

Pagbabalik ng ‘Wheel of Fate’ Tampok sa 30th Anniversary ng Enchanted Kingdom



SANTA ROSA, Laguna — Muling maghahatid ng kakaibang saya at karanasan sa mga bisita ang Enchanted Kingdom sa pagbabalik ng isa sa mga pinakasikat nitong atraksyon, ang Wheel of Fate, bilang bahagi ng pagdiriwang ng ika-30th anniversary ng theme park ngayong 2026.

Ang Wheel of Fate ay kabilang sa mga unang rides na inilunsad nang magbukas ang parke noong 1995.

Sa loob ng maraming taon, naging saksi ito sa iba't ibang alaala ng mga pamilyang Pilipino—mula sa bonding moments hanggang sa mahahalagang okasyon at espesyal na selebrasyon.

May taas na humigit-kumulang 130 talampakan, nagbibigay ang ferris wheel ng malawak na tanawin ng Santa Rosa at mga karatig lugar. Sa gabi naman, lalo itong nagiging kapansin-pansin dahil sa makukulay na ilaw na nagbibigay ng mas mahiwagang tanawin sa loob ng parke.

Ayon sa pamunuan ng EK, muling buksan ang Wheel of Fate na may mas pinahusay na ride system technology at



mas maayos na karanasan para sa mga bisita. Nakatakdang idaos ang grand reopening ng naturang atraksyon sa March 21, kung saan inasahang magkakaroon ng iba't ibang palabas, performances at surprises para sa mga dadalo.

Bukod dito, patuloy ring tampok sa EK ang AGILA The EKsperience: Sari-buhay, isang immersive attraction na nagpa-

pakita ng biodiversity ng Pilipinas. Kinilala pa ito ng ASEAN Tourism Association bilang Best ASEAN New Tourism Attraction noong January 27, 2026.

Samantala, patuloy ring dinarayo ng mga thrill seeker ang Space Shuttle roller coaster ng parke na kamakailan ay sumailalim sa upgrade upang mas maging ligtas at kapana-panabik ang bawat isa



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Laguna Approves Supplemental Budget, Ensuring Continuation of Key Provincial Programs

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Calamba Water District Holds ‘Walk in Her Shoes’ Activity, Highlights Respect for Women’s Roles



CALAMBA CITY, Laguna — In celebration of National Women’s Month, the Calamba Water District held a unique activity titled “Walk In Her Shoes” on Monday, March 9, 2026, led by General Manager Jhun

Aguilar, to recognize and show support for the vital role of women in society and within the home.

The activity encouraged male employees to wear high heels and walk the runway, allowing them to experience—albeit briefly—some of the challenges and responsibilities that women face in their daily lives.

According to Aguilar, the program served as a symbolic gesture of respect and appreciation for women. He explained that

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Turning skills into hope



in Bataan before relocating to Palawan with her grandmother and parents, believing the island would give them better opportunities to start over.

Wilma started her own family at 16 in Puerto Princesa, where she also learned the process of making smoked fish, a skill that helped support her family’s needs. At first, the business was started by her mother-in-law, and she later perfected it with the help of her mother.

As her mother-in-law aged and could no longer manage the business, Wilma took over. Afterwards, the business grew and required additional capital. This prompted her to become a client of CARD SME Bank, Inc., a thrift bank under CARD MRI. She started with a modest loan of PHP 5,000, and solely used it to sustain the business.

For over 15 years of clientship, her loan grew to PHP 250,000, where she invested to meet the expanding business demands. Her livelihood also benefits the community, as local fishermen supply fresh fish and earn income while helping keep her business running.

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At her stall in Puerto Princesa Public Market, Palawan, Wilma Nicolas, a 69-year-old proud CARD SME client, runs a smoked fish business she has nurtured over decades with hard work and community support.

At 69, Wilma Nicolas, a widow and mother of five, has spent her life working hard for her family. Her journey began



EDITORIAL:

CHIZ: MSMEs NEED BETTER SUPPORT, ACCESS TO LENDING TO BOOST EMPLOYMENT

The surge in unemployment to 2.96 million Filipinos in January 2026 has led Senator Francis “Chiz” Escudero to press for urgent action to support micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), widely regarded as the backbone of the country’s economy that employs about two-thirds of the national workforce.

Citing the latest Labor Force Survey conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), Escudero said the figures reflect both seasonal job losses and long-standing structural weaknesses that demand immediate legislative attention.

To help address the situation, the veteran legislator is hoping the Senate will consider expediting the deliberation on the two complementary measures he authored: Senate Bill No. 231, which simplifies tax requirements and reduces compliance costs for MSMEs; and Senate Bill No. 233, which reinstates mandatory credit allocation for small enterprises by requiring banks and lending institutions to dedicate a portion of their loan portfolios to MSMEs.

Escudero noted that his bills have been pending in their respective committees since August of last year.

“Access to credit remains the lifeblood of our small businesses. Without financing, MSMEs cannot restock, modernize, or hire, and without lower compliance costs, they cannot stay afloat long enough to recover,” he said.

The Bicolano senator explained that the two bills form a coordinated strategy for MSME recovery; one reduces operational burdens, while the other ensures capital reaches enterprises that need it most.

“If we want to reverse rising unemployment, we must strengthen the enterprises that employ most of our people. These are practical, fiscally responsible reforms that go straight to the root of the problem,” he said.

Escudero said MSME support is one of the most cost-effective ways to generate employment without requiring massive new government spending. He warned that delays could lead to more closures and job losses.

“Every month of delay means more small businesses closing and more Filipinos losing work. If we want more families to find dignified, stable livelihoods, we must empower the backbone of our economy,” he said.

According to the latest PSA report, the unemployment rate rose to 5.8%, up from 4.4% in December 2025 and 4.3% in January 2025, meaning 58 out of every 1,000 workers had no job or livelihood. Employment also fell to 47.94 million in January 2026, from 48.49 million in January 2025 and 49.43 million in December 2025.

The report said the steepest year-on-year declines were recorded in agriculture and forestry, 1.42 million; wholesale and retail trade, 729,000; and fishing and aquaculture, 140,000. These sectors are heavily dominated by MSMEs.

“Our MSMEs remain the most exposed to economic shocks and the slowest to recover. They are hurting,” he concluded. .

(Nelson Dimapilis)

Laguna...

SANTA CRUZ, Laguna — Key programs of the provincial government will continue moving forward after the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Laguna unanimously approved the province’s supplemental budget during a special session held on March 12, 2026, at the session hall of the Provincial Capitol.

In a Facebook Live broadcast on the same day, Laguna Governor Sol Aragonese expressed gratitude to members of the provincial board for supporting the measure, emphasizing that the approved funds

come from the taxes paid by the people and must be used to address their needs.

Aragones assured Lagunenses that the approval of the supplemental budget will allow the provincial government to sustain several major initiatives and priority projects across the province.

Among the programs set to continue is Akay ni Gob Botika, which provides affordable medicines to residents, as well as preparations for Anilag Festival Level Up 2026, alongside other priority programs funded through the supplemental allocation.

860 Kilos...

PALUAN, Occidental Mindoro — Tinatayang 860 kilo ng hinihinalang shabu na nagkakahalaga ng humigit-kumulang ₱6 bilyon ang nasabat ng mga sundalo matapos madiskubre ang isang sumadsad na speedboat sa baybaying bahagi ng Sitio Agbalite, Barangay Harrison sa bayang ito noong hapon ng Marso 10.

Ayon sa ulat ng 76th Infantry Battalion (Victrix), bandang alas-3:00 ng hapon nang matagpuan ng mga kasundaluhan ang isang twin-engine speedboat na sumadsad sa nasabing lugar. Sa isinagawang inspeksyon, natuklasan sa loob ng bangka ang 43 sako ng puting kristal na substansiya na hinihinalang umethamphetamine hydrochloride o shabu.

Batay sa paunang pagsusuri ng Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), ang mga nasamsam na droga ay may tinatayang kabuuang bigat na 860 kilo at may street value na umaabot sa halos ₱6

FROM PAGE 1

bilyon. Bukod sa mga hinihinalang iligal na droga, narekober din ng mga awtoridad sa loob ng speedboat ang isang Starlink satellite communication device at iba pang kagamitan na pinaniniwalaang ginamit sa operasyon.

Samantala, dalawang hinihinalang Chinese national na sangkot sa insidente ang kalaunang naaresto ng mga tropa ng 76th Infantry Battalion. Kasalukuyan silang nasa kustodiya ng mga awtoridad habang nagpapatuloy ang imbestigasyon para sa kaukulang kaso at disposisyon ng mga nasamsam na ebidensya.

Ayon kay Brigadier General Melencio W. Ragudo, commander ng 203rd Infantry (Bantay Kapayapaan) Brigade, patuloy ang pakikipag-ugnayan ng militar sa iba’t ibang ahensya ng pamahalaan upang masugpo ang iligal na droga at mapanatili ang kapayapaan at seguridad sa isla ng Mindoro.

(Madelaine Go)



tion.

During her livestream following the special session, the governor underscored that public funds belong to the people and must be utilized responsibly for their welfare.

“Hindi ko pera to, hindi pera ng Vice Gov, hindi pera ng Bokal, pera niyo ito, buwis niyo ito,” Aragonese said.

She also highlighted the responsibility of elected officials to support initiatives that directly benefit the public.

“Ang mga bokal ay walang karapatan na hindi ito aprubahan,” she added.

Aragones further called on fellow public servants to remember the trust placed in them by voters and the purpose behind their election to public office.

“At sa mga kapwa ko lingkod bayan, gaya ng marami, wag natin kalimutan ang dahilan bakit tayo ipinalo ng taong bayan,” she said.

The governor stressed that government funds should always be directed toward addressing the needs of the people.

“Dahil may pangako na tutuparin para sa taong bayan, ang buwis nila ay para din sa kanilang pangangailangan na ibibigay ng pamahalaan,” she added.

According to Aragonese, the most important outcome of the discussions surrounding the supplemental budget was the decision to prioritize the welfare of the public.

“Ang pinakamahalaga sa lahat, sa huli pinili natin ang kapakanan ng taong bayan,” she said.

She also thanked the members of the provincial board for their support in approving the funding measure.

“Maraming salamat po sa Sangguniang Panlalawigan na pinili ang kapakanan ng ating mga kababayan,” Aragonese said.

With the supplemental budget now approved, the provincial government is expected to proceed with the implementation of various programs and projects aimed at addressing the diverse needs of communities throughout Laguna.

(Edjun Mariposque)



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Calamba...

it was an opportunity for male employees to better understand the efforts and sacrifices made by women, whether in their families or in the workplace.

“This activity shows our respect for women and allows our male employees to experience some of what our loved ones go through. The role women play in society and in the home is not easy,” Aguilar said.

Some participants even encountered humorous yet telling moments during the activity, with a few experiencing broken shoes and detached heels while hopping to walk flawlessly in the high heels.

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Meanwhile, Roseller “Ross” H. Rizal conveyed his message of appreciation through Abel Landicho, one of the male participants who bravely took part in the challenge. The mayor said the activity demonstrates recognition of the sacrifices and dedication of women in society.

Through the “Walk In Her Shoes” initiative, the Calamba Water District reaffirmed the importance of gender equality and respect for women—reminding everyone that behind many successful men stands a strong and supportive woman.

(Edjun Mariposque)

DUGO NG PAG-ASA: Philippine Army Nagsagawa ng Sabayang Blood Letting para sa ika-129 Anibersaryo

Tanay, rixaNagsagawa ng sabayang blood letting activity ang Philippine Army noong Marso 7, 2026 bilang bahagi ng pagdiriwang ng ika-129 anibersaryo ng hukbong katihan ng bansa, kung saan aktibong nakilahok ang Army Station Hospital upang magbigay ng tulong sa mga nangangailangan ng dugo.

Pinangunahan ng Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Personnel (G1), na nagsilbing Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR), ang nasabing aktibidad na nagbuklod sa mga sundalo at mga katuwang na institusyon sa iisang layunin—ang makapagligtas ng buhay sa pamamagitan ng boluntaryong pagdo-donate ng dugo.

Naging Unit Primary Responsible (UPR) naman ang Army Station Hospital sa pagsasagawa ng blood donation drive, na tiniyak ang maayos na daloy ng programa sa pakikipagtutungan sa mga partner hospitals na St. Luke’s Medical Center sa Quezon City at Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital and Sanitarium, na mas kilala bilang TALA Hospital.

Ayon sa mga

opisyal, ang nasabing inisyatiba ay patunay ng patuloy na dedikasyon ng Philippine Army hindi lamang sa pagtatanggol sa bansa kundi maging sa pagliligtas ng buhay sa pamamagitan ng mga gawaing makatao.

Bawat patak ng dugong ibinigay ng mga boluntaryong donor ay sumisimbolo ng pag-asa, malasakit, at tunay na serbisyo para sa kapwa—ising pagpapakita ng diwa ng pagkakaisa at pagtutulongan sa komunidad.

Nagpaabot din ng taos-pusong pasasalamat ang Army Station Hospital sa kanilang mga katuwang na institusyon, partikular ang St. Luke’s Medical Center–Quezon City at Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital and Sanitarium, sa kanilang mahalagang suporta upang maging matagumpay ang nasabing life-saving activity.

Sa pamamagitan ng ganitong mga programa, patuloy na ipinapakita ng Philippine Army na ang kanilang serbisyo ay hindi lamang sa panahon ng digmaan, kundi pati sa mga gawaing nagliligtas ng buhay at nagpapalakas ng diwa ng bayanihan.

(Pau Mojar)

Turning...

“Dahil sa pagiging client ko sa CARD SME Bank, bukod sa aking negosyo, marami na akong naipundar na mga home appliances, napagawa ko ang aming bahay, at napagtapos ko ang tatlo kong anak sa pag-aaral. (Being a client of CARD SME Bank has allowed me, not only to grow my business, but also to acquire home appliances, renovate our house, and support my three children in finishing their studies),” she said with pride.

Like other entrepreneurs, Wilma faced many challenges. Natural calamities often disrupt fishing, limiting supplies and slowing production. Yet Wilma’s determination never waver and she keeps going through every setback.

Aside from her resilience and perseverance, Wilma also credits CARD SME Bank for being more than just a financial institution. “Magaling ang CARD SME Bank dahil nasosolusyunan nila ang mga pangangailangan at problema naming mga kliyente, lalo na pag-

FROM PAGE 1

dating sa karagdagang kapital para aming negosyo. (CARD is helpful because it understands and addresses our needs as clients, especially when we need additional capital for our businesses),” Wilma said.

What started as a simple household activity, Wilma’s smoked fish business has grown into a reliable source of income. Today, her products reach customers across Puerto Princesa, Palawan, and even abroad through loyal OFW customers.

Looking ahead, Wilma wants to remain focused on her business, the venture that has carried her family through life’s ups and downs. For her, the business is more than a livelihood.

It is proof of her perseverance and strength, showing how she turned her skills into lasting support for her family.

For orders and inquiries, those who are within the area may visit her stall at Puerto Princesa Public Market, Palawan, or contact her at 0912-120-9577.

Rizal PPO, Hinikayat ang mga Botante sa Antipolo na Makilahok sa Espesyal na Halalan

ANTIPOLO CITY — Hinihikayat ng Rizal Police Provincial Office (PPO) ang lahat ng kwalipikadong botante sa Ikalawang Distrito ng Antipolo na gamitin ang kanilang karapatang bumoto sa isinagawang espesyal na halalan.

Ayon sa Rizal PPO, mahalaga ang aktibong pakikilahok ng bawat mamamayan sa proseso ng pagboto bilang bahagi ng pagpapatibay ng demokrasya at pagpili ng mga lider na mamumuno sa komunidad.

Kasabay nito, tiniyak ng kapulisan na nakahanda at naka-deploy ang kanilang mga tauhan sa iba’t ibang lugar upang mapanatili ang kaayusan, kapayapaan, at seguridad habang isinasagawa ang halalan.

Patuloy din nil-

ang hinihikayat ang publiko na makisa sa pagpanatili ng isang maayos, mapayapa, at malinis na eleksyon sa lalawigan.

Sa pahayag ni Rizal Provincial Director PCOL Eleazar R. Barber Jr., binigyang-diin niya ang kahalagahan ng partisipasyon ng mga botante sa halalan.

“Ngayong araw ng espesyal na halalan sa Ikalawang Distrito ng Antipolo, hinihikayat namin ang lahat ng kwalipikadong botante na gamitin ang kanilang karapatang bumoto. Ang inyong partisipasyon ay mahalaga sa pagpili ng mga lider ng ating komunidad. Makakaasa ang publiko na ang Rizal Police Provincial Office ay patuloy na magbabantay upang matiyak ang

CAYETANO: MGA PILIPINONG NAHAHARAP SA FOREIGN ARREST CASES, DAPAT DUMAAN MUNA SA KORTE SA BANSA

Ipinunto ni Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano nitong Miyerkules na ang mga Pilipinong may international arrest warrants ay dapat mabigyan ng pagkakataong humarap sa korte sa Pilipinas bago sila ipadala sa ibang bansa.

Sa period of interpellation ng Senate Resolution No. 307 nitong March 11, 2026, nilinaw ni Cayetano na ang panukala ay para sa mga panghinaharap na sitwasyon at hindi nakatuon sa sinumang tao o kasong nakabinbin.

“I want to look at this prospectively. I think there will be some political color if we talk about what happened in the past. The bottom line of this resolution is that, for whatever reason, every Filipino should be able to run to [a Philippine] court before he is removed from the country,” sabi niya.

Sa naganap na interpellation, humingi ng linaw si Senate Pro Tempore Panfilo “Ping” Lacson ang konsepto ng “extraordinary rendition” at nagmungkahi ng pagbabago sa wika ng resolusyon para hindi malito sa legal na katuturan ng extradition.

Sagot ni Cayetano, ang panukala ay para sa mga sitwasyon kung saan maaaring dalhin ang isang tao palabas ng bansa ng hindi dumadaan sa normal na proseso sa korte sa Pilipinas.

Aniya, sa karaniwang proseso, sinusuri muna ng local courts ang arrest at extradition requests para alamin kung tama ba ang pagsuko sa ibang hurisdiksyon.

“Anyone who arrests anyone but hindi dadaan sa judge, that’s unconstitutional,” sabi isang ligtas, mapayapa, at maayos na halalan para sa lahat,” ani Barber.

Nanawagan din ang Rizal PPO sa publiko na makipagtutungan

niya. Dagdag pa ni Cayetano, kinikilala pa rin ng international legal frameworks, kabilang ang Rome Statute, ang papel ng domestic courts sa proseso ng pag-aresto at pagsuko.

“Ang key word diyan is ‘complementarity.’ Dapat nagko-complement y’ung dalawa,” paliwanag niya patungkol sa relasyon ng international tribunals at lokal na legal system.

Ayon kay Cayetano, may ilang bansa tulad ng United Kingdom, Canada, at South Korea na kinakailangan munang dumaan sa domestic judicial review bago isuko ang isang tao sa arrest warrants mula sa International Criminal Court (ICC).

Aniya, ang pagbibigay ng pagkakataon sa indibidwal na humarap sa korte ay proteksyon hindi lamang sa mataas na opisyal kundi pati sa ordinaryong mamamayan na maaaring humarap sa mistaken identity o mapagbintangan ng mali.

“Shouldn’t he (accused) have the opportunity to go before the court and say we might have the same DNA, baka magkamuka kami but that’s not me, that’s my brother,” sabi niya.

Binanggit din ni Cayetano na kahit sa ilalim ng Republic Act No. 9851 na tumatalakay sa crimes against humanity at related offenses, hindi obligadong isuko ang isang tao sa international courts at nakasalalay ito sa desisyon ng Philippine authorities.

“Ang point lang, before he (accused) is removed from this country, ma-address niya pa rin y’ung sarili niya sa [sarili nating] korte,” sabi ni Cayetano. PR

Sa mga awtoridad upang masiguro ang maayos at mapayapang pagdaraos ng espesyal na halalan sa Antipolo City.

(Pau Dela Cruz)



Dumalo tayo sa Committee Hearings na ginanap sa Session Hall ng Sangguniang Panlungsod, na tumalakay sa mga committee ng:

- Committee on Public Affairs and Information
- Committee on Peace and Order, Fire Prevention, Public Safety & Welfare
- Committee on Appropriation, Budget and Finance
- Committee on Appointment, Plantilla and Personnel Services

Ang ating pagdalo ay mahalaga upang masusing talakayin at pag-aralan ang mga panukala at programang may direktang epekto sa maayos na pamamahala, kaligtasan, at kapakanan ng bawat mamamayan ng Calamba.

Sa pamamagitan ng aktibong pakikibahagi sa mga talakayan, patuloy nating pinatitibay ang tapat, responsable, at makabuluhang paglilingkod para sa ating lungsod.

(Nelson Dimapilis)

Babaeng Miyembro ng NPA, Sumuko at Isinuko ang Baril sa Oriental Mindoro

CAMP CAP-INPIN, Rizal — Isang babaeng miyembro ng rebeldeng grupo na New People's Army (NPA) ang kusang sumuko sa mga tropa ng pamahalaan at isinuko ang kanyang baril sa bayan ng **Mansalay, Oriental Mindoro noong Huwebes, Marso 12.

Batay sa ulat ng 203rd Infantry (Bantay Kapayapaan) Brigade, pinangasiwaan ng mga sundalo ng 1st Infantry (Always First) Battalion ang pagsuko ng rebelde na kinilalang si alias "Ani" sa Sitio Lamak, Barangay Manaol. Boluntaryo nitong isinuko ang isang M16 rifle at isang magazine sa mga awtoridad.

Ayon sa paunang impormasyon, nawalan na umano ng gana at pag-asa ang naturang rebelde matapos maranasan ang hirap ng pamumuhay sa

kabundukan. Naisip din umano nito ang kawalan ng saysay ng patuloy na armadong pakikibaka kaya nagpasya siyang bumalik sa ilalim ng batas.

Sa pahayag ni Brigadier General Melen-cio Ragudo, commander ng 203rd Infantry Brigade, ang pagsuko ng rebelde ay patunay ng patuloy na tagumpay ng mga operasyong pangseguridad at pakikipag-ugnayan sa mga komunidad sa lalawigan.

"Sa pamamagitan ng mas pinaigting na operasyon at malapit na pakikipag-ugnayan sa mga komunidad, mas marami ang nakapagtatanto na ang armadong pakikibaka ay nagdudulot lamang ng paghihirap at kawalang katiyakan. Handa ang ating mga tropa na tulungan ang sinumang nais bumalik sa kanilang

Patuloy naman ang isinasagawang security operations at community engagement ng militar sa lugar upang mahikayat ang iba pang miyembro ng armadong grupo na sumuko at makiisa sa layunin ng pamahalaan para sa pangmatagalang kapayapaan at kaunlaran sa Southern Tagalog.

(Pau Mojar)

Mayor Ross Rizal Leads Calamba in Adopting Advanced Security Technology at Command Center Summit



CALAMBA CITY, Laguna — The City Government of Calamba reaffirmed its commitment to public safety and modern governance as it participated in the Command Center and Security Technology Update: Meet & Greet with GeoVision, an event showcasing the latest innovations in surveillance systems and command center technologies.

Held on March 12, 2026 at Hotel Marciano, the gathering brought together government partners, security experts, and technology providers to discuss cutting-edge solutions that can strengthen monitoring capabilities and improve coordination in city operations.

Roseller "Ross" H. Rizal, mayor of Calamba City, took part in the activity as part of the local government's continuing efforts to enhance security systems and integrate modern technology into public service.

The initiative aims to equip the city with more efficient tools that can support law enforcement, disaster response, and overall urban management.

The event highlighted new developments in command center oper-

ations, intelligent surveillance systems, and integrated security platforms designed to help local governments respond more effectively to incidents while ensuring the safety of residents.

Representing the Office of the Mayor during the program was Executive Assistant Nancy Dimaranan, who joined stakeholders and technology experts in discussions on how innovation can further strengthen the city's public safety initiatives.

Organized by COMSPEC Marketing, the meet-and-greet also served as a venue for partners and stakeholders to exchange insights on how modern security technology can be applied to local governance.

Through initiatives like this, the City Government of Calamba continues to support programs that promote innovation, strengthen security infrastructure, and ensure the safety and well-being of every Calambeño.

EXPLICIT Madelaine Go

PHP 18.7-M HOUSING GRANT IGINAWAD SA 271 PAMILYA SA LAGUNA

CABUYAO CITY, Laguna — Aabot sa 271 pamilya mula Barangay Pulo ang tumanggap ng mahigit ₱18.7 milyong housing grant mula sa Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) at Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC).

L a y u n in ng nasabing tulong-pinansyal na tulungan ang mga residente ng Don Vicente Villas Phase 8 na maisapinal ang pagbili ng lupang kinatitirikan ng kanilang mga tahanan sa ilalim ng Enhanced Community Mortgage Program (ECMP).

Pormal na iginawad ang grant sa Don Vicente Villas Homeowners' Association Phase 8 sa isang ceremonial check turnover na pinangunahan nina DHSUD Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling at SHFC President at CEO Federico Laxa noong Marso 10.

Ang ECMP ay bahagi ng Expanded Pamansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino Program ng administrasyon ni Ferdinand



R. Marcos Jr., na naglalayong magbigay ng ligtas, maayos, at abot-kayang pabahay para sa mga pamilyang Pilipino na may mababang kita.

Sa pamamagitan ng grant, magkakaroon ng kakayahan ang mga miyembro ng homeowners' association na sama-samang bilhin ang lupang kanilang tinitirhan upang maprotektahan sila laban sa panganib ng pagpapaalis at matiyak ang pangmatagalang seguridad sa kanilang tirahan.

N a g p a s -alamat naman ang mga benepisyaryo sa pamahalaan, DHSUD, at SHFC sa pagtulong upang matupad ang kanilang pangarap na magkaroon ng sariling lupa at matatag na tirahan para sa kanilang pamilya.

Sa kasalukuyan, may 41 ECMP projects na ang naaprubahan ng SHFC mula nang ilunsad ang programa noong nakaraang taon, na inaasahang makikinabang ang mahigit 7,000 pamilya mula sa iba't ibang bahagi ng bansa.

BACOR, CAVITE - Coffee enthusiasts in Cavite have a new destination for high-quality brews as ZUS Coffee officially opens its doors on the 3rd Level of SM City Bacoor near the cinema.

The branch invites mall-goers to experience a menu crafted with passion, featuring bold flavors designed for those who want to "go all out" with every cup.

This latest addition to the mall's food scene provides a premium haven where local coffee lovers can "max out" on their favorite signature drinks.



PUBLISHER CORNER

CHIZ: STAGGERED WORK-HOUR TO CUSHION IMPACT OF OIL CRISIS, CUT P3.5-B DAILY LOSSES DUE TO TRAFFIC

Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero over the weekend urged private companies to consider adopting Malacañang-backed four-day onsite workweek or implement staggered work-hour schemes as the country aims to cushion the impact of fuel price hikes and broader economic disruptions amid escalating tensions in the Middle East.

In a statement, Escudero said such flexible arrangements could help reduce daily transportation demand, lower operating costs, provide workers with added relief as global oil markets remain volatile, as well reduce billions of pesos in lost opportunities every day because of traffic congestion.

"Acting this early as we anticipate what could possibly happen would strengthen the country's resilience should the situation worsen," the senator said.

The veteran legislator noted that Congress has long implemented a four-day workweek for its personnel and suggested that extending similar schemes more broadly could help reduce fuel consumption, save energy, and ease traffic congestion.

He added that private sector participation would significantly amplify the benefits of the government's temporary shift to a compressed work arrangement, especially in major business districts.

The Bicolano senator urged firms in Makati and Bonifacio Global City to explore flexible setups that can meaningfully reduce peak-hour congestion.

"These areas experience some of the heaviest daily traffic volumes, making them ideal starting points for mobility-oriented workplace reforms," he said.

President Marcos earlier ordered a temporary four-day workweek for selected executive



branch offices starting March 9 as part of efforts to conserve energy and reduce fuel use.

The directive, outlined in Memorandum Circular No. 114, mandates agencies to, among others, cut electricity and fuel consumption by 10 to 20 percent, maintain air-conditioning at 24°C, and suspend non-essential travel and activities.

The circular also allows agencies to implement the four-day onsite setup through a compressed workweek or a designated work-from-home day, consistent with Civil Service Commission policies.

According to a study conducted by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Metro Manila's traffic congestion alone costs the economy an estimated P3.5 billion per day, a figure projected to rise to P5.4 billion daily by 2035 if unaddressed.

"If we are losing P3.5 billion every single day because of traffic, that means Metro Manila is bleeding roughly P105 billion a month and more than P1.27 trillion a year," Escudero said, adding that even modest reductions in congestion can translate into massive national savings.

The senator encouraged LGUs in major business districts to collaborate with employers on area-wide mobility strategies, including synchronized staggered schedules, improved pedestrian access, and safer cycling routes.

He also urged the public to contribute to energy conservation through everyday habits such as biking short distances, carpooling, and adopting energy-efficient practices at home.

Pointer Pau Dela Cruz

BOKAL JAM AGARAO, "HINDI POSISYON ANG ISYU --KUNDI ANG PROSESO"

Sa mundo ng pamamahala at pulitika, hindi lamang ang desisyon ang mahalaga—kundi kung paano ito ginagawa.

Kamakailan ay nagkaroon ng isang pangyayari sa Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng Laguna kung saan si Senior Board Member Jam Agarao ay tinanggal sa kanyang posisyon bilang Chairperson ng Committee on Finance and Appropriations. Bilang halal na miyembro ng kapulungan, malinaw sa kanya na may kapangyarihan ang Sanggunian na magtala-ga at magbago ng pamumuno sa mga komite nito at ginagalang niya ang kapasyahan ng nakararami at tanggap ni Board Jam ang naging desisyon.

Ngunit sa kabila nito, may isang mahalagang usapin na hindi dapat palampasin—ang proseso! Kung tama ba o hindi ang ginawag pagpapatupad.

Sa araw na inihain ang mosyon upang si Agarao ay alisin sa nasabing posisyon, siya ay hindi nakadalo sa sesyon dahil kinailangan niyang samahan ang kanyang magulang sa isang nakatakdang medical consultation. Sa kanyang paglaban, inihain ang mosyon at agad itong inaprubahan nang walang paunang abiso at nang hindi man lamang siya nabigyan ng pagkakataong maipaliwanag ang kanyang sitwasyon o maipahayag ang kanyang panig.

Maaaring sabihin ng ilan na bahagi ito ng pulitika. Ngunit ang tanong: kung sila mismo sa loob ng institusyon ng pamahalaan ay hindi nagbibigay ng sapat na pagkakataon para sa patas na proseso, paano pa maaasahan na ito ay maisasabuhay sa mas malawak na pamamahala?

Ang deliberasyon ay hindi lamang isang pormalidad sa sesyon. Ito ang puso ng demokratikong pamamahala. Sa pamamagitan ng maayos na pag-uusap, paglalatag ng mga dahilan, at pagbibigay ng pagkakataong marinig ang bawat panig, doon naipapakita na ang mga desisyon ay hindi basta-basta ginagawa kundi pinag-iisipan para sa kapakanan ng institusyon.

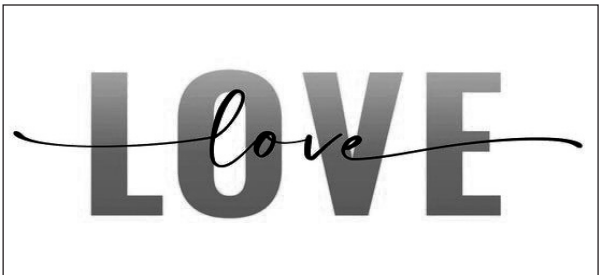
Ayon kay Agarao ay hindi niya inilalahad ang usaping ito upang maghasik ng hidwaan sa loob ng Sanggunian. Sa halip, ito ay maging paalala—sa lahat na mga halal na kinatawan ng mamamayan—na ang integridad ng pagpapatupad at mga proseso ay kasinghalaga ng mismong mga desisyon na kanilang ginagawa hakbangin.

Dahil ang tunay na pamumuno ay hindi lamang nasusukat sa kapangyarihang magpasya, kundi sa kakayahang tiyakin na ang bawat hakbang ay makatarungan, maayos, at nagbibigay-galang sa bawat kasapi ng institusyon o nang sanggunian.

Sa kabila ng nangyari, mananatili pa rin ang dedikasyon sa paglilingkod ni Bokal Jam Agarao bilang Miyembro ng Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng Laguna at patuloy siyang makikipagtulungan sa kanyang mga kasamahan upang matiyak ang main-gat at responsableng paggamit ng pondo ng bayan.

At kahit hindi man siya ang mamuno sa Committee on Finance and Appropriations, nananatili pa rin buo ang suporta niya kay Governor Sol Aragones at sa mga programang naglalayong maghatid ng tunay na kaunlaran at serbisyo sa mga mamamayan ng Laguna.

Sa huli, ang pinakamahalang ay hindi kung sino ang namumuno sa isang komite—kundi kung paano natin pinangangalagaan ang mga prinsipiyong dapat umiral sa loob ng sanggunian. Dahil sa pamahalaan, ang proseso ay hindi lamang detalye. Ito ang pundasyon ng tiwala ng mamamayan.





We Stannin' HARD: Best New Finds in Luzon with SM Supermalls



We are all about that stan life. A new album from a rising artist? Fanboy/fan-girl mode activated. A freshly opened concept store? Consider us a fan. Entering your fitness era? Support. Whether it's a personality we love or a lifestyle we aspire to, as long as it resonates with the life we want, we are stanning hard.

Here at SM Supermalls, you don't need to look any further. Everything—and we mean everything—that will get you hyped up for months is right here. From the hottest new finds across Luzon to everyday essentials that hit different, these stores have us hooked, and we just cannot get enough. As your most-loved mall, SM continues to be an icon worthy of all our attention.

All For Our Foodie Stans

Ah yes, food. Who isn't a fan, right? From familiar dining destinations to new food hubs to explore, we are stanning hard!

• Pho Hoa

A fan of Vietnamese classics? The soon-to-open, first-in-Cavite Pho Hoa at the Upper Ground Level of SM City Bacoor serves soulful bowls of pho, alongside staple sides like spring rolls, vermicelli bowls, and flavorful rice plates. With meals that'll remind you of your last trip to Vietnam, Pho Hoa is the perfect spot to savor the familiar flavors of the country.



• Frankie's New York Buffalo Wings

For all our buffalo wings stans, the first-in-Bulacan Frankie's New York Buffalo Wings at the West Wing of SM City Marilao brings its iconic variations to the table, with flavors ranging from classic buffalo to garlic parmesan and honey sriracha. Craving wings? This is your chance to dig in until you drop.



• Manam

And if you're simply a fan of home, Manam in the Ground Level of SM City Marilao is your best pick! The first-in-Bulacan, Manam elevates Filipino comfort food with creative twists. Ever heard of their iconic Watermelon Beef Sinigang? Yep, that's Manam for you!



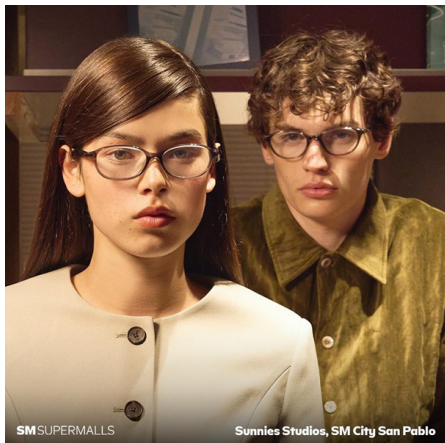
All For Our Lifestyle & Fashion Stans

If she's having it, we're ALL having it. Trends let us feel part of a community where we truly belong.

From accessories you can carry all day to lifestyle must-haves, we're all about riding the hype.

• Aquaflask Designs

If you're a fan of carrying your personality with you, the first-in-Batangas AquaFlask Designs makes hydration look good with functional, sleek tumblers that you can customize—from colors and sizes to all the accessories you can pair them with. Opening soon at the Ground Level of SM City Batangas, AquaFlask Designs lets your personality shine through whether you're heading to the gym, to class, or just malling around SM.



• Sunnies Studios

Sunnies Studios continues to be a staple for eyewear and lifestyle essentials. Its newest store at the Ground Level of SM City San Pablo brings that signature cool directly to your everyday wardrobe and gets you looking like your idol. Known for trendy and timeless styles, Sunnies Studios offers a range of eyewear for all our accessories stans out there.

• Decathlon

For sport and adventure stans who love gearing up for every experience, the newest Decathlon at Level 3 of SM City Grand Central brings over 70 sports' worth of equipment, apparel, and accessories into one space. From running shoes to yoga mats, hiking gear to swim essentials, Decathlon location makes it simple to shop everything you need to stay active and stylish.

All For Our Wellness Stans

Wellness first? Healthy fitness habits? We can't help but stan those who take good care of themselves—and lowkey, we all aspire to be like them!



• The Loop

All for our tech-savvy stans, The Loop at Level 3 of SM Center Tuguegarao Downtown is your newest go-to spot for anything gadget and gadget accessories, bringing in products that are sure to empower you whether you're a student, a professional, or just vibin' through life.



• Iremia Headspa

If wellness is your goal this year, Iremia Headspa at the 2nd Level of SM City Clark is where self-care becomes part of your everyday life. A first in SM, it offers structured head and scalp treatments focused on relaxation and reset. Wanna be your own #1 fan? This is the spot for anyone who's ready to take their well-being seriously.



• Anytime Fitness

For fitness stans focused on building a healthier body, the new Anytime Fitness at the Lower Ground Floor of SM City Trece Martires brings the globally recognized 24/7 gym experience right into your routine. Equipped with machines and tools for every fitness goal, AF is where your fitness journey becomes more accessible and more fun to return to.

ICONIC—SM Supermalls stan here! From the best in fitness and wellness to dining concepts you're sure to love, whatever you're stanning in life, your most-loved SM Supermalls has got it all for you.

Follow @smsupermalls on social media or visit www.smsupermalls.com for the latest updates and events.

Calamba Unveils Bubuyan–Palo Alto Bypass Road, Ending Decades of Waiting for Residents



C A L A M B A CITY, Laguna — After decades of anticipation, the long-awaited Bubuyan–Palo Alto Bypass Road has vfinally been inaugurated under the leadership of Mayor Roseller "Ross" H. Rizal, marking a major milestone in improving mobility and connectivity in the city.

The newly opened bypass road is expected to provide a faster and more convenient route for motorists while enhancing the daily lives of residents in surrounding communities.

During the inauguration, Mayor Rizal highlighted the significance of the project, emphasizing

that it represents more than just a new roadway.

"Hindi lamang ito bagong kalsada. Isa itong daan tungo sa mas maayos na biyahe, mas maginhawang araw-araw na pamumuhay, at mas ligtas na komunidad para sa mga motorista at mga pamilyang nakatira sa paligid.

Ang dating pangarap na sementado at maayos na daan ay isa nang realidad para sa ating mga kababayan."

The project was made possible through collaboration between the local government and private partners, including Filinvest Development Corporation, which con-

tributed land necessary for the road's development.

Mayor Rizal also expressed gratitude to taxpayers and stakeholders who supported the initiative.

"Taos-puso tayong nagpapasalamat sa ating mga tax payers na patuloy na nagtitiwala at sumusuporta sa mga proyektong nagbibigay ginhawa sa ating lungsod. Maraming salamat din sa Filinvest sa maayos na ugnayan at sa kanilang donasyon ng lupa na naging mahalagang bahagi upang maisakatuparan ang bypass road na ito."

According to the mayor, the completion of the bypass road reflects

the power of cooperation and shared commitment to public service.

"Ang proyektong ito ay patunay na kapag may pagkakaisa, mala-sakit, at tunay na layunin na maglingkod—ang matagal nang hinihintay ng bayan ay nagiging posible."

The Bubuyan–Palo Alto Bypass Road is expected to help decongest traffic in key areas while opening up new opportunities for development and improving access for residents and motorists traveling through Calamba.

Mayor Rizal con-

cluded by reaffirming the city government's commitment to continuous development.

"Tuloy-tuloy lang tayo sa pagbuo ng mas maayos, mas maunlad, at mas maginhawang Calamba para sa bawat Calambeño."

(Edjun Mariposque)