

# SMC's Alabang River cleanup boosts flood resilience in Muntinlupa

San Miguel Corporation (SMC)'s river cleanup initiative has cleared a critical stretch of the Alabang River, boosting flood resilience in an area bounded by residential subdivisions, public roads, and the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) in Muntinlupa City.

Based on its latest monitoring report, SMC's Better Rivers PH river cleanup initiative has removed a total of 62,363 metric tons (MT) of silt and waste from the Alabang River, starting from its mouth at Laguna de Bay, through Cupang Bridge, and up to its section near the PNR Railway Bridge. The effort is now progressing upstream toward the Alabang Viaduct area.

With this development, taken together with other simultaneous river cleanups that SMC is currently undertaking in six other areas north and south of Metro Manila, the company's Better Rivers PH program has breached 9 million tons of silt and garbage removed from at least 10 major river systems, since 2020.

It can be recalled that SMC began its clearing operations of Alabang River upon the request of the Muntinlupa City local government unit (LGU) and in coordination with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), following a flooding incident at the Alabang Viaduct in July 2025.

Now, improved river flow has already been observed as rehabilitation

Better Rivers PH removes 9M tons of waste and silt from 10 river systems



Alabang River Mouth



Alabang River, upstream of Cupang Bridge

of this critical waterway progresses, well ahead of the rainy season.

In addition to dredging, SMC is also undertaking river widening works, to improve the Alabang river's carrying capacity and boost flood mitigation. These efforts complement local government-led efforts to relocate informal settler families (ISFs) situated along the riverbanks, and the removal of sheet piles that have encroached into the river, which have restricted water flow and increased flood risk.

"Through these ongoing clean-up and rehabilitation efforts, SMC reaffirms its long-term commitment to flood mitigation and environmental rehabilitation under the Better Rivers PH program, working closely with local government units to protect communities and promote cleaner, safer, and more resilient waterways," said SMC Chairman and CEO Ramon S. Ang.

Also gaining headway are ongoing Bet-

Alabang River (Facing Laguna Lake)

Before: July 2025



After: Feb 4, 2026



Relocation of ISFs and removal of encroached Sheet piles



Dredging near PNR Rail bridge

ter Rivers PH operations in the Las Piñas River system (Las Piñas and Zapote rivers), covering 1.84 kilometers, with a total of 179,558 metric tons of dredged silt and waste removed; the Parañaque River system, span-

ning 9.14 kilometers with 368,414 metric tons removed; and rivers in Laguna (Landayan, San Pedro, and Silang-Sta. Rosa), where 0.83 kilometers has yielded 93,550 metric tons of silt and waste.

Efforts north of Metro Manila include the start of cleaning up the Tullahan River upstream in Novaliches area, which has thus far covered 300 meters upstream with 20,536 metric tons of waste removed; and the Tanza River in Navotas, where 5,166 tons of waste has been removed from a 250-meter area.

Meanwhile, ongoing cleanup operations along the Tabang River in Bulacan and Malolos, Bulacan have reached 8.03 kilometers, with 29,488 metric tons of waste and silt collected.

Along with previously completed cleanups of the Bulacan, Pampanga, and Laguna river systems, as well as the Tullahan, Pasig, San Juan, and Navotas rivers, Better Rivers PH has rehabilitated a total river length of 184.33 kilometers, removing 9.01 million metric tons of garbage, silt, and debris as of March 22. **PR**

## MPTC expressways on full alert this Semana Santa

Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC) and its network of expressways—NLEX, SCTEX, NLEX Connector, CAVITEX, CALAX, and CCLEX in Cebu—are rolling out the "Biyaheng Arangkada" motorist assistance program from March 27 to April 6, 2026.

The initiative is also implemented in SCTEX and CAVITEX in partnership with the Bases

Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) and the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) through PEA Tollway Corporation, respectively.

As part of the program, MPTC has augmented personnel deployment across its network to ensure efficient traffic management, quick incident response, and smooth toll transactions during the Holy Week travel period.]

The "Biyaheng Arangkada" initiative reflects MPTC's commitment to ensuring a safe Holy Week journey for motorists and the commuting public, en-

abling travelers to **reconnect safely with their families during this season of reflection.**

### Motorist assistance includes:

- Strategically located roadside assistance stations
  - Medical teams on standby at select stops
  - Availability of EV charging stations and free wifi at select NLEX and SCTEX Rest and Refuel Stations
  - Free 24/7 basic mechanical services at all NLEX and SCTEX Rest and Refuel Stations
  - Free towing to the nearest exit for Class 1 (and Class 1M for CCLEX) from March 27, 6:00 AM to April 6, 6:00 AM
  - 24/7 customer service support via hotline (1-35000) and the MPT DriveHub app
- During this period, roadworks, lane closures, and maintenance activities will be suspended to help en-

sure smooth traffic flow across the expressways. Traffic teams are also on standby to activate counterflow schemes when conditions permit.

MPTC urges motorists to plan trips ahead of peak hours. In NLEX, anticipate heavy northbound traffic from Wednesday afternoon to Thursday afternoon and increased southbound volume during the afternoon and evening hours on Saturday and Sunday. Expect heavy southbound traffic on early Monday morning.

Motorists are also advised to check their RFID account to ensure sufficient balance, inspect their vehicles before traveling, stay well-rested, and follow speed limits and traffic regulations.

Updates are available via the official social media pages as well as the MPT DriveHub app, to keep motorists informed on the latest situation on the MPTC expressways. #

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**Cayetano, nanawagan ng pagkakasundo; Senado pinagtibay ang agarang pagpapatupad ng contingency framework**

**PWD FEDERATION OF CAVITE ELECTS NEWS OFFICERS, STRENGTHENING INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP**

# Public told to protect ear, nose, and throat health ahead of Summer season

## COURTESY VISIT

PBGEN Hansel M Marantan, Acting Regional Director of PRO CALABARZON, paid a courtesy visit to Honorable Governor Francisco Gabriel "Abeng" Remulla, Governor of Cavite Province, today at the New Provincial Government Center, San Agustin, Trece Martires City, Cavite. During his visit, he also engaged in dialogue with the present local government officials. This engagement highlights the continued efforts of PRO CALABARZON to strengthen coordination with local government units, aiming to enhance peace and order, align public safety programs with local priorities, and ensure responsive and effective police services for the community. It also underscores the importance of unified action between the PNP and local leaders in promoting a safer and more secure CALABARZON for all.



## CvSU Imus Participates in the International Conference on Women Empowerment and Leadership in Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources (WELA 2026)



Representing CvSU Imus, Dr. Agnes C. Francisco, OIC, Office of the Campus Administrator, Dr. Elvira P. Pakingan, and Ms. Margarette B. Soberano attended the International Conference on Women Empowerment and Leadership in Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources (WELA 2026) held at the CvSU International Convention Center in Indang, Cavite from March 17–19, 2026. With the theme "Inclusive Leadership and Foresight for Sustainable Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources," the three-day event highlighted innovative strategies, best practices, and collaborations to empower women leaders in these vital sectors. Their participation reflects CvSU Imus' commitment to advancing leadership, sustainability, and inclusivity in agriculture and natural resource management.

## Blessing and Inauguration of Archive Building (6-storey facility)

March 25, 2026 — The City Government of Bacoor, led by Mayor Strike B. Revilla, through the City Engineering Office headed by Engr. Jicky Jutba, successfully held the blessing and inauguration of the city's new six-storey Archive Building. The facility is designed to enhance public services while preserving Bacoor's important records and history.

The ceremony was led by Mayor Strike together with Vice Mayor Rowena Bautista Mendiola, along with members of the Sangguniang Panlungsod including Councilors Rey Palabrica, Noly Galvez, Simplicio Dominguez, Ariel Gawaran, Rey Fabian, Horacio Brillantes, Roberto Advincola, and Levy Tela. Also present were Board Member Alde Pagulayan, LnB Vice President Randy Francisco, and Ericson Santos, who officiated the blessing, along with department heads, barangay officials, and members of the Unity Band.



The newly inaugurated building features a multi-purpose design across its six floors:

- 1st Floor – Parking Area
  - 2nd Floor – Dugout for athletes
  - 3rd Floor – Fitness Gym and Office of the City Sports Services
- cont. on page 2**

## CARD RBI opens 41st branch in Bago City

**DMW assures support for repatriated OFWs from Middle East**

**CPD puts education first amid rising teen pregnancy cases**



### Inflation is under control

From Last week issued

how many pages of the Bible I read each day. All God cared about was me. He wanted to know me, and in order to do that I had to talk to him and tell him what I was feeling and what I needed. It was that simple. Armed with this revelation, I returned to church with a shift in perspective: I was no longer there to fulfill some obligatory duty put forth by Catholic leadership, but to be with God and feel his presence in a peaceful place. In this way, I was now in it for God, not some religious label.

My mistake? I misconstrued religion for faith. I thought religion alone was enough and ignored a relationship with God as a result. Religion is meant to be a supplement to your faith; it is not meant to be a replacement. Religion, by definition, brings together groups of people who share a set of beliefs in some higher power. Consequently, religion is inherently a collective experience you share with such a group. Faith, on the other hand, is an individualized experience, an exploration of a personal relationship with said higher power. Religion is thus incapable of giving you the intimacy required by faith. Instead, you must establish a personal relationship with your God — on your own.

I find going to church and prayer to be ways in which I can strengthen my faith and relationship with God. Maybe you're conventional too. Or maybe you go on hikes to appreciate nature or lock yourself in a pitch-black room to bask in the peace of silence and stillness. Whatever your modus operandi is, do it.

The stipulations of a religion are not worth following if doing so harms your relationship with your God. Give yourself the freedom to pursue your relationship, your way. When you do, I promise you will be filled with a deeper sense of faith and belief that goes beyond the teachings of any religion.

### Blessing

FROM PAGE 01

- 4th Floor – Future regional office of the Human Settlements Adjudication Commission (HSAC), which handles disputes involving homeowners' associations
- 5th & 6th Floors – City Archives for storing and preserving government documents, historical records, and public service files

The opening of the Archive Building marks a major step in strengthening institutional efficiency, historical preservation, and public service delivery in Bacoor. It reflects the city's commitment to building modern facilities that serve both present and future generations. By MIS-STAFF

### PWD...

A new chapter of leadership and representation began for the Federation of Persons with Disabilities (PWD), Cavite Inc., following the successful election of its new set of officers on March 23, at the Admin. Function Hall of the New Provincial Government Center, Trece Martires City.

Speared by the Office of the Provincial Governor - Office of the Provincial Persons with Disability Affairs Officer (OPG-OPDAO), the

event was led by Ms. Marie Shiela A. Haloc, who emphasized the importance of strong and unified leadership in advancing the welfare of the PWD sector across the province.

Chief of Staff Mr. Ferdinand A. Belamide delivered the welcome remarks on behalf of Governor Francisco Gabriel D. Remulla, reiterating the Provincial Government's commitment to programs that empower persons with disabilities and en-

### Public...

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA) – As the Summer season approaches, Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) specialists remind the public to be more cautious to prevent ENT-related health risks and to avoid self-medication when immediate medical attention is needed.

In an interview during the launch of the ENT Center of Calamba Medical Center on March 12, Doctor Rhodora Ocampo, Chief Medical Officer of the ENT Department, urged the public, especially parents to monitor their children when swimming and avoid prolonged exposure to water as it may increase the risk of ear infections, particularly among children who are more prone to ear-related conditions.

"For children, they should not be allowed to stay in the water for too long. Prolonged exposure, especially staying in the water for many hours, can cause the ears to swell or become inflamed even if they are clean, particularly if the body is not used to it.

Also, if you have a cold, it is better to avoid swimming, not only because it can worsen your condition but also because you might spread illness to others," Ocampo stated.

She emphasized that cases of ear infections and other ENT-related conditions often increase during the summer months due to the frequent water exposure and other outdoor activities.

With the city expecting a surge of visitors this season due to its hundreds of public and private hot spring resorts, the medical specialist assured the public that ENT

sure their active participation in community development.

The election brought together PWD leaders and representatives from various cities and municipalities in Cavite. Conducted in a transparent and orderly manner, the process ensured that the voices of the sector were fully represented.

Leading the federation as the newly elected president is Raji M. Nicol of Trece Martires

subspecialty services are readily available in the hospital.

She added: "We now have skilled specialists who can address ear, nose, and throat problems locally, services that previously required travel to the city or Manila for proper examinations and diagnostics because our goal is to provide quality care that is both affordable and accessible."

As many people seek treatment in other public hospitals for their health concerns, CMC assured its coordination with the city government and relevant government agencies, particularly the Department of Health (DOH) and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), to ensure that patients receive benefits under the Universal Healthcare Law.

This guarantees that all Filipinos have equitable access to quality and affordable health care goods and services and are protected against financial risks, even when admitted to private hospitals.

In his statement, Doctor Michael Galicia, Jr., Head and Neck Surgeon, said that the Universal Healthcare Law helps lessen patients' concerns about seeking consultation with specialists.

"In terms of other diagnostic services, not all are covered, but we do offer certain packages. As long as the patient has PhilHealth, our assumption under the Universal Healthcare Law is that we can perform certain procedures without service charges from the doctor or the hospital.

This is one of the

FROM PAGE 01

City, with Jonnie D. Josue of General Trias City as his vice president. Rennel B. Dinglasan of Mendez will serve as secretary, while Jaessa P. Villa of Naic assumes the role of treasurer.

Overseeing finances is Nerissa C. Dela Cruz of Noveleta as auditor. Roselle D. Limpiada of Amadeo will handle public relations, and Josephine Abarte of General Mariano Alvarez (GMA) will manage business operations. Together, they are poised

ways we can help patients who are afraid or hesitant to go to the hospital," he stated.

This ensures that patients seeking appropriate and improved

### CPD...

TAGAYTAY CITY, Cavite (PIA) — The Commission on Population and Development (CPD) is strengthening ties with the education sector to provide age-appropriate, comprehensive sexual health education, as adolescent pregnancy remains a critical health issue for Filipino girls.

Speaking at a seminar on Adolescent Health last March 16, CPD Information Officer Jasmine Osias emphasized that the Department of Education (DepEd) is a key partner providing information and education campaigns targeting the youth.

"POPCOM reaches out to the youth by conducting the National Population Quiz under the Department of Education's National Festival of Talents, where the youth are educated on population and development concepts and issues."

In Biñan City, Laguna, the City Population Office partnered with DepEd to develop the Sexually Healthy and Personally Empowered (SHAPE) Adolescents module that enabled Araling Panlipunan, Health, and Science teachers to integrate fertility awareness, sexual health, and life skills into their lessons.

"We are learning, gaining, and sharing our experiences in localizing and owning adolescent health and development."

The CPD also launched its Adolescent to lead initiatives that strengthen inclusivity, accessibility, and the welfare of persons with disabilities throughout Cavite.

Through initiatives like this, the Provincial Government of Cavite continues to foster an empowered and equitable society, recognizing persons with disabilities as vital partners in nation-building.— OPIO

The 2021 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Study of the University of the Philippines Population Institute revealed that social media has become a primary source of sex education for 31 percent of Filipino boys. An even larger group – 39 percent

FROM PAGE 01

treatment for their health needs, whether they are admitted to a provincial hospital or a private hospital, Filipinos are still assisted by the government to help ease their burden.

FROM PAGE 01

Pregnancy Symposia to provide data-driven discussions on adolescent sex education and the consequences of teen pregnancy.

Citing the 2020 report on Filipino family planning awareness and the work of the CPD, Osias emphasized the rising number of girls not even aged 15 who are giving birth.

"Ang mas nakaalarma ay bumabata ang mga maagang nanganganak.

There is an upward trend of girls aged 14 and younger ang dumadami sa buong Pilipinas."

Osias also highlighted a sobering reality: in 2024 alone, 3,612 live births were recorded among girls as young as 10, averaging about 10 births to child mothers every day.

"At ang mas nakaalarma na naitala natin, repeated pregnancies or yung nagbubuntis ulit are becoming more common. Bahagya man ang pagbababa, pero meron pa rin."

Based on the 2024 data from local Health Offices in the region, Antipolo City, Rizal reported the highest rate of adolescent pregnancy in 2024, with 1,172 cases. The CPD also noted that high pregnancy rates in Calamba City, Laguna, 948 cases; Santa Rosa City, Laguna, 631 cases; and San Pablo City, Laguna, 504 cases.

"Good news, the numbers are declining. But one pregnant girl is still one pregnant teenager."

cont. on page 7

## DOE Enforces Emergency Measures to Keep Power Stable, Protect Consumers from Price Spikes

The Department of Energy (DOE) has directed power sector stakeholders to immediately implement fuel conservation and prioritization measures following President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s declaration of a state of national energy emergency under Executive Order No. 110. The directive is intended to protect the stability of the country's electricity supply while cushioning electricity price impact amid rising global fuel prices.

Signed by Energy Secretary Sharon S. Garin on 25 March 2026, the advisory covers generation companies, the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines, the Independent Electricity Market Operator of the Philippines, distribution utilities, electric cooperatives, ancillary service providers, and other WESM trading participants. It sets out urgent measures to conserve fuel inventories, manage dispatch more efficiently, and reduce the exposure of the power sector to external supply shocks.

As fuel prices continue to rise due to the Middle East conflict, initial simulations by the Independent Electricity Market Operator of the Philippines (IEMOP) estimate that average prices of getting supply from the WESM could exceed P9 per kilowatt-hour from the pre-Middle East conflict average WESM prices of P5 per kilowatt-hour or less. Similarly, power supply from bilateral contracts is likely to increase as prices of fuel escalate.

As such, the DOE

### CPD...

– obtains information from peers or lacks access to sexual health education entirely.

Girls fared even worse, with 26 percent getting their information on sex from social media. Meanwhile, 44 percent do not have any degree of exposure to any information on sex education.

"These children

called for the adoption of special operating guidelines for system dispatch to support the full utilization, where feasible and subject to system security requirements, of renewable energy resources, indigenous energy sources, and coal. Specifically, the full dispatch of indigenous sources and coal-fired power plants is projected to cushion the increase in WESM prices by up to P2 per kilowatt-hour.

The advisory sets out urgent measures to preserve fuel inventories, strengthen coordination on fuel availability, improve system dispatch under emergency conditions, and reduce the power sector's exposure to external supply disruptions and elevated international fuel prices.

"As a net importer of oil, coal, and liquefied natural gas (LNG), we are acting with heightened discipline to preserve power system reliability in the face of escalating global fuel market volatility," Energy Secretary Sharon S. Garin said. "This is a decisive intervention to protect the grid, manage fuel use responsibly, and ensure that essential electricity services remain uninterrupted."

The advisory also directed generation companies to closely monitor fuel inventories, comply with their required 15-day fuel inventory, and immediately report any actual or potential fuel supply risks to the DOE for appropriate assessment and possible intervention. In addition, generation companies were directed to explore feasible fuel al-

### CPD...

tend to use social media to search for information on sex, both boys and girls. In fact, there is content showing girls getting pregnant in their teens that is trending on these platforms. In these trends alone, we can see that there are early pregnancies and repeated pregnancies."

Aside from Laguna and Rizal, other cities

ternatives to support cost mitigation and supply adequacy, including options for higher biodiesel blends for oil-based plants and coal blending, i.e. mixing different types of coal or co-firing, i.e. mixing coal with locally available feedstock typically biomass, for coal-fired facilities, subject to technical, operational, and environmental requirements.

The Department said these measures are intended to moderate the impact of sustained fuel price increases in the international market, which could otherwise place significant upward pressure on WESM prices.

For off-grid areas, the DOE called on utilities to use available generation efficiently, continue securing fuel supply, and implement demand-side management measures, recognizing the greater vulnerability of isolated systems to international fuel market disruptions.

The DOE emphasized that these actions form part of the government's broader emergency response under EO 110 to safeguard the adequacy, stability, and affordability of energy supply during a period of heightened global uncertainty. The Department said it will continue to monitor compliance closely, in coordination with the Energy Regulatory Commission, IEMOP, NGCP, and other concerned entities, and will take further action as necessary to preserve system reliability, maintain orderly market conditions, and protect consumers. PR

FROM PAGE 02

and municipalities including Tanza, Cavite (501 cases); Lipa City, Batangas (479 cases); Bacoor City, Cavite (462 cases); Taytay, Rizal (452 cases); General Trias City, Cavite (450 cases); and Batangas City, Batangas (446 cases) also reported the highest number of reported adolescent pregnancies in the region



### DMW...

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA) — The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) in CALABARZON has assured continuous assistance for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) affected by the ongoing crisis in the Middle East, as the national government intensifies its repatriation efforts across Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

DMW CALABARZON Regional Director April Casabuena said repatriation operations are actively being carried out in coordination with Philippine embassies and migrant workers' offices across the region to ensure the safe return of Filipinos.

"Repatriation efforts of our national government are ongoing for OFWs in the Middle East, spread across GCC countries. We are ensuring that these efforts are carried out with the help of our embassies and migrant workers' offices in each country," Casabuena said during the Philippine Information Agency's Usapang PIA radio program.

### Cayetano...

Binigyang diin ni Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano nitong Miyerkules ang pangangailangan ng pagkakasundo at pagkakahanay sa pagitan ng gobyerno at pribadong sektor sa gitna ng patuloy na tensiyon sa Middle East.

Ito ay matapos aprubahan ng Senado ang kanyang resolusyon na nananawagan sa Executive Branch na bumuo ng national contingency framework sa lalong madalang panahon.

Ang Senate Resolution No. 343, na co-authored ng 22 senador at co-sponsored ng Senate President, ay naglalayong maitatag ang isang National Contingency Framework na magbibigay daan sa bansa na paghandaan, tugunan, at makabangon mula sa malalaking krisis sa loob at labas ng bansa sa pamamagitan ng maayos na koordinasyon ng buong gobyerno at buong bansa.

Ayon kay Cayetano, kailangan magkaroon ng

are doing that. Nag-announce agad sila ng mga measures," wika ni Cay-

As of latest data, around 1,200 OFWs have already been repatriated under the government's whole-of-government approach. She added that six flights carrying returning OFWs arrived just recently, with authorities continuing data validation and profiling.

"Some of our fellow Filipinos have different home addresses from what they originally registered before leaving the country, so we are still conducting data capturing to properly determine where they will return," she explained.

While no confirmed repatriated OFWs have yet been recorded in the CALABARZON region, Casabuena noted that there are already pending repatriation requests from OFWs still in the Middle East, which are currently being processed.

The DMW, in coordination with the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) and the Philippine Embassy in Riyadh, is facilitating the safe transport of affected OFWs to central locations

FROM PAGE 01

for repatriation. Assistance is being provided throughout the process, including coordination on the ground to ensure their safety.

Casabuena also confirmed that a team from DMW, including her office, may soon be deployed to the Middle East to directly assist and check the welfare of OFWs, particularly in providing legal and psychological support aside from facilitating their return.

Upon arrival in the Philippines, returning OFWs will immediately be welcomed at the airport by DMW and OWWA personnel.

Authorities gather updated information, determine their home regions, and coordinate with regional offices to ensure proper assistance and intervention are delivered.

The government continues to provide a range of support services, including welfare and reintegration programs, financial assistance, psychosocial support, and legal aid to help OFWs recover and rebuild their lives after returning home.

FROM PAGE 01

etano.

Dagdag pa niya, dapat ding nakaayon ang mga polisiya at programa sa national agencies, local government, at private sector.

Aniya, madalas sinusubok ng mga krisis ang katatagan ng pundasyon ng isang bansa.

Ayon sa senador, maaaring maapektuhan ang global oil supply at magdulot ng economic shock kapag nasira ang mga critical infrastructures dahil sa tumataas na geopolitical tensions.

Binanggit din ni Cayetano na nagdulot ang mga krisis ng parehong hamon at oportunidad, depende sa kung paano naghahanda at tumugon ang mga bansa.

"Let's not miss opportunities. Ang lahat ng crisis may winners [at] may losers.

There are things that will divide us, [But this contingency framework] is to prepare us not only for the challenges but also for the opportunities," sabi niya. PR

# DTI Laguna and CLDD Calamba Empower Calambeños through Business Planning Seminar

February 13, 2026 | Calamba, Laguna – The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Laguna Provincial Office, through Negosyo Center Calamba City, in partnership with the Cooperatives and Livelihood Development Department (CLDD) Calamba, successfully conducted the seminar “How to Start a Business & Business Plan Preparation” at the CLDD Training Center, Mercado de Calamba, Brgy. 5, Calamba City, Laguna.

The activity gathered aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups, and existing micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) who are determined to start, grow, and sustain their businesses. The seminar aimed to equip participants with practical knowledge and essential tools to confidently navigate the entrepreneurial journey.

# GSIS opens solar loan applications March 25, brings solar within reach for government workers

The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) opens applications for its Ginhawa Solar Energy Loan (GSEL) today, March 25, marking a major step in making renewable energy more accessible and affordable for government employees.

The launch comes as President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. issued Executive Order No. 110 declaring a national energy emergency, highlighting the need for urgent measures to address rising electricity costs and strengthen energy security. The GSIS initiative supports this broader effort by enabling government workers to adopt solar energy at the household level.

The program positions GSIS among the first public pension institutions in the Philippines to directly support small-scale renewable energy adoption through consumer financing.

Applications are available exclusively through the GSIS Touch mobile application, reinforcing the agency’s push toward fully digital public service delivery.

GSIS President and General Manager Wick Veloso said the program enables members to

Through continuous collaboration, DTI Laguna and CLDD Calamba reaffirm their commitment to delivering accessible and relevant business development services. By empowering more Calambeños with the right knowledge and skills, this initiative supports the creation of sustainable businesses and contributes to the City’s economic progress.

DTI Laguna, through its Negosyo Centers, continues to provide business advisory services, capacity-building seminars, and assistance in business registration and compliance to strengthen the growth and resilience of MSMEs across the province.

For more inquiries, kindly contact DTI Laguna at r04a.laguna@dti.gov.ph (ARAREnal, DTI-Laguna).

take a more active role in the country’s energy transition.

“The call from the President is clear: every Filipino must be part of the solution. Through this program, our members can move from awareness to action, shifting to solar, lowering long-term costs, and investing in a more stable and sustainable future.” Under the program, members may borrow up to ₱500,000 to finance the purchase and installation of solar panels, including equipment and installation costs. Loans are payable over five years at an interest rate of 5% per annum, with no service fee.

By spreading upfront costs over time, the program makes solar more attainable, allowing borrowers to gradually recover their investment through savings on electricity bills. It also allows reimbursement for solar systems installed starting 2026, extending support to early adopters.

Members who install solar panels may also benefit from the government’s net metering system, which allows households to sell excess electricity back to the grid, further reducing energy expenses.

Eligible appli-

# CALABARZON police prepare for Lent, summer season; ensure heightened security in critical areas

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA) — With the observance of Lent and the summer vacation approaching, the Philippine National Police (PNP) has activated a nationwide security plan to ensure safety and peace and order, noting that it remains alert and will deploy personnel in highly critical areas.

In CALABARZON, Police Regional Office (PRO) 4A Regional Director Brigadier General Hansel Marantan supports the directive and has immediately mobilized extensive security preparations under the IMPLAN Ligtas SUMVAC 2026 initiative.

“Aligned with the focused agenda of our Chief, PNP, we are strengthening the management of all public activities, intensifying crowd control measures, and implementing comprehensive risk management plans across all levels especially during red-letter days and other significant holidays in the country,” Marantan said in a press release.

As part of its strategic preparations, PRO

Calabarzon has mobilized 14,025 personnel for deployment across the region.

This includes 8,453 police personnel, 1,306 augmentation forces from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), and other partner agencies, as well as 4,266 force multipliers from advocacy groups and trained volunteers.

For a comprehensive coverage, PRO Calabarzon has identified 1,023 critical areas in the region that require intensified police presence and security operations.

These include 216 places of worship, such as the Antipolo Cathedral in Rizal, Kamay ni Hesus Shrine in Quezon province, and the Diocesan Shrine of St. John the Baptist in Laguna.

Additionally, security will cover 261 major thoroughfares, 87 transportation terminals, 200 commercial establishments, and 227 tourist destinations, where a high influx of visitors is expected throughout the season.

“We continuously revisit and improve our security operations, especially in identified areas of concern, to ensure that every event, gathering, and movement of people is secured with precision, discipline, and foresight.”

Sa Bagong Pilipinas, ang kapulisan ay handang maglingkod nang mabilis, tapat, at may malasakit para sa kaligtasan ng bawat mamamayan,” the Calabarzon top police official added.

Close coordination with local government units, non-government organizations, the Department of Tourism (DOT), and community-based volunteers has been established.

Meanwhile, starting on March 27, all PRO Calabarzon units will be placed on full alert status.

All deployed personnel are directed to focus on crowd management, traffic control, and prevention of any criminal activities.

The public is also urged to stay vigilant and actively cooperate with authorities to help maintain peace and order.

# Courtesy Visit to Ho. Mayor Alex “AA” L. Advincula



The Cavite State University – Imus Campus conducted a courtesy visit to Hon. Mayor Alex “AA” L. Advincula at the Imus City Hall on March 23, 2026, to strengthen collaboration with the local government. The delegation was led by Dr. Agnes C. Francisco, OIC Campus Administrator, together with Dr. Alfe M. Solina, Chairperson of the Department of Management; Mr. Sixto N. Ras Jr., Chairperson of the Department of Physical Education; and Ms. Margarete B. Soberano, Campus Secretary. The visit aimed to foster partnerships in education, research, and community extension. Mayor Advincula expressed his support for initiatives that promote inclusive development in Imus City.

# EDITORIAL:

## The True Wealth of a Nation

The age-old proverb “Health is Wealth” is often dismissed as a cliché until a crisis—personal or national—proves it true. In the Philippines, we are currently navigating a “dual-track” health crisis: the rising costs of medical care for households and the structural fragmentation of our public healthcare delivery.

While the Universal Health Care Act promised a safety net for every Filipino, recent data from the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) reveals that out-of-pocket spending rose by nearly 12% in the last year

alone. This means that despite increased government spending, a single major illness can still push a middle-class family into poverty.

Beyond the wallet, the “decay” of local health centers and the shortage of health-care workers—who often seek better opportunities abroad—remain the silent killers of our system. A building without a nurse is just a shell; a law without funding is just lip service. As we move forward, the focus must shift from simply “building more” to “retaining more”—valuing the health workers who are the true backbone of our national survival.

# ERRATUM

This is to correct the error made in the publication of NOTICE OF SHERIFF’S SALE filed by BDO UNIBANK, INC., versus SPS. GINALYN S. DANCEL and ALEXANDER EUGENE DANCEL published in STRAIGHT NEWS PUBLISHING dated March 11, 18 & 25, 2026. In the tech terms, 12th line in the Imus Estate, ; should be removed; 23rd line should be read as POINTS 1 TO 4BY OLD PS AND THE REST by P.S. CYL. CONC. MONS. 15x60 CM.; 24th line SURVEY should be read as SURVEY, and 25th line, SURVEY should be read as SUBDIVISION SURVEY and not as published.

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# Cavite commemorates the 157th anniversary of General Emilio Aguinaldo

On March 22, the Provincial Government of Cavite, through the Provincial Tourism and Cultural Affairs Office, in partnership with the National Historical Commission of the Philippines and the local government of Kawit, took part in the commemoration of the 157th birth anniversary of Emilio Aguinaldo, the first President of the Philippine Republic.

The ceremony was held at the historic Museo ni Emilio Aguinaldo.

The program formally opened with the raising of the Philippine flag, conducted under the supervision of the Philippine Navy, Philippine National Police Kawit Police Station, and the Cavite Tourist Police Unit.



Representing Cavite Governor Francisco Gabriel D. Remulla, Provincial Tourism Officer Elinia Imelda Rozelle S. Sangalang delivered a message highlighting the enduring legacy of General Aguinaldo. Also present during the ceremony was

Kawit Mayor Cynthia Aguinaldo. The event was further graced by key figures, including Vice Governor Ram Revilla Bautista, who attended on behalf of 1st District Congressman Ramon “Jolo” Revilla III; Carmin-da R. Arevalo, Executive

Director of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines; and Ms. Emilee Aguinaldo-Pulido, a member of the Aguinaldo family, whose presence underscored the continuing significance of the Aguinaldo legacy in Philippine history.

— OPIO

# 220 Kababaihan, Dumalo sa “Imusnya: Handa sa Pagbago-bagong Klima”



TINGNAN: Umabot sa 220 kababaihan ang lumahok sa programang “Imusnya: Handa sa Pagbago-bagong Klima” na isinagawa noong Marso 18, 2026, sa Imus Youth Center, Imus Pilot Elementary School, sa

pangunguna ng Office of the City Environment and Natural Resources Officer (OCENRO) bilang bahagi ng pagdiriwang ng National Women’s Month.

Dumalo sa naturang aktibidad si City Mayor Alex “AA” L. Advin-

cula, kasama ang pangunahing tagapagsalita na si Nerea C. Defensor na nagbahagi ng mahahalagang kaalaman hinggil sa Climate Change.

Tinalakay ni Defensor ang mga usapin ukol sa kahalagahan ng

kababaihan at mga lider ng komunidad sa pagsulong ng climate action at sustainable development.

Kabilang sa mga kalahok ang mga kinatawan mula sa Civil Society Organization (CSO), people’s organization, Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), Local Council for Women, at Imus City Parent-Teacher Association Federation.

Layunin ng aktibidad na palakasin ang kamalayan sa pagbabago ng klima, paigtingin ang kahandaan sa sakuna, at itaguyod ang katatagan ng komunidad, kung saan ang mga kababaihan ang mas apektado sa mga epektong dulot ng climate change.

# Cavite Service Caravan kicks off, expands access to essential service

The Provincial Government of Cavite, under the leadership of Governor Abeng Remulla, officially launched the Cavite Service Caravan on March 24, 2026, in Ternate, reinforcing its commitment to making government services more accessible and responsive to the needs of Caviteños.

The launch was attended by key provincial and local officials, in-

cluding 8th District Board Member Jasmin Angelli Maligaya-Bautista, Ternate Mayor Lamberto Bambao and the Sangguniang Bayan members headed by Vice Mayor Calvin Kenneth Soberano, who joined Governor Remulla in bringing essential services closer to the people, alongside department heads and partner agencies participating in the initiative.

As a flagship program of the provincial government, the Cavite Service Caravan consolidates various offices in a one-stop setup, delivering frontline services directly to communities, particularly those with limited access to government programs.

Governor Remulla underscored the caravan’s mission of bringing provincial government services closer to the people and encouraged citizens

to avail themselves of these programs – reflecting the guiding principle, “mula sa bayan, para sa bayan.”

Health and medical services were spearheaded by the Office of the Provincial Governor and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, offering medical consultations, dental and oral health care, laboratory services such as ECG and fasting blood sugar tests, **cont. on page 5**

# Mekeni president urges media, business leaders to spread hope amid global tensions



SANTA ROSA, Laguna, March 20, 2026 — The president of Mekeni Food Corporation called on media practitioners and business leaders to go beyond delivering factual and unbiased information by actively spreading hope, especially amid ongoing global tensions affecting economies and communities.

Speaking during his acceptance as an honorary member of the Camp Vicente Lim Press Corps (CVLPC) on Friday, the Mekeni president Mr. Pruds Garcia, emphasized the critical role of both sectors in shaping public sentiment during uncertain times, including those influenced by international conflicts such as the situation involving Iran. "While it is our responsibility to

report and communicate the truth, it is equally important to inspire hope and resilience among our people," he said, underscoring the influence of media narratives and corporate leadership in guiding communities through crisis.

The honorary membership was conferred in recognition of Mekeni Food Corporation's significant contributions to the food industry and its expanding impact beyond Central Luzon to other key regions, particularly CALABARZON.

The oath-taking ceremony was held as part of the CVLPC's 23rd anniversary celebration in Santa Rosa, Laguna, bringing together members of the press corps, stakeholders, and partners from various sectors.

Camp Vicente Lim Press Corps officials said the inclusion of representatives from the business sector highlights the growing importance of collaboration between media and industry in addressing societal challenges.

Mekeni Food Corporation, which started as a regional food company in Pampanga, has grown into a recognized brand with a wider national presence, continuing to advocate for community development and responsible business practices.

Nilinaw ng dalawang panig ang mga proseso sa pagsasagawa ng Visual Communication Assessment for the Deaf (VCAD) kabilang ang pagtalakay sa dokumentasyon at pagbabayad sa

forcing Institutions (CARD MRI), established to widen financial services for underserved communities. Founded in 1996, the bank has remained committed to empowering women and improving the well-being of their families while actively promoting the values of hard work and discipline. CARD RBI offers a wide range of services, including loans, savings, and remittances tailored to clients' needs.

The newest branch is located at Gen. Luna St., Brgy. Poblacion, Bago City, District 1.

As of December 31, 2025, CARD RBI has served a total of 907,259 clients. For more information about CARD RBI, visit its official Facebook page @CMRBOfficial or its website at <https://www.cardmri.com/rbi>. PR

The Bago branch is expected to serve more than 3,500 clients in the cities of Bago, Bacolod, Talisay, Silay, and Victoria and the municipalities of Murcia and Valladolid in Negros Occidental, further strengthening the bank's commitment to making financial services more accessible to the people it serves.

CARD MRI Rizal Bank Inc. (CARD RBI) marks another milestone as it opened its 41st branch located in Bago City on January 26, 2026, to meet the growing needs of the micro-entrepreneurs in the area.

"This expansion is an opportunity to widen the bank's reach and extend our services to more clients. By opening new branches, we can serve a greater number of clients and help more Filipinos improve their businesses and uplift the quality of their lives," said CARD RBI President and CEO Lyneth Derequito.

CARD RBI management strategically positioned its new branch location near neighboring provinces where the bank already operates branches, we can serve a greater number of clients and help more Filipinos improve their businesses and uplift the quality of their lives," said CARD RBI President and CEO Lyneth Derequito.

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# CARD RBI OPENS 41ST BRANCH IN BAGO CITY



CARD RBI President and CEO Ms. Lyneth Derequito led the opening of the CARD RBI branch in Bago City together with CARD RBI Executive Vice President Juliana De Leon, CARD RBI Board Director Ms. Elma Valenzuela, CARD MRI Executive Committee members, senior advisers, konek2CARD ambassador Mr. JC Santos, CARD MRI officers, and staff.

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In celebration of World Water Day, volunteers from SM City Tanza — including employees, security guards, and maintenance personnel — came together for a meaningful coastal clean-up initiative at Barangay Julugan 1, Tanza Cavite, led by SM Cares in partnership with the Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office. Through teamwork and shared responsibility, volunteers helped protect our shores and promote environmental awareness in the community — reminding us that caring for our waters today means a better tomorrow for all. #SMCaresCoastalCleanUps #SMWasteFreeFuture #EmpoweringCommunities

# DILG, PDEA torch P4.56-B in Seized Drugs, Call it a Coordinated Campaign, Not a War on Drugs

Interior and Local Government Secretary Jonvic Remulla today said there is no "war on drugs" in the Marcos administration but a coordinated "campaign" that prioritizes legal processes and collaboration across agencies.

"Ayokong gamitin ang salitang war on drugs kasi ang war on drugs is a campaign against illegal drugs. Itong nakikita natin ngayon ay collaboration ng whole of government, barangay at PNP hanggang PDEA," Remulla said.

"This is the product of hardwork, this is the product of collaboration. Trust the process. Trust your local officials. We will do our best for the country," he added.

Remulla joined Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) Director General, Undersecretary Isagani Nerez at the Integrated Waste Management facility in Barangay Aguado, Trece Martires City today for the destruction of 1.136 tons of illegal drugs and controlled substances valued at P4.56 billion that were seized in recent nationwide anti-drug operations.

The substances which were loaded into a thermal decomposition chamber included 555 kilograms of methamphetamine hydrochloride (shabu), 442 kilograms of

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# Korte Suprema at KWF, Nagpulong para sa Episyenteng Pagsagawa ng VCAD



Nagpulong ang Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF) at Office of the Court Administrator (OCA) noong 10 Marso 2026, 10:00 nu, sa tanggapan ng Korte Suprema hinggil sa tuntuning ipinatutupad ng Korte Suprema sa Filipino Sign Language (FSL) sa Hudikatura.

Nilinaw ng dalawang panig ang mga proseso sa pagsasagawa ng Visual Communication Assessment for the Deaf (VCAD) kabilang ang pagtalakay sa dokumentasyon at pagbabayad sa

Deaf Assessor, alinsunod sa A.M. No. 21-12-04-SC (Re: Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Filipino Sign Language Act).

Nakaangkla rin ito sa Batas Republika 11106 o FSL Act na naglalayong palakasin ang akses ng Deaf Community sa mga serbisyong panghudikatura at maisulong ang inklusibidad na pamamahala bilang tugon sa Strategic Plan for Judicial Innovations (SPJI) ng Korte Suprema.

Dumalo mulâ sa KWF si Dr. Benjamin M.

Mendillo Jr., Komisyoner sa Pangasiwaan at Papanalapi, kasâma ang Yunit ng FSL sa pangunguna ni G. Patrick Bryan Q. Ablaza, Senior Deaf Advocacy Officer; Bb. Diana Pria Vizmanos, Deaf Advocacy Officer; at mga Admin Assistant na sina Bb. Nicah Lagrimas at Bb. Mitzi Mae Tabao.

Kinatawan naman nina Hon. Lillian Barribal-Co, Assistant Court Administrator, at Atty. Andrea Mae E. Oraclin ang OCA.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was officially entered into by PhilHealth Regional Office IV-A (PRO IV-A), under the leadership of Acting Regional Vice President Edwin M. Oriña, MD and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) Regional Office CALABARZON, headed by JCSUPT ISABELO V CARTIN JR, DSC, MBA, Regional Director of the Jail Bureau, to ensure the efficient reimbursement of the TB- DOTS benefit for the Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) in the region.

The signing ceremony highlighted a shared commitment between PRO IV-A and BJMP CALABARZON to improve access to quality healthcare services within jail facilities, particularly for tuberculosis prevention and treatment.

During the event, Dr. Oriña also presented an overview of key PhilHealth programs, including the PhilHealth Yamaning Kalusugan Program (YAKAP), which aims to further enhance the health and well-being of PDLs across Region IV-A through expanded benefits, streamlined processes, and improved service delivery.

This partnership represents a concrete step toward the full realization of Universal Health Care. By reinforcing coordinated efforts between PhilHealth and BJMP CALABARZON, the agreement ensures that even the most vulnerable sectors—including PDLs—are provided with equitable access to essential health services, affirming the principle that no one is left behind. PR

# No One Left Behind: PHILHEALTH REGIONAL OFFICE IV-A and BJMP CALABARZON Partner for Inclusive PDL Healthcare



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Get ready for a MAX-OUT Easter Sunday experience at your most-loved SM City Calamba! We're bringing you the FIRST-EVER Easter Parade packed with colorful mascots, festive vibes, and non-stop fun for the whole family! Hop into the celebration, strike a pose with your favorite characters, and make this Easter a memorable one!

#CelebrateEasterAtSM  
#GalaToTheMax  
#GoAllOutAtSM

# Cavite...

pharmacy assistance, and fluoride varnish application for children. Emergency medical support was also provided by the Office of the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officer.

Employment and economic opportunities were facilitated through the Office of the Provincial Public Employment Service Manager, featuring a job fair and job matching, employment support services from national agencies like SSS, Philhealth, BIR, Pag-ibig Fund, TESDA, PSA, and DTI, career coaching sessions on resume writing, interview techniques, and anti-illegal recruitment awareness.

The Office of the Provincial Cooperatives Development Officer also extended entrepreneurship and business facilitation services, cooperative assistance, and promoted local Cavite products through a trade fair.

Agricultural support services from the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist included agriculture and fisheries education, as well as the distribution of vegetable seeds, seedlings, and informational materials to assist local farmers and

fisherfolk.

Social and community services were delivered by the Office of the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Officer through counseling, referral, and welfare assistance, while the Office of the Provincial Population Officer provided family planning counseling and distributed commodities. Free legal aid and basic legal information were also made available through the Office of the Provincial Legal Officer.

Specialized services for vulnerable sectors were extended by the Office of the Provincial Persons with Disability Affairs Officer, including wheelchair provision, hearing tests, hearing aids, and assistance with PWD ID applications.

Animal health services were offered by the Office of the Provincial Veterinarian, including free veterinary consultations, anti-rabies vaccination, and deworming and vitamin supplementation for pets.

Information dissemination and public engagement were supported by the Office of the Provincial Information Officer through an information

booth and photobooth, while digital inclusion efforts were promoted by the Provincial Information and Communications Technology Office through a free digital literacy program and internet connectivity services.

Meanwhile, the Offices of the Provincial Engineer, General Services Officer, Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer, and the Cavite Office of Public Safety provided logistical, environmental, and security support for the event.

Through the

Cavite Service Caravan, the provincial government strengthens its commitment to inclusive and people-centered governance by bringing a comprehensive range of services directly to the grassroots.

The Ternate launch marks the beginning of a series of service caravans to be conducted across the province, further expanding the reach of government programs and uplifting the lives of Caviteños.

— Office of the Provincial Information Officer

FROM PAGE 03

# DILG...

marijuana, 117 kilograms of cocaine, 1.66 kilograms of MDMA (ecstasy), 15.8 kilograms of ephedrine, 0.507 kilogram of ketamine, as well as liquid meth, amphetamine, toluene, and expired medicines.

Remulla emphasized that the destruction followed strict legal procedures, including court authorization, after the items had been presented as evidence in resolved cases. "Sa campaign on drugs, sumusunod tayo sa batas, sa proseso at ginagawa natin ang tama. Ito ang Bagong Pilipinas."

Also destroyed were over 43,000 grams of marijuana (kush) and more than 102,000 grams of cocaine recovered along Palawan's shorelines between late last year and early this year.

The event was witnessed by representatives from law enforcement agencies, the Department of Justice, NGOs, media partners, and local barangay officials, reflecting the government's commitment to transparency, accountability, and due process. DILG.GOV.PH

FROM PAGE 04