

Steps Toward Achieving Dreams

Chita M. Tamayao, a CARD client and entrepreneur from Tuguegarao City achieved success despite life's challenges.

In Tuguegarao City, Chita M. Tamayao's story shows her grit and resilience shaped through unwavering determination and faith in God.

Her journey began in her hometown where she first studied and worked. She finished a 2-year college course and then worked as a Pharmacy Secretary for three years before starting a family.

Chita and her husband tried different businesses to support their growing family, including tricycle rentals, selling coffee, and running a small store. However, their Mikki noodle business became their main source of income.

In 2019, Chita's life took a turn when she was introduced to CARD, Inc. (A Microfinance NGO). Encouraged by friends, she took a loan of PHP 5,000, eventually growing it to PHP 100,000, which helped expand her business.

"The financial support from CARD was crucial for our Mikki noodle business and my children's education," Chita says.

Life once tested Chita's faith and dedication when her husband passed away, leaving her as the sole provider for their four children. Despite this overwhelming challenge, Chita's spirit never wavered. Chita continued running their businesses to support their four children.

Her resilience led her to diversify her offerings, and today her market stall includes various products, such as lumpia wrappers, sprouted mung beans and other seeds, garlic, onions, and other household essentials with daily sales reaching PHP 15,000.

Despite challenges and tough competition, Chita's hard work and friendly nature earned her loyal customers at Don Domingo Market.

Chita's path has also led to big personal wins. She has also renovated her home, supported her children's education, and bought a motorcycle for business deliveries.

Chita shows that with perseverance and the right support, success is possible. Her partnership with CARD played a



key role in her business growth, allowing her to overcome obstacles.

"To aspiring entrepreneurs, starting a business is not easy. It involves facing many challenges and making wise decisions. Stay focused, keep personal desires separate from business goals, and persevere through every challenge," Chita advises.

Her life and work continue to inspire others, proving that with determination and the right support system, the sky is the limit. PR

PhilHealth benefit for heart disease up by over fifteen-fold

As Filipinos celebrate the holiday season, the Department of Health (DOH) recently called on people to prioritize their well-being by practicing moderation in their food intake and maintaining an active lifestyle. This is particularly important given that cardio-vascular diseases, specifically ischemic heart disease (IHD), remain the leading cause of death in the Philippines.

To provide expanded financial coverage associated with heart disease treatment, the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) significantly increased its benefits coverage for Ischemic Heart Disease-Acute Myocardial Infarction (IHD-AMI) or "heart attack" for all inpatient admissions effective December 21, 2024.

PhilHealth Circular No. 2024-0032 published on the same date provides coverage for (1) Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) at

health especially in the coming new year, we encourage everyone to avail of our primary care benefits under Konsulta," urged Ledesma, specifying consultations with primary care physician, laboratory tests for early detection as well as medicines to support those that already have heart conditions, all for free.

"Through the Konsulta, we can identify potential health risks early on, including family history of heart disease, allowing for timely interventions such as medication for cholesterol management and lifestyle advice, to prevent or mitigate the development of heart disease," He asked Filipinos to register to their Konsulta provider of choice at any of the local health insurance offices nationwide or through their own account in the PhilHealth Member Portal.

By embracing a healthy lifestyle and by utilizing the Konsulta, Filipinos can better protect themselves from heart diseases for a healthier and productive future, he added. PR

DSWD Beneficiaries Receive Go Negosyo Mentoring

ISSN NO. 3028-1954

STRAIGHT NEWS PUBLISHING

TODAY'S NEWS AND BEYOND

VOL. II • NO. 28 • January 08-14, 2025 • P 10.00



Kasama ang Team AJAA sa pangunguna nina Mayor Alex L. Advincula at Vice Mayor Homer Saquilayan ay bumisita kamakailan si Senator Imee R. Marcos sa Imus Sports Complex upang personal na magpasalamat sa ating mga minamahal na Imuseño. Kasama rito ang isang masayang Zumba session, kung saan sa-

bay-sabay nag-eherisisyo at nagbigay ng Zumba kits sa mga kalahok bilang bahagi ng supporta sa healthy lifestyle program. Bilang bahagi rin ng kanyang adbokasiya sa kalusugan at nutrisyon, naghatid din si Sen. Imee ng masusustansyang Nutribun para sa ating mga kababayan.



Cavite PESO and TESDA Join Forces to Empower Job Seekers Through Contact Center Services NC II Training

ing on Contact Center Services NC II.

The program, held from November 27 to December 20, 2024, combined 13 days of online learning with 5 days of in-person training at the Cavite Provincial Capitol compound in Trece Martires City. Participants, including displaced POGO workers, OFWs, OFW dependents, and unemployed

In a bid to create opportunities for jobseekers, the Office of the Provincial Public Employment Service Manager, in partnership with TESDA Cavite Provincial Office, has successfully concluded the Community-Based Train-

cont. on Page 2

RSA: New SLEX 6x6 lanes operational in December; full expansion completes by mid-2025

The new 6x6 lanes configuration of the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) from Susanna Heights, Muntinlupa to Calamba, Laguna — with two additional lanes on both southbound and northbound sides — will be opened in December, in time for Christmas,

San Miguel Corporation (SMC) chairman and CEO Ramon S. Ang, said.

The at-grade expansion, undertaken by San Miguel unit and SLEX concession holder SMC SLEX Inc., is proceeding on schedule, with the said 29-kilome-

cont. on Page 3

Filipinos deserve better! LEE DEMANDS IMPROVED PH HEALTHCARE SERVICES BY 2025

The first to expose the billions of available funds of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) in 2023, Manoy Wilbert "Wise" Lee said that the recently approved benefit increases by the state health insurer's Board are still lacking.

The Bicolano lawmaker who has per-

Cayetano rings in 2025 with call for vision, purpose

live broadcast on January 1, 2025, Cayetano reminded the public that while New Year's resolutions are common, they should be backed by reflection and thoughtful planning.

"Napakaimportante na even before we make our New Year's res-

In his Facebook

cont. on Page 4

cont. on Page 2



MINDFULNESS EXERCISES & ACTIVITIES FOR ADULTS

What are the “What” skills?

This first set of skills is meant to help the client learn how to:

1. Simply observe their experience.
2. Describe their experience using a verbal label.
3. Be fully present in the moment and in their actions without feeling self-conscious.

These skills allow the client to be aware of what is happening to them and of their part in their own experience. Becoming aware of their own thoughts and grounded in the present forms the foundation for the next set of “how” skills.

How Do the “How” Skills Work?

The “how” skills relate to the goal of teaching clients how to observe, describe, and participate in their own experience. This set of skills is intended to help clients:

1. Learn to have experiences in a non-evaluative and non-judgmental manner.
2. Focus on one thing at a time and learn to bring their attention back to the target when they go off course.
3. Be effective, or keep their focus on their goals regardless of their current mood (Soler et al., 2012).

The clients were also taken through a series of other mindfulness interventions including mindful breathing, the body scan, and other simple awareness practices.

Individuals in this study who received DBTM training, in addition to the usual treatment, had enhanced benefits compared to the group who received only the usual psychiatric treatment: the more minutes an individual spent practicing mindfulness, the greater the improvements in psychiatric symptoms (Soler et al., 2012).

DBT clearly has something to teach us all in its application of a wide range of mindful-ness techniques and exercises. Let’s take a look at a few easily applicable examples.

Peace mindfulness exercise

Mindfulness is not only beneficial for adults, but it can also offer a great lot to children and young people. Recent research shows that simple mindfulness activities can help train children to become more attuned to their internal and external moment-to-moment experiences, i.e., becoming more mindful.

In a study by Flook et al. (2015), preschoolers engaged in mindfulness activities, such as one called “Belly Buddies”. During this activity, children listened to music while noticing the sensation of a small stone on their stomachs, rising, and falling with each breath. Through practicing this activity, children became more attuned to their bodies, breath, and music.

Saltzman (2011) designed the PEACE mindfulness exercise (shown in the image), which can work better for teens. Children are taught to respond to a particular situation by performing each action corresponding to a letter in PEACE. Using this acronym, children learn to respond to situations by making wise decisions rather than reacting.

It is advised to practice this exercise in minor upsetting situations before employing these steps to handle more extreme situations. The more they practice, the more PEACE they will have (Saltzman, 2011).

Continuation next week

DSWD...

Entrepreneurs from poor, vulnerable and marginalized households and communities received entrepreneurship mentoring from Go Negosyo’s pool of veteran mentors as the non-profit lent its support to the Department of Social Welfare and Development’s (DSWD) Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP).

GoNegosyo conducted a mini version of its 3M on Wheels program to provide business guidance to SLP beneficiaries toward the overall objective of helping improve their socio-economic conditions through accessing and acquiring necessary assets to engage in and maintain thriving livelihoods. 3M on Wheels is Go Negosyo’s free public entrepreneurship roadshow, usually conducted in shopping malls in major urban cities across the Philippines.

“Our efforts to promote entrepreneurship among Filipinos is amplified by collaborations such as this with the DSWD,” said Go Negosyo founder Joey Concepcion. He explained that the mentoring was made possible through a Memorandum of Agreement with the DSWD to provide mentorship for the beneficiaries of their SLP program so that they can be guided as they work toward building their businesses.

Concepcion added that First Lady Liza Araneta Marcos’s Lab For All was instrumental in expanding entrepreneurship mentoring as beneficiaries from areas where the medical and social services caravan is conducted undergo one-on-one mentoring with Go Negosyo before they are given the capital support.

Similar partnerships have been established through government agencies such as the

Department of Education, Department of Tourism, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Agrarian Reform, and the Department of Trade and Industry.

The free mentoring was held in support of the program during the SustainEnablers Livelihood Congress 2024 of the DSWD National Capital Region, held last November 11 to 13 at the Great Eastern Hotel in Quezon City. Seventy-five participants from across the NCR received one-on-one coaching and consultation from the pool of entrepreneurship experts, consultants and veteran entrepreneurs, namely Marvin Adolfo, Roman Buysong, Perry Camba, Pat Ballecer, Rommel Villoria, Evelyn Breguera, Florlynn Dela Pena, Leah Ayeng, Max Yap, Senedith Delos Reyes, Jordan Patente, RC Flores, and Inday Almonte.

The event was to celebrate the SLP program’s accomplishments and highlight the contributions of its partner stakeholders, staff, and participants. The SustainEnabler Awards Program is a platform to highlight the journey of program beneficiaries who have become self-resilient individuals and spread community-level prosperity.

The DSWD’s Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) was started in 2011 and implemented through two tracks: Microenterprise Development and Employment Facilitation. Through the microenterprise track, beneficiaries are provided a one-time financial capital assistance from DSWD, given access skills enhancement, and building/re-building and developing physical and natural assets.



Cavite...

individuals, were trained to become certified customer service professionals, equipped with the skills to thrive in the fast-growing contact center industry.

Designed to address unemployment and skill gaps, the training program aimed to open doors to new career paths while fostering personal and professional growth. By empowering participants to meet industry standards, this initiative serves as a stepping stone for stability and meaningful employment.

The program culminated in a graduation ceremony on December 20, 2024, at the Ceremonial Hall which featured inspiring messages from key leaders, including

January 08-14, 2025

From Page 1

Ms. Rizalie Pinpin-Enero, PESO Manager, Ms. Evangeline E. Plazo, TESDA Cavite Officer-in-Charge, Mr. Earl Jim D. Sumaoang, University and Community Partnership Supervisor - Foundever Philippines Corporation, and Mr. John Ray B. Malaca, President/TVI Head of IExcel School of Communication and Technical Skills, Inc., emphasizing the importance of education and perseverance in achieving success.

This collaborative initiative highlights the shared commitment of OPPEM and TESDA to uplift communities by providing life-changing opportunities through skill development and job placement. - R. Tanael

Cayetano...

From Page 1

olutions, we think about plans, vision, and purpose,” he said.

He also highlighted the importance of envisioning one’s future, saying that a vision serves as the foundation for achieving goals.

“Kailangan na may vision tayo. Wala pong nagsasabi na may plano siya na walang vision. ‘Pag sinabi ng bata na gusto niya maging doctor, ibig sabihin nakikita niya ang sarili niya sa role na iyon,” he said.

“Kapag ang purpose ay klaro, napakaimportante na we should write down the vision then run with it. Ibig sabihin, i-pursue natin ang vision na ‘yan,” he added.

Cayetano also encouraged Filipinos to

reflect on their personal goals and the country’s future, urging them to think about where they see themselves and the nation in the coming months and years.

“It’s very important to demonstrate kung nasaan ako by June 30 ng taon na ito, nasaan ako 10 years from now. Ano ang mga nagawa ko para makamit ang mga vision ko?” he said.

As many are still recovering from the challenges of 2024, the senator also took time to remind Filipinos to trust in Divine guidance.

“May plano ang Panginoon para sa atin -- plano na pagpalain tayo at hindi saktan, at plano na bigyan tayo ng pag-asa at kinabukasan,” he said.



January 08-14, 2025

Pag-IBIG Fund recognized among ‘Best PH Employers’ for 2nd consecutive year

Pag-IBIG Fund has been named one of ‘The Philippines’ Best Employers’ for the second consecutive year, according to a nationwide survey of employees from private companies and government agencies in the Philippines.

The 43-year-old government financial institution bested most Philippine employers as it ranked 35th out of 300 companies in a survey conducted by the Philippine Daily Inquirer in partnership with the market research and business intelligence portal Statista.

“We are truly honored to be included among the best employers in the Philippines for the second consecutive year. This highlights our commitment to creating

a positive workplace culture for our employees, which ultimately drives us to perform our mission of providing accessible savings and affordable housing for Filipino workers. This is in line with President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr.’s call to strengthen the delivery of public service,” said Secretary Jose Rizalino L. Acuzar, who heads the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development and the 11-member Pag-IBIG Fund Board of Trustees.

The Best Philippine Employers 2025 publication noted that the survey gathered insights from thousands of employees who rated their own companies, as well as other organizations within their industry, based on their willingness to rec-

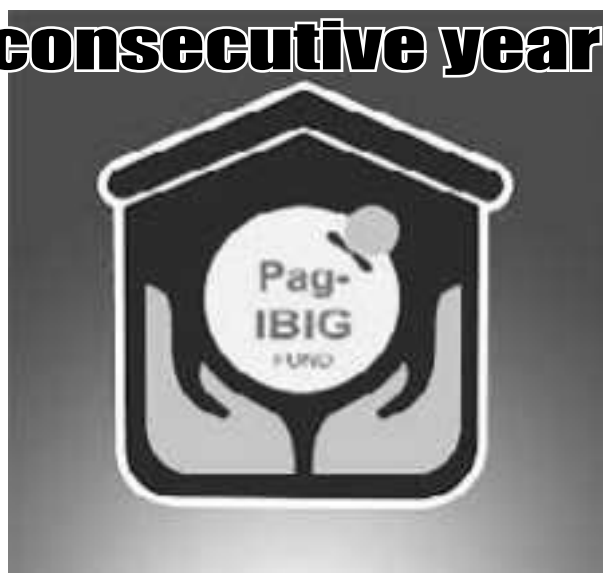
ommend these employers to friends and family.

Pag-IBIG Fund ranked 5th among government agencies and claimed the top spot among Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations (GOCCs) included in the list, further highlighting its reputation and credence among public sector workers.

Pag-IBIG Fund Chief Executive Officer Marilene C. Acosta expressed gratitude for the agency’s remarkable improvement from 160th place in last year’s ranking to an impressive 35th this year.

“On behalf of the Pag-IBIG Fund management, we are deeply grateful to be included in the list as it attests to our employees’ satisfaction

and trust in Pag-IBIG. I am also thrilled to note that for this year’s ranking, we have received a score of 8.60 out of 10, which propelled us 125 places further and improving from 160th place last year to 35th place this year. We believe that by investing in our employees – whom we proudly call ‘Lingkod Pag-IBIG’, we can better serve the financial needs of our more than 16 million members,” Acosta added. (END)



DA-4A, top 1 ng PCAF sa pinakamahusay sa pagsuri ng mga proyektong imprastraktura



Pinarangalan na top 1 ang Constructors’ Performance Evaluation System (CPES) Team ng Department of Agriculture IV-CALABARZON (DA-4A) sa isinagawang Year-End Performance Review ng Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (PCAF) noong ikalawang linggo ng Disyembre sa Olongapo, Zambales.

Ang CPES Team ang sumisiguro sa kalidad ng mga proyektong imprastraktura ng Ka-gawaran kung saan sinusuri ang pagsunod ng mga konstruktur sa plano, disenyo, at materyales na naaaprubahan. Pinangungunahan ito ng Standards Regulations and Enforcement Section (SRES) ng Regional Agricultural Engineering Division (RAED).

Ginawaran na “Outstanding CPES Implementor” ang DA-4A CPES Team tampok ang sampung ebalwasyon sa pito na proyektong imprastraktura ng Kagawaran simula Hulyo hanggang Disyembre ng taong 2024. Kabilang sa mga

proyektong ito ay mga diversion dam, biosecured and climate-controlled finisher operation facility, canal lining, agricultural trading center, at Small Water Impounding Project (SWIP), at iba’t ibang pang-ig rehiyon.

Ayon kay PCAF OIC-Executive Director Julieta Oplencia, ang

CPES ay hindi lamang paraan para tingnan ang performance ng mga konstruktur. Ito ang nagpapakita ng dedikasyon ng Kagawaran na magkaroon ng mga imprastraktura na matibay at mag-tatagal para sa ikabubuti ng pagsasaka, pangngisda, at komunidad. ##### (Danica Taluz, DA-4A RAFIS)

SUDOKU

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

Ika-2 Pandaigdigang Kumperensiya sa Nanganganib na Wika, tagumpay!



Matagumpay na isinagawa ang Ika-2 Pandaigdigang Kumperensiya sa Nanganganib na Wika na ginanap noong 9–11 Oktubre 2024 sa Pamantasang Normal ng Pilipinas, Maynila katuwang ang Pamantasang Normal ng Pilipinas-Sentro sa Pag-aaral ng Wika (PNU-LSC), Departamento ng Filipino ng Pamantasang De La Salle (DLSU-Filipino), at Departamento ng Linggwistiks ng Unibersidad ng Pilipinas (UP-Lingg).

Nilahukan ito ng 267 na kalahok mula sa iba’t ibang katutubong pamayanan, lider ng indigenous cultural communities (ICCs), Indigenous Peoples Mandatory Representatives (IPMR), ahensiya, institusyon, mag-aaral, at mga organisasyon.

Sa unang araw ay nagtanghal ng ritwal ang Bugkalot. Nagbigay ng mainit na bating pagtanggap si Denmark L. Yonson, PhD, Vice President for Student Success and Stakeholders Services ng Pamantasang Normal ng Pilipinas. Nagbahagi rin ng mensahe si Secretary-General Ivan Henares, PhD sa pamamagitan ni Gng. Kaye S. Nagpala ng Philippine National Commission for UNESCO. Nagtanghal naman ng katutubong sayaw ang PNU Kislap Sining Dance Troupe bilang pampasiglang bilang. Matapos nito ay nagbigay ng panayam ang Pamaksang Tagapanayam na si Victoria Tauli-Corpuz,

Direktor ng Tebtebba kaugnay ng karapatan na dapat tinatamasa ng mga katutubo. Sinimulan naman ni Tagapangulong Arthur P. Casanova, PhD, ang panayam sa plenaryong sesyon na tumatalakay sa “Estado ng mga Nanganganib na Wika sa Pilipinas at Programa sa Pagpapasigla ng Wika ng Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino.” Sinundan ito ng paralel na sesyon tungkol sa dokumentasyon at mga pag-aaral sa wika mula sa iba’t ibang institusyon. Sa ikalawang plenaryong panayam naman ay tinalakay ni Anna Belew, PhD, Direktor ng Endangered Languages Project ang “Lumalaking Network ng Pagpapasiglang Pangwika sa Kabila ng mga Hanggahan.”

Sa ikalawang araw ay nagbigay ng mensahe si Deborrah S. Anastacio, PhD, Tagapangulo ng Departamento ng De La Salle. Ibinahagi din ni Marites T. Gonzalo, Direktor, IP Education Ministry ang “Pagtuturo ng mga Katutubong Kaalaman” at ginagawa ng kanilang organisasyon para sa kanilang komunidad na Tagakawlo. Sinundan ito ng pagbabahagi ni Frederick Barcelo, Bugkalot, sa “Pagsasalin ng Bibliya bilang Paraan ng Pangangalaga ng Wika” ng kanilang wika. Hinilawod Epic Chant Recording naman ang ibinahagi nina Felipe P. Jocano Jr., Unibersidad ng Pilipinas at Lord Jane Caballero-Dordas, PhD, Sugidanon. Nagkaroon din

ng bahagian sa sesyong parareal kaugnay ng mga papel-pananaliksik pangwika. Ibinahagi naman ni Siripen Ungsitipoonporn, PhD, Mahidol University ang pag-a-archive ng mga wika (Language Archiving) at nagawang website at mga materyal.

Sa ikatlong araw, nagbigay ng mensahe si Maria Kristina Gallego, PhD, Tagapangulo ng Departamento ng Linggwistiks. Nagbahagi naman ng mga papel sa plenaryong sesyon ang mga tagapanayam mula sa katuwang na institusyon. Sinimulan ni John Amtalao, PhD, Pamantasang De La Salle ang “Ang Sampung Libo-ang Salita ng Tuwali-lfugao sa Lente ni Padre Hubert Lambrecht: Repleksiyon sa Pagbubuo ng Identidad ng Araling Kordilyera.” Sinundan ito ni Voltaire M. Villanueva, PhD Pamtasang Normal ng Pilipinas na “Pagtatampok sa mga Kalinangang Bayan sa Aralin at Pagsasanay tungo sa Preserbasyon ng Wika at Kultura (Bong-abong).” Nagkaroon din ng pagbahagi sa mga papel-pananaliksik sa paralel na sesyon. Huling nagbigay-panayam si Jesus Federico C. Hernandez, Unibersidad ng Pilipinas sa “Quo Vadis: Muling Pagsipat sa Diskurso ng Panganganib at Pagpapasigla ng mga Wika sa Pilipinas.”

Pinangasiwaan naman ni Komisyoner Melchor E. Orpilla, PhD, Komisyoner ng Wikang Pangasinan, ang Res-



olusyon sa mga kalahok hinggil sa pagkakaisa ng mga ahensiya at institusyon sa pangangalaga ng mga nanganganib na wika sa bansa na nilagdaan ng mga kalahok. Sa huli, ay nagbigay ng pampinid na pananalita si Komisyoner Jose Kervin Cesar B. Calabias, PhD, Komisyoner ng mga Wika ng Kahilagaang Pamayanang Kultural kaugnay ng naganap na tatlong araw na kumperensiya. PR

DILG closes over P12.98-M LBP Trust Fund

Following the recommendations of the Commission on Audit (COA), the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) has closed its four trust fund accounts at the Landbank of the Philippines (LBP) with an aggregate amount of over P12.98 million.

Earlier, COA flagged the DILG for maintaining four unauthorized bank accounts, stating that their creation and retention as of yearend 2023 “have no legal basis”.

The Department said the accounts were used as depository accounts for funds from other national government agencies. The accounts were created to ensure the

prompt release of funds to support the implementation of various programs and projects.

According to the DILG, it had earlier closed the P1.73-million RO IX Trust Regular Account and the DILG-NCR Local Government Academy Special Project Account with P111,009.42.

Meanwhile, the DILG is processing the closing of the P1.116-million DILG-NCR Special Project Account and the P10.025-million DILG Central Office Trust Account.

For the latter, the Department has returned the unutilized P2.363-million balance to the source agency; and has utilized

the P5.834-million from the Department of Trade and Industry and the Bureau of Fire Protection - Interagency Task Force. As of today, the BFP-IATF Fund balance of only P199,627.90 shall be utilized for unpaid claims, after which any remaining balances shall be remitted to the Bureau of Treasury (BTr) at year-end.

The DILG is now coordinating with the BTr to open the Modified Disbursement System Trust Account under LBP. This account will be used for fund transfers granted or entrusted to the Department and may take effect in January 2025. DILG. GOV

EDITORIAL:

TODAY, we close the book on 2024, our eyes on the board where the country’s ledger details how this country stood up to the challenges and concerns.

Fittingly, we need to review the strengths and weaknesses as 2025 walks in, and gear up appropriately to meet these challenges, hell bent on addressing them with the determination to succeed.

Definitely several have provoked the unity and capacity of the Filipino people to stand united, as witness their sturdiness and common stand in face of calamities and threats on their territory, stoicism in face of biting poverty, and intimidating inflation, among others.

We see an alarming chapter on climate change, where the Philippines, an archipelagic country of 117 million, is not immune to, surrounded as it is by water and pummeled by an average unforgiving 20 typhoons each year.

With 60 percent of the country’s cities along the coast, including its capital Manila, climatologists have said, and we underline their observation, the

Meeting the 2025 challenges

country is especially vulnerable to sea level rise and its impacts.

Weathercasters have noted a rapid sea level rise here. In Manila alone, with nearly two million population, the sea level has increased about 2.6 centimeters per year, which is faster than the global average.

The Philippines is one of the countries most affected by rising sea levels, rising 7-10 centimeters per decade along the coast – three times faster than the global average, according to climatologists.

Experts say the rate of sea level rise globally has more than doubled since the 20th century, from 0.06 inches (1.4 millimeters) per year to 0.14 inches (3.6 millimeters) per year from 2006 to 2015.

An Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has projected that oceans will rise to 4 feet by the end of the century, and rising levels threaten the stability of countries’ boundaries and pose risks to international peace and security.

With its position on the west side of the Pacific, the Philippines finds itself vulnerable to climate impacts, including tropical cyclones, flooding, landslides, changes

in rainfall patterns and distribution, droughts, threats to biodiversity and food security, public health risks, endangerment of vulnerable groups like women and indigenous people, and sea level rise.

It also experiences erosion, which can damage infrastructure, destroy crops, and lead to loss of life; its natural resources are critical for protecting against climate change, but they are also being depleted.

It faces an energy crisis as its natural gas supply is rapidly being depleted, and has its coral reefs, vital for marine biodiversity and tourism, affected by warming oceans and ocean acidification.

We know the Philippines has taken some steps to address climate change, including setting a moratorium on new coal, launching a green energy auction, considering a 50 percent electric vehicle stock target by 2040, and creating new bamboo and cocoa plantations.

We hope success will bless the country in the years ahead.

From Page 1

DILG-R4A recognizes outstanding barangays, LGOOs in first-ever Juan Awards

As part of its commitment to recognize the tireless efforts and continuous dedication of barangays in the region, the Department of the Interior and Local Government-Region IVA (DILG-R4A) recognized 91 barangays in the first-ever “Juan Awards: Gawad Parangal para sa Natatanging Barangay”

In his message during the awarding ceremony held recently at Aquamarine Recreational Center, Barangay Banay-Banay, Lipa City, Batangas, DILG-R4A Assistant Regional Director Darrell I. Dizon highlighted the importance of sustained excellence.

“Beyond the recognition and incentives, the fundamental objective of each assessment

and audit is to ensure the continuous commitment of our local government units down to its grassroots level,” he said.

The 91 outstanding barangays in CALABARZON were recognized for their exemplary performance in the DILG’s flagship programs such as Barangay Trailblazers for Outstanding Performance (TOP) Tanod Awards; Lupong Tagapamayapa Incentives Awards (LTIA); Kalinga at Inisyatiba para sa Malinis na Bayan (KALINISAN); and Seal of Good Local Governance Barangay (SGLGB).

Concerned City and Municipal Local Government Operations Officers were also recognized for their invaluable support to the success of their respective barangays.





EDITORIAL OFFICE
CAVITE OFFICE : Blk. 5 Lot 69 Barcelona Ph. 2, Buhay Na Tubig, Imus, Cavite
Mobile No. ----- 09556586520 / 09164731260
TIN NO. ----- 237756418-000
Email ad: newsstraight172@gmail.com
soberanmavic@gmail.com

EDITORIAL BOARD
Publisher : Maria Victoria S. Soberano
Editor-In-chief : Dominador “RAEL” Soberano
Marketing Manager : Kristina Marres
Legal Consultant: Atty. Evelyn R. Dominguez

ADVERTISING RATES
COMMERCIAL ----- P200/col.cm
LEGAL/NOTICES ----- P160/col.cm
Font Size:
Heading : 10
Body Text : 8
Space : Single space

Published Weekly by: STRAIGHT NEWS PUBLISHING



“Kahit para na tayong sirang plaka sa paulit-ulit na panawagan na gamitin ang pondo ng kalusugan para sa kalusugan, di tayo titigil dahil ito ang talagang makakabawas sa pangamba ng ating mga kababayan, lalo na sa pagkakasakit dahil sa mahal na gamot at pagpapagamot,” Lee lamented.

“M a g a n d a sanang Pamasko sa ating mga kababayan kung sumunod lang ang DOH sa ipinaglaban at naikasanating commitment na nilagdaan mismo ng pinuno nito para mapababa ang gastos ng bawat Pilipino sa pagpapa-ospital. Pero ang inaprubahan na mga dagdag benepisyo kamakailan ay kulang-kulang sa napagkasunduan,” he added.

Last Dec. 16, the

PhilHealth Board of Directors approved a 50% increase in selected case rates, in addition to emergency care benefit, glasses and optometric services for children, open-heart surgery benefits and pediatric cataract extractions.

Lee said that the DOH, which leads the PhilHealth Board and the Benefits Committee (BenCom) must put as its New Year’s Resolution to be more proactive in increasing the health benefit packages of Filipinos, especially with its more than P500 billion or half a trillion available funds.

The solon from Bicol then reiterated his sentiment during the Dec. 17 House Committee on Good Government and Public Accountability hearing on zero subsidy for PhilHealth, saying “Na-

saan ang hustisya kung milyon-milyong Pilipino pa rin ang papasan sa mga pagdurusa at mapagkakaitan ng mga dagdag na benepisyon pangkalusugan dahil sa pagka-manhid at kapalpakan ng ilang namumuno?”

“Napakalaking insulto at kalokohan na gamitin ang pondong kailangang-kailangan para sa mga dagdag na serbisyong pangkulusugan sa mararangyang okasyon o ilipat ito sa mga proyekto na hindi naman ikamamata ng mga Pilipino kung hindi maipagawa,” Lee reiterated.

“Paano naatim ng ilan na maging makupad sa pagtupad ng kanilang tungkulin at ipagkait ang mga dagdag na benepisyo sa gamot at pagpapagamot na pwedeng magligtas sa buhay

ng milyon-milyon nating kababayan?”

“The focus should remain on addressing the gaps in the country’s healthcare system. Napakalaking kasalanan na hindi ibigay ang pondo at suporta na kaya namang ibigay, at sa halip ay gamitin lang ito kung saan iilan lang ang makikibanang,” he added.

A staunch health advocate, Lee successfully fought for the 30% increase in PhilHealth benefits implemented last February 2024, after more than a decade that PhilHealth case rates were not reviewed and adjusted, making its coverage no longer responsive to the hospitalization cost of beneficiaries.

The solon from Bicol constantly called on the DOH and PhilHealth

leadership to implement more benefit increases, which resulted to securing their commitments during the House Budget Deliberations last September 25, to provide a comprehensive plan to lower the out-of-pocket medical expenses of Filipinos.

It can be recalled that the 2025 DOH budget deliberations ended in a mic scuffle as Lee would like to put on record the said health commitments he secured from DOH and PhilHealth.

He also recently filed a measure to investigate the P11 billion worth of expired medicines and vaccines in DOH warehouses and health facilities flagged by the Commission on Audit (COA), stressing that this kind of inefficiency is a big disservice to millions of Filipinos

GSIS sets aside P8.6 B emergency loan for 364K members, pensioners in Luzon

The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) has set aside nearly P8.6 billion in emergency loans for 363,547 active members and old-age and disability pensioners affected by various typhoons.

In the province of Isabela, the deadline for application is on 4 January.

Deadline for application in the provinces of Ifugao and Nueva Vizcaya, and the towns of Burgos and Bautista in Pangasinan province is on 5 January

The emergency loan window is also open in the provinces of Cagayan until 16 January; Albay on 23 January; Batangas, Camarines Norte, and Catanduanes, until 28 January.

Qualified borrowers in the provinces of Quezon (excluding Lucena City), Camarines Sur, and Laguna; city of Naga; municipalities of Juban, Bulan, Irosin, Barcelona, Don-sol, Matnog, and Castilla in Sorsogon; and municipality of San Fernando in Masbate have until 30 January.

Application for the following areas in Sor-

sogon has been extended until 5 February: Sorsogon City, Bacon, Casiguran, Bulusan, Magallanes, Santa Magdalena, Gubat, Prieto Diaz, and Pilar.

In the municipalities of Pio V. Corpuz and Uson in Masbate province, deadline for application are on 12 and 21 February, respectively.

Eligible to apply are active members who are working or residing in the calamity declared areas, have no due and demandable loan, not on unpaid leave, have paid premiums in the last six months prior to application, have no pending administrative or criminal case, and with a net monthly take-home pay of at least P5,000 after deductions.

Under the emergency loan facility, qualified members who have existing emergency loan may borrow up to P40,000 to pay off their previous emergency loan balance and enable them to receive a maximum net amount of P20,000. Those without existing emergency loan may apply for P20,000.

Old-age and disability pensioners may also apply for a P20,000

emergency loan, provided they are residing in the calamity areas and their net basic monthly pension is at least 25% after loan deductions.

Members and pensioners may apply for the loan through the GSIS Touch mobile application, which may be downloaded from the Google Play and Apple App stores.

The loan proceeds are electronically credited to the borrowers’ eCard or UMID card.

The loan comes with a 6% interest rate, no service fee, and payment period of three years. It includes a redemption insurance, which ensures that the balance will be deemed fully paid in the event of the borrower’s death, as long as payments are up-to-date.

For more information, visit the GSIS website (www.gsis.gov.ph), or the official Facebook page (@gsis.ph), or email gsiscares@gsis.gov.ph, or call the hotline at 8847-4747 (Metro Manila), 1-800-8-847-4747 (for Globe and TM users), or 1-800-10-847-4747 (for Smart, Sun, and Talk ‘N Text subscribers).

Pag-IBIG Fund recognized among ‘Best PH Employers’ for 2nd consecutive year

Pag-IBIG Fund has been named one of ‘The Philippines’ Best Employers’ for the sec-ond consecutive year, according to a nationwide survey of employees from private companies and government agencies in the Philippines.

The 43-year-old government financial institution bested most Philippine employers as it ranked 35th out of 300 companies in a survey conducted by the Philippine Daily In-quirer in partnership with the market research and business intelligence portal Statista.

“We are truly honored to be included among the best employers in the Philippines for the second consecutive year. This highlights our commitment to creating a positive workplace culture for our employees, which ultimately drives us to perform our mission of providing accessible sav-

ings and affordable housing for Filipino workers. This is in line with President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr.’s call to strengthen the delivery of public service,” said Secretary Jose Rizalino L. Acuzar, who

heads the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development and the 11-member Pag-IBIG Fund Board of Trustees.

The Best Philippine Employers 2025 publication noted that the survey gathered in-sights from thousands of employees who rated their own companies, as well as other organizations within their industry, based on their willingness to recommend these employers to friends and family.

Pag-IBIG Fund ranked 5th among government agencies and claimed the top spot among Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations (GOCCs) included in the list, further highlighting its reputation and credence among public sector workers.

Pag-IBIG Fund Chief Executive Officer



who are dying because they cannot afford to buy medicines.

“Hinding-hindi natin titigilan ang paninigil sa mga ipinangako sa ating mga dagdag na benepisyon pangkalusugan. Hindi rin natin tatantanan ang pagpapagat sa mga manhid at walang pakialam, hanggang masiguro natin na ito na ang huli nilang Pasko at Bagong Taon sa posisyon dahil wala silang malasakit at hindi nila ginagawa ang kanilang trabaho,” Lee stressed.

“Hindi na dapat paabutin ng panibagong Pasko o Bagong Taon ang pagpapatupad ng mga dagdag na benepisyon pangkalusugan. Ang gamot at pagpapagamot, dapat libre na ng gobyerno. Ang layunin ko: Gamot Mo, Sagot Ko!” Lee said. PR

SUCCESS STORY| The Inspiring Journey of Alcoh Bistro



Antipolo City, 26 December 2024 – Nestled in the heart of Rizal, Alcoh Bistro stands as a testament to resilience, transformation, and family values. The brainchild of Florey Serrato, a mother of four and a Mass Communication. Alcoh Bistro is more than just a dining spot—it’s a legacy in the making.

Florey’s entrepreneurial journey began in 2009, alongside her

husband, Arnel, with the opening of Alcoh Bar. The establishment became a local favorite for its lively atmosphere, cold beer, and videoke nights. However, like many businesses, the pandemic in 2019 forced its closure, putting a pause on their dreams.

In 2022, Florey and Arnel reopened their doors with a renewed purpose and a new name: Alcoh Bistro. Transitioning from a bar-centric identity,

the couple envisioned a family-friendly restaurant where great food and exceptional customer experience would take center stage.

“When people hear ‘Alcoh,’ they often think of beer or videoke,” Florey shared. “But as a mother watching my four boys grow, I began to reflect deeply on why I do what I do. I wanted Alcoh to be more than just a business—I wanted it to

From Bar to Bistro: The Inspiring Journey of Alcoh Bistro



be something we could proudly pass on to our children.”

With no formal education in Business Management, Florey faced challenges in running the bistro. Seeking to grow her knowledge, she turned to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Rizal Provincial Office. A social media post about the Kapatid Mentor ME (KMME) program caught her attention, sparking a journey that would redefine her business.

Florey joined KMME, submitted her requirements, and went through a mentorship process. Presenting her Business Improvement Plan to a panel of experts, she not only gained invaluable insights but also earned the distinction of Best Presenter.

“The program taught me the importance of value in our business,” she recalled. “Before, my focus was just on generating sales to cover expenses. But KMME gave me a bigger vision for Alcoh Bis-



tro and for our family.”

Since completing the KMME program, Florey and Arnel have made significant strides in improving Alcoh Bistro. The air-conditioned dining area has been transformed into a cozy, inviting space perfect for small events and celebrations. Their menu now boasts upgraded dishes and new recipes, reflecting their commitment to offering only the best to their patrons.

Alcoh Bistro still retains its videoke charm, inviting customers to sing their hearts out while enjoying Filipino favorites. But the Serratos’ focus is clear: creating a dining experience where families can come together, enjoy

great food, and make lasting memories.

Florey’s journey is a testament to the power of determination and adaptability. With a renewed vision and the support of programs like KMME, she has not only redefined Alcoh Bistro but also inspired others in her community.

“Through KMME, we’ve dared to dream bigger for our business and our family,” Florey said with pride.

Today, Alcoh Bistro isn’t just a business—it’s a symbol of resilience, reinvention, and a family’s unwavering commitment to building a brighter future. PR