

DTI 4-A helps LGUs enhance their CMCI data through a workshop



The Department of Trade and Industry Region 4-A conducted the 2024 Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Index (CMCI) Workshop: Cultivating Advantages To Achieve Lasting Competitiveness (CATALYST) on April 18, 2024 at the DTI 4-A Regional Office, Calamba City, Laguna. This event was designed to bring together CMCI Provincial Focal Persons from DTI Provincial Offices and representatives from the Provincial Government of the five provinces in the region: Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon, discussing opportunities for improvement in the CMCI pillars/indicators and determine recommendations and/or possible interventions for a better CMCI Cycle performance for the local government units (LGUs) in CALABARZON.

“We aspire that these CMCI improvements translate into sustained or increased investment inflows into the Region by enhancing the scores and subsequent ranks of all 142 LGUs in the CALABARZON,” said DTI 4-A Assistant Regional Director Revelyn A. Cortez in her welcome remarks.

The CATALYST Workshop helped the participants analyze the CMCI data trends of their respective LGUs over the last five years and identify potential interventions to increase their CMCI scores, particularly under the Government Efficiency and Resiliency Pillars.

The CALABARZON Region has been competitively participating in the CMCI since its launching in 2012. On its 10th year run last 2023, the DTI- Bureau of Industry Planning and Innovation revamped the recognition rites for the CMCI and launched the Philippine Creative Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Congress to incorporate the Creative

Success One Step at a Time

When one is passionate about what they do, they tend to overcome all the challenges that lie ahead of them.

“I’ve experienced numerous losses in my business due to unpredictable circumstances. However, CARD SME Bank always provides me with a solution to bounce back,” said Sonia Torino, 44, from Dasmariñas, Cavite, owner of a thriving sari-sari store.

Among the six siblings, Sonia stands out as the one with a natural knack for business. Since childhood, she has shown a keen interest in selling a variety of products, a passion inherited from her mother and nurtured over the years.

Initially from Batangas City, she thought of moving to her sister in Cavite after graduating from high school. It was in Cavite where she further improved her selling abilities and crossed paths with her life partner, who shared the same interests and passions.

To start standing on their own two feet, they used their savings of PHP 10,000 to establish their planned sari-sari store in 1999.

Their initial attempt did not immediately go smoothly. With a limited range of products, they struggled to meet all the needs of their customers. There were days when their earnings were minimal, and at times, none.

“The income was very unstable at first. But



Optimistic about her chosen business, Sonia Torino remained steadfast and full of hope as she surpassed the challenges faced by her family and business. It was also a significant blessing for her to find a partner who shares the same passion as her.

because I put my mind into it, I never once thought of stopping. I know this is my passion, this is what I want to do in life,” Sonia said.

Despite facing challenges, she maintained an optimistic outlook on her business and envisioned its potential for



PBBM honors First Lady, mothers for compassion, strength

MANILA – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. expressed appreciation to all mothers, including First Lady Liza Arane-ta-Marcos, for their compassion and sacrifices this Mother’s Day.

In a social media post on Sunday, Marcos honored all mothers for their sacrifices that strengthened the family and the society as a whole.

“Sa ating mga kahanga-hangang ina, mga single mom, mga tatay na ginagampanan ang papel ng ina, at sa bawat isa na tumatayong ina, nais kong iparating na ang inyong walang sawang pagmamahal at mga sakripisyo ay siyang nagbibigay liwanag sa ating buhay at nagpapatibay

sa ating lipunan (To our wonderful mothers, single moms, fathers who play the role of mother, and to everyone who stands up as a mother, I want to convey that your tireless love and sacrifices light up our lives and strengthen us in our society),” he said.

“Ngayon, ipinagdiriwang natin ang bawat isa sa inyo. (Today, we celebrate each one of you). Happy Mother’s Day!” he added.

In a separate post, the President recognized and thanked his wife for her strength and compassion, as well as her dedication to defending their family, adding that their family is lucky to have the First Lady by their side.

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Bank offers excellent services. Not only do they offer loans, but they also encourage savings alongside loan repayments. This promotes financial discipline and teaches individuals to manage their finances effectively,” she said.

From a small sari-sari store, Sonia has gradually expanded its offerings to cater a wider range of products for customers. Through her dedication, she is able to send her three children to school and construct a home for her family.

Presently, Sonia’s sari-sari store is flourishing and continues to operate successfully. Looking ahead, she and her husband are planning to further expand their business by transitioning it into a grocery store in the coming years.

“Just focus on the business and devote your heart to it. Losses are there, they happen. What you need to learn is how to pick yourself up to keep going,” Sonia’s advice to aspiring entrepreneurs,” advised Sonia to aspiring entrepreneurs.PR

Enchanted Kingdom unveils the most MAGICAL Mother’s Day Celebration for all Queens



DA: P29/kg subsidized rice sale possible in August



CALABARZON RDP 2023-2028 Roadshow kicks off in Cavite



The province of Cavite played host to the first provincial roadshow of the CALABARZON Regional Development Plan (RDP) 2023-2028 on April 23, 2024 at the International Convention Center of Cavite State University (CvSU) - Indang Campus. Spearheaded by the National Economic and Development Authority Regional Office IV-A in partnership with the Provincial Government of Cavite and CVSU, the event gathered various stakeholders in the aim to improve public awareness, support and participation in the regional and provincial level development plans.

SSS issues violation notices to over 1,200 delinquent employers nationwide



Social Security System (SSS) President and Chief Executive Officer Rolando Ledesma Macasaet today urged Filipino workers to be vigilant and regularly check if their contribution records are updated as the SSS pursued delinquent employers nationwide.

Macasaet led the simultaneous Run After Contribution Evaders (RACE) operation, which called on more than 1,200 employers nationwide to settle their contribution delinquencies, amounting to over P335 million and affecting the social security coverage of nearly 19,000 employees.

“Our members can now easily check if their SSS contribution record is updated using the My.SSS Portal, which they can access through their smartphones. If they find out that their employers are not remitting their con-

DepEd backs review of gov’t eligibility standards for hiring SHS grads

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7 Health Tips Every Woman Should Take to Heart

MORE ABOUT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:

Throughout your life, a physical activity regimen that includes 20-30 minutes of daily cardiac activity (such as walking, running, swimming, hiking, or biking) is recommended for heart health, weight management, and stress reduction. Particularly as you get older, it may be beneficial to supplement your exercise routine with weight lifting or other strength training activities that help prevent loss of bone density and muscle mass.

The good news about exercise is that it's never too late to start. Even if you're past 50 and don't have much of a history of physical fitness, you can still "start small" and work your way into a regular routine of exercise that helps you improve your overall health.

MORE ABOUT RECOMMENDED SCREENINGS:

Cholesterol and Blood Pressure: Women ages 20 and up should consider annual cholesterol tests and blood pressure checks a part of their regular health care routine. Your physician may recommend a more frequent schedule if you have a family history of problems in these areas or other risk factors.

Pelvic Exams and Pap Smears: Women ages 21-65 should have annual pelvic exams and a Pap smear at least every three years. These screenings may performed by your family medicine doctor or your OB-GYN.

Breast Exams and Mammograms: Generally, all women should receive a breast exam every year beginning at age 20. Most healthcare providers recommend annual mammograms from age 40-50, and every-other-year mammograms after that point. Also, you should get into the habit of monthly self-exams of your breasts. Your physician can show you the correct way to perform them.

Osteoporosis Screenings: Women 65 and older are at greater risk for problems with their bones, which is why most doctors recommend annual bone density screenings beginning at age 65.

Colorectal Screenings: Once you turn 50, ask your physician about recommended screenings (such as colonoscopies) for colorectal cancers and other potential problems.

Skin Cancer: Women of all ages should develop the habit of paying attention to changes in the skin or changes in moles and birthmarks. Be sure and report anything that seems different when you have annual wellness checks. If you have risk factors for skin cancer, such as a family history, fair skin, or a history of childhood sunburns, you should ask your physician if he or she recommends regular screenings.

Diabetes: Besides knowing the signs and symptoms of diabetes and managing your risk factors, you may need regular screenings from age 40 onward, depending on your family history and risk factors. Ask your physician for advice.



Enchanted...

Enchanted Kingdom (EK), the first and only world-class theme park in the Philippines, will bring the most magical Mother's Day Celebration on May 12, Sunday.

Enjoy enchanting activities, exclusive offers, and freebies perfect for all the queen mothers and the whole family.

Witness "An Enchanting Mother's Day Concert" featuring the mother-daughter tandem Pinky and Karel Marquez at 6 p.m. at the Spaceport Grounds to cap off this special day with music and entertainment. They will be accompanied by the Women of Song and Music Making Company as they serenade the audience and pay tribute to all mothers through a series of spectacular performances to remember.

"Here at Enchanted Kingdom, we appreciate and salute these wonderful women who make our lives magical through their unconditional love, care and support for their families. Hopefully through this experience, we would also be able to make Mother's Day more

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enchanting," said EK's Chief Operating Officer (COO), Dr. Cynthia R. Ma-mon.

Guests can also make the most out of the whole month of May with EK's Ilaw ng Tahanan - A Magical Mother's Day Promo in collaboration with Firefly Electronic and Lighting Corporation (FELCO). Avail this limited-time offering for Php 1200 to get a regular day pass and a seat at the "An Enchanting Mother's Day Concert" on May 12. This exclusive EK online store promo also includes one (1) Firefly e-gift card worth PhP 200 (with minimum purchase) and a chance to win a Smart Wifi Portable Air Conditioner upon the activation of your FELCO Store account and subscription to their mailing list. Promo runs from May 4 to 30, 2024.

For more information and updates regarding these events and promos, 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.

Soldiers, police recover war materiel in Camarines Norte encounter

CAMP CAPIN-PIN, Rizal - War materiel were recovered by the soldiers of the 2nd Infantry "Jungle Fight-er" Division, 9th Infantry "Spear" Division, and personnel from the Philippine National Police following a clash between the government forces and members of the New People's Army in Labo, Camarines Norte on Sunday, May 5, 2024.

Troops from the 85th Infantry "Sandiwa" Battalion and 9th Infantry "San-digan" Battalion together with Labo PNP were conducting focused military operations when they encountered around 10 members of Platoon Reymark from the Southern Tagalog Regional Party Committee at Barangay Tigbinan, igniting a 10-minute firefight. No injuries were reported

on the state forces while casualties on the rebels' side are still being verified. Among the items recovered following the encounter were 3 magazines, 4 Anti-Personnel Mines, 3 makeshift tents, 30 meters of detonating wire, a jungle pack, medical paraphernalia, and personal belongings.

The 2ID Commander Maj. Gen. Roberto S. Capulong in a statement explained that the recovery of war materiel further disrupts the capabilities of the New People's Army to terrorize communities. He also urged the few remaining NPAs to abandon armed struggle, heed the call for peace, and take advantage of the government programs put in place to help former rebels begin their new lives with their families. 2ID

CALABARZON...

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IV-A, further explained that the RDP is a six-year investment programming document which contains priority programs and projects for the region. It also serves as an instrument to monitor targets and commitments, and a reference document to channel resources.

For the provincial level, Cavite has its Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plan (PDPFP). These plans assessed the socio-economic performance of key sectors in the economy as well as the development challenges, and identified the targets, strategies and legislative agenda to attain economic and social transformation towards prosperous, inclusive and resilient region and province.

Governor Jonvic Remulla noted Cavite as one the fast-developing provinces in the country with its vibrant economy and strategic location. Nevertheless, the governor pointed out that geography alone does not spell the province's success adding that its strength lies in its people. He describes the integration of people coming in from the different parts of the country as high breed vigor which

propels the development in the province. He also shared the current and upcoming development projects that will further bolster the province's economy including the major road infrastructures, heightened peace and order, better education and other innovations.

NEDA Regional Director Agnes Tolentino emphasized that the RDP is not the plan of NEDA alone but is a product of a multi-stakeholder assessment and target-setting; and encouraged the participants to take part in ensuring that the programs are implemented, and strategies are carried out to see the realization of the shared vision for progress.

A short but insightful talk show during the program elicited ideas and recommendations from the participants and the panelists composed of Board Members Sherman Jaro and Irene Bencito, and Engr. Lorna Leyran from the PGC, Ms. Agnes Nuestro and Engr. Orlando Delos Reyes from CvSU, Ternate Mayor Bambao, and RD Agnes Tolentino for NEDA IV-A. Among the areas tackled were agriculture and food security, education and employment, to name a few. - Evelyn M. Reyes

P31.6-M infra projects to bring vital healthcare services to remote areas in Abra

BAGUIO CITY — Health services will soon be more accessible to residents of geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs) in six towns in the province of Abra following the construction of six healthcare stations worth P31.6 million to address the challenges and gaps in healthcare accessibility.

"The government recognizes the dire situation of our physically remote areas, which have experienced challenges in getting vital medical treatment. Healthcare disparities have been a source of concern, and we understand the importance of a holistic solution," said Regional Director Araceli San Jose.

She added that developing healthcare facilities in remote areas is more than just construct-

ing buildings; it is about building a healthier future for every community member by bringing healthcare services, expertise, and support directly to them, as well as the government's commitment to their health, their families, and the entire community.

"The projects funded under the Support to Barangay Development Program (SBDP) spearheaded by the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) for GIDAs mark a pivotal moment in the region's pursuit of equitable healthcare they deserve," she stressed.

RD San Jose explained that the health stations are strategically located in Barangays Pang-Ot, Nanangduan, Villavieja, Dintan, Bolbolo, and Tikitik in Pilar, Abra

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ACROSS

- "Oh, woe!"
- The first to fall, after the fall
- She had a cat names Dinah
- The wisw have it?
- Subject of an apology from HAL-9000
- What he says, goes
- Stopped sleeping on the floor?
- Catcher's position
- Request to a barista
- It might be Odd or happy
- A hero might have it
- Pai plant
- Barber's instuction manual?
- Album entry
- The true face of Walter Mitty
- Part of MIT
- Neither all nor nothing
- She and Nicole lived a Simple Life
- Kind of values
- Gets a bronze
- Store sign
- Evening news hr.
- "Best of intentions" or Modern Day Bonnie and Clyde"?
- Many unknown
- Johns and Janes
- Surrounded by
- Like a brand new trail
- Prepare to end an engagement
- Letter embellishment
- Prestigious list of groundbreaking axioms?
- Partner of Brahma and Vishnu
- Stable parent
- Are not casual?
- Less green, perhaps
- "I he Heat"
- It may require stiches

DOWN

- Some saxes
- Blackmore's
- Like a brand new trail
- "Doone"
- Paris bistros
- Fiddling (with)
- Giraffes' kin
- A singing Carpenter
- Cognizant of
- Automaker's amt.
- Stem's opposite
- "Yo, Bub!"
- Word with zero or happy
- Present opener?
- Take a Porsche out without paying, perhaps

FROM PAGE 1

P31.6-M ... will provide crucial services to the area's various indigenous peoples communities which include regular medical consultations, immunizations, and health education programs.

"The development of these health stations is intended to promote the general health and well-being of indigenous peoples by expanding their access to healthcare. Furthermore, the stations will serve as a venue for community health workers to conduct outreach programs and encourage preventive measures," she said.

Empowering local communities

During a joint inspection by DILG Cordillera, DILG Abra, and the Municipal Government of Pilar, Municipal Mayor Tyron Christopher Berona emphasized the need for improved healthcare services and community empowerment to address previously affected areas and promote development and stability.

"Our goal is clear: to create an environment that is stable, robust, and conducive to progress. By focusing on healthcare improvements and community empowerment, we are setting the groundwork

for a better future for Pilar, where our constituents thrive and contribute to the progress of our community," he said.

Bringing closer govt services

The Upgrading of Cuda-Cacaoayan Farm-to-Market Road, valued at Php 6.6 million, will have a positive impact on approximately 385 residents of Barangay Lul-Luno, Luba, Abra.

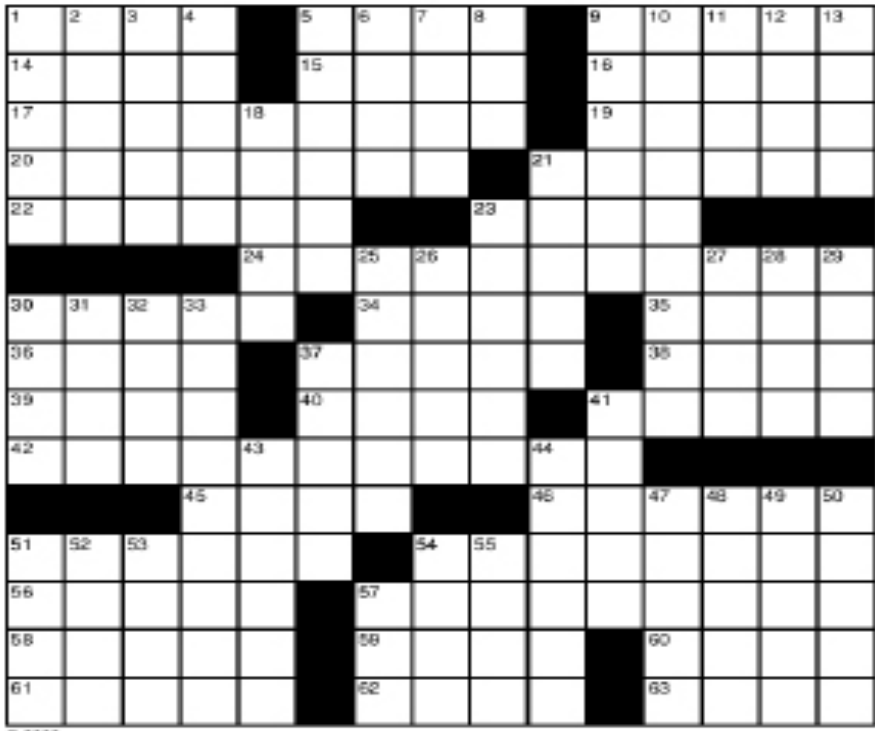
This project aims to improve accessibility to government services, enhance safety in transportation, facilitate the delivery of agricultural products to market centers, and stimulate economic growth in the barangays.

To recall, SBDP is a hallmark program of the NTF-ELCAC with the end goal of bringing development to former conflict-prone communities.

The SBDP also forms part of the government's whole-of-nation approach in fighting the communist armed groups in the countryside, with the overarching objective of eradicating the root causes of the insurgency, poverty, and social injustice in remote communities across the country identified to have been influenced by communist ideologies. DILG.GOV



Crossword Puzzles



DOWN

- Some saxes
- Blackmore's
- Like a brand new trail
- "Doone"
- Paris bistros
- Fiddling (with)
- Giraffes' kin
- A singing Carpenter
- Cognizant of
- Automaker's amt.
- Stem's opposite
- "Yo, Bub!"
- Word with zero or happy
- Present opener?
- Take a Porsche out without paying, perhaps

bed

- German duck
- Disney flier
- Paris bistros
- Fiddling (with)
- Giraffes' kin
- A singing Carpenter
- Cognizant of
- Automaker's amt.
- Stem's opposite
- "Yo, Bub!"
- Word with zero or happy
- Present opener?
- Take a Porsche out without paying, perhaps

- Prepared to be shot
- Melodic subjects
- Beyond bounds
- Mediterranean sail
- Neckwear for a dog or a dogface
- "Beavis and Butt-head" spinoff
- Gobsnacks
- Part of a cog or a comb
- "Back in the" Beatles
- Soda available in grape, orange, and peach
- Send sprawling
- Spanish ladies: Abbr.
- Drachma's replacement
- PA location of a '79 scare

SUDOKU

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

PLAY

It's only works if there's someplace else you'd rather be.

-George Hallas

WHAT DID YOU ENJOY DOING AS A CHILD? Find a way to bring that enjoyment back into life. It is important to spend time playing each day. What you consider play may seem like work to others, but that is not the issue. How you define what you are doing is what matters.

Think of caring a living doing what you consider relaxing and playful. When you are doing what you love, you are contributing not only to the world but also to your own health.

I might have been an artist instead of a surgeon if I had know as a child that people bought paintings, I can't imagine a more joyful life than being paid for doing what you love to do; then you are never really working. I find that in many ways writing fits in this category. I learn while I Write, and if my writing also helps others to cope with life, then we are all being given a gift. It isn't work, but love made visible.

One work about guilt: too often we are brought up to feel guilty playing and relaxing. I say to you, That ridiculous! You and I Know that on our deathbeds we are not going to be sorry for the time we spent playing and relaxing. But we will regret the time we didn't spend enjoying life with our loved ones

There are no limits to the guidance that can come from the consciousness within you and its connection, through meditation, to the greater consciousness of creation.

Soulution of the Day

Take time to listen to the voice of creation and connect with the universal consciousness.

LAGUNA— Ngayon araw na ito ika-9 ng Mayo 2024. ang panunumpa ng mga kandidato sa Akay National Political Party .Na mula pa sa ibat-ibang panig ng bansa. Inaprubahan ito ng Comelec ngayon ang Akay National Political Party o legit na maihahanay na sa libat-ibang political party sa ating bansa. Maari na din itong magnominate ng mga kandidato sa ibat-ibang posisyon sa national. Kabilang dito ang presidente, bise presidente,Senador, maging sa regional at lokal na posisyon ay maari din silang magpatakbo ng kanilang kandidato.

Bahagi ng adbokasiya ng Partido ay akayin ang mga higit na nagan-gailangang sektok o grupo sa ating bansa. Kabilang



SENADOR BONG GO BINISITA ANG SUPER HEALTH CENTER SA BAYAN NG CALAUAN

ay nakisalamuha si Sen. Go sa mga health worker ng bayan. At nagbigay ng mga bola at groceries para sa lahat ng frontliner na dumalo.

Nagpasalamat si Mayor Osel Caratihan sa senador dahil sa patuloy na pagbibigay nito ng kaukulang tulong sa kanya bayan particular ang pagpapatayo nito ng Super Health Center na malaking kapakinabangan para sa mga mamamayan ng Calauan at kalapit nitong bayan.

Ayon sa senador kung may kulang naman mga gamit sa pasilidad ng SHC ay magsabi lang



na dito ang mga pwd's ,solo parents ,senior citizen, riders, guro, kawani ng Barangay, at pamahalaan, Kabataan, kalalakihan, kababaihan, LGBT, Muslim community, kristyano, magsasaka, mangingisda, transportayon, turismo at iba pa.

Samantalang dumalo sa pagtitipon si Mayor Benjie Magalong ng lunsod ng Baguio bilang panauhing pangdangal at iba pa mga taga suporta sa partido

Tumatayong Pangulo ng Partido ay si Vice Mayor Tony Aurelio ng Rizal Laguna, habang si dating Con-gresswoman Sol Aragoness ng 3rd.District of laguna ang Chairmnan ng AKAY Political Party. Si Doland Castro naman ang siyang secretary general nito.

Kabilang sa mga adbokasiya ng Partido ay ang makapagpatayo ng tertiary hospital sa lalawigan ng la-guna. At tumulong sa ibat-ibang probinsya sa larangan ng kalusugan.

Tututukan din nito ang edukasyon sa pamamagitan ng pagbibigay ng scholarship program na walang pinipiling grado mataas man ito o palakol basta gustong makapagtapos ng pag-aaral. Mahalaga din ang turismo sa Partido maniniwala ito kapag my turismo may hanapbuhay at suportado ng Akay ang mga lokal natin mga negosyo(Kevin Pamatmat)

More than 400 Gentriseños benefit from the PGC's health program. On May 2, 2024, a medical and dental mission took place in Barangay San Francisco, General Trias City serving more than 400 beneficiaries. The activity organized by the provincial government of Cavite through the Office of the Provincial Governor in partnership with the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the local government of Gen. Trias City addressed the healthcare needs of residents, especially medical and dental care.

The medical team, comprising doctors, nurses, and support staff, offered a wide range of services including medical check-ups, consultations, and the provision of prescribed medications.

DA...

MANILA – The Department of Agriculture (DA) said Friday that it is possible to sell government-subsidized rice at PHP29 per kilogram in August.

During the Bagong Pilipinas Ngayon, Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa pointed out that the selling of cheaper rice was earlier done through the National Irrigation Administration (NIA)'s contract farming with farmers cooperatives and associations.

"Possible iyan, of course, mayroon iyan subsidiya galing sa ating pamahalaan, nasubukan na natin iyan sa ilang lugar (That's possible, of course, there will be a subsidy from the government, we've already done that before in some areas)," he said.

De Mesa explained that this was done through a lower production cost, considering the provision of free seedlings, fertilizers, free irrigation service fees, and machinery from the Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PhilMech), among others.

The said program may be rolled out in coordination with the National Food Authority (NFA), once the proposed amendments in Rice Tariffication Law (RTL) are finalized, he said.

To date, the NFA's mandate is limited to securing rice for national buffer stocking. (PNA)



For dental care, services such as dental check-ups, tooth extractions, and oral health education were provided, addressing various dental concerns and promoting preventive measures for oral hygiene.

Board Members Morit Sison and Kerby Salazar, some local officials and community leaders expressed their gratitude to everyone involved in making the mission a success. Likewise, they commended the collaborative efforts and reaffirmed

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"Iyan ay pag-aaralan at pagsusumikap natin, hopefully by August lalo na kung maipasa (That's what we are studying and working on, hopefully by August, especially if the proposed amendments are passed)," De Mesa said.

"Na-certify ng ating pangulo (President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.) na urgent itong proposed amendment sa Rice tariffication Law, at malaki ang maitutulong nito para mas maibaba pa ang presyo ng bigas sa ating mga pamilyan (The president has already certified the proposed amendment in the RTL as urgent, and this will greatly help in stabilizing the rice prices in the market)," he added.

The proposed amendments for NFA rice sale, however, are limited to government agencies or entities authorized to handle the sale of rice; retail outlets of organized women's groups or cooperatives duly registered by CDA and DA-accredited; outlets run by consumer groups and similar associations duly registered with Securities and Exchange Commission and DA-accredited; and in Kadiwa stores.

To date, the NFA's mandate is limited to securing rice for national buffer stocking. (PNA)

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EDITORIAL: Addressing deforestation

DEFORESTATION, a nagging problem in many countries including the Philippines, has been for years a headache for many governments.

Imagine one football field of forest gone every second, if we must believe forest experts. That's 5,350 square meters.

Since 2016, 28 million hectares of forest have been cut down every year on average, according to guardians of the world's forests.

From 2001 to 2018, a forest area larger than India was lost worldwide (3,610,000 square kilometers). The loss is equivalent to a 9 percent reduction in global tree cover since 2000.

The main drivers for the loss of forests are production of timber and the clearing of land for cattle, soy, and palm oil production, and other globally traded commodities, according to Frances Seymour of the World Resources Institute.

Due to massive deforestation, about 50 to 100 species of animals are being lost each day. This leads to the extinction of animals and plants on a massive scale. The animals not only lose their habitat and protective cover, but they are also pushed to extinction.

We are glad the Philippine government has implemented various programs and policies to promote reforestation, sustainable forest management, and biodiversity conservation. One such program is the National Greening Program, which aims to plant 1.5 billion trees across 1.5 million hectares of land by 2028.

As in other Southeast Asian countries, deforestation in the Philippines is a major environmental issue. Over the course of the 20th century, the forest cover of the country dropped from 70 percent down to 20 percent.

Over the decade since 2010, the net loss in forests globally was 4.7 million hectares per year. The Rome-headquartered UN Food and Agriculture Organization, has estimated that 10 million hectares of forest were cut down each year.

Deforestation in the Philippines, among severely deforested nations, has several negative effects on the environment. It leads to water contamination as the lack of tree roots causes soil to wash off into water supply systems and deprives the soil of essential nutrients needed for new vegetation to grow.

Estimates place forest cover in the Philippines in the year 1900 at 21 million hectares, covering 70 percent of the total land area.

Between 2000 and 2005, the rate of forest change decreased by 20.2 percent to 1.98 percent per annum. In total, between 1990 and 2005, the Philippines lost 32.3 percent of its forest cover, or around 3,412,000 hectares, according to official figures..

Direct causes of deforestation are agricultural expansion, wood extraction (e.g., logging or wood harvest for domestic fuel or charcoal), and infrastructure expansion such as road building and urbanization. Rarely is there a single direct cause for deforestation.

We are happy the government has added to its National Greening Program laws and policies to protect its forests, like Forest Management Bureau's Community-Based Forest Management Program, which aims to involve local communities in forest management and conservation efforts.

The program successfully reduced deforestation rates in some areas and promoted sustainable forest management practices.

tributions, we advise them to report it immediately to our SSS Branch Office to investigate," Macasaet said.

In a RACE operation held in Quezon City, Macasaet emphasized that employers should religiously remit their workers' contributions so they will not deprive their employees of SSS benefits.

Macasaet said that if their contribution records are not updated, they will not be entitled to claim SSS benefits or apply for loan programs.

"For example, an SSS member was hospitalized for ten days due to an illness. Suppose their employer is not remitting the SSS contributions. In that case, they will be unqualified to receive sickness benefits from SSS because one of the requirements of the said benefit is to have recency in contributions," he said.

He emphasized the importance of an up-to-date contribution record, as the monthly contributions of SSS members serve as the basis for qualifying for SSS benefits.

Meanwhile, Macasaet issued a stern warning to delinquent em-

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PBBM...

"To this dear lady, who not only fills our home with love but stands ready to defend her family at any turn -- happy Mother's Day! We are incredibly lucky to have you on our side," the Chief Executive said.

"Your strength and compassion not only safeguard our family but also uplift our entire nation," he added.

The First Couple got married in Italy on April 17, 1993. They are blessed with three sons, Senior House Deputy Majority Leader Sandro, Joseph Simon, and William Vincent.

Foundation of every family

Meanwhile, House of Representatives Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez recognized mothers as foundations of Filipino families by guiding

SSS...

tributions, we advise them to report it immediately to our SSS Branch Office to investigate," Macasaet said.

In a RACE operation held in Quezon City, Macasaet emphasized that employers should religiously remit their workers' contributions so they will not deprive their employees of SSS benefits.

Macasaet said that if their contribution records are not updated, they will not be entitled to claim SSS benefits or apply for loan programs.

"For example, an SSS member was hospitalized for ten days due to an illness. Suppose their employer is not remitting the SSS contributions. In that case, they will be unqualified to receive sickness benefits from SSS because one of the requirements of the said benefit is to have recency in contributions," he said.

He emphasized the importance of an up-to-date contribution record, as the monthly contributions of SSS members serve as the basis for qualifying for SSS benefits.

Meanwhile, Macasaet issued a stern warning to delinquent em-

ployers, making it clear that SSS will not hesitate to file charges against them, adding, "Non-remittance of SSS premiums is a criminal offense that violates Republic Act No. 11199."

Under the law, SSS Executive Vice President for Branch Operations Sector Voltaire P. Agas explained that employers who fail to register their employees or have not deducted and remitted their contributions to SSS will be penalized with a fine of P5,000 to P20,000 and face imprisonment ranging from six years and one day to 12 years.

"Employers who received the violation notices are given 15 days to coordinate with their respective servicing SSS Branch Office and settle their contribution delinquencies, and if they fail to act on it, SSS will take legal action against them," Agas said.

Meanwhile, Macasaet issued a stern warning to delinquent em-

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children with their love and strength even into adulthood.

"Today, we celebrate the irreplaceable women in our lives -- our nanay, lola (grandmother) and ina. Each plays a unique and pivotal role, and their impact resonates deeply within our society," the House leader said in a statement for all mothers including his wife, Tingog Party-list Rep. Yedda Romualdez.

The Speaker underscored mothers' offering of wisdom and resilience when faced with various challenges.

"May this day be filled with joy and be a testament to the love and respect we hold for you," he said. "Happy Mother's Day to all the remarkable mothers out there! Your guidance illuminates our paths and your love enriches our lives, today and always." (With a report from Zaldy De Layola/PNA)

FROM PAGE 8

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Meanwhile, Macasaet said the nationwide crackdown against delinquent employers on Tuesday aimed to show SSS' solidarity with Filipino workers and recognize their significant contribution to commemorating Labor Day. PR

MANILA – The Department of Education (DepEd) on Friday expressed support for the bill seeking to revise the eligibility requirements for government employment in consideration of Senior High School (SHS) graduates.

The DepEd issued the statement after Senator Sherwin Gatchalian highlighted anew Senate Bill No. 2367, or the Batang Magaling Act, which seeks to ensure the employability and college readiness of SHS graduates.

In an ambush interview, Education Undersecretary Michael Poa said the government should be an example in accepting SHS completers.

"That is another avenue for us to boost employability, kasi tayo pong nasa government, dapat tayo (we in the government, we must) also hire our Senior High School [graduates]," he said.

"There's a need to, kailangan nating makipag-usap sa Civil Service Commission (CSC) para po matingnan natin iyong mga qualification standards natin sa ngayon. Kasi hindi pa po nasasama doon iyong ating K-12 (Kinder to Grade 12) graduates. (We need to talk with the CSC to look at the current qualification standards. Because the K-12 graduates are not included there yet.) So, we support that," he said.

Meanwhile, Gatchalian said it is crucial for the government to trust the competitiveness of SHS graduates.

"Ang game-changer kapag government ang nagha-hire, pinapakita ng gobyerno na may kumpansa tayo sa kakayahan at galing ng (The game changer is when the government do the hiring, the government is showing confidence in the ability and knowledge of our) Senior High School," he said.

He, however, said this only suggests a limited number of positions, in compliance with whatever qualification standards the CSC will specify.

"Limited positions, but from local government, from barangay to local government, all the way to national government, mayroon nang specific na trabaho para sa (there's already a specific work for) Senior High Student," Gatchalian said.

In terms of promotion, he said hired SHS graduates may consider technical upskilling, or secure college diplomas.

Gatchalian earlier said his proposal is timely considering the target pilot implementation of the revised SHS curriculum for the academic year 2025-2026.



MANILA – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Thursday urged local government units (LGUs) to pre-prepare for the effects of the rainy season as the La Niña phenomenon looms.

In a speech during the distribution of assistance to farmers and fisherfolks affected by El Niño on the Zamboanga Peninsula in Zamboanga City, Marcos said the world is experiencing “extreme weather” brought by climate change, causing extreme heat and later on, extreme rainy season.

“Extreme weather ang nararanasan natin. Matinding init ngayon at sa mga susunod na buwan naman ay asahan natin ang matindi naman na pag-ulan (We are experiencing extreme weather. Now it’s extreme heat, and in the coming months we are anticipating extreme rainy season),” Marcos

GROWTH OF GSIS INSURANCE PREMIUMS UP 12% IN 1Q

The insurance premiums written by the Government Service Insurance System for the first quarter hit Php2.98 billion. This is a 12% increase from Php2.65 billion in premiums from March year-on-year. The GSIS General Insurance has issued 52,644 total policies, with total sum insured amounting to Php798.4 billion.

As of end-March, net income is at Php3.3 billion, marking a 35% increase from Php2.4 billion in first quarter of 2023.

The net worth of the GSIS General Insurance Fund (GIF) for the first quarter of 2024 is up by 7% at Php54.63 billion from Php51.26 billion as of year-end.

GSIS President and General Manager Wick Veloso said “GSIS is aggressively campaigning for the protection of all government insurable assets and interests. We protect the Government’s Budget and individual programs against unexpected insurable losses such as fire, earthquakes and typhoons. And more importantly, we are able to pool long-term funds and

said.

“Kaya naman po, nananawagan ako sa lokal na pamahalaan ng Zamboanga at sa mga karatig-bayan [nito sa] buong rehiyon: Maging handa po kayo sa lahat ng oras. Alamin natin ang pangangailangan ng ating mga nasasakupan at gumawa tayo ng mga programa na tiyak na makakatulong sa ating mga kababayan (That’s why, I am calling on the local government of Zamboanga and its nearby towns, as well as the entire region: Let’s be prepared at all times. Let us attend to the needs of our constituents and devise programs to ensure assistance in times of need),” he added.

La Niña is characterized by cooler sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific which triggers above-average rainfall in the country.

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Last March, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration raised a La Niña Watch as the country deals with the effects of El Niño or extreme drought. The El Niño Task Force has assured that mitigation efforts to cushion the impact of La Niña will be put in place, noting that preparing for the rainy season is among its mandates.

According to the President, some 3.6 million Filipinos have been affected so far by the extreme heat. He added that damage to agriculture has already reached PHP5.9 billion.

Marcos said the national government will assist the affected LGUs as he called the people and sectors to coordinate with the affected local governments to avail of government assistance. (PNA)

37 local officials join Lakas-CMD

Two town mayors, three city and municipal vice mayors, and 32 other local officials on Monday joined Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD).

House Speaker and Lakas-CMD president Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez administered the oath of membership to the new party members. “With unity of purpose, we, together, can fulfill our dream of a better life for our constituents and our people in general,” he added.

Among the new members are Angat Mayor Reynante Bautista, Santa Maria Mayor Bartolome Ramos, Angat Vice Mayor Arvin Agustin, Santa Maria Vice Mayor Pablo Juan, and Malaybalay City Vice Mayor Estelito Marabe.

Bukidnon councilors who joined Lakas-CMD are Niko Aldeguer, Brian Flores, Zoltan Dinlayan, Kathleen Pa-

galing, Royland Orquia, Erwin Damasco, and Alan Legaspi, all of Malaybalay City; Reynard Encarguez, George Ostan, and Vemencita Ocier of Cabanglasan town; Jetaime Gumban, Jonathan Olana, and Xenia Echeminado of Impasugong town; Neil Luardo, Aurora Rubio, and Rogelio Saway of Lantapan town; and Fernando Grafil, Richie Rabago, Benjie Gonzaga, and Dante Dy of the municipality of San Fernando.

Meanwhile, 10 incumbent Bulacan councilors and two former councilors also affiliated themselves with Lakas-CMD.

These are Wil-

galing, Royland Orquia, Erwin Damasco, and Alan Legaspi, all of Malaybalay City; Reynard Encarguez, George Ostan, and Vemencita Ocier of Cabanglasan town; Jetaime Gumban, Jonathan Olana, and Xenia Echeminado of Impasugong town; Neil Luardo, Aurora Rubio, and Rogelio Saway of Lantapan town; and Fernando Grafil, Richie Rabago, Benjie Gonzaga, and Dante Dy of the municipality of San Fernando.

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May 15-21, 2024

Cayetano pushes Virology and Vaccine Institute Bill ahead of Senate deliberation

To fortify the country’s defenses against viral diseases, Senator Alan Peter Cayetano is pushing for a clearer function of a dedicated research laboratory for virology studies and vaccine development.

The independent senator’s initiative is contained in Senate Bill No. 941 or an Act Establishing the Virology and Vaccine Institute of the Philippines. On April 24, 2024, the Senate’s Science and Technology Committee’s subcommittee on the Virology Institute of the Philippines (VIP) will hold its first public hearing on the proposal.

As the committee chairperson, Cayetano is pushing for the reinforcement of the country’s defenses against viral dis-

eases affecting humans, animals, and plants.

“The entire government must, and will, act quickly to address the public health and economic crisis that threatens the lives and livelihood of our kababayan,” he said.

While the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) currently addresses a spectrum of tropical diseases, including viruses, Cayetano emphasized that the VIP bill will streamline research efforts and expertise specifically towards viruses.

“In the event of emergencies, this will also be a handy tool that can be essential in saving lives,” he added.

Once the VIP bill is enacted into law, it will enhance the country’s ca-

capacity to conduct thorough research on new, emerging, and recurring viral diseases, enabling the complete development of vaccines.

In 2020, the emergence of SARS-CoV-2, a novel strain of coronavirus, brought attention to the necessity for virology research and development capabilities. This prompted the 18th Congress to initiate and discuss the VIP bill.

Wednesday’s hearing will delve into the key provisions outlined by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), emphasizing in-depth virology research and partnerships with other laboratories and related institutions.

May 15-21, 2024

Celebrate Mom at SM

Because SM has special treats in store for every SuperMom out there!

Hey SuperFam! Get ready to show some love to the most important woman in your life this Mother’s Day at SM Supermalls.

From May 3 to 19, SM Supermalls nationwide will be rolling out the red carpet for all SuperMoms with a lineup of activities guaranteed to make her feel like the queen she is.



Celebrate Mother’s Day with a feast of sumptuous meals only at Modern Shanghai SM City Santa Rosa

Shared Experience

Sharing experiences is fundamental for strengthening the bond between mothers and their children. Mall and playing at the SM City Santa Rosa’s playscape offer numerous opportunities for these shared experiences. Whether it’s capturing moments at their Instagram-worthy spots or interacting with Roary the Lion while exploring the playscape together, these activities promise a delightful time. Such shared experiences not only create cherished memories but also nurture a deeper sense of closeness and understanding between the children and their supermoms.



Playtime with Mom: Making Memories at the Playscape with Roary

Supermalls

Shop for Mom

Tick off every item on mom’s wish list and make her Mother’s Day unforgettable with the perfect gifts from SM. From fashion to beauty to gadgets, they’ve got everything she’s been dreaming of!



MOM deserves the 'bear' best! Surprise her with our cuddly Beatriz bear – the perfect companion for creating 'pawsitive' MOMents.



Make your gifts extra special with these personalized perfumes and cosmetics.



Treat your moms to a relaxing bundle of vintage humidifier & fragrance blend only from Surplus SM City San Pablo and SM City Santa Rosa



Ensure Wellness for Mom

Pamper your mom with a full day of relaxation and rejuvenation. Treat her to a spa day or a makeover session because she deserves to feel like a million bucks.



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Mother’s Day is unwind, refresh, and pamper yourself kind of day! Treat your mom to a day of pure relaxation with Intensive Body Polish, a soothing Swedish Massage, and a rejuvenating Deep Pore Facial from Bioessence SM City Calamba!

