

CRAFTING DREAMS TOGETHER



Susana Grabillo and her husband proudly displayed their handcrafted bags in their newly constructed concrete home, reflecting their success in every life's challenges.

Susana Grabillo, 55, from Barangay Basiao, Basey, Samar, continues to weave her dreams into a thriving venture with her husband on her side.

Susana started helping her parents at an early age. She initially weaved mats alongside her mother in Saob Cave, while her father worked as a fisherman. Her exposure to weaving from a young age enabled her to develop skills in the craft.

As a child, she was always eager to assist her parents. She began selling various fruits in their barangay, which helped her buy school supplies.

In 1979, Susana's family relocated to

Manila where they made a living selling eggs. Despite the challenges, she completed her elementary and high school education. In 1994, she took a six-month vocational sewing course in a facility in Pasay.

"I persevered in learning sewing because I have bigger dreams for myself and my family. I know I can do more," she said.

Susana got a job at a sewing factory in Taguig soon after receiving her certificate, then to Sucat after six months. She eventually settled in Makati, where she spent many years sewing dresses for dolls. During this time, she met her now

husband, who had been a tricycle driver in Manila.

The couple decided to get married in 1996 and settled in Pasay to start their own family. They lived there for years before moving back to Samar in 2001. They resided with her in-laws until they could build their own house.

"My brother-in-law loaned us PHP 1,500, which we used as capital to raise native pigs in 2006. We began with a sow and sold the piglets. For two years, this provided for our family's needs," Susana said.

Due to the challenges of pig farming, Susana transitioned to cooking and selling pancakes

and ice candy in a school close to their home while her husband worked as a helper in a handicrafts factory. Her husband gradually learned the weaving himself just by observing.

They got inspired to start a handicraft business as it was easy for Susana to learn weaving with her skills in sewing. In 2012, with just PHP 700.00, they began crafting slippers and coin purses from tikog grass. Over time, their product line grew to woven bags, baskets, and mats.

"My husband became my business partner. He would sketch product ideas, and I would figure out how to bring them to life. This is how

we expanded our weaving skills and knowledge," Susana said.

Their business was thriving until typhoon Yolanda struck in 2013. All their products and weaving materials were destroyed, including their home. During this time they received support from NGOs and CARD Bank, a microfinance-oriented rural bank they had been a client since 2011.

"Even before Yolanda struck, CARD Bank supported my business. I frequently applied for loans to add to our capital. After Yolanda, I again utilized my loans to purchase materials and restart," she said.

They slowly regained their strength to start again, setting up a small hut to display a few handicrafts they made. Fortunately, they found buyers from Manila, Davao, and Cebu. They also seized the opportunity to bring their handicrafts to Manila and participate in trade fairs, further expanding their customer base.

The pandemic in 2020 posed no hindrance to them as orders continued to flow. With her husband by her side, they continued weaving in their small hut until they were

able to rebuild a concrete house in 2022.

"We are immensely thankful to CARD Bank because, without the loans they provided, we wouldn't have been able to sustain our handicraft business. They also opened up greater opportunities for us; now we are suppliers to Mga Likha Ni Inay," Susana expressed gratefully. MLNI is a member institution of CARD MRI that aims to support microfinance clients in marketing locally made products.

Susana's coin purses and laptop bags are now available at the Mga Likha Ni Inay store, providing a new way to introduce their product to more customers.

Currently, Susana has an existing loan of PHP 50,000 at CARD Bank, Inc., and plans to apply for a bigger loan in the future to further expand her business.

For Susana, maintaining hope and resilience during uncertain times is crucial. Despite facing numerous challenges in life, she persevered with her dream, and her determination has been rewarded with a thriving venture.



CAVITE CITY NAGDEKLARA NG STATE OF CALAMITY

'CALABARZONE' MOBILE APP TO BE LAUNCHED BY DOT-REGION 4A



STA. ROSA, Laguna (PIA) – Department of Tourism (DOT)-Region 4A Director Marites Castro announced the launch of the CALABARZONE mobile application, a tool designed to enhance the tourist experience in Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon (CALABARZON) by providing easy access to information about the region's attractions for local and international tourists.

This announcement was made during the seventh episode of Kapihan sa Bagong Pilipinas on July 9, along with Castro's report regarding the significant increase of the region's overnight tourists from 6,086,430 in 2022 to 9,505,849 (56 percent increase) and same-day tourists from 55,884,948 in 2022 to 112,517,404 in 2023 (101 percent increase).

With continuous technological innovation and a steadfast commitment to excellence, DOT touts the readiness of CALABARZON to welcome more visitors for years to come and remain a premier destination for tourists from around the country and worldwide. "CALABARZON is very accessible. Our road networks are excellent, and the travel time is fast. We offer various destinations, all of which are stunning, and you will never regret visiting the CALABARZON area," said Castro.

"The Department of Tourism is really keen to

support this Bagong Pilipinas program, which is why we are participating in all of the undertakings of the Bagong Pilipinas program, whether it be [tourism] fairs, governance, or policy [directives], so we can help our countrymen. We also want the CALABARZON region to be more progressive through governance down to our local government units," Castro added.

Some of the most popular destinations in the region are Sky Ranch and Picnic Grove in Tagaytay City (Cavite), Holy Sepulchre Shrine in San Pedro City (Laguna), and the National Shrine of Padre Pio in Sto. Tomas City (Batangas), Antipolo Cathedral (Rizal), and Kamay ni Hesus in Lucban (Quezon). (PIA-Laguna)

DENR CALABARZON HIGHLIGHTS ACHIEVEMENTS AT KAPIHAN SA BAGONG PILIPINAS

ANGKAS AWARENESS REACHES NATIONWIDE: TRANSFORMS STIGMA INTO OPPORTUNITY AS FILIPINOS SUPPORT FORMALIZING HABAL-HABAL

DTI-LAGUNA AND DOLE CONDUCT SEMINAR ON FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: BASIC ACCOUNTING AND BOOKKEEPING



Calamba City — With a collaborative effort to empower trade unions, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) under the Workers' Organization Development Program (WODP) conducted training about Financial Management: Basic Accounting and Bookkeeping, which took place at Hotel Marciano, Calamba City, Laguna, on June 11, 2024.

A total of forty (40) trade union members from different companies across Laguna participated in the said activity. The topic on Financial Management: Basic Accounting and Bookkeeping was discussed by Mr. Kent Arvin Cainto, Negosyo Center Business Coun-

sellor at DTI-Laguna. He started the training with an energizer to prepare and help participants be more alert and active followed by insights about accounting and bookkeeping.

After the introduction on what accounting and bookkeeping is, Cainto discussed financial recording and financial statements. He shared the importance of familiarity with the uses of account titles, record keeping and its benefits, forms that can be used for recording (i.e., cashbook, sales on credit, and purchase on credit), as well as different useful financial statements (i.e., balance sheet or statement of financial position, income statement, and cash flow statement).

Within the discussion, he further incor-

porated two activities: first is to show how important recording is for a business and the benefits of practicing it and second is a group activity providing a practice set on a small business recording on a daily basis with a simple computation.

Moreover, Negosyo Center Business Counsellor Kim Carlo Palacio talked about Consumer Education, which gave the trade unions knowledge on their rights and obligations as consumers. This is also part of DTI-Laguna's mission to empower consumers.

This activity is part of the initiative of DTI-Laguna's ongoing commitment to give consumer and business information to Laguna's entrepreneurs, both potential and existing (KADCainto, DTI-Laguna).

CONCEPCION LAUDS GOVT RECOGNITION OF OUT-STANDING MSMES



Go Negosyo Founder & ASEAN Advisory Council Philippines Chair, Joey Concepcion

Government recognition and encouragement are essential to the growth of MSMEs, said MSME Development Council Vice Chair and Go Negosyo founder Joey Concepcion, as President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is set to lead the Presidential Awards for Outstanding MSMEs 2024 this July 10, 2024 at ceremonies to be held at Malacañang Palace.

"When the Presi-

dent himself giving importance to MSMEs by recognizing the outstanding ones, this just emphasizes just how critical their role is in achieving our goal to become an upper-middle income nation," said Concepcion. MSMEs account for almost all of the enterprises in the country and generate more than half of the jobs for Filipinos.

Concepcion will join the President and Department of Trade and

Industry Sec. Alfredo Pascual in awarding two outstanding MSMEs. There will be one Presidential Awardee for the Small Enterprise Category, and one from the Medium Enterprise Category, all chosen from shortlisted finalists coming from the island groups of Northern Luzon, Southern Luzon (including NCR), Visayas, and Mindanao.

"The story of these finalists proved just

how important it is for MSMEs to have access to money, markets and mentoring in order for them to scale up," said Concepcion, adding how the programs of Go Negosyo, the non-profit he founded more than 18 years ago to encourage entrepreneurship among Filipinos, revolve around providing MSMEs access to these three pillars.

"For MSMEs to fully realize their potential to power the economy, we must enable them to scale up: to help the micro become small, the small become medium, and the medium enterprises to join the ranks of the country's large corporations," he said.

In addition to the Outstanding MS-

MEs, there will also be an awarding for the 2024 Presidential Recognition for Outstanding Development Partners. The five recipients of the award were chosen for having programs that improve business climate, access to finance, markets, technology and innovation, and management/labor capacities of MSMEs.

The Presidential Awards for Outstanding MSMEs is organized by the DTI and the MSME Development Council to give recognition to and celebrate exceptional MSMEs

across various sectors; inspire and motivate other aspiring entrepreneurs by showcasing successful models; and promote the importance

of digitalization and innovation, sustainable practices, and social responsibility within the MSME community.

The grant of the awards is pursuant to the Magna Carta for MSMEs, or RA 9501. The winners will receive a trophy and plaque, and cash prize from Go Negosyo.

Only one hundred percent Filipino-owned and duly registered MSMEs are eligible for the awards. The board of judges is chaired by DTI Sec. Pascual, and the winners were chosen based on market development; technology and innovation; human resource development; sustainability; community linkages and environmental impact; and financial management.



100 HEALTH AND FITNESS TIPS

1. **Eat a healthy breakfast.**
Eating breakfast starts your day off on the right foot and gives you fuel for the day that will help you make better food decisions throughout the day.
2. **Get moving.**
Walk where you can, whenever you can. Walk to a co-worker's desk instead of sending an email. Take a lap around the block. You don't have to take long or intense walks, but try to add a few more steps to your day.
3. **Find a workout buddy.**
It may not be for everyone, but for a lot of people, having a buddy to meet for workouts helps with accountability and enjoyability. If your friends' workout schedules don't work with yours, check out our small group training and group exercise options.
4. **Make it easier to get a full night's sleep.**
Blocking out unwanted noise, keeping your room cooler and making sure your bedroom is dark enough are all ways to help perfect your sleeping environment.
5. **Play with your pet.**
Your furry friend does a great job of reducing stress in your life, and reducing stress in your life makes it easier to keep your fitness goals. Also, putting effort into playtime with your pet may be a great way to get your MEPs for the day!
6. **Spend time with positive people.**
When getting started with a new habit or lifestyle change, it's important to surround yourself with people who support you and can give you encouragement. Make plans with your support system this week to absorb some positivity.
7. **Review your MYZONE app/emails.**
Seeing what you have accomplished will keep you motivated, allow you to see your progress and keep you focused on your goals.
8. **Make food changes slowly.**
Don't try to change everything at once! Instead of making drastic changes all at once, make a few small adjustments every week or month to help you get where you want to be. Try a new food or modify the proportions you eat, and let your body acclimate between changes.
9. **Eight (8-ounce) cups of water a day.**
The amount of water each person needs can vary, but eight cups a day is a good rule of thumb (possibly more depending on your activity level). With all the MYZONE workouts you'll be completing, be sure to stay hydrated!
10. **Start your day off with positive thoughts.**
What are you looking forward to? What fun or exciting things may happen today? We're not telling you to forget any negative or worrisome things you are dealing with in your life, just remind yourself of the things that can and do give you a sense of calm or put a smile on your face. For those interested, we also offer meditation classes at the Staenberg Family Complex as part of our group exercise schedule! Join us on Fridays at 7am.

CAVITE...

Nagdeklara na ng State of Calamity ang pamahalaang lungsod ng Cavite matapos ang sunog na naganap sa Barangay 5 at 7 noong Hulyo 14. Sa kanilang Resolution No. 2024-094, inaprubahan ng Sangguniang Panlungsod ang rekomendasyon ang deklarasyon ng State of Calamity at ang awtorisasyon ng paggamit ng Quick Response Fund (QRF) para sa relief operations para sa mga apektadong pamilya.

Alinsunod sa Memo Order No. 04 series

Angkas....

Angkas has come a long way in shaping and changing public perception about motorcycle taxis (MC Taxis). The company's efforts have not only increased awareness but have also created significant advocacy that has led to the industry's success. According to WR Numero, a leading research firm in the Philippines, awareness of Angkas is notably high, with 48% of Filipinos recognizing the brand. Furthermore, the study reveals that 45% of Filipino participants now use habal-habal for transportation, with 14% reporting regular usage and 11% using it two to four times weekly.

A recently published study by WR Numero reveals that 58% of Filipinos "agree with or strongly support" the legitimization of habal-habal, an unregulated motorcycle transport service. Additionally, 78% of Filipinos consider having an advocate in Congress essential, underscoring the significance of MC Taxis in the lives of Filipino commuters. The WR Numero Philippine Public Opinion Monitor, a pioneering and innovative public opinion research initiative, surveyed individuals 18 years and older nationwide regarding habal-habal. These findings highlight Angkas' instrumental role in bringing nationwide awareness and advocacy for the motorcycle taxi industry.

Since its inception in 2016, Angkas has tirelessly worked to dispel

of 1998 ng National Disaster Coordinating Council, idinedeklara ang State of Calamity sa isang lugar kung dalawa (2) o higit pang mga barangay ang naapektuhan ng kalamidad.

Kinakailangan ring makapagpasa ng resolusyon ang local Sanggunian para sa deklarasyon ng State of Calamity sa loob ng 24 oras. Isusumite ang kopya nito sa Regional Disaster Coordinating Council at National Disaster Coordinating Council. | via Cavite Press Corps, DILG

DENR...

In the eighth episode of Kapihan sa Bagong Pilipinas, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Region IV-A shared its accomplishments and ongoing projects aligned with their mandate to conserve, manage, develop and ensure the proper use of the region's environment and natural resources.

DENR 4A Calabarzon Regional Executive Director Nilo B. Tamoria presented the region's accomplishments from 2022 to 2024, along with Mines and Geosciences Bureau Calabarzon Regional Director Edgardo Castillo and Environment and Management Bureau Regional Director Robert Angelo Metin.

Some of the most significant points discussed include:

- Improvement of the DENR Calabarzon's Geospacial Database as part of the effort of the regional department for digitalization which include digital elevation models, roster and vector data,

50,000 motorcycle drivers have been lifted out of poverty through Angkas, thanks to Royeca's biker welfare initiatives like reliable loan programs, benefits, and incentives that formalized the once-informal habal-habal sector.

Royeca's dedication to the motorcycle taxi industry and his advocacy efforts have paved the way for significant developments. The strong support (58%) for legitimizing habal-habal riders underscores the success of Royeca and Angkas in advocating for the inclusion of the informal sector in the country's labor force and in offering commuters a safe, quick, and comfortable transport experience. Currently, Congress is working on regulatory



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digital maps, environment and natural resources datasets where information is used for crafting decision, policies and administrative order.

- Adapt drone and advance remote sensing techniques to monitor land vegetation improvements, forest cover status, land cover updates and land-use strengths.
- Development of 3D Flood Simulation and Maps used on Forest Land Used Plan (FLUP) Formulation.

- Support for the new water sources projects including the New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam Project and Upper Wawa Dam by enhancing water security and reliability in response to the national government's call to address Metro Manila's growing water supply demands and augment the regions water supply.
- Launching of Project TRANSFORM which aims to streamline efforts against climate change.

via MO, TJZP, JM; PIA4A

laws for MC Taxis, structured according to the TWG's recommendations. Royeca and Angkas' belief in habal-habal riders has paved the way for this historic development in the local transport industry.

Angkas' success in reaching nationwide consciousness and creating awareness and advocacy has been pivotal in the motorcycle taxi industry's growth. George Royeca's leadership and relentless advocacy have made him a champion of the industry and the 18 million-strong motorcycle rider community. Together, Angkas and George Royeca continue to drive forward the industry, ensuring a brighter future for millions of motorcycle riders across the Philippines.

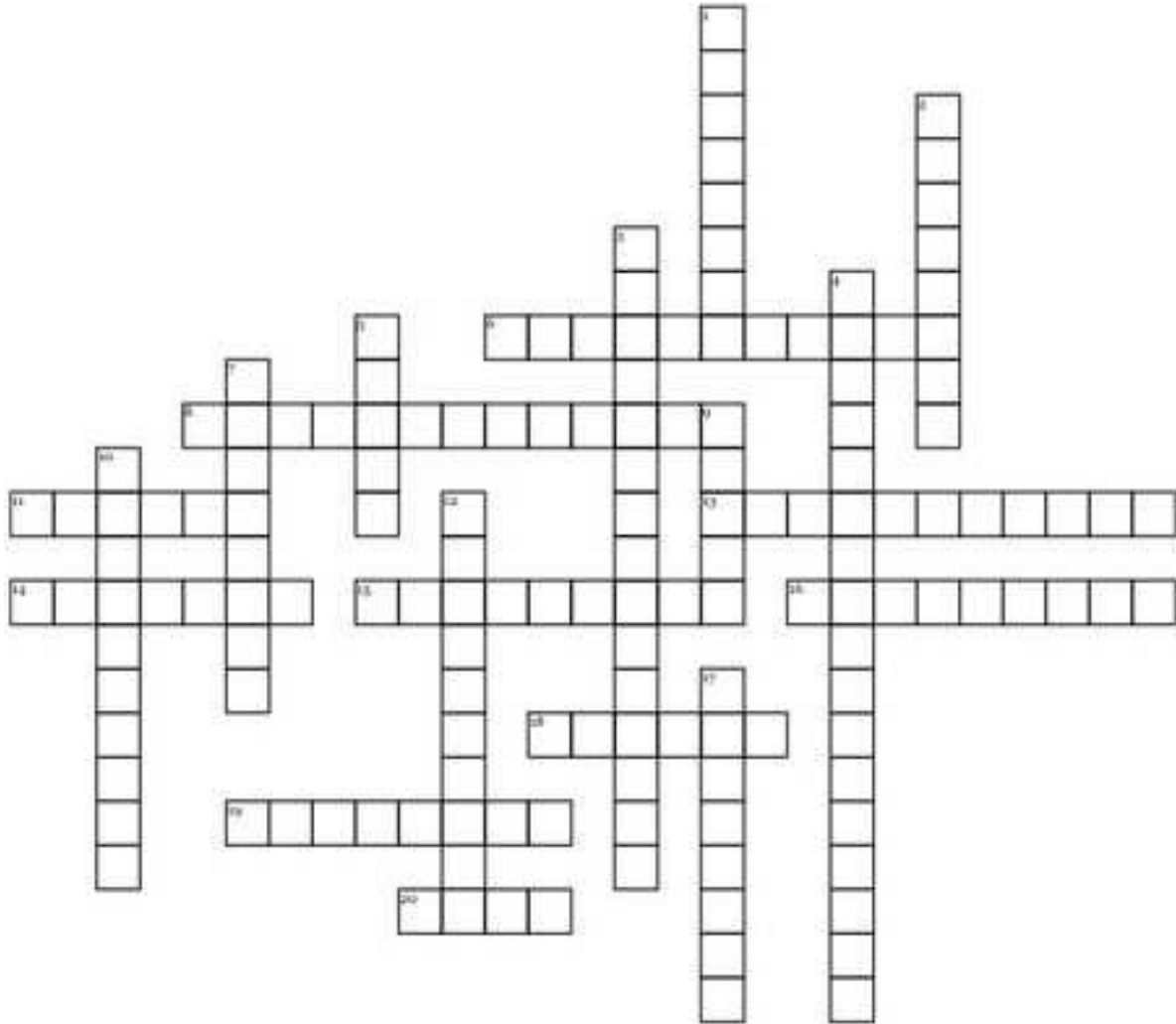
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SODOKU

2			6		5
		6		1	2
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3		4			6
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Disney Movie Titles



Across

- 6. He has a lucky fin.
- 8. Wants to be where the people are.
- 11. Do you wanna build a Snowman.
- 13. Just a Snap and the Job is a game.
- 14. Can Fly on a Magic Carpet.
- 15. Wants to be a Real Boy.

16. Has Poisonous Apples

18. Raised By Aps.

19. Wants to Be one of the Gods

20. Wants to win a Piston Cup.

Down

- 1. Off to Never land!
- 2. Infinity and Beyond
- 3. shared a plate of spaghetti.

4. Falls in Love with a Monster

5. One of China's greatest heroines.

7. hakuna matata

9. Can fly with his ears

10. Native Princess

12. Leaves a Glass Slipper Behind

17. Has Magic Glowing Hair

Rx

MIRROR, MIRROR

PRESCRIPTIONS

Just as we cannot see our own faces without looking into a mirror, we cannot know ourselves without looking into our soul. -ANONYMOUS

I USE A MORROR TO SEE MYSELF, but the mirror reflects only the image I can see with all its imperfections. I'm sure that somewhere God is laughing at me, she laughs she sees more than I do. She can see through me. As I turn away from the mirror, for the first time I see myself, my essence, and my beauty reflected in God's eyes.

Soulution of the Day :
Reflected on the fact that you are much more than physical being you see in the mirror: stop judging and become a perfectly imperfect human being.

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KASPERSKY HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR ENHANCED CYBERSECURITY IN SCHOOLS, UNIVERSITIES

Kaspersky, a global cybersecurity and digital privacy company, emphasized the urgent need for stronger cybersecurity measures in schools and universities in the Philippines ahead of the new school year.

This call to action comes as schools and universities prepare for the opening of classes for school year 2024-2025, which will begin on July 29 and end on April 15, 2025.

Yeo Siang Tiong, General Manager for Southeast Asia at Kaspersky emphasized that educational institutions in the Philippines must prioritize cybersecurity to protect their community's privacy and sensitive information against the increasing number of cyber threats.

"By taking proactive measures, schools and universities can protect their students and staff, and ensure a safe learning environment," Yeo added.

Earlier this year, Romblon State University, a state university in the Philippines, fell victim to

Gatchalian is confident that President Marcos will heed mounting call to ban POGOs

Senator Win Gatchalian said he is confident that President Marcos will eventually heed mounting calls to expel from the country all Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGOs) which have become a source of various criminalities including human trafficking, torture, and online scams.

The senator said he hopes to hear the President make such a declaration during his State of the Nation Address on Monday, July 22.

"Naging mas malinaw sa atin na mas maraming masasamang dulot ang pananatili ng mga POGO sa bansa kasabay ng mga pinakahul-

a significant data breach perpetrated by a group known as 'DeathNote Hacker Philippines', which resulted in the theft of personal information belonging to both students and faculty members.

Likewise, the Philippines is currently one of the most vulnerable nations to cyberattacks. In 2023, Kaspersky detected 1.5 million local threats, prevented 4.62 million brute-force attacks, and successfully blocked 15,312 ransomware attacks targeting organizations within the country.

To safeguard sensitive information and maintain a secure environment, Kaspersky recommended several critical actions for schools and universities. These include the utilization of advanced threat detection systems to monitor network activities and identify potential cyber threats in real-time, as well as the conduct of compromise assessment and perform regular security audits to identify and address vulnerabilities within the institution's IT

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OVP to prioritize assistance in underserved areas

MANILA — The Office of the Vice President (OVP) will prioritize underserved areas alongside assistance to teachers nationwide.

"Hinahanap natin iyong mga underserved na areas doon sa iba't ibang satellite offices natin. Syempre nandyan pa rin iyong para sa kababaihan, para sa kabataan, at para sa LGBT (Lesbian, Gays, Bisexual, Transgender), and senior citizens natin (We are looking for the underserved areas in different various satellite offices. Of course, there's the [programs] for women, for the youth, for the LGBT, and our senior citizens," Vice President Sara Duterte said in a media interview on Thursday.

She said they are planning to launch another program called "Lawyers for Teachers" under OVP.

"Ngayon na hindi na hati ang oras ko sa dalawang opisina, iniisip namin na magbibigay kami, iyong hindi ko naga-wa sa (Now that my time is no longer divided between two offices, we think we

will give what I haven't done in the) Department of Education, the legal assistance for teachers," Duterte added.

In September 2023, Duterte entered into an agreement with the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and the Public Attorney's Office (PAO) to ensure the welfare and legal assistance to teachers serving during the Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections (BSKE).

The agreement covered teachers with election offenses or administrative charges through free access to PAO's free legal assistance, including counsel with no appearance fees.

Duterte also vowed to continue the existing OVP programs including Magnegosyo ta Day, Libreng Sakay (free rides) services, Pagbabago advocacy campaign, and other OVP programs launched during the time of former VP Noli de Castro, particularly the medical and burial assistance.

Duterte resigned as secretary of Education effective July 19. President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. appointed Senator

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Sonny Angara to take the helm of the Department of Education.

She also resigned from her position as the vice chair of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC).

The Vice President, meanwhile, said one of the officials who resigned from DepEd will join her in the OVP.

"Mayroong isang assistant secretary na sama siya sa akin sa Office of the Vice President. Magkasama kami sa trabaho (One of the assistant secretaries will join me in the OVP. We've been working together) since 2007," she said, without naming the assistant secretary.

Earlier, five DepEd officials tendered their resignations. They are Undersecretary and Spokesperson Michael Poa, Undersecretary for Administration Nolasco Mempin, Assistant Secretary Sunshine Fajarda, Assistant Secretary for Procurement Reynold Munsayac, and Assistant Secretary for Administration Noel Baluyan. (PNA)

REMULLA TO RALLYISTS: KEEP IT PEACEFUL

MANILA — Justice Secretary Jesus Crispin Remulla on Friday reminded protesters to remain peaceful in demonstrations and avoid directing violence on innocent persons.

"The State unconditionally respects the right of the people to peaceably assemble and petition the government for redress of their grievances. However, in the name of justice and fair play, this right must end once the right of others begins," Remulla said in a statement.

He issued the statement following an incident where a Department of Justice (DOJ) security guard sustained a head injury after being

attacked by rallyists.

On Thursday, Bayan Timog Katagalugan and other groups rushed to the DOJ main office in Ermita, Manila to express their supposed dissent over the government's handling of the case of Bayan Laguna member Elizabeth Camoral, who was arrested during the infamous "Bloody Sunday" incident last year.

Remulla said the DOJ will go "all-out" in supporting the injured security guard and his family until justice is served.

In a separate statement, DOJ spokesperson and Assistant Secretary Jose Dominic Clavano IV urged rallyists to avoid the rage rhetoric culture in protests.

"Understand what your true reason and motive why you are demonstrating, drop the anger and violence; let's talk peacefully, convince rather than coerce," he said. (PNA)



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EDITORIAL: Fake Filipinos

Alarm bells should be ringing wildly by now after the recent revelation of the National Bureau of Investigation that nearly 1,200 fake birth certificates were issued to Chinese nationals from 2016 to 2019.

These documents were reportedly all processed by the civil registry of Sta. Cruz town in Davao del Sur.

This development has prompted lawmakers of the House of Representatives to call on the chamber's leadership to probe the matter as soon as possible following reports that a Chinese national was recently arrested after applying for a passport in Davao City using a falsified document.

The NBI in Region 11 said the arrest was made after the Department of Foreign Affairs called the bureau's attention to a 21-year-old Chinese male who gave contradictory statements about his identity in the course of applying for a passport.

According to Davao Oriental Rep. Cheeno Miguel Almario, a birth certificate is not something that can be easily given, fabricated, or bought.

"Filipinos are not for sale. There should be no fake Filipino," he pointed out.

"We must understand that a birth certificate is more than just a document. It symbolizes a Filipino's connection to their (sic) country. It is the first official document that every Filipino receives as birthright, establishing official tie to the nation," he said. We agree.

The proposed investigation in aid of legislation seeks to further strengthen the legislative framework to ensure rigorous verification processes are in place for the issuance of birth certificates.

This could include reviewing the span of control of local civil registries, implementing more robust checks and balances, and imposing severe penalties on those found guilty to be facilitating fraud.

Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian had earlier bared what appears to be a fake birth certificate racket costing Chinese nationals P300,000.

Once they get the fake birth certificate, they can then apply for a passport and a driver's license, making them full-fledged Filipino citizens entitled to enjoy the protection of their rights by the State.

According to the senator, the reported 200 falsified birth certificates in Santa Cruz, Davao del Sur is "very concerning" as it may indicate a syndicate is actively issuing valid Philippine documents to Chinese nationals.

There's a possibility, he said, that these erring individuals are within the Philippine Statistics Authority itself or the local government of Santa Cruz.

The senator surmised that reports of fake birth certificates obtained by Chinese nationals could be another case similar to embattled Bamban Mayor Alice Guo, whose birth certificate, per the Philippine Statistics Authority, is "irregular," and, therefore, the Davao del Sur case has already created 200 Alice Guos.

The senator has emphasized the need to review the entire process for applying for a birth certificate.

This is a laudable move by the senator as falsified Philippine birth certificates could pose a threat to our national security via espionage and economic sabotage, and a tool for criminal activities like identity theft, human trafficking and smuggling that could also endanger the lives and welfare of Filipino citizens.

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Guo in no position to tell lawmakers what issues to prioritize — Chiz



MANILA — Suspended Bamban Mayor Alice Guo is in no place to tell lawmakers what issues to prioritize after she suggested that Senators Risa Hontiveros and Sherwin Gatchalian focus their efforts on other issues, Senate President Francis Escudero said.

Guo, who has been issued a Senate arrest warrant, issued a statement Thursday, saying Hontiveros, Gatchalian, and other offices seemed "fixated" on her case.

She told the senators that instead of "threatening her with arrest and accusing" her of complicity in Philippine Overseas Gaming Operators (POGO) crimes, they should focus their attention on "many critical issues such as national security, poverty, unemployment, food shortage, health care delivery, environmental degradation, and human rights violations."

"Karapatan niya (na sabihin) iyon pero para sa akin wala siya sa lugar pagsabihan sinumang miyembro ng Senado kung ano ang prayoridad sa isip nila at ano ang dapat nilang hindi maging prayoridad (She has the right to say that but for me she is in no position to tell any member of the Senate what issues they should and shouldn't prioritize)," Escudero said in a press conference Friday.

He said Guo is entitled to defend herself amid the allegations against her but said the Senate is equally obligated to protect the interest of the Filipinos by conducting public hearings.

"Hindi ma-ikakaila na siya kung tingin niya may obligasyon siya na pangalagaan at protektahan ang sarili niya. Kami rin meron kaming obligasyon at trabaho na pangalagaan at protektahan ang interes ng sambayanan

linked to the operations of a POGO hub in the Tarlac town which was recently raided by the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Commission and the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group for violation of human trafficking laws and serious illegal detention.

The Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations, and Gender Equality cited in contempt and ordered an arrest warrant against Guo and seven others for refusing to attend the hearing into the POGOs.

Escudero said he has ordered the Office of the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms to coordinate with law enforcement agencies to help track the mayor, Sheila Leal Guo, Wesley Leal Guo, Jian Zhong

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SSS WARNS PUBLIC VS. FAKE TEXT ALERTS



MANILA — The Social Security System (SSS) on Thursday warned the public against text providing claims updates.

Normita Doctor, SSS Senior Vice President for Member Services and Support Group, said the agency has been receiving reports from members who get text alerts, instructing them to click a link to avoid expiration of contribution payments or to register to My.SSS.

"Do not click the link in the message of these fake text alerts. It will lead to a phishing site that will steal personal information such as SS numbers and login credentials from My.SSS account," Doctor said in an advisory.

Recipients of such text alerts could "easily identify" scam messages by checking the sender details, she said.

"The SMS sender should be 'SSS' and the official SSS website is www.sss.gov.ph. If it is an unidentified mobile number, it is a text message from scammers purposely

Doctor said victims could help law enforcement agencies in filing a case against text scammers with the assistance of the SSS SID by sending an email at fid@sss.gov.ph or by calling at (02) 89247370. (PNA)

Guo, Seimen Guo, the mayor's suspected mother Wen Yi Lin and Dennis Cunanan.

Escudero reminded Guo that the Senate warrant is to ensure that she attends the next Senate inquiry, not to jail or punish her.

"May prinsipyo sa batas na (There is a legal principle that says) flight is evidence of guilt," he said.

"Ang kawalan ng

sent to deceive its receiver," she said.

To keep My.SSS accounts from being compromised and used in fraudulent activities, Doctor told the recipients of fake text alerts not to share their SSS number, usernames, passwords and other login details of accounts.

The SSS Special Investigation Department has investigated the reported incidents and has submitted a "text scam complaint" containing the fake text alerts to the National Telecommunications Commission.

Victims of text scammers are advised to report directly to the Philippine National Police's Anti-Cybercrime Group and the National Bureau of Investigation's Cybercrime Division.

Doctor said victims could help law enforcement agencies in filing a case against text scammers with the assistance of the SSS SID by sending an email at fid@sss.gov.ph or by calling at (02) 89247370. (PNA)

kagustuhang sumuko at boluntaryong magpakita at sumagot sa mga simpleng katanungan, bagaman hindi siya pinupwersang umamin, ay pagpapakita na marahil ay may tinatago siya, may iniwasan siya at merong mga katanungan na ayaw sagutin (The lack of interest to voluntarily appear and answer questions, although she is not being forced to answer, shows that she might be hiding something)," he added. (PNA)



Cluster ng mga magmamais sa Laguna pinalalakas ng DA 4A sa merkado sa tulong ng AECA



Tinipon ng Department of Agriculture IV-CALABARZON (DA-4A) ang isang cluster ng mga magmamais sa Laguna, ang Calamba Upland Farmers' Multi-Purpose Cooperative (CUFAMCO) upang palakasin ang kanilang pagnenegosyo sa tulong ng Agro-Entrepreneurship Clustering Approach (AECA) na isinusulong ng Farm and Fisheries Clustering and Consolidation (F2C2) Program katuwang ang Jolibee Group Foundation.

Ang AECA ay isang proseso ng pagtuturo sa mga magsasaka ng mga estratehiya sa pagnenegosyo upang makapag-suplay sa mas malalaking mamimili gaya ng Jolibee Group Foundation. Mula sa pagiging produuser, layon nitong gawing negosyante ang mga magsasaka na nakasentro sa clustering at consolidation.

Kaugnay nito, noong ika-17 ng Hulyo

ay kinapanayam ng F2C2 ang CUFAMCO para sa ikalawang hakbang nila sa AECA kung saan sinimulan nang buuin ang kanilang production module at cluster supply plan na naglalaman ng plano ng kanilang produksyon ng ipinagmamalaking dilaw na mais.

Inaasahan na sa ikatlong hakbang ng cluster para sa AECA ay haharap sila sa mga nasabing mamimili upang ipresenta ang dami ng kayang isulay ng CUFAMCO. ##### (Danica T. Daluz, DA-4A RAFIS)

LIMCOMA Multipurpose Cooperative at Luntian Feedmill para sa feeds, at Prifood Corporation kung saan ipoproceso ang kanilang mais para mag-ing tsitsirya.

Inaasahan na sa ikatlong hakbang ng cluster para sa AECA ay haharap sila sa mga nasabing mamimili upang ipresenta ang dami ng kayang isulay ng CUFAMCO. ##### (Danica T. Daluz, DA-4A RAFIS)

GSIS COMMITS TO ENSURING AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR GOV'T WORKERS

MANILA – The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) has expressed commitment to improving housing for government workers, as it ensures that affordable housing programs are available to public servants.

In an interview over PTV's Pre-SONA Special, GSIS President and General Manager Jose Arnulfo Veloso explained that the recently launched housing initiative "Maginghawang Pabahay sa Bagong Pilipinas" aims to address the housing needs of government employees, as directed by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.

"Kapag makita mo ang ating mga kasamahan sa gobyerno at sila

ay walang matinong natitirahan, mabigat sa puso sapagkat kapag umuulan, tumutulo ang mga bubong at sila ay naninilbihan nang tapat sa ating gobyerno. Dapat mabigyan natin ng kaukulang ginhawa (When you see our colleagues in the government and they don't have a decent place to stay in, it is heavy on the heart because when it rains, the roofs leak and they serve our government faithfully. We should give them the appropriate comfort)," he said.

Veloso noted that the program addresses the challenges government employees face, especially those in the lower salary grade level who could not afford hefty down payments.

The "Magingha-

wang Pabahay sa Bagong Pilipinas" program features a rent-to-own scheme with no down payment, allowing monthly payments that can be extended up to 25 years.

There will be an option to have a next of kin as a co-borrower for those nearing retirement age who will continue the payment later.

Veloso said that since the program launch last Monday, the agency has received 1,000 queries about the program.

He said the GSIS has identified more than 3,000 housing units in Bulacan, with plans to improve existing properties and offer options for renovation.

Meanwhile, another GSIS initiative is the

Lease with Option to Buy program that allows the renter to own the property through the Pag-Ibig Fund.

The program, Veloso said, is open to those working in the private sector and the government and has already benefited more than 2,500 person.

He also discussed plans for future developments and renovations of GSIS properties that aim to provide government workers with dignified housing solutions.

He cited the GSIS vacant properties and empty lots, such as those in Fairview in Quezon City and Cogeo in Antipolo, Rizal, which are being developed to become government housing. (PNA)



Senators seek Marcos' backing on POGO ban



MANILA – Senator Sherwin Gatchalian is hoping President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. would back calls to expel Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGOs) and make a declaration in his State of the Nation Address (SONA) on Monday.

In a news release on Friday, Gatchalian said POGOs are a source of various criminal activities, including human trafficking, torture and online scams.

"Naging mas malinaw sa atin na mas maraming masasamang dulot ang pananatili ng mga POGO sa bansa kasabay ng mga pinakahulung pangyayari. Alam kong hindi ito lingid sa Pangulo at may kumpiyansa akong nakikinig siya sa gusto ng nakararami na patalsikin

na ang mga POGO sa bansa (It became clear that POGOs' negative effects outweigh the benefits. I know that the President knows this and I am confident that he is listening to the mounting calls to expel POGO from the country)," he said.

Given that the country's economic managers as well as law enforcement agencies are in favor of banning POGOs, Gatchalian is optimistic that the Chief Executive would eventually consider the adoption of such a policy.

The chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means had already filed a bill calling to ban POGOs.

At a recent public hearing on the bill, representatives of the Department of Finance, National Economic and Development Authority, Philippine National Police, Bureau of Immigration, and the Department of Labor and Employment, among others, supported the ban.

Gatchalian, meanwhile, commended business and socio-civic groups for also agreeing with the proposed ban.

Among these organizations are the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Alyansa Agrikultura, Makati Business Club, Management Association of the Philippines, Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines, Foundation for Economic Freedom, University of the Philippines School of Economics Alumni Association, Institute of Corporate Directors and Justice Reform Initiative.

"I am delighted to learn that major business groups in the country support our advocacy to ban POGOs in the country in line with the position taken by our economic managers," Gatchalian said.

"I hope the President will listen to the growing clamor and make the appropriate decision," he added.

The groups pointed out that allowing POGOs to continue operating in the country could hinder economic growth and discourage investors.

They added that the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation and the government should create credible alternative employment opportunities for those

who will be affected by the closures of POGO companies.

Decisive action Senator Juan Miguel Zubiri, in a separate statement, said he likewise wants to hear Marcos address the issue of POGOs in his SONA.

"[T]he issue of POGOs requires decisive action. The industry has been plagued by criminal activities and the social costs far outweigh the revenues," he said.

"It is time for a clear policy on POGOs, whether it involves an immediate ban or a phased transition to other industries for affected workers," he added.

In addition, Zubiri looks forward to hearing how the administration plans to bring down inflation, ensure food security, boost local agricultural production, support farmers and reduce reliance on imports.

He also touched on the need to discuss wage hike to help Filipinos cope with the rising prices of goods.

"Finally, as a sen-

ator and a former Senate President, I look forward to the President's legislative agenda, which we will consider and support as part of our six-member bloc in the Senate," he said.

Zubiri's group includes senators Nancy Binay, Joel Villanueva, Loren Legarda and Gatchalian.

Sonny Angara was a member but has assumed the top post at the Department of Education effective Friday.

Binay said their group is still undecided whether to join the majority or the minority bloc.

She clarified that their group will not be a hindrance to the present leadership but they will be very critical during the deliberations.

"We are an independent bloc kasi noong time ni Sen. Migz (Zubiri), sina Sen. Pia considered sila na independent (because during the time of Sen. Migz [as Senate president], Sen. Pia's group is independent)," Binay said in a statement. (With a report from Leonel Abasola/PNA)

2 PBA CHAMPION TEAMS TO REPRESENT PH IN EASL 2024-25 SEASON

HONG KONG SAR – The San Miguel Beermen and the Meralco Bolts will represent the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) in the East Asia Super League (EASL) 2024-25 Season.

The Beermen and the Bolts were selected to compete in EASL based on their performances during the 2023-24 PBA season.

The San Miguel Beermen are the 2023-24 Commissioner's Cup champions and also finished runners-up in the Philippine Cup. The Meralco Bolts are the 2023-24 Philippine Cup champions.

The Beermen have been placed into Group A for the Group Stage, where they are scheduled to face Japan B.LEAGUE champions

the Hiroshima Dragonflies, Korean Basketball League (KBL) runners-up the Suwon KT Sonicboom, and P. LEAGUE+ runners-up the Taoyuan Pauian Pilots. The Meralco Bolts have been placed into Group B, where they are slated to match up against Japan B.LEAGUE runners-up the Ryukyu Golden Kings, KBL champions the Busan KCC Egis, and P. LEAGUE+ champions the New Taipei Kings.

The draw for the EASL 2024-25 Season Group Stage was made earlier this year in agreement with the participating leagues.

PBA Commissioner Willie Marcial said the league is excited to send two of its champion teams to participate in the EASL.

"The San Miguel Beermen and the Meralco Bolts showed their strength last season by winning the Commissioner's Cup and Philippine Cup, respectively. They will represent Filipino basketball with pride and we hope that one of them will be crowned the champion of East Asia next season," Marcial said in a news release on Friday.

EASL CEO Henry Kerins said, "Filipino teams and fans bring great competitiveness and passion to EASL and we are delighted to confirm the participation of the San Miguel Beermen and the Meralco Bolts next season."

"We expect them to compete strongly for the championship, against the best teams from the rest of East Asia," he said. (PR)

