

Angat Lahat and The Vision of a Bagong Pilipinas



do City, La Union, on February 6, 2024.

Last week, Go Negosyo joined First Lady Liza Araneta Marcos' LAB for All caravan in La Union. The nationwide initiative brings medical, social and legal services closer to the communities and, of course, we were there last week to support it with entrepreneurship training. Working with the First Lady was quite easy; she is very humble, accommodating and has quite a sense of humor.

I was glad to see that the First Lady is supportive of our efforts. After all, we share the President's vision of a Bagong Pilipinas, one where a robust MSME sector creates a Circle of Prosperity where no one is left behind. When MSMEs thrive, they can employ more people and generate more revenue, become part of the formal economy and pay taxes, contributing to the overall economic output of the country. This increased economic activity has a positive multiplier effect, creating growth and development across various sectors. We as a nation have the power to create this Circle of Prosperity, and we start by reaching out to MSMEs through mentoring.

Our 14 mentors during the LAB for All caravan in La Union included successful entrepreneurs Myrna Yao and Sandy Montano, who led the mentoring of more than a hundred active and aspir-

ing entrepreneurs from the communities surrounding San Fernando, La Union. It was a huge success, and we are already excited for the next leg of the mentoring caravan this February in Pampanga.

Mentoring is crucial if we are to give Filipinos a clear path toward entrepreneurship. During our mentoring sessions, our mentors give small entrepreneurs the knowledge, skills and guidance necessary for founding or building enterprises. We normally organize these mentoring events ourselves with the cooperation of our partners in government such as the DTI, the DA and the DepEd. But now with the First Lady's Lab for All, our Go Negosyo mentors can reach even the farthest communities and provide invaluable support to budding entrepreneurs, thanks to the well-executed and efficiently coordinated caravans that attract so many people. I was told there was even seed money, given by the DSWD, awarded to the top 20 entrepreneurs at the La Union caravan to start them on their business ventures.

This wouldn't be the first time that Go Negosyo has worked in partnership with the national and local government as well as our peers in the private sector to bring entrepreneurship closer to people. At the PSAC (Private Sec-

tor Advisory Council) Jobs Fairs at the SM Malls, for example, we introduce jobseekers to the potential of entrepreneurship as an alternative career path for them. Youthpreneur, our program with the DepEd, mentors the youth in entrepreneurship and, in cooperation with existing programs within the department, it encourages them to pursue a future in agriculture. With local governments – especially their Sangguniang Kabataan – we hold the Negosyo sa Bayan to create local agents of entrepreneurship who can help foster the growth of MSMEs at the grassroots level.

These projects owe much of their success to partnerships. In La Union, for example, we are grateful for the help given by the DTI La Union, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the La Union Local Economic Investment Promotions Office. In the private sector, executives and owners of businesses volunteer as mentors to MSMEs, while the country's largest malls help us by being the venues for our mentoring events; some even support us with the logistical requirements such as outreach project requires. On a regular basis, the leaders of the country's biggest companies devote their time advising the President as part of their duties with the PSAC.

Government cannot do it alone. As the First Lady pointed out during our La Union caravan: if we are to thrive as a nation, we need everyone to be on board. She herself has worked in the private sector and knows how much potential it holds to help the economy and uplift lives. She told me that the Bagong Pilipinas vision is all about everybody coming together: private sector and government working hand-in-hand. It's about genuine development that benefits everybody, not just a privileged few. "I am thrilled every time I see yet another private sector partner coming to join us," she said during the La Union caravan.

Private sector can contribute so much in terms of growing businesses and generating jobs. I always see jobs and entrepreneurship as two sides of the same coin, and I often point out that MSMEs are responsible for creating more than half of the jobs in the country.

With the Philippines having millions of MSMEs spread out to the farthest and smallest communities in the country, we can only imagine how many jobs can be created if we scale them up, and the positive ripple effect this can have on our economy. As these MSMEs grow, they will require more manpower, leading to increased employment opportunities for the work-

force. This, in turn, leads to higher wages and improved standards of living for employees. When individuals have more disposable income, consumer spending rises, stimulating economic growth and driving demand for goods and services.

Scaling up MSMEs through mentorship and training is essential for fostering economic prosperity. By supporting and guiding entrepreneurs,

we can create a virtuous cycle where more businesses lead to more jobs, higher wages, increased consumer spending and a stronger GDP. Our efforts in mentoring individuals, partnering with various organizations and focusing on the youth are crucial steps toward achieving this goal. By investing in the growth of MSMEs, we invest in the future of our economy.

No extradition request yet for Quiboloy – DOJ



MANILA – The Department of Justice (DOJ) on Friday has yet to receive an extradition request from the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) for Apollo Quiboloy following a California court's unsealing of arrest orders for the controversial pastor who is wanted by the United States' Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for multiple charges.

"There is no extradition request received yet by the DOJ from the DFA. It's difficult, however,

to speak on hypothetical situations. The government's goal is to attain justice in whatever form and through the best forum," DOJ spokesperson Assistant Secretary Mico Clavano told the media.

"The decision to resolve came as a result of almost a year of verifying the evidence on record as well as the identity of the alleged victim," he noted.

Central District of California Judge Terry Hatter Jr. earlier ordered the unsealing of the arrest warrants against the Kingdom of Jesus Christ founder and his co-accused following a request by the United States Attorney Criminal Division.

The charges against Quiboloy and co-accused Helen Panilag

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Bong Go sa Laguna Medical Center



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Bacoor LGU, LTO establishes first inter-connectivity program outside Metro Manila

Lalong magliliwanag ang mga lansangan sa lungsod ng Imus matas pangunahan ng pamahalaang lungsod at ng Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) CALABARZON ang pagbubukas ng 48 unit ng LED streetlight noong Sabado, Marso 2. Pinangunahan nina Mayor Alex Advincula at DILG CALABARZON Regional Director, Ariel Iglesia ang pormal na pagpailaw sa mga streetlight. Ayon kay Advincula, ang pondong ginamit para sa nasabing proyekto ay nagmula sa 2022 Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) Incentive Fun na natanggap ng pamahalaang lungsod. | via Alex Advincula



Sta. Cruz, Laguna — Personal na binisita ni Senator Bong Go, Chair ng Senate Committee on Health, ang pagdiriwang ng 100th Anniversary ng Laguna Medical Center sa Sta. Cruz, Laguna noong Lunes, February 26, 2024.

Ang pangunahing layunin ni Senator Bong Go ay makapagpaabot ng serbisyong medikal sa mga kababayan na lubos na nangangailangan. Kaya namán sinuportahan niya ang lahat ng bumubuo ng Laguna Medical Center sa kanilang malaking papel sa pagliligtas ng buhay at pangangalaga sa kalusugan ng kanilang mga pasyente.

Ayon sa mensahe ng Senator, "Mayroon ng 159 na Malasakit Center sa Pilipinas, 89 sa Luzon, 30 sa Visayas at 40 sa Mindanao na handang tumulong sa ating mga kababayan. Batas na po yan, ang dalawa nito ay kabilang ang Laguna, sa Laguna Medical Center at San Pablo General Hospital. Ito ay One-Stop-Shop na dahil nasa loob na ng mga ospital ang mga ahen-sya ng gobyerno gaya DOH, PHIL HEALTH, PCSO at DSWD."

Matagal nang isinusulong ni Mr. Malasakit Senator Bong Go ang pagpapatayo ng mas marami pang Super Health Centers sa iba't ibang panig ng bansa upang hindi na kailanganing bumiyahen pa ng matagal ng ating mga kababayan, lalo na ang mga nasa liblib na lugar, para lamang makakuha ng sapat na atensiyong medikal.

Binigyang diin ni Senator Go na magkakaroon na humigit 600 na Super Health Center sa Bansa, kabilang na rito ang 13 sa probinsya ng Laguna; Alaminos, Biñan, Cabuyao, Calamba, Mabitar, San Pedro, Sta. Rosa, Calauan, Los Baños, San Pablo, Sta. Maria, Nagcarlan at Pila.

Binisita naman ni Senator Bong Go ang Malasakit Center sa loob ng ospital. Inilunsad dito ang Malasakit Center noong Au-

Cont. on Page 3

House optimistic Senate will approve economic amendments



New voter registrants breach 1M mark - Comelec

P30B allotted for enhanced PhilHealth benefit packages, primary care



HEALTH HINTS FOR ELDERSDFROM AGES 45 TO 100 YEARS

Sometimes it can feel like maintaining a healthy lifestyle is an overwhelming challenge that doesn't fit within the realities of daily life. It's tough to hold down a full-time job, eat well, train for a marathon, make homemade green juice, spend quality time with your family/partner, and meditate for an hour each day. □

Of course, healthy living can incorporate all of these things (if you want it to), but it doesn't have to be defined by grandiose displays of health and fitness.

So much of healthy living is really made up of small things we do daily—things that are so small they don't feel momentous, but that, done consistently over time, add up to produce big results.

31 wellness tips for healthy & happy living Here are 31 tips to live a healthier, happier lifestyle—all simple, easy things that can be seamlessly incorporated into your daily life:

1. drink a glass of water first thing in the morning

Coffee's great too, but it's best to start your day by re-hydrating with a full glass of water. Hydrating first thing in the morning helps to aid digestion, enhance skin health and boost energy.

2. take the stairs Taking the stairs instead of the elevator is a simple way to get a little more physical activity in your daily life. It also strengthens and tones your legs and core while you're at it!

3. make half your plate veggies A simple hack for healthy eating (and portion control) is to make half your plate veggies at each meal. The veggies pack in essential vitamins, minerals and other phytonutrients important for health and longevity. And, because they're rich in fiber, they help to aid digestion (aka keep you regular!) and keep you feeling full longer.

4. get a fitness tracker + track your steps Using a fitness tracker (like a Fitbit or Apple Watch) to track your steps is an easy way to make sure you're getting enough physical activity each day. We aim for 10,000 steps daily, which has significant physical and mental health benefits. A fitness tracker will also remind you to get 250 steps each hour (another important measure of health—see tip #9!). Here are our favorite fitness tracker smartwatches of 2021.

5. switch to non-toxic household cleaning products Conventional household cleaning products are full of harmful chemical ingredients that are not good for our health (or the health of our kids or pets!). Switching to healthier alternatives is a simple way to reduce your exposure to environmental toxins in your home. See our Healthy Cleaning Guide for a complete list of recommendations, and what to look for when choosing safer household cleaning products.

6. use non-toxic skincare + personal care products Similar to cleaning products, conventional skincare and personal care products are formulated with toxic ingredients we should not regularly let absorb into our body's largest organ. Reduce the toxic burden on your body by switching to non-toxic personal care and beauty products (see our specific recommendations on deodorant, sunscreen, and green beauty products).

Cont. Next week issue
March 20-26, 2024



Bacoor LGU, LTO establishes first inter-connectivity program outside Metro Manila



BACOR CITY, Cavite (PIA) – The city government of Bacoor, Cavite and the Land Transportation Office (LTO) signed a memorandum of agreement for the implementation of a pioneer interconnectivity system outside of Metro Manila.

The LTO-LGU Interconnectivity Program or the Single Ticketing System, plays a vital role in enforcing traffic laws, where real-time data from the LTO's database is now accessible through the handheld devices used by Bacoor's traffic enforcers.

Under the agreement, Bacoor's traffic aids can now issue On-the-Spot Traffic Violation Receipts (OVRs) that will be directly linked to the motorist's record with the LTO.

The integration ensures that demerit

points are promptly assigned to the driver's license subsequently after committing a traffic violation.

According to LTO guidelines, drivers who have accumulated demerit points or traffic violation records are no longer eligible for the 10-year validity of driver's license and could face suspension or revocation depending on the severity and frequency of violation.

Mayor Strike Revilla together with Vice Mayor Rowena Bautista-Mendiola and other city officials signed the agreement on behalf of Bacoor, while Assistant Secretary Atty. Vigor D. Mendiza II – Regional Director Atty. Noreen Bernadette San Luis-Lutey represented LTO.

Asec. Mendiza delivered the message on behalf of Transportation

Secretary Jaime Bautista, where the secretary noted that the digitization of government processes is in line with the mandate of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., under the Bagong Pilipinas brand of governance.

"The Department of Transportation, through the Land Transportation Office, intends to streamline traffic violations and fines throughout the country by institutionalizing this system. This is also a part of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s program of digitalizing government systems and processes to establish better interconnectivity among agencies," the statement reads.

LTO believes that the single-ticket system will bring convenience and improve compliance for motorists, and will lessen the corrupt practices of some traffic enforcers.

March 13-19, 2024

March 13-19, 2024

Crossword Puzzles

1 Intrinsically
6 Shave off
10 South America prairie
15 Illustrious warriors
16 Attack
17 Grass trimmers
19 Shrewd
21 Cheap
23 E. Can. time zone
24 Noah's great grandfather
25 Correspondence friend
27 Wading bird
28 Use a dagger
30 Sinned
32 Pious one
33 Screen
34 Labors
36 Stopwatch
38 Particular thing: L.
39 Fish covering
40 Group of nine
42 Rescue
44 Quick breads
45 Stake
47 Imputed
48 Harvest
49 Welcome one
54 Ponders
58 Curare kin
59 Incidental
60 Silt
62 Little island
63 Great quantities
64 Marsh rails
66 Elegant room
67 Moon over Montevideo
68 Corrida cry
69 Failed to keep appointment
71 Speed: ABBR.
72 Russian sea or lake
73 Gun muzzle covers
75 Doubt
79 Greek Letters
80 Lima is its capital
81 Give off
82 Avoids
85 FDR secretary of Labor
88 Puzzle
92 The Buccaneers' home
93 Homily: abbr.
94 Contemptible

person
96 Atlantic or Pacific
97 Wine vessel
98 Arab chief
100 2 years
102 Some are loose
103 Castle trench
104 Tomorrow, in Toledo
106 Head covers
108 Italian three
109 Studied
111 Steep cliff face
114 Chief commodity
115 Parisian heads
116 Makes happy
117 Louvers
118 did in
119 Inhibit

DOWN

1 Be appropriate
2 Hesitation sounds
3 Lasso
4 Net
5 Accompany
6 Canadian prov.
7 Above or upon
8 Rakes
9 Trapped
10 Thin shelled nuts
11 Grown-up
12 Exec. skill
13 Submarine viewer
14 Graceful horse
15 Played Moses
16 Plan
18 Discourage
19 Adhesive
20 Bitter
22 Former senator — Kefauver
26 Marina feature
29 Praises
31 A Reese
35 Japanese Premier, 1964-72
37 Lasso
39 ___ Flow;
German Ocean
41 Put on
43 Liquid vessels
44 Canary kin
46 African primates

48 Rotate
49 Steer
50 A-Bomb plane
51 Juniper Shrub
52 International Service club members
53 Peruse
54 Whined
55 Formerly Pleasant Island
56 Muslim gold coin
57 Unpalatable
61 Kilauea output
64 Greek porticons
65 Top-notch
67 Crossed wood framework
69 Alaska town
70 Gratuities
74 Continuous
76 Destroyed remains
77 Scot's uncle
78 Child: Sp.
80 Amulets
82 Jazz dance
83 Nimbi
84 Discloses
85 Hammer part
86 Wall recesses
87 Spark, a la grandpa
89 More docile
90 India dress fabric
91 Goose: L
93 Sunglasses

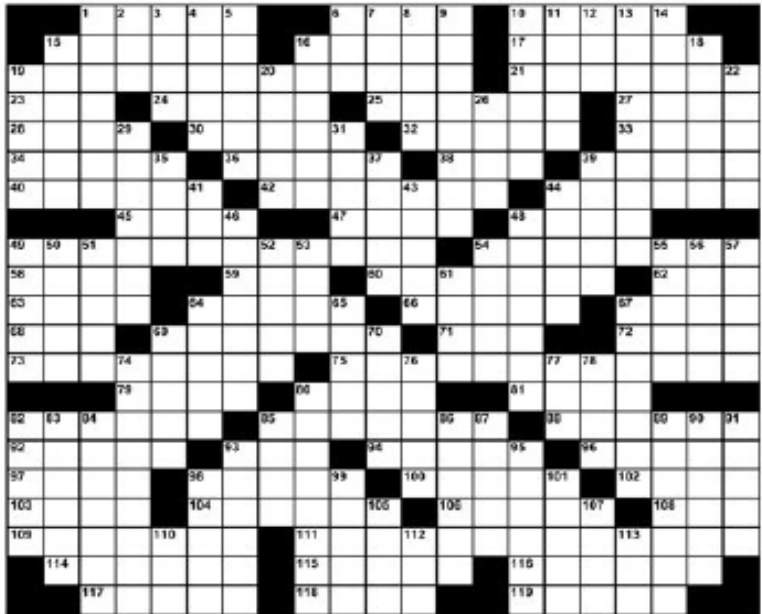
95 Worn
98 Fuse
99 Genuflect
101 Roman magistrate
105 Comedian dell' ___
107 Shoo
110 Baden_Baden, e.g.
112 Church seat
113 Western Indian

4	6		5	7	
		9			
9			1		6
	3			9	
4		5	2		8
	8				7
5	7		3		8
2				3	

WORDHUNT

C H J Y S F P N E X J K U Y G
D N F P V J J P R I N T E R O
K I U B K I P R V J B N B P T
W Y G S C R A P B O O K A E E
N Q K I E V J Z S V M P V G N
C J D V T K Z V E B E I X W F
A S I N U A N N V R T W V A T
J E R O U S L E A A X F T O G
W F B X Y S E L E M E N T S O
B G Y P D D B R L I Z Q Z G B
D S H A C C C P G F R S T Q Z
K S R E W O L F G T P T H Y W
S B G M E M O R I E S H A Z A
T T Z W Z V P Q I P M R H U I
T P Y S W R I B B O N S T S H

SCRAPBOOK
DIGITAL
PAPER
PREVIEW
ELEMENTS
FLOWERS
LEAVES
CREATIVE
SUZYQ
HYBRID
PRINTER
RIBBONS
BRADS
MEMORIES



Quiboloy.. FROM PAGE 8

and Teresita Tolibas Dandan include conspiracy to engage in sex trafficking by force, fraud, coercion, sex trafficking of children, conspiracy, and cash smuggling.

The online poster on Quiboloy on the FBI webpage said the 74-year-old pastor is wanted for his alleged participation in a labor trafficking scheme that brought church members to the United States via fraudulently obtained visas and forced them to solicit donations for a bogus charity.

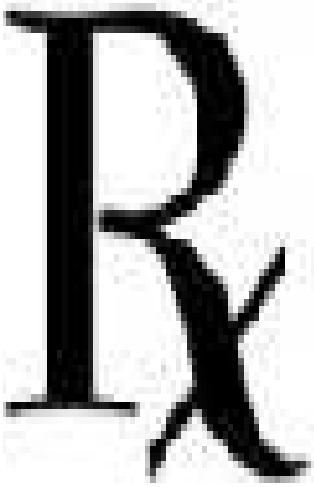
The donations were allegedly used to finance church operations and the lavish lifestyles of its leaders.

Members who proved successful at soliciting for the church were allegedly forced to enter into sham marriages or obtain fake student visas to continue soliciting in the United States year-round.

Further, it was alleged that females were recruited to work as personal assistants, or "pastorals," for Quiboloy, adding that victims prepared his meals, cleaned his residences, gave massages and were required to have sex with him. (PNA)

SUDOKU

8					1	2		
	7	5						
				5			6	4
9			7					6
5	2				9		4	7
2	3	1						
		6		2		1		9



LONELINESS

The eternal quest of the individual human being is to shatter his (or her) loneliness.

WHEN YOU KNOW YOURSELF, you will never be lonely because you will always have yourself to be with. When you achieve this state of self-awareness you will also realize that there is a greater awareness, the universal consciousness that is aware of you and with you at all times. One of the ways to

connect with this consciousness is through prayer. It can connect you with all things.

You have to be willing to see beyond yourself for this to happen. If you blame others for your loneliness or the lack of attention you receive, things will not change. Then loneliness will prevail. But if you focus on getting to know yourself and your Creator, you will always have company.

Soulution of the Week

*Take some time to get to know yourself better.
Keep a journal, meditate, pray and listen.*



MPT South's 'Drayberks' Toll Road Safety Seminar Initiative Returns



Metro Pacific Tollways South (MPT South), the concessionaire for the Cavite-Laguna Expressway (CALAX) and Manila-Cavite Expressway (CAVITEX), kicks off its annual 'Drayberks' Toll Road Safety Seminar in partnership with Vermosa Estate in Imus, Cavite.

The seminar on Monday, February 19, saw the 50 road safety, security officers, and locators of Vermosa Estate in attendance, to learn more about road safety practices and be familiarized with safety features along the expressway.

"We're delighted to launch this year's 'Drayberks' Road Safety Seminar in partnership with Vermosa Estate, a testament to our commitment to promoting road safety in our communities. As long-term partners, we are dedicated to ensuring that essential safety education reaches even more individuals, equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to

ways proudly spearheaded this caravan, aimed at educating individuals on fundamental road safety practices," said Ms. Mayi Rodriguez, Senior Project Development Head for Ayala Land Estates.

Since its inception in 2018, 'Drayberks' has successfully educated over 1,000 drivers joining over 50 activations in MPT South's road network, including CAVITEX, C5 Link, and CALAX. Recognized

tions to road safety, the program was honored with a Silver Anvil at the 55th Anvil Awards by the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) in 2019 under the category of Public Relations Program on a Sustained Basis Community Development (Urban/Rural).

MPT South is a subsidiary of Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC), the infrastructure arm of Metro Pacific Investments Corporation (MPIC). Aside

from the CALAX and CAVITEX network of toll roads, MPTC's domestic portfolio includes the concessions for the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX), the NLEX Connector Road, the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX) and the Cebu-Cordova Link Expressway (CCLEX) in Cebu. PR

For in queries about this press release please email us at:corpcomm@mptsouth.com



P156.7-B retirement benefits paid to 2.2M SSS members in 2023

MANILA – The Social Security System (SSS) on Friday said it released PHP156.7 billion retirement benefits to 2.2 million members in 2023, making it the most availed assistance last year.

In a news release, SSS Vice President for Benefits Administration Division Joy Villacorta noted that the retirement benefits released in 2023 is 10.7 percent higher compared to the PHP141.5 billion released in 2002 and that majority or 87.46 percent of the payees are pensioners.

"Retirement benefit is a cash benefit being granted by SSS to a member who can no longer work due to old age. Members who paid at least 120 monthly contributions will get a lifetime monthly pension while those with less than 120 monthly contributions will receive a one-time lump sum amount," she said.

Death benefit came in second with a total release of PHP70.1 billion to 1.4 million beneficiaries in 2023, slightly lower than the PHP70.2 billion death benefits to 1.3 million beneficiaries in 2022.

"SSS grants cash

benefit to beneficiaries of a deceased member. Deceased SSS members with 36 monthly contributions will entitle their beneficiaries to a monthly pension. In comparison, beneficiaries of those with less than 36 monthly contributions will get a one-time lump sum amount," she added.

Maternity benefit placed third with a disbursement of PHP14.1 billion to 357,000 members in 2023, which rose by 9.6 percent from about PHP12.9 billion recorded in 2022.

Villacorta said female members who have paid at least three monthly contributions in the last 12 months before the semester of childbirth, miscarriage, or emergency termination of pregnancy can avail of the maternity benefit.

As provided in the Expanded Maternity Leave Law, the SSS maternity benefit is paid to an eligible member at every instance of her pregnancy since March 2019.

Meanwhile, the disability benefit came in fourth with PHP7.5 billion released to over 130,000 members last year, a 16.3 percent increase from the PHP6.4 billion released in 2022.

"Members who become disabled either partially or totally can receive a monthly pension or lump sum amount under the disability benefit. Members who have paid at least 36 monthly contributions are qualified to get a monthly disability pension while those with less than 36 monthly contributions will be granted a lump sum amount," she said.

Funeral benefit is granted to whoever paid the funeral expenses of the deceased member. Claimants of deceased members with 36 or more monthly contributions may receive a variable amount from PHP20,000 to PHP60,000, depending on the number and amount of contributions paid by the member.

However, funeral benefit arising from the death of a member who paid less than 36 monthly contributions is fixed at PHP12,000.

The SSS also released sickness benefit -- a daily cash allowance paid for the number of days a member cannot work due to sickness or injury.

"Unemployment benefit is the least availed benefit in 2023 with a total disbursement of PHP914.1 million to 64,000 members, down by 4.9 percent from the PHP961.4 million released to 75,000 members in 2022. This is also a reflection of the continuing improvement in the Philippine labor market with the unemployment rate reaching its lowest levels last year," Villacorta said.

She noted that benefit payments released in 2023 amounted to PHP257.4 billion -- 6.9 percent more than the PHP240.6 billion disbursed in 2022. (PNA)

March 13-19, 2024

EDITORIAL: Responsible gun ownership

Lawmakers and gun control advocates are up in arms over the policy change announced recently by the Philippine National Police easing the rules on gun ownership.

Under the new IRR of the Comprehensive Law on Firearms and Ammunition Regulation or Republic Act 10591 proposed by the PNP, the civilians may be allowed to own semi-automatic rifles or those of a caliber not exceeding 7.62mm.

A separate license is needed for the gun owner to transport the firearm or carry it outdoors.

The PNP said the new IRR was prepared by a technical working group it created and submitted to the University of the Philippines Law Center on Feb. 27 for publication, after which the revision would take affect after 15 days.

Lawmakers are reported to have expressed grave concern over this development.

For Sen. Francis Tolentino, the new IRR implementation should be reviewed since promoting a culture of gun ownership particularly involving long firearms will not be conducive to achieving economic stability.

Sen. Risa Hontiveros said the law itself should be amended, pointing out that "hoarding high-powered weapons should not be a hobby, much less one enabled by law...our society, families and schools will be safer if we reduce the guns that may be used to kill and commit other crimes."

For her part, Sen. Imee Marcos asked whether gun manufacturers

The PNP has given assurances that safeguards are in place to address concerns over the IRR revision, and "not just anyone will be able to have the privilege to possess and own small arms."

Whatever would be the outcome of this controversial issue, what should probably be emphasized is responsible gun ownership.

That means a firearm, whether a handgun or more powerful ones like semi-automatic rifles, should be made available to the citizenry only for their protection from criminal elements and only after passing a stringent licensing process.

Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) has allotted PHP30 billion to enhance its benefit packages and provision of primary health care services to its members this year.

"Target po natin ay lahat po tayong Pilipino ay mabigyan ng access sa ating Konsulta [Konsultasyong Sulit at Tama] Package providers para manatiling malusog po tayong lahat (Our target is for all Filipinos to gain access to our Konsulta Package providers so we can all stay healthy)," PhilHealth's corporate affairs group acting vice president Rey Baleña said in a Bagong Pilipinas Ngayon interview aired over PTV 4.

"Hindi na kailangan magkasakit yung miyembro para magamit 'yung PhilHealth benefit. Kung mayroon pong dinaramdam, ito po ay maagang made-detect at maaagapan po at 'di na matutuloy sa magastos na gamutan (The member needs not be sick to use

P156.7-B...

members last year, a 16.3 percent increase from the PHP6.4 billion released in 2022.

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MANILA – The House of Representatives expects the Senate to approve proposed amendments to the constitution's restrictive economic provisions.

Speaker Martin Romualdez believes Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri will do everything to convince his colleagues to agree to the changes.

"We understand the challenges, pero (but) the Senate has always lived up to the challenge. Magagaling 'yung mga senador natin (Our senators god) and I know that they know what is good for our people," Romualdez told reporters in an ambush interview during the

groundbreaking ceremony of the Philippine Cancer Center in Quezon City on Friday.

Zubiri earlier said that getting the needed 18 votes in the Senate for the economic amendment proposals "is a big challenge" but "not impossible."

The House of Representatives is expected to approve the Resolution of Both Houses (RBH) No. 7 before the Lenten break starts on March 23.

Meanwhile, Bagong Henerasyon Party-list Rep. Bernadette Herrera reiterated full support to amend the economic provisions.

Herrera cited

P30B ...

Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) has allotted PHP30 billion to enhance its benefit packages and provision of primary health care services to its members this year.

"Target po natin ay lahat po tayong Pilipino ay mabigyan ng access sa ating Konsulta [Konsultasyong Sulit at Tama] Package providers para manatiling malusog po tayong lahat (Our target is for all Filipinos to gain access to our Konsulta Package providers so we can all stay healthy)," PhilHealth's corporate affairs group acting vice president Rey Baleña said in a Bagong Pilipinas Ngayon interview aired over PTV 4.

"Hindi na kailangan magkasakit yung miyembro para magamit 'yung PhilHealth benefit. Kung mayroon pong dinaramdam, ito po ay maagang made-detect at maaagapan po at 'di na matutuloy sa magastos na gamutan (The member needs not be sick to use

PhilHealth benefit. If there are symptoms, these will be detected and cured early and will not result in expensive treatment)," he added.

PhilHealth accredited 2,611 Konsulta Package providers in 2023 which are mostly rural health units and health centers, infirmaries and primary health clinics, and some private clinics, Baleña said.

For members to avail of the Konsulta Packages, they must choose a provider from the list accredited facilities and register. After registration, they will undergo health screening and assessment where the health risks would be identified.

"Ang konsultasyon with a primary care physician ay walang bayad. May nakapaloob din dito na mga laboratoryo at mga gamot (The consultation with a primary care physician is free. There are also laboratories and medicines)," he said.

The 13 laboratory and diagnostic tests

Bong Go...

gust 13, 2020.

Namahagi rin ang Senador, maging sina Gov. Ramil at Vice Gov. Karen ng lugaw sa mga kababayang nasa ospital, sa mga doctors at nurses, ospital employees, pasyente at sa mga bantay sa pasyente.

Nagbigay pasasalamat sina Gov. Ramil at Vice Gov. Atty Karen Agapay sa inisyatibo ng Senador at ng Gobyerno na patuloy na kumakalinga at sumusuporta sa probinsya ng Laguna.

Labis naman ang kasiyahan ng mga kawani ng ospital gaya nina Provincial Health Office-Head Dr. Rene Bagamasbad at Chief Officer Judy Rondilla sa patuloy na pagsuporta ng gobyerno sa mga ospital upang higit na magating epektibo ang kanilang pagseserbisyo. | Shekinah Pamatmat

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circumvention through internal arrangements between local and foreign business partners as her main reason.

"In our experience here in Congress, we have conducted hearings and investigations on foreign ownership restrictions, but we also see internal arrangements that do not truly reflect the partnership between foreign and local entities," she said in a news release.

She said the discrepancy between official regulations and internal agreements often leads to legal disputes. (With a report from Zaldy de Layola/PNA)

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are complete blood count, urinalysis, fecal stool test, chest x-ray and lipid profile, among others.

The 21 drugs and medicines included are maintenance medicines for patients who have diabetes, hypertension and asthma.

The tests and medicines will be provided to the patients for free based on the recommendation of the Konsulta Package provider.

This year, PhilHealth is working on the enhancement of its benefit packages for HIV patients, animal bite victims, tuberculosis, children under 5 years old experiencing severe acute malnutrition, children undergoing open heart surgeries, and malaria patients.

It also plans to increase its breast cancer package from PHP100,000 to PHP1.4 million, kidney transplantation (currently PHP600,000), cervical cancer package and prostate cancer package.

As for the free maintenance medicines, it plans to increase them from 21 to 53 drugs this year.

In 2023, PhilHealth increased the hemodialysis sessions from 90 to 156 for patients with stage 5 chronic kidney disease.

It also increased the benefit package for high risk pneumonia from PHP32,000 to PHP90,100; hemorrhagic stroke from PHP38,000 to PHP80,000; and ischemic stroke from PHP28,000 to PHP76,000. (PNA)

ENCHANTED KINGDOM WELCOMES STARBUCKS TO ITS MAGICAL HOME

Enchanted Kingdom, the first and only world class theme park in the Philippines, announces the opening of Starbucks at EK Portico. Located beside the entrance of the park, the EK Portico is part of the theme park's 28th anniversary promise of an enhanced retail and dining experience.

"Enchanted Kingdom has always been relentless in pursuing partnerships with brands that are in line with our goal to

create world class, magical experiences for our guests. We are glad that we can forge this partnership with Starbucks and looking forward to creating enchanted stories with them," said EK Head of Business Development & Digital Transformation, Anna Mamon-Aban.

Anna also shared that the location of Starbucks with public access in EK Portico will allow guests and surrounding communities to enjoy a

magical experience even if the park is closed.

"This store is a reflection of two iconic brands coming together to offer their customers the kind of experience they expect in a way that embodies the unique passion of each," said Starbucks Philippines Store Development Manager, Quito Lopez. "Collaborating with Enchanted Kingdom offered us the opportunity to create a gathering place that will serve as a desti



CARD MRI celebrates entrepreneurs in the PsMLNI 2023

CARD Mutualy Reinforcing Institution (CARD MRI) recognized the outstanding microentrepreneurs at the "Pagkilala sa Mga Likha ni Inay Awards 2023" held in San Pablo City, Laguna on December 6, 2023.

The annual PsMLNI awards celebrate the impactful businesses of CARD MRI clients, underscoring their contributions to the well-being of their families and communities. The award also reflects the organization's commitment to empowering members of the communities, especially the MSMEs and acknowledging their remarkable self-sufficiency.

The Executive and Management Committee of CARD MRI attended and witnessed the event, which took place at Maharlika Square.

CARD MRI Managing Director Aristeo A. Dequito commended the awardees in a speech during the event for em-



The Executive and Management Committee of CARD MRI, along with the Pagkilala Sa Mga Likha Ni Inay 2023 awardees: Lailane Gomintong, Mary Celine Gordon, Rosario Agarín, Rowena Baya, and Rizalina Tolentino

bodying the strength and resilience of Filipino entrepreneurs and providing the institution with the motivation to remain steadfast in its goal of poverty eradication. He also emphasized the transformative impact of the awardees as they generate employment opportunities in their own communities, ultimately contributing to the social

and economic growth of the country.

The selection process involved judging based on predefined criteria. After careful deliberation, Juvy Fabro of CARD Bank, Inc. San Fernando Branch secured the institutional winner and the "Gawad Maunlad Micro," while Rosario Agarín of CARD SME Bank Naga

Branch earned the "Gawad Maunlad SME."

Three clients from CARD SME Bank won the special awards: Mary Celine Gordon from Manaoag Branch was awarded the "Gawad Malikhain"; Romeo Bustamante from Lipa Branch won the "Community Service Award"; and the "Innovative Family Enterprise

Award" for Rizalina Tolentino of San Pablo Branch.

Other institutional winners for this year include Lailane Gomintong of CARD, Inc. (A Microfinance NGO) Sta. Lucia Branch and Rowena Baya of CARD MRI Rizal Bank, Inc. Carcar Branch.

CARD MRI, a group of 25 mutually reinforcing institutions, has

been dedicated to poverty eradication through financial, non-financial, and social development initiatives since 1986. The organization is serving more than 9.1 million clients nationwide as of October 2023.

For more information about CARD MRI, please visit <https://card-mri.com>

Kababaihan, health workers, at MSMEs nagpasalamat kina Senador Alan at Pia sa napapanahong tulong



Nasa 1,000 benepisyaryo mula sa mga lalawigan ng Antipolo at Rizal ang nakatanggap ng mahalaga at napapanahong tulong mula sa opisina nina Senador Alan at Pia Cayetano noong March 4, 2024.

Sa pagdiriwang ng Women's month, nagbigay ng tulong ang tanggapin ni Senadora Pia sa mga kababaihan at pinalakas ang health sector sa Lungsod ng Antipolo.

"As barangay

health worker po na nakatanggap po ng pinansyal, malaking bagay po ito para sa amin. Salamat po sa patuloy na kalinga sa BSW [Barangay Health Worker]," wika ni Analiza Cabahug, isa sa mga 500 benepisyaryo sa katapos lang na programa sa Lungsod ng Antipolo.

Bilang isang health worker, responsibilidad ni Analiza na tiyakin na nasa tamang oras ang pag-inom ng bitamina ng mga bata. Binabantayan

din niya ang kanilang taas at timbang. Ayon sa kanya, mahalaga ang kanyang tulong na natanggap sa kanyang trabaho.

Nakatanggap din naman kay Cedie Ampol, isa ring barangay health worker sa Lungsod ng Antipolo, ang tulong na natanggap upang makapagpasimula ng sari-sari store.

"Nagpapasalamat ako kay Senator Pia at Senator Alan sa pagbigay sa amin, kahit

papaano ay makatulong sa pamilya namin. Sa ganitong program, marami silang natutulungan, hindi lang sa amin, sa ibang tao rin," sabi niya.

Nakinabang din ang 500 na mga benepisyaryo mula sa Lalawigan ng Rizal na may Micro, Small, at Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sa tulong na ipina-abot ng opisina ni Senador Alan upang madagdagan at palakihin ang kanilang pangkabuhayan.

Naisagawa ang

programa sa pakikipagtulungan ng Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) sa pamamagitan ng kanilang programa na Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS).

Layunin ng AICS na mabigyan ng agaran at mahalagang suporta ang mga taong nasa mahirap na sitwasyon upang matulungan sila sa kanilang pagbangon.

Naging matagumpay ang aktibidad sa tulong at par-

tisipasyon nina Rizal Province Governor Nina Ynares, Antipolo City Mayor Jun Ynares, Councilor Susan Say, at Former Mayor Andrea "Andeng" Ynares.

Hindi ito ang unang pagkakataon na nakarating ang magkapatid na senador sa mga lungsod ng Antipolo at Rizal. Noong nakaraang buwan, mahigit 2,000 residente ng Rizal ang nakatanggap din ng mahalagang tulong upang mapalago ang kanilang kabuhayan.PR

Urban Gardening. Isinusulong ng DA-4A; Mga Magsasaka at Kinatawan ng LGU, Sinanay



Nagsagawa ang Department of Agriculture IV-Calabarzon (DA-4A) ng pagsasanay tungkol sa urban gardening noong ika-28 ng Pebrero, 2024, sa Lipa City, Batangas. Ito ay dinaluhan ng mga magsasaka at mga kinatawan ng lokal na pamahalaan mula sa mga lungsod San Pablo, Calamba, at San Pedro sa Laguna, at

Batangas, Lipa, Sto. Tomas sa Batangas.

Bahagi ito ng National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program (NUPAP), na naglalayong hikayatin ang mga barangay, paaralan, subdivisions, religious groups, at military groups na magtanim ng gulay at prutas sa anumang bakanteng lote o espasyo sa kanil-

ang mga komunidad.

Sa pagsasanay, binigyang-diin ang kahalagahan ng tamang pamamahala sa peste at sakit, pati na rin ang pagpapatupad ng Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) sa urban farming.

Ayon kay Maricris Ite, ang NUPAP Regional Focal Person, ang inisyatibong ito, kung mas mapapalawak,

ay magbibigay-daan sa pagtaas ng produksyon ng prutas at gulay, magiging ang pagkakaroon ng sapat na suplay para sa konsumo ng bawat pamilyang Pilipino.

Nagpahayag ng positibong pagtanggap si Emerito Dayo, isang guro, sa pagpapatupad ng naturang programang.

Aniya, nagbigay ito ng inspi-

rayon upang muling yakapin ang pagsasaka. Sa kabilang banda, nagpahayag din ng pasalamat si Elizer Capuno, isang dating OFW, sa kagawaran para sa gani-tong uri ng programa at umaasa sa karagdagang pagsasanay para sa mga baguhan sa paghahalaman.

Ang pagsasanay ay dinaluhan din

ng iba pang kawani mula sa DA Calabarzon, kabilang ang mga miyembro ng NUPAP, Regional Crop and Protection Center (RCPC), at Regulatory Division, na nagpapakita ng malakas na suporta at komitment ng kagawaran sa pagpapalakas ng urban agriculture sa rehiyon. (Bryan E. Katigbak, DA-4A RA-1S) RR