

DPWH OPENS MOLINO-DAANG HARI FLYOVER IN CAVITE



The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has opened to vehicular traffic the 531-meter Molino-Daang Hari Flyover Project in Cavite following the inauguration ceremony held on December 12, 2023.

Representing DPWH Secretary Manuel M. Bonoan during the project's inauguration were DPWH Undersecretary Roberto R. Bernardo, DPWH Regional Office 4A Director Jovel G. Mendoza, and DPWH Cavite 3rd District Engineer Donnie D. Cuna, joined by local officials: Cavite 2nd District Rep. Lani Mercado-Revilla, AGIMAT Party List Rep. Bryan Revilla, Bacoor City Mayor Strike Revilla, and SM Supermalls Assistant Vice President for Operations Mr. Lorenzo Leon Calingasan IV.

With the flyover's opening, travel time between Barangay Molino III and Barangay Molino IV in Bacoor City and neighboring towns is reduced by 15 to 30 minutes.

The Molino-Daang Hari Flyover is a multi-year project which has received P240 million as initial allocation in 2016, P311 million in 2018, and P150 million in 2022.

DPWH will be proposing additional allocation of P765 million for project which is envisioned as a 4-lane flyover, with road widening component. This will cover road right-of-way acquisition, and remaining civil works for additional lanes.

During the event, Bacoor City Mayor Revilla also noted the challenges faced during construction, including road right-of-way and financial releases, emphasizing the multi-sectoral commitment to overcoming obstacles for the remaining road works.

Congressman Revilla acknowledged that the project still needs to be completed but emphasized its immediate functionality while Congresswoman Mercado-Revilla reassured citizens that funding would be secured to complete the project, expressing gratitude to the national and local governments, as well as SM Molino for their unwavering support.

"The Molino-Daang Hari Flyover, though still in progress, marks a significant step toward enhancing transportation infrastructure and fostering economic growth in Bacoor and its surrounding areas," Regional Director Mendoza said.

DPWH CONDUCTS POLICY DIALOGUE MEETING ON KOREAN-ASSISTED IFPS



Officials of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MOEF) of the Republic of Korea and the Export-Import Bank of Korea (KEXIM) held an open discussion on the on-going and pipeline infrastructure flagship projects (IFPs) under Official Development Assistance (ODA) financing by Korean Economic Development Cooperation Fund (KEDCF). DPWH Senior Undersecretary Emil K. Sadain said that the policy dialogue meeting on December 19, 2023 in Manila with Korean delegation headed by MOEF Director Park Jeong-Hyun will contribute to the collective effort in fast-tracking big-ticket Korean-funded infrastructure projects in the Philippines as well as enhance financial frameworks to optimize the support provided by the lending institution.

The dialogue serves as a platform to align strategies and will guide the DPWH and lending institution in addressing bottlenecks, and ensuring the successful implementation of projects, added Senior Undersecretary Sadain.

The meeting was also participated by MOEF Deputy Director Lee Hyun-Ji; EDCF-KEXIM Headquarters Director General Jang Ik-Hwan, Senior Loan Officer Shin Yujin, Director Cho Eun-Jin, Loan Officer Kook Sungkeun; and EDCF-KEXIM Manila Office Country Director Moon Jae-Jeong, and Deputy Country Directors Lee Yun-Hak and Kwon Min-Jeong; and DPWH Unified Project Management Office (UPMO) officials namely Project Director Benjamin A. Bautista of Roads Management Cluster 1, Project Director Sharif Madsmo H. Hasim of Roads Management Cluster 2, and Project Director Ramon A. Arriola III of Flood Control Management Cluster, and Stakeholders Relations Service Director Randy R. Del Rosario.

Among the projects tackled in the meeting is the nearing completion of the 3.169 kilometer Panguil Bay Bridge which is now 83.56% completed. This will connect Tangub City in Misamis Occidental to the Municipality of Tubod in Lanao Del Norte, reducing travel time from 2.5 hours to seven (7) minutes, and is targeted to open to vehicular traffic in the first half of 2024.

Subsequently, the ongoing Integrated Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation (IDRR-CCA) in low-lying areas of Pampanga, is currently at 82.91% completion rate. This project aims to minimize the flooding situation in various Municipalities in Pampanga including Macabebe, Masantol, Minalin, and Sto. Tomas. Thus, improving the drainage system on the four (4) rivers along the Eastern Branch River, the Caduang Tete River, and the Sapang Margul River.

Also highlighted in the discussion are the ODA-KEDCF projects which are currently in the primary stage of planning, feasibility study (FS), and detailed engineering design (DED) to include the Panay-Guimaras-Negros Island Bridges Project with its contract for the DED approved just recently. This project will be the gateway between three (3) islands in Western Visayas namely Panay in Metro Iloilo, Guimaras Island Province, and Negros. Hence, reducing the travel time to approximately one (1) hour, from the 4-hour via ferries.

Moreover, the Samar Pacific Coastal Road (SPCR) II Project improves the connectivity and access to services and economic activities in the Pacific Towns of the Provinces of Northern and Eastern Samar, now awaits the approval of the DED. This 15.01km project will link the island of Laoang to mainland Northern Samar.

Also discussed in the presentation of Senior Undersecretary Sadain are the Philippines - Korea Project Preparation Facility (PK-PPF), Road and Bridges Output for the following contract packages for feasibility study and detailed engineering design: (1) Lubao-Guagua-Sasmuan-Minalin-Santo Tomas Bypass Road in Pampanga, (2) Mount Kitanglad Range Belt Road in Bukidnon, and (3) Capas-Botolan Road in Tarlac and Zambales.

Further, the PK-PPF Flood Control Output is at 76.91% in the Master Planning and Feasibility Study stage. This project covers the four (4) major river basins, including the Pampanga River Basin, Bicol River Basin, Panay River Basin, and Agusan River Basin dedicated to establishing policies, strategies, and improvement works adaptive to Climate Change.

These projects will further realized the "build, better, more" program of the government to address the inadequacies of infrastructure and spur economic growth under "Bagong Pilipinas".



WEDNESDAY CHRONICLE

NEWS PUBLISHING SERVICES

MAKE YOUR WEEKLIES INFORMATIVE

VOL. I • NO. 13 • Dec. 27 - Jan 02, 2024 • P 10.00



TARIFF CUTS ON RICE, PORK EXTENDED BY ONE YEAR

Turn on page 2

OVER 161,000 ARRIVALS DURING CHRISTMAS WEEKEND

Turn on page 3

PPP CODE LAW TO COVER PHILIPPINES P23 TRILLION INFRASTRUCTURE GAP

Turn on page 2

YEARENDER: WE'VE DONE WELL: PALACE TOUTS ECONOMIC SUCCESS UNDER MARCOS

Turn on page 3



MANILA, Philippines — President Marcos' 11 foreign trips this year have drummed up over P4 trillion in investments or 148 projects as of Dec. 21, according to monitoring done by the Department of Trade and Industry. The DTI described the investments as business investment promotion agency registered with operations worth P11.4 billion, business/IPA registered (P54.75 billion) and IPA registration in progress operations (P282.8 billion). Meanwhile, investments that already have a signed agreement were valued at P544.152 billion, while those with a signed memorandum of understanding (MOU) of letter of intent (LOI) were valued at P1.588 trillion. ADVERTISING Finally, those confirmed but not covered by MOUs/LOIs and still in the planning stage are pegged at P1.522 trillion. Aside from these, the DTI said it is monitoring about 20 projects – including those made on Marcos' recent trip to Japan – that have been approved and registered with its IPAs, the Board of Investments (BOI) and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA). "These investments, realized and in the pipeline, are mostly in the sectors of manufacturing, IT-BPM (information technology and business process management), renewable energy, data centers and telecommunications," the DTI said. It also reported three signed agreements "with clear financial project value" from business engagements during the President's visit to Japan for the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit worth \$85.07 million and six MOU/LOI valued at \$178.01 million. In its Dec. 14 update, the DTI said Marcos' visit last month to the United States for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Leaders' Meeting was added to its monitoring, adding P37.2 billion to the total value and six to the total project. These include a P2.2-billion investment in telecommunications, P110 million in artificial intelligence, P13 billion in manufacturing, P1.1 billion in health sciences/pharma manufacturing/health services, P16 million in energy and an undisclosed amount for another investment in health sciences/pharma manufacturing/health services. These projects comprise signed agreements with clear financial values and MOUs/LOIs.



## "Navigating the Horizon: Anticipating Economic Prospects for the Philippines in 2024"

As we stand at the threshold of a new year, the economic landscape of the Philippines appears poised for a transformative journey in 2024. With a tapestry woven from the threads of resilience, adaptability, and innovation, the nation seems set to traverse the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

The Philippines, like the rest of the world, continues to grapple with the lingering effects of the global pandemic. However, amidst the uncertainties, there is an air of cautious optimism as the country steers towards economic recovery and growth.

1. Economic Resilience Amidst Global Uncertainties:

The year 2024 is expected to witness the Philippines demonstrating its economic resilience in the face of global uncertainties. While external factors, such as geopolitical tensions and fluctuations in commodity prices, may exert pressure, the nation's diversified economy, fueled by a robust services sector, is likely to act as a buffer.

2. Infrastructure Development as a Catalyst: The government's commitment to infrastructure development remains a key driver of economic

growth. The "Build, Build, Build" program, now in its advanced stages, is anticipated to yield positive results, creating jobs, fostering regional development, and enhancing connectivity. Improved infrastructure can attract foreign investments and stimulate various sectors of the economy, contributing to a more vibrant economic landscape.

3. Embracing Technological Advancements:

The Philippines has the potential to leapfrog into a technology-driven economy. The acceleration of digitalization and the adoption of emerging technologies are likely to redefine industries, making them more efficient and globally competitive. Investments in technology education and the startup ecosystem can position the Philippines as a regional hub for innovation and digital entrepreneurship.

4. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a Guiding Compass:

The global call for sustainable and inclusive development is resonating louder than ever. In 2024, the Philippines is expected to align its economic strategies with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, addressing issues such as poverty, inequality, and climate change. Responsible and ethical business practices

are likely to take center stage, fostering a business environment that values both profit and social impact.

5. Challenges on the Horizon:

While prospects are promising, challenges persist. Inflationary pressures, global economic slowdowns, and domestic issues such as political stability and regulatory reforms could pose obstacles to the Philippines' economic trajectory. A proactive and adaptive approach from policymakers, coupled with public-private collaboration, will be crucial in overcoming these hurdles.

As we set sail into the uncharted waters of 2024, the Philippines stands at the crossroads of opportunity and challenge. By leveraging its inherent strengths, addressing vulnerabilities, and embracing change, the nation can embark on a journey towards sustainable and inclusive economic prosperity. The resilience and tenacity of the Filipino spirit, combined with strategic economic policies, will shape the narrative of the Philippines' economic odyssey in the year ahead.

## TARIFF...

MANILA, Philippines — President Marcos has extended the lower tariffs on rice, corn and pork until the end of 2024 to ensure affordability during El Niño and amid possible outbreaks of African swine fever.

On behalf of Marcos, Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin signed Executive Order (EO) 50, which maintains the lower tariffs on these commodities. The EO cited possible droughts and dry spells that could affect rice and corn production as well as trade restrictions in some countries that could affect prices.

"The present economic condition warrants the continued application of reduced tariff rates on rice, corn and meat of swine — fresh, chilled or frozen — to maintain affordable prices," Marcos said in the EO.

The EO also intends to ensure food security, help manage inflationary pressures and augment the supply of basic agricultural commodities and diversify the country's market sources. On Dec. 14, the President's economic team endorsed the extension of the tariff cuts — a measure that has been in effect since late last year under EO 10.

Under the current modifications on import duties,

the tariff rate for rice is 35 percent; for pork, 15 to 25 percent, and corn, five to 15 percent.

The extension of tariff cuts for these commodities will remain in effect until Dec. 31, 2024.

Meanwhile, tariff rates for coal under EO 10 will be subjected to annual review after the end of this year. Marcos also ordered the committee on tariff and related matters of the National Economic and Development Authority to submit its findings and recommendations on the semestral and annual review of tariff rates, including analysis and monitoring of subject commodities.

El Niño is expected to peak in April, with 63 provinces projected to bear the brunt of the dry spell until the second quarter of 2024.

Marcos ordered the creation of a task force to handle the impacts of El Niño this month, noting the prevailing weather phenomenon is similar to the one that occurred in 1997 to 1998, which caused billions of pesos in damage to agriculture.

Smuggled rice Meanwhile, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) has seized suspected smuggled rice with an estimated value of P26 million and the vessel that delivered the contraband at a port in Bataan.

From Page 1

William Balayo, BOC-Limay port district collector, on Sunday issued a warrant of seizure and detention against the contraband and the motor vessel SF Omega, after noting discrepancies in the documents submitted by the ship's officers and crewmembers.

The cargo was reportedly consigned to the Dios Consumer Goods Trading and the BBD Veterinary Supplies Trading and General Merchandise.

The SF Omega and its 18 crewmembers were placed under the custody of the BOC's enforcement security service-customs police division.

The vessel came from Talisay, Cebu and arrived at the Orion Dockyard in Orion, Bataan on Dec. 22.

Based on documents submitted by the ship's officers, the cargo arrived on board foreign motor vessel Royal 88 and was transferred to the SF Omega as the ships were docked at the port of Cebu.

The BOC expressed belief that the sacks of rice loaded on the SF Omega were different from the ones discharged from the Royal 88.

It said the shipment on the SF Omega was not supported by any goods declaration and clearance from the Bureau of Plant Industry.

## PPP Code...

MANILA, Philippines — The Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Code, signed by President Marcos on Dec. 5, will generate additional funds that will cover the Philippines' P23-trillion infrastructure investment gap, according to Rep. Joey Salceda.

"The PPP Code (Republic Act 11966) move is towards a rules-based, transparent and efficient PPP framework that will help cover the P23-trillion infrastructure investment gap of the country," Salceda said, adding that the measure has been a "pet bill" of Marcos back when he was still a senator.

The Philippines has been lagging behind its Asian neighbors in terms of foreign direct investments.

"There is great promise if we can get the sys-

tem to implement large national projects on PPP bases, where we can transfer the costs of capital to the private sector and even the financial risks to the private sector, whilst giving the private sector to gain profit," Salceda quoted Marcos as saying.

Neophyte lawmaker Bulacan 6th District Rep. Salvador Pleyto Sr. earlier said, "This is my first bill to become a law."

"What is also good about this amendment to the BOT (build-operate-transfer) Law is that it prohibits issuance by courts, except by the SC, of a TRO and preliminary injunctions against all PPP projects. This is very important because projects can no longer be stalled," Pleyto argued.

Other authors of the measure were Surigao del Sur 1st District Rep. Romeo Momo, 1-Pac-man party-list Rep. Michael Romero, Camarines Sur 2nd District Rep. Luis Raymund Villafuerte, Parañaque City 2nd District Rep. Gus Tambunting, BH party-list Rep. Bernadette Herrera and Deputy Speaker Ralph Recto.

Salceda noted that the PPP Code raised the threshold to P15 billion for National Economic and Development Authority-Investment Co-ordination Committee approval.

The PPP Code also prohibits regulatory agencies from entering into and implementing PPP contracts that they regulate and allows the Commission on Audit to evaluate PPP projects.

"The new PPP Code

From Page 1

## SM CELEBRATES A FUR-TASTIC CHRISTMAS WITH SUPER PETS!

Wagging tails and furry friends flocked at the SM Aura Paw Park last December 17 for SM Supermalls' Super Pets Club Christmas Paw-ty and Pet Blessing.



Pet owners create unforgettable memories with their furry companions at the Super Pets Club Christmas Pawty and Pet Blessing held recently at the SM Aura Paw Park.



The mascots of the Super Pets Club—Maki, Matty, Shasha, and Sera—entertain guests with their playful charm.

Furbabies and furbarents were given a fur-tastic party with a 'paw-to' booth, where paw-some memories were captured. Furry attendees were also treated to a delectable pet buffet. From gourmet treats to mouthwatering goodies, the spread was a delight for every discerning pet palate.



A puppy strikes a cute pose for the camera.



A precious dog transforms into an ice cream vendor.



A furry guest indulges in a delicious treat.

Pet parents also had the chance to flaunt their fur babies' fashion sense in an adorable pet costume contest. From dapper bow ties to whimsical Christmas tutus, the creativity on display was simply paw-some. The highlight of the day was a spirited pet parade that showcased the Super Pets, each strutting their stuff in style. The entertainment continued with a lively pet talent show that left everyone in awe of the remarkable skills possessed by these cute companions.



A pet dog dons a costume alongside its owner.



A lovable Santa Puppy spreads holiday cheer.



A pet talent show leaves spectators amazed by the impressive skills of these adorable companions.

The event also provided valuable insights into responsible pet care during an informative talk with veterinarian Dr. Jannie Pauline Sta. Ana, enriching the bond between pets and their owners. On top of all this, the event featured a heartwarming pet blessing.



The event strengthened the pet-owner bond with valuable insights on responsible pet care from veterinarian Dr. Jannie Pauline Sta. Ana.

The Christmas Paw-ty was an exclusive affair reserved for members of the Super Pets Club. Members reveled in the joyous camaraderie, sharing stories and experiences that celebrate the unconditional love shared between pets and their furparents.

The SM Super Pets Club's Christmas Paw-ty was undoubtedly a tail-wagging success, leaving both pets and owners with cherished memories to last a lifetime. To know more about the Super Pets Club, visit [www.smsuperpetsclub.com](http://www.smsuperpetsclub.com) or follow @SMSupermalls on social media.

An Affiliated of

**WEDNESDAY CHRONICLE**  
NEWS PUBLISHING SERVICES



Editorial Office

OFFICE : 64 Pinahan St., Mabolo III, Baco City  
Mobile No. 09218534676

Email add: [wednesdaychronicle@gmail.com](mailto:wednesdaychronicle@gmail.com)

Note: All news articles and opinions expressed by the writers are entirely their own and do not reflect the opinion of the Publisher, Management and Editor of this Publication.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be copied or reproduced or transmitted nor translated in any form for commercial purposes without prior written permission from the publisher and its writers/columnists.

Wednesday Chronicle News Publishing Center  
is published weekly every Wednesday



EDITORIAL BOARD

LUCIO C. ALEJO III  
Publisher

KATRINA A. CRUCENA  
Managing Editor

ROWENA A. ALEJO  
Sub Editor

LUCIO A. ALEJO IV  
Marketing Manager

RACQUEL CRISOLOGO -LARA  
Legal Consultant



PHILIPPINE SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF UNDERGOES REVITALIZATION

Henry Sy Foundation, SM Foundation transform spaces for inclusive education in the Philippines



Philippine School for the Deaf (PSD) hand signs a gratitude message to Henry Sy Foundation (HSF), Department of Education, and Pasay Local Government after they collaborated for the revitalization of the 12-room laboratory building of Senior High School students.

The Philippines' Magna Carta for Disabled Persons ensures the rehabilitation, self-development, and self-reliance of persons with disabilities. The country provides educational assistance to people with disabilities from primary to tertiary education, including vocational or technical training.

One such school is the Philippine School for the Deaf (PSD) in Pasay City. For over a century, the school had demonstrated the transformative power of education in empowering and unlocking the capabilities of those with diverse disabilities to live fulfilling lives.

Though standing as a testament to the Philippines' long-standing commitment to differently-abled education, the school, one of Southeast Asia's oldest institutions for the deaf, suffers from the effects of time and wear, compromising its ability to fulfill its mission.

The school lacked basic facilities and accessibility features: converted classrooms, timeworn corridors, limited space for vocational training, inadequate furniture, dilapidated walls and ceilings, broken tiles and faucets, and dim lighting. It was also prone to flooding due to drainage problems, and it had only one functional toilet with a broken door infested by termites.

Revitalizing a legacy

In a transformative partnership, the Henry Sy Foundation, SM Foundation (SMFI), and the Department of Education's Schools Division Office of Pasay City joined forces to breathe new life into the Senior High School building and a four-story, 12-classroom structure. This initiative, executed under the DepEd's adopt-a-school program, stands as a testament to the power of collaboration in revitalizing educational infrastructure for the benefit of the community.



Teachers conduct lectures on electronics in a more conducive laboratory after the rehabilitation of the school building

Previously hindered by infrastructural limitations, the century-old school now features enhanced learning spaces dedicated to various subjects, including dressmaking, beauty care, cookery, electrical, bartending, food & beverage preparation, ICT, and dance. A dance studio with a dressing room and a conference room were also refurbished.



Through the social good collaboration, the laboratory for baking and cookery has been equipped with new tools and furniture, helping conduct more hands-on classes.

To enhance safety and accessibility, ramps and railings were installed throughout the campus, ensuring ease of movement for all students. Aside from revitalizing 10 classrooms, the SM group also refurbished the conference rooms, and the lobby with a reception area to provide a comfortable environment.



Differently abled students from PSD focus as they attend their beauty and cosmetology class in their new building.

Helping instill good hygiene and encourage healthy habits, a handwashing station, and separate male and female toilets were rehabilitated with clean, functional cubicles, urinals, and PWD-friendly facilities.

The covered court was restored with a spacious stage, creating a conducive area for outdoor learning and recreation.

The rehabilitation of the facilities at the PSD was undertaken, not just to address the physical challenges but also to cultivate an environment where every student can thrive. The project stands as a testament to the SM and Henry Sy Foundations' continued pursuit of inclusivity and its commitment to empowering differently-abled individuals through education.



SM Foundation school building program head Juris Soliman and SMFI Project Supervisor Ar. Caren Lopez (fourth and fifth from left) with PSD Principal Shery Function and SDO Pasay City SGOD Sylwyn Tenorio (sixth and seventh from left) with the team behind the school's refurbishment.



YEARENDER....

STAR / KJ Rosales  
MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine economy performed well in 2023 despite lingering external challenges, due largely to the administration's business-friendly measures and continued public spending as well as President Marcos' active promotion of the country as an attractive investment destination in his foreign trips, according to the government.  
This year alone, the President embarked on 12 foreign trips, which the government said generated at least P757.33 billion in foreign investment approvals from January to October, which are expected to create thousands of jobs. The country is one of the best performing economies among Southeast Asian nations, according to Marcos' economic managers, posting a gross domestic product growth of 5.9 percent in the third quarter, outpacing its neighbors in Asia such as Vietnam (5.3 percent), Indonesia and China (4.9 percent), Malaysia (3.3 percent) and Singapore (0.7 percent).  
"2023? We have done well. Given the circumstances, that's a very challenging year to say the least. The world market was far more challenging than initially expected, say, at this time last year," Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan said at a recent Palace briefing when asked about the economy's status this year.  
"We have done well because if you look at the way we have performed in relation to those many other countries, we have remained among the top performers — economic performers in Asia," he said, noting that this came despite multilateral agencies' downgraded forecast for practically every country.  
The Philippines remained the best performer in Southeast Asia, the chief of the National Economic and Development Authority said, citing a Dec. 13 report of the Manila-based Asian Development Bank.  
Balisacan and Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno expressed optimism on the country's capability to post a full-year economic growth close to the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC)'s growth assumptions of six to seven percent for 2023 with easing inflation, strong labor market conditions and robust consumer spending, especially during the holiday season.

"I'm still hoping that we get at least the six percent but even if we miss that a bit, again, you know that we should congratulate ourselves. We should be very thankful that we have — did not get as much reduction as many other countries," Balisacan said.  
Diokno had said the economy has to grow by at least 7.2 percent in the fourth quarter to achieve the low end of the DBCC's growth forecast of six to seven percent this year. The country's inflation further eased to 4.1 percent in November, lower than the eight percent posted in the same month last year and the 4.9 percent registered in October this year.

Unemployment in the country fell to 4.2 percent in October this year from the 4.5 percent in the same month last year based on the Philippine Statistics Authority's latest Labor Force Survey.  
National Statistician Dennis Mapa earlier said the number of unemployed Filipinos went down to 2.09 million from 2.24 million in October 2022. Renewable energy

At a Malacañang briefing in October, Department of Trade and Industry-Board of Investments Undersecretary Ceferino Rodolfo said of the total investments, P427 billion represented foreign projects mostly in the renewable energy sector.  
Rodolfo attributed the rise in foreign investment to Marcos' foreign trips and the lifting of foreign equity restrictions on renewable energy projects last year.  
Balisacan said the government has learned "many lessons" this year on how to better manage public programs. "We had hiccups on the government spending in the first half of the year and that really hit us hard by way of growth and the kind of services that we were able to provide our people," he said.  
"We have learned our lessons. Verily, if we would not want to see that repeated in the coming year, I think that looking at what our many development servers are reporting, they see the Philippines to be a rising star in this part of the world. So, we are optimistic and I think that despite the challenges, we have done well," Balisacan said.  
In a Facebook post on Dec. 7, Marcos said the latest developments show "remarkable progress" in the country.  
"This is not just a number, it signifies the lives of millions of

our fellow citizens who have found new opportunities. Our dedication to fostering an environment conducive to trade and investment is paying off," he added.  
The ADB's Asian Development Outlook December 2023 projected the Philippines' GDP growth and inflation rates at 5.7 and 6.2 percent, respectively, in the fourth quarter.  
"Developing Asia's outlook remains upbeat despite global challenges," the ADB said in its website.

The multilateral development bank revised its growth forecast for Developing Asia, which includes the Philippines, from 4.7 percent in September to 4.9 percent in December.  
Inflation is also expected to decline from 4.4 percent last year to 3.5 percent this year before rising slightly to 3.6 percent in 2024.  
"Downside risks are mainly associated with higher-for-longer interest rates in advanced economies, which could trigger financial instability. Possible supply disruptions from El Niño and the Russian invasion of Ukraine could renew energy and food security challenges, and rekindle inflation," the ADB noted.  
Seventy-seven percent or around 65 provinces in the Philippines are likely to experience drought by May next year due to El Niño, weather officials had warned.

Business-friendly

On the sidelines of his attendance at the 50th anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-Japan relations in Tokyo last week, Marcos issued Executive Order 49, creating the Office of the Special Assistant to the President for Investment and Economic Affairs (OSAPIEA).  
The OSAPIEA aims to ensure the effective integration, coordination and implementation of the various government investment and economic policies and programs.  
The OSAPIEA will be headed by Presidential Adviser on Investment and Economic Affairs Frederick Go, who will have the rank of Cabinet secretary.  
Among Go's tasks are to provide the President "timely, relevant and strategic advice on economic matters and concerns, including among others, inflation, food security and the increasing prices of key commodities."

From Page 1

In a previous speech, the President said his administration remains steadfast in its commitment to continuously support current and prospective investors as he emphasized that the government has amended existing laws to further open the country's economy to foreign investments.  
Among these initiatives are the Foreign Investments Act, Retail Trade Liberalization Act, Public Service Act and the Renewable Energy Act, which aim to attract more foreign investors in the country's telecommunications, port operations, transportation and clean energy sectors.  
In February, Marcos issued EO 18, directing the establishment of green lanes for strategic investments in all government agencies.

The government has also revised the implementing rules and regulations of the Build-Operate-Transfer law to improve the financial viability of public private partnership or PPP projects.  
Marcos had said his administration was making it easier for private investors to engage in infrastructure initiatives.  
The President has also issued EO 32, streamlining the permitting process for the construction of telecommunications and internet infrastructure in the country.

Maharlika Fund

In July, Marcos signed the Maharlika Investment Fund Act of 2023, creating the Philippines' first-ever sovereign wealth fund that will support the administration's economic goals.  
The President last month appointed Rafael Consing Jr. as president and chief executive officer of the Maharlika Investment Corp., which will manage the fund.  
Consing previously served as executive director of the Office of the Presidential Adviser for Investment and Economic Affairs under the present administration.  
Marcos and his economic managers claimed the Maharlika law would promote fiscal stability through strategic and profitable investments in key sectors.  
Amid criticisms, administration officials said the President's frequent travels abroad have helped the Philippines build up image as an investment hub.  
Marcos made state visits to China, Japan and Malaysia in January, February and July, respectively.

PPP.....

From Page 2

does not suffer from long-standing defects of ambiguity. It is clearly specified which undertakings are not allowed. The process is outlined. The comparative challenge process is simple," he said.  
"There is Original Proponent Status, good for only one year upon acceptance by agency, and a comparative challenge within 90 days to one year, with 30 days right to match," he added.  
Nuclear energy  
Meanwhile, Villafuerte earlier said that House Bill 9293, approved on third and final reading in November, sets the stage for the Marcos administration's use of nuclear or atomic sources to attain energy

security.  
"The development by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council of a national emergency plan for potential nuclear or radiological emergencies, plus the establishment of separate funds for the final disposition of SNF (spent nuclear fuel) and the eventual decommissioning of would-be nuclear power facilities, are on the must-do list of HB 9293 for our safe and secure use of atomic energy," he said.  
HB 9293 seeks the creation of the Philippine Atomic Energy Regulatory Authority to take over all regulatory functions concerning nuclear energy and radiation.

Over 161,000 arrivals during Christmas weekend – BI

MANILA, Philippines — More than 161,000 passenger arrivals were recorded in the country during the Christmas weekend, Bureau of Immigration (BI) Commissioner Norman Tansingco said.  
In a statement, Tansingco said he was pleased with the number of travelers, from the almost 60,000 daily arrivals during the Christmas week that shot up to 161,664 during the Christmas weekend.  
"International travel is not just on a rebound. Figures show that the number of travelers is almost surpassing pre-pandemic numbers. It's a cause for celebration for the tourism and international travel sectors," he said.

ADVERTISING  
The bureau noted that almost 81 percent of the passengers entered the country via the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.  
Meanwhile, 130,497 passengers departed from Dec. 23 to 25.  
Tansingco said that before the COVID-19 pandemic, the average number of daily arrivals during December was only 55,000. In 2019, the average figure for daily departures was at 47,000.



## CROSSWORD



freedailycrosswords.com

## ACROSS

- 1) No longer original
- 6) Good-will agreements
- 11) Sun, moon or sphere
- 14) Bird with a curved neck
- 15) Cancel, as a rocket launch
- 16) Positive sign?
- 17) It starts after 40 hours, for many
- 19) Mendes of Hollywood
- 20) Get what you bask for
- 21) Coke's alcoholic partner
- 22) Bleed in the wash
- 23) Crossword constructor's activity
- 27) States of friendliness
- 29) Did 22-Across
- 30) Catchy tune
- 32) One billion years (var.)
- 33) Make sense (with "up")
- 34) Snobbish expression
- 36) Original sin city
- 39) Slope slider
- 41) Rubbernecked
- 43) Correct the pitch of
- 44) Calligrapher's stroke
- 46) More friendly
- 48) Order's counterpart
- 49) Difficult expedition
- 51) Spreadsheet contents
- 52) Gerard of "Buck Rogers"
- 53) Tries anew
- 56) Some children at kidfriendly zoos
- 58) Pub order, often
- 59) One little piggy
- 60) Lanka
- 61) Eggy Christmas libation
- 62) They have grave responsibilities
- 68) Brains of a PC
- 69) "The Canterbury Tales" character
- 70) Virtual certainty
- 71) Barnyard figure
- 72) Committed a faux pas
- 73) Student's composition

## DOWN

- 1) However, in short
- 2) Gun, as an engine
- 3) More than vexation
- 4) Bakery sweet
- 5) Involves
- 6) Mindy portrayed of TV
- 7) Bart's animated granddad
- 8) Dried coconut meat
- 9) Emergency room concern
- 10) Hinders the progress of
- 11) Not stop when one should
- 12) Musical show
- 13) They may be refried
- 18) Unit of six outs
- 23) Boorish
- 24) Big dipper
- 25) Feeling great pressure
- 26) Gather little by little
- 28) Harbor sound
- 31) Not too hot
- 35) Closing news segment
- 37) How the euphoric walk
- 38) Cries weakly
- 40) Desperate, as circumstances
- 42) Can't stand
- 45) Highlight
- 47) Stressful corporate routine
- 50) Danish coins
- 53) Dressing option
- 54) Run away to wed
- 55) Exodus commemoration
- 57) Hawaiian lights
- 63) First mate
- 64) One side in checkers
- 65) Printer's widths
- 66) Zenith competitor of old
- 67) A verse to first moves

## CITY OF BACOR NEWS

## First Bacoor Hope Children's Chorus Christmas Concert



Nagpakita ng galing ang Bacoor Hope Children's Chorus ng ganapin ang kanilang unang Concert sa Bacoor Government Center, Bacoor City.

Kasama sa nagbigay ng kanilang galing sa pag kanta ang DLSU Chorale, na tumayong kanilang mga Ate at Kuya sa larangan ng pagkanta.

Ang pagbigay ng mensahe ng ating butihing Cong. Lani Mercado – Revilla, ay nagdagdag inspirasyon sa lahat upang patuloy na pagbutihin ang kanilang pagkanta at maabot ang kanilang mga pangarap. Ang ating Deped officer na si Ms. Editha Gregorio ay natuwa dahil sa nakitang niyang buong suportang ng mga magulang at kapamilya ng miyembro.

Nagpasalamat si Dr. Tina Alberto sa walang sawang suporta na binibigay ni Mayor Strike B. Revilla, Vice Mayor Rowena Bautista- Mendiola at ang buong Sangguniang Panlungsod, para sa Bacoor Hope Children's Chorus, gayun din ang mga sponsors, bisita at higit sa lahat ang kanilang Choir Conductor na si Mr. Vell Litan. Isang Maligayang Pasko at Masaganang Bagong Taon sa lahat.

## Pagsasama-sama ng mga dating at bagong halal na opisyal ng barangay, Bumida sa sa masayang Christmas Party



Sa isang kasiyahang puno ng sayawan, kantahan, at kuwentuhan, nagtipon-tipon ang mga dating at bagong halal na opisyal ng barangay noong nakaraang Martes, ika-12 ng Disyembre 2023 para sa kanilang Christmas Party.

Naging tampok sa masiglang pagdiriwang na ito ang pagbibigayan, kung saan hindi lamang nagbahagi ang mga ito ng mga regalo at Christmas packages, kundi pati na rin ng pa-affle na talaga namang ikinatuwa at ikinagalak ng bawat isa.

Dumalo rin sa selebrasyon si Mayor Strike B. Revilla at City Councilor Karen Sarino Evaristo upang magbigay ng kanilang suporta at pakikiisa.

Sa huli, nagtagumpay ang okasyon sa pagpapakita na sa likas na diwa ng Pasko, ang pagkakaisa at pagmamalasakit sa kapwa ang pinakamahalagang regalo na maaring ibigay ng bawat isa.



## Last week's solution:



## CAVITE GIVES BACK TO THE DEDICATED BHW AND BNS



To give back to the laudable dedication and efforts of Barangay Health Workers (BHW) and Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS) across Cavite province, the provincial government of Cavite, with Governor Jonvic Remulla leading the team, distributed incentives allotted to the barangay health frontliners on December 11, 2023 at Cavite State University-Silang Campus. Two-thousand four hundred (2400) BHW and eight hundred thirty-eight (838) BNS received the incentives, amounting to a total of Php 27,695,400.

Gov. Remulla was accompanied by Hon. Aidel Paul Belamide, 5th District Board Member and Committee Chair on Finance, Budget and Appropriations; Silang Mayor Atty. Alston Kevin Anama, Vice Mayor Edward Caranza, and Sangguniang Bayan Members during the program./POC

## MEDICAL AND DENTAL MISSION IN SANTIAGO, ETC



The Provincial Government of Cavite organized another medical and dental mission, underscoring its commitment to the well-being of its constituents. Collaborating with Bria Homes Homeowners' Association, the PGC medical mission team's outreach event was successfully conducted in Barangay Santiago, City of Gen. Trias on December 13, 2023.

More than 200 residents availed free medical and dental services provided by the Office of the Provincial Health Office's medical team and the dental team of the City Health Office of Gen. Trias, assisted by local officials, barangay health workers, and HOA officers. The consultations addressed various health concerns, empowering individuals with insights into their health conditions and furnishing them with pertinent medical advice. Furthermore, prescription medicines were distributed free of charge./POC

## PRAISE AWARDEES



On December 07, 2023, the Provincial Government of Cavite (PGC) held the Recognition of PGC Praise Awardees 2023 at the Bayleaf Hotel in the City of General Trias, Cavite. The ceremony celebrated the dedicated service and outstanding contributions of government employees, highlighting their commitment to public service.

The event, hosted by Atty. Khervy B. Reyes and the Ms. Denesse S. Cajulis, featured an array of distinguished guests, including Mr. Rodel Vincent T. Bae, the OIC-Provincial Administrator for Internal Affairs. Mr. Bae set the tone for the evening by extending a warm welcome to the attendees, recognizing the significance of their collective efforts.

Dir. Maria Theresa R. Poblador, Director II of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) Cavite Field Office, delivered an inspirational message, emphasizing the importance of public service and the impact it has on the community. Her words resonated with the audience, setting the stage for the subsequent recognition of exemplary employees.

The PRAISE Committee took center stage to award plaques and cash incentives to 36 service awardees aged between 60 and 64 years old, as well as 35 service awardees aged 65 and above. The ceremony not only acknowledged the length of their service but also celebrated the quality and dedication these individuals brought to their roles within the Provincial Government of Cavite.

A poignant moment occurred with the presentation of a Posthumous Awardees Video, honoring the memory of 18 employees who had passed away. This solemn tribute showcased their contributions and the lasting impact they made during their tenure. Following this, plaques were awarded to the families of the posthumous awardees, ensuring their legacy lives on.

Board Member Mauroto C. Sison graced the event, acknowledging the guests and participants, further elevating the significance of the ceremony. Mr. Alvin S. Mojica, Provincial Administrator for Community Affairs, delivered the closing remarks. He underlined the significance of the recognition, stating that it goes beyond compliance with the Civil Service Commission's standards. PA Mojica stressed that the event is a heartfelt acknowledgment of the hard work and unwavering dedication of the employees of the Provincial Government of Cavite.

In essence, the Recognition of PGC Praise Awardees 2023 was a testament to the commitment and excellence displayed by the employees of the Provincial Government of Cavite. The ceremony not only celebrated their years of service but also paid homage to those who had left an indelible mark on the organization. The event concluded with a sense of pride and unity, as the awardees and their colleagues reaffirmed their dedication to serving the people of Cavite with passion and distinction./POC

## A COLLABORATIVE MISSION BROUGHT TO THE BARANGAY FATIMA II COMMUNITY



Cavite provincial government organized a medical and dental mission in Barangay Fatima II, Dasmariñas City, on December 5, 2023, benefitting 276 residents.

Led by Dra. Evelyn Agdon from GEAMH, the mission provided medical consultations to 235 individuals. Simultaneously, the GEAMH and Dasmariñas City dental team, provided dental check-ups and extractions to 41 residents.

The collaborative effort between GEAMH and CARSIG-MA District Hospital teams ensured a comprehensive healthcare approach. Medicines, multivitamins, and mosquito repellent lotions were distributed. The success was attributed to the leadership of Punong Barangay Jamil B. Ibardaloza, SK Chairperson Ana Marie Abogado, and dedicated Barangay Health Workers.

The event emphasized proactive community health initiatives, showcasing the power of collective efforts in fostering a healthier and more resilient community. The community expressed gratitude to the provincial government for providing these essential services. /POC

TUMMY AVE. BY KHT-ANO  
OPERATING SCHEDULE

We are open for dine-in, pick-up and deliveries every  
Friday, Saturday & Sunday  
from 4:00PM - 10:00 PM

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LOVE AND SUPPORT!

www.fb.com/tummyave | tummyave | 09153553703 or 09605759151  
99 Manggahan-Lawin, Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite

**TUMMY AVENUE**  
99 Manggahan St, Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite  
09153553703 or 0960 5759151 | www.fb.com/tummyave

Facebook page: tummyave  
Instagram: tummyave  
Contact No.: 0916.355.3703/ 0906.575.9151  
Location: 99 Manggahan-Lawin, Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite