

CAVITE NEWS PUBLISHING

A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER THAT'S NATIONAL IN SCOPE

VOL. XXVII NO. 16 JULY 30-AUGUST 5 2026 P10.00
ISSN: 2651-7450

DSWD expands to reach more people in street situations

MANILA – The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is expanding the implementation of the Pag-abot Program to reach more individuals and families in street situations nationwide following President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s fifth State of the Na-

tion Address (SONA).

In his SONA, Marcos highlighted the DSWD's key social welfare initiatives for vulnerable sectors, including the Pag-abot Program, which was institutionalized under Executive Order No. 52.

The initiative is the DSWD's social pro-

tection initiative for children, individuals, and families in street situations. It provides immediate interventions, temporary shelter, and support services to help beneficiaries reintegrate into society.

“Our commitment in the Department remains firm in protect-

Rice aid, P20/kilo rice program expand in Laguna

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA) — Programs of the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. aimed at addressing hunger, easing household expenses, and strengthening the country's food security efforts continue to expand across the province of Laguna.

In his fifth State of the Nation Address (SONA), President Marcos Jr. highlighted the administration's gains in providing rice



In Calamba City, the Benteng Bigas Meron Na program is also set to roll out across the city, providing affordable rice to senior citizens, solo parents, persons with disabilities, farmers, drivers, members of Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) households, and indigent individuals.

assistance to priority sectors through the Bawat Bayan Maki-kinabang Program

Senate demands timetable for fuel-charge audit

MANILA – Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian on Thursday directed the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) to submit a timetable and detailed plan for auditing fuel-related charges passed on by power companies to consumers.

During the Senate Committee on Energy hearing, Gatchalian said generation accounts for about 60 percent of an electricity bill, with fuel comprising a substantial portion of the charge for coal, liquefied natural gas and other conventional power sources.



Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian (PNA photo by Avito Dalan)

es.

“Kung gusto natin pababain iyong elec-
(Turn to p. 2)



ing the vulnerable, especially the Families and Individuals in Street Situation (FISS).

under the Local Government Support Fund (LGSF). The program has been implemented in several local government units nationwide to help cushion the effects of global economic challenges.

“Sa panahon na lumiit ang kita dahil sa mataas na mga presyo, mahigit 26,000 toneladang bigas ang binigay sa mahigit 2.5 milyong pamilya. At ito'y itutuloy pa natin hanggang umabot sa 8 milyong pamilya na

Gagawin po ang lahat ng DSWD para maalis sila sa kapahamakan na maaaring idulot ng lansangan, lalo na po na ngayon ay pumasok na tayo ng panahon ng tag-ulan (The DSWD will do everything to pull them away from the dangers of living on the streets, especially now that the rainy season has started),” DSWD spokesperson Assistant Secretary Irene Dumlao said in a statement Thursday.

Latest data showed that Pag-abot teams have profiled 29,988 individuals, reached out to 22,852 persons, and successfully rein-

tegrated 21,174 beneficiaries into their home communities.

Dumlao said the program continues to provide interventions that help beneficiaries become productive members of society while protecting them from the risks of street life.

She said families and individuals in street situations reached by social workers undergo an initial assessment before being admitted to a Pag-abot Processing Center, or a Center for Residential Care Facility.

“Pinaparami na rin
(Turn to p.2)

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po ng Departamento ang ating (The Department is also increasing the number of) processing centers to, of course, accommodate more clients, more beneficiaries, dahil ito po ang mandato ng DSWD (because this is the DSWD's mandate), to ensure that no Filipinos are living on the streets," Dumlao said.

The DSWD currently operates four Pag-

PH external trade in goods up 21% in June

MANILA – The Philippines' total external trade in goods rose by 21.3 percent to USD22.48 billion in June from USD18.53 billion in the same month last year, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

Data released Thursday showed that of the total external trade in goods during the month, 61 percent were imports, while the remaining 39 percent were exports.

The balance of trade in goods, or the difference between the value of exports and imports, meanwhile, recorded a deficit of USD4.94 billion.

The total value of exports reached USD8.77 billion, the highest recorded since the PSA series began in 1991.

It was also 24.1 percent higher than the USD7.07 billion total export sales in the same month of 2025.

Electronic products recorded the highest increase in export value at USD1.37 billion, followed by gold and electronic equipment.

By commodity group,

abot Processing Centers. Two facilities in Pasay City and Cebu are operational, while two more in Pampanaga and the Cordillera Administrative Region are being renovated to serve more beneficiaries.

"The goal of DSWD is to give FISS a fresh start, safe living environments, and stable support systems," Dumlao said. (PNA)

electronic products continued to be the country's top exports with total earnings of USD5.25 billion, accounting for 59.9 percent of the total export value.

This was followed by other mineral products with an export value of USD414.85 million and other manufactured goods with USD401.37 million.

The United States, Hong Kong, the People's Republic of China, Japan, and Singapore were the top export destinations in June.

Imports, meanwhile, also recorded a double-digit growth of 19.6 percent to USD13.71 billion from USD11.46 billion.

Imports of electronic products recorded the highest import value of USD4.77 billion, followed by mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials, and transport equipment.

China was the biggest source of imported goods in June.

Other top sources of imports are South Korea, Japan, Indonesia, and the US. (PNA)

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tricity bill natin, dapat ma-target natin iyong pinakamalaking singil, which is generation (If we want to lower electricity bills, we should target the biggest charge, which is generation)," he said.

Gatchalian asked the ERC to determine whether fuel costs being charged by generation companies and distribution utilities reflect actual market and purchase prices, stressing the need to prevent consumers from being billed excessive amounts.

He also directed the commission to submit its audit resolution and identify regulated

entities that have not complied with its requirements.

"Submit to us a timetable, submit to us an audit plan. We have to make sure that what is being passed on to consumers is reasonable and correct," Gatchalian said.

ERC Chairperson and chief executive officer Francis Saturnino Juan said the regulator's confirmation process allows refunds or additional collections once it establishes whether a distribution utility has over-recovered or under-recovered pass-through charges.

Juan said the ERC could immediately or-

RICE AID... FR. P. 1

makikinabang," the President said in his address.

The Chief Executive also cited the fulfillment of his campaign promise to make affordable, high-quality rice accessible to more Filipinos through the Benteng Bigas Meron Na program. The initiative has since benefited millions of consumers while supporting local farmers and fisherfolk through the KADIWA program.

"Patuloy pa rin ang programang Benteng Bigas Meron Na. Ito'y nakakapagbigay-ginhawa sa mahigit 12 milyong Pilipino sa buong bansa. Ang mahigit 800 nating KADIWA na nasa buong Pilipinas ay sabay paring nakakatulong sa mga mamimili, at sa mga magsasaka't mangingisda na direktang nakakapagtinda ng kanilang mga produkto,"

In Laguna, the provincial government has partnered with the national government to further support vulnerable sectors through rice distribution activities in San Pablo City.

Around 650 registered solo parents in the city each received 30 kilograms of rice, completing the 50-kilogram rice assistance committed to them by the national government under the Bawat Bayan Makikinabang rice distribution program on July 25.

The provincial government of Laguna and the city government of San Pablo jointly reaffirmed their commitment to continue working with the national government in implementing programs that directly address the needs of residents.

"Kaniyang tiniyak na patuloy na makikipagtulungan ang lokal na pamahalaan sa mga susunod pang programa at proyekto ng pambansa at panlalawigang pamahalaan. Dahil aniya ang mga programang ito ay nararapat lamang dahil ito ay mula sa buwis na binabayaran ng mga tao," San Pablo City Acting Mayor Justin Colago said in a statement provided by the City Information Office.

der the return of excess collections if an audit finds over-recovery, without prejudice to the issuance of a show-cause order.

He explained that distribution utilities would issue the refunds because they collect electricity payments from consumers, but may recover the amount from generation companies that failed to follow their fuel-adjustment agreements.

Gatchalian said the ERC must also examine the contracts between distribution utilities and generators, particularly agreements governing fuel-price adjustments.

He cited more than 400 show-cause orders issued by the regulator and sought updates on 104 distribution utilities and 37 generation companies reportedly covered by compliance concerns.

The Senate President warned that distribu-

tion utilities that repeatedly fail to comply with regulatory requirements could face a congressional review of their franchises.

"May mga prangkisa iyan na dumadaan sa Kongreso. So kung hindi sila sumusunod, puwedeng i-recommend ng ating chairman ang audit of their franchise or even cancellation (They have franchises that pass through Congress. If they do not comply, our chairperson may recommend a franchise audit or even cancellation)," he said.

Gatchalian clarified that the committee was not accusing power companies of wrongdoing but wanted safeguards against possible abuse during periods of volatile fuel prices.

Juan assured the panel that the ERC would submit the requested documents and information. (PNA)

CAVITE NEWS PUBLISHING

WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

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PUBLISHERS, EDITORS, &
REPORTERS of the Philippines Inc.

THIS NEWSPAPER IS EDITED, PUBLISHED AND CIRCULATED
IN THE PROVINCE OF CAVITE AT BLK. 8 LOT 19
SAINT FRANCIS ST. CARDINAL VILLAGE
SALITRAN 3 DASMARIÑAS CITY OF CAVITE

Commercial Advertising Rate: P200.00/col.cm
Legal Rate P160.00/col.cm.



Medical and Dental Mission benefits 716 residents in Kawit

On July 21, a Medical and Dental Mission was conducted by the Provincial Government of Cavite in Brgy. Samala Marquez, Kawit, benefitting 716 residents with free healthcare services.

The mission offered medical consultations, dental services, fasting blood sugar (FBS) tests, and ECG procedures. 1st District Board Member Jygs Gandia and local officials of Kawit attended the activity, demonstrating their continued support for community healthcare initiatives.



PGC brings quality healthcare to Magalleños

Residents of Brgy. Poblacion III, Magallanes, Cavite received free essential healthcare services through the Provincial Government of Cavite's Medical and Dental Mission held on July 24, 2026.

A total of 437 residents benefited from the outreach, which provided 279 medical consultations, 58 dental services, 75 fasting blood sugar (FBS) tests, and 25 electrocardiogram (ECG) examinations.

The successful activity was made possible through the collaborative efforts of the local government of Magallanes led by Mayor Janessa Maligaya-De Ramayo, the Rural Health Unit (RHU) of Magallanes, and dedicated Barangay Health Workers (BHWs). Vice Mayor Aina Marie Sisante-Maligalig and members of the Sangguniang Bayan also joined the activity reaffirming the shared commitment to delivering accessible and preventive healthcare services to the community.



Mendezeños benefitted in another leg of medical and dental mission

In a continuous pursuit to make healthcare services accessible to all, another medical and dental mission was successfully facilitated by the Provincial Government of Cavite in the Municipality of Mendez on July 17, benefitting a total of 681 Mendezeños.



Celebrating the effort and dedication of Cavite public servants.

In recognizing the unwavering dedication of the employees as public servants, the Provincial Government of Cavite, through PRAISE Committee, successfully conducted the Distribution of Performance Incentives to July birthday celebrants, awarding them with the commemorative wooden clock as token of appreciation.

Gracing the activity were Governor Abeng Remulla and the members of Sangguniang Panlalawigan.

The Provincial Government of Cavite continues to honor the invaluable contribution and dedication of the employees as the driving force for efficient and effective public service delivery.



Cavite Career Caravan Brings Employment Opportunities to Jobseekers in Indang

The Provincial Government of Cavite, through the Office of the Provincial Public Employment Service Manager (OPPEM), successfully conducted the Cavite Career Caravan on July 22, 2026, at the Indang Municipal Covered Court, providing jobseekers with convenient access to employment opportunities from various industries.

The one-day recruitment activity featured the participation of 22 companies, offering a total of 6,724 job vacancies for applicants with diverse skills, qualifications, and work experience. The caravan served as a venue where jobseekers could directly interact with employers, submit applications, and undergo initial screening and interviews.

A total of 144 jobseekers participated in the recruitment activity, demonstrating the continued interest of Caviteños in employment opportunities. Of these, 34 applicants were hired on the spot (HOTS), allowing them to immediately begin the next steps toward employment.

The Cavite Career Caravan forms part of the Provincial Government's continuing efforts to generate employment opportunities, strengthen partnerships with the private sector, and make recruitment services more accessible to communities across the province. By bringing employers closer to jobseekers, the initiative helps reduce barriers to employment while supporting economic growth and workforce development in Cavite.--- OPIO

The services rendered included medical consultation, dental extraction and on-site diagnostic procedures, such as fasting blood sugar and electrocardiogram tests. Additionally, medicines and vitamins were handed out to the patients to complement the overall healthcare services.

The Office of the Provincial Governor and Office of the Provincial Health Officer continue to work together to bridge the gap between the communities and healthcare services.

PH, Poland eye stronger farm trade, skills cooperation

MANILA – The Philippines and Poland are seeking to deepen cooperation in agriculture, trade, and workforce development as both countries explore new opportunities to expand agricultural exports and create more jobs for Filipino workers.

Cabinet Secretary Benjamin “Benhur” Abalos Jr. on Thursday met with a Polish delegation led by Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Stefan Krajewski to discuss ways to strengthen bilateral ties through closer inter-agency collaboration.

The meeting focused on expanding agricultural trade, enhancing technical cooperation, improving skills development and certification for Filipino workers, and strengthening government coordination to support the priorities of both countries.

Joining the discussions were Department of Agriculture Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia, Department of Migrant Workers Undersecretary Dominique Rubia-Tutay, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) Deputy Director General Felizardo Colambo, TESDA Executive Director Charlyn Justimbaste, and Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc. Director Jet Ambalada.

According to the Bureau of Animal Indus-



PH-POLAND PARTNERSHIP. Cabinet Secretary Benjamin “Benhur” Abalos Jr. and Polish Agriculture Minister Stefan Krajewski lead a high-level meeting on Thursday (July 30, 2026) to map out areas for deeper cooperation under the government’s push to strengthen economic partnerships with Europe. The meeting brought together officials from the Departments of Agriculture, Department of Migrant Workers, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, and the Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc. to discuss agricultural trade, workforce training, and skills certification. (Photo courtesy of Office of the Cabinet Secretary)

try, meat shipments from Poland to the Philippines reached 25,009 metric tons from January to June this year.

Meanwhile, Poland’s agri-food exports to the Philippines rose 30.6 percent, from USD81.1 million in 2024 to USD106 million in 2025, underscoring growing trade between the two countries.

The Polish delegation expressed interest in further expanding exports of pork, poultry, apples, grains and other agricultural products while exploring

broader cooperation in the agriculture sector.

Krajewski also lauded Filipino workers, describing them as highly valued in Poland because of their work ethic, adaptability, communication skills and English proficiency.

Abalos welcomed Poland’s continued confidence in Filipino workers and conveyed President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.’s commitment to further strengthening bilateral cooperation through sustained dialogue and coordinated government action. (PNA)

Just a little while longer, and the wicked will be no more; You will look at where they were, And they will not be there.

But the meek will possess the earth, And they will find exquisite delight in the abundance of peace

Psalm 37:10-11

Lucena mayor lauds LGSF for strengthening local governance, community development

LUCENA CITY, Quezon — Lucena City Mayor Mark Alcala welcomed the national government’s continued investment in local governments, saying the Local Government Support Fund (LGSF) enables local government units (LGUs) to respond more effectively to the specific needs of their communities.

During President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.’s visit to Lucena City on July 21, Alcala said the LGSF demonstrates the national government’s trust in LGUs by allowing them to identify and implement projects that directly benefit their constituents.

“Masisipag ang mga Lucenahin kaya naging progressive city tayo at kinikilalang business district ng Quezon Province. Malaking bagay na ang mga programang tulad ng LGSF ay nagbibigay sa ating mga lokal na pamahalaan ng kakayahang tugunan ang tunay na pangangailangan ng ating mga kababayan,” Alcala said.

The mayor described the President’s visit as a historic milestone for the city, noting that it was the first time a sitting President personally visited Lucena to roll out multiple national government programs.

“Napakalaking karamalan para sa Lucena. Kauna-unahang Pangulo na personal na nagsadya sa ating lungsod upang maghatid ng iba’t



ibang programa para sa ating mga mamamayan,” he said.

Alcala also reflected on the long-standing partnership between the Marcos and Alcala families in advancing Quezon’s development, recalling the infrastructure initiatives undertaken during the administration of former President Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. and then Governor Anacleto Alcala Sr..

“Napaka-memorable po nito dahil bahagi ito ng ating kasaysayan. Nagtulungan noon ang inyong ama at ang ating dating Governor Alcala sa mga proyektong nagbigay ng daan sa pag-unlad ng ating lalawigan. Ngayon, muli nating nakikita ang pagpapatuloy ng suportang ito sa pamamagitan ng mga programang direktang nakikinabang ang ating mga barangay at mga mamamayan,” he said.

Under the LGSF, barangays in Lucena identified priority projects through the Bawat Barangay Maki-kinabang Program, including the procurement of computer equipment to improve frontline government services and the installation of solar-powered street lights to enhance safety in underserved

communities.

President Marcos said the fund was designed to ensure that resources from the national government reach local governments, which are in the best position to determine the needs of their constituents.

“Ang LGSF ay pondo ng national government na talagang ibinibigay sa ating local government—sa mga governor, mayor at barangay—para sa pangangailangan ng ating mga kababayan,” the President said.

For Alcala, the program reflects a governance approach that recognizes LGUs as key partners in national development.

He said that when local governments are provided with adequate resources and greater flexibility in implementing priority projects, they can deliver services more efficiently and improve the quality of life of their constituents.

The mayor expressed optimism that the continued collaboration between the national and local governments would accelerate Lucena City’s development and further strengthen public service delivery in the years ahead. (CCM / PIA Quezon)

CALAX Earns Three GREEN Awards for Environmental Sustainability



From L-R: Santa Rosa City Councilor Hon. Carmela Rosa Gonzales-Colmenar; MPCALA Holdings Inc. Facilities Management and MEPF Senior Engineer Dhale Angelo D. Santos; MPTC Assistant Vice President for Central Quality, Environment, Safety and Health (QESH) Allan Jeffrey N. Ang; MPTC Vice President for Stakeholder Engagement Arlette V. Capistrano; Santa Rosa City Mayor Hon. Arlene B. Arcillas; Santa Rosa City ENRO Head Engr. Maria Amor A. Salandanan, EnP.; and Santa Rosa City Councilor Hon. Mythor C. Cendaña. Photo credit: Santa Rosa City Environment and Natural Resources Office



MPCALA Holdings Inc. (MPHI), a subsidiary of Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC) and the concessionaire of the Cavite-Laguna Expressway (CALAX), has been recognized by the City Government of Santa Rosa, Laguna, for its unwavering commitment to environmental sustainability. This marks the fourth consecutive year the company has been honored by the local government.

The Guarantee the Restoration of the Environment & our Ecological Niche (GREEN) Awards is the city's annual recognition program that honors organizations, institutions, and individuals for their significant contributions to environmental protection and sustainability.

This year, CALAX received three major awards in recognition of its green initiatives:

- **Sustainable Development Partner:** Recognizing MPCALA's contributions to environmental sustainability through its active participation in various coastal clean-up initiatives that help preserve ecosystems, reduce pollution in Laguna Lake, and support climate change mitigation efforts.
- **Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partner:** Awarded for the company's excellence in reducing energy consumption, promoting renewable energy solutions, and implementing energy efficiency initiatives across its offices, toll plazas, and facilities.



Aerial view of the MPT South Hub, featuring 1,184 solar panels that generate about 97% of the building's energy needs. The facility also has a rainwater harvesting system that reduces water use by 10%, along with EV charging stations for company electric vehicles.

The awards were presented by the City Government of Santa Rosa and received by representatives of MPCALA.

"We are deeply honored to receive this recognition from the City Government of Santa Rosa. These awards reflect our commitment to integrating sustainability into every aspect of our operations, from building greener infrastructure to adopting environmentally responsible practices. As we continue to expand CALAX, we remain dedicated to proving that infrastructure development and environmental stewardship can go hand in hand," said MPHI President and General Manager Andrew B. Pangilinan.

CALAX is a 44.6-kilometer expressway connecting the provinces of Cavite and Laguna. Once completed, it is expected to serve approximately 95,000 motorists daily. Currently, its operational segments span from Biñan, Laguna to General Trias, Cavite, significantly reducing travel time from an hour to just 26 minutes.

Beyond improving mobility, CALAX also advances environmental sustainability by helping reduce fuel consumption and vehicle emissions through shorter travel times. Its green initiatives include the integration of solar power systems, rainwater harvesting facilities, and the progressive transition of its corporate fleet to electric vehicles (EVs), reinforcing the company's commitment to responsible and sustainable expressway operations.

- **Earth Hour Advocate:** Presented for the company's active participation in the annual global Earth Hour movement and its continued efforts to promote energy conservation and environmental awareness.

**DRAW CLOSE TO GOD AND
HE WILL DRAW CLOSE TO YOU**

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Eala dethrones Fernandez to make Mubadala DC Open quarters

MANILA – Filipino tennis star Alexandra Eala dethroned defending champion and No. 7 seed Leylah Fernandez, 6-1, 7-6 (2), Friday to reach the WTA 500 Mubadala Open in Washington, USA.

The win avenged Eala's 1-6, 4-6 loss to the Canadian in the first round of the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix on clay in Stuttgart, Germany last April 14.

"I know that she was playing a little better, and maybe my level dropped a little bit," said the 21-year-old Eala of her second-set comeback during the post-match interview.

"Those are very tricky moments, when you know your level has dropped and you want to do better, but things for one reason or another just aren't coming out. I think patience was key there, just trying to work it out, and a strong mentality in terms of trying to find solutions," added Eala, who also dethroned Iga Swiatek in the Wimbledon third round four weeks ago.

Eala will next face the winner between Ukrainian second seed Elina Svitolina and Uzbek qualifier Polina Kudermetova.

Svitolina had a first-



Alexandra Eala (Mubadala DC Open photo)

round bye while Kudermetova rallied past Spanish Cristina Busca, 5-7, 7-6 (4), 6-0.

Meanwhile, 2022 champion Liudmila Samsonova marched to the quarters after beating Wang Xinyu 6-2, 6-2.

The tournament has a total of USD1,637,982 in prize money.

The breakdown of ranking points and prize money for each round: Singles: First

round: 1 | USD17,440; Second round: 60 | USD24,474; Quarterfinal: 108 | USD47,750; Semifinal: 195 | USD90,900; Finalist: 325 | USD155,000. Champion: 500 | USD252,000. Doubles: First round: 1 | USD9,210; Quarterfinal: 108 | USD15,140; Semifinal: 195 | USD29,490; Finalist: 325 | USD50,790; Champion: 500 | USD83,500. (PNA)



OPPO CELEBRATES WORLD POPULATION DAY 2026

The Office of the Provincial Population Officer spearheaded the celebration of World Population Day 2026 recently, at the Admin Function Hall, New Provincial Government Center in Trece Martires City. With the theme, "Realizing the Hopes and Aspirations of Young People for Their Futures," the event aimed to strengthen public awareness on the importance of investing in the well-being, rights, and opportunities of young people as key drivers of sustainable development.

The celebration gathered provincial officials, partner

Asian Games-bound Filipino windsurfers visit PH embassy in Rome

ROME – The Philippine windsurfing team bound for the 2026 Asian Games in Nagoya, Japan, paid a courtesy visit to Consul General Randy Arquiza at the Philippine Embassy in Rome on Tuesday.

During the visit, Arquiza expressed his gratitude to the team members for bringing honor to the country as they begin training in Bracciano, Italy, in preparation for the Asian Games, set from Sept. 19 to Oct. 24 in Nagoya, Japan.

"Good luck and go for the gold," Arquiza told the team members.

Arquiza also congratulated the team for representing the country in international competitions, such as in Poland, where Khian Cuervo delivered an outstanding performance, finishing 10th overall, and Jade Justiniane secured 24th place.

He also commended the team for winning medals both in last year's Southeast Games and this year's Asian Beach Games.

The team expressed optimism that their recent performances abroad, including in Spain and Poland, will prepare them for the Asian Games and Youth Olympic Games set for Oct. 31 to Nov. 13.

"During the Techno 293 and Techno 293

agencies, youth organizations, educators, and other stakeholders in a meaningful program that highlighted the role of young people in shaping a more inclusive and resilient future. The event featured inspirational messages, educational discussions, and activities that encourage youth participation while promoting responsible population and development initiatives.

Through this activity, the Office of the Provincial Population Officer reaffirmed its commitment to empowering the youth by advocating for access to quality education, healthcare, livelihood opportunities, and informed decision-making. The celebration also serves as a platform to recognize the aspirations of the younger generation and the collective responsibility of government and communities in creating an environment where they can thrive. --- OPIO



COURTESY VISIT. Asian Games-bound Philippine windsurfing team members call on Consul General Randy Arquiza at the Philippine Embassy in Rome on Tuesday (June 28, 2026). The team is in Italy to train in Bracciano as part of their preparation for the 2026 Asian Games in Nagoya, Japan from Sept. 19 to Oct. 24. (Photo courtesy of Alona Cochon)

Plus competition in Sopot, Poland, sobra po lamig at mahangin pero marami po natutunan (it was extremely cold and windy, but I learned a lot)," young Filipino windsurfer Khian Cuervo shared.

For 15-year-old Justiniane, her qualification to play in the Asian Games reflects the steady progress of the country's sailing and windsurfing programs.

"Ako po ay sumali sa T293 and T293 Plus European Championships para sa preparation ko sa Youth Olympic Games. Alam ko po ang experience ko dito ay makakatu-long ito sa akin nang malaki (I participated in the T293 and T293 Plus European Championships as part of my preparation for the Youth Olympic Games. I know that the experience I gained

there will help me a lot)," she said.

Aside from Cuervo and Justiniane, team members present during the courtesy visit were SEA Games gold winner and 2026 Asian Beach Games silver medalist Dhenver Castillo, SEA Games bronze medalist Harold Madrigal, Kelsy Moreno, and Rome-based SEA Games bronze winner Arianne Paz.

"Ok naman po ang karera ko sa World Youth iQFOil Championship sa Spain, maganda po results, di ko nga po ini-expect kasi madami magagaling (My race at the World Youth iQFOil Championship in Spain went well; the results were good. I actually hadn't expected it, given the number of talented competitors)," the 16-year-old Moreno said.

"Dito sa Europe po nanibago sa weather, malamig po at saka iba ang alon pero marami po natutunan para sa Asian Games sa Japan (Here in Europe, I had to adjust to the weather – it's cold and the waves are different – but I learned a lot for the Asian Games in Japan)," Castillo said. (Alona Cochon/PNA)