

Mayor Ross Rizal Relaunched “Libreng Sine para kay Lolo at Lola” at SM City Calamba



Calamba City, Laguna — Senior citizens in Calamba were given a special treat as Mayor Roseller “Ross” H. Rizal, together with the entire Sangguniang Panlungsod, relaunched the “Li-



breng Sine Para Kay Lolo at Lola” program at SM City Calamba, in time for the celebration of Grandparents’ Day. The initiative, held in collaboration with SM City Calamba and the Office of the Senior Citizens Affairs (OSCA), offers free movie screenings to Calamba’s senior citizens twice a month, every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday at SM cinemas. “This is a simple yet heartfelt way of showing our gratitude and love to our grandparents who have continuously given care, wisdom, and inspiration to our families,” Mayor Rizal said. SM City Calamba also expressed its support, posting that the program made the city’s beloved seniors enjoy a memorable Grandparents’ Day celebration. Through this initiative, the City Government of Calamba reaffirms its commitment to honoring the elderly community and ensuring they feel valued, appreciated, and celebrated. (Edjun Mariposque)

COUNCILOR ARVIN MANGUIAT NAMED PCL-LAGUNA PRESIDENT, EARNS PRAISE FROM MAYOR ROSS RIZAL

Calamba City, Laguna – Mayor Roseller “Ross” H. Rizal extended his heartfelt congratulations to City Councilor Hon. Arvin Laude-Manguiat for his victory as the newly elected President of the Philippine Councilors League (PCL) – Laguna Chapter. In his official message, Mayor Rizal expressed pride and joy, saying that Manguiat’s achievement is not only a personal honor but also a triumph for the entire City of Calamba. “Congratulations, City Councilor Hon. Arvin Laude-Manguiat! On behalf of the City Government of Calamba, we extend our warmest greetings for your success as the elected President of the Philippine Councilors League – Laguna Chapter. This is a recognition that brings pride not only to you but to the whole of Calamba,” Mayor Rizal said. He also emphasized that Manguiat’s leadership should serve as an inspiration to strengthen unity and further enhance public service for the benefit of all Lagunenses. The Philippine Councilors League – Laguna Chapter serves as a vital platform for councilors across the province to collaborate, share best practices, and reinforce good governance. Manguiat’s election is seen as a promising step toward fostering stronger local leadership and representation. “Mabuhay ka, City Councilor Arvin Manguiat!” Mayor Rizal concluded. (Edjun Mariposque)



CONGRATULATIONS

HON. ARVIN L. MANGUIAT

ELECTED PRESIDENT
PHILIPPINE COUNCILORS LEAGUE - LAGUNA CHAPTER

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SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR

EMPLOYMENT OF STUDENTS (SPES)

Pagsasanay ng DA-4A RCPC, tugon sa lumalaganap na Rice Yellowing Disease

DEPED LAUNCHES BOOTCAMP FOR

CAMPUS JOURNOS IN CALABARZON

Cavite bags several awards during the closing ceremony of Regional Science and Technology Week

DTI RIZAL LAUNCHES SEAL-BETA PROJECT IN RIZAL PROVINCE TO EMPOWER MICRO ENTREPRENEURS

NEW 12-CLASSROOM SCHOOL BUILDING OPENS AT SALINAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, BACOR: A TESTAMENT TO CITY'S COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION

BIR COMMITS TO GOOD GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY THROUGH GUIDING PILLARS

Calamba Water District Marks 49 Years of Service Under GM “Jhun” Aguilar

Online gambling transactions down 50% after Cayetano's pressure on BSP

Editoryal:

24 BARKO NG CHINA, NAMATAAN SA AYUNGIN SHOAL BAGO PA MAN ANG POSIBLENG RESUPPLY MISSION – PN OFFICIAL

Namataan ang presensiya ng 24 na barko ng China sa Ayungin Shoal bago pa man ang posibleng resupply mission sa BRP Sierra Madre. Kinumpirma ni Philippine Navy spokesperson for the West Philippine Sea Rear Admiral Roy Vincent Trinidad na naispatan ang apat na barko ng China Coast Guard at 20 Chinese maritime militia vessels sa lugar kahapon, Setyembre 4.

Aniya, dati nasa apat na maritime militia lamang at dalawang Coast Guard vessels ang nasa lugar marahil dahil sa hindi magandang lagay ng panahon subalit sa nakalipas na apat o limang araw ay mahigit

20 Chinese vessels ang namataan.

Tumanggi namang magbigay ng detalye ang Navy official sa magiging susunod na resupply mission sa BRP Sierra Madre subalit itiniit ng opisyal na hindi maaaring pabayaan ang pangangailangan ng mga kasundaluhang nakaistasyon sa outpost ng ating bansa sa WPS.

Aniya, nakadepende sa commander ng Western Command ang mga detalye ng susunod na rotation and resupply (RORE) mission.

Subalit ayon kay Rear Adm. Trinidad, huling isinagawa ang resupply mission sa BRP Sierra Madre noong Hulyo.

KAUNLARAN CARAVAN GOES TO PALOMPON, LEYTE

Kalabasa chips making was one of the activities held during the Kaunlaran Caravan in Leyte on July 16, 2025.

Hosted by CARD RBI on its fourth run this year, CARD Mutually Reinforcing Institutions' (CARD MRI) Kaunlaran Caravan was held in Palompon, Leyte on July 16, 2025.

The Kaunlaran Caravan is an initiative of CARD MRI, aimed at bringing community development programs to different provinces across the Philippines.

"Through this initiative, we aim to assist better Filipinos, especially economically challenged individuals and their families. We hope that through offering free community development programs and other essential services, we can contribute to CARD MRI's mission of poverty eradication," said CARD MRI Rizal Bank President Ms. Lyneth Derequito.

Event Highlights One of the highlights during the program was the mass wedding where six couples officially legalized their union. This effort by CARD MBA aimed to help its members officially recognize their partners as legal dependents.

CARD MRI Publishing House facilitated a storytelling session featuring the storybook Ang Magic Alkansiya ni Carding, attended by 35 children. The activity aimed to promote financial literacy and teach the value of saving.

A livelihood training on Kalabasa Chips making was attended by 35 participants, aiming to empower the community by teaching them valuable skills to generate additional income and improve their livelihoods.

Furthermore, a total of 365 attendees benefited from free med-

ical, dental, and optical check-ups, while 75 received massages, 60 had haircuts, and 55 were treated to manicures and pedicures, all for free. To combat hunger, the event also included a feeding program, serving champorado to over 100 people.

Kaunlaran Car-

avan is a CARD MRI initiative that brings various community development services to different areas, with the goal of uplifting and empowering local communities. The fifth leg of the caravan is set to take place in Polomolok, South Cotabato, on August 20, 2025.



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CAYETANO...

Online gambling transactions plunged by half after the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) ordered e-wallet providers to take down gambling site links, days after Senator Alan Peter Cayetano grilled central bank officials in a Senate hearing over their delayed action.

During the August 14 Blue Ribbon Committee hearing on online gambling, Cayetano slammed the BSP for its 'lack of political will,' questioning why it waited until the day of the hearing to issue the order when it had already consulted e-wallet operators as early as July.

He also questioned the 48-hour grace period granted to e-wallet firms, saying as a regulator, BSP should have acted immediately.

"We're giving them 48 hours na hindi naman nila kailangan? DICT just said it can be done in an instant. Walang kayong ITs sa Central Bank or nasasayangan kayo sa two days?" Cayetano pressed BSP Deputy Governor Mamerto Tangonan.

"Kung may matatay [within] 48 hours kasi nalulong doon, OK lang sa atin or kasi sayang kita?" he added.

That same day, Tangonan issued BSP Memorandum No. 2025-29, which instructed e-wallet platforms to remove in-app features that promote or provide access to e-gambling sites.

FROM PAGE 1

The order also applied to banks, payment apps, and other financial institutions under BSP supervision.

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (Pagcor) later reported that online gambling activity fell by 50% following the memo's enforcement.

Even before the hearing, though, Cayetano had pointed out that any intervention would go to waste if online gambling advertisements remain rampant.

He has filed the Anti-Online Gambling Advertisement Act of 2025, which seeks to ban all forms of ads, marketing, and promotions for online gambling across television, radio, internet, social media, print, and outdoor platforms, including company sponsorships of sports and cultural events.

The measure is part of Cayetano's broader campaign to curb online gambling, which he says fuels addiction, financial distress, and family breakdowns.

Senate Bill No. 109 proposes penalties of up to six years in prison or fines of up to P5 million for violators, with harsher sanctions for public officials.

"As part of our persistent push toward a total ban on online gambling, we start with cutting off its oxygen – advertising," Cayetano said in filing the bill on July 3.

SPECIAL...

On September 3, 2025 a total of 28 students were hired on the spot during the Special Program for Employment of Students (SPES) held at McDonald's Olivarez, Tagaytay branch on Wednesday, marking a successful collaboration between the Provincial Government of Cavite, Golden Arches Development Corporation, and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

Organized through the Office of the Provincial Public Employment Service Manager

(OPPESM), the program aimed to provide job opportunities for youth and students, particularly those looking to earn while continuing their education. The initiative forms part of Cavite's ongoing efforts to support youth employment and address economic challenges faced by students. Participating branches from McDonald's included Tagaytay Taal, Tagaytay Olivarez, Tagaytay Primark, Delos Reyes Tagaytay, Mendez, and Tagaytay Sta. Rosa.

Calamba...

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna – With pride and purpose, the Calamba Water District (CWD) marked its 49th founding anniversary at the José Rizal Coliseum on September 4, 2025. The celebration, spearheaded by General Manager Exequiel "Jhun" Aguilar Jr., spotlighted CWD's commitment to innovation, resilience, and the welfare of its growing service community.

Celebration Highlights & Leadership General Manager Aguilar, has been instrumental in guiding CWD through major modernization efforts and emergency initiatives. Among recent achievements:

In September 2024, Aguilar led the unveiling of Calabarzon's first UV hydro-optic disinfection facility at the Bu-

cal pumping station—an initiative enhancing water safety while reducing reliance on chlorine.

The district also pioneered an AI-powered reservoir monitoring system paired with submerged CCTV units for real-time oversight of water clarity—underscoring its forward-looking approach.

Emergency Response & Climate Proofing

The core values of public service were evident during the recent Typhoon Emong disaster in July 2025. Under Aguilar's leadership, CWD dispatched UV-disinfected water trucks to evacuation centers across barangays Pansol, Parian, and others, fulfilling its mission of safeguarding community health in times of crisis.

Beyond earth-

quakes and floods, the district also took proactive steps to ensure uninterrupted service—adding generator sets to all pumping stations to counter threats from volcanic activity and outages, part of a comprehensive climate-proofing program championed by GM Aguilar.

The 49th Anniversary Event

The anniversary celebration was a vibrant affair held at the José Rizal Coliseum. It featured brief addresses from CWD officials, recognitions for long-serving employees, and a live presentation of the district's key initiatives in water quality, infrastructure resilience, and community engagement.

In his opening remarks, General Manager Aguilar reflected on nearly

FROM PAGE 1

five decades of growth:

"From humble origins to becoming one of the most modern water utilities in Laguna, our journey has always been guided by the principle of service—day in, day out, rain or shine."

He also outlined future goals: expanding barangay coverage, further integrating smart water management systems, and strengthening disaster readiness.

Looking Ahead

As CWD enters its 50th year, the path ahead is clear—continuing to deliver clean, reliable water while enhancing adaptability through technology and infrastructure. GM Aguilar's leadership embodies that vision, rooted in stewardship, innovation, and responsiveness. (Edjun Mariposque)

TRAINING ON ALTERNATIVE DISPUTES EMPOWERS CAVITE COOPERATIVES

On September 1, 2025, the Office of the Provincial Cooperatives Development Officer, in partnership with the Department of Justice - Office for Alternative Dispute Resolution (DOJ-OADR), facilitated the "Capacity Building Seminar for Cooperatives: Basic Mediation - Training on Alternative Dispute Resolution" at the Cavite Provincial Government Center,

equipping cooperatives with necessary skills and tools to foster a more harmonious and effective organization.

The program, attended by diverse cooperative leaders and members, started with Ms. Rizalie Pinpin-Enero, Provincial Public Employment Service Manager, extending a warm greeting to the attendees on behalf of Governor Abeng Remulla. She underscored the significance of the seminar to the cooperatives and recognized the dedication and effort of the guest speakers in imparting their knowledge and expertise on mediation.

Ms. Reinalyn Vidallon-Varias, Director III of Training, Accreditation and Promotion Service (TAPS) - DOJ-

OADR, gave an overview on the importance of mediation in the cooperative sector, emphasizing its role in strengthening connection, collaboration and commitment among the members.

"Sana ang course po na ito ay maka-challenge, maka-inspire, at maka-equip para mas maging competent po kayo at mas maging confident with integrity and compassion. Let this be the beginning of new insights, meaningful connections, and shared commitment to a more empowered society," Ms. Varias remarked.

During the seminar proper, Ms. Vilmi S. Quipit, OADR Accredited Mediator and Trainer, gave an in-depth discussion on mediation, providing the attendees with skills and

techniques on effective dispute resolution needed in cooperative development. She mentioned the importance of effective listening for identifying and understanding conflicts that may arise within the organization.

In her closing remark, Ms. Myrachel P. Cuadra, OPCDO Officer-in-Charge, aspired for the cooperatives to continue engaging in alternative dispute resolution. "Sana hindi lang nito napalalim ang inyong kaalaman tungkol sa mediation process kundi na-empower din kayo with the tools na makakatulong sa pagresolba ng conflict sa inyong mga kooperatiba. Patuloy tayong matuto, magsanay at lumago bilang mga peace builders sa ating mga komunidad," she said. - J. Reyes

fFaith





Pagsasanay...

Bilang tugon sa lumalaganap na Rice Yellowing Disease sa CAL-ABARZON, nagsagawa ang Department of Agriculture IV-CALABARZON (DA-4A) Regional Crop Protection Center ng pagsasanay para sa mga farmer technicians mula sa Rizal noong ika-27 hanggang ika-29 ng Agosto sa Antipolo City.

Katuwang ang DA-4A Rice Program at Regional IPM Task Force, layunin ng pagsasanay na paigtingin ang kakayahan ng mga tekniko sa pagtukoy at pamamahala ng mga peste at sakit sa palay tulad ng rice leaf folder (maniniklop), rice bug (atangya ng palay), armyworm, rice blast, at ang

kasalukuyang binabantayan na Rice Yellowing Disease na dulot ng Rice Ragged Stunt Virus (RRSV) at Rice Grass Stunt Virus (RGSV).

Tinalakay din ang Integrated Pest Management (IPM) upang maiwasan ang pagkalat ng sakit at mapanatili ang produksyon ng palay sa rehiyon. Bahagi rin ng pagsasanay ang pagpatibay ng koordinasyon sa mga extension partners para sa mga epektibong rice pest reporting system. Layunin nitong mapabilis ang pag-uulat at pagtugon sa mga insidente ng peste at sakit sa palayan.

Sa gitna ng lumalawak na banta ng Rice

FROM PAGE 1

Yellowing Syndrome, itinuturing ng DA-4A ang ganitong pagsasanay bilang unang linya ng depensa hindi lamang upang protektahan ang ani, kundi upang tiyakin din ang seguridad sa pagkain at kabuhayan ng mga magsasaka sa CALABARZON.

Ayon kay Dr. Isagani Serrano, Municipal Agriculturist ng Rodriguez, Rizal, mahalaga ang tamang diagnosis para mabigyan ng tama at angkop na solusyon ang mga problema sa ating palayan. Ang mga itinuro sa pagsasanay ay dapat maibahagi sa nakararami upang mas mapagandaan at maagapan ang sakit na ito. PR

NEW...

Salinas Elementary School, Bacoor City – September 2, 2025 – A new 12-classroom school building was inaugurated at Salinas Elementary School today, highlighting the City Government's commitment to education. The project, spearheaded by Mayor Strike B. Revilla and the City Government in partnership with the Department of Education (DepEd), aims to provide a better learning environment for students.

The event was attended by Mayor Strike

B. Revilla, Vice Mayor Rowena Bautista-Mendiola, and City Councilors Karen Sarino Evaristo, Noly Galvez, and Levy Tela. Also present were DepEd officials led by Schools Division Superintendent Dr. Babylyn M. Pambid, school principal Feliciano F. De Vera Jr., Barangay Captains Nicamor D. Espiritu (Salinas 1) and Mark G. Torno (Salinas 2), and Bishop Erik Santos, who led the invocation. During the ceremony, a special tribute was given to the

FROM PAGE 1

late Councilor Victorio "Toto" Guerrero Jr. for his unwavering support of the school during his lifetime. The recognition was received by his children, Mr. Victorio "Rio" Guerrero III and Ms. Vina Guerrero-Gandia. The ceremony included remarks from key officials, a ribbon-cutting, and the unveiling of a marker. This new building symbolizes the city's dedication to investing in the future of its youth by providing them with quality educational facilities.

Deped...

C A L A M B A CITY (PIA) – Known as a training ground for up-and-coming journalists and media practitioners, campus journalism has taken another level and will now include an education bootcamp to better prepare students for the regional competitions.

Eugene Ray Santos, Education Program Supervisor of the Department of Education (DepEd) in CALABARZON, stated that the Education Bootcamp Series is designed to provide holistic training for campus journalists competing for the National Schools Press Conference (NSPC).

"This is our way of leveling the playing field while raising the standards of campus journalism in CALABARZON."

As the proponent of the training series, Santos said the revamped Regional Schools Press Conference (RSPC) provides campus journalists with unhindered access to quality training and mentorship on writing, broadcasting and journalism ethics.

"It also addresses the overwhelming volume of contest entries

that previously slowed down the judging process and affected consistency in evaluation."

The new edition of the CALABARZON RSPC, slated to launch in Rizal Province in 2026, will include a lecture series focusing on journalism ethics, news and feature writing, photojournalism, and broadcast and digital journalism.

In a statement, DepEd CALABARZON noted that the new RSPC will serve as a training ground for skilled and ethical young journalists.

"As the RSPC 2026 unfolds under this reconfigured design, learners, teachers, and communities alike can expect not just a competition, but a movement that empowers the youth to become the next generation of ethical storytellers and nation-builders."

The Education Bootcamp Series will use a hybrid model, combining online and face-to-face modalities to provide workshops on media ethics, news and feature writing, broadcast journalism, photojournalism, and digital platforms, under the guidance of field experts

FROM PAGE 1

and media professionals. They will also undergo assessment where they will be judged under a blind evaluation system, adopting a rubric following the NSPC standards to ensure fairness and objectivity.

The new RSPC will also adopt a dual-qualification system where each of the 24 Schools Division Offices (SDOs) will automatically secure slots, while additional top scorers will advance into the competition based on merit.

Enacted into law as the Campus Journalism Act of 1991, the Department of Education–then the Department of Education, Culture, and Sports (DECS)–oversees the promotion of campus journalism as a means of strengthening values, encouraging ethical and critical thinking, and developing moral character and personal discipline among the youth.

A consistent finalist for the NSPC, the CALABARZON region took home the 3rd place in the competition's 2025 edition and is consistently among the top performing regions.

HPG, NAGSAGAWA NG SURPRISE INSPECTION SA SASAKYAN NG MGA PULIS NA NASA KAMPO CRAME

N a g s a g a w a ng surprise inspection ang Philippine National Police-Highway Patrol Group (PNP-HPG) sa mga sasakyan ng police personnel at mga bisita na nasa Kampo Crame sa Quezon City.

Ito ay kasunod ng kautusan ni HPG director Col. Hansel Marantán, upang matiyak na walang police office ang gumagamit ng mga ninakaw at narerecover na sasakyan.

Nais ding tiyakin

ng HPG na ang lahat ng mga driver at pulis na bumibisita sa Crame ay may balidong lisensiya, updated registration, atbpang kaukulang dokumento.

Hanggang 500 motorsiklo at 300 sasakyan ang nasuri ng naturang police unit, kung saan anim ang natukoy na may violation.

Kabilang dito ang hindi pagdadala ng Certificate of Registration, updated Official Receipts, at mga lisensiya.

Batay sa official

report ng HPG, walang nakita na na-karnap o covered vehicles sa mga sinuring sasakyan ngunit ilan sa mga private car na nakapasok sa loob ng police camp ay gumagamit ng unauthorized accessories at insignia.

Magpapatuloy din ang naturang inspection bilang bahagi ng pagtiyak ng HPG na lahat ng mga pulis na naka-assign sa Crame ay sumusunod sa traffic and registration laws ng bansa. **(Nelson Dimapilis)**

Dizon pabor tapyasan flood control budget ng DPWH, pondo irealign sa rehabilitation ng mga daan, tulay

si Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Secretary Vince Dizon na bawasan ang P268.3 billion pondo ng ahensiya sa flood control projects para sa susunod na taon.

Sinabi ni Dizon dapat lamang ito na bawasan ng hindi nalalagay sa alanganin ang iba pang mga lugar na nangangailangan talaga ng proyekto.

Binigyang-diin ng Kalihim na marami

talagang dapat ayusin at linisin sa mga flood control projects ng mga nakaraang taon.

Naniniwala si Dizon na dapat magkaroon ng malaking pagbababa sa budget ng flood control ng sa gayon ang mga kwestiyunableng proyekto ay mabura.

Humiling naman si Dizon sa kamara na bigyan sila ng sapat na oras para kanilang maisa ayos ang kanilang panukalang 2026 budget.

Aminado ang

Kalihim na nao-overwhelm siya at litong-lito dahil sa gulo na kaniyang nadatnan niya mula nang maupong bagong kalihim ng ahensiya.

Una ng ibinunyag ni House Deputy Speaker Ronaldo Puno na may nakita silang kwestiyunableng proyekto sa 2026 NEP sa DPWH.

Ayon kay Dizon kinikilala niya ang naging hakbang ng mga Kongresista. **(Nelson Dimapilis)**

be still
and know
PSALM 46:10



Pointer

Pau Dela Cruz

Escudero, isinusulong ang 'negative list' para mapigilan ang mga walang kwentang proyekto ng DPWH

Hinimok ni Senate President Francis "Chiz" Escudero ang Malacañang na bumuo ng tinatawag na "negative list" o talaan ng mga proyektong pang-imprastruktura na hindi dapat pondohan sa ilalim ng pambansang badyet para sa 2026.

Ito aniya ay dapat agad na i-veto ni Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos Jr. dahil nagiging dahilan lamang ito ng pag-aaksaya ng pondo na mas kailangan sa mahahalagang programa.

Ayon sa senador, mas mainam na maging maagap at tukuyin na agad kung anu-anong proyekto ang hindi dapat isama sa budget kaysa hintayin pang makalusot ang mga kuwestiyonableng proyekto.

Aniya, babaha ng mga walang sibling proyekto kung hindi lilinawin kung alin ang dapat ipagbawal, at nararapat na walang ilaan na pondo para sa mga proyektong hindi naman nagbibigay ng benepisyo.

Kabilang sa mga iminungkahin niyang isama sa negative list ang mga mababang halaga ngunit labis na overpriced na kagamitan sa kasada gaya ng reflective studs o "cat's eyes," slope protection nets at mga pintura.

Gayundin, dapat ding ali-

sin ang mga tinawag niyang "vanity projects" gaya ng waiting sheds, swimming pools, signages at iba pang hindi pangunahing pangangailangan na madalas maging dahilan ng pang-aabuso at pag-aaksaya sa pondo.

Tinitingnan din ng Senate President ang posibilidad ng pagpapataw ng moratorium sa mga bagong flood control projects ng Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) para sa 2026, lalo't nananatiling hindi pa naipatutupad ang bilyon-bilyong pisong alokasyon sa ilalim ng badyet para sa 2025.

Binigyang-diin niya na dapat munang tapusin ang mga nakabinbing proyekto at ayusin ang sistema bago ipagpatuloy ang mga ito, upang mabigyan ng pagkakataon si DPWH Secretary Dizon na ayusin muna ang pamamalakad.

Iminungkahin rin ni Escudero na ilaan ang pondo sa mas makabuluhang proyekto gaya ng waste-to-energy plants, refuse-derived fuel facilities at iba pang hakbang laban sa basura, baradong daluyan ng tubig at bumababang kapasidad ng mga ilog at daluyan na pangunahing dahilan ng pagbaha sa Metro Manila at iba pang lungsod.

Happy Birthday



Ma'am SONIA TORZAR TEJO and ATE ZENY REBUSQUILLO
Pagbati mula kina Nelson Dimapilis at Edjun C. Mariposque

PUBLISHER CORNER

"PANTAY NA SWELDO SA MGA MANG-GAGAWA SA NCR AT PROBINSYA"



Isinusulong ni Senate Committee on Labor and Employment Vice Chairperson Sen. Idol Raffy Tulfo na gawing across-the-board o pantay ang minimum wage sa Metro Manila at mga probinsya.

Sa kasalukuyan, nasa ₱695 ang daily minimum wage ng mga manggagawa sa NCR na kabilang sa non-agriculture sector. Malaki ang discrepancy nito sa ibang mga probinsya gaya halimbawa ng BARMM na nasa ₱411 daily at CARAGA na ₱415 naman kada araw lamang ang swelduhan.

Sa hearing ng nasabing komite, iminungkahi ni Sen. Idol sa National Wages & Productivity Commis-

sion (NWPC), DOLE at iba pang labor experts na pag-aralan ang kanyang suhestiyon dahil ang presyo ng mga bilihin gaya ng gasolina, pagkain, medisina at marami pang iba ay magkapareho lang ang sa Metro Manila at sa mga probinsiya.

Sa katunayan, sinabi ni Sen. Idol na mas mahal pa nga kung tutuusin ang presyo ng gasolina, na driving force ng ating ekonomiya, sa ibang probinsya. Dagdag pa niya, ito ay para na rin hindi na kailangang lumuwas pa ng mga taga-probinsya sa Maynila para makahanap ng trabahong may mas mataas na sweldo.

Nangako naman si DOLE Sec. Bienvenido Laguesma na pag-aaralan nila ang mungkahi ni Sen.

Idol at magsasagawa ng masusing konsultasyon sa mga Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards sa ilalim ng NWPC.

Matatandaan na naghain ng Sen. Bill (SB) No. 1269 si Sen. Raffy noong nakaraang buwan na layong magtakda ng pantay na ₱300 dagdag sahod araw-araw para sa lahat ng manggagawa sa pribadong sektor upang maibsan ang hirap na dulot ng patuloy na pagtaas ng presyo ng bilihin.

PIA to roll out workshops on AI, digital communications

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA) – The Philippine Information Agency (PIA) will spearhead a training on artificial intelligence to integrate AI technology in grassroots communications.

PIA Director-General Katherine Chloe De Castro announced the agency's plan to integrate AI-powered tools into its communication strategies to strengthen the delivery of timely and accurate information to the public.

"We still have

many programs we want to do, one of which is our workshops in terms of AI, because for the longest time what we have been doing at PIA is training on how to write news, on how to create interesting collaterals on social media, now we are now going to study AI and how we are going to use AI to our advantage," De Castro stated during the Philippine Information Agency's radio program.

This effort is also in support of the "Maging Mapanuri" initiative of the Presidential Communica-

tions Office (PCO), which promotes media and information literacy among Filipinos and encourages the responsible consumption of digital content.

According to De Castro, the initiative will not only enhance the technical skills of PIA personnel but also provide training opportunities for government information officers and local media partners nationwide which she sees as important partners of the agency to deliver government information.

"Their role is very important because if we have any information we want to disseminate from the government, just a call or text to them, they can immediately disseminate it in their areas of responsibility," she stated.

De Castro then emphasized that adopting AI in communication aligns with the administration's Bagong Pilipinas vision of a digitally empowered society and a government that can respond more effectively to the needs of the people.

"You don't always
need a plan.
Sometimes you just
need to breathe,
trust, let go, and see
what happens."

MANDY HALE



DTI...

ANTIPOLO CITY, RIZAL | The DTI Rizal through the Philippine Trade Training Center – Global MSME Academy (PTTC-GMEA), in partnership with BPI Foundation and BPI Direct Banko, proudly brings the SEAL-BETA Project (Small Enterprise Acceleration Lab – Business Expansion thru Training & Application) to the Province of Rizal on August 5–8, 2025 at the Ynares Event Center, Antipolo City.

The SEAL-BETA Project is an integrated training program designed to assist micro enterprises that have been affected by the pandemic and natural disasters. This initiative aims to help entrepreneurs build resilience, recover,

and thrive in today's competitive market. Through SEAL-BETA, participants will gain access to:

- Business training and mentoring to strengthen operations,
- Financing opportunities to support expansion,

- Product road-shows to boost market reach, and

- Grassroots support and networking to build stronger business communities.

A highlight of the event was the successful mini trade fair held at Sumulong Park, Antipolo City. The trade fair provided a platform for local micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to

FROM PAGE 1

showcase their products and connect with potential buyers and partners, further boosting local entrepreneurship.

Over four days, participants engaged in workshops, networking sessions, and business pitch competitions, gaining valuable insights and opportunities for growth.

The event not only highlighted Rizal's vibrant business community but also reinforced its role as a hub for innovation and development.

The success of SEAL BETA 2025, including the mini trade fair, paves the way for more initiatives aimed at empowering entrepreneurs and strengthening the local economy.

BIR...

SAN PABLO CITY, Laguna (PIA) – The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) Revenue Region 9B LaQueMar reaffirmed its commitment to good governance and transparency by upholding the “Four Pillars of Good Governance” as the foundation of its operations and reforms.

BIR LaQueMar Regional Director Atty. Michael Remir Macatangay said personnel are guided by the principles introduced by BIR Commissioner Romeo Lumagui Jr., which include: Fearless and Aggressive Enforcement Activities; Excellent Taxpayer Service; Integrity and Professionalism of the Institution and its Employees; and Digitalization.

Macatangay stressed that these pillars are crucial in curbing corruption, noting that digitalization minimizes red tape and reduces reliance on the “palakasan” system in government transactions.

“Through those four pillars, the chances of corruption are reduced, because in the past corruption or red tape only happened when the system was not efficient and sufficient.”

He added that the bureau is pursuing international audit certifications to further ensure efficiency and effectiveness in its processes.

“It is not yet perfect, but we are working to improve our digitalization until it becomes almost perfect, because with less or no human intervention, the process becomes faster and the opportunity for corruption is eliminated.”

On enforcement, BIR LaQueMar reported a total collection of Php1.4 billion from operations this year, including Php26.8 million under the 48-Hour Notice and 5-Day VAT Compliance Notice of the Oplan Kandado program. 36 cases have also been filed under the Run After

FROM PAGE 1

Tax Evaders campaign. “Our approach is to assist, educate, and monitor businesses before we enforce. We help them comply rather than immediately resort to closure or penalties,” Macatangay explained.

To strengthen taxpayer service, the BIR continues to promote digital platforms such as the Electronic Filing and Payment System (eFPS), eBIRForms, and other accredited online payment channels. E-Lounges have also been established in various offices to assist taxpayers with digital transactions and provide guidance in adapting to online systems.

Macatangay reiterated that taxpayers and the BIR are not enemies but partners in ensuring compliance, emphasizing that the real challenge lies with tax evaders. He stressed that tax collection is a shared national responsibility for the benefit of all Filipinos.

NAPOLCOM KICK-OFFS THE 31ST NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION WEEK IN CALABARZON

The National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) Region IV-A Calabarzon led the celebration of the 31st National Crime Prevention Week (NCPW) this Monday, September 1, at the Santa Rosa City Auditorium, City of Santa Rosa.

Themed “Pinalakas na Pamahalaang Lokal para sa Ligtas na Pamayanan: Pagpapatibay ng mga Programa sa Pag-iwas sa Krimen sa Ilalim ng CSOP”, the observance highlights the crucial role of local governments in building safer and more resilient communities through the institutionalization of Community and Service-Oriented Policing (CSOP) strategies and innovations.

In her message, NAPOLCOM IV-A Regional Director Julieta Rañeses emphasized that crime prevention is not solely the responsibility of law enforcement agencies but a shared duty. She recognized the significant

contributions of local governments, officials, and civil society organizations in ensuring peace and order within communities.

Laguna Second District Representative Ramil Hernandez served as the guest of honor and speaker during the kick-off ceremony, where he recognized the NAPOLCOM's effort of institutionalizing the CSOP as it seeks to empower the local government units on crafting the right policies and initiatives for the sustained peace and order situation within their communities.

Also in attendance were NAPOLCOM IV-A Acting Assistant Regional Director Atty. Mia Antonette Quijano, Police Regional Office (PRO) IV-A Deputy Regional

Director for Administration (DRDA) PCOL Melvin Napiloy, Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) IV-A Assistant Regional Director Darrell Dizon, Sta. Rosa City Vice Mayor Arnold Arcillas, Philippine Information Agency (PIA) Laguna Information Center Coordinator Christopher Hedreyda, local chief executives from cities and municipalities within Calabarzon region, barangay chairpersons, and officers and members of various civil society organizations.

The annual celebration of the NCPW reflects the commission's commitment to making crime prevention a nationwide movement—empowering communities to build safer and more resilient environments. | PIA



When Agriculture is the Greener Pasture: How Growing Mushrooms Rekindles Matthew Profeta's Relationship with the Soil

It may be a hard pill to swallow, but in the Philippines, farming is more often associated with an aging population of farmworkers than with the aspirations of the younger generation.

However, amid this reality, there are still a lot of young Filipinos who serve as a beacon of hope and continue to shape the future of Philippine agriculture.

Some take the straight path toward agriculture, while others may wander into different careers before realizing that their true roots lie in the soil. What's important is not how straight or winding their path is, but that they find their way back—rekindling their relationship with farming and experiencing empowerment in it.

One of them who truly embodies this principle—realizing that agriculture is indeed the greener pasture—is Matthew Profeta, 24, a young agripreneur from Tanza, Cavite. F a c -

ing a Crossroads For Matthew, the farm was never far away. Born into a family of farmers, he grew up witnessing the sweat and hard work poured into working the land. Yet as a child, he had other dreams.

“Bata pa lang ako gusto ko talaga kumuha ng Multimedia Arts kasi mahilig ako mag-picture at mag-edit,” he recalled. He loved capturing moments with his camera and editing visuals—his heart was drawn more to this craft than to the fields.

When it was time to enter college, his father urged him to pursue Agriculture at Cavite State University. Obediently, Matthew tried, but he admitted that the experience was overwhelming.

“N a - c u l t u r e shock ako sa mga pinagaaralan. Mahirap po pala, kaya saludo ako sa mga nakapagtapos ng Agriculture and naging agriculturists,” Matthew uttered.

He shifted to Tourism, only to realize it was not his passion either. Finally, he moved to another school to finish a two-year Multimedia Arts course, closer to what he truly loved.

After graduation, he entered the real world as a Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) employee. While he was earning, something felt missing. He was at a crossroads: Is it to continue a career that doesn't ignite his passion, or return to the soil—something he knew was in his blood but hadn't fully embraced?

Rekindling Relationship with the Soil

The turning point came in late 2022. His father, Mario Profeta, who is the owner of an ATI CALABARZON-certified Learning Site for Agriculture (LSA) named Profeta Integrated Farm, showed him a post in their farmers' group chat about a new opportunity. It was the Youth Internship Program on Organic Agriculture (YIPOA) offered by the Department of Agriculture - Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI).

The 21-month intensive program promised not only learning but also financial support, like the 150,000-peso start-up fund and allowance, and most importantly, mentorship from established organic farmers.

The program is designed to instill and develop in the trainees the eagerness and appreciation of organic agriculture, and eventually make it a source of their income. Program beneficiaries are trained in planting crops, raising livestock, making natural fertilizers, troubleshooting agricultural machinery, and food processing, among others.

“At first, ayaw ko talaga kasi you need to commit,” Matthew admitted. But as he thought it through, he realized it was an opportunity worth taking. “Nanghinayang ako sa opportunity kaya agad akong nag-fill-out

ng form, at sa kabutihang palad ay natawagan ng ATI CALABARZON.”

Soon, Matthew found himself deployed to Luntiang Republika, also an LSA located in Alfonso, Cavite. There, he met his mentors, Eduardo and Hilda Cleofe, who became instrumental in reshaping his view of farming.

“Malaki ang pasalamat ko sa kanila kasi hindi nila ako pinagdamutan sa kaalaman. Sa kanila ko natutunan ang simple pero epektibong pamamaraan ng organikong pagnenegosyo,” Matthew shared.

There, he realized that choosing organic means choosing a healthier soil, healthier people, and a more nourished community. It not only protects the environment but also adds more value to products that today's conscious consumers are actively seeking

He also learned about value-adding, digital marketing, agritourism, leadership, and business planning.

Farming, he realized, wasn't backward; it could be innovative, creative, and even connected to his skills in multimedia arts and marketing. This was the start of Matthew's deeper reconnection with agriculture.

A Bittersweet Comeback

Every comeback story has its challenges, and for Matthew, it came in the form of his first YIPOA project called “May Money sa Mani” — a peanut production venture. He invested time, labor, and resources into making it succeed. However, the harsh effects of El Niño devastated his crops.

“Halos one-fourth ng budget ko ay nawala,” he said. The peanuts dried up despite his efforts, and he was left with disappointment and financial loss. It was a bitter pill to swallow, especially for someone just starting to build his confidence in farming. But instead of



giving up, Matthew chose to pivot. He asked himself: What else can I grow? What other opportunities are hidden in the soil?

Then came a twist of fate. From the failed peanut project sprouted a different crop—mushrooms. What others might have seen as a failure, Matthew transformed into a chance to innovate.

“Hindi ako sumuko, bagkos ay sumugal ako sa ibang proyekto at ito ang naging resulta ng aking tagumpay,” he said with determination—and this is how “The Mushi Project” was born.

G r o w -

ing and Succeeding What started with just 1,000 mushroom fruiting bags expanded to 3,000 bags, producing up to 13 kilograms of fresh mushrooms a day—roughly 2,600-peso worth of harvest. For Matthew, this was a revelation.

“Ito ‘yung turning point ko na ang galing kasi hindi ko man lang ito naranasan noong nagtatrabaho ako sa BPO,” he reflected.

“Bilang isang kabataang magsasaka at young entrepreneur, nais kong maitaguyod ang agrikultura gamit ang makakalikasang pamamaraan at makapagbigay-inspirasyon sa kapwa kabataan. Gusto kong maging huwaran sa larangan ng agrikultura na makakatulong sa pag-unlad ng ating komunidad,” Matthew declared.

Though he hasn't yet received formal awards, Matthew treasures the recognition from his peers and community. “Isang malaking karangalan na ma-acknowledge ng

novate, para ‘yung money patuloy na magenerate,” he expressed.

With ATI CALABARZON's continuous support through funding, mentoring, and trust in his endeavors, Matthew's confidence grew. He also became a liaison officer at Profeta's Integrated Farm, which also happens to be a Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)-accredited farm school, offering various National Certification (NC) agriculture-related courses.

Matthew also helps their scholars and on-the-job trainees while sharing his own story of resilience and success.

On weekends, he pursued photography gigs, showing that farming could co-exist with other passions.

Apart from this, his growing success gave way to various speaking engagements in seminars and other activities related to agriculture, where he was being tapped to deliver his project and his story.

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mga taong nakapaligid sa akin ang aking pagsisikap,” he shared.

Moving Ahead

His mission now goes beyond personal success as he aspires to expand “The Mushi Project” to create more jobs and inspire more youth to embrace agriculture.

For him, farming is not dirty or outdated—it is innovative, sustainable, and deeply rewarding. He realized that all his past experiences, from agriculture to tourism to multimedia arts, going back to agriculture, came together to strengthen his journey as a farmer and entrepreneur.

“Ipinagmamalaki ko na p'wede kang sumak-ses sa pamamagitan ng pagsasaka. Huwag mong sayangin ang opportunity na ibinibigay ng ating mga ahensya. Lahat tayo ay may kanya-kanyang potential na mailalabas, basta't huwag tayong matatatakot mag-explore, mag-commit, at magmahal sa ating kakayahan,” Matthew confidently said.

He added, “Para sa akin wala namang lock ang tagumpay. Lagi lang itong nakabukas at naghihintay sa atin. Ang gagawin lang natin ay kumilos at isapuso ang anumang bagay na magdadala sa atin sa tagumpay.”

Matthew's story proves that the greener pasture is not always found in corporate cubicles, but right here in one's very own soil. It's agriculture where he learned that the soil can give back even more than what you plant in it, not just income, but confidence, creativity, purpose, and a way to uplift his community.



Happy photo op with mentors, mentees, guests, partners, and exhibitors after a successful GO NEGOSYO held at Robinsons Galleria Cebu recently to bring FREE BUSINESS MENTORING to the Cebuanos.