

Enchanted Kingdom unveils 31st anniversary events and offerings, announces new developments at AGILA The EKsperience: SARIBUHAY

Enchanted Kingdom, the first and only world-class theme park in the Philippines, is set to mark its 31st Anniversary with Fiesta ng Saribuhay, a month-long celebration that puts the country's rich biodiversity at the heart of its enchanting lineup of exciting shows, world-class entertainment, and other anniversary experiences this October.

With this year's theme, EK continues its mission to enrich every guest's visit as it highlights the beauty of the Philippines through a grand showcase of its people, culture, and biodiversity, which make the country truly unique and enchanting.

The anniversary festivities officially begin on October 2, with an enchanting World Teachers' Day Celebration, complete with insightful sessions, captivating performances, and special treats and giveaways dedicated to the inspiring educators who help nurture the next generation of Filipinos.

Guests are also invited to take a symbolic stride for sustainability, wellness, and togetherness at Run to 31: Takbo ng Saribuhay Fun Run on October 11.

More details about the event, including how to register, will be released soon on EK's social media pages.

Every weekend of October, the Fiesta ng Saribuhay streetdance performances will set the stage for the country's vibrant culture and festive spirit to shine across the Park. EK's very own Storyverse characters will also add their magical touch into the festivities through their spectacular nighttime parade.

On October 17, EK will put Filipino music, talent, and pride in the spotlight at the Fiesta ng Saribuhay Concert, with R&B hitmaker Dionela set to headline the star-studded lineup of OPM acts that will surely make the anniversary festivities



even more unforgettable.

The celebration continues on October 18 with another exciting set of Fiesta ng Saribuhay performances featuring more OPM artists, all of which will be revealed soon.

Explore the archipelago through food as EK's newest Saribuhay Menu serves up healthy and hearty local dishes from the featured destinations in the AGILA The EKsperience: SARIBUHAY film, available soon at LaunchTime and Amazon

Grill restaurants.

Further expanding its wide selection of in-park food and dining options, EK will also welcome new tenant partners in the coming months, including Pepper Lunch at the EK Portico, Minimelts, Stroop & Zo, and Mango Royal.

AGILA The EKsperience: SARIBUHAY 2.5

One of the highlights of EK's 31st anniversary is the launch of AGILA The EKsperience: SARIBUHAY 2.5 this October, featuring new immersive pre- and post-



birds in the country.

Additionally, EK will elevate the retail experience at Pugad, AGILA's in-house concept store, with displays and experiences that incorporate retail, education, innovation, and sustainability. Guests can take home not just souvenirs, but also a deeper appreciation and understanding of their overall AGILA experience.

Relaunched in October 2025 with a renewed mission that goes beyond tourism to champion sustainability, AGILA The EKsperience: SARIBUHAY was notably named as the Best ASEAN New Tourism Attraction by the ASEAN Tourism Association (ASEANTA) last January.

Extending its advocacy beyond the Park,

show experiences that bring more enchanting stories of biodiversity to life. It introduces a new multi-sensory walkthrough upon entry that reveals the inspiration, symbolism, and making of the attraction.

Delving deeper into the walkthrough, guests are brought into the natural habitat of the Philippine eagle, offering a glimpse into its lifecycle and the eye-opening plight of one of the most iconic and critically endangered

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Cavite City health officials sound alarm on rising leptospirosis cases

PGC equips OFW's families with financial and livelihood skills



The Provincial Government of Cavite (PGC) strengthened its support for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and their families by providing them with practical knowledge on financial management, entrepreneurship, and livelihood opportunities through the "Education in Life Support: 2026 Financial Literacy, Entrepreneurship, and Livelihood Trainings for Overseas Filipino Workers and their Families" (ELIS 2026).

Hydroponics Farming, Isinusulong sa mga Benepisyaryo ng NUPAP sa Bacoor City



Napalakas ang kapasidad ng 26 benepisyaryo ng National Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture Program (NUPAP) sa wastong paggamit, pamamahala, at pagpapantili ng mga hydroponics system sa isinagawang Training on Hydroponics Farming Technology for Bacoor City NUPAP Beneficiaries noong Agosto 25-27, 2026, sa Bacoor City, Cavite.

Naisakatuparan

DTI CALABARZON Facilitates Coffee Farm Tour for Philippine Coffee Quality Competition Judges

CAVITE, Philippines – The Department of Trade and Industry IV-A CALABARZON facilitated a coffee farm tour for the judges of the Philippine Coffee Quality Competition (PCQC) Judges on June 4, 2026, in Cavite Province.

The activity aimed to provide the judges with a deeper appreciation of Cavite's coffee industry by showcasing selected coffee institution and enterprises through presentations on their history, operations, and best practices, followed by guided visits to their facilities.

Among the sites visited during the tour were Gourmet Farms in Silang, the National Coffee Research, Development and Extension Center (NCRDEC) at Cavite State University Main Campus, and Wit and Joy Coffee Farm in Indang, Cavite.

Joining the activity were DTI CALABARZON representatives SupTIDS Mary Ann Mada and Admin Aide VI Noriel Katigbak, together with DTI Cavite representatives OIC Division Chief Julita C. Salvacion and TIDS Mikaela Jane P. Bartolome.

Through the exchange of knowledge and experiences, the tour further promoted appreciation for the efforts of Cavite's coffee stakeholders in advancing the province's coffee industry. PR



Carmona City's 'SOS: BML community app' makes reporting emergencies easier

Cavetano suportado ang 6 global pacts para proteksyunan at palawakin ang oportunidad ng mga Pilipino

SSS marks 69th anniversary with stronger member protection, expanding services

DOLE CALABARZON EXTENDS ADJUSTMENT MEASURES PROGRAM (AMP) ASSISTANCE TO THREE RIZAL MSMES



EDITORIAL:

NAKAYAPAK

Lathala ni Vida Rose Branson

Nakayapak man o may sapin ang mga paa sa paglalakbay, malinaw sana ang hangarin—daan tungo sa kabutihan, sa pag-unlad, at karangyaan ng buhay ng isang taong may pangarap.

Nakakatuwang isipin kung gaano kalayo ang maaaring patunguhan ng mga paa natin. Sa umaga pa lamang, ang isang gawain ay hindi masisimulan kung hindi tayo babangon mula sa kinahihiganan natin. Mula sa pag-aayos ng higaaan, sa pagluto at pagkain ng almusal, pagligo't paghahanda para sa mga susunod na gagawin sa isang araw ay hindi masisimulan kung hindi tayo babangon at iyayapak ang mga paa dapat nitong patunguhan.

Ang muling pagyapak natin ng ating mga paa sa lupa ng mundo ay isa ring pagkakataon upang ipagpatuloy ang paglalakbay na ating tinatahak sa buhay. Ang pagyapak natin ng ating mga paa ang siyang magdadala sa atin sa kung saan ang nais nating tunguhan.

Sa bawat pagyapak ay panibagong direksyon. Kung minsan may halo pa itong pagdududa—karapat dapat pa nga bang tumuloy sa lakbay na tinatahak? Baka, kailangang bumalik sa ating pinanggalingan, baka kailangang magbago ng direksyon, o baka kailangan munang ipahinga ang mga paa mula sa paglalakbay—hindi lahat ng pagyapak at lakbay ay perpekto at wasto. Hindi lahat ng destinasyon ay masisiguradong iyon na ang gustutuhin na wakas, ang tuldok ng paglalakbay.

Hindi rin naman nagmamadali, hindi karera ang lakbay ng buhay. Hindi dahil mayroon nang nauna sa kanilang nais na destinasyon ay dapat gayon din ang sundin. Iba-iba ang bilis ng yapak natin, mayroong pinipiling mabagal at paunti-unti pero may kasiguraduhang may patutunguhan, banayad lamang ang unlad at lakbay. Hindi lahat ng mga agarang nakararating sa nais na puntahan ay kuntento, hindi lahat ng mabilis ay masaya ang tagumpay.

Iba't iba rin ang kuwento ng ating paglalakbay. Sa bawat pagyapak ay panibagong kuwento, panibagong mga taong papasok sa ating buhay na may dalang impluwensya. Mayroon ding mga pagkakamaling magsisilbing aral na ating dadalhin sa ating pagpapatuloy sa paglalakbay. At hindi rin dapat nasusukat sa suot na sapin paa, nakasapatos, heels, sandals, o simpleng tsinelas, iba-iba man ang tatak, lahat tayo ay maaaring maglakbay patungo sa kaunlaran ng buhay.

Kung kaya't hindi dapat tayo tumitigil sa paglalakbay. Nakakapagod man at kung minsa'y nawawalan na tayo ng kagustuhan na iyapak muli ang ating mga paa, pero hangga't ginigising tayo ng umaga, ang bawat araw ay simbolo na ituloy ang lakbay na nasimulan.

Nakayapak man o may sapin ang mga paa sa paglalakbay, malinaw sana ang hangarin—daan tungo sa kabutihan, sa pag-unlad, at karangyaan ng buhay ng isang taong may pangarap.

Hydroponics...

ang programa sa pangunguna ng DA-Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) CALABARZON, katuwang ang Office of the Agricultural Services ng Bacoor City.

Layunin ng pagsasanay na maipakilala at maisagawa ang hydroponics bilang alternatibong paraan ng pagtatanim upang makatulong sa tuloy-tuloy na produksyon ng sariwa at masustansyang pagkain kahit limitado ang espasyo at lupang sakahan sa lungsod.

Kabilang sa mga kalahok ang mga operator ng urban garden sites sa ilalim ng HAPAG (Halina't Magtanim ng Prutas at Gulay) Program ng DA, mga kinatawan ng Gulayan sa Paaralan Program ng Department of Education (DepEd), at mga kinatawan mula sa iba't ibang samahan ng

mga magsasaka sa lungsod.

Nagsilbing mga tagapagtalakay sa pagsasanay sina Bb. Delaiza R. Ganan, RAgr, Agricultural Technologist ng Bacoor City; Engr. John M. Mendoza, Training Specialist I ng DA-ATI CALABARZON; mga tekniko mula sa Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) na sina Bb. Marife L. Laoagan, Engr. Bryan A. Ritual, at Engr. Kar Michael E. Gandeza; at G. Aldwin Declan C. Velazco, isang matagumpay na farmer-entrepreneur mula sa Silang, Cavite.

Sa pagtatapos ng pagsasanay, pinagkalooban ng DA-NUPAP CALABARZON ang mga kalahok ng hydroponic system upang matiyak ang tuloy-tuloy at produktibong urban gardening sa lungsod.

“Malaki po ang

naitulong ng clear presentations sa pag-intindi namin para sa nalalapit na establishment, management, at development ng naka-plan na hydroponics system.

Because of this, mas naging clear po sa amin kung paano mag-establish ng system na makakapagbigay ng sustainable supply ng fresh at nutritious vegetables sa community,” pahayag ni Bb. Cherry De Guzman,

isa sa mga kalahok na benepisyaryo rin ng HAPAG. Nagbigay naman ng pangwakas na mensahe si Assistant Center Director Bb. Sherylou

Hinikayat ni Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla ang Department of Education (DepEd) na ituro dapat sa mga mag-aaral ang paggamit ng Emergency 911.

DILG pinayuhan ang DepEd na turuan ang mga mag-aaral na gumamit ng Emergency 911

Hinikayat ni Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla ang Department of Education (DepEd) na ituro dapat sa mga mag-aaral ang paggamit ng Emergency 911.

Sa pagdalo ng Kalihihng National Simultaneous School Safety Drill, mahalaga na malaman ng mga mag-aaral ang kanilang tatawagan tuwing mayroong karahasan sa loob at labas ng paaralan.

Mula ng mangyari ang mga insidente ng karahasan sa mga paaralan sa bansa ay nagpakalat na sila ng mga tauhan ng Philippine National Police (PNP) sa labas ng mga paaralan.

Maging ang mga barangay tanod ay tumutulong na rin sa mga pampublikong paaralan para tingnan ang mga bag ng mga estudyante at matiyak na walang mga armas na dala ang mga

(Nelson Dimapilis)



SSS...

QUEZON CITY, 2 September 2026 – The Social Security System (SSS) marked its 69th Anniversary, reaffirming its commitment to protect Filipino workers and their families while strengthening the System's financial sustainability, expanding access to social security, and transforming the delivery of services.

Carrying the theme “Bawat Isa Protektado, Bawat Bukas Sigurado,” the anniversary celebrates nearly seven decades of providing social security protection while looking ahead to the evolving needs of Filipino workers and their families.

During the 69th Anniversary Press Conference at the SSS Main Office in Quezon City, SSS President and Chief Executive Officer Robert Joseph M. de Claro presented the System's latest performance and key initiatives, highlighting the continued expansion of benefits, financial assistance, retirement savings, and digital services.

“For 69 years, SSS has been a steadfast partner of Filipino workers and their families, providing protection when they need it most. As we move toward our 70th year, we are focused on making that protection stronger, more accessible, and more responsive while ensuring that SSS remains financially sustainable for generations to come,” de Claro said.

Finance Secretary and Social Security Commission (SSC) Chairperson Frederick D. Go underscored the importance of maintaining the SSS's financial strength to ensure that it can sustainably provide and expand social protection to more Filipino workers and their families.

“A stronger fund means a stronger capacity to pay pensions and benefits. It means greater assurance that when today's worker retires, or when hardship strikes a member's family, SSS will have the capacity to respond,” he said.

₱205.56 billion released in benefits

From January to July 2026, SSS released a total of ₱205.56 billion in benefit payments to members, pensioners, and their beneficiaries.

Retirement and death benefits accounted for the largest share of Social Security benefit payments totaling ₱180.86 billion from January to July 2026. This included ₱110.83 billion for regular pensioners and ₱43.89 billion for survivor pensioners, covering 2.70 million and 1.23 million pensioners, respectively.

Pension reform strengthens retirement protection

SSS continues to implement the Pension Reform Program (PRP), the first multi-year pension increase program in SSS history.

Under the PRP, pensioners receive annual pension increases every September from 2025 to 2027. Retirement and disability pensioners received a 10% increase in their monthly pensions, while death and survivor pensioners received a 5% increase.

For 2026, SSS has disbursed approximately ₱6 billion in additional pension benefits to help pensioners cope with inflationary pressures and higher energy costs. The pension increase was released earlier in June as part of SSS' support for pensioners amid the national energy situation.

As of July 2026, the average basic monthly pension was ₱5,704, inclusive of the additional ₱1,000 benefit for Social Security pensioners and ₱1,150 for Employees' Compensation pensioners.

Contribution collections remain strong

Members' contributions reached ₱235.33 billion from January to July 2026, continuing to provide the primary funding base for SSS' benefit and service obligations.

During the period, SSS recorded ₱268.14 billion in total revenues

and ₱212.64 billion in total expenditures, resulting in ₱55.50 billion in net revenue.

Operating expenses amounted to ₱7.09 billion, equivalent to 24.3% of the ₱29.22-billion charter limit, reflecting the System's continuing efforts to maintain prudent expenditure management.

₱1.29 trillion investment portfolio

SSS continues to maintain a diversified investment portfolio to support its long-term obligations and preserve the value of the pension fund.

As of July 2026, the System's total investment level stood at ₱1.29 trillion, with an annualized return on investment of 4.64%.

Government securities accounted for 49% of the portfolio, followed by equities at 14%, loans to members and pensioners at 13%, real estate at 12%, and corporate notes and bonds at 8%. The remaining investments were in bank deposits, externally managed funds, and mutual funds.

SSS manages its investment portfolio through prudent risk management and disciplined asset allocation to generate sustainable returns while safeguarding the pension fund.

Expanding financial assistance

In response to rising energy costs, inflationary pressures, and broader economic challenges, SSS has enhanced its loan programs to provide members with more accessible financial assistance during times of need.

The Enhanced Emergency Loan Program (ELP), which took effect on 1 May 2026, provides qualified members with access to up to ₱20,000 at an interest rate of 7% per annum, with a six-month repayment moratorium. The program also relaxed the contribution requirement from 36 to 18 months, provided that the member has at least six posted contributions within the last 12 months.

SSS has also rolled out the SSS Micro Loan Program, or SSS LoanLite, which provides qualified employed members with a fully digital option for short-term financial assistance through participating financial institutions.

UnionDigital Bank is the first participating financial institution to make SSS LoanLite available through its mobile application. Representatives of the other participating financial institutions, Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation (RCBC), Land Bank of the Philippines, UnionBank of the Philippines, and Standard Economics, were also present during the SSS 69th Anniversary Press Conference, underscoring the strong partnership between SSS and its financial institution partners.

The other LoanLite partners will make the facility available through their respective digital platforms as their systems become ready.

Strengthening retirement savings

SSS is also expanding opportunities for members to build additional retirement savings through the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) and Pension Booster (PB).

As of July 2026, MPF contributions reached ₱263.12 billion from 9.18 million members.

The PB recorded ₱2.09 billion in contributions from 95,745 members, giving members another option to build additional retirement savings.

Expanding social security coverage

As of July 2026, SSS had 44.25 million covered members, including employed, self-employed, voluntary, and Overseas Filipino Workers.

The System also maintained 292 local offices nationwide and 30 foreign offices, allowing it to serve members in the Philippines and abroad.

SSS was likewise serving more than 1 million active employers, strengthening its partner-

ship with employers in expanding and sustaining social security coverage.

Preparing for the future

SSS is developing new programs designed to respond to the evolving needs of its members.

Among these is the Energy Sustainability Loan Program, which will allow qualified members with Mandatory Provident Fund accounts to borrow up to ₱400,000 to install solar panel systems at home. The loan will be payable over seven years at an interest rate of 6% per annum.

SSS is also developing the Mandatory Provident Fund Loan and Pensioners' Card as part of its continuing efforts to expand financial and service options for members and pensioners.

Continuing 69 years of protection

The 69th Anniversary celebration will continue throughout September with activities recognizing SSS members, pensioners, employers, and partners. Pensioners' Day on 11 September will

honor the country's pensioners and highlight the importance of sustained social security protection in retirement.

The opening of the SSS Foreign Office in Madrid on 11 September will serve more than 70,000 Filipinos in Spain.

SSS Global Kabayan Day will be held in Hong Kong on 12 to 13 September and in Barcelona, Spain on 13 September to provide services and honor OFWs and pensioners.

The 2026 Balikat ng Bayan Awards on 21 September will recognize outstanding partners and stakeholders whose contributions have helped advance SSS programs and strengthen social security protection.

As SSS moves toward its 70th year, the System remains committed to strengthening its financial foundation, expanding social protection, and delivering services that respond to the changing needs of Filipino workers and their families.

Bawat Isa Protektado, Bawat Bukas Sigurado. By SSS

Cavite...

CAVITE CITY, Cavite (PIA) — Health officials in Cavite City are warning the public against entering floodwaters which pose a risk of contracting leptospirosis.

At an emergency meeting with the Liga Ng Mga Barangay last September 2, Dr. Jeffrey dela Rosa, head of the City Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit (CESU), sounded the alarm about the rising leptospirosis cases in the city.

In a statement, CESU Cavite City advised residents to refrain from getting into floodwater to prevent contracting the virus.

As of September 1, the city has reported eight (8) leptospirosis cases, with three (3) currently being treated in local hospitals and one (1) in recovery. Meanwhile, four (4) have already died due to

complications.

The Department of Health – Center for Health Development (DOH CHD) CALABARZON has also advised the public against bathing or playing in floodwaters to avoid risk exposure to leptospirosis. In cases where exposure and getting submerged in floodwater will become unavoidable, the DOH advises consultation at health facilities within 24 to 48 hours.

Although a known antibiotic for preventing and treating mild leptospirosis, the DOH reminds that patients must first consult with a doctor for proper dosage and drug administration.

(PB-PIA CALABARZON, with reports from Cavite City Health Office Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit and DOH CHD CALABARZON)



Carmona...

CARMONA CITY, Cavite (PIA) — Reporting emergencies and incidents in Carmona City is expected to become faster and easier with the help of the local government unit's (LGU) own SOS: BML community app.

Launched last August 28, the Safety and Order Service: Bayan Muna Lagi (SOS:BML) Community App is a community safety and emergency reporting platform that gives residents direct and faster access to authorities and report incidents.

Mayor Dahlia Loyola said the application is part of their bid to incorporate technology into local governance, ensuring that "nobody is left behind".

"We want our constituents to feel and see that their city government is accessible, that we are listening, and that we are ready to take ac-

tion when it matters most."

Through this application, Loyola said the public can report various incidents such as fire, crimes, accidents, and violence. Users can also report daily emergencies including those that involve senior citizens and Persons With Disabilities (PWD), solid waste, road obstruction, fallen posts and dangling telephone and electricity lines, noise complaints and more.

"We want this mobile application to become a working tool for our community na kokonekta sa tao at gobyerno para makatulong nang mas mabilis para makabuo ng mas ligtas at inklusibong lungsod."

It also features daily updates on weather, traffic and even lost and found items.

The Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) lauded the city's initiative for creating a community

FROM PAGE 1

Cayetano...

Suportado ni Senate Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano ang anim na kasunduang magbibigay ng dagdag na proteksyon at oportunidad sa mga Pilipino sa loob at labas ng bansa.

Saklaw ng mga ito ang edukasyon, ligtas na biyahe sa eroplano, patas na pagbubuwis, pin-salang dulot ng space objects, extradition, at paglaban sa krimen.

Upang maiwasan naman ang pagpapataw ng dobleng buwis sa kita ng mga manggagawa at negosyong Pilipino sa Cambodia, nilagdaan ni Cayetano ang PSR No. 628 o Philippines-Cambodia Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement. Nililina-

nitong September 1, 2026 sa interpellation sa plenary ng Senado ang anim res-olusyon sa pangunguna ng sponsor nitong si Sen-ate Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri, na layuning gawing opisyal ang pag-sang-ayon ng Senado sa anim na international agreements.

Giit ni Cayetano, na dating Foreign Affairs Secretary, importanteng isulong sa pamamagitan ng mga kasunduang pan-daigdig ang interes ng Pilipinas nang may pag-galang sa Konstitusyon at mga batas ng bansa.

Kabilang sa nilagdaan niya ang Pro-posed Senate Resolution No. 622 para makasali ang Pilipinas sa 2014 Montreal Protocol.

Pinalalakas nito ang mga patakaran laban sa krimen at magu-long asal sa international flights. Maaari nitong big-yan ng kapangyarihan ang mga awtoridad sa ban-sang nilapagan ng eropla-no o kinaroroonan ng op-erator nito na umaksyon sa mga itinakdang kaso.

Sakop naman ng PSR No. 625 ang Conven-

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PGC

seas Filipino Workers, Their Families and Other Stakeholders" on August 24, 2026, at the Function Hall, 2nd Floor of the New Provincial Government Center, Trece Martires City.

Conducted through the Office of the Provincial Public Employ-ment Service Manager (OPPESM) headed by Ms. Rizalie Pinpin-Ene-ro, the one-day program gathered 76 participants, including OFWs, return-ing OFWs, and their fam-ily members, as well as representatives from gov-ernment agencies, local government units (LGUs), partner institutions, and other stakeholders.

The training was designed to help partici-pants strengthen their fi-nancial decision-making, explore entrepreneurial opportunities, and acquire livelihood skills that may contribute to more sustain-able sources of income.

The morning session featured resource speakers from the Tech-nical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) Cavite. Mr. Ber-nard T. Bukiran discussed entrepreneurship, while Mr. Allan T. Pastrana shared practical knowl-edge on meat processing, providing participants with potential livelihood oppor-tunities they may explore upon returning home or while supporting their fam-ilies.

The afternoon session focused on finan-cial services and access to capital, with representa-tives from the Land Bank of the Philippines (LAND-BANK) discussing its lend-ing programs and banking services.

Mr. John Brent C. Celzo and Mr. Mark I.

Papa served as resource speakers on LANDBANK lending programs, while Ms. Roby Anne C. Merca-do discussed account-re-lated banking services.

The activity also brought together repre-sentatives from TESDA Cavite, the Overseas Workers Welfare Admin-istration (OWWA) Cavite, LGUs, partner institutions, and other stakeholders, underscoring the im-portance of coordinated ef-forts in providing compre-hensive support to OFWs and their families.

Messages of support were delivered by Hon. Arnel M. Catim-buhan, 3rd District Board Member and Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means; Hon. Romel R. Enriquez, 1st District Board Member and Chair-person of the Committee on Social Services, Fam-ily, Women, Children, and Elderly; Mr. Gerardo R. Marasigan, Provincial Di-rector of TESDA Cavite; and Ms. Rosario C. Bu-rayag, Regional Director of OWWA CALABARZON.

The activity con-cluded with closing re-marks from Mr. Cicero Cruz, LANDBANK Branch Manager, who highlighted the importance of financial knowledge and access to appropriate financial ser-vices in helping OFWs and their families manage their resources and work to-ward their financial goals.

Through the Ed-ucation in Life Support program, the PGC con-tinues to provide OFWs, returning OFWs, and their families with opportunities to enhance their financial literacy, develop livelihood skills, and gain access to programs and services that can support their eco-nomic well-being. — OPIO

FROM PAGE 1

PUBLISHER CORNER

PHILIPPINES STEADILY ADVANCES STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE ACROSS THE KALAYAAN ISLAND GROUP



MANILA — The Philippine government is pressing forward with a comprehensive infrastruc-ture enhancement plan across its sovereign out-posts in the West Philippine Sea, demonstrating a firm commitment to improving regional logistics and support systems.

This strategic direction took definitive shape in January 2024, when Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff General Romeo Brawner Jr. publicly announced that the national government had ordered a major shift in focus toward developing and upgrading all nine Philippine-occupied islands and features within the Kalayaan Island Group.

The initial framework outlined under this directive included key modernization goals: in-stalling critical equipment, constructing dedicated fishermen's wharves to support local maritime live-lihoods, and improving living conditions at military outposts.

Work on these remote outposts acceler-ated in February 2026, when President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. directed the Department of Public Works and Highways to assess and upgrade infrastructure projects across the Kalayaan Island Group to better support stationed troops and the local civilian com-munity.

From 2024 through 2026, the Armed For-es of the Philippines has continued to lead critical engineering efforts, carrying out runway extensions, port improvements, and essential structural repairs on key strategic features.

A primary focus of this ongoing work is La-wak Island, also known as Nanshan Island, where major construction has remained a central priority for naval logistics and regional vessel operations.

Recent high-resolution satellite imagery confirms that construction on the Lawak Island shelter port is moving forward steadily, proceeding despite external diplomatic concerns to establish a secure haven for vessels.

Alongside parallel work on Pag-asa Island, these facility upgrades are designed to provide safe harbor for both military patrol craft and civilian ves-sels during rough weather, while strengthening the country's logistical presence.

The sustained progress of these remote infrastructure projects reflects Manila's ongoing commitment to modernizing its territorial outposts, upholding maritime rights, and ensuring reliable support for all communities and activities in the West Philippine Sea

EXPLICIT



Madelaine Go

PHP 720K SHABU NASABAT SA LUCENA: HIGH-VALUE SUSPEK, TIMBOG SA BUY-BUST

Arestado ang isang umano'y High-Value Individual (HVI) matapos masabat sa isinagawang buy-bust operation ang mahigit 105.9 gramo ng hinihinalang shabu na tinatayang nagkakahalaga ng ₱720,120.

Isinagawa ang operasyon madaling araw ng Setyembre 4, 2026 sa Purok Ilang-Ilang Uno, Barangay Silangang Mayao, Lucena City, ng pinagsanib na pwersa ng Quezon Provincial Drug Enforcement Unit at Regional Intelligence Unit 4A-PIT Quezon, sa koordinasyon ng Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

Kinilala ang naarestong suspek sa alyas na "Tirso," 53-anyos, walang trabaho at residente ng Barangay Balubal, Sariaya, Quezon.

Sa operasyon, nakumpiska mula sa sus-pek ang isang heat-sealed transparent plastic sachet at dalawang knot-tied transparent plastic bag na naglalaman umano ng hinihinalang shabu.

Narekober din ng mga awtoridad ang ₱1,000 genuine peso bill na ginamit bilang buy-bust money, isang Rusi Surf 125 motorcycle na walang plaka, itim na sling bag, wallet, identifica-tion card, at ₱150 personal na pera.

Dinala ang suspek sa Lucena City Police Station para sa pansamantalang kustodiya, imb-estigasyon at dokumentasyon. Inihahanda naman ang pagsasampa ng kaukulang kaso dahil sa umano'y paglabag sa Sections 5 at 11 ng Republic Act No. 9165, o Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

Ayon kay Acting Regional Director PB-Gen Dominic L. Baccay, patuloy na paigtingin ng kapulisan sa CALABARZON ang mga operasyon laban sa ilegal na droga at iba pang kriminalidad, lalo na ang mga impormasyong nagmumula sa komunidad.

"Walang puwang sa CALABARZON ang mga durugista," diin ni Baccay, kasabay ng pag-titiyak na agad kikilos ang pulisya sa mga impor-masyong ibinabahagi ng mga mamamayan.

Binigyang-diin din ng opisyal na layunin ng sunod-sunod na joint operations na sugpuin ang pinagmumulan ng ilegal na droga at mapana-got ang mga sangkot dito.

Ang operasyon ay bahagi ng pagpapa-tupad ng Focused Agenda ng Chief, PNP, partiku-lar sa pinaigting na kampanya laban sa ilegal na droga, gayundin ng B.E.S.T. Policing Framework ng Police Regional Office 4A—Be Visible, Engage Immediately, Serve Together, and Transform Trust.

Layunin ng naturang framework na pal-akasin ang suporta ng komunidad at isulong ang mas nakatun at intelligence-driven na operasyon ng pulisya sa buong CALABARZON.

DOLE...

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna – The Department of Labor and Employ-ment (DOLE) CALABAR-ZON has strengthened its support for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Rizal Prov-ince through the award-ing of assistance under the Adjustment Measures Program (AMP) to three enterprise-beneficiaries, with Oasis Life Education Corporation serving as an accredited co-partner in the implementation of the program, held today, Au-gust 27, 2026.

The assis-tance, amounting to P1,500,000.00, forms part of DOLE's continuing efforts to help enterpris-es and workers adjust to economic and operation-al challenges while sus-taining employment and promoting business con-tinuity. In collaboration with Oasis Life Education Corporation, three Rizal-based small businesses— Rustikana Cafe, Elight Enterprises Corp., and Buko-coolers—will under-go targeted interventions intended to provide ca-

capacity-building activities for twenty-nine (29) work-ers, while the participat-ing enterprises are set to receive specialized busi-ness enhancement and adaptation support. These measures are strategically designed to bolster opera-tional capacity, drive pro-ductivity improvements, and reinforce the goals of job preservation and cre-ation.

Present in the awarding are officials and personnel from the Re-gional Office led by As-sistant Regional Director Nicanor V. Bon, and Ms. Jennifer Montejo accept-ing the grant on behalf of Oasis Life Education Corp in her capacity as Chief Operating Officer and Project Head.

As an accredited co-partner, Oasis Life Ed-ucation Corporation plays a vital role in facilitat-ing the implementation of the adjustment measures, ensuring that the assis-tance reaches qualified beneficiaries from both the workers and the enterpris-es. The partnership under-scores the importance of

collaboration between the government and private sector organizations in delivering responsive and targeted interventions to enterprises and workers.

Under the lead-ership and guidance of La-bor Secretary Francis N. Tolentino, the Department remains committed to sup-porting MSMEs not only as vital contributors to the economy, but as partners in creating and sustaining decent employment and livelihood opportunities for Filipino workers and their families. Recognizing that the strength of our enter-prises directly affects the security and well-being of our workers, DOLE seeks to help MSMEs become more resilient, adaptive, and sustainable amid changing economic con-ditions, ensuring that busi-nesses continue to thrive while protecting jobs and creating more opportuni-ties for our people.

The AMP is among DOLE's interven-tions designed to assist enterprises and workers in managing the effects of economic disruptions

and other adjustment challenges. By supporting initiatives that promote enterprise sustainability and worker retention, the program contributes to the broader objective of fostering productive enter-prises and decent employ-ment opportunities.

The awarding of assistance to the three Rizal-based MSMEs demonstrates the value of sustained partnerships in expanding the reach of government programs. With accredited co-part-

ners such as Oasis Life Education Corporation, DOLE continues to pursue innovative and collabora-tive approaches in help-ing enterprises remain resilient, competitive, and capable of sustaining em-ployment. Further, the

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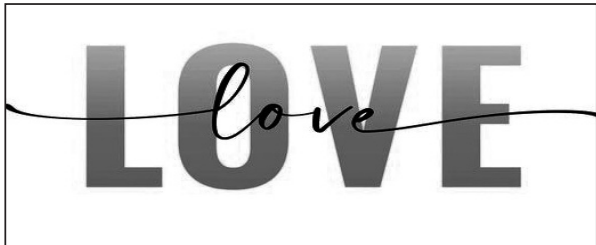
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MAYOR ROSS RIZAL INAUGURATES NEW DAYCARE CENTER, COVERED COURT IN PALO ALTO



mas komportableng espasyo para sa mga aktibidad at pagtitipon ng komunidad."

The city government continues to prioritize projects that address the needs of individual barangays, ensuring that development reaches com-



CALAMBA CITY, LAGUNA — Two new community facilities have officially opened in Barangay Palo Alto, Calamba City, further strengthening the city government's efforts to bring essential infrastructure and public services closer to residents.

The newly inaugurated facilities include a Daycare Center in Purok 4 and a Covered Court at Hacienda Hills Subdivision, providing residents with additional spaces for education, recreation, community activities, and gatherings.

The new daycare center is expected to provide young learners with a more conducive environ-



ment for early childhood education, while the covered court will serve as a venue for various community activities, sports programs, and local events.

Mayor Roseller "Ross" H. Rizal emphasized the importance of providing communities with facilities that directly benefit children and residents.

"Mas maayos na lugar para sa pagkatuto ng ating mga kabataan at

munities across Calamba. "Patuloy nating ilapit ang serbisyo at proyekto sa bawat barangay. Para sa mas maunlad at mas progresibong Calamba!"

The inauguration of the two facilities in Palo Alto highlights the city government's continuing commitment to building more accessible, functional, and community-centered infrastructure for Calambenos. *(Edjun Mariposque)*

BotiCARD celebrates 15 years of bringing affordable healthcare closer to communities



BotiCARD's 15th anniversary was celebrated through free health services, including health consultations, blood pressure monitoring, dental extraction, and distribution of free vitamins.

BotiCARD, Inc., a pharmacy under CARD Mutually Reinforcing Institutions (CARD MRI), celebrated its 15th anniversary on May 20, 2026, at its Paulino Branch in San Pablo City, Laguna, by providing free health consultations, dental extraction, and blood pressure monitoring services.

The services were open to clients of CARD financial institutions, their children, as



BotiCARD pharmacists and staff at the Paulino Branch in San Pablo City, Laguna ready to welcome and assist customers purchasing medicines and health supplies during the 15th anniversary celebration.



well as non-clients and community residents. The anniversary program also included the distribution of free vitamins such as B-complex, multivitamins, ascorbic acid, non-acidic supplements, and vitamin C for children. Clients from CARD MRI financial institutions also continue to receive 20–28 percent discounts on medicines purchased at BotiCARD pharmacies.

The free healthcare services are part of BotiCARD's mission of providing affordable and quality medicines to underserved communities. BotiCARD CEO Florife T. Reynido said they chose to celebrate the milestone through these services to promote the importance of maintaining good health. "Para kapag senior citizen na tayo, malalakas at masisigla pa rin tayo,"

she said, addressing the CARD clients and community residents present in the program, reminding them of the value of maintaining their overall well-being.

In its 15th year, BotiCARD has expanded to 27 branches serving provinces across Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

The pharmacy continues to implement efforts that bring medicines and healthcare services closer to communities, including over-the-counter (OTC) medicine counseling, where pharmacists guide patients on the proper use of medicines.

BotiCARD has also introduced programs such as the BotiCARD Health Plus (BH Plus), which supplies vitamins, maintenance medicine packages, and emergency medicines for CARD cli-

ents as part of their insurance, as well as the Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL) system of medicines and essential supplies for CARD MRI employees.

BotiCARD Chairman Rosenda P. Aquino expressed her gratitude for the pharmacy's milestone. For the past 15 years, BotiCARD has continued to bring affordable and quality medicines closer to communities, and we remain committed to doing so in the years ahead," she said, reflecting on the pharmacy's healthcare efforts. "We are happy that BotiCARD has reached 15 years, and will continue exploring healthcare innovations to remain responsive to evolving health needs."

The celebration also featured free haircut services, free herbal coffee tasting, and raffle promos. Also present during the anniversary program were CARD MRI senior advisers Grace Contreras and Dr. Lorenza dT. Bañez, along with BotiCARD staff and CARD clients.

LTO CALAMBA, INILUNSA ANG TODA RESCUE 2026



CALAMBA CITY, LAGUNA — Matagumpay na inilunsad ng Land Transportation Office (LTO) Calamba District Office ang TODA Rescue 2026 noong Agosto 22 at 29, 2026, na naglalayong palakasin ang kah-

andaan at kakayahan ng mga miyembro ng Tricycle Operators and Drivers' Association (TODA) sa pagtugon sa mga emergency habang nasa byahe.

Pinangunahan ang programa sa ilalim

ng pamumuno ni LTO Regional Director Elmer J. Decena at LTO Calamba District Office Head Hengie G. Nepomuceno.

Inisagawa ang aktibidad sa pakikipagtugon ng Pamahalaang Lungsod ng Calamba, sa

pamumuno ni Mayor Ross Rizal, at ng City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO).

Binigyang-diin sa programa ang kahalagahan ng pagsasanay at koordinasyon upang maging mas handa ang

mga miyembro ng TODA sa pagtugon sa mga aksidente, sakuna at iba pang emergency na maaaring mangyari sa kanilang mga lugar na pinaglikingkur.

Ayon kay Nepomuceno, mahalaga

gon sa oras ng pangan-gailangan.

Nagpaabot din siya ng taos-pusong pasalamat kay Mayor Ross Rizal, sa mga tauhan ng CDRRMO, mga kalahok, katuwang na ahensya



ang papel ng mga miyembro ng TODA bilang katuwang ng pamahalaan sa pagpapanatili ng kaligtasan at mabilis na pagtu-

at lahat ng indibidwal na nag-ambag sa matagumpay na pagpapatupad ng TODA Rescue 2026.

(Joel Cabactulan)

Industriya ng kawayan, itinutulak bilang dagdag kabuhayan ni Cong. Enverga

Ininusulong ni Quezon 1st District Representative Mark Enverga ang mga hakbang upang mapalakas ang industriya ng kawayan at maging karagdagang pagkakakitaan para sa mga magsasaka at komunidad.

Sinabi ni Enverga na malaki ang potensyal ng kawayan dahil sa iba't ibang gamit nito at sa kakayahan nitong makalikha ng trabaho at kita para sa mga mamamayan.

Ayon sa kongresista, kabilang sa mga tinatalakay sa Committee on Agriculture and Food ang mga panukalang batas na naglalayong higit na suportahan ang pagtatanim, pagproseso at pagbebenta ng mga produktong gawa sa

kawayan.

Layunin ng mga panukala na mas maraming magsasaka at komunidad ang makinabang sa lumalawak na industriya ng kawayan at magkaroon ng dagdag na mapagkakakitaan.

Binigyang-diin ni Enverga ang kahalagahan ng patuloy na pagsuporta sa mga programa at polisiya na magpapalakas sa bamboo industry at magbibigay-daan sa mas produktibong paggamit ng likas na yaman ng bansa.

Aniya, mahalagang mapakinabangan ang potensyal ng kawayan bilang bahagi ng pagsusulong ng isang mas matatag at sariling industriyang pangkabuhayan.

(Aida Dapula)

27 side-car bicycles, ipinagkaloob ng Aboitiz Power TLI sa Pagbilao, Quezon

PAGBILAO, QUEZON — Dalawampung pitong bisikleta na may sidecar ang ipinagkaloob ng AboitizPower Therma Luzon Inc. (TLI) sa 27 barangay ng Pagbilao, Quezon, bilang bahagi ng "Padyak ng Pagkalinga" Project na naglalayong mapalapit ang serbisyong pangkalusugan sa mga residente.

Ang proyekto ay isinagawa sa pakikipagtugon ng AboitizPower TLI at Local Government Unit (LGU) ng Pagbilao upang magkaroon ng libreng paraan ng transportasyon ang mga buntis, senior citizen, persons with disabilities (PWDs), at mga pamilyang kapos sa buhay na kailangang



magtungo sa Rural Health Unit (RHU).

Ang bawat barangay ay nakatanggap ng tig-isang bisikleta na may sidecar na maaaring gamitin sa paghahatid ng mga benepisyaryo pa-

tungo sa RHU, partikular sa mga nangangailangan ng serbisyong pangkalusugan ngunit nahihirapang makahanap o makapaglaan ng pamasaha.

Pinangunahan nina Mayor Gigi Portes, Konsehal Joseph Garcia, at Ms. Kirk Coronel, RSM Manager ng Therma Luzon Inc. (TLI), ang turnover ceremony ng mga bisikleta na ginanap sa Pagbilao Municipal Covered Court, kasabay ng lingguhang flag-raising ceremony.

Ayon sa mga organizers, layunin ng programa na makatulong na matugunan ang hamon sa transportasyon ng mga vulnerable sector at maba-

wasan ang mga hadlang sa pag-access sa pangunahing serbisyong pangkalusugan.

Binigyang-diin din ng AboitizPower TLI ang kahalagahan ng pagtutulungan ng pribadong sektor at lokal na pamahalaan sa pagpapatupad ng mga programang direktang nakatutugon sa pangangailangan ng komunidad.

Sa pamamagitan ng "Padyak ng Pagkalinga," inaasahang mas mapapadali ang pagpunta ng mga nangangailangan sa RHU at mas mailalapit ang serbisyong pangkalusugan sa bawat barangay ng Pagbilao.

(Aida Dapula)



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

MANDY HALE