

TARA, LET'S EXPLORE MANILA: A CULTURAL ADVENTURE MADE EASIER VIA CAVITEX



Beyond the busy streets of Manila lies a city rich in history and culture, now more accessible than ever via for Caviteños via Manila-Cavite Expressway (CAVITEX). Motorists from Las Piñas and Parañaque may also use the CAVITEX Sucat Interchange, with entry along Dr. A. Santos Avenue, for a more convenient route to these destinations. Last March 14, 2025, Metro Pacific Tollways South (MPT South) successfully hosted Biyaheng South: Tara, Let's Explore Manila, an immersive cultural tour they made possible through partnerships with Intramuros Administration, the National Historical Commission of the Philippines, Food Wanderer x Lakbay Museo, and Space & Time Cube. This unique experience allowed selected Ka-Biyaheros to rediscover Manila through a seamless blend of history, interactive exhibits, and local flavors—all just a quick and convenient drive from Cavite via CAVITEX.

Three lucky winners, along with their chosen guests, were selected through an online raffle on Biyaheng South's Facebook page. They joined influencers on an exciting journey to some of Manila's most iconic landmarks and attractions.

First Stop: Intramuros—A Walk through History

The first stop was the historic walls of Intramuros, just an hour away from Cavite via CAVITEX. The Intramuros Heritage Tour began at Palacio del

Gobernador, a historic Spanish-era building near Manila Cathedral, setting the stage for a journey through time. From there, participants boarded a Tranvia, a charming electric streetcar reminiscent of Manila's early 20th-century rail transport, for a nostalgic ride through the streets of Intramuros.

The group then visited Fort Santiago, a centuries-old citadel that once served as a military stronghold and the final prison of Dr. José Rizal. Inside, they explored Museo ni Rizal, where they gained insights into the life and works of the national hero. Next, they proceeded to Centro de Turismo to explore Museo de Intramuros, which houses a collection of religious artifacts and colonial-era art that highlight the Spanish influence on Philippine culture.

The tour also included stops at Baluarte de San Diego, one of the oldest stone wall structures in Intramuros, and Casa Manila, a beautifully reconstructed Spanish colonial home that offers a glimpse into the elegant lifestyle of Filipinos during the 19th century. After the tour, our Ka-Biyaheros enjoyed a delightful lunch at Barbara's Heritage Restaurant, where they savored authentic Filipino cuisine—adding another layer of cultural immersion to their journey.

Second Stop: Immersive Experience at the Space & Time Cube PH

From history to innovation, the journey

continued at Space & Time Cube PH at S'Maison, Pasay—an interactive art space that blends art, technology, and imagination, offering a fresh perspective on modern Manila. The museum provided participants with a mesmerizing visual spectacle, where shifting lights, dynamic soundscapes, and interactive exhibits created an otherworldly experience—a striking contrast to their historical exploration of Intramuros.

Third Stop: Sensory-filled Journey at Food Wanderer x Lakbay Museo

The final stop was Food Wanderer x Lakbay Museo at Ayala Malls Manila Bay, a multi-sensory museum showcasing the country's rich culinary heritage. The participants were greeted with life-sized displays of food and realistic recreations of traditional Filipino markets and kitchens. One of the highlights was the interactive tasting experience, where participants sampled iconic Filipino treats. In addition to this, the museum's vibrant, Instagram-worthy setups added to the experience, making it both fun and educational.

Why We Do This

Arlette V. Capistrano, Vice President for Communication and Stakeholder Management of MPT South, said, "Exploring Manila's rich history through this event was a unique and immersive experience. It was an opportunity to reconnect with our history and culture

while fostering a deeper appreciation for our heritage, allowing them to see the beauty of our past while enjoying the present. We hope this inspires more travelers to rediscover the cultural gems in our own backyard."

"Tara, Let's Explore Manila" was launched to provide a unique opportunity for travelers to rediscover the rich history, heritage, and hidden gems of the country's capital. Manila, often seen as just a gateway to other destinations, holds centuries of history and vibrant culture waiting to be explored. Through this initiative, MPT South sought to showcase the beauty and significance of the city's historical sites, immersive museums, and cultural landmarks, reinforcing the company's mission of enhancing connectivity—not only through expressways but also by fostering deeper connections between people and places.

About MPT South

MPT South is a subsidiary of Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC). Aside from CALAX and CAVITEX networks of toll roads, MPTC's domestic portfolio includes concessions for the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX), the NLEX Connector Road, the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX), and the Cebu-Cordova Link Expressway (CCLEX) in Cebu.

Two Major Roads in Calamba Now Open: Faster, Safer Travel for All!



DERETSAHAN

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Vol. I - Series 36 - March 23-29, 2025



Governor Athena Bryana D. Tolentino received the prestigious Gawad Bayanihan sa Pamumuhunan Award for the Provincial Government of Cavite during the 1st GAWAD Bayanihan sa Pamumuhunan: Making It Happen with A Whole-of-Nation Strategy awarding ceremony on March 13, 2025 at Malacañan Palace in Manila.

Spearheaded by the Department of Trade and Industry – Board of Investments (DTI-BOI), the event

recognizes government partners for the successful implementation of Executive Order No. 18 which mandates the creation of "green lanes" as the government-wide response to enhance Ease of Doing Business expediting and streamlining government processes for strategic investments.

His Excellency President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. hailed the awardees for their exemplary work in advancing the green lanes for strategic investments and enjoined them to nurture

the commitment to investment facilitation and to support reforms that will attract even more high-impact and sustainable investments.

DILG Secretary Juanito Victor Remulla joined the Governor Tolentino as she received the award together with Provincial LEDIPO, Mr. Adriano Timoteo, and 6th District Board Member Morit Sison. Mayor Luis Ferrer IV of the City Government of Gen. Trias was also among the awardees of the 1st Bayanihan sa Pamumuhunan.



Special Non-Working Holiday

Cavite Day

Paggunita sa kapanganakan ni **Emilio Aguinaldo** - ang unang pangulo ng Pilipinas.

#GovATyourservice
#CaviteDay

@athenatolentino
@athenatolentino



Proclamation No. 822, declaring March 22, 2025, a special (non-working) day in the Province of Cavite, holds great historical and cultural significance.

This special day commemorates the birth anniversary of General Emilio Aguinaldo, the first President of the Republic of the Philippines, who played a significant role in the country's fight for independence.

Kilalang "Land of the Brave" ang Cavite dahil sa mahalagang papel nito sa Himagsikang

Pilipino, at si Heneral Aguinaldo ang isa sa mga pinakatampok na bayani nito. Isinilang sa Kawit, Cavite noong Marso 22, 1869, pinamunuan niya ang mga Pilipino sa pakikibaka laban sa mga mananakop na Espanyol at Amerikano.

Kilala siya sa pagpapahayag ng Kalayaan ng Pilipinas noong Hunyo 12, 1898, sa kanyang tahanan sa Kawit—isang makasaysayang sandali na nagpapatibay sa kanyang legasiya.

Sa paggunita ng araw na ito, binibi-

gyang-dangal ng mga Caviteño ang kanyang mga ambag, pinanganagala ang mayamang kasaysayan ng lalawigan, at pinalalakas ang diwa ng pagmamahal sa bayan, katapangan, at pamumuno para sa mga susunod na henerasyon.

Ang proklamasyong ito ay hindi lamang isang pagpapaalala kundi isang pagpapatibay rin sa matatag na paninindigan ng lalawigan sa pagmamahal sa bayan at sakripisyo na humubog sa Pilipinas.

#GovATyourservice



Editorial

Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking is called by DSWD to examine ways to protect children.

To explore strategies for enhancing child safety and eliminating child trafficking, the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking members have been brought together by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

The coordination meeting took place on Wednesday, March 19, at the DSWD Central Office in Quezon City, and was chaired by Director Edmon Monteverde of the Protective Services Bureau (PSB).

IACAT Officer-in-charge Executive Director Hannah Lizette Manalili, Assistant Secretary Ada Colico of the DSWD's Protective Programs, and other heads and representatives of the member-agencies attended the conference.

The meeting's main objective was to discuss and resolve possible trafficking cases that were discovered when children traveling overseas applied for travel permission using the DSWD's recently developed children Traveling Abroad (MTA) system.

Help. In order to guarantee that effective measures are in place to protect minors and prevent trafficking dangers, Secretary Colico underlined the significance of cultivating strong partnership with IACAT and other pertinent agencies.

"Strengthened partnerships will help ensure that the Centralized Processing Office for Minors Traveling Abroad (CPO-MTA) implements comprehensive and effective mechanisms, including stricter monitoring, and policy enforcement to prevent and address child trafficking," Asst. Secretary Colico said.

Attorney. Manalili emphasized the significance of careful evaluation and confirmation throughout the application procedure, which is essential in spotting possible warning signs prior to minors departing the nation.

In order to further examine possible trafficking instances and guarantee a proactive approach to protecting vulnerable youngsters, the conversation also emphasized the necessity of IACAT and the Bureau of Immigration (BI) working together.

CAYETANO CALLS FOR FAIR REPORTING, DUE PROCESS IN DUTERTE'S ARREST

Senator Alan Peter Cayetano on Tuesday urged the media to report fairly and neutrally on the arrest of former President Rodrigo Duterte.

At the same time, he stressed the need for the authorities to ensure due process and uphold the rule of law.

Discussing the issue on his Facebook series "CIA 365 with Kuya Alan" on March 11, Cayetano called on the media

to focus on objective reporting rather than injecting personal opinions into the news.

"Siguro isa ring shout-out o hingi ko ay maging totally neutral din ang media. Report, hindi opinion kasi masyadong malaki ang stake sa ating bansa," he said.

Duterte was arrested at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 on Tuesday morning following an International-

SM supermalls Brings the Magic of cinema to the Visually Impaired with 'Movies for the Blind'

SM Supermalls continues to champion inclusivity with 'Movies for the Blind,' a special screening series designed for individuals with visual impairments. In collaboration with Project ADAM (Audio Description Awareness Movement), this initiative features audio-descriptive technology to ensure an immersive cinematic experience.

Held across multiple SM malls nationwide, the initiative aligns with SM's continuing commitment to making entertainment accessible to all. The culminating event will take place on August 2 at SM Megamall in celebration of White Cane Safety Day.

A More Inclusive Movie Experience

Through audio-descriptive screenings, visually impaired guests can follow the story

al Criminal Court (ICC) warrant related to alleged crimes against humanity during his administration's war on drugs. He was placed on Interpol's Red Notice list prior to the arrest.

Cayetano acknowledged the gravity of the situation and emphasized that legal remedies must be accorded to Duterte.

"Napaka-importante na y'ung ating system of laws. Lahat po ng judicial process, lahat po ng remedies under the law, ma-accord sa ating Pangulo," he said.

He also expressed concern for the former president's safety, urging the public to pray for him. "Personal kong dalangin and I have to join my brother, former President Duterte. Pray for his health, pray for strength, pray for his safety."

The senator also called for prayers for law enforcers involved in the process, warning against any actions that could undermine public trust in law enforcement.

He underscored

with narration of key visual elements. The featured film, Firefly (2023), was chosen for its heartwarming fantasy storytelling and inspiring message perfect for all families.

"Everyone deserves to enjoy the magic of cinema. Through 'Movies for the Blind,' we are not just screening films—we are creating meaningful experiences where individuals with visual impairments feel valued and included," said Earth Olazo, Assistant Mall Manager SM City Calamba

Nationwide Reach and Impact

Screenings have been held at SM City Davao, SM City Legazpi, and SM City Calamba (March 22), with upcoming events at SM City Cebu and SM City Baguio (April 26).

By partnering with Project Adam, GMA

the need for the justice system to remain impartial regardless of political affiliations.

"Sa lahat ng involved sa proseso na ito, kailangan pag sinabi mo na 'Justice,' hindi tinitignan kung administration y'un o opposition, kung former president y'un o presidente," he said.

Cayetano, who has been closely monitoring developments, reiterated his belief in the power of prayer in times of crossroads.

"Gusto ko lang ipa-abot na in everything that's happening, we have to get involved, but we have to pray. Walang conflict in praying and discerning. Hindi lang prayers kundi i-discern natin kung ano rin ang tama na gawin," he said.

"Lumalabas pa lang lahat ng facts, but we'll definitely be monitoring. We'll be praying. This is just really a big responsibility for our country," he added. PR



Network, and local communities, SM Supermalls reinforces its ongoing mission to create inclusive and welcoming spaces for all.

For updates on SM Cares' accessibility programs, visit <https://www.smsupermalls.com/smcares> or follow @SMCaresOfficial on social media. ###

TWO MAJOR ROADS... FROM PAGE 1

Calamba City, Laguna – Progress is unstoppable in Calamba! In a historic day of development, two major roads were officially inaugurated—LTO Road in Brgy. Real and Batino Road—bringing faster, safer, and more efficient travel for Calambefios.

With the strong leadership of Congresswoman Cha Hernandez, Mayor Ross Rizal, and Vice Mayor Totie Lazaro, these projects stand as proof that promises made are promises kept.

LTO Road, Brgy. Real – Now Open!

From LTO Calamba to Real, real quick! The opening of LTO Road marks another milestone in Calamba's infrastructure boom. This

com/smcares or follow @SMCaresOfficial on social media. ###

About SM Cares
SM Cares is the corporate social responsibility arm of SM Supermalls, championing inclusivity, sustainability, and community engagement.

TWO MAJOR ROADS... FROM PAGE 1

newly completed road means smoother traffic flow, improved road safety, and easier access for motorists and commuters alike.

Batino Road – Finally, GO na GO!

Batino Road, long-awaited and much-needed, is now officially open! With the full support of #TeamCalambAGO, local leaders, and the community, this project will ease congestion and provide a more comfortable journey for all.

This is #LevelUpNaCalambAGO in action—less talk, more action, real progress! As Calamba continues to grow, residents can expect more road improvements, better infrastructure, and a brighter future ahead!

(Edjun Mariposque)



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ADVERTISING RATES

COMMERCIAL ----- P200/col.cm
LEGAL/NOTICES ----- P160/col.cm

Font Size:

Heading : 10
Body Text : 08
Space : Single space

UNITY WALK, INTER FAITH RALLY, AT PEACE COVENANT SIGNING, ISINAGAWA SA LAGUNA PARA SA MAPAYAPANG ELEKSYON



Laguna – Bilang paghahanda sa nalalapit na 2025 National and Local Elections (NLE) at Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) Parliamentary Election, matagumpay na isinagawa ang Unity Walk, Inter Faith Rally, at Peace Covenant Signing sa Cultural Center, Sta. Cruz, Laguna noong Marso 21, 2025.

Pinangunahan ang aktibidad ng Laguna Police Provincial Office (LPPPO) sa pamumuno ni Police Colonel Ricardo Dalmacia kung saan naging panauhing pandangal si Atty. Patrick Enaje, Provincial Election Supervisor ng Laguna.

Dumalo sa aktibidad ang mga opisyal mula sa iba't ibang ahensya ng gobyerno kabilang ang Department of Education (DepEd), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), 904th Maritime Police, at Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP).

Kasama rin sa mga lumahok ang mga kinatawan ng sektor ng relihiyon, mga miyembro ng Advocacy Support Groups, at mga force multipliers. Hindi rin nagpauwan ang mga kandidatong pulitikal na sumuporta sa adbokasiya para sa mapayapang halalan. Kabilang sa mga tampok na bahagi



ng programa ang recitation at pagpirma sa Solidarity Pledge, kung saan nangako ang mga kandidato at opisyal na itaguyod ang patas at marangal na halalan.

Bilang simbolo ng kapayapaan, nagpa-



maging responsible at makatarungan sa kanilang pangangampanya. Matataguyod rin ang tiwala ng publiko sa proseso ng halalan sa pamamagitan ng pagpapakita ng pagkakaisa at transparency.

Ang Unity Walk,

Inter Faith Rally, at Peace Covenant Signing ay bahagi ng mas malawakang kampanya ng COMELEC, PNP, at iba pang ahensya upang matiyak ang ligtas, patas, at mapayapang eleksyon sa bansa.

(Shekinah Esteban)

Rep. Ruth Hernandez Brings 'Healthy Barangay, Healthy Laguna' to Los Baños, Vows Stronger Healthcare

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA — Laguna 2nd District Representative Ruth Hernandez, who is running for governor, reinforced her commitment to public health by expanding her Healthy Barangay, Healthy Laguna program to Brgy. Timugan and Brgy. Bambang in Los Baños.

"Health is the foundation of a strong community," Hernandez emphasized. "That's why we are ensuring that our kabarangay receive proper medical services and health education."



The initiative included free maintenance medicines for hypertension and diabetes patients, vitamins to strengthen immunity, and HPV vaccinations to prevent cer-

vical cancer. Women also received free Pap Smear/VIA screenings for early disease detection, while health lectures provided essential knowledge on disease prevention and

wellness. Hernandez assures residents that accessible healthcare will remain a top priority under her leadership.

(Edjun Mariposque)



Laguna Vice Gov. Karen Agapay Leads Blessing, Ribbon Cutting of Women's Rice Retailing Store in Biñan



Laguna Vice Governor Atty. Karen Agapay personally attended the blessing and ribbon-cutting ceremony of the new rice retailing store established by the Kababaehan sa Pag-Unlad SLP Association in Biñan City. The business was made possible through a ₱240,000 grant from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), facilitated by the Office of the Vice Governor.

This initiative is part of the Sustainable

Livelihood Program (SLP), which has already helped establish 51 stores across Laguna with the support of Agapay's office. The program continues to provide livelihood opportunities for women, empowering them to become self-sufficient entrepreneurs.

Vice Gov. Agapay emphasized the importance of community support in fostering success, stating, "True care and support for our fellow Lagunenses is the key to progress."

(Edjun Mariposque)



GOV. ATHENA PARA KAY SEN. PIA



Itinaas ni Cavite Governor Athena Bryana Tolentino ang kamay ni re-electionist Senator Pia S. Cayetano tanda ng suporta sa nalalapit na halalan sa kanyang pag courtesy call sa gobernadora sa kapi-tolyo kasama ang mga opisyal ng probinsya, mga punong lungsod, at board members makaraan ang masayang pagbisita ng senadora sa lalawigan kamakailan.



Pointer Pau Dela Cruz

59th Infantry "Protector" Battalion, Dinaluhan ang Simultaneous Unity Walk, Interfaith Rally, at Peace Covenant Signing ng 3rd and 4th Distrito ng Laguna.

Noong ika-21 ng Marso (PA), sa pamumuno ni LTC JONEL G MARTINEZ, ay aktibong dumalo sa Simultaneous Unity Walk, Interfaith Rally, at Peace Covenant Signing sa mga bayan ng San Pablo, Alaminos, Calauan, Victoria, Liliw, Lumban, Rizal, Majayjay, Magdalena, Nagcarlan, Cavinti, Famy, Siniloan, Pangil, Paete, Pakil, Sta Maria, Kalayaan, Pagsanjan, Mabitac, Luisiana, Pila, at Sta. Cruz sa lalawigan ng Laguna.

Ang mga kasundaluan ay nakikilahok sa mga aktibidad na layong isulong ang isang maayos, mapayapa, at makatarungang Mid-term National and Local Elections (MNLE) 2025. Naniniwala kami na ito ay makakamtan sa pamamagitan ng kooperasyon ng lahat, kabilang ang iba't ibang ahensya ng gobyerno, mga botante, at lalo na ang mga kandidatong kalahok sa halalan ngayong 2025.

Ito rin ay isang paalala sa ating mga kababayan na maging mapanuri sa pagpili ng mga kandidato at organisasyon. Iwasan ang mga grupong may koneksyon o sumusuporta sa mga teroristang organisasyong tulad ng CPP-NPA na naglalayong pabagsakin ang ating gobyerno sa pamamagitan ng armadong pakikibaka. Gamitin natin ang ating boto nang ayon sa batas, patas, at mapayapang paraan.

Nakikiisa ang inyong kasundaluan at katuwang ninyo sa pagtutok sa isang ligtas, mapayapa, at makatarungang Midterm National and Local Elections.

LAGUNA VICE GOVERNOR KAREN AGAPAY LEADS PROVINCIAL BOARD TO OUTSTANDING LEGISLATIVE PERFORMANCE AWARD

Laguna's Sangguniang Panlalawigan, under the leadership of Vice Governor Atty. Karen Agapay, has been recognized for its Outstanding Legislative Performance in 2024, receiving the highest distinction from the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) as a Provincial Awardee of the Seal of Good Local Governance.

The prestigious award was conferred during the 33rd National Convention of the Philippine Councilors League (PBMLP) held at Century Park Hotel, Manila, on March 18, 2025. This accolade highlights the Laguna Provincial Board's commitment to exemplary legislation, good governance, and public service.

The Seal of Good Local Governance is the highest recognition given by the DILG to local governments that demonstrate excellence in financial administration, disaster preparedness, social protection, business-friendliness, environmental management, and peace and order.

This achievement further solidifies Laguna's reputation as a province that prioritizes transparency, efficiency, and the welfare of its constituents.

(Edjun Mariposque)



Vice Governor Agapay expressed gratitude for the recognition, emphasizing that the award is a testament to the dedication and hard work of Laguna's legislators in crafting policies that promote progress and development in the province.

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PUBLISHER CORNER

ANG BULAG NA UMAAKAY SA NALIGAW: ISANG BANSA NA TRINAYDOR

"Ang sinumang tumatanggap ng kasamaan nang hindi ito nilalaban ay tunay na nakiki-pagsabwatan dito."

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

Ang Kongreso at Senado ay puno ng pagtataksil. Hindi na ito isang simpleng palabas—isa itong malakihang pagnanakaw, isang matinding panlibak sa mga sakripisyo ng sam-bayanang Pilipino. Habang tayo ay nagpapakapagod, nagpapawis, at nagsa-sakripisyo para sa ating bayan, ang ating mga tinaguriang lider ay abala sa pagnanakaw—hindi lang ng ating kayamanan kundi pati ng ating dangal. Ang kanilang walang-pakundangang kasakiman at kawalang-malasakit ay naghatid sa 119 milyong Pilipino sa kawalan ng pag-asa. Hindi sila mga lider—sila ay mga traydor. Bulag sa pangangailangan ng bayan, hinahatak tayo sa bangin ng kawalan ng pag-asa.

Isang malupit na pagtataksil. Hindi na natin dapat palamutin ang ating mga salita—ito ay isang uri ng pagtataksil. Nang ginutay-gutay ng Kongreso ang bilyon-bilyong piso mula sa edukasyon, hindi lang nila binago ang isang spreadsheet. Pinunit nila ang kinabukasan mula sa kamay ng mga batang Pilipino. Sinira nila ang mga pangarap ng mga estudyanteng umaasa sa edukasyon bilang kanilang tanging pag-asa upang manatili sa kapangyarihan. Ibabato nila ang mumo sa mga tao tuwing panahon ng eleksyon, habang milyon-milyong Pilipino ang nagdugutom, naghihirap, at nagdurusa.

Ang pandaraya ng akap

At ngayon, dumating ang "Ayuda sa Kapos ang Kita Program" (AKAP)—isang walang-kahihiyang panunuhol sa eleksyon na pinalalabas bilang kawanggawa. P26 bilyon ang ninakaw mula sa edukasyon at kalusugan, itinago sa anyo ng ayuda, ngunit sa totoo, ito ay sandatang gagamitin ng mga korap upang manatili sa kapangyarihan. Ibabato nila ang mumo sa mga tao tuwing panahon ng eleksyon, habang milyon-milyong Pilipino ang nagdugutom, naghihirap, at nagdurusa.

Akala ba nila bulag tayo? Akala ba nila hindi natin nakikita ang tusong pakana nilang ito? Ang bawat pisong inaksaya sa AKAP ay isa pang pisong ninakaw mula sa mga paaralan, ospital, at kalsada. Isa pang patalim na itinakaw sa likod ng sam-bayanang Pilipino.

Ang ating katahimikan ang nagpapalakas sa kanila

Ngunit marahil ang pinakamasakit na pagtataksil ay mula sa atin mismo. Ang

hindi isang aksidente. Isa itong krimen. Isa itong pagpatay—ang pagpatay sa potensyal ng ating kabataan.

Ang kalusugan: unang nasalanta

Ang zero na pondo para sa PhilHealth ngayong 2025 ay hindi lang kapabayaang—ito ay malupit na intensyon. Para bang idineklara ng Kongreso ang digmaan laban sa mahihirap. Ilang magulang ang kailangang ilibing ang kanilang mga anak dahil hindi nila kayang magpagamot? Ilang haligi ng tahanan ang mapaparalisa dahil sa sakit, pinabayaan ng isang sistemang pangkalusugan na winasak?

Ang PhilHealth ay hindi isang "reserbang pondo" na maaaring pagnakawan ng mga sakim. Ito ay ang tanging pag-asa ng milyon-milyong Pilipino sa kanilang pinakamalulupit na pagsubok. Ayon sa Universal Health Care Act, dapat ginagamit ang buwis mula sa alak at sigarilyo upang suportahan ang PhilHealth. Ngunit nilabag din nila ito. Ano ang tawag nila rito? Mismanagement? Hindi—ito ay isang planadong kalupitan ng estado.

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ating katahimikan ang nagpapalakas sa kanilang kayabangan. Bakit wala tayo sa lansangan? Bakit hinahayaan nating gutayin nila ang ating bansa habang tahimik lang tayong nanonood? Takot ba? Kawalang-pakialam? Pagod? Anuman ang dahilan, ang ating kawalan ng aksyon ay nagbibigay-lakas sa kanila. Ang bawat sandali ng ating katahimikan ay isang pagtataksil sa bayang sinasabi nating mahal natin.

Pati ang ating Korte Suprema, na dapat sana'y tagapagtanggol ng hustisiya, ay nananatiling walang-kibo—mas takot sa Kongreso kaysa sa pagsunod sa kanilang tungkulin. Nasaan ang hustisiya para sa mga inaapi kung pati ang hudikatura ay natatakot? Kapag tahimik ang hustisiya, lalong namamay-agpag ang pang-aapi.

Sobra na, tama na!

Ito ay hindi na tungkol sa pulitika—ito ay tungkol sa ating buhay. Binabaklas nila ang ating bansa, isa-isa ang piraso, piso sa pisong ninanakaw. At kung hindi tayo lalaban, walang matitira sa atin kundi abo at kawalan ng pag-asa.

Ngunit may pag-asa pa. Tayo, ang sambayanan, ang tunay na may kapangyarihan sa bansang ito. Kaya nating wakasan ang pagtataksil na ito. Kaya nating maninigil ng hustisiya. Kaya nating bawiin ang gobyernong para dapat sa atin—isang gobyernong naglilingkod, hindi nagnanakaw.

Ang oras ng paglaban ay ngayon na!

Kung mananatili tayong tahimik, karapat-dapat tayo sa kapahamakan na darating. Ngunit kung tayo ay babangon—kung tayo ay magkaisa at kumilos—kaya nating bawiin ang ating bayan mula sa mga magnanakaw at traydor na su

SMC REVENUE HITS PHP 1.6 TRILLION, UP 9% IN 2024



San Miguel Corporation (SMC) reported ₱1.6 trillion in consolidated revenues for 2024, a 9% increase from the previous year, driven by higher sales volumes across its core businesses. Growth was led by Power, Spirits, and Fuel & Oil, while Beer and Infrastructure also made solid contributions. Consolidated operating income rose 11% to ₱160.8 billion, supported by margin improvements in Power, Food & Beverage, and Infrastructure, along with cost management initiatives across all business units. EBITDA increased 10% to ₱225.9 billion. Core net income grew 22% to ₱52.3 billion, reflecting strong operational performance. On a reported basis, net income stood at ₱36.7 billion, including foreign exchange adjustments.

"Our strong 2024 performance reflects strategic growth, operational efficiency, and disciplined execution. We remain focused on strengthening and making our businesses more efficient, while driving sustainability and long-term growth," said SMC Chairman and CEO Ramon S. Ang.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

San Miguel Food and Beverage, Inc. (SMFB) posted solid growth in 2024, with consolidated sales up 6% to ₱400.9 billion, primarily driven by higher volumes and market ex-

pansion initiatives. Gross profit rose 10% to ₱110.9 billion, and operating income grew 15% to ₱55.8 billion, supported by a favorable product mix as well as operating and cost efficiencies. Net income increased 7% to ₱40.9 billion while EBITDA stood at ₱73.1 billion, maintaining an 18% margin.

San Miguel Foods reported ₱185.0 billion in sales, up 3%, led by a 7% increase in the Protein segment, and a 12% rise in Prepared and Packaged Food – driven by strong demand for Purefoods Tender Juicy Hotdogs, Magnolia dairy, and San Mig Coffee. Operating income jumped 37% to ₱13.3 billion, while net income climbed 33% to ₱8.4 billion, reflecting operational efficiencies and continued focus in controlling costs. EBITDA reached ₱21.3 billion.

San Miguel Brewery Inc. recorded 4% sales growth to ₱153.4 billion, with domestic sales at ₱137.6 billion and international sales at US\$276.5 million. Operating income rose 6% to ₱33.4 billion, while net income edged up 1% to ₱25.6 billion, showing stable growth, profitability, and resiliency despite the impacts of numerous typhoons. EBITDA stood at ₱41.8 billion.

Ginebra San Miguel Inc. saw a 17% sales growth to ₱62.5 billion, driven by increasing consumer demand, with

a 9% volume expansion, reaching 50.6 million cases. Operating income rose 26% to ₱8.6 billion, while net income increased 3% to ₱7.3 billion. Without the one-time Don Papa rights gain in 2023, recurring net income would have risen 22%. EBITDA stood at ₱9.5 billion.

POWER

San Miguel Global Power Holdings Corp. (SMGP) delivered a strong performance in 2024. Revenues were up 21% to ₱205.1 billion, driven by a 45% rise in offtake volume to 36.6 million MWh, partially offset by lower average realized prices due to declining pass-through coal prices.

Robust growth was supported by secured Power Supply Agreements (PSAs), new RES customers for Limay Power Plant, additional BESS ancillary services, and the commercial operations of Mariveles Power Plant Units 1, 2, and 3. Operating income and EBITDA grew 24% and 27% to ₱40.5 billion and ₱55.5 billion, respectively. Net income increased 25% to ₱12.4 billion.

FUEL AND OIL

Petron Corporation reported ₱868.0 billion in revenues for 2024, up 8% from ₱801.0 billion in 2023. Sales volume grew 10% to 139.9 million barrels, led by strong performance from its Philippine operations and Singapore trading subsidiary, where combined sales rose 16%

to 92.5 million barrels, supported by network expansion and aggressive marketing.

Retail sales climbed 18%, leveraging the country's largest fuel station network, while commercial sales increased 6%, driven by strong demand from the aviation sector.

Petron Malaysia faced challenges due to fuel subsidy policy changes, while a maintenance shutdown at the Port Dickson refinery in Q4 2024 limited production and exports.

At the same time, global prices remained volatile given geopolitical conflicts. Dubai crude peaked at US\$89 in April before dropping US\$73 by year-end, putting pressure on, and compressing refinery margins.

Despite these headwinds, operating income remained steady at ₱29.2 billion. Net income declined 16% to ₱8.5 billion, but the company continued to remain profitable, demonstrating resilience amid these industry challenges.

INFRASTRUCTURE

San Miguel Infrastructure continued its steady growth in 2024, with revenues rising 7% to ₱37.5 billion. Average dai-

ly traffic grew 2% to 1.03 million vehicles, supported by the continued ramp-up of its toll roads. Operating income increased 12% to ₱20.3 billion, while EBITDA rose 8% to ₱29.7 billion, maintaining a healthy 79% margin.

CEMENT

SMC's Cement business, which includes Eagle Cement Corporation, Northern Cement Corporation, and Southern Concrete Industries, Inc., reported a 6% decline in net sales to ₱34.9 billion. A 3% increase in sales volume helped offset the impact of lower average selling prices due to the influx of imported traded cement.

Despite the revenue decline, operating income grew 10% to ₱6.6 billion, driven by effective cost control measures. EBITDA rose 1% to ₱9.7 billion, with EBITDA margin improving from 26% to 28%.

DTI-LAGUNA SAFEGUARDS CONSUMERS BY INSPECTING PETC IN PILA, LAGUNA



VICTORIA, LAGUNA – Pursuant to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Department Administrative Order No. 3, Series of 2002 (DAO 3:2002), the Department of Trade and Industry - Laguna Provincial Office (DTI-Laguna), through its Consumer Protection Division, conducted onsite inspection and monitoring of a motor vehicle private emission testing center (PETC) in Pila, Laguna, on February 11, 2025, to ensure that accredited PETCs continuously comply with government rules

and regulations as well as meet the quality standards set by the government under the Republic Act No. 8749, otherwise known as the Philippine Clean Air Act.

The onsite inspection and monitoring activity of motor vehicle PETCs is one of the DTI's mandates in implementing standards and procedures on the accreditation of PETCs. This process also includes checking of their necessary tools, equipment, facilities, expertise, and quality service; interview with their qualified

technicians or motor vehicle emission control technician; and actual testing of equipment.

As part of its routine monitoring activities, DTI-Laguna will continuously inspect and monitor motor vehicle PETCs at least once a month for this year of 2025 all throughout the Laguna Province. This endeavor seeks to protect the interest of the consumers in availing of PETC services. **(ALSLinga, DTI-Laguna | Photo by ZAGavino, DTI-Laguna)**

DRIVEN BY DEDICATION, POWERED BY POSITIVITY



Maria Teresa Layron, an entrepreneur and proud CARD client from Malolos, Bulacan proved that no matter how hard life's challenges may be, success is attainable through dedication and optimism.

Maria Teresa Layron of Malolos, Bulacan, has built a successful beauty salon from the ground up, embodying the power of hardwork, resilience, and a positive mindset. Her journey inspires aspiring entrepreneurs and anyone chasing their dreams, no matter the obstacles life throws their way.

A Humble Start

Driven by passion, Maria's business journey began in her home in Cofradia, Malolos, Bulacan, where she initially ran a simple parlor and often offered home beauty services.

Determined to hone her skills, Maria enrolled in a TESDA-accredited beauty cosmetology course, allowing her to expand her services by adding manicure and pedicure services.

In 2006, Maria became one of the pioneering clients of CARD, Inc. (A Microfinance NGO) where she started with small loans ranging from PHP 1,500 to PHP 4,000. As Maria's financial needs grew, she was transferred to CARD MRI Rizal Bank, Inc., a microfinance-oriented rural bank, where her loans gradually reached up to PHP 200,000. Her loans played a crucial role in helping her meet family needs, grow her business, and improve her home.

"As a client, I make sure my loans are used efficiently, especially in running my business," Maria says.

Overcoming Challenges

Running a business is never without its challenges. Maria acknowledges the common struggles that business owners face, like the so-called "ghost month,"

when sales and customers tend to dip. Despite these struggles, she has always maintained a positive outlook.

The stability of her family life and the success of her business eventually allowed Maria to focus on her salon full-time. "Despite life's challenges, I stood tall and remained strong, making sure to provide for my family," she reflects.

Her resilience and determination in the face of adversity have allowed her to navigate tough times, always finding new ways to keep her business growing.

"Resilience and dedication are important, but it is just as essential to understand the business you are into. This helps you manage effectively, even if your staff isn't around," Maria shares.

A Partnership with CARD

Maria's partnership with CARD MRI Rizal Bank has been about much more than just financial assistance—it has been a steady source of support throughout her journey.

"With CARD RBI, my journey is more than just financial help—it's the source of inspiration and motivation to keep going, to continue dreaming of a better life, and to successfully manage my business," she says.

The bank has provided her with essential financial tools and guidance, empowering her to manage and grow her business. But perhaps most importantly, it has been a source of unwavering support, helping her stay focused on her long-term goals.

Words of Wisdom for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

Maria's journey is a powerful reminder that starting a business requires more than capital—it takes dedication, resilience, and a strong will to succeed.

"Business isn't always about profit. There will be ups and downs, but a positive mindset and determination can lead you to success," she said.

Through her salon business, Mystica Beauty Studio and Barber-shop, Maria created a livelihood and built a stable foundation for her family. The salon now caters to both men and women, offering a wide range of services, including haircuts, coloring, manicures, pedicures, hair treatments, and more.

Maria's story is one of persistence and unwavering belief that anything is possible, no matter the obstacles.

Her journey proves that with dedication, resilience, and a positive mindset, success is always within reach. PR

RAFFLE TIME SA BARANGAY NINA ARAGONES AT PEREZ, PATULOY SA PAG-IKOT SA LAGUNA



Laguna – Patuloy ang masigasig na pag-iikot nina aspirant Governor Sol Aragones at aspirant Vice Governor Peewee Perez sa iba't ibang bayan at lungsod ng Laguna upang makadaupang-palad ang mga mamamayang Lagunense.

Bilang bahagi ng kanilang kampanya at programang pang-serbisyo publiko, isinagawa nila ang "Raffle Time sa Barangay" sa mga bayan ng Nagcarlan at Victoria, kung saan namahagi sila ng iba't ibang papremyo. Kabilang sa mga ipinamigay ay oven toaster, desk fan, spaghetti package, bigas, at washing machine, na nagbigay ng kasiyahan sa mga residente.

Naging kapan-sin-pansin ang mainit

na suporta sa programa mula sa mga lokal na lider, kabilang ang Team Tajaran at sina Barangay Chairman Isko Agonia at Barangay Chairman Onie Fajardo, na aktibong nakiusap sa kaganapan.

Layunin ng Aragones-Perez tandem na maghatid ng konkreto at direktang tulong sa mga Lagunense, kasabay ng kanilang pangakong itaguyod ang mga proyektong pang-edukasyon at serbisyong medikal saka-

ling sila ay maluklok sa pwesto. Ang masiglang partisipasyon ng mga residente ay patunay ng mainit na pagtanggap sa kanilang adbokasiya.

Ang "Raffle Time sa Barangay" ay isa lamang sa mga inisiyatibong isinusulong ng kanilang magbigay ng ginhawa at suporta sa mga pang-araw-araw na pangangailangan ng mga Lagunense.

(Shekinah Esteban)

