

DOST-CALABARZON leads conduct of the iSTART Regional Stakeholder Analysis Consultation-Workshop in CALABARZON



On March 12-13, 2024, DOST-CALABARZON, in partnership with the University of the Philippines Los Baños - Department of Community and Environmental Resource Planning (UPLB-DCERP), spearheaded the Innovation, Science, and Technology for Accelerating Regional Technology-Based Development (iSTART) Stakeholder Analysis Workshop at the Monte Vista Hotsprings and Conference Resort, Calamba, Laguna.

The consultation workshop was attended by about 75 participants from 14 Regional Line Agencies (RLAs), 14 city government units (LGUs), 4 provincial government units, and 7 state universities and colleges (SUCs) in CALABARZON. It aims to assess the current landscape for Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) particularly in the CALABARZON region to better design the succeeding steps and direction of the iSTART program, and to engage various local governments, R&D institutions, NGAs (National Government Agencies), HEIs/SUCs (Higher Education Institutions/State

Universities and Colleges), and the private sector. Among the participants were Ms. Emelita P. Bagsit, Regional Director of DOST-CALABARZON; Engr. Francisco R. Barquilla III, Assistant Regional Director of DOST-CALABARZON; Engr. Amelia S. Dean, Regional Director of the Department Of Information And Communications Technology (DICT); Ms. Revelyn A. Cortez, OIC-Assistant Regional Director of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and Dr. Leny V. Sal-



rizing the "Leveling Off with STI Stakeholders"; Dr. Edgar M. Reyes, Jr., EnP and Mr. Janssen Andrew Calvelo on "Needs Identification and Assessment"; and Dr. Ma. Catriona E. Devanadera on "STI Innovation and Network Mapping". Inputs from the workshop will be used for the crafting of the Regional Communication Plan for the iSTART Program. The Regional Communication Plan will serve as the framework in communicating the key strategies of the iSTART program to its stakeholders. It will also serve as the basis for the conduct of local and national promotional activities and campaigns through the use of various communication media and in spearheading STI collaboration projects.

DOST's iSTART Program is designed to enhance the local development plans by introducing science-based tools and analyses. This would result in an STI Plan, supporting and supplementing the existing plans of the LGU by enhancing decision-making and the implementation of its Programs, Projects, and Activities (PPAs), integrating a STI-based perspective in the LGU's Local Development Planning. Consequently, DOST's Smart and Sustainable Communities (SSC) Program shall serve as the execution arm in implementing the STI Plan.

Currently, DOST-CALABARZON has identified the City of Carmona, Cavite and Santa Rosa City, Laguna as the initial iSTART pilot sites in the CALABARZON region where a series of iSTART workshops had been conducted from September of last year up to date. Representatives from the said sites were also present in the activity.

2024 Provincial Women's Month Celebration Empowers Women with Vital Information and Services



The General Trias Convention Center played host to the 2024 Provincial Women's Month Celebration, an event dedicated to honoring the invaluable contributions of women in society and empowering them with

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Home as a foundation in promoting gender equality

Home is where an individual gets their early and much-needed lesson about good manners, positive behavior, and gender equality.

The Philippine Commission on Women, the Philippines' primary policymaking and coordinating body on women and gender equality concerns, believes that every child should be taught that they can play with either toy guns or dolls regardless of their gender, with the help of their parents and guardians.

In an interview with the Philippine Information Agency, PCW deputy executive director Kristine Balmes, emphasized that the formation of children's perceptions of the world we live in is established within our homes.

She stated: "Through our daily interactions with our children at home, their perspective and knowledge about equality is instilled in them.

First, parents should lead by example because children are keen observers. Therefore, parents should ensure equal treatment of both men and women at home."

Even at an early stage, Balmes stressed that children should be educated at home and that household tasks are not solely exclusive to women. She believes that the distribution of responsibilities should not be gender-based but rather evenly distributed.

This includes giving them equal treatment in all household matters, from simple chores to decision-making and career aspirations. By dispelling misconceptions and gender norms within the home, children will be equipped to treat everyone outside equally.

Camille Ramos, an entrepreneur and a mother of four girls, commits to teaching her children the respect needed

for individuals regardless of their gender.

"My children are still young, I don't even know what they will be when they grow up, but I will teach them one thing, they must learn how to respect everyone. Regardless of their state of life and gender. This way, as they mature and navigate the real world, they will be equipped to interact confidently with individuals from all walks of life," Ramos said.

For Charisse Odong-Ungria, a first-time mother to a son, in today's ever-changing world, it is essential to instill the principles of gender equality within the home.

"At home, it's where our children must first learn to treat others with respect and fairness. My partner and I, often talk about equality and show it through our actions to help teach our son that everyone deserves equal opportunities and respect.

We believe that these conversations at home will help our son to grow up to be a kind and respectful adult." Odong-Ungria explained.

"Trabaho ng mga babae yan!", "Hindi umiyyak ang mga lalaki!" and many other false statements and beliefs, are as backward as the toxic ideology of misogyny and sexism are.

Parents should continue to recognize the diversity of roles, showcasing to children that women can succeed in male-dominated fields, and vice versa, which will lead to a safe environment for discussions and inquiries regarding gender roles and expectations.

Balmes believes that the all-for-one initiative will help create an environment free from discriminatory practices and attitudes among all genders and achieve the long-term aspiration #WEcanbeEquALL for everyone. (CO/PIA-4A)



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mingo, Director of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) Sta. Rosa. The activity was divided into four (4) main workshops facilitated by experts from the UPLB-DCERP namely, Ms. Almira Geles L. de Mesa, EnP on "Exploring Notions of STI"; Ms. Grace Anne C. Buno on summa-

Ugnayan sa Barangay Program Strengthens Community Bonds Across Cavite



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Fleeing NPA surrenders, soldiers recover war materiel after Batangas encounter

Sen. Alan's amendments in Senate-approved PNP reform bill pending in bicam

General Emilio Aguinaldo's 155th birth anniversary commemorated in Kawit, Cavite



TeaM Energy Corporation Donates ICT Equipment to Boost Education in Quezon Province

DTI-Laguna Conducts Livelihood Orientation Seminar to CMDC's Graduates and Trainees



Calamba City — On March 22, 2024, the Calamba Manpower Development Center (CMDC), in collaboration with the Department of Trade and Industry – Laguna Provincial Office (DTI-Laguna), through its Negosyo Centers, spearheaded a livelihood orientation seminar for the graduates and trainees of CMDC held at 3rd floor lobby, New City Hall, Calamba City, Laguna. It was attended and participated in by 262 graduates and trainees

from different courses.

The said livelihood orientation program commenced with an opening prayer led by Ms. Zenisa Alinsunurin, followed by the welcome remarks delivered by Mr. Crisolo Gamboa, Senior Manpower Development Officer.

Continuing with the program, Ms. Avegail Agojo, Business Counselor from Bay, led a discussion on how to start a business.

She discussed the pros and cons of managing a business based on ownership, as well as the step-by-step process of starting a small business.

Following Agojo's presentation, Ms. Rica Mae Garcia, Business Counselor

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Tax breaks for stores offering bigger goods discounts to seniors eyed

Estrada: Claims linking Erap to alleged BRP Sierra Madre deal baseless

Angara reminds students fare discounts valid during holidays



HEALTH HINTS FOR ELDERSD FROM AGES 45 TO 100 YEARS

5th series

ic 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).

image.jpg
tyler-nix-Y1drF0Y3Oe0-unsplash.jpg
daiga-ellaby-uooMlIXe6gE-unsplash.jpg
mandy-liz-6DPfIZmWpnA-unsplash.jpg

7. take a probiotic daily
Maintaining a healthy gut has significant impacts on digestion, skin health, immunity, mental health and more. Taking a daily probiotic with a glass of water each morning is one of the simplest things you can do to boost your gut health (which, in turn, boosts overall health in many ways too). Learn more about the health benefits of probiotics (and all the ways to get them in your diet), and shop our favorite probiotic supplement here.

8. eat real food
Aim to eat real food that's made of whole food ingredients you would have in your own kitchen pantry, or that your grandmother would recognize. (Yup, this rules out most packaged food, sorry!) This is a little different than suggesting you eat only "health foods" (many of which are increasingly processed!). "Real food" includes unprocessed foods like an apple, a cucumber, soybeans or a steak, as well as foods loosely processed from one (or few) real-food ingredients, like butter, olive oil, yogurt, tofu, etc. In other words, aim for foods that could be reasonably made in your own kitchen and avoid foods that can only be made in a lab.

9. stand up every 30 minutes while working
Reduce the harmful effects of sitting (like at your desk job) by standing up and moving around for a minute or two every half hour.

10. get sunlight every day
Vitamin D is one of the most important nutrients for overall health, and sunlight is one of our best sources of it. Aim to get at least 30 minutes of sunlight each day—preferably in the afternoon, and without sunscreen (read more about that here). Not much sunlight in the winter where you live? It might be worth supplementing with a vitamin D supplement and/or other food sources of this essential nutrient.

11. fill your home with houseplants
Houseplants help to cleanse your indoor air (sadly, it probably needs it!), they're pretty, and research even shows they improve mood, creativity and problem solving!

12. sweat every day
Aim to sweat in some way each day—whether that's via running, biking, dancing, hot yoga, or any other physical activity you enjoy. See our Fitness Guide for more workout ideas, as well as tips and tricks for building regular physical activity into your daily life and a downloadable fitness planner you can use to outline your own custom fitness plan to stay on track.

Cont. on next week serries 5th

Estrada...

MANILA — Senator Jinggoy Estrada on Thursday debunked the statement of former presidential spokesperson Harry Roque linking the alleged agreement between the Philippines and China to remove BRP Sierra Madre from Ayungin Shoal to his father, former president Joseph Estrada.

Estrada said the statement is disappointing and it is unacceptable for Roque "to make such baseless claims when he's not privy to such information."

"Minsan ko nang pinanindigan sa isang privilege speech na walang kasunduan o pangakong binitawan ang aking ama, ang dating president Joseph Estrada, sa pagtanggap ng BRP Sierra Madre sa Ayungin Shoal at ito'y pinatotohanan pa ng mga noo'y defense and security officials gaya ni dating (I already have affirmed in a privilege speech that there was no agreement or commitment given by my father, former president Joseph Estrada, to remove BRP Sierra Madre in Ayungin Shoal, and this was already proved by former defense and security officials like former) Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado," he said in a statement.

Estrada, who chairs the Committee on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification, and Reconciliation, said statements like what Roque made sow confusion and doubt in the country's integrity and capability to fight for its sovereignty amid the "worsening aggression and bullying" of China.

"Amid all these

2024 Provincial...

essential knowledge and services.

Organized by the Provincial Government of Cavite through the Office of the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Officer, the event saw nearly 200 participants including Gender and Development (GAD) Focal from the Provincial Government of Cavite and Local Government Units, City/Municipal Health Officers, Women with Disabilities, Solo Parents and representatives from Local Council of Women.

pronouncements, it's praiseworthy that the Marcos administration is taking concrete actions to protect our sovereign rights and territorial integrity. Any efforts made to address this ongoing and escalating aggression by China should be supported and encouraged," the lawmaker said

"We must remain firm and united in defending our sovereignty, and in safeguarding our maritime territories for the benefit of present and future generations," he added.

When asked in an interview with Politiko about a previous agreement between China and the Philippines to remove the BRP Sierra Madre in Ayungin Shoal, Roque said that he is not "privy" to the said agreement but only to the engagements made by the Duterte Administration with China. He said that as far as he knew, the agreement about the removal of the grounded warship had been attributed to former President Estrada.

"Kung di ako nagkakamali, ina-attribute naman nila yang kasunduan na yan sa administrasyon po ni president Estrada na hindi kay (If I am not mistaken, they attribute that agreement to the administration of president Duterte," Roque said.

Roque said in the same interview that the Philippines entered into a "gentleman's agreement" with China during the Duterte Administration, which supposedly barred the country from sending repair materials to the BRP Sierra Madre. (PNA)

2024 Provincial... FROM PAGE 8

The event commenced with opening remarks delivered by Mr. Alvin S. Mojica, Provincial Administrator for Community Affairs, who highlighted the significance of celebrating women's achievements and addressing the challenges they face. Inspiration-al messages were also shared by distinguished guests including Ms. Anna Lisa Ferrer, President of the Local Council for Women; Ms. Carolina Beltran, Representative of the City Mayor of General

Cont. on Page 5

2 more NPAs neutralized, 3 firearms seized by soldiers in Quezon encounter anew

CAMP CAPIN-PIN, Rizal - Two members of the New People's Army were neutralized while three high-powered firearms were captured by the Philippine Army's 2nd Infantry "Jungle Fighter" Division following an encounter between state forces and rebels in Guinayangan, Quezon on Thursday, March 28, 2024. Soldiers of the 85th Infantry "Sandiwa" Battalion were conducting focused military operations when they encountered armed personalities from the Southern Tagalog Regional Party Committee at Barangay San Jose, Guinayangan, Quezon. This resulted in a 20-minute firefight with two rebels neutralized and the capture of three high-powered firearms. Meanwhile, one soldier was wounded during the encounter. This comes after troops previously encountered

Fleeing NPA ... FROM PAGE 1

CAMP CAPINPIN, Rizal - A member of the New People's Army yielded to the government while soldiers recovered war materiel following an encounter between the Philippine Army's 2nd Infantry "Jungle Fighter" Division and the Communist Terrorist Group in Calauag, Quezon on March 25-26, 2024. On March 25, troops of the 21st Division Reconnaissance Company encountered 7 armed personalities of Platoon Rey-mark from the Southern Tagalog Regional Party Committee at Barangay Doña Aurora, resulting in a 25-minute firefight. Two soldiers who were injured during the fight are now in stable condition. Meanwhile, casualties on the rebels' side are still being verified. On the same day, soldiers of the 85th Infantry "Sandiwa" Battalion received information from concerned citizens and barangay officials regarding an unknown person asking for help which turned out to be alias Bibo, a rebel fleeing from the previous encounter. He then voluntarily surrendered to the troops. Sub-

the NPAs last March 25, with one rebel surrendering after fleeing the area in the neighboring municipality of Calauag and the soldiers recovering war materiel, including an M16 rifle and three Anti-Personnel Mines. The 21D Commander Maj. Gen. Roberto S. Capulong in a statement expressed his condolences to the families of the neutralized communist terrorists, noting that they could have chosen a path towards peaceful integration into society had they decided to surrender instead of engaging in armed conflict. Furthermore, he urged the remaining NPA members to abandon the violent ideologies of the NPA before they suffer the same fate as their comrades and emphasized the military's steadfast commitment to secure Southern Tagalog from insurgency. 21D

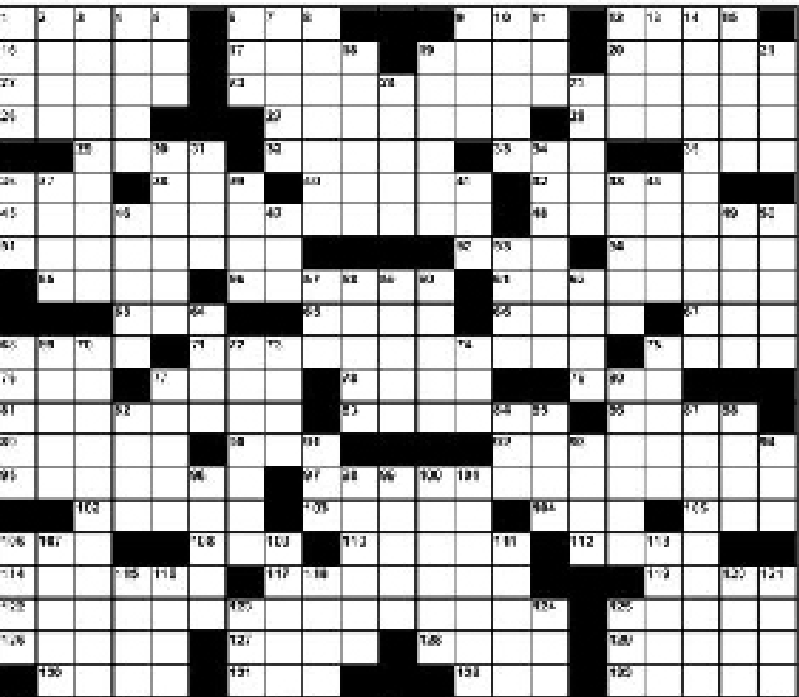
FROM PAGE 1

sequently, on March 26, soldiers conducting operations at the said barangay found and recovered an M16 rifle, a bandolier with 7 magazines, and 3 Anti-Personnel Mines. The 2nd Infantry "Jungle Fighter" Division Commander Maj. Gen. Roberto S. Capulong commended the bravery and vigilance of the troops involved in the successful encounter, emphasizing their dedication to securing peace and stability in the region. He also expressed gratitude to the concerned citizens and barangay officials whose cooperation and timely information resulted in the apprehension of the fleeing rebel. Maj. Gen. Capulong urged the remaining NPA members to abandon armed struggle and take advantage of the government programs aimed at reintegrating former rebels into mainstream society. He then reiterated the military's commitment to peace and development initiatives while ensuring the safety and security of communities across Southern Tagalog. 21D

ACROSS

- 1 Raises
- 6 Snack
- 9 Swich label
- 12 Pinnacle
- 16 Brilliance
- 17 Sports org.
- 19 Greek portico
- 20 Oslo's land, to the natives
- 22 Lamp cap
- 23 Dorothy Sayers detective
- 26 ___ Soit qui mal y pense
- 27 Put an end to
- 28 Pass
- 29 ___ monster
- 32 Mortise's partner
- 33 Catch
- 35 Mil, Coil.
- 36 Poerically above
- 38 Spanish gold
- 40 Adds alcohol to
- 42 Neighbor of tibet
- 45 P.D. James detective
- 48 Rumbled
- 51 Tricks
- 52 Not me
- 54 France's longest river
- 55 Novel ending
- 56 Skier's coverup
- 61 Forage plants
- 63 " Cats" author's monogran
- 65 Manitoba indian
- 66 Hair, in Heidelberg
- 67 Request
- 71 Martha Grimes detective
- 75 Cuts down
- 76 " ___tu," Verdi aria
- 77 Distaff counterpart
- 78 Off the mark
- 79 Slip
- 81 Detoured
- 83 London suburb
- 86 Teen angst
- 89 Storms
- 90 Airport abbr.
- 92 Endures
- 95 Silly
- 97 Agatha Christie detective
- 102 Frequent stopper
- 103 " ___ what I say"
- 104 "___ volenter; God willing
- 105 CIA predecessor
- 106 Wee dram
- 108 Satiric magazine
- 110 "... nor iron ___ cage...."
- 112 Skier's powder
- 114 Melodic

Crossword Puzzles



- 117 City on the Po
- 119 Virginia politician
- 122 Harry Kemelman detective
- 125 Tree-lined walk
- 126 Facing the pitcher
- 127 Read my _____
- 128 Patner or polish
- 129 Devenports
- 130 Anglo-Saxon laborer
- 131 Prevarication
- 132 Comic Caesar
- 133 Concerning

DOWN

- 1 Hebrew letter
- 2 Iterative sound
- 3 Josephine Tey detective
- 4 Diameters' halves
- 5 Fr. holy woman
- 6 Not Gi dratfee
- 7 ___ of many colors
- 8 Journalist Ida
- 9 Baseball's Mel et al.

- 10 Mountain wind
- 11 At a distance
- 12 Blue dye
- 13 Michael crichton film
- 14 Dorothy Gilman detective
- 15 Discharge
- 18 Hebrew name fo God
- 19 Fishing nets
- 21 Ogles
- 24 Thetorical repetition
- 25 " Oberon" composer
- 30 Resort hotels
- 31 ___ Sea (east of the caspian)
- 34 Bony
- 36 Doit
- 37 Entertainer Adams
- 39 Designer Cassini
- 41 Diffident
- 43 ___ bear
- 44 MP's problem
- 46 Gloss alternative
- 47 Brownie's org.
- 49 Rub out

WORDHUNT



MYTH
UNICORN
FAIRY
FANTASY
MAGICAL
PERFECT
LEGENDARY
MYSTICAL
RAINBOW
BEAUTIFUL
WILD
SPARKLE
MYSTERIOUS
BEAST
REAL
TALES

- 50 Classroom furniture
- 53 Lei land
- 57 " ___ bin ein Berliner"
- 58 Sweep the sea
- 59 Uncanny
- 60 " Ruby Red Dress" singer
- 62 Actress Dunaway
- 64 Part of QED
- 68 Father Juniper
- 69 Regions
- 70 John Ball detective
- 72 ___ Cite, Paris
- 73 Surrender
- 74 Intense black
- 75 Original: Prefix
- 77 " ___ to my ears"
80. Sugarcane shoot
- 82 Wine : Prefix
- 84 Wise bird?
- 85 Should have
- 87 Rex Stout detective
- 88 Greek Cupid

- 91 Beta Kappa leader
- 93 Gibbons
- 94 Relatives of aves:
- 96 Titled
- 98 Envelops
- 99 Large quantities
- 100 Pool shots
- 101 Unfastens
- 106 Scarlett'd place
- 107 Sound off
- 109 MCX minus Dill
- 111 Hawaiian hardwood
- 113 Synthetic fiber
- 115 Scottish resort
- 116 Location
- 118 Mature
- 120 Legume
- 121 Top quality
- 123 Without exception
- 124 Inc. , in the UK
- 125 " I wandered lonely ___ cloud"



The least of things with a meaning is worth move in life than the greatest of things without it.

THINK BACK TO A TIME that was meaningful for you. I didn't say pleasant or joyful, I said meaningful. More often the meaningful events are not pleasant ones, but painful or frightening. Other times they are sudden epiphanies that bring great insight. Initially the incident may seem insignificant, and the full impact of it will not come until later. The meaningful moments focus us on the significant of our lives and how we spend our time.

How have these events become our teachers and guides? What lessons have you learned that have led you to where you are and the person you have become? Many times we have no idea how the decisions and choices we make lead us to experiences that become life altering.

Today, ask yourself what motivates you, what gives your life meaning? Find the answer, and you will find yourself. Look back at meaningful events; think about what gave you joy as a child. When you combine the two things, you will be living the life intended for you.

Soulution of the Week

Today take the time to explore what is meaningful for you. Ponder past events and note the lessons that they brought you.

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

The Toll Regulatory Board (TRB), in collaboration with MPCALA Holdings Inc., a subsidiary of Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC), convened the various toll road operators and concessionaires for the 8th Tollway Industry's Advocacy Caravan, focusing on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment in celebration of National Women's Month.

This year's event, themed "Lipunang Patas sa Bagong Pilipinas: Kakayahan ng Kababaihan, Patutunayan!", was hosted by MPCALA which took place at the Bayleaf Hotel Cavite on Friday, March 22, 2024. The gathering brought together 250 employees from various sectors, including contingents from Cavite-Laguna Expressway (CALAX), Manila-Cavite Expressway (CAVITEX), North Luzon Expressway (NLEX), and Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX), along with



representatives from toll road companies under the San Miguel Corporation (SMC) and the Villar Group (MCX); as well as teams from the TRB and government partners Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), its operating arm PEA Tollway Corporation (PEATC), and Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA).

The event aimed to highlight and honor outstanding women who have broken barriers and excelled in roles traditionally dominated by men. It recognized and honored the contributions of women in male dominated roles. Ms. Rebecca Dimasa-

cat (Security Operations) and Ms. Anna Marie Eroy (Patrolwoman), as well as Ms. Karla Carizza Orozco from (Security Operations) MPT South; Ms. Meldwynn Maikae Lacson and Ms. Margarita Miranda (Patrolwomen) from NLEX Corporation; Ms. Reizil Vee Marfil (Patrolwoman) from PEA Tollway Corp (PEATC); Ms. Mary Rose Abragar (Patrolwoman) from Tarlac-Pangasinan-La Union Expressway (TPLEX); Ms. Claire Gutierrez (Patrolwoman) from Skyway. Additionally, guest speaker Ms. Xaxa Manalo-Gochangco, a pilot of the nation's flag carrier, turned CEO of an avia-



gratitude to MPCALA Holdings Inc. for graciously hosting the 8th Tollway Industry's Advocacy Caravan this year. The event provided an invaluable opportunity for all participants to share and gain insights into their personal definitions of women empowerment and gender equality.

Our hope is that the spirit of this event resonates not only within these walls but also across broader communities as we celebrate National Women's Month," stated Atty. Alvin Carullo, Executive Director of Toll Regulatory Board.

In addition to inspiring speeches from the

Operators for 2024 GAD Caravan

Angara..

MANILA – Senator Sonny Angara on Wednesday reminded students planning to travel this Holy Week that the 20 percent discount on regular fares still applies regardless of what mode of transport they will be taking.

"Sa lahat ng estudyante, siguraduhin ninyo na may dala kayo na student ID bago kayo magbayad ng ticket sa eroplano, barko, bus o tren. Tuloy-tuloy ang 20 percent na discount sa inyo kahit holidays (To all students, make sure that you bring with you your student ID before paying for your plane, ship, bus, or train

ticket. The 20 percent discount is still effective even during) holidays," Angara said in a statement.

Angara was among the lead authors of Republic Act 11314, or the Student Fare Discount Act, which states that "the year-round discount is available during the entire period while the student is enrolled, including weekends and holidays."

In case students do not have their school IDs with them for one reason or another, Angara said validated enrollment forms can also be accepted as a requirement for the discount.

"Siguraduhin ninyo

lang na may dala kayo na kahit anong government ID kapag enrollment form lang ang dala niyo para lang masiguro ang identity niyo sa pagbigay ng (Just make sure that you bring any government ID if you only brought with you an enrollment form to establish your identity before being entitled to the) discount," he said.

The lawmaker warned that failure to honor the student fare discount carries penalties for both the owners or operators of the transport services and their concerned employees.

For drivers of land public transportation

utilities, they shall face a suspension of their driver's licenses for a month for the first offense; two months for the second offense; three months for the third offense; and three months plus a fine of PHP1,000 for each subsequent offense.

Owners or operators of sea/water public transportation utilities shall face a fine of PHP5,000 for the first offense; PHP10,000 for the second offense; PHP20,000 for the third offense; and additional increments of PHP10,000 on top of the fine for the third offense for each subsequent offense

For air public transportation utilities, the fine is PHP50,000 for the first offense; PHP100,000 and a warning for the second offense; and PHP150,000 plus other sanctions as may be determined by the Civil Aeronautics Board for the third and subsequent offenses. In the case of rail public transportation utilities, violations will result in sanctions or fines under the existing civil service rules while for privately-operated rail public transportation utilities, they face the same amount for sea/water public transportation utilities. (PNA)

FROM PAGE 1

EDITORIAL:
Scrappy situation in the SCS

We heard again Washington saying it is standing with its ally Manila as the former condemned Beijing's dangerous actions against the lawful maritime operations of the Philippines in the South China Sea.

The echoes of the US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller were loud: "The PRC's actions prevent normal personnel rotations and deprive Filipino service members at Second Thomas Shoal (Ayungin Shoal) of necessary provisions.

"This incident marks only the latest in the PRC's repeated obstruction of Philippine vessels' exercise of high seas freedom of navigation and disruption of supply lines to this longstanding outpost."

The National Task Force for the West Philippine Sea (NTF-WPS) smashed the China Coast Guard last weekend for damaging a Filipino supply vessel near the Ayungin Shoal with water cannon and injuring those on board.

The NTF-WPS rightly stressed the government "will not be deterred – by veiled threats or hostility – from exercising Manila's legal rights over its maritime zones.

We join the authorities in condemning the PRC's repeated obstruction of Philippine vessels' exercise of high seas freedom of navigation and its disruption of supply lines to this longstanding outpost.

The latest confrontation between Philippine and Chinese vessels came four days after Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited Manila and said the US stood by its "ironclad" commitment to defend its longtime ally against armed attack in the South China Sea.

Miller reaffirmed that commitment, saying the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty extends to armed attacks on Philippine armed forces, public vessels, or aircraft – including those of its Coast Guard – anywhere in South China.

China's actions, immediately denounced by the Philippines and the United States, are indeed "destabilizing to the region and show clear disregard for international law."

What is unnerving is China's continuing belligerence despite what an international tribunal said in July 2016 that it has no lawful maritime claims to the waters around Second Thomas Shoal, a low-tide feature clearly within the Philippines' 200-mile exclusive economic zone.

As provided under the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention, the 2016 arbitral decision is final and legally binding on the People's Republic of China and the Philippines, and China must abide by the ruling and desist from its dangerous and destabilizing conduct.

We note Washington "reaffirms that Article IV of the 1951 U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty extends to armed attacks on Philippine armed forces, public vessels, or aircraft – including those of its Coast Guard – anywhere in the South China Sea."

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General Emilio ...

FROM PAGE 1

On March 22, 2024, the Provincial Government of Cavite, through the Provincial Tourism and Cultural Affairs Office, together with the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) and the Municipality of Kawit, commemorated the 155th birth anniversary of General Emilio Aguinaldo.

The program began with a solemn mass led by Rev. Fr. Efren Bugayong of the Santa Maria Magdalena Parish Church.

Following the mass, a wreath-laying ceremony took place at Gen. Aguinaldo's tomb, where descendants of the general, led by Ms. Emilie Aguinaldo-Pulido, along with government officials including Mayor Angelo Emilio G. Aguinaldo, NHCP Chairperson Emmanuel Franco Calairo, Cavite 1st District Rep. Ramon "Jolo" Revilla III, Provincial Tourism Officer Elinia Imelda Rozelle Sangalang, and Guest of Honor DILG Secretary Benjamin "Benhur" C. Abalos, Jr., who paid their respects

to the Father of Philippine Independence.

In his message Secretary Abalos urged everyone to draw inspiration from Aguinaldo's life story as they confronted their own difficulties and challenges.

"Sari-saring problema sa araw-araw, sari-saring hamon. Pero sana maging lekyon itong buhay ni Aguinaldo, na basta ikaw ay naniniwala sa inyong gustong mangyari, 'wag kang matakot. Maski anong hamon, ito'y kakayanin Ninyo", he said.

In closing, he also called on the people to remember the struggles, challenges, and triumphs of our heroes, including Emilio Aguinaldo for they are not just relics of the past but the beacons for the future.

Also present during the program were Hon. Serafin P. Barreto Jr., Undersecretary for Public Safety, PCOL Eleuterio M Ricardo Jr., PLTCOL Richard Corpuz, and Board Member Ramon Vicente "Ram Revilla" Bautista. - Fatima A. Tamio

Tax ...

FROM PAGE 1

MANILA – A lawmaker on Tuesday appealed to the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) to consider granting tax credits to supermarkets and other retail outlets required to give price cuts in conjunction with the implementation of the higher monthly discounts on essential grocery items purchased by senior citizens and persons with disabilities (PWDs).

Carmines Sur Rep. Luis Raymund Villafuerte Jr. said granting tax breaks or deductions to supermarkets and other retail stores would ensure greater compliance with the expanded discount scheme, which hiked the weekly cap covered by the 5-percent discount from PHP1,300 to PHP2,500.

"Such a tax break would spell financial relief for them—and help ensure their greater compliance with this new House-initiated economic benefit for our seniors and PWDs in the face of the ever-spiraling cost of basic commodities," Villafuerte said in a

statement.

Villafuerte said full compliance with this new policy would be impactful, especially with the recently approved price increases in about 40 basic necessities and prime commodities (BNPCs), including instant noodles, soap, and bottled water

"If the BIR does not consider granting tax credits to retail outlets, there is a greater possibility for supermarkets or grocery stores to ignore this would-be policy or jack up the prices of their BNPC items to cancel out the discounts of seniors and PWDs who would buy from them," he said.

The basic necessities covered by the new policy include rice; bread; fresh, dried and canned fish; fresh pork, beef and poultry meat; fresh and processed; fresh vegetables; instant noodles; coffee; sugar; cooking oil; salt; laundry and detergent soap; household liquid petroleum gas (LPG); charcoal and kerosene.

The prime com-

Sen. Alan's ...

The Senate-approved Philippine National Police (PNP) Reform Bill that includes two crucial amendments that Independent Senator Alan Peter Cayetano pushed for is now pending at the Bicameral Conference Committee (Bicam).

This after the Senate announced on Monday, February 26, 2024, the composition of the Senate Bicameral Conference Committee for Senate Bill No. 2449 and House Bill No. 8327 or the PNP Reorganization Act. Former PNP Chief Senator Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa, as bill sponsor, chairs the Senate panel. He is joined by Senators Alan Peter Cayetano, Ramon Bong Revilla Jr., Joseph Victor Ejercito, Francis Tolentino, and Minority Leader Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III as members.

Cayetano's amendments that are included in the Senate-approved bill are the addition of personnel to the Regional Forensic Unit-National Capital Region (RFU-NCR) and the option allowing current PNP personnel who have less than 1 year left in the service upon effectivity of the law to retire at the age of 56, instead of 57 years old as the bill mandated.

Cayetano said these reforms can make the dream of a more professional and effective police force closer to reality. "Kung sa batas

modities covered include flour; dried, processed, and canned pork, beef, and poultry meat; dairy products; onions and garlic; vinegar, fish sauce or patis and soy sauce; toilet and bath soap; fertilizer and pesticides; feeds for poultry, livestock, and fish; veterinary products; paper and school supplies; cement, plywood and construction nails.

Citing the Philippine Amalgamated Supermarkets Association Inc. (PAGASA) and the Philippine Retailers Association (PRA), Villafuerte said subsidies and tax credits would be beneficial to relieve retailers, especially the small enterprises, of the higher BNPC discounts.

Under the new policy, seniors and PWD can avail of up to PHP125 discount on BNPCs per week,

na ito ay magtatanim tayo ng tamang resources, batas, at proteksyon para sa ating mga pulis, magandang rin ang aanihin natin," the senator stated in an interpellation with dela Rosa on December 12, 2023.

Cayetano has been actively supporting PNP's modernization to enhance the organization's ability to maintain peace and order in the country and tackle insurgency and terrorism.

In January, he spearheaded the construction of the newest RFU-NCR crime laboratory at Camp Bagong Diwa in the City of Taguig which aims to fast-track crime investigations in the country and restore public trust in the law.

"I am very much honored and I thank God for the opportunity to be able to advocate for you, to play a small part na y'ung mga facilities n'yo ay mapondohan at mapaganda, nasa administrasyon man ako o sa oposisyon," Cayetano said.

He said helping reform the PNP for better service is part of his vision of a transformed nation, a vision he wants to instill to the institution as well.

"Let us have the same priorities, my brothers and sisters in uniform, dahil ito ay para sa inyo, para ating mga kababayan, at para sa ating mahal na bansang Pilipinas," he added.

higher than the previous PHP65.

The new joint administrative order (JAO) likewise provides rules on giving the same special discount on BNPCs bought online as establishments will have their verification process.

Senior and PWD identification cards and the Office of Senior Citizen Affairs (OSCA) booklet should be presented upon delivery of the products.

The 5-percent discount on LPG covers cylinders with a net content of not more than 11 kilograms and could be availed of only every five months.

Small-scale stores and businesses registered with cooperatives are exempted from giving out special discounts to seniors and PWD. (PNA)

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STRAIGHT NEWS

PUBLISHING

April 03-09, 2024

Donates ICT Equipment to

TeaM Energy Corporation Boost Education in Quezon Province

In a bid to enhance educational opportunities in Quezon Province, TeaM Energy Corporation collaborated with DOST-CALABARZON to donate ICT equipment in support of the Community Empowerment thru Science & Technology (CEST) Program. The donation ceremony was held at the DOST-CALABARZON Regional office last March 6, 2024.

The Community Empowerment thru Science and Technology (CEST) program extends its impact into the realm of education by integrating science and technology to enhance learning experiences within remote communities. Through innovative educational initiatives, CEST aims to bridge the gap between traditional knowledge and modern advancements, empowering students and educators.

The event commenced with a warm



ing Science Research Specialist. Led by Mr. Froilan Gegory H. Romualdez III, Head for External Affairs of TeaM Energy Corporation. The donation included a set of Desktop Computers with i7 processors, three sets of Desktop Comput-

Ugnayan sa Barangay Program Strengthens Community Bonds Across Cavite

In a series of events aimed at strengthening community ties and fostering open communication between local government officials and residents, Governor Jonvic C. Remulla spearheaded the Ugnayan sa Barangay program across various municipalities in Cavite.

The Ugnayan sa Barangay initiative, held on March 13, 18, 21, and 25, 2024, served as a vital platform for Caviteños to engage with their local officials, express their needs, and build meaningful connections within their communities. Hundreds of residents actively participated in the program, demonstrating their eagerness to contribute to the development and progress of their respective municipalities.

Local officials from each municipality warmly welcomed and



supported the Ugnayan sa Barangay activities, underscoring their commitment to inclusive governance and grassroots engagement. Among the esteemed attendees were Vice Governor Athena Bryana Tolentino, 2nd District Board Member Ram Revilla, 7th District Con-

gressman Ping Remulla, 5th District Board Member Aidel Paul Belamide, and the municipal mayors, including Mayor Randy Salamat of Alfonso, Mayor Yuri Pacumio of Tanza, Atty. Kevin Alston Anarna of Silang, and Mayor Francisco Mendoza of Mendez, together with their re-

spective Vice Mayors and council members.

Governor Jonvic C. Remulla extends his gratitude to all participants for their enthusiastic engagement and looks forward to further initiatives that empower communities and promote progress across Cavite. - Romelyn P. Dones



and future projects aimed at maximizing their impact on regional development. The partnership highlights a shared vision of driving sustainable growth through education and technology.

In recognition of TeaM Energy Corporation's invaluable support, DOST-CALABARZON extended an invitation to their team for the launch of the 2nd Mini Science Centrum in Quezon, Quezon, on April 5, 2024, at Cesar C. Tan Memorial National High School. This event will feature a formal turnover and MOA signing of

the Deed of Donation to the recipient school and will be followed by the donation to Polillo.

The donation of ICT Equipment by TeaM Energy Corporation signifies its dedication to empowering communities and facilitating access to quality education. As the partnership continues to evolve, Quezon Province can anticipate transformative initiatives that will pave the way for a brighter and more prosperous future.

DTI-Laguna...

from Majayjay, tackled business ideas. She presented some small business ideas and the required capital needed to start them, along with the type of business they want to engage with.

The third speaker, Ms. Michelle Caymo, Business Counselor assigned in Nagcarlan, talked about the programs and services offered by the Department, as well as the two (2) divisions it has and their specific functions.

Next, Garcia imparted knowledge on consumer education, specifically addressing the consumer's eight (8) rights and five (5) responsibilities, which should be practiced and exercised by every consumer.

Lastly, Mr. Carl

FROM PAGE 1

Eric Villanueva, Business Counselor from Magdalena, provided information on the difference between business and entrepreneurship and the characteristics and traits an entrepreneur must possess. He also named some entrepreneurs who experienced failures and hindrances but remained successful in operating their businesses nowadays.

The event concluded with a question-and-answer portion wherein participants were able to clarify some points and share their insights.

Overall, the seminar received positive comments from the participants and they expressed their satisfaction with the learning activity. (RMEGarcia, DTI-Laguna)

2024 Provincial... FROM PAGE 5

as a platform for empowerment and advocacy, where women are equipped with knowledge and resources to lead healthier, safer lives."

The success of the 2024 Provincial Women's Month Celebration underscores the commitment of the Provincial Government of Cavite and its partners to promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and overall societal progress. - AC Cabrera

April 03-09, 2024

SUMMER MEANS IT'S SM TIME!

Celebrate the arrival of summer at SM! Capture the moment and start the season with countless unforgettable memories every time you visit any SM malls in Laguna. Relax, have fun, and create lasting bonds with your friends and family. Egg-citing activities this Easter

Hop into the summer and enjoy the Easter-themed activities awaiting for you at SM City Santa Rosa, SM City Calamba, SM City San Pablo and SM Center San Pedro. Come one, come all and catch SM's



Unleash the creative side of your little ones and join the Easter Artventure at SM Center San Pedro!



Your favorite Italian Gelato is now available in Tubs! Take scoops of happiness wherever YoGo #yogorinotub only at SM City San Pablo

Looking for your summer must-haves? Grab your essentials and take your fashion 'fits to the next level. Visit the different fashion apparel and accessories stores at the SM mall near you.



Cool and comfortable summer 'fits only at Uniqlo, SM City Santa Rosa

Add color to the summer vibes with IG-worthy spots

Mark your calendars as as summer gets even more interesting with onsite activities as SM malls in Laguna unveil playful installations starting this April. Explore rainbow staircases and larger-than-life displays that promise to make your mall visit this summer both exciting and thrilling.

So what are you waiting for? Hurry and head to your favorite SM Laguna mall near you.

April 03-09, 2024

SUMMER MEANS IT'S SM TIME!

Easter Mascots. Gather the whole family, dress-up, flaunt that super cute bunny smile and join the Easter costume contest on Mar 31. Check out the Facebook page of your to-go-to SM mall for the registration details. Easter would not be complete without an Easter egg hunt! Add a little sprinkle of Easter magic and hold on to your bunny ears as you hunt for the lucky egg

Hot deals and bundles

Beat the summer heat and satisfy your cravings with the wide array of food and drink choices at

SM. Enjoy mouth-watering meals and thirst quenching drinks from your favorite restaurants.



Cool down this summer with refreshing drinks from Yi Fang at SM City Calamba

2024 Provincial... FROM PAGE 2

Trias; and BM Romel R. Enriquez, Chairman of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan Committee on Women, Family, Children, Elderly, and Social Services. A range of crucial topics were discussed during the event, aimed at enhancing women's well-being and safety in various aspects of life. Engr. Adrian R. Barera from the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) shed light on Cyber Security Awareness, emphasizing the importance of digital safety in today's interconnected world. Dr. Jesus Randy "Bogs" Rivera, a renowned radiation oncologist and Convenor of End Cervical Cancer Philippines delivered insights on Cervical Cancer Awareness, highlighting preventive measures and

early detection strategies. In addition to enlightening discussions, the celebration provided various essential services to attendees. These included Oral Prophylaxis, HPV Vaccination, Family Planning and Antenatal Care services, Nutrition assessment and counseling, as well as informational booths by DICT and Adventist Community Service, offering valuable resources and educational materials.

Speaking about the event, Ms. Anna Lisa Ferrer expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to come together and address crucial issues affecting women in the community. She stated, "The Provincial Women's Month Celebration serves

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Sen Alan: Faith in God, collective effort key to success of single-hosting FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship Philippines in 2025

Senator Alan Peter Cayetano believes the success of single-hosting the FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship Philippines in 2025 depends on the Filipino people's sense of community and their faith in God.

"It's up to us," Cayetano said at a press conference on March 26, 2024, in the City of Taguig.

"Ang pag-asa natin sa successful hosting will be two elements: One, faith and action, faith in God, and number two, action as a community," he said.

Chairing the Local Organizing Committee of the international event, Cayetano underscored the importance of the Filipino people, particularly those volunteering their efforts during the competition, in showcasing the nation's capabilities.

"I'm reminded how beautiful our country is and how our number one resource is underutilized. Our number one resource is the Filipinos and Filipinas, the men and women of the Philippines," he asserted.

The hosting of the FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship Philippines 2025 marks the first instance in nearly a decade where a sole country will bear the responsibility alone.

With all facets of the tournament slated to unfold within the Philippines over a span of approximately 17 days, the absence of additional co-hosts distinguishes this event from other major tournaments such as the FIBA World Cup.

Citing the burgeoning sector of sports tourism which is pro-

jected to contribute significantly to the global economy, Cayetano outlined the potential economic dividends awaiting the Philippines.

"As one of the fastest-growing sectors in tourism generating 800 billion dollars worldwide, sports can have a positive impact on the country's economy," he noted, referring to the anticipated growth of sports tourism in the Philippines.

Cayetano also said the championship is a good platform to showcase the renowned Filipino hospitality.

"We are still known in the whole world to be the most hospitable people. I'm talking about how we as a people, welcome the rest of the world," he said.

Beyond the games

Cayetano, an avid sports fan who has supported the industry throughout his political career, said the FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship Philippines 2025 can also spur future development in sports in the country.

He expressed the need to establish a dedicated Department of Sports that would institutionalize consistent and widespread support for sports development.

He said while he appreciates the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), its reach is limited due to its very nature. The games it hosts are also few and far between, he said, and do not address the need for regular competitions that would hone the country's athletes. PR