

BJMP TO REV UP FIGHT AGAINST JAIL CONTRABANDS



CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA) -- The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) on Tuesday warned people visiting persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) detained in BJMP-administered detention facilities not to attempt to sneak in contraband such as weapons and illegal drugs or they risk getting prosecuted.

“[BJMP] will not tolerate such actions, and we will continue to instill in the persons deprived of liberty and their visitors the gravity of our commitment to implementing programs aimed at preventing the proliferation of contrabands and the devastating effects of smuggling within our jail facilities,” said Jail Chief Inspector Hilbert Flor, Regional Director of BJMP.

Flor made the statement after jail personnel together with personnel from the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, Philippine National Police, Bureau of Fire Protection and other allied security personnel conducted Greyhound operations in the regional jail facility.

The director also said that they have enacted stricter guidelines for families and other visitors of PDLs to ensure that contrabands are not being illegally brought inside correctional facilities. “We strictly implement searches as soon as our visitors enter the gate. We have searchers there, and we rigorously look into their belongings, food, and inspect the clothes of our visitors. There are cases where they also use their children as instruments to conceal illegal contrabands in their clothes or on the bodies of small children. All of these are being studied and examined by our jail personnel,” Flor said.

Through Greyhound Operations, BJMP IV-A has confiscated 137 mobile phones, 100 sim cards, two memory cards, over 310 packs of cigarettes from 2019 to 2022. The said items were destroyed in a ceremony on October 24 at the BJMP IV-A Regional Office in Calamba City, Laguna, as part of the bureau’s celebration of National Correctional Consciousness Week (NACOCOW).



BJMP IV-A officials and personnel destroyed 137 mobile phones, 100 sim cards, two memory cards, over 310 packs of cigarettes which were confiscated from 2019 to 2022, during the celebration of the National Correctional Consciousness Week (NACOCOW). (Christopher Hedyda, PIA-Laguna)

Once confiscated, items are being analyzed and assessed if these can be used as an additional criminal charge for an inmate.

According to BJMP, PDLs caught in possession of prohibited items is a grave offense and will face sanctions imposed by its Disciplinary Board, such as temporary cancellation of all or some recreational privileges, suspension of visitation privileges, close confinement and monitoring, and/or transfer to another BJMP facility in coordination with the Court.

JCINSP Flor then gives a stern warning to PDLs and their families to yield the smuggling of items as they may be charged as accomplices and may face charges or hefty fines.

“Sa mga PDL natin, gayundin sa pamilya ng mga PDL at bibisita ay huwag na nating hikayatin pa ang ating mga mahal sa buhay na magdala ng mga ilegal na bagay o kontrabando sa loob ng mga kulungan o piitan. Sapagkat ito ay magdudulot lamang ng kapahamakan at hindi magandang kinabukasan sa ating mga PDL at mga pamilyang bibisita. Kung ito ay mahuhuli, magkakasama pa sila sa loob ng bilangguan at magiging mahirap ang kanilang pamumuhay.” (CH/PIA-Laguna)

DENR TO TAKE ELDERLY, PWD EMPLOYEES TO QUEZON FOR ECO-TOUR



CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA) – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) IV-A will host an eco-tour for its employees who are senior citizens and Persons With Disabilities (PWD) as part of their Environmental Awareness Month celebration on November 15.

In an interview with the Philippine Information Agency’s Usapang PIA program, Supervising Ecosystems Management Specialist and Regional Strategic Communication and Initiatives Group Chief, Forester Judaline Fabro said the eco-tour is part of their bid to make environmental conservation programs more inclusive.

“First time po itong eco-tour para sa ating mga senior citizens at PWD’s. Isa po sa tinarget namin ito this year upang maipakita na pinapahalagahan natin ang lahat ng sektor sa ating mga empleyado, maliban sa kabataan, meron din sa kabataan at sa mga senior citizens” Fabro said.

Participating employees will visit the Quezon Protected Landscape in Pagbilao as part of the ecotour.

Fabro adds: “Ang aming target ay 50 to 55 na makakadalo sa EcoTour kasi madami po kami ngayon na senior citizens sa DENR CALABARZON. During the tour magkakaroon po ng tree planting o tree glowing sa protected area bilang pledge po ng ating mga senior citizens at PWD para sa kalikasan.”

Fabro said the eco-tour will highlight the importance of providing senior citizens and PWD employees with an enjoyable experience as part of their celebration of Environmental Awareness Month.

Aside from the eco-tour, DENR IV-A lined up numerous programs such as Camp-Plant-Hike for the Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week , and free webinars on environment conservation for youth in celebration of National Day for Youth in Climate Action.

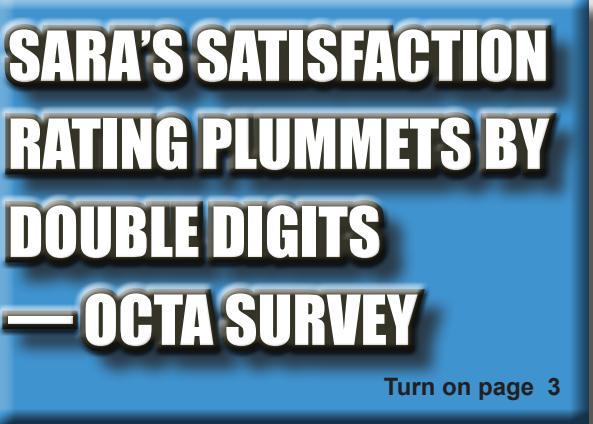
Forester Fabro invites everyone to support the agency’s proactive approach in addressing environmental issues in the country.

“Ganun din po hinihikayat din po namin ang lahat na makiisa at makibahagi sa mga gawain sa pangangalaga ng ating kapaligiran at sa mga Likas Yaman na meron tayo upang sa ganoon ay mapanatili natin na patuloy-tuloy na mapayabong at mapakinabangan ng maayos hanggang sa mga susunod na henerasyon” Fabro said.

Republic Act No. 9512 declares November as the National Environmental Awareness Month which articulate that the state must raise public awareness of the value of ecological balance and environmental preservation for long-term national development, as well as the role that natural resources play in economic growth. (AM/PIA-4A)

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A member of the Philippine Coast Guard looks at a China coast guard vessel as they come close during a mission to deliver provisions in Ayungin Shoal in the West Philippine Sea on Nov. 10.

MANILA, Philippines — Calling China a bully, senators reminded yesterday the Chinese coast guard that it does not have the right to trespass into, much less remain, in Philippine waters.

The senators were reacting to CCG’s latest act of harassment in the West Philippine Sea last Friday, wherein the Chinese fired water cannon at one of the Philippine vessels delivering provisions for soldiers stationed on the BRP Sierra Madre in Ayungin Shoal.

Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri said the incident has exposed “China as a bully: using size and brute strength to illegally encroach upon our exclusive economic zone and enforce a baseless right to drive away our protectors.”

“No amount of aggression can undo the fact that the Chinese government’s claims to the West Philippine Sea have already been invalidated by the Permanent Court of Arbitration,” he said, referring to the 2016 arbitral ruling that invalidated China’s sweeping nine-dash line claim.

“Water cannons and blockades will not dampen the will and resolve of our Navy and our Coast Guard to protect our exclusive economic zone in the West Philippine Sea,” Zubiri said.

Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda said there was no truth to the CCG’s claim that it was the Philippine vessels that were “trespassing,” as the area where Friday’s incident happened was well within the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone.

“The Philippines takes every opportunity to assert the significance and importance of the 2016 Arbitral Award in bilateral and multilateral fora. Our country is consistent that the UNCLOS and Award are twin anchors of its actions and its policy in the West Philippine Sea,” Legarda said.

She lauded those involved in the resupply mission as well as the troops stationed on the Sierra Madre for “fulfilling their duty to the nation.”

For his part, Senator JV Ejercito said the “latest unprovoked acts of coercion and dangerous maneuvers against a legitimate and routine Philippine rotation and resupply mission” were not only illegal, but also a proof of China’s insincerity in maintaining stability in the region.

“This latest bullying exposes China’s lack of sincerity in peaceful talks. We cannot allow this act of coercion to jeopardize our territory, security and peace,” Ejercito said.

“I demand that China immediately cease these unlawful activities, vacate the vicinity of Ayungin Shoal and refrain from encroaching on our territory. This is ours, not yours. Respect our sovereign rights; stop the harassment,” he added.

For Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, the Philippines should consider seeking support from the UN General Assembly amid China’s increasingly aggressive actions.

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Nurturing Minds: A Critical Look at the Mental Health of Students in the Philippines

In the bustling landscape of academic pursuits, the mental health of students has become a pressing concern in the Philippines. The traditional emphasis on academic achievement and relentless competition, coupled with the challenges of the modern world, has led to a significant impact on the psychological well-being of students.

One of the primary issues faced by students today is the intense pressure to excel academically. The education system in the Philippines places a heavy emphasis on grades, and students often find themselves in a relentless pursuit of perfection. This pressure can lead to stress, anxiety, and, in extreme cases, burnout. The fear of failure can be debilitating, affecting not only academic performance but also taking a toll on mental health.

Furthermore, the societal expectations placed on Filipino students add an extra layer of stress. The desire to meet the expectations of family and society, coupled with the uncertainty about the future, can contribute to a sense of inadequacy and hopelessness. The stigma surrounding mental health issues exacerbates the problem, preventing many students

from seeking the help they desperately need.

The advent of technology has also introduced a new set of challenges. While the digital age has brought about incredible opportunities for learning and connectivity, it has also opened the door to cyberbullying, online harassment, and the constant comparison on social media. Students, already grappling with academic stress, must now navigate the complexities of the online world, further impacting their mental well-being.

Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach. First and foremost, there is a need for a paradigm shift in the education system. Emphasizing holistic development over grades and fostering a supportive learning environment can help alleviate some of the pressures students face. Schools should also prioritize mental health education, teaching students coping mechanisms and stress management skills.

Beyond the educational system, there is a need for a cultural shift in how mental health is perceived in Filipino society. Open conversations about mental health should be encouraged, and the stigma surrounding seeking professional help must be dismantled. Government

initiatives, community programs, and collaborations with mental health organizations can play a crucial role in creating awareness and providing accessible mental health services for students.

Parents, too, play a pivotal role in supporting their children's mental health. Encouraging open communication, being aware of the signs of distress, and fostering an environment where failure is seen as an opportunity for growth rather than a source of shame can contribute significantly to the well-being of students.

In conclusion, the mental health of students in the Philippines is a critical issue that demands urgent attention. By re-evaluating the education system, fostering a culture of open dialogue, and providing necessary support structures, we can create an environment that not only promotes academic success but also nurtures the mental well-being of the future leaders of the nation. The well-being of our students is an investment in the future prosperity and resilience of the Philippines as a whole.

-Ang Kabitenya

No Right...

"Our government should seriously consider heeding the adopted Senate Resolution No. 79 which recommends several courses of action, one of which is the filing of a resolution before the United Nations General Assembly to call for the cessation of all activities that harass Philippine vessels and violate our established rights in the West Philippine Sea," Estrada said.

"In a show of solidarity, my colleagues and I crossed party lines in unanimously passing this resolution which calls out China for its repeated incursions in the WPS and incessant harassment of Filipino fishermen, patrol vessels and resupply mission teams," Estrada said. "Recent developments involving China's unlawful acts and increasing aggression against our vessels are leaving us with no other recourse but to take appropriate action in asserting and securing our sovereign rights over our exclusive economic zone. China should be made to stop its illegal activities," he added.

Appeal to AFP Speaker Martin Romualdez said the incident has underscored the need for the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to build up its capabilities for maintaining peace and upholding sovereignty, and not for waging war. "Our nation stands at a pivotal juncture, where the ripples of global tensions are felt even within the serene waters of the (WPS). It is here that our brave men and women in uniform stand as sentinels of sovereignty, safeguarding our nation's territory against the ceaseless tides of adversity," Romualdez said at a forum of the National Defense College of the Philippines Alumni Association at Camp Aguinaldo on Friday.

He also conveyed his "admiration and gratitude to the courageous and dedicated Filipino soldiers" and reaffirmed the commitment of the House of Representatives to help bolster AFP's operational capabilities. "The House of Representatives, fully aware of the weight of this responsibility, has been unyielding in

its commitment to fortify the operational capabilities of our Armed Forces," he added. "We have embarked on a strategic journey, not only to modernize our military assets but also to ensure that our personnel are equipped with the fortitude of skill and the assurance of a nation's unwavering support," he maintained.

According to Romualdez, some P282.7 billion of the P5.768-trillion proposed national budget for 2024 has been earmarked for the defense sector. This was 21.6 percent higher than this year's allocation. The House had also removed some P1.23 billion in confidential funds of civilian agencies like the Office of the Vice President and the Department of Education and reallocated them to agencies mandated to uphold national security.

This "strategic reallocation" includes P300 million to the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, P100 million to the National Security Council, P200 million to the Philippine Coast Guard for intelligence activities and ammunition and P381.3 million to the Department of Transportation for the development or expansion of Pag-Asa Island Airport. Romualdez pointed out that the allocation demonstrates "our dedication to maintaining a strong and credible defense posture, one that sends a clear message that we will not compromise when it comes to safeguarding our national interests."

"As a nation, we must take proactive measures to enhance our defense capabilities and ensure that we have the necessary resources to effectively protect our sovereign rights," he added. Don't expose civilians While commending civilian help in resupply missions, Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez cautioned the AFP against such practice, saying it exposes civilian lives to danger.

"Let's end this practice. I do not see the rationale for using civilian boats and crew in delivering supplies to our soldiers whose presence in that remote part of the West Philippine Sea symbolizes our national sovereignty and territorial integrity there," said Rodriguez, who is a member of the House committee on national defense and security. Instead of tapping civilians for the task, Rodriguez recommended that provisions for Sierra Madre be air dropped by the air assets of the AFP. "The danger Air Force and Navy personnel would face in those missions is the same as that civilian boat crew have to contend (with). But unlike civilians who are just doing a civic duty, it is the responsibility of the military to resupply our troops in Ayungin and protect our country's national sovereignty and territory," he stressed.

Rodriguez added the military could use "a number of strategies in air dropping supplies." He cited the use of decoy planes with military videographers and photographers documenting the mission. The lawmaker also suggested that the AFP and DND request the country's allies like the United States to deploy surveillance aircraft to monitor the airdrops.

SM FOUNDATION REVAMPS EDUCATIONAL CLINIC, STRENGTHENS COMMITMENT TO HEALTH, EDUCATION



Darmae (center) with the employees of ErrandBoys

"Errandboy is a pandemic-born business as it aimed to fill a gap that time is given, we were in lockdown and not mobile. The bulk of the business then was providing service to senior citizens, mothers, and families buying much-needed supplies for their homes safely and conveniently," she started.

Amidst the rising tide of unemployment in the country, Darmae's company provides full-time employment opportunities and healthcare benefits to its workforce.

"We made seemingly insurmountable tasks possible even for those who were in another province and even in a different country altogether. We uplift the lives of Cebuanos near and far but close to home what we are most proud of is that we were able to employ our loyal drivers and staff when they needed it most. Today, we continue to make Cebuanos' lives easier by doing any and all errands for them – safe, convenient, and worry-free," she added.

Taking SM Foundation's philosophy of people helping people to heart, the partner company of Errandboy MYT SoftDev Solutions established MYT Foundation. The foundation financially supports high school and college scholars and student-athletes. The foundation was also active during Typhoon Odette by providing and facilitating the sourcing and distribution of drinkable water to families, especially infants and children.

Darmae and Melvin stand as shining examples among the over 4,000 SM college scholar graduates to date, exemplifying the core values of SM Foundation. Their inspiring stories reflect the vision of SM group founder, Henry Sy, Sr., as they continue to influence and uplift the lives of their families and communities. /PR



MYT Foundation prepares drinking water for the Odette-affected families



(From left) SM North EDSA Mall Manager Miguel Gaspi, SM Supermalls Operations SAVP Jocelyn Clarino, SM Foundation Executive Director for Health and Medical Programs Connie Angeles, Schools Division Superintendent Dr. Carleen Sedilla, Regional Medical Officer of DepEd National Capital Region Dr. Connie Gapanayao, and School and Governance & Operations Division Chief Dr. Maria Teresa Namoro at the turnover ceremony of the newly refurbished medical and dental clinic

SM Foundation Inc. (SMFI) has consistently invested in critical areas such as health and education to support the country in attaining inclusive growth. A recent testament to this commitment is the transformation of the medical and dental clinic at the Quezon City Schools Division Office (QC-SDO) of the Department of Education (DepEd).

The refurbished clinic, nestled behind the Annex Building of SM North EDSA, features state-of-the-art equipments and a welcoming environment for students, teachers, and staff.

The clinic will also serve as a platform for preventive healthcare, promoting healthy lifestyles and encouraging regular check-ups.

SM group representatives, SM Foundation Health and Medical Program Executive Director Connie Angeles, Mall Operations SAVP Jocelyn Clarino, and SM North EDSA Mall Manager Miguel Gaspi joined the turnover, as SM Foundation marks the beginning of its entry into the renovation of existing clinics in public elementary and secondary schools within the jurisdiction of the DepEd.

Building a healthier future



A dentist performs a tooth extraction inside the newly renovated medical and dental clinic at the Quezon City Schools Division Office (QC-SDO)

Meanwhile, Dr. Gapanayao said that the close relationship between the SM group and the SDO, facilitated by the proximity of their locations, has played a pivotal role in this collaboration. "A healthy student is a happy student," Dr. Gapanayao also said, optimistic that the clinic will also help make wellness an integral part of daily life and serve as a hub for community building, fostering connections among teachers, students, and their families, and strengthening the educational community as a whole. /PR



Teachers and teaching staff monitor their blood pressure inside the new clinic

With 158 schools and over 436,000 students in public schools, along with 16,000 teachers, Dr. Sedilla shed light on the critical need for school-based health services. Its value is further highlighted as the country recorded increased cases of hand, foot, and mouth diseases (HFMD) among young students, along with the prevalence of other illnesses.

With the development, the DepEd NCR is hopeful that they will become better equipped to provide extensive medical services to promote the positive impact of health on academic performance.



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POP INTO THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT WITH SM B-POP BEARS OF JOY

Pop Into the Holiday Spirit with SM B-Pop Bears of Joy



The SM Bears of Joy charity project aims to encourage generosity and spread holiday cheer to children in need this Christmas.

SM Cares, together with SM Supermalls and Toy Kingdom, returns with their annual Christmas charity project, the SM Bears of Joy.

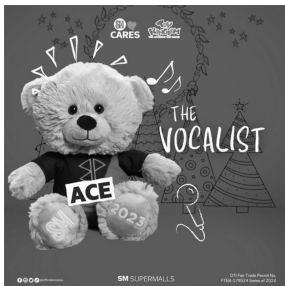
This year, SM debuts their very first B-POP (short for Bear Pop) group, the Bear Pop Squad. This new group of idols captures the hearts of fans with the relatable stories they share, mirroring their fans' daily experiences.



The Bear Pop Squad aims to inspire the same sense of community displayed by pop fandoms as mallgoers join in sharing a bear to a child in need for every purchase



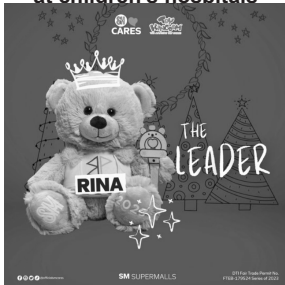
Meet BIN, the group's groovy dancer, who also enjoys nature hikes with his friends and volunteering at coastal clean-ups in his spare time



The squad's maknae, ACE, is a vocal powerhouse, who makes friends with people both in and out the industry, and loves to volunteer at children's hospitals



EYA's strong personality comes out in her rap verses, but deep down, she's an angel who loves to bike, enjoys payday sales, and has a heart for dogs (even if she's allergic to them)



EYA's strong personality comes out in her rap verses, but deep down, she's an angel who loves to bike, enjoys payday sales, and has a heart for dogs (even if she's allergic to them)

This collection features four brand-new designs that draw inspiration from the K-POP and P-POP community, and highlights the unity and togetherness in fan culture when it comes to celebrating shared interests.

SM's Bear Pop Squad hopes to encourage customers and mallgoers to celebrate both the love of friendship and community as displayed by pop fandoms, and share

that with children in need this Christmas season.

Buy one bear and donate another for only 250 pesos! The Bear Pop Squad will be available starting November 15 until December 25, 2023 in select SM Supermalls and Toy Kingdom branches, and can also be purchased through SM Online and Toy Kingdom Online Stores. /PR

You can find the SM Bears of Joy at the following locations:

B-POP SQUAD 2023 BOOTH LOCATIONS			
SM City North EDSA The Block Atrium SM Megamall GL Mega Fashion Hall SM Mall of Asia Central Atrium SM Southmall Food Street Concourse SM City Fairview Mall Atrium SM City Novaliches Mall Atrium SM City Sta Mesa UGL near JCO SM City Manila Garden Area near Event Center SM San Lazaro Mall Atrium SM City East Ortigas Hallway near Main Atrium	SM City Marikina Main Atrium SM City Bicutan Event Center SM City BF Paralique Mall Atrium, Ground Level SM City Sucat Atrium A, Ground Level SM City San Jose Del Monte The Atrium, Ground Level SM City Tagtay GP Building A SM City Masinag Mall Atrium SM City San Mateo 2nd Level Event Area SM City Baguio Mall Atrium, Lower Ground	SM City Rosales Central SM City Urdaneta The Event Center, Level 3 SM City Cauayan Level 2, Green Bridgeway SM Megacentre Cabonatuan Upper Ground SM City Tuguegarao Uptown Mall atrium, GL SM City Cabanatuan Upper Ground SM City Tarlac Ground Level near The Atrium SM Olango Downtown Ground Level	SM City Olongapo Central SM City Pampanga Mall Atrium, Ground Level SM City Clark The Event Centre III SM City San Fernando 2nd Level, in front of SM Store SM City Telabastagan The Atrium, Ground Level SM City Marikina Mall Atrium, Ground Level SM City Balingay Mall Atrium, Ground Level

B-POP SQUAD 2023 BOOTH LOCATIONS			
SM City Valenzuela The Event Center SM City Bacoor Event Center, Lower Ground Level SM City Dasmarillas Event Center, Ground Level SM City Molino Event Center, Ground Level SM City Rosario Event Center (near Centerplex) SM City Trece Martines Atrium H1 - LGF SM City Tanza Event Center SM Sta Rosa Amphitheatre, Expansion Wing SM City San Pablo Mall Atrium	SM City Calamba Mall Atrium SM City Lipa The Event Center SM City Batangas Mall Atrium 2 SM City Lucena Mall Atrium SM City Naga The Event Center, Ground Level SM City Legazpi Ground Level, GL Mall Atrium SM City Daet 2nd Level The Event Center SM City Sorsogon Ground Level, The Event Center SM City Bataan The Event Center SM City Sto. Tomas Ground Level, The Event Center	VISAYAS SM City Cebu Upper Ground Level, Main Mall SM City Consolation Ground Level, Event Center SM City Seaside Cebu Mountain Wing Atrium SM City Iloilo North Point, Entrance 6 in front of Starbucks SM City Bacolod Mall atrium, GL SM City Puerto Princesa Mall Atrium, Lower Ground Level SM City Roxas The Event Center	MINDANAO SM CDO Downtown Premier Event Center SM City CDO Uptown Event Center SM City Gensan Event Center SM City Butuan Mall atrium, GL SM City Davao 2L Main Mall - fronting SM Supermarket SM City Lanao The Atrium SM City Mindpro Level 2, fronting The SM Store

tics, computer science, and mathematics helps me excel in the program."

"As an SM Scholar, I already have the foundation of being hardworking, submitting work on time, actively participating in class, and achieving high grades. Those characteristics are the significant factors that help me land a job in the United States," he added. Paying it forward

Another SM scholar alumnus spreading social good through technology is Darmae Tan. According to her, the greatest lesson she learned is that it matters to pay it forward as no one has made it through life without receiving help, and to make this world a better place for the future generation is to make it less difficult for each other.

This inspired her to launch Errandboy at the height of the pandemic. Beyond providing help for those who had difficulty going around during the lockdown, Darmae's venture provided jobs to the people in her community.

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AYALA.....

MANILA -The Ayala Group is spending about \$78 million to build a second data center in Cavite as it beef up its portfolio of facilities storing critical servers and enabling the flow of data in the advent of artificial intelligence (AI) and digitalization. On Monday, Ayala-led ST Telemedia Global Data Centers (STT GDC) Philippines held groundbreaking ceremony for STT Cavite 2.The 6-megawatt (MW) data center is a two-story building with a gross floor area of over 4,500 square-meters. The data hub is targeted to be opened by mid-2025. By that time, the Cavite portfolio will have about 11-MW capacity in total. STT GDC Philippines president and CEO Carlo Malana said this digital infrastructure was capital-intensive, requiring them to earmark about \$13 million per megawatt. Starting its second major data center project this year is in line with the goal of STT GDC Philippines—a joint venture among Globe Telecom Inc., Ayala Corp. and Singapore-based STT GDC—to increase data center capacity to 150 MW in the coming years. "As the Philippines sets its sights on a digital future and rapidly expands its digital capabilities, this forward momentum makes the need for robust digital infrastructure and rich

network connectivity even more critical," Malana said. Globe CEO Ernest Cu noted that AI is among the demand drivers for data centers in the country given the modern technology's massive data storage requirement. In May, the joint venture company held a groundbreaking ceremony for its 124-MW data center in Fairview, Quezon City. It will be spending about \$1 billion to construct the facility sprawling over 83,000 square-meters of

gross floor area across four buildings. Construction for the first phase of the project, comprising 28 MW, has started. It is set to go live by early 2025. Last month, it also completed the construction of a 1.2-MW data hall in Makati. "With the right critical infrastructure in place, businesses can thrive in the digital realm and citizens can reap the benefits of a digital society," Malana said. /PHILSTAR.COM

SANGLEY...

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Coast Guard on Saturday said it detected the largest number of Chinese ships to swarm the vicinity of Ayungin shoal — 38 in total — during its latest resupply mission to the BRP Sierra Madre. Of the 38 ships, most or 28 were Chinese militia vessels, while there were five China Coast Guard (CCG) vessels and five People's Liberation Army vessels, PCG Spokesperson Jay Tarriela said during a media briefing. "I think it is fair to say that this is the highest number because there were 38 documented," Tarriela said. ADVERTISING

On November 10, Chinese vessels fired a water cannon anew at a Philippine supply vessel boat carrying provisions for troops stationed at BRP Sierra Madre in an "illegal though unsuccessful attempt to force (it) to alter course," the National Task Force-West Philippine Sea (NTF-WPS) said in a statement.

Supply vessels Unaizah Mae 1 and M/L Kalayaan were also subjected to "extremely reckless and dangerous harassment at close proximity" by CCG rigid-hulled inflatable boats on their way to BRP Sierra Madre — actions that Chinese boats have

done before. Both vessel boats were able to complete their resupply missions. Most of the Chinese vessels observed in the vicinity did not participate in the blocking operations. Of the 38 vessels, six Chinese militia vessels and all five CCG boats attempted to disrupt the resupply mission, Tarriela said. "All in all, there were 11 who actively participated in carrying out dangerous maneuvers to the PCG vessels and also to the resupply boats," the PCG spokesperson said. The task force said that the Philippine Embassy in Beijing has protested the incidents before the Chinese Foreign Ministry. Several Filipino troops, which depend on resupply missions to receive provisions, are stationed at the BRP Sierra Madre, which was grounded by the Philippine Navy at Ayungin Shoal in 1999 to counter China's expansive claims in the region. Based on the 2016 arbitral ruling and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Ayungin Shoal is located inside the Philippines' exclusive economic zone. It is approximately 200 kilometers away from Palawan and more than 1,000 kilometers from China's Hainan Island. /PHILSTAR.COM

BATANGAS...

BAUAN, Batangas (PIA) – Disaster response authorities said the chemical spill that hit Bauan, Batangas on November 4 is under control. In a report on November 8, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) IV-A said hazardous chemical identified as solvent naphtha leaked from an untightened drain plug that forced at least 53 families in the coastal village of San Miguel to evacuate. Naphtha solvent, commonly used as an additive in paints and thinner products, can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat while prolonged exposure may lead to severe health conditions, the DSWD said. DSWD Director for Calabarzon Barry Chua said

the families, comprising of 248 individuals, have since returned to their homes after authorities declared the incident to be 'under control.' "A closure order was served on the company involved in the incident while an investigation is ongoing," Chua added. Reports showed the chemical had dissipated while containment and clean up operations in the affected shoreline were conducted. Following the spill, affected residents underwent a health assessment from the Bauan health office and were provided with face masks to prevent possible inhalation of chemical fumes. The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) has also conducted chemical

DHSUD...

MANILA, Philippines — President Marcos' Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino (4PH) program supports the development of smart cities, according to the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DH-SUD).

"In the parlance of a government agency such as ours, it can only mean enhancing the quality of life of our fellow Filipinos through innovations and technological solutions in the housing, human settlements and urban development sectors," Housing Secretary Jose Rizalino Acuzar said in his keynote speech during the "BusinessWorld x The Freeman" business forum in Cebu City on Nov. 10. In "The Prospect of Smart Cities: From a Real Estate Perspective" discussion, Acuzar noted that developing smart cities can be achieved through maximizing land uses, efficiently using valuable resources, delicately balancing and promoting open spaces and connecting them through networks, investing in and adoption of appropriate technologi-

cal breakthroughs that will translate into realizing the cities' or housing communities' purpose for its local inhabitants and the general public. "It sounds pretty complicated as it is indeed complicated. Establishing smart cities would entail weaving various social, economic, geographical as well as political components into a net of strategies capturing urban development," he added. The Digital Cities Index 2022, developed by the Economist Impact and supported by the Nippon Electric Company, considers four key pillars in assessing the extent and impact of digitalization in 30 global cities: digital connectivity, services, culture and sustainability. The index showed the performance of subject cities in terms of quantitative metrics like internet speed and qualitative factors such as the presence of strategies, policies and plans for technologies like 5G and artificial intelligence. Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Beijing, London and Seoul ranked as the top-per-

scooping and water sampling in the area. The DSWD IV-A said it prepared non-food items amounting to Php 41,033,567.44 that are stored in their field office and satellite warehouses. Standby funds amounting to Php 5,847,725.80 may be used for the procurement of additional raw materials. "The Field Office [has] coordinated with the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office of Bauan, Batangas regarding the details of the chemical spill incident," Chua said in a report to DSWD Undersecretary for Disaster Response Management Group Diana Rose Cajipe. (PB/PIA-4A; with reports from DSWD IV-A) /PIA

SM SCHOLARS TAKE THEIR TURN IN SPREADING SOCIAL GOOD

"Once an SM scholar, always an SM scholar."

This is an adage beneficiaries of SM Foundation's college scholarship program hold dearly. Their journey to bringing out their limitless abilities doesn't end when they toss their graduation caps proudly up in the air, it continues for as long as they live.

It's not only the honor that's ingrained in their hearts, but also the values instilled by the SM group—one of which is spreading social good.

Passing down the kindness



Melvin (in red, first from left) spends time with his family, who serves as his inspiration to work hard.

SM scholar alumnus Melvin Matanos proved that persistence will open limitless opportunities. Now working as an engineer in New York, U.S.A, his inspiring past remains vivid.



CROSSWORD

PIN CUSHION? By Timothy E. Parker

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16		
17					18					19		
		20					21			22		
23	24	25			26		27			28		
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33				34			35		36		37	38
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44				45			46		47		48	
		49		50			51			52		
53	54				55		56			57		
58				59			60					
61		62				63	64			65	66	67
68				69					70			
71				72					73			

freedailycrosswords.com

ACROSS

- 1) "The _ Reed Show"
- 6) Garden bulb
- 11) Impressive degree
- 14) Steer clear of
- 15) Protective layer
- 16) Apiece, in scores
- 17) Wood lighters?
- 19) Game for "it"
- 20) "Yo!"
- 21) Shake a leg
- 22) Dream Team coun-try
- 23) Involve deeply
- 27) Emancipate
- 29) Secret agent org.
- 30) Carve in stone
- 32) Like a pink steak
- 33) Guinness World Records suffix
- 34) Put off
- 36) Health store beans (var.)
- 39) Brought into play
- 41) Some bays
- 43) Viral internet item
- 44) Fiery funeral mounds
- 46) Trials and tribula-tions, essentially
- 48) Subsidy
- 49) Part of a foot
- 51) Protein, often
- 52) Genetic material
- 53) Freeway catastro-phe
- 56) Offspring acquired by marnage
- 58) "Aviv" header
- 59) Bird that can't take flight
- 60) Address for a dot-com
- 61) Foreman vanquish-er
- 62) Old cinema star
- 68) Felt topper
- 69) "+" pole
- 70) Barely leading on the scoreboard
- 71) Service charge
- 72) Have a hunch
- 73) Three-player cardgames

DOWN

- 1) Beaver's work
- 2) Egg cells
- 3) "Ask _ what your country ..."
- 4) Corner of the market
- 5) Clung
- 6) Young'un
- 7) Certain machine gun
- 8) Ness and Lomond
- 9) More like a squid's defense
- 10) Former Spanish coins
- 11) Time for the elder-ly?
- 12) World-weary
- 13) Pond buildup
- 18) It may be beaten or bucked
- 23) Become frozen
- 24) Hip-hop's Elliott
- 25) Appear in thin air
- 26) Brilliant acclaim
- 28) Gift tag word
- 31) Female seal group
- 35) Affirmative respons-es
- 37) Acid type
- 38) It's hardly a con-vertible
- 40) Some animal shel-ters
- 42) Lady Liberty, for one
- 45) Frameworks
- 47) Common sound systems
- 50) Caring and decent to others
- 53) Group on the payroll
- 54) Donnybrook
- 55) Stage, as a show
- 57) Sound of a BB striking tin
- 63) Things displayed at checkpoints
- 64) "Originally named"
- 65) Narc's org.
- 66) Caught off base
- 67) CD predecessors

CITY OF BACOR NEWS

Alamin kung ano nga ba ang mga benepisyo ng mga OFW mula sa OWWA Region 4A

STRIKE SA KABUHAYAN AT KARAPATAN
Seminar For OFW Displaced Workers Parokya sa Barangay

Orientation on OWWA Programs and Services and Community Organizing

November 15, 2023
Revilla Hall 3rd Floor, Bacoor Government Centre, Bacoor City Hall, Bacoor Boulevard, Bacoor Cavite.

Mas mabuti ang madaming alam kaya samahan po natin si Mayor Strike B. Revilla, VM Rowena Bautista Mendiola, at Cong. Lani Mercado Revilla katuwang ang Bacoor Public Employment Service Office at Owwa Calabarzon Welfare ni OWWA RD Allan Ignacio, Batang Ilog Katrina Alforja Del Valle at Jennifer Jumbas sa Huwebes, Nov. 16, 2023 sa REVILLA Hall, 3rd flkoor City Hall of Bacoor para malaman ang mga benepisyo ng mga OFW mula sa OWWA Region 4A. [/bacoor.gov.ph](mailto:bacoor.gov.ph)

Earthquake and Tsunami Simulation Exercise, Pinangunahan ng Pamahalaang Lungsod ng Bacoor

Noong November 11, 2023, naging matagumpay ang isinagawang Earthquake and Tsunami Simulation Exercise sa Strike Gymnasium at ilang mga Barangay na malapit sa tabing dagat. Dito ipinakita ang mga pagsasanay kung saan ang lahat ng mga Bacooreño ay pinaghahanda sa kahit anumang sakuna na maaring mangyari sa Lungsod. Ang pagsasanay na ito ay binigyan ng masusing pag-aaral upang mas mabilis na makapagbigay ng tulong sa mga Bacooreño. Hindi lang ang BDRRMO ang nanguna sa pagsasanay na ito, dahil ipinakita rin ng City Social Welfare and Development (CSWD) at Philippine National Police (PNP) ang serbisyong kanilang gagawin sa oras ng sakuna. Sa mensahe naman ni City Councilor Rey Palabrica, binigyan diin nito ang isang resolusyon na ang lahat ng mga manggagawa sa Lungsod ng Bacoor ay dapat dumaan sa isang pagsasanay bilang paghahanda sa kalamidad. Hiniling din ni Konsehal sa mga Bacooreno na dapat magpakita ng interes at pagmamalasakit ang lahat, sapagkat ayon sa kanya, tayoy-tayo rin ang magtutulungan sa oras ng sakuna. Nagbigay din ng mensahe ang Bacoor Disaster Risk Reduction & Management Officer na si Mr. Richard Quion via live zoom, upang ipaalala ang kahalagan ng ginawang Simulation Drill, at nag pasalamat sa lahat ng mga dumalo at nakiisa. Sinimulan ang Simulation exercise sa pamamagitan ng pag press ng alarm button kasama sina PLTCOL. John Paolo Caracedo ng Bacoor PNP, SFO3 Romeo Buena ng C, Operations Section BFP-Bacoor City, Ms. Evelyn Castillo ng CSWD, Local DRRM Officer III, Ms. Charise ng BDRRMO, Kapitan Randy Francisco ng Brgy. Daang Bukid, Brgy. Secretary Toots Felizardo ng Tabing Dagat at Brgy. Kagawad Jerry San Pedro ng Camposanto. Ang Pamahalaang Lungsod ng Bacoor sa pangunguna ni Mayor Strike B. Revilla at ng Sangguniang Panlungsod Members sa pangunguna naman ni Vice Mayor Rowena B. Mendiola ay patuloy na gumagawa ng mga programa at proyekto para mag-ing handa ang Bacoor sa kahit anong sakuna. [/bacoor.gov.ph](mailto:bacoor.gov.ph)

Bagong SK Officials at LYDC Members, Sumabak sa kauna-unahang Mandatory Training sa Lungsod ng Bacoor



Punong puno ng makabuluhang talakayan at diskusyon ang tatlong araw na Mandatory Training para sa mga bagong halal na Sangguniang Kabataan Officials at Local Youth and Development Council Members (LYDC), kung saan kanilang tinalakay ang iba't – ibang mga gawain at responsibilidad na kailangan nilang gampanan bilang mga bagong lingkod-bayan. Kasama sa mga usapin na ito ang Decentralization and Governance, SK History and Salient Features, Meetings and Resolutions, Planning and Budgeting, at marami pang iba. Buo naman ang suporta na ibinigay ni Mayor Strike B. Revilla sa mga ito, kasama sina SK Federation President Mac Raven Espiritu, HRDMD Head Ms. Natividad Ople, LYDO Head Ms. Angie Cariaso, CLGO Officer Mr. Reginaldo S. Revilla of DILG – Bacoor, LGOO VII/Cluster Head Ms. Nencita N. Costelo of DILG – Cavite, at SK Secretary Josh McCarver of Barangay Molino IV. Inaasahan na sa pagtatapos ng pagsasanay mula November 11 hanggang 13, mas magiging handa na ang mga bagong opisyales na harapin nang buong tapang ang kanilang panunungkulan. [/bacoor.gov.ph](mailto:bacoor.gov.ph)



Passport on Wheels: Bringing Convenience to Caviteños



In an era marked by technological advancements and the pursuit of greater convenience, Provincial Government of Cavite through the Office of the Public Employment Service Manager (OPPESM) took a significant step forward by spearheading the Passport on Wheels on November 8, 2023 at SM City Trece. The initiative was carried out in collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs-Office of Consular Affairs (DFA-OCA), making the process of obtaining and renewing a passport more accessible and efficient to more than 300 Caviteños. The Passport on Wheels offered application for new passports and renewal of existing ones. It provided a comfortable and efficient setting for applicants to submit their requirements, have their biometric data captured, and receive guidance on the passport application process. Furthermore, the presence of highly-trained DFA-OCA personnel ensured that applicants received accurate information and support throughout the process, making the passport application process as seamless as possible.



The initiative received an overwhelming response from the community. Residents appreciated the convenience of having passport services readily available at their doorstep. --- JDP

Last week's solution:

VISITING THE ER By Timothy E. Parker

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
A	L	E	R	T	P	L	A	T	B	O	P	S
14	C	U	R	I	O	S	I	L	O	B	L	I
17	E	A	R	L	Y	R	E	T	I	R	E	M
20	R	U	S	E	H	U	E	T	A	B	O	O
23	F	E	D	E	R	E	S	E	S	T		
25	A	Z	A	L	E	A	S	O	L	E		
28	C	O	V	E	T	G	I	R	L	F	O	W
31	E	L	E	V	A	T	E	D	R	A	I	L
34	S	A	R	I	R	E	L	Y	D	E	E	R
37	C	A	S	E	B	L	E	N	D	S		
40	M	A	S	H	I	E	S	O	Y			
43	C	O	C	O	O	N	O	H	O	A	S	E
46	E	X	C	L	U	S	I	V	E	R	I	G
49	L	I	R	A	E	K	E	D	S	H	A	N
52	L	E	A	R	T	E	N	S	M	A	M	A

Gov't unveils cash, rice aid program for the poor in Laguna



BIÑAN CITY, Laguna (PIA) -- Over 5,000 poor residents in two cities in Laguna were given cash and rice support from the government as it launched on Sunday a new assistance program for vulnerable families. The program, dubbed as Cash Assistance and Rice Distribution (CARD), was simultaneously unveiled in the National Capital Region (NCR), covering 33 legislative districts in 17 cities, courtesy of the Office of the President, House of Representatives and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez led the dis-

tribution in the cities of Biñan and Sta. Rosa where recipients that included senior citizens, persons with disabilities (PWDs), single parents, and indigenous peoples were each given 25-kilogram rice and P4,000 cash assistance. Romualdez said the initiative aligns with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s vision of providing affordable and high-quality rice to vulnerable communities. "This program was developed in response to the challenge set by President Marcos Jr. to Congress to find ways to provide our communities with affordable and high-quality rice," he said.



Local legislators and other officials showed their support for the launch of the Cash Assistance and Rice Distribution (CARD) Program spearheaded by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, House of Representatives, and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

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