

City Government of Tanauan adopts DOST-developed information dissemination system to strengthen assistance to farmers

The City Government of Tanauan, thru its Agriculture Office, has adopted the Department of Science and Technology (DOST)-developed information dissemination system called LGUIDS, short for Local Government Unit Information Dissemination System, in an effort to strengthen its dissemination of agriculture-related information to farmers, July 19.

LGUIDS is an information system developed by DOST-CALABARZON aimed at improving the dissemination of critical, timely, and community-oriented information. Originally designed to share information related to disaster risk management, such as typhoon bulletins, flood warnings, and weather outlooks, LGUIDS has since expanded its scope. It is now also used for farming and fishing updates, as well as community announcements like class suspensions, fiestas, festivals, and job fairs. This ability of the system has sparked



the interest of Tanauan City's Agriculture Office, which recognizes LGUIDS as a valuable tool for enhancing communication with farmers and improving agricultural practices in the area.

As part of the technology transfer, orientation and training activities were conducted for the City Agriculture's Office. The training covered

the brief history of LGUIDS and its functionality, which involves using a cellular SIM card and a Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) Module to send text messages to registered contacts within the system. The training included steps for operating the system, such as creating classifications for bulletins, forming groups for message recipients,

and encoding contacts to assign them to these groups. Messages are limited to 150 characters, with longer messages being split and sent separately. Users can also monitor how many messages are successfully sent and how many fail to be sent, with options to restart the GSM module if problems persist.

A workshop on using the system was conducted for the city government staff. They practiced sending messages to each other and monitoring these communications. Additionally, they were trained on viewing the replies and conversations within the system. Basic troubleshooting steps, such as restarting the

GSM module, checking for signals, and restarting the system to resolve issues, were also discussed with the staff.

Mr. John Julius G. Calibo, Project Technical Assistant IV of DOST-CALABARZON's Management Information System Unit, facilitated the orientation and training. He was assisted by Mr. Cedric L. Rodriguez, Project Technical Assistant I of DOST-Batangas.

Mr. Sherwin A. Rimas, City Agriculturist, thanked DOST for the installation of the information system and the conduct of the orientation and training. According to him, the system will be maximized and utilized to inform their farmers of the latest agriculture-related news and developments, as well as important announcements and information. He also challenged his staff to populate the system with the relevant contact details and to operate LGUIDS as soon as possible.

Concepcion Welcomes Roque as to DTI

The President could not have picked a better person to lead the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)", said Go Negosyo founder Joey Concepcion as President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. named Cristina Aldeguer-Roque as DTI Acting Secretary.

"During her time as Undersecretary for the MSME Development Group, she has proven to be a strong ally of the MSMEs, assisting in whatever way she can in pushing for policies that can benefit this critical sector of our economy," he said.

Concepcion said Roque's experience as a successful entrepreneur herself come as powerful credentials for leading the DTI. "She can bring private sector perspective to the DTI and give continuity to programs that have already been set in place.



Concepcion said her appointment also comes at a time when women are being recognized as a powerful force in business and economy. Roque will be the only other woman to lead the DTI since Lilia Bautista took on the helm in 1992. "This is definitely a step in the right direction," he said.

Concepcion thanked outgoing DTI Sec. Alfredo Pascual for his service to MSMEs, citing his support for the country's MSMEs, which comprise almost all of the enterprises in the country and generate more than half of the country's jobs. Pascual was appointed by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. as DTI Secretary in June 2022 after several years of a successful career in the private sector and serving as the President of the University of the Philippines.

"Going by how Fred Pascual's stint at the DTI did so much for the Filipino MSMEs, I think we can look forward to a more vibrant and dynamic MSME sector under Cris Roque's watch," he said.

DA: Fishing ban in 16 areas amid oil spill

MANILA – The Department of Agriculture (DA) on Friday reported the implementation of fishing bans in 16 areas amid the effects of the oil spill.

This came in the aftermath of three maritime incidents involving the capsizing and sinking of the motor tanker (MT) Terra Nova in Limay, MTKR Jayson Bradley, and MV Mirola 1 in Mariveles.

In an interview, DA Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said fishing bans are implemented in several areas in Metro Manila, Central Luzon, and Calabarzon, affecting 28,373 fisherfolks.

He said foregone losses as of Aug. 8 were placed at PHP78.69 million. In Metro Manila, the fishing ban is implemented in Las Piñas and Parañaque; Abucay, Balanga, Limay, Mariveles, and Samal in Central Luzon; and Baco, Cavite City, Kawit, Maragondon, Naic, Noveleta, Rosario, Tanza, and Ternate in Calabarzon.

Earlier, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) said fish samples with "tainting with petrochemicals" in oil spill-affected areas are unsafe for human consumption.

Continuous intervention

De Mesa, meanwhile, assured continuous interventions to affected fishers through BFAR.

He said BFAR has already started its fuel subsidy rollout worth PHP3,000 per fisher, alongside the distribution of relief packs.

"Tumutulong din sila sa coastal cleanup sa mga areas na naapektuhan. Nag-donate sila ng mga spill boom na rin at tuluy-tuloy iyong kanilang (they are also helping the coastal cleanup in affected areas. They have also donated spill booms, with the continuous conduct of) sensory evaluation," De Mesa said.

For its part, he said the DA is now processing the utilization of PHP1 billion worth of quick response fund (QRF) to help affected fishers recover through alternative livelihood.

According to BFAR, there are 46,000 registered fishers in the three regions. (PNA)



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Local Officials and Provincial Government Drive Successful Health Initiative in Imus



On July 30, a medical mission conducted by the provincial government in Brgy. Palico IV in partnership with the local officials of Imus City, provided essential health services to 575 Imuseños. The event offered free medical care provided by the health professionals from the Medical Center Imus and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer.

The mission, led by Congressman Adrian Jay Advincula, City Mayor Alex L. Advincula, Vice Mayor Homer Saquilayan, the city council, and the provincial government, included general check-ups, consultations, ECGs, x-rays, PhilHealth registration, HIV and pneumococcal vaccination, and laboratory exams such as urinalysis and blood tests.

Local officials of Imus expressed gratitude for the unwavering support of Governor Jonvic Remulla to their constituents, and the dedication of the volunteers and professionals involved. - Romelyn P. Dones

CA FREEZES QUIBOLOY, KOJC ASSETS

MANILA – The Court of Appeals (CA) has issued a freeze order on known assets of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KOJC) and its officers led by Pastor Apollo Carreon Quiboloy.

The August 6 notice issued by the CA's Special 3rd Division covered 10 bank accounts, seven real properties, five motor vehicles, and one aircraft owned by Quiboloy.

Cont. on Page 2



PNPA groundbreaks new grandstand named after Marcos Sr.

ANOTHER MEDICAL MISSION PROGRAM FOR IMUSEOS



A total of 689 Imuseños benefitted in the medical mission program extended by the Provincial Government, through Office of the Provincial Governor and Office of the Provincial Health Officer, offering free basic medical consultations and medicines at Greengate Subdivision, Brgy, Malagasang II-C, City of Imus, on July 31, 2024.

The program aims address the healthcare needs of Caviteños, particularly those with financial constraints that hinder them from accessing health services.

Present during the event were Mayor AA Advincula, Congressman AJ Advincula, alongside Imus SP members, who conveyed their appreciation to everyone who made the medical mission program a resounding success. - Jam Elisse M. Reyes



27 NATURAL HEALTH AND NUTRITION TIPS THAT ARE EVIDENCE-BASED

7. Feed your gut bacteria

The bacteria in your gut, collectively called the gut microbiota, are incredibly important for overall health.

A disruption in gut bacteria is linked to some chronic diseases, including obesity and a myriad of digestive problems (30Trusted Source, 31Trusted Source).

Good ways to improve gut health include eating fermented foods like yogurt and sauerkraut, taking probiotic supplements — when indicated — and eating plenty of fiber. Notably, fiber serves as a prebiotic, or a food source for your gut bacteria

8. Stay hydrated

Hydration is an important and often overlooked marker of health. Staying hydrated helps ensure that your body is functioning optimally and that your blood volume is sufficient (34Trusted Source).

Drinking water is the best way to stay hydrated, as it's free of calories, sugar, and additives.

Although there's no set amount that everyone needs per day, aim to drink enough so that your thirst is adequately quenched

9. Don't eat heavily charred meats

Meat can be a nutritious and healthy part of your diet. It's very high in protein and a rich source of nutrients (36Trusted Source).

However, problems occur when meat is charred or burnt. This charring can lead to the formation of harmful compounds that may increase your risk for certain cancers (37Trusted Source).

When you cook meat, try not to char or burn it. Additionally limit your consumption of red and processed meats like lunch meats and bacon as these are linked to overall cancer risk and colon cancer risk

10. Avoid bright lights before sleep

When you're exposed to bright lights — which contain blue light wavelengths — in the evening, it may disrupt your production of the sleep hormone melatonin (42Trusted Source).

Some ways to help reduce your blue light exposure is to wear blue light blocking glasses — especially if you use a computer or other digital screen for long periods of time — and to avoid digital screens for 30 minutes to an hour before going to bed (43Trusted Source).

This can help your body better produce melatonin naturally as evening progresses, helping you sleep better.

continue for the next issue (next week)



QUIBOLOY...

The order also includes the 47 bank accounts, 16 real properties, and 16 motor vehicles of the KOJC, and 17 bank accounts, five real properties, and 26 motor vehicles of Swara Sug Media Corporation which operates the religious group's media arm, Sonshine Media Network International (SMNI).

The CA said it found a reasonable ground to believe that Quiboloy's money and properties are "linked to unlawful activities and predicate crimes" not only for qualified human trafficking, sexual and child abuse and sex trafficking of children, but also fraud, conspiracy, marriage fraud, smuggling, and money laundering, among others.

"In order to avoid the possibility of the funds in the subject bank accounts and/or properties from being withdrawn, removed, transferred, concealed or placed beyond the reach of law enforcers, this Court finds it appropriate and judicious to issue a 20-day freeze order as prayed for by petitioner over said bank accounts, including all other related or materially-linked accounts, and the real and personal properties enumerated in the ex-parte petition," the CA said in the decision signed by Associate Justice Gabriel Robeniol.

In a statement, Justice Secretary Jesus Remulla hailed the court's "bold action in freezing the properties and restraining the financial muscle of fugitive Quiboloy" who has been constantly mocking the justice system by evading arrest and our courts of law.

"This Order demonstrates the CA's firm resolve as a partner of the DOJ in upholding the rule of law. This is just one step which has somewhat provided hope for truth and justice," Remulla said. Quiboloy still in Davao

Meanwhile, Davao Region police director Brig. Gen. Nicolas Torre III said based on their intelligence monitoring, Quiboloy is still within the 30-hectare property of the KOJC in Davao City.

"The indicators and informants are telling us na nandoon lang sa loob (si Quiboloy) kaya nga binabantayan siya ng kanyang mga tagasunod (he is still there and being guarded by his followers)," Torre told reporters at Camp Crame during the 123rd Police Service Anniversary.

Torre said this was the information which they have been receiving even before a PHP10-million bounty was placed on the KOJC leader who is wanted for serious criminal offenses.

time, with least casualty on both sides. We don't want it (violence) to happen," he said.

Torre said another challenge is that searching inside the KOJC property would certainly take a long time, since aside from the fact that it is 30-hectare big, there are also several establishments inside, including a coliseum four times bigger than the Araneta Coliseum.

"And the longer the cops stay inside, the bigger the possibility that violence may erupt," he said.

Tightly guarded

Torre said they are ensuring that the compound is tightly guarded to prevent the fugitive's escape.

Police are also monitoring the KOJC's air assets, which includes two airplanes and four helicopters.

Torre said they have plans if Quiboloy attempts to flee using his air assets.

"We have our air unit. Our air unit is armed. Worse comes to worst, they can try the might of the government if they want to do that," he said.

While the PNP can still choose the path of forcibly entering the

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FROM PAGE 1

KOJC, Torre said what they still consider is the safety and well-being of Quiboloy's supporters.

This is the reason, he said, why they are continuously finding ways to arrest Quiboloy with no violence.

"We are concentrating on hammering into his head and his lawyers that the only way for this to be resolved peacefully and with justice for all, is for him to submit to the jurisdiction of the court," Torre said

"We are hoping that his supporters would be enlightened that what the police are doing is a very simple part of the justice system."

Meanwhile, Senate Deputy Minority Leader Risa Hontiveros is hoping that the freeze order will disable Quiboloy's capability to escape the law.

"Hopefully, this freezes Quiboloy's ability to escape. Hopefully also, our local entities can work with their foreign counterparts to stanch the flow of money to offshore accounts," Hontiveros said in a statement.

"Umpisa na ito ng pagkamit ng hustisya (This is the start of attaining justice)," she added. (With a report from Wilnard Bacerlonia/PNA)

FROM PAGE 1

ond floor will serve as the stage with a VIP room, an audio-visual room, an office, and bleachers which can accommodate approximately 1, 200 seats. On the other hand, the parade ground will also have a LED wall similar to those located in its old parade ground and an open field with a total area of 30,591 square meters.

Senator Marcos likewise witnessed the successful Incorporation Rites of the PNPA Sandirangan (SANDI) ng Bayan paRA sa Lupang Sinila (NGAN) Class of 2028 wherein the Senator is the guest of honor and speaker.

In her message to the 332 new cadets, the Senator unveiled her proposed Senate Bill 409 for the modernization of the Philippine National Police, as well as another

bill that would provide free legal assistance to police, soldiers, BJMP personnel, and Coast Guard to face lawsuits or complaints in court

During the media interview, Senator Marcos pushes for the PNP modernization program because she wants to expand it, adding that "our enemies are not ordinary criminals anymore but it seems like corporations or gigantic syndicates that are very wide and cover the towns and the whole world as well."

The incorporation rites is one of the significant activities of the Cadet Corps wherein it will exhibit the union of Plebes (Fourth Class Cadets) to their Upper-class Corps after surpassing the 45-day "Breaking Period" or New Cadet Orientation Course (NCOC).

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CARD SME OPENS ITS 40TH BRANCH IN ZAMBOANGA SIBUGAY



With the end goal of strengthening financial inclusion nationwide, CARD MRI management members alongside staff, officers, and some clients of CARD SME Bank, came together to grace the branch opening. The Ipil Branch is now ready to serve the community of Zamboanga Sibugay with even higher quality financial and personalized products and services.

CARD SME Bank, a thrift bank under the CARD Mutually Reinforcing Institution (CARD MRI), opens its 40th branch on June 10, 2024, in Ipil, Zamboanga Sibugay to further expand the reach of the institution to fulfill its goal of growing the businesses of Micro,

Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSMEs) clients.

CARD SME Bank offers a variety of products and services such as savings, remittances, and various types of loans, including business loans, to assist MSMEs in growing their businesses.

"This expansion is our way of fulfilling our part in nation-building by providing MSMEs much-needed support to sustain their businesses which will ultimately improve the economic landscape of our trading areas," CARD SME Bank President and CEO Cynthia Baldeo stated.

As a full-fledged thrift bank, the institution also provides value-added financial products and services to clients and

non-clients alike, particularly to less fortunate individuals who want to help themselves gain financial freedom.

"At CARD MRI, we pride ourselves in putting our clients first in everything we do. The 40th CARD SME Bank branch also strengthens financial accessibility and reaffirms our commitment to providing innovative financial products and personalized services to our clients nationwide," Baldeo said during the branch opening.

The opening was also graced by CARD MRI Managing Director Mr. Aristeo Dequito, Senior Management Adviser Ms. Mary Jane Pererras, Security Consultant Gen-

eral Dickson Hermoso, staff, and clients. The ribbon-cutting event was further honored by the presence of Ipil Mayor Honorable Mr. Anamel Olegario.

The new branch is located at Purok Everlasting, Don Andres, Ipil, Zamboanga Sibugay. As of April 2024, CARD SME Bank has more than 6.6 billion outstanding loans and serves more than 1.2 million clients. The institution aims to become the best thrift bank in the country and be able to reach and serve more clients in the future.

For more information, visit CARD SME Bank's official website and Facebook page, @CARDSMEBankOfficialPage.

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KUYA BONG GO GOES TO ALFONSO



sa kasalukuyan ay patuloy na pinakikinabangan ng ating mga kababayang Pilipino tulad ng 159 Malasakit Centers nationwide na ayon sa Department of Health (DOH) ay 10 million Filipinos na ang nakikinabang. Dagdag pa dito ay sinusuportahan din Sen. Bong Go ang pagtatayo ng mga Super Health Centers sa buong Pilipinas para maging mas accessible, partikular sa

mga taong mahihirap ang serbisyo ng gobyerno para sa kanila. Dumalo rin sa pagtitipon ang kaibigang aktor na si Mr. IPEktibo Philip Salvador sa pagbisita na sinundan ng Site Inspection sa isang Super Health Center sa Mangas 2, Alfonso Cavite at project Visit sa Alfonso Evacuation Center sa Buckestate Alfonso Cavite bago bumalik ng session sa senado. (WEBSTER ACE C. PAG-INAG -CVLPC)

PhilHealth...

Center.

As of 2020, the Philippine Statistics Authority recorded 9,242,121 senior citizens or those above 60 years old nationwide.

Earlier, the NCSC said about 4,419,153 senior citizens have registered to its nationwide database as of March 1, 2024. (PNA)



i am with you always

30,000 ANGKAS PARTNER RIDERS TO GET SOCIAL SECURITY PROTECTION FROM SSS

Macasaet lauded Angkas for taking the initiative to secure the future of its partner bikers through SSS membership and giving them access to the social security benefits they deserve.

"Considering the high risk of their profession by being in the field most of the time, Angkas partner bikers need a solid protection that they something to turn to in cases of emergencies. With this agreement, SSS will give them the social security protection that they need," Macasaet said.

Macasaet said that Angkas-SSS partnership carries the tagline "AngkaSSS na sa Protektadong Bukas," which reflects the SSS' aim of providing social security coverage and old-age pension to all working Filipinos.

Macasaet called on other ride-sharing and food delivery platform companies to imitate Angkas's initiative and take

the necessary steps to make their partner riders and drivers SSS members.

Under the agreement, SSS Senior Vice President for National Capital Region (NCR) Operations Group Maria Rita S. Aguja explained that partner bikers will be classified as self-employed SSS members. They will gain access to a wide range of social security benefits such as sickness, maternity, disability, retirement, funeral, and death.

Aguja, who also chairs the Task Force on the Coverage of Angkas Riders, said that they can also apply for SSS loan programs such as salary and calamity, providing them with financial assistance for their immediate needs.

"On top of SSS benefits, they will also get additional coverage from the Employees' Compensation (EC) Program for work-related sickness, disability or death," Aguja



Social Security System (SSS) President and Chief Executive Officer Rolando Ledesma Macasaet (left) and Angkas Chief Executive Officer George Ilagan Royeca (right) on August 1 signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that will give social security protection to about 30,000 Angkas partner bikers operating in Metro Manila, Metro Cebu, and Cagayan de Oro City.

said.

She said that Angkas will serve as an authorized Coverage and Collection Partner of SSS. "Angkas can collect the monthly contributions of its active partner bikers and remit it to the SSS," she added.

Meanwhile, SSS Executive Vice President for Branch Operations

Sector Voltaire P. Agas said that currently, the SSS contribution rate stands at 14%. The monthly salary credit (MSC) used to determine the amount of monthly contribution ranges from P4,000 to P30,000 for self-employed members.

Agas said that the lowest monthly contribution is pegged at P570,

consisting of P560 for the regular SSS contribution and P10 for the EC contribution. "On the other hand, the highest monthly contribution is P4,230, composed of P2,800 for the regular SSS contribution, P30 for the EC contribution, and P1,400 for the mandatory MySSS Pension Booster."

He explained

that, for example, if the Angkas partner riders earn P13,000 monthly, they will have a combined SSS and EC monthly contribution payment of P1,830.

He said that partner bikers earning P20,250 and above will also contribute to the mandatory MySSS Pension Booster, which ranges from P70 to P1,400 per month in addition to the SSS and EC contributions.

"For example, if the Angkas partner riders are getting P23,750 monthly, they will be contributing P2,800 for the regular SSS contribution, P30 for the EC contributions, and P560 for the mandatory MySSS Pension Booster every month," he added.

He concluded that with this agreement, SSS commits itself to promoting the welfare of Angkas riders and their families by providing them with social security benefits.

END



GADGETS GALORE

If you're into gadgets, consoles, and the latest and greatest tech products on the market, Cyberzone will be featuring these and more at the Gadget Expo! Get ready to see what the biggest tech brands have to offer, and have fun with their experiential displays, pop-up booths, and more!



Shop and Save with Exclusive Deals
The fun doesn't stop there! Cyberzone is ready to LEVEL UP the entire month of August! Get your hands on the hottest deals at the Great Gadget Sale, with up to 60% off on select items at any Cyberzone nationwide. You'll also find exclusive sales on SM Malls Online.



P562-M HALAGA NG INTERBENSYON, IPINAGKALOOB NG DA-4A SA BAGONG PILIPINAS SERBISYO FAIR SA CALABARZON

Umabot sa P562,720,363 ang kabuuang halaga ng interbensyon na naipagkaloob ng Department of Agriculture IV-CALABARZON (DA-4A) sa mga magsasaka sa rehiyon sa isinagawang pakikiisa sa Bagong Pilipinas Serbisyo Fair (BPSF) ni Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. noong ika-11 ng Hulyo sa San Jose, Batangas at Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Ang BPSF ay proyekto ng pangulo na naglalay-ong sama-samang magbigay ng benepisyo ang pamahalaan sa mga komunidad sa bansa. Prayoridad dito ang mga programang pangkabuhayan, pangkalusugan, pang-agrikultura, at iba pa.

Sa pangunguna ni Pangulong Marcos kasama sina DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel at OIC- Regional Executive Director Fidel Libao, ibinida sa booth ng Kagawaran ang mga interbensyong binhi, punla, pataba, mga alagang hayop, makinarya, pasilidad, suporta sa patubig, at iba pang kagamitang pansaka mula sa Rice Program, Corn Program, High Value Crops Development Program, National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program, at Organic Agriculture Program.

Ayon kay Pangulong Marcos, inisyatibo niyang



tipunin ang mga ahensya ng gobyerno upang direktang maibaba ang serbisyo sa mga magsasaka at mangingisda na lubos na naapektuhan ng matinding tagtuyot dulot ng El Niño. Dito ay ipinaalala rin niya ang kahalagahan ng hindi pagsuko kalakip ng patuloy na pakikipag-tulungan sa pamahalaan.

Sa masinsinang paghahanda rito nina Agricultural Program Coordinating Officer (APCO) para sa Batangas; Michael Lalap at APCO para sa Cavite; Ruben Perlas, nagpasalamat ang mga ito sa aktibong kooperasyon ng mga munisipalidad at lungsod sa buong rehiyon sa pagtawag ng paanyaya sa mga magsasaka na dumalo sa aktibidad. **(Danica T. Daluz, DA-4A RAFIS)**

2024 METROBANK OUTSTANDING FILIPINOS NAMED

MANILA – Ten unsung heroes who have demonstrated excellence and dedication in their public service have been recognized by the Metrobank Foundation as outstanding Filipinos this year.

The Metrobank Foundation honored four teachers, three police officers and three soldiers who have helped instill the values of patriotism, integrity, courage, and social responsibility in the minds of every Filipino. Teachers as pillars of hope

The teacher awardees include Ma. Ella Fabella, a Master Teacher II from Zamboanga City, who stands as a beacon of hope for the Sama-Bajau children, as she teaches them to become better persons with

dignity and pride and who will stand up for their tribe.

Meanwhile, Franco Rino Apoyon, the “Greenducator” from Zamboanga Sibugay, has dedicated 11 years to nurturing young minds about the importance of caring for the environment and advocating the promotion of sustainable practices among last-mile villages.

Metrobank also honored Maria Regina Hechanova-Alampay of Quezon City, a mental health champion, for developing her Katatagan framework, a community intervention program that helped people recover from disaster.

University of the Philippines- Los Baños Professor Decibel Faus-



tino-Eslava was also honored for providing her students guidance on holistic environmental management.

Police officers as champions of safety
Cagayan de Oro Police Staff Sergeant Llena Sol-Josefa Jovita is a community-care advocate, who was cited for her

“Gatas Mo Kinabuhì Ko” program that supports mothers who are unable to breastfeed obtain milk from healthy, lactating women. She also developed a swimming program for at-risk children and helped in educating the youth against drug abuse

EDITORIAL: Carina's cruelty

Metro Manila and its surrounding provinces awoke Wednesday flustered by scenes of rampaging floodwaters as high as chest-deep in some areas and some roads impassable, with financial markets, schools and offices closed.

The chilling scenario – as signal 2 remained hoisted over the area despite announcements the weather disturbance will be exiting the country's area of responsibility by Thursday – slapped the metropolis, home to 13 million people, as the southwest monsoon continued to bring heavy rains enhanced by Typhoon Carina

Before sunrise Wednesday, the eye of Carina was monitored to be 280 kilometers northeast of Itbayat, Batanes with maximum sustained winds of 155 kilometers per hour near the center with gustiness of 190 kilometers per hour and central pressure of 950 hPa.

Pressure is measured in hectoPascals (hPa), or millibars. Standard pressure at sea level is defined as 1013hPa, but we can see large areas of either high or low pressure. These areas are all relative to each other, so what defines a high will change depending on the area around it.

By noon, the rains were still continuing in some areas of the national capital, and many parts remained under water, stranding cars and morning commuters as Carina battered the metropolis

The Philippine Stock Exchange said there would be no trading in its equity market, while the nation's central bank said currency trading and monetary operations would be closed.

Local government units in the National Capital Region and east of the capital in towns of Rizal announced some of the roads and villages in their respective jurisdictions were not accessible to vehicles due to flood waters that reached from gutter to chest deep levels

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority also released flood advisories across the NCR due to continuous rains from Tuesday night until early Wednesday morning.

Earlier the state weather bureau PAGASA raised the yellow rainfall warning – residents should be on the alert as flooding may result in flood-prone areas – over Metro Manila and seven other areas: Zamboales,ataan, Pamanga, Bulacan, Cavite Batangas and Tarlac

Weather men said the southwest monsoon, enhanced by Typhoon Carina, is bringing the heavy heavy rains, forcing rivers and other waterways in the capital and nearby towns to threaten their banks.

Light to moderate with occasional heavy rains meanwhile are being experienced in Nueva Ecija, Rizal, Quezon and Laguna, with weathermen warning these rains may persist within three hours.

We enjoin residents in the affected areas to be on guard and monitor developments and warnings from the authorities including the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council .

MANILA – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. is pleased over the Philippines' improving partnership with the United States (US), its oldest and only treaty ally.

This, as Marcos, during his meeting with members of the US Congressional Delegation (CODEL) at Malacañan Palace in Manila on Thursday, thanked the US for its continued support for the Philippines, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Secretary Cheloy Garafil said in a statement on Friday.

“The fruits of those partnership, of those alliance that we are now forming to face up to these new challenges that we really had before are I think very true although we are [coming] from resolution at least to manage the situation,” Marcos told the US CODEL, as quoted by the PCO.

“Again, on behalf of the Philippines, we express our gratitude for all the United States has done and continues to do in support of our alliance and to strong adherence for the Philippines,” he added.

The US CODEL was led by Rep. Michael McCaul (Republican-Texas), who serves as chairperson of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Chairman Emeritus of the House Committee on Homeland Security. Rep. Addison Graves Wilson (Republican- 2nd district of South Carolina), member of the House Committee on Foreign Af-



PBBM sees progress in US-PH alliance

fairs, joined McCaul during the courtesy call on Marcos at Malacañan.

Garafil said McCaul and Wilson were primarily interested in hearing the Marcos administration's views and concerns about China and what the US can do to support its assertion of the Philippines' sovereignty, sovereign rights, and jurisdiction in the West Philippine Sea (WPS).

McCaul expressed his gratitude to Marcos for the Philippines' support to the US and assured the Philippine president of Washington's inclusion in the Foreign Military Financing (FMF).

“The supplemental (appropriation) is very important, we see Israel, see Ukraine, see Indo-Pacific—three areas in the world, three regions [receiving] attack from tyrannical governments. We see President [Vladimir] Putin and President Xi [Jin Ping] made an alliance in Beijing,” McCaul said.

Around USD500 million out of the USD2.5 billion FMF supplemental budget for the Indo-Pacific will be given to the Philippines following a 2+2 Foreign and Defense Ministerial Dialogue with Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique Manalo, and Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr.

Bilateral defense and security engagement remains a key pillar of the two nations' bilateral relations and is carried out

within the framework of the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT), the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), and other bilateral agreements.

The US also remains an important and strategic trading and investment partner of the Philippines, having a common interest in advancing agriculture and food security, promoting energy security, boosting trade and building supply chain resilience, enhancing connectivity and digitalization, and protecting critical infrastructure.

The US in 2023 ranked as the Philippines' third top trading partner, with total trade valued at USD19.96 billion.

Also last year, the US ranked as the Philippines' top export market and fifth import source amounting to USD11.54 billion and USD8.41 billion, respectively.

The two nations established formal diplomatic relations on July 4, 1946.

There are an estimated 4.46 million Filipinos living in the US as of 2022, making Filipinos the third largest Asian group in the country.

PH Navy modernization bearing fruit

Meanwhile, a Philippine Navy (PN) official said the ongoing modernization program of the service is now reaping dividends as seen in the just-concluded “mul-

tilateral maritime cooperative activity” (MMCA) in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) among the Philippines, Australia, Canada and the US.

“It highlights the modern capability of your PN to operate with other like-minded navies to ensure regional peace and security,” PN spokesperson for the WPS Rear Admiral Roy Vincent Trinidad said in a message to the Philippine Navy Agency.

During the MMCA which ran from Wednesday to Thursday, the PN deployed the missile frigate, BRP Jose Rizal (FF-150), its embarked AW-159 “Wildcat” anti-submarine warfare helicopter, considered the best platform for such mission, aside from the offshore patrol vessel BRP Ramon Alcaraz (PS-16).

“The recently concluded (MMCA) was held within our EEZ (exclusive economic zone) was within the bounds of international law and supported the 2016 Arbitral Tribunal ruling that global commons should remain free and open,” Trinidad said.

The MMCA included events such as pre-sail briefing, communication exercise, division tactics/officer of the watch maneuver, photographic exercise, cross deck landing operations, anti-submarine warfare exercise, replenishment at sea, contact reporting/maritime domain awareness, and a final exercise. (with Priam Nepomuceno/PNA)

Senior citizens body, PhilHealth to en-

MANILA – The National Commission of Senior Citizens (NCSC) and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) are in talks about the expansion of healthcare coverage and support for senior citizens.

In a news release Thursday, the NCSC said Commissioner Mary Jean Loreche proposed an expansion of PhilHealth's current laboratory packages for the elderly. Loreche said pros-

tate-specific antigen tests for males, breast ultrasound and mammogram for women, and comprehensive screening for various diseases and geriatric syndromes must be included in the current packages.

Citing that some elderly patients prefer less invasive and more comfortable options over dialysis, Loreche proposed the creation of conservative kidney management pro-

grams.

Seniors fighting depression, anxiety, and cognitive decline would also benefit from expanded mental health programs, she said.

Other benefit packages which the NCSC deemed important to the elderly are home-based healthcare services, and transition and convalescent care to support senior citizens recovering from illnesses and surgeries.

The NCSC pushed for the accreditation of the Senior Citizens Community Care Center for the Konsulta Package to ensure its coverage and sustainability, providing a robust support system for elderly care.

It also pushed for discussions on the status of the National Geriatric Center in Metro Manila -- transforming it into a model hospital nationwide similar to the Bicol General Hospital and Geriatric

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GSIS earmarks P18.5 B in emergency loans for Typhoon Carina and Habagat victims

The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) has set aside P18.5 billion in emergency loans to assist 864,089 members and pensioners affected by Tropical Storm Carina and the southwest monsoon (Habagat) in Batangas, Rizal, and the National Capital Region (NCR).

These regions have been declared calamity areas. Members and pensioners may apply for the loan from July 26 to October 28, 2024.

The GSIS Emergency Loan program aims to provide immediate financial relief to its members and pensioners impacted by natural disasters. Members and pensioners with existing emergency loan balances may borrow up to P40,000 to enable them to clear their previous loans and receive a maximum net amount of P20,000. Those without existing loans may apply for up to P20,000. The loan features a low interest rate of 6% per annum and a repayment period of three years.

To qualify for the emergency loan, active members must not be on unpaid leave, have no pending administrative or legal cases, and have made at least six monthly

premium payments before applying. Their net take-home pay should not be less than P5,000 as stipulated by the General Appropriations Act. To be eligible for the loan, old-age and disability pensioners must have a net monthly pension that is at least 25% of their gross pension after deducting the amortization of the loan.

Eligible members may apply for the loan online through the GSIS Touch mobile app. They may also file their application through the GSIS Wireless Automated Processing System (GWAPS) kiosks located in all GSIS branches, major government offices such as the Department of Education, provincial capitols, city halls, municipal offices, and selected Robinson's and SM malls.

For more information about the emergency loan program and application procedures, members are encouraged to visit the GSIS website at www.gsis.gov.ph, follow the GSIS Facebook page (@gsis.ph), email gsis-cares@gsis.gov.ph, or call the GSIS Contact Center at 8847 4747 (Metro Manila) or 1-800-8-847-4747 (Globe and TM subscribers) or 1-800-10-847-4747 (Smart, Sun, and TNT subscribers). END

METROBANK...

and bullying. Police Major Mark Ronan Balmaceda, Deputy Force Commander of the Regional Mobile Force Battalion in Taguig City, meanwhile, played a crucial role in the liberation of Marawi City, leading strategic military operations, hostage rescue, and the recovery of enemy weapons. He also drafted "Oplan: Pagsungko" to ensure a fair and corrupt-free PNP recruitment,

efforts, fostering a climate of understanding and cooperation, and setting the foundation for lasting peace.

Soldiers as guardians of peace and progress

From San Vicente town, Palawan province, Staff Sergeant Michael Rayanon of the Philippine Navy Marine Battalion was recognized for championing the welfare of indigenous peoples by engaging in the upliftment of local communities through humanitarian efforts and progressive development projects.

The foundation also recognized Major Ron Villaras Jr., Chief of the Civil Affairs Division, Civil-Military Operations

EX-COMELEC CHAIR FACES BRIBERY, MONEY LAUNDERING RAPS IN US

MANILA — Former Commission on Elections (Comelec) chairperson Andres Bautista, along with three others, have been charged before a United States court for alleged bribery and money laundering in connection with the 2016 elections.

In a press release on its website, the US Department of Justice said a federal grand jury in the Southern District of Florida returned an indictment Thursday (US time) charging the former Comelec chair and three executives of an election voting machine and service provider company for their roles in an alleged bribery and money laundering scheme to retain and obtain business related to the 2016 polls.

According to the indictment, between 2015 and 2018, Roger Alejandro Pinate Martinez, 49, a Venezuelan citizen and resident of Boca Raton, Florida, and Jorge Miguel Vasquez, 62, a US citizen and resident of Davie, Florida, together with others, allegedly caused at least USD1 million in bribes to be paid to Bautista.

"These bribes were allegedly paid to obtain and retain business

related to providing voting machines and election services for the 2016 Philippine elections and to secure payments on the contracts, including the release of value-added tax payments," the US DOJ said.

"The co-conspirators allegedly funded the bribes through a slush fund that was created by over-invoicing the cost per voting machine for the 2016 Philippine elections. To conceal and disguise the nature and purpose of the corrupt payments, the co-conspirators used coded language to refer to the slush fund and caused the creation of fraudulent contracts and sham loan agreements to justify transfers. The co-conspirators then allegedly laundered funds related to the bribery scheme through bank accounts located in Asia, Europe, and the United States, including in the Southern District of Florida."

Pinate and Vasquez are each charged with one count of conspiracy to violate the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and one substantive violation of the FCPA.

Bautista, Pinate, Vasquez, and Elie Moreno, 44, a dual citizen of

Venezuela and Israel, are each charged with one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering and three counts of international laundering of monetary instruments.

If convicted, Pinate and Vasquez each face a maximum penalty of five years in prison for the FCPA and conspiracy to violate the FCPA counts.

Bautista, Pinate, Vasquez, and Moreno each face a maximum penalty of 20 years for each count of international laundering of monetary instruments and conspiracy to commit money laundering, the US DOJ said.

The Homeland

PNPS COMMUNITY IMMERSION YIELDS MORE SURRENDEREES

CALAMBA CITY (PIA) — Citing the law that created the Philippine National Police (PNP) as a civilian agency, cops in the Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon) region have found a better way to address local insurgency—going deep into communities and offering government programs for rebel returnees.

During the Kapihan sa Bagong Pilipinas, Calabarzon PNP regional chief Brig. Gen. Kenneth Lucas cited the need for fellow cops to revisit the PNP mandate, embarking on its nature as a civilian agency.

As such, Lucas said that the PNP's role should be primarily focused on establishing rapport with the communities alongside the Calabarzon Regional Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (RTF-ELCAC) to maintain the region's peace and order.

"With all the interventions undertaken by the Philippine National Police, PS Bank, Rotary Club of Makati Metro, and Rotary Club of New Manila East. (PNA)

supporting a wide network of stakeholders.

"We hope these relief packages will help families and communities see that there is always hope, even in these trying times," said Arlette V. Capistrano, Vice President for Communication and Stakeholder Management at MPT South. "It is essential that we support each other in any way we can."

This swift and compassionate response from MPT South demonstrates the company's unwavering commitment to its corporate mission and responsibility

CAYETANOS RELIEF OPERATIONS BRING HOPE TO SUPER TYPHOON CARINA VICTIMS

Four communities in Metro Manila and nearby provinces experienced renewed hope as the offices of Senators Alan Peter and Pia Cayetano rolled out a series of compassionate relief operations on Friday aimed at providing support to those affected by super typhoon Carina.

On August 2, a total of 1,150 grocery packs were distributed by the Cayetano team to beneficiaries in Valenzuela City (200), Quezon City (150), Province of Laguna (150), Meycauayan City (300), Paombong (300) in Bulacan Province, and Antipolo in the province of Rizal (50) to stand with the affected communities in the midst of adversity.

Simultaneously, a total of 350 hot meals were provided to frontliners and volunteers in Valenzuela City (20), Quezon City (20), Manila City (100 for health centers in Sampaloc; 75 for fire volunteers and for the Bureau of Fire Protection Sampaloc Station), and at the 12th Civil-Military Operation Battalion at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City (75).

All these were mobilized as part of the Cayetano siblings' advocacy in creating an Emergency Response Department (ERD).

ERD Act or Senate Bill No. 66, a measure filed by Senator Alan Peter Cayetano this 19th Congress, seeks to centralize government action to enhance the country's disaster resilience, citing the country's high vulnerability to natural calamities and climate change impacts.

He reiterated this

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RESPONDING TO THE URGENT NEEDS OF STAKEHOLDERS. MPT SOUTH DELIVERS VITAL RELIEF TO COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY TYPHOON CARINA

In a compassionate display of corporate social responsibility, Metro Pacific Tollways South (MPT South), a subsidiary of Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC), sprang into action to provide critical aid to communities devastated by the wrath of Typhoon Carina that hit Metro Manila and Cavite. On August 5 and 6, 2024, MPT South delivered a total of 600 relief packages to affected host communities, including Brgy. Pulvorista and Aplaya in Kawit, Brgy. Talaba II in Bacoor, Brgy. Tambo, Don Galo, and San Dionisio in Parañaque, and Barangay 201 in Pasay City.

Recognizing the profound impact of the storm, MPT South also shared 100 relief packages with its valued partners, the Philippine Navy and the Alliance of Concerned Transport Organization (ACTO), underscoring the company's commitment to supporting a wide network of stakeholders.

"We hope these relief packages will help families and communities see that there is always hope, even in these trying times," said Arlette V. Capistrano, Vice President for Communication and Stakeholder Management at MPT South. "It is essential that we support each other in any way we can."

This swift and compassionate response from MPT South demonstrates the company's unwavering commitment to its corporate mission and responsibility

CAYETANOS RELIEF OPERATIONS BRING HOPE TO SUPER TYPHOON CARINA VICTIMS



call for the establishment of ERD after super typhoon Carina wreaked havoc across Luzon, causing widespread flooding in Metro Manila and nearby provinces last July 24.

While the measure is pending passage, the Cayetanans remain committed to delivering immediate aid and support to disaster-affected areas through ERD operations, providing relief and restoring hope to communities facing crises. **PR**

RESPONDING TO THE URGENT NEEDS OF STAKEHOLDERS. MPT SOUTH DELIVERS VITAL RELIEF TO COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY TYPHOON CARINA



to support its host communities, especially in times of crisis. MPT South, together with the people who revolve around it, embodies the strong sense of 'Bayanihan' — a uniquely Filipino spirit of community, cooperation, and mutual aid — and is dedicated to sharing this spirit with those in greatest need.

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

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

For inquiries about this press release please email us at: corpcomm@mpt-south.com