. Rosa City in Laguna province.

It will eventually be implemented nationwide to benefit some 2.5 million Filipinos at an estimated cost of P5 billion.

Each of Metro Manila's 33 legislative districts would have 10,000 beneficiaries, while Biñan City and Sta. Rosa City would have a total 5,000 recipients who would each get cash and rice in batches in four days.

Each beneficiary would get P2,000 worth of assistance.

Of this amount, P950 would be for a 25-kilo sack of rice (computed at P38 a kilo) and the balance in cash for the purchase of other food items.

Funding for the program would come from the budget set aside for the DSWD's Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations.

The DSWD would identify the beneficiaries, which would include, apart from indigent Filipinos, persons with disability, senior citizens, solo parents, and indigenous peoples.

The agency could increase the amount of financial aid in some areas depending on its evaluation of prevailing circumstances.

CARD is a timely and appropriate response by the administration in light of the high cost of rice and other goods.

It will enable impoverished Filipino families to gain access to the staple food at better prices.

At the same time, it will serve to prevent rice hoarding and price manipulation by unscrupulous traders.

The recent launch of the Cash and Rice Distribution program coincided with the introduction of the Marcos administration's Bagong Pilipinas Serbisyo Fair in Laguna following its successful introduction in give other provinces.

With an initial funding of at least P1 billion, this is expected to benefit, at first, more than 400,000 Filipinos seeking to avail themselves of more than 60 services offered by various government agencies, including health and medical support, as well as livelihood and educational assistance.

What is clear from this is that the government is making big strides in poverty alleviation programs aimed at making no one left behind in the country's push toward sustained and inclusive economic growth.

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Manila's cash aid payout for solo parents, PWD set early December



MANILA – The city government of Manila will start the distribution of monthly financial assistance for its residents who are solo parents and persons with disabilities (PWDs) in early December.

Citing the report of the Manila Department of Social Welfare (MDSW), Mayor Honey Lacuna said Thursday the beneficia-

ries would each receive PHP3,000, representing the PHP500 monthly cash aid from July to December this year.

The grant would benefit the city's 17,000 solo parents and some 33,000 PWDs, she added. At the same time,

Lacuna urged solo parents and PWDs to ensure that their identification cards are updated or not expired.

The IDs for solo parents are renewable every year while those for PWDs are renewable every three years.

MDSW chief Ma. Asuncion Fugoso said the renewal of these IDs aims to ensure that the solo parents and PWDs remain as such and they continue to be residents of Manila.

Meanwhile, Lacuna said the cash allowance for the city's senior citizens has already been processed and will be released soon.

According to the report of the City's Office of Senior Citizens'

Pinakaunang sabog-tanim na Malusog Rice ng Pilipinas sa Batangas, sinuri



Isinagawa ang pinakauna sa bansa na pagsasabog-tanim ng barayit ng binhi ng palay na Malusog Rice (NSIC 2022 Rc 682GR2E) sa Sition Mangahan, Nasugbu, Batangas noong ika-9 ng Agosto.

Kaugnay nito, bilang bahagi ng selebrasyon ng National Rice Awareness Month 2023

ay sinuri ang kalagayan ng mga tanim sa pamamagitan ng "Farm Walk" na pinangunahan ng Philippine Rice Research Institute – Los Baños kaisa ang Department of Agriculture IV-CALABARZON (DA-4A) noong ika-9 ng Nobyembre.

Ang Malusog Rice ay isang uri bigas na nagtataglay ng beta-carotene na kayang tumugon sa 30-50% bitamina A na kinakailangan ng katawan ng mga bata, mga buntis, at nagpapasusong ina. Isinusulong ang pagpoprodyus at pagkain nito bilang karagdagang solusyon sa Vitamin A Deficiency (VAD) na isa sa mga pangkalusugang suliramin sa bansa.

Ayon kay Gerardo Cabasis na nagmamahala ng palayan, malakas ang Malusog Rice sa lupang Nasugbu dahil sa kabila ng sunod-sunod na pinagdaanan nitong nagbabagong panahon at smog na dulot ng bulkang taal ay nananatili pa rin itong nakatayo. Aniya, mabilis din itong dumako sa hustong gulang kaya naman maaani na nila ito sa ika-95 na araw matapos itanim.

Samantalala, kasalukuyang isinasagawa ang pagpaparami ng binhi ng Malusog Rice at inaasahang mas palalawakin pa ang pamamahagi nito sa iba't ibang lugar sa bansa kapag dumami na ang suplay nito.



contributions, dedication and efforts of the committed individuals working for the betterment of senior citizens. More so, PA Mojica echoed that the provincial government has always been at the forefront, giving its utmost help for the sector.

Thereafter, Ms. Beverly Alvaran, representative of Board Member Romel Enriquez, further emphasized the support of BM Enriquez and the Provincial Government of Cavite in improving the quality of life of the elders. In closing, Ms.

Precyl Ramos, Social Welfare Officer of the OPSWDO, conveyed their appreciation to all local government units that prioritize initiatives for the elderly, particularly in the areas of Health and Nutrition, Community Participation Activities, and Social Services. "Expect the OPSWDO to continue and improve the services for senior citizens in the years to come", Ms. Ramos said. During the program, the 2023 accomplishments were presented. Additionally, Federation President of Senior Citizens in all Cavite LGUs showcased

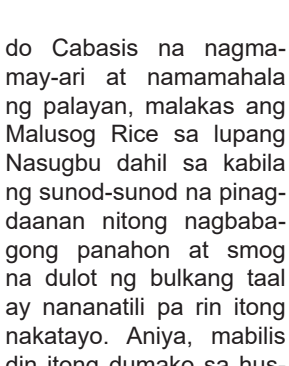
Affairs (OSCA), some PHP180,000 elderly residents would each receive PHP2,000, representing the PHP500 monthly allowance from September to December this year.

They are also set to get the usual Christmas gifts which are being provided by the city government every year.

The provision of monthly cash assistance to senior citizens, solo parents and PWDs is part of the social amelioration program of the city government.

The program also covers Grade 12 learners and students of the two city-run universities -- the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila and the Universidad de Manila. (PNA)

Pinakaunang sabog-tanim na Malusog Rice ng Pilipinas sa Batangas, sinuri



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their dancing skills in an intermission number, proving that age shouldn't be a hindrance to being active.

Highlight of the event was the recognition of program implementers – the Provincial Federation of Senior Citizens Association of Cavite Inc., Provincial Council for the Elderly, and all Local Government Units.

After the program, the Office of the Provincial Health Officer offered free Pneumococcal Vaccine for the Senior Citizens to help protect them against diseases and infections- Jam Elisse M. Reyes



Finance Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno has expressed full confidence that the Philippine economy remains firmly on the path to recovery and progress, as evidenced by its solid economic performance in the first three quarters of the year, the strong gross domestic product (GDP) forecasts for the country by international financial institutions, and the Marcos, Jr. administration's comprehensive policy thrusts to accelerate economic development.

"[W]ith a brightening outlook on the horizon and a strong array of revenue-enhancing reforms, the Philippine economy remains firmly on the path to recovery and progress," Secretary Diokno highlighted during the Pilipinas Conference 2023 on November 22, 2023 at The Peninsula Manila.

Hosted by the Stratbase ADR Institute, the Pilipinas Conference is an annual event that aims to stimulate ideas and generate discussions on society's most pressing issues.

With the theme, "The Path Towards Economic Security: Turning Global Risks into Opportunities", this year's conference gathered key leaders from the government, business sector, and the diplomatic community to strengthen multi-sectoral collaboration to address the social, political, and economic challenges that shape the Philippines and Indo-Pacific.

Secretary Diokno was invited alongside Department of Transportation (DOTr) Secretary Jaime J. Bautista, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual, and National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Undersecretary for Investment Programming Group (IPG)



Joseph J. Capuno to participate in the first panel discussion titled "Economic Outlook and Strategies for 2024".

During his speech, Secretary Diokno highlighted that the Philippine economy posted the strongest third-quarter growth of 5.9 percent in the region.

This brought the country's GDP expansion for the first three quarters of 2023 to 5.5 percent – faster than China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Singapore.

The strong growth performance was supported by higher revenue collections, easing inflation, and continuous improvements in the jobs market.

"Despite external risks and domestic challenges, the Philippines remains to be one of the brightest spots in the region," Secretary Diokno said.

This is backed up by strong growth forecasts from foreign financial institutions, such as the World Bank (WB) which expects the Philippines to outpace its East Asia and Pacific peers at 5.6 percent in 2023.

The ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO), on the other hand, projects the Philippines to post the highest growth in Southeast Asia both in 2023 and 2024 at 5.9 and 6.5 percent, respectively.

"With a promising outlook on the horizon, we are confident that we will achieve the lower end of our growth target of 6.0 to 7.0 percent for this year, and accelerate at 6.5 to 8.0 percent from 2024 to 2028," said the Finance Chief.

The Marcos, Jr. administration aims to pursue macroeconomic stability and fiscal sustainability by implementing the Philippines' first-ever Medium-Term Fiscal Frame-

work (MTFF). Among the key reforms being pursued by the Department of Finance (DOF), as identified under the MTFF to accelerate economic development, are the Real Property Valuation and Assessment Reform Bill, the Passive Income and Financial Intermediaries Taxation Bill, and the value-added tax (VAT) on digital services.

Gatchalian seeks P1.9 billion for hiring of non-teaching personnel

Senator Win Gatchalian is proposing the allocation of P1.9 billion for the hiring of non-teaching personnel, which will help decongest teachers' workload and improve the quality of their teaching.

"We recommended an allocation of P1.9 billion, I know it's a substantial amount to hire 5,000 administrative officers and 3,000 project development officers to help our teachers unload their administrative responsibilities. This is one of the low-hanging fruits in terms of improving efficiency in our classrooms," said Gatchalian, Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Basic Education.

Gatchalian specifically seeks augmentation under the Department of Education's (DepEd) Personnel Services for the creation of 5,000 positions for Administrative Officer II and 3,000 for Project Development Officer I. Citing the Legislative Budget Research and Monitoring Office (LBRMO), Gatchalian pointed out that the proposed 2024 national budget has no allocation for the hiring of non-teaching personnel.

The lawmaker cited how the congestion of teachers' workload has affected the quality of teaching in public schools. The Philippine Institute

for Development Studies (PIDS) pointed out in 2019 that actual teaching is sidelined by other administrative and student support roles of teachers, which include their participation in programs like mass immunizations, deworming, and elections, among others.

In 2022, Gatchalian urged the DepEd to study the recommendation of the PIDS to conduct evidence-based studies on teacher workload, which will rationalize the job functions of public school teachers, allow them to balance their workload, and allocate more of their time to improve learner outcomes. This is one of Gatchalian's recommendations when he presented the findings of an oversight review on the implementation of the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers (Republic Act No. 4670).

Gatchalian also plans to file amendments to the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers and make it more responsive to teachers' present challenges and needs.



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Israel, Hamas announce prisoner swap deal

ISTANBUL – The Israeli government and the Palestinian group Hamas agreed to a prisoner exchange deal early Wednesday.

After almost six hours of debate, a deal was approved by the Israeli Cabinet where 50 hostages consisting of children and women held by Hamas in Gaza would be released in exchange for a four-day ceasefire, the Israeli Broadcasting Authority reported.

The pause in fighting would extend an extra day for every 10 additional hostages released by Hamas.

During the Cabinet meeting, the ministers were informed that the first group of captives would be released Thursday.

The government said this is the plan for the first phase, to return the captives to their homes. It said the war will continue until all of the goals are achieved: returning all Israeli hostages and the elimination of Hamas.

While the Israeli Broadcasting Authority did not indicate the number of Palestinian prisoners to be released in return, the Hebrew Channel 12 said earlier that as part of the agreement, 150 Palestinian prisoners will be released and 300 trucks of humanitarian supplies including fuel will enter daily.

Hamas announced reaching a humanitarian de-escalation for four days with Israel after "difficult and complex negotiations for long days...with diligent and appreciated Qatari and Egyptian efforts."

"According to the agreement, there will be a ceasefire by both parties, a cessation of all military actions by the occupation

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army in all areas of the Gaza Strip and a halt to the movement of its military vehicles penetrating into the Gaza Strip," it said.

Hundreds of trucks carrying humanitarian, relief, medical, and fuel aid will be allowed into all areas of the Gaza Strip, without exception, in the north and south, according to Hamas.

The agreement includes "the release of 50 women and children of the occupation detainees under the age of 19 years in exchange for the release of 150 women and children of our people from the occupation prisons under the age of 19 years, all according to seniority."

The de-escalation also includes "stopping air traffic in the south of the Gaza Strip for four days and stopping air traffic in the north for 6 hours a day from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m."

Hamas stressed that "during the truce period, the occupation is committed not to attack or arrest anyone in all areas of the Gaza Strip" in addition to "ensuring the freedom of movement of people from north to south along Salah al-Din Street."

"While we announce reaching a de-escalation agreement, we affirm that our hands will remain on the trigger and we promise our people that we will remain loyal to their blood, their sacrifices and their aspirations for liberation, freedom and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital," it added.

Israel estimates that at least 239 Israelis are being held by Hamas following its cross-border attack on Oct. 7. (Anadolu



Nov. 22 - 28, 2023 Transport strike impact to commuters minimal – LTFRB

MANILA – The transport strike has limited effect on public transportation based on the number of Libreng Sakay (free ride) rescue vehicles deployed in the National Capital Region, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Wednesday said.

Citing data from the first two days of the strike, LTFRB spokesperson Celine Pialago said around 50 government assets were deployed daily since Monday, fewer than the 66 vehicles deployed during the previous transport strike in October.

"Hindi naman po nagri-relax ang LTFRB together with other attached agencies, MMDA (Metropolitan Manila Development Authority), DOTr (Department of Transportation) para po tiyakin na may masasakyan iyong ating mga pasahero doon po sa mga maapektuhan na ruta (The LTFRB and other attached agencies of the DOTr such as the MMDA do not rest to ensure that those affected by the strike have transportation)," Pialago said in an interview over Bagong Pilipinas Ngayon.

Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Tsuper at Opereytor Nationwide (Piston) held a three-day transport strike until Wednesday to protest the government's public utility vehicle modernization program (PUVMP) and the consolidation requirement of the program as well as other recently proposed amendments to the Omnibus Franchising Guidelines.

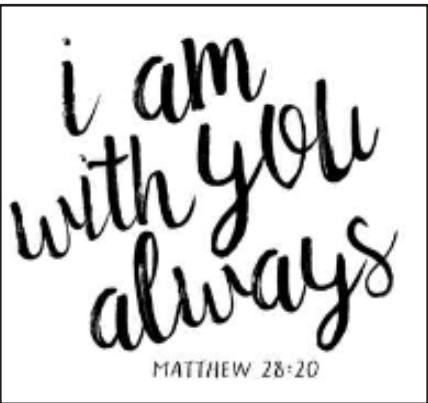
Latest data from the MMDA show that a total of 83 rescue vehicles were deployed on Wednesday and benefited 1,547 passengers.

While an agreement between the LTFRB and Piston has not been finalized, she said the group has agreed to end the transport strike on Wednesday morning and will instead continue their protest through a march towards Malacañang.

"Wala na pong tigil-pasada, ngunit may martsa. Lyon po ang huling mensaheng ipinaabot ho nila sa atin (Their transport strike is over, but there will be a march. That's the last message given to us by Piston)," she said.

Pialago assured protestors that several of their demands have been agreed upon by the LTFRB such as waiving penalties, extending franchise validity to up to five years, and other changes to the Omnibus Franchising Guidelines (OFG).

"After all of the efforts po of ad-



justing the OFG, lahat po ito ay halos 50 percent ng kanilang hiling ay napagbigyan at iyong ibang naman po ay nabi-gyan-linaw na (After all of the efforts of adjusting the OFG, about half of their demands have been met and the rest have been clarified)," she said.

However, she said the deadline for consolidation or submitting a letter of intent remains on Dec. 31 and is "non-negotiable."

Consolidation 'non-negotiable' Department of Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista said consolidation of jeepney operators and drivers into cooperatives or corporations is an essential component of the PUVMP.

"One very important issue that is non-negotiable is industry consolidation because we really need the players to consolidate into cooperatives or corporations," Bautista said on the sidelines of the Stratbase ADR Institute Pilipinas Conference on Wednesday.

"Sabi ko nga hindi namin pwedeng pagbigyan 'yung ayaw nilang mag-consolidate. Sa tingin namin this is an important component of PUVMP (We cannot allow that they won't consolidate)," he added. (PNA)

Mandatory Drug Testing for PRO4A personnel and other Support Units, all Yielded Negative Results

Camp BGen Vicente P Lim - 1,369 personnel of the PRO CALABARZON Regional Headquarters, Regional Support Units and Technical Support Company-Regional Mobile Force Battalion 4A all found with negative result on urine test during the Mandatory Drug Testing in support to the PRO4A Drug Free Workplace Declaration held today at Camp BGEN Vicente P Lim, Calamba City.

The Mandatory Drug Testing applies to every member of the unit participated in by Police Commissioned Officers, Police Non-Commissioned Officers, and the Non-Uniformed Personnel.

It aims to ensure that each member is free from the influence of ille-



MANILA – A senator said Wednesday that only President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. has the discretion on whether to cooperate with the International Criminal Court (ICC) or not.

Senator Ronald dela Rosa made the statement when asked to comment about House of Representatives Resolution 1477, which urges the Marcos administration to work with the ICC in the probe into the alleged crimes against humanity committed during former president Rodrigo Duterte's war on drugs.

"If that resolution is approved by the House of Representatives, it will remain a resolution unless acted upon favorably by the President who has made clear of his decision not to allow ICC to intrude our sovereignty," he said.

In July, Marcos declared that the Philippine government would not cooperate with the ICC, saying the country is not a member of the Rome statute anymore.

"These gov't agencies are taking orders from the President and not

gal substances and to affirm to the public that they can trust in the credibility and reliability of the police force.

In the message of the Regional Director, PBGEN PAUL KENNETH T LUCAS delivered by the Chief of the Regional Staff, PCOL MARIANO C RODRIGUEZ, he said that the fight against illegal drugs is not only a national concern but one that directly impacts the effectiveness of our law



enforcement efforts. "A drug-free workplace is a fundamental prerequisite for us to effectively fulfill our duty to serve and protect the people. It is an investment in our collective integrity and an assurance that our officers are fit to carry out their duties without any compromise," the Regional Director in his message.

The mandatory drug testing shall also be implemented in the Police Provincial Offices down to the Municipal and City Police Stations accross the region. (RPIO4A)

Solon: House reso urging gov't to cooperate with ICC depends on PBBM

from Congress," dela Rosa added.

Dela Rosa, then the country's top cop, led Duterte's war on drugs, which resulted in deaths and arrests of drug personalities, including police officers.

Several senators have also expressed their opposition to the ICC probe, saying the country's justice system is working fine.

In a separate statement, Senator Imee Marcos reiterated what the President has repeatedly said that the country would not cooperate with the ICC, being a free country with its own working justice system.

"Panghawakan natin iyon at hindi naman niya tayo bibiguin (We will hold on to it and he will not fail us for sure)," Senator Marcos said.

"Ipapasa pa daw yung ICC resolution na pakialaman tayo ng dayuhan samantalang ang mga korte natin napapatunayan naman na umaandar, malaya, at matibay. Bakit papapasukin pa yung iba? Diyan ako nagtataka (They are going to pass the ICC resolution allowing foreigners to interfere in our affairs while our courts have been proven to be functioning, free, and tough. Why should we let anyone else interfere? I am confused)."

The measure, which was authored by House Human Rights Panel chairperson Bienvenido Abante Jr. and 1-Rider Party-list Rep. Ramon Rodrigo Gutierrez, passed the first reading on Tuesday and was already referred to the House Committee on Justice. (PNA)

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