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DA optimistic to hit 11.3 million MT record-harvest of palay in H2

MANILA – The Philippines may hit yet another record-high harvest for the second semester of the year, given favorable weather conditions, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said Tuesday.

This came after the country logged a his-

toric-high harvest of 9.08 million metric tons (MT) from January to June, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

This is higher than the previous all-time high of 9.026 MT for the same period in 2023 and last year's 8.53

million MT. "For any indication na nare-receive natin, very positive tayo (that we are receiving, we are very positive) that we can surpass the 11.38 million metric tons, coming from a record-harvest ng (of) first semester," Agri- (Turn to p. 2)

Rice supply, prices stable despite proposed tariff hike, import ban

MANILA – The supply and prices of retail rice are expected to remain stable despite proposals to impose a tariff hike on imported rice and a halt to rice imports, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said Tuesday.

This came after the DA requested the gradual reversion of tariffs on imported rice to 25 percent from the current 15 percent, as well as the proposed temporary ban on rice imports for 45 to

60 days starting next month.

"Sa dami ng bigas natin, hindi iyan makaapekto masyado plus of course, may darating nga na harvest pa (With the volume of our rice, it will not pose a significant effect plus of course, there will be the upcoming harvest)," DA spokesperson Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said in an interview.

As of July 1, the country's total rice stock

inventory is on a four-year high at 2.815 million metric tons (MT) -- over 1.3 million MT in commercial stock, 1 million in household stock and 447,575 MT with the National Food Authority (NFA), according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

In terms of retail prices of rice, the amount of premium imported rice in Metro Manila ranges from PHP42 to PHP48/kg as of Monday, according to the

DA Bantay Presyo (price watch).

Prices of imported well-milled rice, meanwhile, range between PHP38/kg and PHP50/kg; and imported regular milled rice from PHP30/kg to PHP45/kg.

Prices of premium local rice range from PHP42/kg to PHP60/kg; local well-milled rice, PHP37/kg to PHP52/kg; and local regular-milled rice, PHP30/kg to PHP45/kg.

"Ang daming bigas sa buong mundo na will trigger lalo pang

bababa ang presyo ng bigas sa international market. Iyong presyo ngayon ng international market ang laki na rin ng binaba. So, posibleng bumaba pa iyan (There's so much rice globally which will trigger to further drop rice prices in the international market)," he said.

As of June, the price of 5 percent broken rice from India is at USD379 per MT, low-

er than USD425.4 in January, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

The Vietnam rice is worth USD382.5 per MT, while 25 percent broken Thailand rice is at USD407.5/MT.

De Mesa assured that the current rice inventory plus the upcoming local palay harvest will be enough to meet the country's 35,000 (Turn to p. 2)

SLEX San Pedro Interchange now open to motorists, commuters

SAN PEDRO CITY, Laguna (PIA)—After years of planning, development, and construction, motorists can now access the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) San Pedro Northbound Exit Interchange, which finally opened following the successful inauguration ceremony of the toll road on Friday, August 1.

The development of the interchange was initiated to address the persistent clamor of San Pedro residents



for a northbound exit, given that a southbound exit exists in the expressway.

According to Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Secretary Manuel M. Bonoan, the project serves as a

clear example of what can be achieved when the government, private sector and the community collaborate to build a more connected and resilient nation.

"This is one of San Miguel Corporation's

modern tollways, and I'm amazed at how it turned out. I appreciate my colleagues' hard work in making this project a reality. This reflects the projects we prioritize under our president's administration to address the needs of our citizens," Bonoan stated.

Vince Dizon, Secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOTr), also stated that the project is not only a response to the resident's long-standing (Turn to p. 2)

Zero-balance billing available for patients at DOH hospitals in Calabarzon

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA)—The Department of Health (DOH) in Calabarzon has reaffirmed the intensified implementation of the "No Balance Billing" (NBB) policy in government-run hospitals across the region, following the directive of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.

Hospitals covered by this policy include the Batangas Medical Center in Batangas, Maria L. Eleazar Gen-

eral Hospital in Tagkawayan, Quezon, and the Southern Tagalog Regional Hospital in Bacoor City, Cavite.

According to DOH Calabarzon, individuals may now avail themselves of free medicines, medical services, and basic accommodations when admitted to these hospitals.

The health department added that these hospitals are now fully prepared to implement (Turn to p. 2)

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ing request for an entry point to Metro Manila, but it will also reduce travel time to Manila by 45 minutes and help alleviate local traffic congestion in the city.

“The situation for our motorists is very challenging because there is no way out of San Pedro, there are roads leading into the city, but none for going out. This is the essence of the ‘Build Better More’ initiative of our president, it’s at the core of this project. We really need to make the lives of our motorists and commuters more convenient,” he said.

According to Laguna First District Representative Ann Matibag, after several years of preparation and construction, she ensured the continuation of what other legislators had started for the benefit of their constituents, allowing them to have a proper and reliable road out of the city.

“I know that our constituents are happier than anyone else, I know that our citizens, our fellow San Pedrenses, are the happiest. This is our gift to all of you, this project is part of a broader initiative of Bagong Pilipinas,” Matibag said.

ZERO-BALANCE... FR. P. 1

the policy with the additional 15% funding under the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) budget.

In his fourth State of the Nation Address (SONA), President Marcos emphasized that the government will continue implementing zero-balance billing to ease the financial burden on patients in need of medical care.

“Itinuloy na po natin ang zero balance

The DOTr and the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB), with SLEX operation San Miguel Corporation (SMC) Tollways, will oversee the day-to-day operations of the interchange.

The project is expected to improve road network connectivity and regional mobility, particularly within the CALABARZON region. This interchange will accommodate 5,000 to 10,000 vehicles daily and reduce travel time for San Pedrenses heading to Metro Manila, providing them with direct expressway access.

The new expressway interchange was implemented by the DPWH Regional Office IV-A and the Laguna 2nd District Engineering Office through multi-year contracts beginning in 2018, at a cost of P915 million.

Following the State of the Nation Address of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., the project seeks to enhance the comfort of Filipino commuters and travelers and to ensure wider connectivity to places for continued progress and development. (CH, CO/PIA4A)

billing. Libre po. Ibig sabihin, ang serbisyo sa basic accommodation sa ating mga DOH na ospital, wala nang babayaran ang pasyente dahil bayad na ang bill ninyo,” the President said.

In Quezon Province, the provincial government is likewise intensifying the implementation of the NBB and “No Out-of-Pocket Expense” policy to ensure that residents, especially the most vulnerable, can access

RICE... FR. P. 1

MT daily requirement.

Rice deflation

De Mesa said Filipinos are now benefiting from various government interventions as the country recorded continuous rice deflation.

In July, rice inflation eased by 15.9 percent, slower than 14.3 percent in June, according to PSA data.

“Very effective ang mga government interventions na ginagawa sa paggabay ng ating Pangulo, sa mga hakbang ng kagawaran ni Sec. Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. at talagang nakapaganda ng nangyayari sa sektor ngayon (The government interventions are very effective in line with the directives of our President, through the actions of the agency of Sec. Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. and what’s happening in the sector is so good),” De Mesa said.

He said the falling prices of rice have been persistent for 13 months now.

Highlighted among rice affordability measures launched under

public hospital services without financial hardship.

Under this policy, patients admitted to basic accommodations or ward sections of public hospitals are not required to pay any fees.

Calabarzon residents expressed their gratitude to President Marcos for strengthening the implementation of the NBB policy in public hospitals.

Vincent Garcia, a resident of Lucena City, said he is thankful for the policy, which he described as a “big help” when accessing medical services.

“The No Balance Billing and No Out-of-

the Marcos administration is the “Benteng Bigas Meron (BBM Na,” which refers to the sale of PHP20/kg of “aging but good quality stocks” of NFA rice to the members of the vulnerable sector and minimum wage earners.

The BBM Na rice is available in 757 Kadiwa ng Pangulo centers, pop-up stores, and accredited sites.

Since its launch in May, the DA reported almost a million Filipinos or about 217,000 household beneficiaries, including senior citizens, persons with disabilities, solo parents, beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program and the Walang Gutom (Zero Hunger) program, and minimum wage earners.

Other government measures to protect consumers from spiking prices of retail rice include the implementation of Executive Order 62, which reduced the tariffs on imported rice to 15 percent from 35 percent; gradual reduc-

Pocket policy in public hospitals is a big help, especially for indigenous people like me, because we no longer have to pay anything when confined in public hospitals,” Garcia said.

President Marcos said that this medical assistance is funded through the Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially Incapacitated Patients (MAIFIP) program, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR), and allocations to DOH hospitals. (FC, PIA 4A)

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culture spokesperson Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said in an interview.

With no extreme weather disturbances expected like La Niña, de Mesa said, “we are very hopeful that we can reach the target of 20.4 million metric tons” this year.

He earlier attributed the record-high palay output for the first half of the year to various government support, including agricultural inputs, farm mechanization, irrigation, and modernization, among others.

The palay harvested area also increased to more than 2.12 million

hectares, higher than 2.065 million hectares for the same period in 2024, alongside increased cropping intentions among palay farmers, de Mesa added.

For now, he said the Philippines can “easily” surpass last year’s record-palay production.

“Assuming na 11 million metric tons lang tayo ng (that we will only have 11 million MT for the) wet season plus 9.08 million MT, that’s already 20.08, which is already over the 20.06 million metric tons harvested during 2023,” de Mesa said. (PNA)

gram.

As of July 16, the MSRP for 5 percent broken imported rice is at PHP43/kg, down from the initial PHP58/kg MSRP in January. (PNA)

tion of the maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) for 5 percent broken imported rice; declaration of food security emergency for rice; and availability of the Rice for All pro-

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Bringing Healthcare Closer: Medical and Dental Mission Held in Brgy. San Rafael II, Noveleta.

With the goal of promoting community wellness and preventive care, a medical and dental mission was successfully conducted in Barangay San Rafael II, Noveleta on July 29, 2025, serving a total of 387 beneficiaries.

The activity was made possible through the collaborative efforts of the Provincial Government of Cavite through the Medical Mission Team of the Office of the Governor and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, and the local government of Noveleta. A range of free healthcare services were provided, including medical and dental consultations, X-ray examinations, and blood sugar testing.

The health mission was warmly welcomed by the residents, who took the opportunity to consult with medical professionals and avail of basic diagnostic services, especially those who rarely have access to routine check-ups.

Gracing the event were Noveleta Mayor Davey Chua, Cavite 1st District Board Member Romel Enriquez, and Board Member Juan Ismael Gandia, who expressed their appreciation to the medical team for bringing essential services closer to the community.

The initiative reflects the province's ongoing efforts to ensure that no Caviteño is left behind when it comes to healthcare, especially in grassroots communities.



PGC's Medical and Dental Mission.

The Provincial Government of Cavite's Medical and Dental Mission was successfully conducted on July 30, 2025 in Barangay Burol 1, Dasmariñas City, through the Office of the Provincial Governor (OPG) and Office of the Provincial Health Officer (OPHO).

The OPHO team provide essential healthcare services including medical consultation, check-ups, and dental care. In addition, the OPG staff took charge of distributing free medicines to the patients.

A total of 555 patients were served through the program - 493 individuals received medical check-ups and 62 patients availed tooth extraction services.

The initiative forms part of the Provincial Government's broader efforts to support community wellness and extend basic healthcare services directly to the people-especially those in barangays where access to such services is limited.

Cavite recognizes nutrition movers and outstanding program implementers

In a fitting culmination to the month-long celebration of the 51st Nutrition Month in Cavite, the provincial government through the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the Provincial Nutrition Committee, recognized the dedication outstanding implementation of nutrition programs in the different barangays, cities and municipalities during the awarding ceremony held on July 31, 2025 at the Function Hall of the New Provincial Government Center, Trece Martires City.

The program was organized by the Nutrition Team of the OPHO headed by Provincial Nutrition Action Officer, Ms. Angeles Peñalba. Provincial Health Officer II, Dr. Nonie John Dalisay delivered the welcome remarks with enthusiasm and gratitude to all the awardees and nutrition partners who have made significant contributions to the successful implementation of nutrition and health programs down to the grassroots.

Eighth district Board Member Jasmin Angelli Maligaya-Bautista graced the event and delivered a message of congratulations to the local nutrition pillars who work tirelessly to deliver services within their localities. As a leader who champions nutrition, she praised their efforts and dedication to service and showed her strong support to the cause.

Awardees who were recognized during the event included the following: Provincial Outstanding Baran-



gay Nutrition Committee was awarded to Daang Amaya II, Tanza received by Punong Barangay Cindy Arguson and BNS Soledad Clamosa; Provincial Outstanding Barangay Nutrition Scholar award was given to Ms. Clarisa L. Reyes of Poblacion III, Mendez-Nuñez; Provincial Outstanding Municipal Nutrition Program Coordinator was awarded to Ms. Teresita L. Bendo from the Municipality of Alfonso; Provincial Outstanding Municipal Nutrition Action Officer was awarded to Ms. Maria Rea A. Villa of the Municipality of Rosario; and Provincial Outstanding District Nutrition Program Coordinator award was conferred to Ms. Dessa May R. Alibangbang.

Additionally, LGUs with exceptional performance in nutrition program policies and program implementation were duly recognized with the Provincial Outstanding Municipal Nutrition Committee award. Among the awardees were the Municipality of Rosario - 1st Yr Green Banner Seal of Compliance Award accepted by MNAO Maria Rea Villa; Municipality of Magallanes - 1st Yr Green Banner Seal of Compliance Award received by MNAO Ms. Chiara Papa; and, the Municipality of Tanza which

was awarded with 3rd Yr Green Banner Seal of Compliance Award accepted by MNAO Dorothy Ramirez. These municipalities have consistently showed excellence in their nutrition program implementation.

Special awards were also given to nutrition local nutrition committees (LNC) which have displayed significant improvements and innovation in their program implementation. The Municipality of Amadeo was conferred with the Most Improved LNC Award while the Municipality of Gen. Mariano Alvarez was hailed as the Most Innovative LNC.

Top awardees were also given the opportunity to share words of gratitude and inspiration to all the nutrition stakeholders in attendance for the recognition they received which will serve as fuel to keep going. They shared a common message of dedication and commitment to serve their communities towards better nutritional status of their constituents.

Capping the event was a message of gratitude from Provincial Health Officer I, Dr. Nelson Soriano, to all the nutrition movers and their tireless resolve to bring forth nutrition advocacies and programs for the benefit of Caviteños.--- OPIO

DOH reminds public anew of leptospirosis risk amid rainy season

MANILA – The Department of Health (DOH) warned the public anew against the dangers of leptospirosis, a potentially life-threatening bacterial infection.

In the past weeks, parts of the country experienced heavy downpours and widespread flooding due to tropical storms.

The public is urged to exercise caution when wading through floodwaters, which may be contaminated with the urine of infected animals, particularly rats—the primary carriers of leptospira bacteria.

The bacteria commonly enters the body through cuts or abrasions on the skin, or through the eyes, nose, or mouth.

It is found in water, moist soil or vegetation contaminated by the urine of infected animals. The risk significantly increases during floods, especially in urban areas with poor drainage and sanitation.

Leptospirosis symptoms typically appear in five to 14 days after exposure, and they include high fever, headache, muscle pain (especially in calves and lower back), red eyes, chills, vomiting or diarrhea, jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes), and dark-colored urine.

Severe cases may lead to kidney damage, meningitis, liver failure, respiratory distress, or even death if left untreated.

The DOH strongly advises the following preventive measures:

Avoid wading in floodwaters. Use waterproof boots and protective clothing if unavoidable.

Cover wounds properly and wash exposed skin thoroughly with soap and clean water, especially parts of the body submerged in floods.

Monitor yourself for possible symptoms.

Even without symptoms or open wounds, consult a health professional if exposed to floodwaters.

Take proper medication upon doctor's prescription.

Maintain proper sanitation, and eliminate rat breeding grounds.

For prophylaxis, the DOH is recommending doxycycline 200 mg taken once a week for adults, under medical supervision, especially for individuals with high exposure to contaminated waters.

For treatment of suspected or confirmed leptospirosis cases, doxycycline or other appropriate antibiotics may be prescribed depending on severity and patient condition. It is essential to complete the prescribed course to prevent complications.

Earlier, the DOH said taking doxycycline without a doctor's prescription is dangerous.

Improper or unnecessary use of the antibi-

otic may lead to bacterial resistance, making future infections harder to treat and potentially resulting in prolonged or more severe illness.

The appropriate use of doxycycline depends on an individual's risk level and exposure to contaminated floodwater.

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation provides a benefit package of up to PHP21,450 for moderate to severe leptospirosis cases.

Over the weekend, DOH latest data show it logged 3,037 leptospirosis cases from Jan. 1 to July 19.

Of the tally, about 1,114 cases were recorded since June 8, a week after the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) declared the official start of the rainy season.

The DOH hospitals recorded 569 cases from July 13 to 31. The East Avenue Medical Center in Quezon City logged the most number of leptospirosis cases with 32.

It is followed by Sta. Ana Hospital in Manila City with 26 cases and National Kidney and Transplant Institute with 19 cases. (PNA)

BSP sees sustained below-target inflation rates this year

MANILA – A turnaround of the domestic inflation rate in July 2025 at 0.9 percent, the slowest since October 2019's 0.6 percent, made monetary authorities' projection of below-average inflation rate for this year firmer.

The latest inflation rate, as reported by the Philippine Statistics Authority Tuesday, is a reversal from the 1.4 percent uptick last June, and brought the seven-month average to 1.7 percent, below the government's 2.4 percent.

In a statement, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said the latest inflation figure is within its 0.5 to 1.3 percent forecast for July.

"Inflation is projected to average below the lower end of the target in 2025, primarily due to the continued easing of rice prices," it said.

Rice price inflation has been on the down-trend since at least in August 2024, National Statistician Claire Dennis Mapa said in a briefing.

Aside from slower price increases in power rates and oil prices, PSA data show that rice inflation drove the annual slowdown in the food index last July after it registered a 15.9 percent decline from a 14.3 percent drop last June.

This, as the government increased rice importation and lowered tariffs to boost supply and address price upticks in the early part of last year,



INFLATION FORECAST. Fresh produce being sold as part of the government's Kadiwa ng Pangulo program at the Quezon City Hall Covered Pathwalk on July 15, 2025. This program has helped boost the availability of cheaper food items and help address inflation, which the central bank forecasts to average below the government's 2 percent to 4 percent target this 2025. (PNA photo by Ben Briones)

when rice prices were cited as among the reasons for the faster domestic inflation rate.

While inflation this year is seen to remain below-target, BSP forecasts an uptick to within-target levels for the next two years.

"Global economic activity is showing signs of deceleration, influenced by uncertainty over US trade policy and ongoing geopolitical conflict in the Middle East. These developments may contribute to slower domestic growth," it said.

Amidst this, the BSP said "a more accommodative monetary policy stance remains warranted."

This year alone, the central bank's policy-making Monetary

Board (MB) has reduced the BSP's key rates by a total of 50 basis points as inflation continues to slow. Indications for more hikes have been hinted by BSP Governor Eli Remolona.

The statement said "emerging risks to inflation from rising geopolitical tensions and external policy uncertainty will require closer monitoring, alongside the continued assessment of the impact of prior monetary policy adjustments."

"Going forward, the BSP will safeguard price stability while ensuring that monetary policy settings are conducive to sustainable economic growth and employment," it added. (PNA)

**The one walking with the wise
will become wise,
But the one who has dealings
with the stupid will fare badly.**

Proverbs 13:20

**Better is a handful of rest
than two handfuls
of hard work and chasing
after the wind.**

Ecclesiastes 4:6

45 to 60-day rice import ban sought in Sept. to protect palay farmers

MANILA – The Department of Agriculture (DA) on Tuesday said it proposed the temporary ban on rice importation in September to protect local palay (unhusked rice) farmers.

In an interview, DA spokesperson Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said they have made the request to President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to ensure better farmgate prices of palay during the upcoming wet harvest season.

“Very timely kasi mid-August, mag-start na iyong harvest sa ilang bahagi ng Nueva Ecija. Kaya iyong proposal ni Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na mag-start ng Sept. 1 ang ban (because by mid-August, the harvest will start in some parts of Nueva Ecija. That’s why the proposal of Sec. Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. to start the ban on Sept. 1), can last say 45 to 60 days,” he said.

He said the measure would be helpful to farmers as local palay harvest from wet cropping is set to peak from September to October.

The proposed ban was done considering the high volume of the rice stock inventory, which influences retail prices of rice, and “eventually” the farmgate prices of palay across the country.

“Napakarami ng pumasok na import, 2.5 million metric tons (MT) na bigas. Plus record-harvest tayo ng palay first semester (A lot of rice imports entered, 2.5 million metric tons (MT). Plus, we have a record harvest of rice in the first semester),” de Mesa said.

The historic high harvest hit 9.077 million metric tons (MT) from January to June, surpassing the previous all-time high of 9.026 MT for the same period in 2023, and last year’s 8.53 mil-

lion MT, based on the latest data of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

With this, de Mesa said the government intends to strike a “balance” in measures to ensure stability of both retail rice prices and farmgate prices of palay.

“Gusto natin magkaroon ng balanseng aksyon sa ating mga magsasaka at sa ating mga (We want to have a balanced action for our farmers and) consumers,” he said.

Meanwhile, the average farmgate prices of rumble fresh palay, as of July 31, range from PHP8.33 per kg. to PHP17 per kg., while the price of rumble dry ranges from PHP15 per kg. to PHP22 per kg. across the regions in the country, according to the Philippine Rice Research Institute (Philrice).

“Nakikita natin na mababa na masyado iyong farmgate price ng palay... Hindi PHP20 na bigas ang reason kundi masyadong maraming bigas sa Pilipinas ngayon (We see that the farmgate price of rice is very low... The reason is not PHP20 rice but there is too much rice in the Philippines right now),” de Mesa said.

The Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SINAG) earlier flagged the “flooding” of imported rice, citing reported drops of farmgate prices, with the lowest buying of wet palay plunging to as low as PHP5/kg. in Nueva Ecija on July 17.

The imposition of a temporary import ban is allowed under Republic Act (RA) 12078 or the Agricultural Tariffication Act.

Under Section 9 of the law, the President has the power to “suspend or prohibit” importation for a limited period or a specific volume when there is “an excessive supply of imported or locally produced rice resulting

SM City Dasmariñas Showcases Over 500 Artworks in “Art for Everyone” Exhibit



The participating groups include Urban Sketchers Cavite Heritage Artists Community, Castrillo Legacy Art Studio, Alitaptap Artists Community, United Artists by Lance Daliva, and Dasmariñas Art Group.



Castrillo Legacy Art Studio – Carrying the legacy of National Artist Eduardo Castrillo, the studio is recognized for its powerful sculptures and public monuments.



in an extraordinary decrease in local rice prices.”

Earlier, de Mesa said a reasonable farmgate price of palay should not be lower than the average production cost.

In 2024, the average palay’s production cost rose to PHP14.52/kg. according to the PSA, higher than the PHP13.54/kg. in 2023.

Dasmariñas Art Group – Composed of home-grown talents dedicated to promoting the city’s rich identity through visual arts.

For its part, the National Food Authority (NFA) has been implementing its Price Range Scheme (PRICERS), with a buying price ranging from PHP23/kg. to PHP30/kg. for clean and dry palay, while PHP17/kg. to PHP23/kg. for fresh and wet palay to help farmers secure a reasonable income. (PNA)

In celebration of local creativity and culture, SM City Dasmariñas launches the Art for Everyone exhibit, featuring more than 500 art pieces including sculptures from the iconic Castrillo Legacy Art Studio. The exhibit runs from July 20 to 31 at the Annex Event Center, bringing together five prominent art groups that represent the heart of Cavite’s vibrant art scene.



Urban Sketchers Cavite Heritage Artists Community – Artists committed to capturing Cavite’s heritage and everyday moments through on-location sketching.



Alitaptap Artists Community – A collective of multidisciplinary artists known for their community-driven projects and international collaborations.



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Chef de mission optimistic on PH World Games bid

MANILA – Chef de mission Stephen Arapoc expressed his optimism on Team Philippines' campaign at the 2025 World Games scheduled Aug. 7 to 17 in Chengdu, China.

"With teamwork and strong support from the Philippine Olympic Committee and the Philippine Sports Commission, there is no doubt we will produce champions," Arapoc, president of the Muaythai Association of the Philippines, said in a statement on Tuesday.

He will fly to Chengdu City on Wednesday afternoon.

Wushu standouts Agatha Wong and Jones Inso, and cable wakeboarder Raphael Trinidad arrived Tuesday morning ahead of the 47-athlete national contingent.

Wong, who qualified for the World Games with her silver medal at the 2023 World Wushu Games in Texas, USA and Trinidad will carry the Philippine flag during the opening ceremony parade on Aug. 7.

"It will be my first time competing and I expect a tough compe-



OFF TO CHINA. The Philippines is sending 47 athletes to the 2025 World Games set Aug. 7 to 17 in Chengdu, China. Photo shows (from left) wushu athletes Jones Inso and Agatha Wong and wakeboarder Raphael Trinidad waiting for the flight at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 1 in Parañaque City on Tuesday (Aug. 5, 2025). (Contributed photo)

tion. All world events are competitive, but I believe World Games will be more competitive, so it means a lot for me," Trinidad said. "I am so thankful to be named flag bearer, too."

The 14-member floorball team was the first to arrive in Chengdu.

"Food and room are great, so far everything is okay," floorball association president Marco Ortiz, whose team will face Latvia in the preliminary round on Thursday morning, said in a statement.

The 12-member drag-

on boat team, muay standout Rudzma Abubakar and the duathlon squad led by Kim Mangrobang will likewise arrive Wednesday.

The Philippines has won two gold medals so far at the World Games.

Carlo Biado ruled the men's single nine-ball event in Wroclaw, Poland in 2017, while Filipino-Japanese Junna Tsukii dominated the kumite women's 50kg category in Birmingham, Alabama, USA in 2022. (PNA)

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL POLICE

Rediscover Cavite One Stamp at a Time—And Get Rewarded!



Itching for a road trip, a weekend food crawl, or just a new place to unwind? Cavite is the perfect place to explore—as this time, the journey comes with rewards. Whether you're craving countryside views, cozy staycations, rich history, or local eats that hit the spot, Cavite has it all. And thanks to the return of the Cavite Tourism Passport, you won't just experience the best the province has to offer—you'll earn points, prizes, and bragging rights while doing it.

Spearheaded by the Provincial Government of Cavite through the Office of the Provincial Tourism Officer and MPT South—the concessionaire behind the Cavite-Laguna Expressway (CALAX) and Manila-Cavite Expressway (CAVITEX), which serve as the province's gateway from NCR and Laguna—the Cavite Tourism Passport is back for another year, now with more exciting mechanics to level up your local adventures.

In partnership with the Department of Tourism (DOT) CALABARZON and the Department of the Interior and Local Gov-

ernment (DILG), this year's edition features over 100 DOT-accredited establishments across Cavite, categorized into Staycation, Adventure, Food, and Heritage destinations.

So, what's new? A point-based system that gamifies the journey. Instead of simply collecting stamps, travelers will now earn points as they visit each accredited spot. To qualify for exclusive rewards, you must complete all four categories and reach at least 700 points between August 1, 2025, and August 31, 2026.

As a bonus, attending local festivals also earns you extra points, making it the perfect excuse to experience Cavite's rich culture firsthand. So, whether you're craving a bowl of authentic pancit pusit in Cavite, planning a nature escape in Maragondon, or looking to time your trip with a town fiesta, there's something for every kind of traveler.

"We want to make travel around Cavite not only fun, but also meaningful," shares

Rozelle Sangalang, Cavite Provincial Tourism Officer. "Through this passport, we're encouraging both locals and visitors to dive deeper into what our province has to offer—from heritage and food to natural wonders and community celebrations."

"This initiative reflects our commitment to building more than roads—we're helping connect people to stories, culture, and communities," says Arlette V. Capistrano, Vice President for Communication and Stakeholder Management at MPT South.

Passports are now available at the CALAX Customer Service Center, partner establishments, and local tourism offices across Cavite. For full mechanics and partner establishments, visit <https://tourism.cavite.gov.ph/cavite-tourism-passport/>. So, gas up, grab your passport, and start your Cavite adventure—because the best stories aren't just found, they're earned.

A TRUE FRIEND SHOWS LOVE AT ALL TIMES AND IS A BROTHER WHO IS BORN FOR TIMES OF DISTRESS

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