

DBM, inilahad ang mga transformative reform, policies ng PBBM administration sa 2024 Spring Meetings kasama ang IMF at World Bank

(Nelson Dimapilis)

Inilahad ng Department of Budget and Management (DBM) ang mga prayoridad, transformational reforms, at mga polisiya ng administrasyon ni Pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos upang suportahan ang socioeconomic growth ng bansa sa katatapos lamang na 2024 Spring Meetings sa United States.

Noong ika-15 hanggang 20 ng Abril, idinaos ang 2024 Spring Meetings sa Washington, D.C., na nagtipon sa International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group (WBG), at iba't ibang stakeholders. Kinatawan ang DBM ni Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman, ang unang Muslim Budget Secretary at kaisa-isang babaeng miyembro ng Philippine economic team, kasama si DBM Principal Economist Dr. Joselito R. Basilio.

Ilan sa mga tinalakay sa serye ng pu-long ay ang pagpapabuti ng Philippine Public Financial Management (PFM), pagpapalakas ng mga inisyatibang sa climate at gender budget tagging, at ang posibleng paglikha ng Office

of the Accountant General.

“The rapidly changing world, marked by challenges such as climate change, health crises, and economic instability, underscores the critical need for multilateral cooperation. The Spring Meetings provided us with a unique opportunity to exchange ideas and forge partnerships that will enable us to tackle the pressing issues of our time,” pahayag ni Sec. Pangandaman.

Noong Abril 17, 2024, nakipagpulong si Secretary Pangandaman sa mga kinatawan mula sa World Bank - Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Secretariat, na pinangunahan ni PFM Global Unit of World Bank Practice Manager Serdar Yilmaz.

Sa kanilang pag-uusap, inilatag ng Budget Secretary ang mga pagsisikap ng Pilipinas sa pagpapalakas ng public financial management na base sa 2016 PEFA Assessment. Kasama rito ang pagbuo ng Philippine

PFM Reforms Roadmap 2024–2028 upang gawin ng alinsunod sa pamantayan ang mga regulasyon sa PFM at i-digitize ang mga pamamaraan sa mga ahensya ng gobyerno. Binigyang-diin din ang plano na magtatag ng PFM institute na magbibigay ng pagsasanay para sa mga practioners ng budget at procurement sa lokal at pambansang antas.

Bilang tugon, inilahad ng PEFA, sa pamamagitan nina Secretariat Head Srinivas Gurazada, Senior Governance Specialist Dmitri Gourfinkel, at Senior Governance Specialist Antonio Leonardo Basco, ang kanilang programa at nag-alok ng tulong sa DBM at sa gobyerno ng Pilipinas sa pagpapabuti ng mga budget framework, lalo na sa aspeto ng gender-responsive budgeting at climate change.

Para sa Philippine Dialogue ng Spring Meetings, tinalakay ang macroeconomic landscape ng Pilipinas, mga regulasyon, at iba pang mga reporma na layuning mapalakas ang

kondisyon ng negosyo sa bansa.

Nangangako si Secretary Pangandaman na palakasin ang mga ongoing development initiatives ng kasalukuyang administrasyon sa pamamagitan ng mga programang pinamunuan ng gobyerno at titiyakin ang sapat na paglalaan ng budget upang matugunan ang mga pangangailangan ng mamamayang Pilipino.

Samantala, noong Abril 18, 2024, nagkaroon ng pagpupulong sina Budget Secretary at DBM Principal Economist Dr. Basilio kasama ang IMF Gender Strategy Team, na pinangunahan ni Strategy Policy and Review Department Deputy Director at Senior Advisor on Gender Rishi Goyal.

Pagkatapos ipaliwanag ang kalagayan ng Pilipinas sa aspeto ng gender equality at ang mga pagsisikap ng gobyerno na isama ang gender equality sa pangunahing praktis upang bawasan ang pagkakaiiba, at pagyamanin ang women empowerment at pakikilahok sa pagbuo ng bansa, binigyang-di-



in ni Secretary Pangandaman ang kahalagahan ng gender tagging bilang estratehiya upang pasiglahin ang matatag at inklusibong pag-unlad ng ekonomiya.

Noong Abril 19, 2024, isang side meeting ang idinaos kasama ang World Bank, na pinangunahan ni Country Director for Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand Ndiame Diop, kasama si PFM Global Unit Practice Manager Serdar Yilmaz, na mas pinalalim ang pagtutok sa gender at climate adaptation budget tagging.

Binigyang-diin dito ang kahalagahan ng matibay na sistema, capacity building, at evaluation mechanisms upang maayos na tugunan ang mga pagkakaiba-iba sa gender at tiyakin ang mabisa na paggamit ng alokasyon ng budget.

Tinalakay din ng World Bank ang mga magagandang praktis sa pagtatatag ng Ac-

countant General's Office (AGO) at ang mahalagang papel nito sa accounting, financial reporting, at analysis. Nagsisilbing pundasyon ang AGO upang siguruhin ang transparency, accuracy, at accountability sa pamamahala ng pampublikong pon-

Layon ng panukalang magtatag ng Accountant-General's Department, na hango sa matagumpay na modelo ng Singapore, ang itaas ang antas ng PFM systems ng gobyerno ng Pilipinas.

Magbibigay ng framework ang pagtatatag ng naturang departamento para sa pagpapahusay ng mga operasyon ng PFM, na posibleng humahantong sa higit na kahusayan at pagiging epektibo sa pamamahala ng pampublikong pananalapi. (Nelson Dimapilis)

GSIS posts Php37B net income in Q1 Total assets jump to P1.74T



DOLE reminds employers of pay rules for Labor Day



VP Sara thanks PBBM for continued trust, support



Marcos vows solid investments in Cebu

PNPAAAI COLLABORATES WITH METROBANK AWARDEES ANDAFP IN COMMUNITYOUTREACH PROGRAM IN PAG-ASA ISLAND

EK brings back enchanting World Pets Day event this April



Enchanted Kingdom, the first and only world class theme park in the Philippines, will hold the Ogg's Pet Day Out on April 28, 2024 exclusively at the Enchanting Events Place Reception Lobby in celebration of World Pets Day. This event is set to provide a magical experience for guests and their pets, particularly dogs and cats. This event will feature a pet blessing, a biscuit eating contest, a

DTI Cavite launches BISITALAKAYAN - its newest consumer advocacy initiative

In celebration of World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD), the DTI Cavite – Consumer Protection Division (CPD-Cavite), in close coordination with Acienda Designer Outlet, conceptualized a project dubbed “BISITALAKAYAN” — a project led by the CPD-Cavite that covers actual site visit (BISITA) and face-to-face discussion (TALAKAYAN) on matters related to consumerism.

The BISITALAKAYAN is a two-day activity wherein the DTI-Cavite Team visited the Acienda Designer Outlet Mall, Lalaan I, Silang, Cavite to verify its compliance with existing Fair Trade Laws (FTLs). Alongside the monitor-

ing, CPD-Cavite spearheaded an information dissemination campaign to orient mall tenants of different FTLs. A total of 44 establishments were monitored and oriented on 11 March 2024.

On the 2nd day of the BISITALAKAYAN project, conducted on 13 March 2024, DTI-Cavite facilitated a face-to-face seminar attended by mall tenants. Aside from the orientation on different FTLs, the result of monitoring and corresponding improvement actions were highlighted and discussed during the activity. The FTL seminar was attended by 75 participants. With the success of the activity, the CPD Team plans to coordinate with other



malls in the Province for the BISITALAKAYAN project. PR

Breaking the Silence: Filipinos Embrace End-of-Life Planning

Filipinos cherish and celebrate strong family bonds, yet death largely remains a subject whispered in hushed tones, if spoken about at all. This often leaves families unprepared for the emotional and logistical challenges of a loved one's passing.

“For generations, Filipino families have prioritized strong bonds, yet a crucial conversation has often been left unspoken,” says Edgardo P. Aytona, PhilPlans Assistant Vice President.

“The tide is turning. We're thrilled to see more Filipinos recognizing the importance of pre-planning for end-of-life needs. By taking the time to discuss and plan preferences, families can navigate this difficult time with greater emotional and logistical ease, allowing them to focus on cherishing the memory of their dearly beloved.”



House Speaker unveils 'transformative' health-care agenda for all
Cayetano wants to provide immediate help to disaster victims



POINT OF VIEW

How to improve your health as a woman?

- Following a well balanced Diet plan. ...
- Exercising each day for a minimum of thirty minutes. ...
- Taking measures to maintain a proper Body Mass Index (BMI) ...
- Practising regular Yoga/Meditation to improve Health. ...
- Drinking plenty of Water each day

Following a well balanced Diet plan While Knorr soups and Maggie might taste delicious and take two minutes to prepare, they hardly contribute anything in terms of "food value".

A home-cooked meal chock full of vegetables, on the other hand, can be just the thing your body needs after a long, busy day.

According to dieticians, an individual's diet should consist of as many natural foods as possible. You should, therefore, focus on the following food groups while planning your meals:

- Plenty of fruits, vegetables and legumes.
- Pulses and grains.
- Lean meats, eggs, fish, etc. Tofu if you are vegan.
- Dairy products.
- Seeds and nuts.

These food groups contain the right balance of nutrients, which can help you maintain and improve your overall health. They help to provide your body with carbohydrates, protein, fat, vitamins, fibre and minerals, which are essential for sustenance.

Further, in this respect, it is best to avoid foods high in saturated fat, like cakes, pastries, biscuits, etc. Saturated fat, alongside trans-fat, can have an adverse effect on your health and expose you to risks like heart diseases, obesity, etc.

However, you should also remember to treat yourself. There is no harm in having some pizza or a sugary treat once in a while!

Exercising each day for a minimum of thirty minutes

Owing to the strenuous life that most women lead nowadays, heart-related diseases are becoming more common. Combined with unhealthy eating habits, lack of exercise is one of the primary causes for a rise in obesity, heart attacks, blockages, et al.

But, the way to counter this is pretty simple. A mere 30 minutes of exercise each day can minimise the chances of these illnesses. Jogging, swimming, bicycling, aerobics and such, are particularly useful when it comes to fitness.

Along with cardio, it is also important to include resistance and weight-bearing exercises in your workout routine for the prevention of diseases like –

- Heart ailments,
 - Osteoporosis,
 - Diabetes, and such.
- Exercising regularly also holds the key to promote your mental health. Thus, when it comes to the best health tips for women, exercise has to be one of the more important ones.

Marcos...

MANILA – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Saturday vowed to push for the development of investments that will solidify Lapu-Lapu City and the entire Cebu province as among the leading drivers of economic growth in the Philippines.

In his speech during the capsule-laying ceremony of the PHP1.5-billion Mactan Expo Center at Mactan Newtown in the city, President Marcos said the government will continue investing in the success of Cebu.

"I am delighted to be here in Mactan Newtown to lead the capsule laying of the Mactan Expo Center, which is a part of the grand township being developed by our friends in Megaworld," President Marcos said in his speech, referring to the real estate giant.

He said through Megaworld's pioneering

live-work-play township development, it has cemented its role as a crucial player in shaping the Philippines as a hub of progress.

"The Mactan Newtown is the latest testament to their team's passion, dedication, and brilliance -- and new concepts and new ideas on how to develop our country. This township will further strengthen the city's position as a major destination for key business events, both local and international," he said.

He said the significant participation of the private sector in nation-building will be matched by government efforts.

"The government, for its part, will also continue to invest in its success, which is why in 2024, the DPWH (Department of Public Works and Highways) is funding

DOLE...

MANILA – Workers in the private sector who will be working on May 1 (Labor Day) are entitled to 200 percent of their basic salary.

In Labor Advisory 6 issued Thursday, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) said the 200 percent pay covers the first eight hours (basic wages times two).

Beyond eight hours, the employer shall pay the employee an additional 30 percent of the hourly rate (hourly rate of the basic wage times 200 percent times 130 percent times the number of hours worked).

The DOLE said employees who will not report to work on Labor Day shall receive 100 percent of his/her wage for that day, provided that the employee reports to work or is on leave of absence with pay on the day immediately preceding the regular holiday.

Where the day immediately preceding the regular holiday is a non-working day in the establishment, or is the scheduled rest day of the employee, the employee shall be entitled to holiday pay if the employee reports to work or is on leave of absence with pay on the day immediately preceded-

FROM PAGE 1

ing the non-working day or rest day.

If work is done during the regular holiday that also falls on the employee's rest day, the employee shall receive an additional 30 percent of the basic wage of 200 percent (basic wage times 200 percent times 130 percent).

Job fairs The DOLE is also reminding prospective job-seekers of the simultaneous job fairs to be conducted across the country in celebration of the 122nd Labor Day.

Labor Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma said 95 job fair venues organized by the 16 regional offices of DOLE would feature 204,818 local job vacancies from 2,441 participating employers.

A total of 41,026 overseas employment opportunities will also be offered by 81 participating employers.

The DOLE said workers would also be given free rides for a limited period at the Metro Rail Transit Line 3 (MRT-3) and Light Rail Transit Line 2 (LRT-2) on May 1.

Those who would like to avail of the free rides from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m., and 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., only have to present their company IDs. (PNA)

about PHP2.9 billion in infrastructure projects here in Lapu-Lapu City alone," President Marcos said.

The DPWH projects include road widening, which will significantly decongest traffic along major thoroughfares such as the Mactan Circumferential Road and the Mactan Airport Road, and the Official Development Assistance-assisted Cebu-Mactan 4th Bridge and Lapu-Lapu City Coastal Road, the President said.

The expo center is expected to entice more investments through the Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions sector.

The President also recognized the strategic location of the development, particularly its proximity to Mactan-Cebu International Airport, resorts, and hotel development.

"There is no better way to end a long day of meetings or conferences than to enjoy the beach-

FROM PAGE 1

es of Mactan, partake in its local food, drinks, and delicacies, take a short trip to nearby Cebu City, experience its sights and sounds. And this investment will certainly solidify Lapu-Lapu City and the Province of Cebu's position as a leading driver of growth and prosperity in the country," Marcos said.

The President led the ceremony on the sidelines of the 503rd commemoration of Lapulapu's victory over the Ferdinand Magellan-led Spanish forces.

"All the feats that we are witnessing today follow in the footsteps taken by our valiant heroes, Datu Lapulapu and his warriors," Marcos said.

He said the Philippines is honoring the heroism of Datu Lapulapu by "taking brave steps in developing the island and helping the people who they fiercely fought for more than 500 years ago." (With Filane Mikee Cervantes, PND/PNA)

Abalos...

FROM PAGE 6

"Samahan niyo po kami sa Super Kadiwa at sama-sama nating suportahan ang ating mga kababa-yang magsasaka sa pagbili ng kanilang mga produkto," he said.

DILG Assistant Secretary Elizabeth Lopez-De Leon supported Abalos' call during her visit

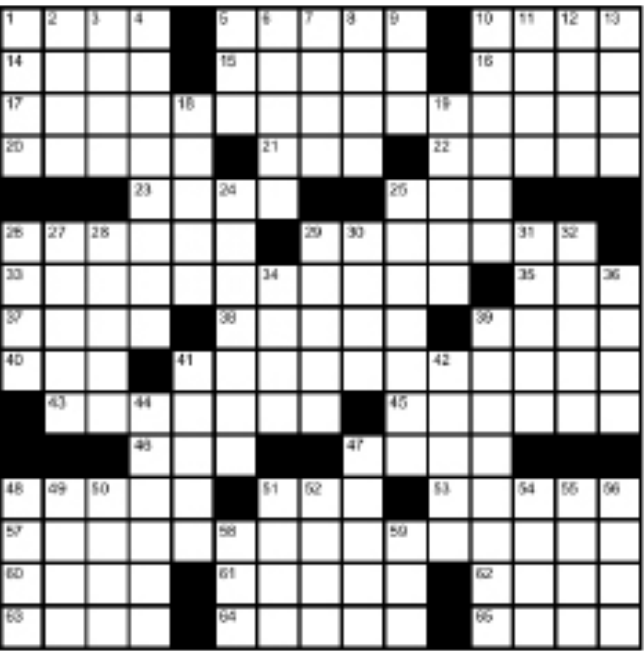
to Super Kadiwa centers in Parañaque City.

She said that seeing the high-grade quality of products being sold in Kadiwa was encouraging saying that she hopes more patrons will visit the centers. DILG GOV



Every adventure deserves an extra outfit! That's why #CocoRepublic is here to double the fun and to double the sun! Buy one outfit, get the second one for free. Head now to SM Store Molino and take advantage of this! Promo runs from April 23-30 only! You can also get these when you order from a Personal Shopper! Call them at 0933 817 6133 to know more.

Crossword Puzzles



ACROSS

- 1. Tibia
- 5. Respond by changing
- 10. Mold
- 14. Yield
- 15. The original "401"
- 16. Beach banquet
- 17. Result
- 20. Pickle portion
- 21. Treacherous curve
- 22. Gives the boot to
- 23. Hardy heroine
- 25. Give a single

- star, perhaps.
- 26. Miss Vanners' metier
- 29. Twitchy
- 33. Water quality evaluation?
- 35. Fidel's friends
- 37. Type of Tennis or bowling
- 38. She Played Gia on Full House
- 39. James of Rollerball
- 40. Suffix with lex-or-morph-
- 41. Succinet Sahara summary?
- 43. Former Senator

- D'Amano Edmonton Skaters
- 46. Gore and Sharpton
- 47. Eso Beso balladeer
- 48. When Macbeth kills Duncan
- 51. American Uncle
- 53. Mutual of ___
- 57. Midmorning fruit disg?
- 60. Rapids rider
- 61. Like some verbs, abbrev.

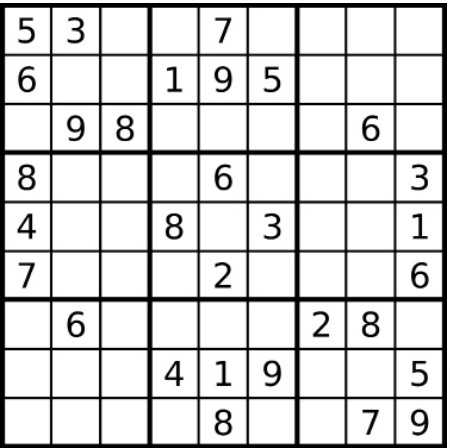
T Z J X T E L E S T O U M O M C A I T H N E S S T
N O M A N U A L T Y V K O O H I T S S T E F D A S
P V S A C B E L Z E B U B Z M H L V I R U L E N T
A I K I L B I W B P P I K I W E D I A S I S U H T
U B E C R E I N T E G R A T I O N F P H D R K O Z
L B V E A T X M B K A A B F P M O A L N A C M H L
Y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

ALEXSWEDEN UKRAINIAN BACH
BEASTINSHEN RADIANCE CAITHNESS
BOINGLOING ZEROT KEROKAI
DARTHBUCK PIKIWEDIA OLIV
KILLAHBEE BARNEEY INTEGRATION
SISU SHAHIL NISMO
NOMANUAL HOLDNEXT ARF

ARF
VIPJUN
TEPPLES
SIRTETRIS
BLAZENAZN
IAMSAND
CONFUGAL



SUDOKU

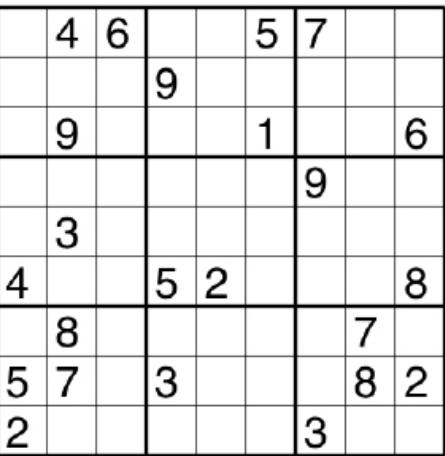
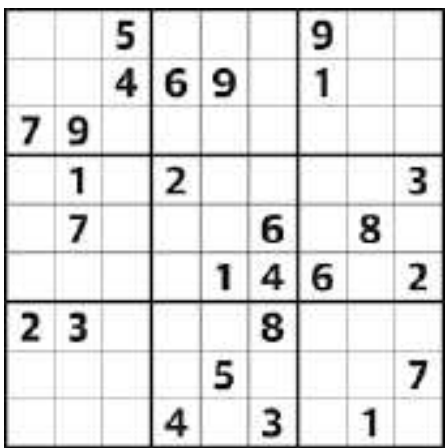


DOWN

- 1. Sec 30 down
- 2. Give a hand
- 3. Like some hands
- 4. Denial
- 5. Member of the colonial army?
- 6. Saharan fruits
- 7. Fruity refreshments

- 28. Wheel of fortune buy
- 29. Buying binge
- 30. With I down govt. students.
- 31. Meeting maestro
- 34. Eyeglass Holders?
- 36. You'd like to make them meet
- 39. Squid snack
- 41. Kind of acid
- 42. Big name in cameras
- 44. Swoons

- 47. Decorative resin
- 48. Incantation initiation
- 49. Alpine porch
- 50. Clump of curls
- 51. Reorder
- 52. Retro do
- 54. Very prolife auth?
- 55. Wield a machere
- 56. Says "who"?
- 58. Towel label
- 59. Iron or bronze, e.g.



Rx

PRESCRIPTIONS

OVERWHELM

Take your life in your own hands, and what happens? a terrible things: no on to blame.

WHEN YOU ARE FEELING OVERWHELMED, stop and ask yourself why you are feeling that way. Who created the situation that you find overwhelming? If it was someone asking for your help, why didn't you say no? If you feel overwhelmed because of all the things you have undertaken, when will you realize that you have needs too?

Becoming angry or resenting your family, co-workers, and the world in general will not solve anything. Only you can change things by accepting your humanity and asking for what you need. Remember that saying no to others is saying yes to you.

No matter what you learned growing up, there is no reason to feel guilty about caring for yourself you will find much more peace with thre world and the people in it. Instead of blaming them for your troubles, you will realize you aere problem and you are also the solution.

Soulution of the Week

Become more aware of your needs. Ask for the help you require, and say no when you need no

Cabarles of Kaulayaw Coffee, Annette Patdu of Diaspora Farm, Camille Escudero of Lily of the Valley, Cristina Balao-as Cayat of Ina-bel Tailoring, Czarina Sevilla of Avacodoria PH, Emilyn Kabor of Jireh Food Products, Katrina Blanca De Leon of Genteel Home, Maria Ra-faella Louise Sol of Nuevo Ystilo, Marica Peñalosa of Ate Rica's Bacsillog, Marie Joyce Co Yu of True Blends & Coffee, Frances Uma Espinosa of The Original Paeng's, Jonnah Garcia of Punique Handicrafts, Marjorie Barcelona of Healthy Lemon, Leah Marie Ayeng of Prestige Paper Products, Anna Melissa Nava of 1Export Trade and Services, Anna Magalona of But First Coffee, and Denise Canofe of Konu. Robina Gokongwei-Pe, meanwhile, was

given the Woman of Legacy Award. In attendance to talk to the hundreds of women entrepreneurs gathered that day were accomplished Filipina executives and entrepreneurs including GMA's Annette Gozon-Valdez, re-nowned chef Gaita Fores, mining executive Caroline Tanchay, designer Vania Romoff, and Can-va's Yani Donato. Go Negosyo organizes Women Summit every year to celebrate women's achievements and contributions to society and the economy in various fields and industries. In doing so, it hopes to inspire the next generation of Filipinas and advocate for the integration of digitalization that supports women-led enterprises. By putting forward

Abalos says 'Super Kadiwa' stores offer P39 per kilo rice

Interior and Local Government Secretary Benhur Abalos on Wednesday urged residents of the National Capital Region (NCR) to visit 'Super Kadiwa' centers and take advantage of the P39.00 per kilogram of rice and other low-priced but high quality produce that are being offered in their stores. 'Super Kadiwa', a limited offering of the Kadiwa ng Pangulo, started in April this year and will open until the end of June in various local government units in Metro Manila. "Malaking katipiran po ito para sa ating mga kababayan sa Metro Manila dahil sa halagang P39.00 lamang ay makakabili ka na ng isang kilong bigas," he said. He added: "Inaanyayahan ko po kayong lahat na suportahan po ang ating tinatawag na 'Super Kadiwa' at tulungan po natin ang ating mga kababayang magsasaka". Kadiwa ng Pangulo is a market linkage facilitation program aimed at making agri-products and other basic commodities accessible and affordable to the poor. It also seeks to establish an additional market for farmers and fisherfolks to directly sell

their products and increase their income, while also bringing down the prices of food commodities in the market as the concept eliminates the role of middlemen. 'Super Kadiwa' platforms were opened last April 15-16 in San Antonio, Parañaque City; Central, Quezon City; Tinasan, Muntinlupa City; Addition Hills, Mandaluyong City; San Juan City Hall; Pamplona Ties, Las Piñas City; Santo Tomas, Pasig City; Caloocan City Hall; Navotas City Hall; Poblacion, Pateros; and, Dulong Bayan, City of San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan. The same were also launched at Employee's Park, Taguig City Hall; People's Park, Malinta, Valenzuela City; Manila City Hall, Inner Court, Antonio Villegas St., Ermita on April 16-17, 2024. It is organized by the Department of Agriculture, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Labor and Employment and the DILG.

Abalos said that 'Super Kadiwa's "center-piece product is rice that sells for as low as P39 per kilo which is way cheaper than those being sold in the mainstream markets. "Kadiwa is a good platform for our local farmers to market their products but more than that, it is a venue for us to show our support by purchasing their produce na matagal nilang pinaghirapang itanim," he said. The DILG Chief likewise assured that the 'Super Kadiwa' will soon be staged in other parts of the country giving more Filipinos access to a cheaper-priced

PNPAAI COLLABORATES WITH METROBANK AWARDEES ANDAFP IN COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMIN PAG-ASA ISLAND



The Philippine National Police Academy Alumni Association Inc. collaborated with the Metrobank Outstanding Filipino Awardees and Armed Forces of the Philippines in the second iteration of the Guro, Pulis at Sundalo (Teacher, Police, and Soldier) Community Outreach Program (GPS2) on April 20, 2024



at Pag-asa Island located at the Municipality of Kalayaan, Palawan. Lakan Gilberto DC Cruz '86, Chairperson, PNPAAI and a Metrobank's recipient of Country's Outstanding Police Officers in the Service (COPS) in 1999 and 2007 together with other awardees Lakan Rodelio B. Jocson '87 (COPS,

nessing the Digital Age to Empower Women". Among the topics of discussion were translating creative vision into business, envisioning sustainable businesses centered around agriculture, breaking gender barriers in male-dominated professions, succeeding in an industry transformed by AI, effective financial management for MSMEs, effective branding using digital tools, impactful content creation, opportunities in eco-friendly businesses, women in e-sports, and the business of beauty. Celebrity women entrepreneurs Cristalle Belo Henares, Ms. Universe Philippines Angelique Man-to and singer/TV host Atasha Muhlach also were featured in inspirational sessions. Drag performer and impersonator Taylor Sweep provided the entertainment for the event. **PR**

Cont. on Page 4



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT. First Lady Liza Araneta Marcos joins Go Negosyo founder Joey Concepcion, together with Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Alfredo Pascual and US Ambassador MaryKay Carlson, join the country's leading women entrepreneurs and executives, winners of the Inspiring Filipina Entrepreneur Awards 2024, and nearly two thousand aspiring and active women entrepreneurs at the Women Summit event of Go Negosyo, held at the Ayala Malls Manila Bay last March 9, 2024.

this agenda, the program aims to empower women through forum discussions, inspirational talks, and interactive sessions by successful businesswomen and visionaries, highlighting their resilience to promote productivity and global competitiveness.

The day-long program featured panel discussions centering around the theme "Har-

EDITORIAL: Rescuing future generations

THIS week, leaders from the Group of Seven started their four working sessions over two days in Turin, Italy, the first political session since the world pledged to transition away from coal, oil and gas. The pledge was made through the UN's COP28 climate summit in December, and now the G7 ministers are meeting for environment and climate change talks, with experts urging highly industrialized economies to use their political clout, wealth and technologies to end fossil fuel use. The two-day meeting which ends today, with hundreds of protesters protesting outside the conference venue and accusing G7 leaders of failing future generations over the climate crisis, follows a new report by a global climate institute which shows the G7 is falling far short of its targets. Which brings us back home, where the Philippines remains one of the fastest-growing developing countries where poverty is in decline but access to energy is rising and, with that, demand for energy services. Fossil fuels still dominate the energy system, accounting for 78 percent of power generation in 2022. The Philippines' current energy mix highly favors fossil fuels, with coal, natural gas, and oil, primarily due to their low cost. One study has suggested the Philippines, on the global warming frontline, must urgently phase out coal-fired power by 2035, and almost entirely phase out gas-fired generation by 2040. The same finds this is not only feasible but will benefit the economy and provide more than a million jobs by 2050. The Philippines' power sector is not yet aligned with the country's current emission reduction targets, let alone with 1.5°C, so the government needs to strengthen those targets and align them with a 1.5°C compatible emissions pathway. This means a well-defined plan for an expedited coal phase-out and expanding renewable energy to 99 percent coverage by 2050, with experts suggesting the government must make this a top priority in its climate and energy policy. The draft Philippines Energy Plan 2023-2050 sees a growth in renewables, but a substantially lower share in 2050 (at 63 percent-72 percent under different scenarios) than the near-100 percent renewables system needed to meet a Paris Agreement-compatible emissions pathway for the power sector. We are glad the Philippine government, in earnest attempts to help reduce global climate change, has committed to limiting the future growth of greenhouse gas emissions by implementing alternative policy options, like carbon taxes, improvement of energy efficiency in both generation and consumption, diversification of the energy supply-mix, and accelerated development of renewable energy. The country intends to reduce emissions by about 70 percent from different sectors, like energy, transport, waste, forestry, and industry, by 2030, compared to the business-as-usual scenario of emission levels between 2000 and 2030.

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MANILA – The House of Representatives will undertake a "transformative journey" to uplift health services and primary care for all Filipinos. Addressing fellow graduates from Cornell University during the Spring Brunch and Education Forum in Tagaytay City on Saturday, Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez said on top of their initiatives is the comprehensive review of the charter of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), the country's premier health insurance provider. "We are not just lawmakers. We are collaborators, working closely with executive agencies to uplift the living conditions under President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s administration," he said in a news release.

He said PhilHealth must mirror the efficiency of health maintenance organizations. "This shift is about more than expanding coverage. It's about ensuring PhilHealth evolves into a pillar of our Universal Health Care System, providing a safety net that is robust, compassionate and equitable," he pointed out. During the National Women's Month in March, Romualdez commended PhilHealth for its swift response to the House advocacy by raising the benefit package for breast cancer patients to an unprecedented PHP1.4 million, a remarkable increase from the previous coverage of PHP100,000. He also lauded the PhilHealth initiative to provide free annual mammogram and ultrasound services, slated to commence in July. He said it is a clear testament to the administration's commitment to preventive care, ensuring that every woman has access to essential diagnostic services. Another symbol of the government's dedication, Romualdez said, was the recent establishment of the Phil-

ippine Cancer Center in Quezon City. Set to be constructed on a 5,000-square-meter lot within the Philippine Blood Center complex in Diliman, it will also be a modern teaching and research hospital. Each of the 20 floors will be dedicated to different types of cancers, ranging from hepatic, renal, and gastrointestinal to lung, breast, reproductive organs of women, skin, and rare cancers. The center aims to provide comprehensive services encompassing diagnosis, treatment, research, and patient support. "Through these infrastructures, we aim to encapsulate the very essence of care and prevention taught to us at Cornell -- knowledge in service of society," he said. Romualdez also highlighted several legislative achievements that underscore the House's dedication to healthcare reform and accessibility. Among these are the amendment to the Universal Health Care Act, Magna Carta of Barangay Health Workers, and establishment of the Virology Institute of the Philippines. He also emphasized the House's active oversight role, particularly in monitoring the implementation of health-related laws, which includes the conduct of inquiries into gaps in the execution of laws for senior citizens and persons with disabilities, leading to recommendations aimed at harmonizing benefits and improving services. "As a result of these inquiries, senior citizens and persons with disabilities will soon be able to enjoy an increase to PHP500 per month in discounts on groceries and other prime commodities," he added. Romualdez pursued his undergraduate studies at Cornell University in New York, United States from 1981 to 1985, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Government. (PNA)

Recognizing the challenges that victims face in recovering from natural or man-made calamities, Senator Alan Peter Cayetano is pushing for his proposal to provide immediate assistance to families that have lost their properties and livelihoods as a result of disasters. According to Cayetano, individuals affected by natural or human-caused disasters such as floods, storms, typhoons, fires, or earthquakes should receive financial aid from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). "This measure proposes to strengthen the 4Ps [Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program] Law to aid our kababayan placed in unfortunate situations without their fault, such as in disasters," he said in his Explanatory Note to Senate Bill No. 302 or the 4Ps for Disaster Victims Act. He formally filed the proposal on July 18 last year. On April 23 (Tuesday), the proposal will be deliberated within the Committee on Social Justice, Welfare, and Rural Development. Under the proposal, DSWD is required

to provide immediate help to victims of disasters who have suffered property or livelihood losses. "Ang DSWD, bibigyan ng immediate financial assistance ang mga pamilyang apektado ng bagyo, lindol, or whatever natural calamity. Then within 15 to 30 days ia-assess yung economic status ng pamilya," Cayetano said. Under the proposal, victims who have been rendered poor by disaster will receive immediate enrollment in the 4Ps program with full benefits. Individuals who suffered losses but were not rendered poor will also be enrolled immediately and eligible as full beneficiaries for one year. Cayetano also emphasized that the government can further utilize existing programs such as the 4Ps so that disaster victims will receive the immediate help they need. "Dapat pwede nating magamit yung 4Ps para matulungang makabangon ang mga pamilyang apektado ng mga kalamidad, we should be able to enroll families into the program in times of disasters," he said. **PR**

FROM PAGE 1

EK brings...

pet fashion show, an online photo contest, and more activities specially curated for pet owners and their furry friends. Additionally, the City Veterinarian Office of Santa Rosa, Laguna will provide and administer 50 anti-rabies vaccines to raise awareness on the importance of vaccination of pets. Ms. Cherina Consunji, Head of the Merchandise Division, shared that EK will introduce a range of merchandise especially made for pets and their owners. To bring home the magic of EK, special treats and gifts also await all participating guests. "We are very excited to bring back this enchanting world pets day event since we first held it in 2019. This event is dedicated to our guests' furry companions as we acknowledge how their unconditional love makes human lives bet-

ter," Ms. Consunji added. In partnership with the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), participants will also have the opportunity to learn more about animal welfare and responsible pet ownership during the said event. Ticket booking is available online (EKOS) and onsite (walk-in). Event pass which includes pet and pet owner starts at Php 1000, while event pass with park and rides access starts at Php 1,900. For safety purposes, park and ride access is only allowed for hoomans. For more information about the Ogg's Pet Day Out and upcoming events at EK, visit https://www.enchantedkingdom.ph and EK's official social media accounts @enchantedkingdom.ph for Facebook and Tiktok, and @ek_philippines for Twitter and Instagram.

Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) today reported a net income of Php37 billion for the first quarter 2024, a 21% increase from its net income of Php30.75 billion in 1Q 2023.

The growth in profitability for the 1st quarter 2024 was driven by strong revenues reaching Php85 billion. This represents a 17% increase year on year.

GSIS President and General Manager Wick Veloso said “Our commitment to support the nation’s growth story saw increases in GSIS investments in key sectors such as real estate, infrastructure, food, energy and mining. Further, the GSIS is boosting revenue streams as it focuses on building efficiencies in its various businesses.”

On global investments, the income from Financial Assets went up by Php28 billion or 45% versus March year-on-year.

Veloso said GSIS would like to be

a catalyst supporting investments in various sectors to bring down the cost of power and allow vertical integration for mining companies to process raw materials into intermediate and finished products.

As of end-March 2024, the total assets of the GSIS increased to Php1.74 trillion, posting a 10% increase or Php156 billion higher compared to March 2023 levels.

Bolstering its commitment to support its 2 million members, the GSIS enhanced its lending program to allow its members to better manage their finances and, for some, to ease their debt burden. As of March 2024, the Multi-Purpose Loan Flex (MPL FLEX) program disbursed PHP136 billion since September 2023, availed by 506,000 members.

Veloso also said that fund life of the GSIS pension fund is now at 2058 because of sustained investment returns.

FROM PAGE 1

Further, net gains on sale and market-to-market valuation of local equities and exchange-traded funds (ETFs) resulted to revenues amounting to Php10 billion. This is 234% higher compared to March 2023.

GSIS interest income from fixed income securities reached Php9 billion for Q1 2024. This includes holdings in USD and PHP sovereign bonds, short-dated Treasury Bills, and corporate bonds.

Maintenance and other operating expenses were 41% below budget and the administrative cost ratio is 2.98%, significantly below the 12% limit allowed for by the GSIS Charter.

Veloso said the GSIS is on track in the execution of its Strategy, which supports the overall growth of the economy, highlighting its investments and programs towards Pabahay (housing), Power (energy), Pagkain (food), and Pagamot (healthcare).



MANILA – Senate Deputy Minority Leader Risa Hontiveros is calling for an immediate ban on the operation of Philippine Offshore Gaming Operation (POGO) in the country, saying human trafficking is part of its business model. Hontiveros made the statement during her inspection Wednesday, together with Senator Sherwin Gatchalian, of a POGO firm in Bamban, Tarlac which was raided for human trafficking and illegal detention.

“Ginagamit talaga bilang legal cover ang POGO ng mga sindikatong scammer. At kahit pa ligal na POGO, hindi ikinaganda ng Pilipinas ang pag-welcome sa mga sugalang ito (Scammer syndicates use POGO as legal cover. And even POGOs are legal, these gambling hubs never made the Philippines any better),” she said.

“Simula pa lang, nakita na natin

May 01-07, 2024

Hontiveros wants ban on POGOs, says ‘hotspot of fugitives’

na mas pinalala lang ng mga POGO ang mga sakit ng ating lipunan (From the start, that POGOs just worsened the problems of our society),” she added.

During the inspection, the senators were informed by the Philippine Anti-Organized Crime Commission that six Chinese fugitives running love scams and cryptocurrency investment scams were found in the premises.

Phones hanging on metal racks were also found, together with numerous SIM cards, presumably used to execute fraudulent transactions.

Hontiveros saw that the alleged POGO hub in Bamban, similar to other scam facilities previously raided, also had offices off-fitted with computer workstations, along with instructional guides and scripts used in love scams and crypto schemes.

She filed on Tuesday Senate Resolution No. 1001, seeking to start a probe into foreigners using falsified documents to acquire Filipino citizenship.

She cited in the resolution how findings of the Senate Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality revealed that the Visa Upon Arrival scheme was abused by Chinese POGO workers who wanted to enter the Philippines unchecked. (PNA)

May 01-07, 2024

SM Prime marks 30th anniversary 100 billion investment for 2024

Manila, Philippines - SM Prime Holdings, Inc. (SMPH), the leading integrated property developer in the Philippines, marks its 30th anniversary as a publicly listed company with the announcement of its highest-ever recorded income and a ₱100 billion investment for its partners, stakeholders, and communities they operate in. With eyes set on the future, SM Prime reaffirms its position as a catalyst for economic development and community advancement. During the Annual Stockholders Meeting held on April 23, 2024, SM Prime announced its highest-ever recorded income, reaching PHP40 billion in consolidated net income, marking a 33% increase from 2022. Additionally, the company’s revenues surged by 21%, soaring to PHP128.1 billion, a notable growth from the previous year. The consolidated operating income also saw significant growth, rising by 24% to PHP61.3 billion.

The outstanding performance can be attributed to SM Prime’s mall business, driving 56% of consolidated revenues and a 30% growth to PHP71.9 billion in 2023. This growth was bolstered by a 24% increase in mall rental income, amounting to PHP61.3 billion. Moreover, the opening of four new malls in 2023 expanded SM’s retail presence to 85 malls in the Philippines and 8 malls in China.

Meanwhile, SM Prime’s residential business group, led by SM Development Corporation (SMDC), recorded an 8% growth in revenues to PHP43.1 billion in 2023. The residential group’s gross profit rose by 15% to PHP25.4 billion, with reservation sales standing at PHP102 billion.

In addition to its mall and residential businesses, SM Prime’s other key segments, comprising offices, hotels, and convention centers, contributed 10% of consolidated revenues, reported PHP13.1 billion in revenues in 2023, marking a remarkable 26% increase from the previous



SM Prime’s (L-R): Assistant Corporate Secretary Arthur Sy, Corporate Secretary Atty. Elmer Serrano, Chief Finance Officer and Chief Compliance Officer John Nai Peng Ong, President Jeffrey Lim, Independent Director Atty. Darlene Marie Berberabe, Chairman of the Board Henry Sy Jr., Vice Chairman and Lead Independent Director Amando Tetangco Jr., Non-Executive Director Herbert Sy, Chairman of the Executive Committee Hans Sy, and Non-Executive Director Jorge Mendiola

Record-Breaking Performance



From Left to Right, Top to Bottom: Lanson Place, SM Development Corporation (SMDC) Turf Residences, SM City Yangzhou in China, SM Mega Tower, SM Mall of Asia Complex, and SM City North EDSA

year. At the core of SM Prime’s success is its unwavering commitment to shared prosperity in every city where they are present. With a strategic ₱100 billion investment capital expenditure in 2024, SM Prime aims to reinvest in its partners, stakeholders, and communities.

SM Prime aims to continuously expand and develop new places for every Filipino to enjoy. 60% will be dedicated to enhancing its malls, development of new residential properties under SMDC, and construction of new hotels and convention centers. 40% will be directed towards acquiring new properties and coastal developments to pave the way for modern, eco-friendly urbanization. SM Prime has always been committed towards

creating a sustainable future. SM Prime continues to work towards its goal of achieving Net Zero carbon emissions by 2040, aligning with the Department of Energy’s target of reaching a 35% renewable energy share by 2030.

Through partnerships with renewable energy suppliers and organizations like the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF), SM Prime endeavors to reduce its environmental footprint and advocate for sustainable practices in all areas of its operations.

SM Supermalls’ SM Cares and SMDC’s The Good Guys also remain actively engaged in various community initiatives, such as conducting community disaster preparedness programs, providing support pro-

with record-breaking income, PHP

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grams for senior citizens and persons with disabilities, and promoting job generation and entrepreneurship through nationwide job fairs and MSME programs. Other initiatives include coastal clean-ups, the donation of school buildings and fire trucks, and the organization of eco-camps for youth.

Jeffrey C. Lim, President of SM Prime Holdings shared, “At SM Prime, we’re not just building spaces; we’re cultivating lifetimes of progress and shared growth. Our commitment lies in empowering Filipinos to thrive within their neighborhoods, whether through convenient shopping experiences at SM Supermalls, quality living in SMDC homes, or fulfilling work environments in our office properties. We believe that individual success fuels community prosperity, creating opportunities, and driving the nation’s growth for many years to come.”

SM Prime remains committed to its role as a catalyst for economic growth, delivering innovative and sustainable lifestyle cities, thereby enriching the quality of life of millions of people. For more information, visit www.smprime.com.

Commitment to Shared Growth



4 New SM Malls in 2024: SM City Caloocan, SM City J Mall, SM City Laoag, and SM City La Union

Commitment to Environmental Sustainability and Disaster Resilience



From Left to Right, Top to Bottom: SM Foundation’s Grow Trees Community Program, SM Cares’ Bike-Friendly Program, ARISE Philippines Chairperson Mr. Hans Sy and Members, SM Supermalls x Bureau of Fire Protection’s (BFP) Nationwide Simultaneous Fire Drill, SM Supermalls’ Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations, and SM Prime’s Solar Rooftop Project

When it comes to the crunch

In the city of Butuan, the name Julius Laguesma is synonymous with his business venture, “Angel’s Chicharon”. Named after his youngest child, the business produces approximately 5,000 packs of chicharon every week with the help of his four employees.

However, Julius’ path to the chicharon business was not easy. Alongside his wife, Juvelyn, they once became peddlers, selling steamed sweet potatoes to their neighborhood under the scorching sun.

Seeking a more profitable business, they became a reseller of chicharon. But after quite some time, his supplier stopped making chicharon, so he decided to make it himself in 2018. This proves that when it comes to the crunch, a solution may come in the form of a delicious recipe.



From a reseller to a supplier themselves, Julius Laguesma and his supportive wife, Juvelyn Laguesma, from Butuan City, Agusan Del Norte climbed their way up in their Chicharon business with perseverance and faith in God.

Despite lacking prior experience in that field, Julius’ courage and entrepreneurial spirit drove him to experiment tirelessly. It took them almost three years of trial and error before they came up with a perfect recipe that they could call their own.

They offer two

varieties of chicharon: one made from traditional pork skin sold at PhP13.00 each, while the other is made from elbow macaroni pasta sold at PhP7.00 each. From his business sales, he was able to build a house and send their children to private school.

In 2023, Julius decided to become a client

CARD RBI

of CARD MRI Rizal Bank, Inc. (CARD RBI), a microfinance-oriented rural bank that provides clients access to different financial services. Currently, he has a PHP20,000.00 loan from the institution that he uses as additional capital for his chicharon business. Furthermore, he also became a member of the CARD Mutual Benefit Association (CARD MBA), which provides an additional layer of security for his family.

Julius’s story serves as an inspiration, reminding us that with perseverance and faith in God, you can overcome any challenge and achieve success. Today, Angels’ Pork Chicharon is a thriving business, which provides not only for their family but also for about 50 resellers that they have. “Trust in God and be patient. Without faith, overcoming challenges is impossible,” he said.

VP Sara ...

MANILA – Vice President Sara Duterte expressed Wednesday her gratitude to President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. for his continued trust and support in her function as education chief.

“Maraming salamat, Pangulong Ferdinand ‘Bongbong’ Marcos Jr., sa patuloy na pagtitiwala sa akin bilang Kalihim ng Kagawaran ng Edukasyon (Thank you President Ferdinand ‘Bongbong’ Marcos Jr., for your unwavering trust in me as the Secretary of the Department of Education),” Duterte said in a statement.

She pledged to continue upholding the welfare of learners in the country.

FROM PAGE 6

“Makakaasa po kayo na ang DepEd, na binubuo ng ating mga guro at non-teaching personnel, ay patuloy na maglilingkod nang tapat para sa kinabukasan ng bawat mag-aaral (You can count on the DepEd, together with our teachers and non-teaching personnel, to continuously serve faithfully for the future of each learner),” she added.

On Wednesday, the President said there is no reason to replace Duterte as education secretary, noting that Cabinet members are replaced based solely on their performance.

The country’s two highest officials are set to talk in private to thresh out various issues. (PNA)

