

# CAVITE NEWS PUBLISHING

A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER THAT'S NATIONAL IN SCOPE

VOL. XXVII NO. 6  
ISSN: 2651-7450

MAY 21-27, 2026

P10.00

# Marcos: Flood mitigation works underway ahead of rainy season

MANILA – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Wednesday assured the public that the government is aggressively implementing flood mitigation measures in Metro Manila and other parts of the country ahead of the onset of the rainy season.

During an inspection of the G. Araneta

Drainage Improvement Project in Quezon City, Marcos said the government is carrying out multiple interventions under the nationwide “Oplan Kontra Baha” program to reduce flooding in historically flood-prone areas.

“As you know, we’re here at G. Araneta Avenue, tinitignan

natin ang iba’t ibang ginagawa natin para mabawasan ang baha (we are checking the measures we are implementing to mitigate flooding),” Marcos said.

The over PHP482-million drainage project involves the installation of two 1.50-meter-diameter high-density polyethylene

pipes along G. Araneta Avenue to upgrade the existing drainage system.

The 758-meter project, stretching from Kaliraya Street to E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, is targeted for completion by May 31.

G. Araneta Avenue, located near Talayan Creek and the San Juan (Turn to p.2)

## PhilHealth’s YAKAP a ‘game changer’ in PH healthcare

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA) — With benefits covering laboratory, outpatient consultation and access to free medicine, the Philhealth Yaman ng Kalusugan Program (YAKAP), which expanded primary care benefit packages, is seen to become a

‘game changer’ in the country’s implementation of the Universal Healthcare (UHC) framework.

In an interview with the Philippine Information Agency and Radyo Pilipinas Lucena’s Sulong Southern Tagalog radio program, Arturo Ar-

diente, Field Operations Division chief for PhilHealth CALABARZON, noted that YAKAP will encourage more Filipinos to seek not only medical treatments but also preventive care.

“Sa ating kultura, kapag tayo ay nag- (Turn to p. 2)

## DepEd lauds PH learners for 6-award haul at int’l science fair

MANILA – The Department of Education (DepEd) on Wednesday lauded Filipino learner-researchers for garnering international recognition at the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) 2026 in Phoenix, Arizona.

The Philippine delegation secured two Grand Awards and four Special Awards across multiple science and innovation categories in the global science fair.

In a statement, DepEd Secretary Sonny Angara commended the efforts of Filipino young researchers and mentors behind their world-class research and innovation.

“Nakakatuwa at nakaka-proud makita ang ating mga mag-aaral na kayang maki-pagsabayan sa pinakamahuusay na young scientists sa mundo (It makes us happy and proud to see our learners at par with the brightest young scien-

tists in the world),” he said.

Angara added the achievement reflects the directive of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to strengthen the quality of basic education and prepare Filipino learners for innovation-driven opportunities in higher education, industry and nation-building.

Learners from Angeles City Science High School, Quezon City Science High School and Alaminos City

National High School earned international recognition for research projects in energy, software design and physics and astronomy.

These include Nathan Andrew Canilao, Pierre Phoella Ilagan and Asher John Garcia, under their coach, Lolita Bautista, from the Angeles City Science High School.

They won the 2nd Grand Award in the Energy: Sustainable (Turn to p.2)



**FLOOD MITIGATION.** President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. inspects the G. Araneta Drainage Improvement Project in Quezon City Wednesday (May 20, 2026). The over PHP482-million, 758-meters long project is targeted to be completed by May 31, 2026. (RTVM screengrab)



**GLOBAL SCIENCE AWARDS.** Learner-researchers from Quezon City Science High School join the Philippine delegation at the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair 2026 in Phoenix, Arizona in this undated photo. The Department of Education on Wednesday lauded Filipino learner-researchers from Angeles City Science High School, Quezon City Science High School, and Alaminos City National High School for garnering international recognition across multiple science and innovation categories in the global science fair. (Photo courtesy of DepEd)

**MARCOS: . . . FR. P. 1**

River, is among Metro Manila's most flood-prone areas due to recurring overflow during heavy rains.

Standing along the notoriously flood-prone G. Araneta Avenue, Marcos said the project forms part of a broader strategy that includes drainage upgrades, desilting operations, pumping stations and river rehabilitation efforts.

He noted that the temporary pumping station currently operating in G. Araneta would eventually be replaced by a permanent facility near the San Juan River.

The President said the interventions are based on recommendations from the government's Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazards (NOAH) studies, which identified critical flood-prone areas requiring long-term engineering solutions.

"This is one of the areas that are critical. This is not the only area that we are doing these kind of interventions to make sure that we find a way para mailabas ang

tubig para naman hindi na masyado bumaha (to release water and lessen flooding)," he said.

Marcos said additional excavation work is still needed in the area before the peak of the rainy season, but expressed confidence residents would immediately feel improvements once heavy rains begin.

"These are the strategies that we are employing. It will take a bit of time but we put in a good start," he said.

He added that while Metro Manila remains a priority because of its dense population and vulnerability to flooding, similar flood control interventions are also being undertaken nationwide.

"Isa lang ito, napakarami nang ganito ang ginagawa natin around Metro Manila at saka sa buong Pilipinas (This is just one of the many flood mitigating measures we are doing around Metro Manila and the entire Philippines)," Marcos said. (PNA)

**50/KG . FR. P. 4**

for hidden costs like logistics and possible spoilage. At PHP50, everyone in the chain should still earn," Tiu Laurel said.

He urged stakeholders to cooperate for the month-long imposition of an imported rice price cap nationwide.

"No one should be profiteering in the whole value chain, especially during this period. The price cap will run for 30 days, and we hope everyone cooperates because the country is struggling. We are not saying traders should not earn—just not excessively," Tiu Laurel said.

The DA will enforce full implementation next week, as it plans to deploy field teams nationwide.

Stakeholders will be monitored, and retailers will be assisted to ensure compliance and accessibility for fair imported rice prices.

"Retailers can approach our teams directly. We are distributing pamphlets with implementation guidelines and contact details so concerns can be addressed quickly. We want smooth implementation," Tiu Laurel said, citing weekly and daily inspections in local markets. (PNA)

**DepEd. . FR. P. 1**

Materials and Design category, with a cash prize of USD2,400 for their winning project, the WinDTurbinePower.

They also received the Third Prize Special Award for Excellence in Energy and Environmental Stewardship, with a cash prize of USD2,000.

Besides them, Jose Rafael Cayabyab, Cassandra Lipango and Eirah Riduca from Quezon City Science High School won the 3rd Grand Award for Software Design Category for ViSMo, under the guidance of Genevieve Vasquez.

It is an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-in-

tegrated vital status monitoring robot with Internet of Things features.

The team also received the Arizona State University Scholarship Award and the Society for Science Alumni Award.

Charly David Manuel, under coach Kris Cristhopher Dela Cruz, from Alaminos City National High School, likewise, earned recognition in the Physics and Astronomy category.

He received the Patent and Trademark Office Society First Prize Award, with a cash prize of USD500.

Angara commended the support provided

**PhilHealth's. . FR. P. 1**

kakasakit ay doon pa lang tayo nagpapa-check-up. In fact, ito 'yung challenge natin sa YAKAP. Binabago natin 'yung mindset ng tao na hindi lang kung kailan malala na 'yung pagkakasakit ay saka ka tatakbo sa ospital."

As part of the UHC, the PhilHealth YAKAP expands the benefits provided by the Konsulta program.

"Medyo limitado 'yung kakayanan ng Konsulta na matugunan 'yung mga pangangalagang pangkalusugan, pang-primary 'yung preventive care ng ating mga mamamayan."

Ardiente underscored that members do not need to be hospitalized to avail of their YAKAP benefits.

"YAKAP 'yung preventive approach natin [dahil] hindi na kailangang ma-ospital para ma-avail 'yung benefits. This is our preventive approach at hindi kailangang may sakit ka para ma-avail 'yung benefits."

Aside from room and professional fees, patients also normally need to pay for their own medicines even when receiving inpatient care. But with YAKAP, patients can access up to 54 free medicines in accredited facilities nationwide.

"We want to ensure na kapag dumating 'yung pagkakasakit, ay hindi malulugso ang kabuhayan. Sinisiguro ng UHC Law na hindi magiging dahilan ang karamdaman para maghirap ang mga Filipino."

PhilHealth YAKAP covers a wide range of medicines from over-the-counter drugs such as paracetamol to antibiotics and maintenance drugs.

"Makukuha mo ito nang libre at ang bawat kababayan natin ay mayroong allotment na P20,000 per year. Pero para ma-avail mo ito ay dapat YAKAP physician ang mag-prescribe nito sa iyo." (PB-PIA CAL-ABARZON)

for all participating Filipino learner-researchers abroad.

"Sa likod ng bawat award ay maraming oras ng pag-aaral, paggabay ng coaches at teachers, at tiwala ng schools at families sa kakayahan ng mga bata (Behind every award are long hours of research, guidance of coaches and teachers, and the trust of schools and families in the children's abilities)," he said.

The Education chief also underscored the need for sustained investment in science education, student research and innovation pathways for Filipino learners.

"Ang mahalaga ngayon ay tuloy-tuloy nating suportahan ang ganitong uri ng pagkatuto kung saan ang science ay hindi lang subject sa class-

room, kundi paraan para makahanap ng solusyon sa tunay na problema ng komunidad (What's important now is to sustain the support for this kind of learning where science is not a mere classroom subject, but a way to provide solutions to realistic community problems)," Angara said.

The Philippine delegation was composed of 16 learner-researchers selected from the winning individual and team projects at the 2026 National Science and Technology Fair (NSTF) held in March, before representing the country at Regeneron ISEF 2026.

More than 1,700 young researchers from over 60 countries and regions participated in the 2026 Regeneron ISEF from May 9 to 15. (PNA)

## CAVITE NEWS PUBLISHING WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

*raquel.cavitenews@gmail.com*  
*0997409432/09329770888*  
*Website Cavitenews.com*

**RAQUEL M. MAGTIBAY**  
*Publisher*

**JESSIEL M. RAVANA**  
*Editor-In-Chief*

**JOHN JEPREE MAGTBAY**  
*Lay-out-Artist*

**LAURO M. MAGTIBAY**  
*Circulation Manager*

**ATTY. RACQUEL C. LARA**  
*Legal Counsel*



MEMBER of PRIME ALLIANCE of  
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.*



### OPPEM, LPU-Cavite Hold Graduate Recruitment and Development Job Fair and Career Talk 2026

The Office of the Provincial Public Employment Service Manager (OPPEM), in partnership with Lyceum of the Philippines University Cavite (LPU-Cavite), successfully conducted the “Graduate Recruitment and Development Job Fair and Career Talk 2026” on May 5-6, 2026 in LPU-Cavite, City of Gen. Trias, providing graduating students and job seekers with valuable employment opportunities and career development insights.

The two-day event gathered various companies and employment partners offering numerous job vacancies for aspiring professionals and fresh graduates. A total of 1,216 applicants participated in the activity, while 17 applicants were successfully hired on the spot (HOTS), highlighting the effectiveness of the initiative in connecting job seekers with potential employers.

One of the highlights of the event was the Career Talk session featuring Mr. Kim Chua, General Manager of JOBS180, who served as the resource speaker. During his presentation, Mr. Chua introduced the company’s programs and services, while also sharing practical insights on employment trends, job application strategies, and career readiness among graduates entering the workforce.

The activity aimed to equip students and job seekers with the knowledge, confidence, and opportunities needed to transition successfully from academe to employment. Participants were also able to directly engage with company representatives, submit resumes, and undergo initial interviews during the job fair proper.

Through initiatives like the Graduate Recruitment and Development Job Fair and Career Talk 2026, the Provincial Government of Cavite, through OPPEM, continues to strengthen its commitment to employment generation, career development, and empowering Caviteños toward meaningful and sustainable careers.--- OPIO

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

*Proverbs 13: 20*



### Seminar-Workshop on Records Digitization and Digitalization Strengthen Records Management keeping in PGC

In support of the Provincial Government of Cavite’s continuing efforts toward efficient, secure, and technology-driven public service, a two-day Seminar-Workshop on Records Digitization and Digitalization was successfully conducted on May 5–6, 2026 spearheaded by the Cavite Quality Management Off at the 2nd Floor Function Hall, New Provincial Government Center Building, Trece Martires City, Cavite.

The activity gathered document custodians and records officers from various PGC offices to strengthen their knowledge and skills in modern records management practices through digitization and digitalization.

The seminar aimed to strengthen the knowledge and skills of government personnel in managing records through modern digital systems and technologies. Participants learned the importance of digitization and digitalization in improving government records management, ensuring faster access to information, better storage, and stronger data protection.

One of the resource speakers was Edgardo Quiros, Assistant Director of the National Library of the Philippines. He discussed important topics including the fundamentals of records management, records lifecycle, classification, retention and disposition, and the role of records in government operations.

Mr. Quiros also explained the difference between digitization and digitalization, including their applications, benefits, risks, and challenges. He further discussed legal and policy frameworks related to records management, data privacy, and Quality Management System (QMS) requirements.

Participants were also guided on planning records digitization projects, proper document preparation, scanning standards, file naming conventions, indexing, metadata standards, and digital storage systems. Hands-on workshops allowed participants to practice scanning, file organization, quality checking, and designing digital workflows for office operations.

Meanwhile, Alfonso Fredericko Gonda, Information Officer II from DICT, discussed cybersecurity, data privacy, and risk management, emphasizing the importance of protecting the integrity and confidentiality of digital records. He also highlighted the importance of using registered electronic signatures in government transactions to ensure authenticity, security, and accountability in digital documents.

The seminar-workshop provided participants with valuable knowledge and practical skills that will help improve records management systems



### Silangueños availed the healthcare services brought closer to their doorstep

Recently, another leg of PGC’s medical and dental mission was conducted in Brgy. Lucsuhin, Silang, reaching the community with free essential health care services.

A total of 391 Silangueños benefitted from the program, with 255 constituents availing free medical consultation and 56 residents receiving dental services rendered by the healthcare professionals from the Office of the Provincial Health Officer. In addition, diagnostic tests were also provided – 54 for fasting blood sugar test and 26 for electrocardiogram exam.

Thereafter was the distribution of prescribed medicines and vitamin supplements by the Office of the Provincial Governor, free of cost.

5th District Board Members Aidel Paul Belamide and Ivey Jayne Reyes graced the program, displaying their warm support and appreciation to the PGC’s medical and dental mission for bringing the health care services closer to their constituents.--- OPIO



### PGC conducts successful Operation Tuli in Biwas, Tanza

Recently, the community of Biwas, Tanza benefited from a successful Operation Tuli Program conducted by the Provincial Government of Cavite (PGC) thru the OPG Medical Mission Team in partnership with the Rural Health Unit (RHU) of Tanza.

A total of 41 young boys received free circumcision services during the medical outreach activity, providing accessible and safe healthcare assistance to local families.

The RHU Tanza led the provision of the free circumcision procedures, with the valuable assistance and support of the OPG Medical Mission Team, who helped to ensure the smooth and organized conduct of the program. In addition, beneficiaries also received free prescribed medicines to support proper healing and recovery after the operation.

The initiative reflects the continued commitment of the PGC and local healthcare partners to promote public health services and improve the well-being of residents through accessible medical programs.--- OPIO

and support efficient, secure, and transparent government services.--- OPIO

## Expert opts for screening over travel ban amid global Ebola alert

MANILA – The Philippines remains at low risk for the rare and highly fatal Bundibugyo strain of the Ebola virus, with screening and border monitoring deemed more effective than imposing travel restrictions, an infectious disease expert said on Tuesday.

In a Bagong Pilipinas Ngayon interview, San Lazaro Hospital infectious disease expert Dr. Rontgene Solante said the World Health Organization's (WHO) recent declaration of a Public Health Emergency of International Concern is crucial due to the virus' rapid transmission and severe mortality rate in Africa.

"Malaking bagay ito na pag-declare nila dahil nga itong Ebola ngayon lumalabas na doon sa ibang bansa na malapit sa Congo at saka Uganda. Pangalawa, mataas ang mortality rate, so out of 300 cases yata, almost 100-plus na ang namamatay in just the span of mga two weeks (This declaration is highly significant because Ebola is now spreading to countries adjacent to Congo and Uganda. Furthermore, the mortality rate is high; out of approximately 300 documented cases, over 100 fatalities have been recorded in just a span of two weeks)," he said.

He noted that the Bundibugyo strain is rare and currently has no available vaccine.

Despite the global alarm, Solante assured the public that the Philippines is not

a high-risk country unless an infected individual slips through the borders.

"Pero mayroon naman tayong mga ginagawa base dito sa report ng Department of Health na iyong sa pagpasok pa lang, mga border control, sinusuri iyong may mga lagnat, may mga sintomas at anong mga bansa ang pinanggalingan (However, we are actively implementing measures based on the Department of Health's report. Right at the points of entry, our border controls are screening passengers for fevers and other symptoms, while thoroughly reviewing their travel histories and countries of origin)," he said.

When asked about calls to implement travel bans on affected African nations, Solante favored rigorous health screening over locking down borders, drawing from protocols used during the 2014 Ebola outbreak.

"Kasi nasanay na tayo dito, mayroon na tayong mga napulot na mga aral na we need to also give an advise doon sa mga nagta-travel (Because we are already accustomed to managing these situations, we have gathered valuable lessons that now allow us to provide timely travel advisories to our outbound and inbound passengers)," he said.

"Handa naman siguro tayo kasi nalampasan na natin iyong COVID [coronavirus disease], nalampasan na natin iyong mga iba't ibang

outbreak, hanggang ngayon marami na tayong mga lessons natutunan doon at any time na may mga ganitong outbreak ay malaking bagay iyong mga natutunan natin at kailangan lang nating i-reinforce ulit (We are likely prepared given that we have successfully navigated COVID and various other outbreaks, to date, we have gathered numerous lessons, and in the event of another outbreak, these insights will be invaluable — we simply need to reinforce them)," he added.

He also cited the availability of isolation rooms, personal protective equipment and the diagnostic capabilities of the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine.

Overseas Filipino workers and peacekeepers stationed in Africa were urged to seek immediate medical attention if they experience symptoms, rather than dismissing them as an ordinary illness.

Health experts describe the Bundibugyo strain as a type of hemorrhagic fever, sharing clinical symptoms with the more common Zaire strain.

It causes fever, headaches, body malaise, vomiting and severe internal and external bleeding, which ultimately causes death.

To maintain public order and safety, Solante advised the general population to remain calm and depend strictly on verified sources. (PNA)

## 1% cap on power system loss charges proposed in Senate

MANILA – A bill filed in the Senate seeks to lower the recoverable system loss charges passed on to consumers to a uniform 1 percent for both private electric utilities and rural electric cooperatives.

Sen. Rodante Marcoleta, who filed Senate Bill No. 2131, or the proposed "System Loss Limitation Act," said on Wednesday the measure seeks to amend Section 10 of Republic Act 7832, otherwise known as the Anti-Electricity and Electric Transmission Lines/Materials Pilferage Act of 1994.

The bill said electricity rates in the Philippines remain among the highest in Asia, with residential consumers bearing a particularly heavy burden.

It noted that a portion of the monthly power bill is made up of system loss charges, which include technical losses inherent in the transmission and distribution of electricity, as well as non-technical losses

caused mainly by human error or deliberate pilferage.

Under the current law, utilities are allowed to recover system losses from consumers up to 14 percent for rural electric cooperatives and 9.5 percent for private electric utilities.

Marcoleta's bill proposes to lower the cap to 1 percent from the effective date of the measure.

It also seeks to completely prohibit the passing on of non-technical system losses to consumers, including those arising from pilferage, billing errors, meter misreading and other causes linked to the negligence of power distributors.

In his explanatory note, Marcoleta said the current setup has "disproportionately shifted" business risks to consumers while discouraging power firms from pursuing operational efficiency and better service delivery.

"This bill seeks to remedy the injustice in the current cost-re-

covery mechanism by capping the recoverable system loss rate to a uniform one percent for both private electric utilities and rural electric cooperatives, and by completely prohibiting the passing on of non-technical system losses to consumers," he said.

It said the reform would promote fairness and accountability in the power sector while making electricity pricing more equitable, especially for poor and marginalized families.

Under the measure, the Energy Regulatory Commission may still reduce or phase out technical or design losses as a component of system losses.

The Department of Energy, in consultation with the Energy Regulatory Commission and other stakeholders, would be required to issue the implementing rules and regulations within 90 days from the effectivity of the proposed law. (PNA)

## P50/kg price cap for imported rice, reasonable— DA

MANILA – The Department of Agriculture (DA) on Tuesday said the PHP50 per kilogram price cap for 5 percent broken imported rice is reasonable for fair market margins.

The price cap was earlier approved to help protect consumers from food inflation, following the recent effects of global oil price surges due to the tensions in the Middle East.

In a statement, Agriculture Secretary

Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the price cap provides "enough room" for reasonable profit for the entire value chain.

"We are ensuring consumers get affordable rice while traders and retailers remain viable. The goal is balance, not disruption," he said on the sidelines of his market inspection at the Paco Public Market in Manila.

The PHP50 per kg price cap is calibrated considering landed costs, logistics, shrink-

age, and markups across importers, traders, and retailers.

"At a landed cost of around PHP37 to PHP38 per kilo, there is still a workable margin across the value chain," Tiu Laurel said.

A reasonable markup across the value chain should only be at PHP10 per kilogram, he added.

"If (the) landed cost is PHP38, retail should be about PHP48. We set it at PHP50 to allow (Back to p.2)

## DOH brings essential health services closer to underserved communities through KAPUUA

RODRIGUEZ, Rizal —The Department of Health (DOH), through its KAPUUA (Kalusugang Pam-pamilya sa Unserved at Underserved Areas) program, continues to expand access to essential healthcare services for geographically isolated and disadvantaged communities across CALABARZON.

Implemented in partnership with local government units, regional health offices, and community stakeholders, the initiative brings mobile health and nutrition services directly to underserved populations, including indigenous peoples, remote island communities, and low-income families.

Under the program, residents receive free medical consultations, nutrition and breastfeeding counseling, immunization, tuberculosis and HIV screening, blood pressure and blood sugar monitoring, as well as family planning and WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene) education. Pregnant women, nursing mothers, and children also benefit from Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) assessment, Vitamin A supplementation, ferrous sulfate distribution, and deworming services.

In Brgy. Puray, Rodriguez, Rizal, the DOH CHD CALABARZON Nutrition and Breastfeeding Program conducted KAPUUA services for the Dumagat-Remontado tribe and nearby residents on March 26, 2026,



during which, at least 455 members of the indigenous community and other residents in the area received free family health services. Health workers provided nutrition counseling, MUAC assessment for children and mothers, and distributed Vitamin A supplements to eligible children.

Meanwhile, more than 350 residents of Brgy. Janosa, Talim Island, in Binangonan, Rizal, benefitted from the DOH CALABARZON SimbaKalusugan caravan on May 9. The outreach activity, conducted in partnership with the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines-Episcopal Commission on Health Care (CBCP-ECHC), offered medical consultation, chest X-ray for TB screening, ECG, dental services, mental health counseling, HIV testing and counseling, nutrition services, and free medicines.

A similar SimbaKalusugan initiative was also held on April 11 at Sta. Cecilia Parochial School in Brgy. Maly, San Mateo, Rizal, where residents received laboratory services, adolescent health services, dental care, and other preven-

tive healthcare interventions.

The KAPUUA program supports the Universal Health Care (UHC) agenda of the national government under the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. by strengthening grassroots healthcare delivery through the DOH's PuroKalusugan framework. It also complements initiatives such as PhilHealth Konsulta, Zero Balance Billing (ZBB), Bagong Urgent Care and Ambulatory Service (BU-CAS) Centers, and the PhilHealth YAKAP at GAMOT Program.

Through sustained partnerships and community-based health missions, the DOH aims to ensure that quality, accessible, and compassionate healthcare reaches every Filipino, especially those in remote and underserved areas. (CCM with reports from DOH CHD CALABARZON)

**Better is a piece of dry bread where there is peace Than a house full of feasting along with quarreling.**  
*Proverbs 17: 1*

## Maternity care benefits expanded to curb 'alarming' maternal deaths

MANILA – The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) has rolled out an expanded maternity care benefit package designed to guarantee near-zero out-of-pocket expenses for pregnant women, following an “alarming” increase in preventable maternal deaths nationwide.

During a media forum on Wednesday, the state insurer cited that maternal mortality nationwide reached 1,852 in 2024 based on Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) data.

The maternal mortality rate ratio is 119 deaths per 100,000 live births.

While it has decreased from 151 in 2020, the figure remains above the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) target threshold of 70 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births by 2030.

“Kaya po naglabas po ang PhilHealth nitong bagong expanded na maternal care benefit package so that ang ating mga nanay at mga buntis ay maalagaan talaga pag umpisa pa lang ng kanilang pagbubuntis hanggang po sila ay manganak (This is why PhilHealth released this new, expanded maternal care benefit package so that our mothers and pregnant women are thoroughly cared for from the very beginning of their pregnancy up until they give birth),” PhilHealth acting Vice President for Corporate Affairs Group Mae Villa told reporters.

Villa highlighted that the revamped package covers the entire continuum of pregnancy, from prenatal visits and delivery to postnatal care.

“Ang pinakamaganda po dito sa maternal care benefit package ng PhilHealth ay yung care coordination. So, nagkaroon na po tayo ng benefit package sa

pag-a-assign po ng ating specific person in the health facility who will assist yung ating mga buntis para sa kanyang buong journey (The best feature of PhilHealth's maternal care benefit package is care coordination. We have established a benefit package that assigns a specific individual within the health facility to assist expectant mothers throughout their entire pregnancy journey),” she said.

PhilHealth Medical Officer IV Dr. Laurence Sabido clarified that under Department of Health (DOH) Administrative Order guidelines, specific criteria dictate whether a pregnancy must be handled in a hospital rather than a local lying-in clinic.

All first-time mothers (primigravidas) and mothers entering their fifth or subsequent pregnancies (multigravidas) are strictly classified as high-risk.

“The DOH set guidelines, and in their guidelines, they said that all first pregnancies and pregnancies at the fifth and beyond are considered high risk, and therefore they should not be managed in a lying-in clinic. They should be managed in a hospital setting,” Sabido said.

She said common complications like gestational hypertension and diabetes must be carefully monitored.

Sabido said medical data shows first-time births carry higher unpredictable risks, while fifth-term pregnancies face severe hazards like spontaneous or uncontrolled uterine bleeding.

Addressing the public's tendency to avoid hospital deliveries due to rising healthcare costs, PhilHealth significantly adjusted its reimbursement packages to eliminate financial concerns.

Villa clarified that PhilHealth covers maternal services across all accredited platforms provided the facility matches the patient's risk profile.

“Kaya, dapat po, huwag silang matakot doon sa gastos. Sa hospital na panganganak dahil sagot po ng PhilHealth iyan (They should not be hindered by the fear of medical expenses. Giving birth in a hospital is covered by PhilHealth),” Villa said.

Under the expanded maternity care benefit package, normal spontaneous delivery (NSD), Caesarian Section (CS), Endometrial Sampling (ES), and Dilation and Curettage (D & C) can be availed of in all PhilHealth-accredited hospitals.

The NSD new case rate in infirmaries and primary care facilities is up to PHP14,000, while the new case rate in hospitals is up to PHP29,000.

The new case rate for CS is up to PHP58,000, while the new case rate for Caesarian delivery only following attempted vaginal delivery after a previous Caesarian delivery is up to PHP62,000.

For ES, the new case rate is up to PHP31,500.

The new case rate for DS is up to PHP36,500.

Antenatal care, which includes up to eight check-ups and diagnostics, step-up referral for complications during labor, and postpartum care of up to 3 visits after discharge, is also included in the benefit package.

With all the additional benefits, Villa urged women with high-risk pregnancies to seek medical consultation and services at PhilHealth-accredited hospitals to avoid maternal deaths or mortality. (PNA)

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VOL. XXVII NO. 6

MAY 21-27, 2026

P10.00

## Fully Connected CAVITEX C5 Link Enhances Logistics Efficiency and Reliability

The logistics sector is recognizing operational predictability and asset efficiency as key benefits following the opening of the CAVITEX C5 Link Segment 3B.

Segment 3B is the final segment that completes the alignment of the 7.7-kilometer CAVITEX C5 Link, establishing a direct connection between the Manila-Cavite Expressway (CAVITEX) and C5 Road in the City of Taguig.

While the industry continues to operate under challenging economic conditions, leaders note that the ability to bypass traditional urban bottlenecks provides a critical edge in maintaining supply chain reliability.

“The opening of the CAVITEX C5 Link Segment 3B eases up our daily transport movements, helping us keep up our delivery timelines and optimize our resources,” said Doris Torres, Executive Director of the Philippine Multimodal Transport and Logistics Association, Inc. (PMTLAI). “We welcome infrastructure that eventually reduces the total cost of logistics in the country.”

At the operational level, the expressway



significantly improves turnaround time. A route that previously took up to 1.5 hours can now be completed in as little as 15 minutes, enabling more consistent and predictable scheduling.

Arlyn Abello, Account Manager at Premier Global Logistics Corp., shared that improved traffic flow has enhanced fleet performance. “It has helped



helps reduce delays, fuel consumption, and overall stress for our drivers, which is a big factor in keeping operations smooth. Because of this, we’re able to serve our clients more efficiently, particularly for time-sensitive shipments,” the company

enhance the efficiency of our deliveries, allowing us to better meet our schedules and improve overall service reliability,” Abello said.

Llalaksmi Freight Services Inc. also emphasized that the expressway enables them to avoid heavily congested inner roads, saving on operational costs and prioritizing driver welfare. “It

stated.

While the alignment is now fully connected, a portion of Segment 3B is currently operating under a modified scheme, with two lanes in each direction, as the remaining Right-of-Way (ROW) concerns are being addressed to achieve

## Japan women’s league champion coach to call shots for Gilas Women



Newly minted Gilas Pilipinas Women head coach Burke “BT” Toews (Photo courtesy of Women’s Japan Basketball League)

MANILA – The Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas (SBP) announced the hiring of Canadian tactician Burke “BT” Toews as the new head coach of Gilas Pilipinas Women, handing the national squad to a decorated bench strategist with back-to-back championship runs in Japan’s top women’s league.

In a statement posted on social media, the SBP said Toews emerged as the top choice following an extensive global search that drew more than a dozen applicants from different countries.

The SBP said the hiring forms part of its continuing buildup for the women’s national program, with Gilas Pilipinas Women currently ranked No. 30 in the world by the International Basketball Federation (FIBA).

its full six-lane capacity with a 2x2 service road.

Even in its current state, the project significantly enhances network connectivity, enabling logistics companies to better manage fleet

Toews recently wrapped up his tenure with the Fujitsu Red Waves in the Women’s Japan Basketball League, where he steered the club to back-to-back titles in 2024 and 2025.

The Red Waves also captured the All-Japan Championship, regarded as the country’s premier basketball tournament.

The veteran coach built a winning culture during his decade-long stint with Fujitsu, guiding the squad to five Finals appearances while collecting three Coach of the

Year honors along the way.

His arrival gives the Filipina dribblers a coach with deep experience in the fast-paced, high-discipline Japanese system, a style known for sharp ball movement, relentless defensive pressure, and efficient half-court execution.

Toews is replacing Pat Aquino as Gilas Women’s tactician ahead of the FIBA Women’s Olympic Pre-Qualifying Tournament in August and the Asian Games in September. (PNA)

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

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utilization and ensure that time on the road is spent moving goods rather than idling in traffic.

The CAVITEX C5 Link expressway is a joint venture between Metro Pacific Tollways

Corporation’s (MPTC) subsidiary, the Cavite Infrastructure Corporation (CIC), and the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), and operated by the PEA Tollway Corporation (PEATC).