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DSWD credit Walang Gutom Program for drop in hunger incidence

MANILA – Since their inclusion in the Walang Gutom Program (WGP) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), 300,000 families have continued to eat better, contributing to the downward trend in hunger incidence among the poorest Filipino households.

A private sector-commissioned Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey for the WGP, conducted in March, showed that

hunger prevalence among beneficiaries dropped by 7.2 percentage points, with the most notable improvement seen in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) - Plus cluster, where hunger incidence fell by 17.4 percentage points.

“We are seeing early signs of success of the Walang Gutom Program. And as instructed by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., we will expand

the program further to 600,000 beneficiaries in the second half of the year to make a bigger and more tangible impact of food-poor Filipino households,” DSWD Secretary Rex Gatchalian said in a Palace briefing on Wednesday.

The latest SWS survey showed that the incidence of hunger among WGP beneficiaries in 10 regions and 22 provinces dropped by 7.2 percent from October 2024 to March 2025.

It also showed a decline in hunger prevalence for a second consecutive quarter.

In October 2024, the SWS recorded 48.7 percent in hunger prevalence among WGP beneficiaries, which dropped to 44.6 percent in December 2024, or by 4.1 percentage points.

In the second quarterly survey, the hunger incidence further dropped to 41.5 percent in March, or by 3.1 percentage points.

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DOST's innovation hub now in Calabarzon

SAN PABLO CITY, Laguna (PIA) – The Calabarzon region is now home to an innovation hub for advanced manufacturing, the seventh facility that Department of Science and Technology (DOST) unveiled in the country.

The Advanced Manufacturing Center (AMCEN) is the DOST's research facility in additive manufacturing (AM) and state-of-the-art technological hub providing comprehensive services on product prototyping, manufacturing, materials de-



velopment, training, consultancy, and other 3D-printing solutions.

DOST Secretary Renato Solidum Jr. emphasized that in order to truly realize the vision of ‘Agham na Ramdam,’ the DOST must go down to the grassroots level to

reach and serve all sectors of society.

“Beyond machinery and equipment, AMCEN is an investment in people. It cultivates a new generation of engineers, researchers, and innovators equipped with the skills to harness

disruptive technologies. The partnerships we forge—among government, academe, industry, and civil society—create an ecosystem where research meets application, and ideas become tangible solutions,” Solidum stated.

According to the DOST-Calabarzon, the facility, located at the Laguna State Polytechnic University (LSPU) San Pablo City Campus, is vital to the government's commitment of bringing advanced science, technology, and inno-

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FDA okays no purchase booklet for senior citizens' medicine discount

MANILA – Senior citizens will no longer be required to present a purchase booklet to avail themselves of the 20 percent discount on medicines and medical devices.

This was after the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued Department Cir-

cular 2025-005, which officially removes the booklet from the checklist of requirements.

In a public advisory on Thursday, the FDA said this initiative complies with Department of Health (DOH) Administrative Order 2024-0017 and the

provisions of Republic Act (RA) 9994, also known as the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010.

“To streamline the requirements and remove undue regulatory burden to the availing senior citizens, the DOH has omitted the

(Turn to p. 2)



FOOD SECURITY. A beneficiary of the Walang Gutom Program (WGP) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) gets food supplies during a redemption activity in Libon, Albay on Jan. 20, 2025. DSWD Secretary Rex Gatchalian on Wednesday (Sept. 3, 2025) said hunger incidence among the poorest of the poor families continues its downward trend due to the WGP. (Photo courtesy of DSWD-5)

Bacoor seeks Malacañang's help in addressing flooding woes



CITY OF BACOOR (PIA) — The city government of Bacoor has sought the national government's intervention in addressing the city's flooding problem, citing clogged waterways and outdated drainage

infrastructures as behind the flooding.

In a letter to Malacañang, Bacoor Mayor Strike B. Revilla requested funding support for the city's drainage and flood control plan through

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“We are pleased with the favorable results that clearly show the positive impact of the WGP on the food-poor beneficiaries. Consequently, we will continue to develop ways to make the program more responsive to address the food insecurity of the program’s beneficiaries,” Gatchalian said.

The sharpest reduction was seen in the BARMM-Plus cluster – which includes the provinces of Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Maguindanao del Norte, Maguindanao del Sur, Lanao del Sur, and Zamboanga Sibugay – where hunger incidence fell by 17.4 percentage points, from 55.1 percent to 37.7 percent.

Almost a third of the existing WGP beneficiaries are in the BARMM provinces, where the highest prevalence of hunger was also recorded.

The SWS survey, dubbed “Walang Gutom Tracker,” was commissioned by private companies Globe and Monde Nissin.

It also mirrored the latest results of the regular SWS survey on involuntary hunger, which showed a 3.9 percent drop in the number of Filipino families experiencing involuntary hunger – from 20 percent in April to 16.1 percent in June.

Gatchalian noted that the SWS survey

results are a concrete proof that the WGP is making a tangible difference in the lives of food-poor households.

“The program remains central to President Bongbong Marcos’ priority agenda of addressing involuntary hunger, combining immediate food support with long-term empowerment initiatives,” he said.

Through the WGP, each household receives PHP3,000 worth of monthly food credits via Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards, redeemable at partner retailers.

As of August, the WGP was supporting 300,000 household beneficiaries nationwide and working with 1,017 accredited retail partners, including 639 women-led enterprises.

The Walang Gutom 2027: Food Stamp Program, commonly known as the Walang Gutom Program, has been in existence for nearly two years, with its pilot phase launched in July 2023.

The program aims to free from hunger 750,000 food-poor families by 2027.

The WGP, created through Executive Order 44, also promotes social and behavioral change among food-poor families by teaching them how to prepare nutritious, delicious, and affordable meals. (PNA)

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purchase booklet from the checklist of requirements to avail of the discount,” the FDA said.

“As one of the agencies responsible for the implementation of the aforementioned AOs,

this Circular is hereby issued for the guidance of concerned industry stakeholders and the general public.”

Under RA 9994, elderly Filipinos are entitled to a 20 percent discount and Val-

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foreign-assisted programs such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) or the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund (NDRRMF). Di-

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rect intervention by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), and the Department of Environment and Natural

resources closer to regional industries. AMCen provides access to cutting-edge technologies such as 3D printing, additive manufacturing, prototyping, and product design, enabling micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), startups, and even academic institutions to transform their ideas into market-ready products.

Calabarzon is regarded as a home to some of the country’s biggest industrial zones and manufacturing hubs, and with the opening of AMCEN’s the region is expected to benefit significantly from its presence.

Solidum encouraged stakeholders and the public to engage in the facility and utilize the center to produce solutions attuned to local needs with global potential.

“I challenge DOST CALABARZON to ensure that our researchers, students, industry partners, and

ditional documentary requirements. The move is part of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.’s effort to enhance healthcare access for the elderly and streamline processes across pharmacies and medical establishments. (PNA)

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Resources (DENR) for large-scale dredging were among the assistance sought.

“The dams and rivers that once protected us are now clogged with silt and debris. Without immediate support from the national government, thousands of lives and homes remain at risk,” Revilla said in a statement.

The appeal also includes the immediate desilting of rivers and canals in Bacoor, especially in flood-prone barangays according to the City Engineering Office

Under the Bacoor Drainage Plan, the city government proposed main strategies that include: the JICA Master Plan (2022), developed with assistance from JICA, and a supplementary plan from the DPWH, including the Draft Final Master Plan Report from Cer-

teza Infosys Corporation and a feasibility study for the Bacoor River Improvement Project.

“Despite our ongoing requests to agencies such as the NIA for the transfer of the Molino dams, there has been no clear response. The delays in administrative processes have significantly hampered our ability to act,” Revilla added.

The city expressed its readiness to implement and take responsibility for any assistance provided by the national government, in close coordination with relevant agencies.

Revilla stressed the urgency for immediate action, warning that every day of delay increases the risks to residents and property. (RBF/Bacoor CIO)

CAVITE NEWS PUBLISHING

WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

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Recently, a total of 590 residents of Ternate, Cavite received free medical, dental, and wellness services during a one-day Medical & Dental Mission organized by the Provincial Government of Cavite in partnership with the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and Board Member Jasmin Maligaya-Bautista. The event, held at the Ternate Town Plaza Covered Court, prioritized vulnerable sectors including senior citizens, persons with disabilities (PWDs), farmers, and solo parents.

Around 530 individuals availed of general medical services, which included 18 x-rays and 8 electrocardiograms (ECGs). Additionally, 60 patients received dental extractions. Aside from medical care, the mission also offered free haircuts, massages, and nail care providing holistic wellness to attendees.

Board Member Maligaya-Bautista, a staunch advocate for accessible healthcare, emphasized the importance of bringing services directly to communities.

The Provincial Government has been rolling out similar health outreach efforts across Cavite to address the gap in healthcare access for rural and underserved areas.--- OPIO



PGC Brings Free Medical and Dental Mission to Brgy. Punta 1

More than 590 residents of Brgy. Punta 1, Tanza benefited from the Medical and Dental Mission spearheaded by the Office of the Provincial Governor (OPG) in partnership with the Office of the Provincial Health Officer (OPHO) and the Municipal Government of Tanza last August 26, 2025.

A total of 501 medical consultations, which included the 23 X-rays and 6 ECG procedures, and 91 dental extractions were rendered, along with the distribution of free medicines by the OPG medical team headed by Mr. Geri Olaes.

The mission was strengthened by the combined expertise of OPHO medical and dental professionals and the Tanza Rural Health Unit (RHU), who also provided MR-Bolster immunization for 10 – 19 years old, under Community-Based Immunization Program.

The success of the program was made possible through the support of Brgy. Chairwoman Adelaida B. Sumilong, together with Barangay Health Workers and Barangay Nutrition Scholars. Seventh District Board Member Aldrin Anacan also graced the event, showing his commitment to making healthcare accessible to the people.

The initiative reaffirms the provincial government’s commitment that quality healthcare is a right for every Caviteño.

ability to communicate effectively and inclusively; Presentation Skills – practical guidelines on what to consider before, during, and after delivering presentations; and Disability Perspectives in Presentations – instilling an inclusive mindset in crafting and sharing information.

The training adopted a hands-on and participatory approach. Participants were tasked to create and deliver their own presentations, applying what they learned in real-time. The engaging activity not only sharpened their public speaking and communication skills but also boosted their confidence as future trainers and advocates in their communities.

The presence of 6th District Board Member Ivey Jane Reyes added significance to the event. In her message, she expressed her full support for the program, commending the initiative as a meaningful step toward Cavite’s vision of inclusivity. She encouraged participants to maximize the opportunity by becoming proactive leaders and partners in promoting the rights of PWDs.

The training is part of Cavite’s broader efforts to build a strong pool of disability inclusion advocates who will lead local initiatives, conduct sensitivity orientations, and ensure that policies and programs remain responsive to the needs of PWDs.--- OPIO



PGC Empowers Advocates for Disability Inclusion

The Provincial Government of Cavite through the Office of the Provincial Persons with Disability Affairs Officer continues to strengthen its commitment to build a more inclusive society with the successful conduct of the Training of Trainers on Empowering Advocates: Building a Resource Pool for Disability Inclusion in Cavite on August 19–20, 2025 at Tagaytay Country Hotel, Tagaytay City.

The two-day training gathered Persons with Disability Affairs Officers and focal persons from local government units of the province. The activity aimed to equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to champion the rights and welfare of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in their respective communities.

Atty. Walter Jayson G. Alava, Regional Programs Coordinator of the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA), facilitated the training which featured insightful sessions covering essential topics: Disability Laws Awareness and Sensitivity Orientation – ensuring that advocates understand the legal foundations protecting the rights of PWDs; Communication: Nature, Elements, Process, and Models – enhancing participants’

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ara said the agency will seek flexibility in the 2026 national budget to let qualified LGUs with proven capacity to undertake school-building projects.

He underscored the different capacities of LGUs in terms of technical expertise, financial resources, and governance structures to move projects quickly.

DepEd will retain authority over standard-

ized designs and safety standards, while DPWH would still handle projects in areas requiring national oversight.

Angara said mechanisms such as accreditation, technical assistance, and co-financing are being studied to support low-income LGUs.

Since he assumed office in July 2024, Angara has secured more than PHP458 million in private sector commit-

ments, funding at least 84 new classrooms and several upgrades.

“Our partners in local governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector have shown they want to be part of the solution. What we hope to do is create the space for their contributions to make a bigger impact,” he said. (PNA)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
FOURTH JUDICIAL REGION
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF COURT
DASMARIÑAS CITY, CAVITE

File No. FC-DC-1871-25
EXTRA JUDICIAL FORECLOSURE
OF REAL ESTATE MORTGAGE
UNDER ACT 3135, AS AMENDED
BY ACT 4118

BDO UNIBANK, INC.,
Mortgagee,

-versus-

SPS. MICHELLE SOLIS MARIANO AND
JERIC GIGAWIN MARIANO,
Debtors/Mortgagors,

X-----X

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

Upon extra-judicial petition for sale under Act 3135, as amended by Act 4118 filed by the petitioner/mortgagee, **BDO UNIBANK, INC.** with postal address at 33rd Floor BDO Corporate Center Ortigas, No. 12 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City against the debtor/mortgagors **SPS. MICHELLE SOLIS MARIANO AND JERIC GIGAWIN MARIANO** with postal address at (1) Block 8 Lot 20 Greenbreeze 3 Village, San Agustin I, Dasmariñas, Cavite; (2) Block 9 Lot 8 Phase 6 Greenwoods Village, Brgy. Paliparan, Dasmariñas, Cavite and for the satisfaction of the mortgaged debt which as of **July 01, 2025** amounts to **SIX MILLION FOUR HUNDRED FIFTY FIVE THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED NINETY ONE PESOS AND 53/100 (Pph 6,455,691.53)**, exclusive of all legal fees and expenses incidental to this foreclosure and sale, the undersigned sheriff will sell at public auction on **October 14, 2025** at 10:00 o'clock in the morning or soon thereafter at the lobby of Branch 90, Regional Trial Court Ground Floor, Dasmariñas Community Affairs (DASCA) Building, Congressional Road, Buro I, Dasmariñas City, Province of Cavite to the highest bidder and for CASH or **CERTIFIED CHECK**, in Philippine Currency, the following described real property together with all the buildings and other improvements existing thereon, to wit:

Transfer Certificate of Title
No. 057-2024018682

IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED that certain land situated in BRGY. PALIPARAN, DASMARIÑAS, CAVITE, ISLAND OF LUZON, bounded and described as follows”
A PARCEL OF LAND (LOT 8, BLK. 9 OF THE CONS.-SUBD. PLAN PCS-04-020581 BEING A PORTION OF BLK 1E LOTS 1-35, BLK. 2E LOTS 1-7, BLK 3E LOTS 1-12, BLK. 4E LOTS 1-31, BLK 5E LOTS 1-23, BLK 6E LOTS 1-22, BLK 8E LOTS 1-10, BLK 9E LOTS 1-24, BLK 10E LOTS 1-10, BLK 11E LOTE 1-6, BLK 12E LOTS 1-3, BLK 13E LOTS 1-67 ROAD LOTS 1E TO 20E, BLK 36-C ALL OF PCS -04-017424, BLK. 1 LOT 15, BLK. 15 LOTS 53 & 54 ALL OF PCS-04-017571, BLK. 21A LOT 11, BLK 21B LOTS 10 & 11 ALL OF PCS-04-017094, L.R.C. rec., no. 8843), SITUATED IN THE BRGY. PALIPARAN, DASMARIÑAS , CAVITE, ISLAND OF LUZON. BOUNDED ON THE S.W., ALONG LINE 1-2 BY AND LONG LINE 2-3 BY LOT 13; ON THE N.W., ALONG LINE 3-4 BY LOT 9, BOTH BLOCK 9, BOTH OF THE CONS. SUBD. PLAN; ON THE N.E., ALONG LINE 4-5 BY AND ON THE S.E. ALONG LINE 5-1 BY LOT 7, BLOCK 9, OF THE CONS.-SUBD. PLAN. BEGINNING AT A PT. MARKED “1” ON PLAN BEING N. 14 DEG. 49’W., 783.49M. FROM MON. 79, IMUS ESTATE; THENCE N. 84 DEG. 23’W., 2.00 M. TO PT.2; THENCE N. 84 DEG. 23’W., 9.00 M. TO PT. 3; THENCE N. 05 DEG. 37’E., 14.00 M. TO PT. 4; THENCE S. 84 DEG. 23’E., 11.00 M. TO PT. 5; THENCE S. 05 DEG. 37’W., 14.00 M. TO THE PT. OF BEGINNING, CONTAINING ON AREA OF ONE HUNDRED FIFTY FOUR (154) SQUARE METERS. ALL PTS. REFERRED TO ARE INDICATED ON THE PLAN AND ARE MARKED ON THE GROUND BY P.S. CYL. CONS. MONS 15X40 CM.; BEARINGS TRUE; DATE OF ORIGINAL SURVEY, JULY 27, 1905-JUNE 11, 1908 AND THAT OF THE CONS.-SURVEY, OCTOBER 18-28, 2004 & WAS APPROVED ON NOVEMBER 26, 2004.
is registered in accordance with the provision of the Property Registration Decree in the name of
Owner: SPOUSES MICHELLE S. MARIANO AND JERIC G. MARIANO, BOTH FILIPINOS, BOTH OF LEGAL AGE
Address: BLOCK 8 LOT 20 GREENBREEZE 3 VILLAGE, SAN AGUSTIN 1, DASMARIÑAS, CAVITE
Prospective buyers and/or bidders and hereby enjoined to investigate for themselves the title of the said real property and the encumbrance thereon, if there be any.
All sealed bids must be submitted to the undersigned on the

PAGCOR donates more patient transport vehicles

MANILA – The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) said it recently turned over seven new Patient Transport Vehicles (PTVs) to local government units across the country.

In a statement Thursday, PAGCOR said the PTV beneficiaries include Las Piñas City, Tacloban City (Leyte) and the towns of Busuanga (Palawan), San Manuel (Tarlac), Mexico (Pampanga), Kibawe (Bukidnon), and Indang (Cavite).

PAGCOR chairperson and CEO Alejandro Tengco, who led the ceremonial turnover at the agency’s corporate office in Pasay City on Wednesday, said the initiative is part of PAGCOR’s commitment to improve healthcare ac-

cess in far-flung and vulnerable areas.

“This is more than just a turnover of vehicles; it is about saving more lives,” Tengco said.

The PTVs are fully equipped with a GPS navigation system, ambulance stretcher, medical oxygen, wheelchair, and first aid kit, ensuring safe and efficient transport of patients to the nearest hospital or health-care facility.

PAGCOR has so far donated a total of 51 emergency vehicles to LGUs, public hospitals, frontline agencies, and select military units nationwide, in support of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.’s thrust to strengthen emergency medical services in at-risk and underserved communities. (PNA)



BETTER HEALTHCARE ACCESS. PAGCOR chairperson and CEO Alejandro Tengco (4th from right) leads the ceremonial turnover of seven Patient Transport Vehicles to LGUs across the country on Sept. 3. Among the recipients are (from left) Kibawe Mayor Reynaldo Ang Rabanes (Bukidnon); Tacloban City Health Office head Dr. Gloria Fabrigas (Leyte); Mexico Mayor Rodencio Gonzales (Pampanga); Indang Mayor Virgilio Fidel (Cavite); San Manuel Mayor Doña Cresencia Tesoro (Tarlac); Busuanga Mayor Raymond Emil Cruz (Palawan); and Las Piñas DRRMO head Alejandro Dela Merced. (Photo courtesy of PAGCOR)

DFA... FR. P. 5

which has jurisdiction over Afghanistan, remains in contact with nationals in Kabul and is verifying the condition of the others.

The powerful tremor, with epicenter some 27 kilometers northeast of Jalalabad, has left more than 800 dead and at least 2,000 injured, but the United Nations said the total impact could be in the “hundreds of thousands.”

Currently, access to

the affected provinces is complicated due to road blockages caused by landslides and difficult terrain, which are impacting the speed of humanitarian assistance.

“The Philippine Embassy in Islamabad will continue to monitor the situation closely by coordinating with Afghan authorities and issue a follow-up advisory should developments require,” the DFA said. (PNA)

DepEd to tap LGUs in classroom construction to address backlog

MANILA – Education Secretary Sonny Angara is pushing for a new policy that would allow local government units (LGUs) to directly handle classroom construction, a move aimed at accelerating projects and reducing backlogs.

At the House Committee on Appropriations hearing on Wednesday, Angara said the plan would lessen reliance on the Department of Public Works and Highways

(DPWH), cut bureaucratic delays, and tap local expertise to deliver school infrastructure faster.

“Every classroom we add brings hope and opportunity to learners. But delay in construction means children wait longer than they should. That is why we are looking for ways to build faster and smarter, with partners who are closest to the ground,” he said.

Under the plan, Ang-
(Turn to p. 3)

above-stated time and date.

In the event that the public auction should not take place on the said date and time, it shall be held on **October 28, 2025**, at the same time and place without further notice
Dasmariñas City, Cavite, August 19, 2025.

ARLYN P. BARCELON
Sheriff IV

ATTY. MARCELA L. BAYBAY
Clerk of Court VI & Ex-Officio Sheriff

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REMEDIAL MANAGEMENT UNIT
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33rd Floor, BDO Corporate Center Ortigas,
No. 12 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City

SPS. MICHELLE SOLIS MARIANO AND
JERIC GIGAWIN MARIANO
(1) Block 8 Lot 20 Greenbreeze 3 Village, San Agustin 1, Dasmariñas, Cavite;
(2) Block 9 Lot 8 Phase 6 Greenwoods Village, Brgy. Paliparan, Dasmariñas, Cavite

Notice posted at:
1. The Bulletin Board of Regional Trial Court, Dasmariñas City, Cavite
2. The Bulletin Board of Dasmariñas City Hall
3. The Bulletin Board of Dasmariñas City Post Office
4. The Bulletin Board of Dasmariñas City of Public Market

DA explores supply options as chili prices soar to P800/kg

MANILA – The Department of Agriculture (DA) on Thursday said it is exploring supply options as prices of local chili or siling labuyo continue to soar in local markets with the onset of the “ber” months.

According to DA’s Bantay Presyo (price watch), the maximum retail price of chili in Metro Manila reached PHP800 per kg. as of Sept. 3.

This marked a steep increase from the PHP550/kg. peak price recorded on Aug. 15 and PHP350/kg. on July 25.

Asked whether cheaper chili could soon be sold at Kadiwa ng Pangulo (KNP) outlets, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said this would be possible once additional supply sources are secured.

“Maybe... but wala rin supply masyado (there’s not much supply). We are looking at supply options,” he told the Philippine News Agency in a Viber message.

Tiu Laurel explained that successive weather disturbances have significantly reduced production, pushing prices higher.

“Production is down talaga (really down) due to rains and floods,” he said.

A report on the crop shared with the PNA said the chili price surge is “primarily driven” by the rainy season, which has created a “supply gap” in major producing regions.

Supply reductions were reported in Ilocos, Central Luzon, and Bicol due to con-

tinuous rains.

In Ilocos and Central Luzon, fewer farmers planted chili, while in Bicol, persistent rainfall hampered cultivation and reduced yields, the report added.

The same report underscored the need for investment in “protected cultivation technologies (rain shelters, greenhouses, and improved drainage), better crop scheduling, and supply chain interventions.”

Intensified research, development

Agriculture spokesperson Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa, meanwhile, said greater investment in research and development—particularly in greenhouse technology—may help address the perennial problem of chili price spikes caused by its “seasonality.”

“Malaki ang maitutulong ng R&D, especially sa off-season planting ng sili and other solanaceous crops na very vulnerable during tag-ulan (R&D will greatly help, especially in off-season planting of chili and other solanaceous crops that are very vulnerable during the rainy season),” he told the PNA in a separate phone interview.

He explained that greenhouses could help prevent waterlogging in plantations, allowing chili production even during the off-season.

“Very seasonal kasi ang sili, hindi sila masyadong nagta-thrive kapag tag-ulan (Chili is very seasonal and does not thrive well during the

wet season),” he said.

As of Sept. 3, chili prices in the National Capital Region (NCR) ranged from PHP400 to PHP800 per kg, with a prevailing price of PHP700 per kg.

Aside from R&D, de Mesa said the DA is also studying the possibility of identifying alternative planting areas for chili during the off-season.

Currently, most chili supply comes from Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, and Southern Tagalog.

“Titingnan natin yung mga areas na hindi masyadong inuulan, kagaya sa Mindanao at Visayas, para mapadala dito sa mga areas na malaki ang demand (We will look into areas less affected by heavy rains, such as Mindanao and Visayas, so chili can be delivered to areas with high demand),” he said.

De Mesa stressed that ensuring a steady supply is crucial given the growing demand for chili among consumers and restaurants, especially during the “ber” months. (PNA)

DFA: No Filipino casualties in deadly Afghanistan quake

MANILA – The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) confirmed Wednesday that no Filipinos were reported dead or injured in the powerful magnitude 6 earthquake that struck eastern Afghanistan on Aug. 31.

The DFA said there is at least seven Filipino nationals in Afghanistan, all of whom are based in or around Kabul.

“As of this time,



PuroKalusugan offered community wellness and care in Bailen

The Department of Health IV-A collaborated with the Provincial Government of Cavite, through the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, in spearheading the PuroKalusugan program at General Emilio Aguinaldo (Bailen) Town Plaza, on August 19, 2025.

The town plaza was transformed into a venue filled with services promoting the health and well-being of Baileños, demonstrating the province’s continued commitment to making healthcare services more accessible to local communities.

In his opening message, Dr. Nelson C. Soriano, Provincial Health Officer I, welcomed stakeholders and highlighted the objectives of the program. He emphasized the important role of local government units in identifying and prioritizing the health services most needed by their constituents.

“Kayo po ang mag-a-identify ng ipa-prioritize na programang pangkalusugan sa inyong barangay”, he remarked.

Dr. Soriano also expressed his appreciation for the extension of the program to the province and its planned rollout to every purok and barangay.

The event was packed with a wide range of free services for residents. A total of 153 patients availed of chest X-ray services, while 55 individuals underwent PPD testing. HIV and syphilis testing were also conducted, with 18 and 37 individuals screened, respectively. In addition, 70 patients received skin consultations, and 52 patients availed of oral health services, including tooth extractions. PhilPEN screening was also conducted, serving a total of 153 residents.

Beyond healthcare services, the event also featured informative lectures on road safety and family planning, raising awareness among participants. A bloodletting activity was likewise held, with 30 Baileños successfully donating blood.

The program was not limited to the health the welfare of the people, as it also offered rabies vaccine for their fur babies.

The activity reaffirmed the Provincial Government of Cavite’s commitment to bridging healthcare gaps and moving toward a healthier Cavite where no community is left behind.--- OPIO

there are no reports of Filipino casualties or injuries. No Filipino nationals are known to be in evacuation centers, and no evacuation orders have been issued,” the agency said.

The provinces of Kunar, Nangarhar, and Laghman in Afghanistan appeared to be the most severely affected, the agency added.

The Philippine Embassy in Islamabad,

(Turn to p. 4)



EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE. ARWEO, a partner of the UN Refugee Agency, assesses the needs of communities affected by the Aug. 31, 2025 quake in eastern Afghanistan. The Department of Foreign Affairs confirmed that no Filipinos were among the casualties or injured. (Photo courtesy of UNHCR/ARWEO)

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Ybañez eager to learn from FIVB Men's World Championship campaign

MANILA – For Josh Ybañez, competing in the FIVB Men's Volleyball World Championship 2025 is an opportunity to hone his skills and learn from the experience.

The 5-foot-7 pride of General Santos City, who is among 21 players in the Alas Pilipinas pool, vows to perform well in the 32-nation event set at the SM Mall of Asia Arena and Smart-Araneta Coliseum on Sept. 12 to 28.

"I will just focus on doing my best in every game and learning from each match. That's the only way I can grow," the 22-year-old Ybañez said in a press statement issued by the Philippine National Volleyball Federation (PNVF) on Thursday.

As an outside hitter at the collegiate level, the two-time UAAP champion from the University of Santo Tomas, is used to pressure every time he steps on the court.

"Pressure is constant. It's always there, even if it's not the World Championship. There's always pressure. So, I just embrace it and focus on loving what I do," said Ybañez, who has been embracing a defen-



RISING STAR. Josh Ybañez is looking forward to showing his best form in the FIVB Men's Volleyball World Championship 2025 at the SM Mall of Asia Arena and Smart-Araneta Coliseum set on Sept. 12 to 28, 2025. He is among 21 players in the Alas Pilipinas pool. (Contributed photo)

sive role under Italian coach Angiolino Frigoni.

The SEA V.League Best Libero embraces every moment with focus and determination, letting his passion for the sport guide him through every challenge as Alas Pilipinas prepares for the world meet.

"It's an honor for us to represent the Philippines for the first time at the World Championship, and as they say, this is history. I'm happy, and for sure, I'm going to learn so much from our opponents and from the tournament itself," said Ybañez.

The Philippines will kick off the tournament against Tunisia – match time moved to 4:30 p.m. from the original 6 p.m. – at

the MOA Arena, following a festive opening ceremony headlined by K-pop group BOYNEXTDOOR and Cebuana singer-songwriter-actress Karencitta.

Fans can secure their seats for the historic event, which will see Alas Pilipinas face Egypt on Sept. 16 and Iran on Sept. 18, by purchasing tickets online at the official website: <https://www.philippineswch2025.com>.

"I hope all Filipinos will support us, because of course, there are teams like the USA and others that are also favorites among Filipinos. So, I hope they cheer for us too," Ybañez said. (PNA)

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL POLICE

MPT SOUTH BAGS QUILL AWARD FOR 'BIYAHENG SOUTH' CAVITE TOURISM PASSPORT INITIATIVE

City of Manila—Metro Pacific Tollways South (MPT South), a unit of Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC), proudly received the Award of Merit at the 21st Philippine Quill Awards for its 'Biyaheng South' Cavite Tourism Passport.

The Philippine Quill Awards, organized by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Philippines, is regarded as one of the most prestigious award programs in the country for business communication. It honors outstanding programs, campaigns, and publications that showcase excellence in strategy, creativity, and impact, while also contributing to the growth of organizations and communities alike.

The 'Biyaheng South' Cavite Tourism Passport bagged the Award of Merit under the Communication Skills Division, Publications Category. This project stands out as a creative initiative that promotes Cavite's diverse destinations, from unique local food spots to cultural landmarks.

An improved version of the passport was just recently relaunched on August 1, 2025, in collaboration with the Provincial Government of Cavite, giving tourists and locals an engaging way to rediscover Cavite's heritage while boosting local businesses. The project serves as a unique tool to encourage trav-



The Award of Merit from the 2025 Quill Awards given to MPT South



MPT South receives the Award of Merit at the 2025 Quill awards for 'Biyaheng South' Cavite Tourism Passport Initiative

el to the South, aligning with MPT South's advocacy of supporting regional growth and sustainable tourism.

"We are truly honored to receive this Award of Merit for our 'Biyaheng South' Cavite Tourism Passport. It inspires us to keep creating projects that celebrate local heritage, empower communities, and enrich the driving experience of every traveler using our expressway," Arlette V. Capistrano, Vice President of Communication and Stakeholder Management of MPT South, said.

With this recognition, MPT South looks ahead to further innovating and championing initiatives that promote inclusivity, cultural apprecia-

tion, and economic growth—making the South not just a destination, but a thriving hub for tourism and development.

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

SAY NO TO DRUGS