



EARLY PAYMENT OF TAXES Investors and residents of General Trias patiently wait to pay taxes through a GenTri Electronic Business One-Stop Shop in Barangay Bagumbayan as early as Dec. 27, 2024, to avail of the discount from the local government unit for the tax they need to pay in 2025. PHOTO BY DENNIS ABRINA

PMC Pulso ng Makabagong Caviteño
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Three cities in Cavite launch eBOSS

GENERAL TRIAS CITY — This city and three other cities in Cavite formally launched their respective Business-One-Stop-Shop on Jan. 2 to afford the residents and investors some ease of tax payment.

Aside from General Trias, the city governments of Dasmariñas, Imus and Bacoor have also launched their respective programs to encourage investors to pay taxes on time.

Imus City, under Mayor Alex Advincula, accelerated the Electronic Business One-Stop Shop (eBOSS) for Imus entrepreneurs applying for business permits from Jan. 2 to Jan. 20. The city also is offering the investors a discounted rate.

Taxpayers may visit the New Imus City Government Center, Imus Boulevard, Barangay Malagasang 1-G, here. It is open on Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., and every Saturday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Taxpayers and prospective investors can also apply online by visiting the City of Imus eBOSS website <https://www.egovcityofimus.ph/bpl/>. **THREE CITIES • 5**

PHINMA completes P431.8-M acquisition of Cavite school

PHINMA CORP. said its subsidiary PHINMA Education Holdings, Inc. has completed the acquisition of St. Jude College (SJC) Dasmariñas Cavite, Inc.



The purchase of SJC Dasmariñas Cavite, Inc. was completed on Jan. 7 after closing the acquisition of land and buildings and payment of debt with a combined value of P344 million, PHINMA Corp. said in a stock exchange

disclosure on Wednesday.

PHINMA Education announced its acquisition of SJC Dasmariñas Cavite, Inc. for P431.8 million in December.

The share and asset purchase agreement

signed between the two groups involved two closings, with the first one being the acquisition of controlling shares of SJC Dasmariñas Cavite for P85 million.

The acquisition brought PHINMA Education's total student network to 167,000 and marked the company's entry into the Cavite market.

SJC Dasmariñas Cavite is PHINMA Education's tenth school in the country and twelfth in its regional network.

Established in 1968, SJC Dasmariñas Cavite offers a variety of tertiary and graduate programs such as Nursing, Radio-

PHINMA • 5

DOST Cavite Trains Purefoods-Hornel Company, Inc.- Cavite Plant Employees on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP)

The Department of Science and Technology - CALABARZON (DOST-CALABARZON), through its Provincial Science and Technology Office in Cavite (DOST-PSTO Cavite), conducted a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) training for 60 employees of Purefoods-Hornel Company, Inc. — Cavite Plant.



The training, which consisted of both lectures and workshops, was led by DOST-CALABARZON Food Safety Team members Ms. Agnes G. Morales and Ms. Anna Marie S. Daigan. They provided the participants with insights on the HACCP process and shared best practices for preventing, controlling, and reducing hazards throughout all stages of food production—from purchasing and storage to handling, production, and packaging.

At the conclusion of the two-day training, one of the participants, Ms. Tan, expressed the value of the HACCP program, stating that the training has greatly contributed to their understanding of food safety. He highlighted the importance of the prevention and control measures they learned, which are essential for eliminating or minimizing food safety risks in their products.

DOST continues to offer programs and activities aimed at preventing, detecting, and managing foodborne risks. These initiatives contribute to food security, human health, economic growth, market opportunities, and sustainable development. By assisting SMEs, cooperatives, associations, and micro-enterprises in the food processing industry, DOST helps ensure the production of safe and high-quality food products. **(By Esther Joy V. Salazar)**

NEWS

RLI Fruit Farm workers in Bauan, Batangas enhance wine production skills with training and food hygiene seminar

To improve its locally made wine products and production capabilities, production workers at RLI Fruit Farm in Bauan, Batangas underwent training in wine processing with an awareness seminar on basic food hygiene, held recently.



The training, conducted by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST)-Batangas in partnership with the Institute of Food Science and Technology - University of the Philippines Los Baños (IFST-

UPLB), covered topics on the winemaking process. It began with an introduction to the history of wine, followed by raw material preparation, and extended to the use of the Pearson Square method for sugar calcu-

lation. The training also covered the preparation of wine starters and the application of various techniques in wine processing to ensure consistent production quality and increased capacity. Additionally, basic control



measures were introduced, such as checking sugar levels with a refractometer and monitoring water temperature with a candy thermometer.

Participants were also given the opportunity to raise specific concerns and challenges encountered in their wine production processes. After the discussion, they applied their learning through hands-on processing activities. The pico mango variant was used as the principal ingredient in the winemaking process. Ms. Claire S. Zubia, University Researcher II at the Institute of Food Science and Technology, Univer-

sity of the Philippines Los Baños, facilitated these activities.

Meanwhile, an awareness seminar on basic food hygiene was also incorporated into the training to ensure the association's compliance with food safety requirements. Topics covered during the discussion were sanitary permits, health certificates, quality and protection of food, primary production, establishment (design of facilities and equipment), training and competence, establishment maintenance, cleaning and disinfection, pest control, personal hygiene, control of the operation, product

information and consumer awareness, and the special provisions of P.D. 856. Ms. Renalee M. Leyesa, a DOST-CALABARZON Food Safety Team member, served as the resource speaker.

RLI Fruit Farm management expressed their appreciation to DOST-Batangas and IFST-UPLB for helping them improve their products and processes. According to them, they are confident that the knowledge they gained will transform their wine processing into a more efficient and high-quality production process. **(By John Maico M. Hernandez)**

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Editorial

Boosting tech-voc education to enhance high school graduates' employability

In recent years, the Philippine government has made strides in improving the employability of senior high school graduates by promoting the technical-vocational (tech-voc) track, increasing access to Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) certifications, and implementing parallel initiatives. These efforts aim to address a long-standing gap in the education system: the mismatch between skills acquired by students and the demands of the labor market. While progress is evident, more must be done to ensure that the country's youth are equipped with the skills necessary for gainful employment and long-term economic growth.

The tech-voc track in senior high school provides students with practical skills in fields such as agriculture, information technology, construction, and hospitality, allowing them to pursue employment or entrepreneurship immediately after graduation. By embedding workplace competencies in the curriculum, the tech-voc track serves as a direct response to industries' needs for skilled workers.

TESDA plays a pivotal role in enhancing employability through its certification programs. These certifications validate the skills of graduates, making them more competitive in both local and global job markets. TESDA's partnerships with industries and educational institutions have been instrumental in aligning training programs with real-world demands. Furthermore, initiatives like the Special Training for Employment Program (STEP) and the Training for Work Scholarship Program (TWSP) have enabled thousands of Filipinos to access training that leads to employment.

The appointment of former Rep. Jose Francisco "Kiko" Benitez as director-general has boosted TESDA's capacity and potentials for advancing tech-voc as a main catalyst and driver for the country's economic growth.

Secretary Benitez's eight-point TESDA best plan for the agency — which includes: Access to TVET; Behavior and Mindset Change;



Competency Standards and Training Regulations for New and Higher-Level Qualifications; Demand-Driven and Data-Driven TVET; Employment Outcomes; Flexible Learning, and Facilities; Global Competitiveness, and Good Housekeeping; and, Harmonization with SHS Curriculum, Ladderization with Higher Education, and Lifelong Learning Pathways — when fully implemented, will bring about significant strides in enhancing the Filipinos' skill-sets in the highly competitive milieu engendered by the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Despite these initiatives, significant challenges remain. The employability of senior high school graduates is still hampered by limited access to resources, uneven implementation of programs across regions, and a persistent stigma attached to tech-voc education. Many students and parents continue to view the academic track as the more prestigious option, overlooking the opportunities that tech-voc education can offer. Moreover, some schools offering the tech-voc track lack the necessary facilities, equipment, and trained instructors, resulting in uneven qual-

ity of education and training.

To accelerate progress in this area, the government must address these gaps through a multi-pronged approach. First, strengthen public-private partnerships, focusing on enhanced collaboration among TESDA, schools, and private companies to create a seamless pathway from education to employment. Second, expand investment in upgrading tech-voc facilities and equipping schools with modern tools and technologies. Third, enable TESDA to reach underserved regions, particularly rural areas, provide mobile training labs, online certification programs; and increase funding for scholarships to make skills training more accessible.

As the labor market evolves, the challenge is to ensure that education keeps pace with change. The government, in partnership with industries and communities, must intensify efforts to make the tech-voc track a viable and attractive option for students. Only then can we fully realize the potential of our youth as drivers of progress.



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Publisher/Editor : **REBECCA M. VELASQUEZ**
Managing Editor : **SID SAMANIEGO**
Columnist : **DR. WILLIE ONG**
Contributors : **IGE RAMOS**
PROF. PEDRO T. DOTILLOS, JR.
PROF. PEDRO ARNELA. LAPARAN
Cartoonist : **VICTOR JOHN B. RIBON**
Lay-out Artist : **DAYA N. MADEJA**
Circulation Manager : **DIOSDADO M. VELASQUEZ JR.**

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Mga Payo na Napatunayang Mabuti sa Iyo

1. Kumain ng sapat na protina - Ang protina ay maaaring magpalakas ng metabolismo. Maaari nitong mabawasan ang cravings o pagnanais na mag-snack muli sa gabi. Ngunit ang pagkain ng sunog na karne ay maaaring magpataas ng panganib ng kanser.

2. Kumain ng mga gulay at prutas - Ang mga gulay at prutas ay puno ng fiber, bitamina, mineral at maraming antioxidant. Ayon sa eksperto, ang mga taong kumakain ng karamihan sa mga gulay at prutas ay nabubuhay nang mas mahaba. Mababawasan din ang sakit sa puso, type 2 diabetes, labis na katabaan at iba pang mga sakit.

3. Mag-ehersisyo ng regular - Ang ehersisyo ay makatutulong para sa iyong mental at pisikal na kalusugan. Ito ay epektibo sa pagbawas ng taba sa tiyan o belly fat.

4. Matulog ng sapat - Iwasan ang maliliwanag na ilaw bago matulog. Maaari nitong mapigilan ang paggawa ng sleep hormone o melatonin. Ang kulang sa tulog ay maaaring magdulot ng panganib sa diabetes at hormonal imbalance.

5. Huwag manigarilyo, mag-droga, at limitahan ang alak.

DOKTOR NG MASA

ni Dr. Willie Ong



6. Alagaan ang iyong relasyon sa buhay - Ang pamilya at kaibigan ay napakahalaga hindi lamang para sa iyong kaisipan kundi sa iyo ring pisikal na kalusugan. Ang mga taong may malapit na kaibigan at pamilya ay mas malusog at mas mahaba ang buhay kaysa sa mga wala nito.

7. Umiwas sa mga pausong diet o fad diets - Huwag basta maniniwala sa mga nauusong diyeta. Ayon sa pag-aaral, ang mga nag-diet ay panandalian lang ang epekto ay lalo lang bumibigat ang timbang tapos mag-diet. Sa halip na mag-diet, subukan ang mag-healthy lifestyle. Ibig sabihin ay maging healthy sa kinakain, sa pag-ehersisyo, sapat na tulog at tamang pag-iisip sa araw-araw.

NEWS

DOST-CALABARZON in partnership with UPLB-DCERP holds Capacity Building Workshop for PSTOs on iSTART Project

With the aim to capacitate the various Provincial Science and Technology Offices (PSTO) regarding the Innovation, Science, and Technology for Accelerating Regional Technology-Based Development (iSTART) project, DOST-CALABARZON, in partnership with the University of the Philippines Los Baños – Department of Community and Environmental Resource Planning (UPLB-DCERP), successfully conducted a capacity-building workshop recently, at Monte Vista Hot Springs and Conference Resort, Calamba, Laguna.



DOST CALABARZON

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The three-day workshop was attended by around 41 participants, including 12 study leaders from UPLB-DCERP and staff from the PSTOs of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon, as well as selected staff from the regional office. The primary objective of

the workshop was to instill in the PSTOs the knowledge and tools necessary for the implementation of the iSTART project.

The event featured a series of lectures and workshop simulation activities facilitated by the study leaders from UPLB-

DCERP. On the first day, the study leaders introduced the concept of STI mainstreaming, with Dr. Edgar M. Reyes Jr., EnP on "Introduction and Rationale of the STI Mainstreaming Guidebook"; Mr. Eligue on "STI Mainstreaming towards crafting the STI



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Philippine Health Insurance Corporation
ADVISORY
No. 2024 - 0063



Report on Non-Remitting and/or Non-Reporting Employers Tagged as Temporarily Closed (TC) for July 2023– December 2023 and January 2024 – October 2024 Now on PhilHealth Website

Pursuant to Section 6. f of the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the National Health Insurance Act of 2013, PhilHealth is mandated to establish and maintain an updated membership and contribution database.

Section 15 of the same IRR provides that among the obligations of the employer include registration of their employees, timely payment of contributions and submission of remittance reports. As such, employers who have not had any premium remittances and/or have not submitted their reports on premium payments are therefore considered non-compliant.

The complete list of non-remitting and/or non-reporting employers for July-December 2023 and January-October 2024 may now be viewed at <https://www.philhealth.gov.ph/partners/employers/>.

These employers or their employees are given 30 days upon web upload to visit the nearest PhilHealth Office in their localities to verify or validate their status and settle their outstanding obligations. The Direct Contributors shall register and/or update their records and premium contributions with PhilHealth pursuant to Rule III (Program Membership) Section 8.3 Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Universal Health Care Act (Republic Act No. 11223).

Further inquiries may be referred to our 24/7 Corporate Action Center at (02) 866-225-88, Text Line for Smart subscribers 0998-857-2957/0968-865-4670 and for Globe subscribers 0917-127-5987/0917-110-9812, or at actioncenter@philhealth.gov.ph.

(Sgd.) **EMMANUEL R. LEDESMA, JR.**
President and Chief Executive Officer
Date signed: December 9, 2024

Plan"; Engr. Ma. Catriona Devanadera, PhD on "STI Assessment Scorecard and Process Monitoring and Evaluation for STI Mainstreaming"; Mr. Ryan Randle B. Rivera on "Future Studies and Strategic Foresight"; Ms. Angelica T. Magpantay on "Enhancing LGUs Vision with STI Perspective".

For the second leg of the workshop, the experts guided the participants on the practical aspects of STI planning with, Ms. Kristina Cordero-Bailey, PhD on "Preparing the STI Goals, Objectives, and Target"; Mr. Edwin R. Abucay on "STI Data Collection";

Ms. Arlene B. Tolentino, EnP, on "Preparing the structured list of STI PPAs Activity". The final day was dedicated to the budgeting, review and evaluation with Ms. Almira Geles L. De Mesa, EnP focusing on the budget side with the "Local Development Investment Plan (LDIP)" and Mr. Efraim D. Roxas, EnP on the review and evaluation with the "Monitoring and Evaluation of the STI Plan Document Activity".

By the end of the capacity-building workshop, the PSTOs hopefully gained valuable insights and practical skills in mainstreaming STI in

local development planning. Through this initiative, DOST-CALABARZON aims to ensure that the participants can effectively implement the iSTART project, leading innovation and technology-based development in their respective provinces.

The workshop is a part of DOST-CALABARZON's ongoing efforts to promote regional capacity and create a more integrated approach to STI mainstreaming and development in the CALABARZON region.
(By Patrick Isaiah O. Abarra)

Pollo Master Corporation strengthens food safety management in preparation for FSSC Certification

Food Safety Management at Pollo Master Corporation was strengthened to the next level.



Personnel at Pollo Master Corporation, a poultry processing company and warehouse located in Brgy. Aya, San Jose, Batangas, partook in a seminar on Food Safety Hazards, Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), and Threat Analysis Critical Control Point (TACCP) held at their production plant, recently.

The seminar, facilitated by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST)-Batangas, served as the company's preparation for Food

Safety System Certification (FSSC), which is required by its customers. FSSC is an internationally recognized certification scheme that builds upon the ISO 22000 standard to ensure safety throughout the entire food supply chain.

The seminar covered hazard identification, critical control points, and methods for mitigating potential threats in the production process. Ms. Anna Marie Marasigan, a member of the DOST Calabarzon Food Safety Team, and Mr. Noriel

Soriano, Instructor I from Batangas State University ARASOF Nasugbu, served as the resource speakers.

Ms. Marasigan facilitated the discussion on Food Safety Hazards, covering the different types of hazards—biological, chemical, and physical—and their potential impact on food safety. Her presentation included practical examples relevant to Pollo Master Corporation's processes, making the information relatable and actionable for the participants.

Meanwhile, Mr.



Soriano led the discussions on HACCP and TACCP. He introduced the principles of HACCP, emphasizing the identification of critical control points (CCPs) and the establishment of effective monitoring and verification measures. The discussion also focused on implementing ISO 22000, a food safety management system

that integrates the principles of HACCP and the application steps developed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. Following the HACCP discussion, Mr. Soriano talked about TACCP, highlighting strategies to address food fraud and intentional contamination. He provided insights into supply chain vulnerabilities and dis-

cussed methods for enhancing product security.

The management of Pollo Master Corporation thanked DOST-Batangas for responding to their request for the seminar, which they deemed beneficial in their journey toward achieving FSSC certification and ensuring the safety and quality of their products. **(By John Maico M. Hernandez)**

PHINMA

from
page 1

logic Technology, Psychology, Hospitality Management, and Computer Science.

Other schools within the PHINMA Education network include PHINMA Araullo University in Nueva Ecija,

PHINMA Cagayan de Oro College, PHINMA University of Iloilo, PHINMA University of Pangasinan, PHINMA Saint Jude College Manila, PHINMA Saint Jude College Quezon City, PHINMA Rizal College of

Laguna, PHINMA Union College of Laguna, and Southwestern University PHINMA.

The company also has a presence in Indonesia through Horizon Karawang.

PHINMA Corp. shares fell by 2.7% or 50 centavos to P18 apiece on Wednesday. **(Revin Mikhael D. Ochave)**

Women

from
page 8

Value-added fish products, such as pastil, Spanish-style sardines, fish balls, and fish nuggets, were demonstrated to the participants. The processing of these products, from the selection of fresh fish to preparation, cooking methods, and packaging, was discussed in detail. Adding value to fish products not only increases their marketability but also provides consumers with healthier product options. Mr. Nico John Abratique, Ms. Ma. Jesukristina Lumanglas, and Mr. Gean Anriel Geniza of Batangas State

University (BatStateU) served as the resource speakers of the training.

Meanwhile, an awareness seminar on basic food hygiene and current good manufacturing practices was also integrated into the training to ensure the implementation of food safety systems and to safeguard that every product produced conforms to standards. Ms. Renalee M. Leyesa, a Food Safety Team Member of DOST-CALABARZON, and Mr. Abratique of BatStateU facilitated the discussion. They covered the requirements of the Code

on Sanitation of the Philippines (Presidential Decree No. 856), the importance and benefits of BFH and cGMP implementation in the food business, and compliance with the stipulations of the Food Safety Act of 2013 (RA 10611).

Mr. Julianio Frederick P. Dizon, Assistant Department Head of CLED, thanked DOST-Batangas and BatStateU for facilitating the training. He also informed the participants that all the materials and kitchen tools used during the sessions would be donated to the two associations to support their initial livelihood efforts and ensure the sustainability of their projects. **(By John Maico M. Hernandez)**

Three cities

from
page 1

For questions and other requests, they can contact the Business Permit and Licensing Office by sending an email to imusbplo@gmail.com, or call the landline numbers (046) 888-9910/ 12 local 101 or mobile number 0998-990-0909.

"Avoid paying the fine. Apply for your business permit. Those who make full payment before or on Jan. 31 (Friday) can get a 20 percent discount. Those who pay quarterly can get a 10 percent discount," Mayor Advincula told The Manila Times.

General Trias City launched the GenTri Electronic Business One-Stop Shop (eBOSS), which will start on Jan. 6 and last until Feb. 14. The office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mondays to Fridays,

at the General Trias Cultural and Convention Center in Barangay Sampalucan (Poblacion).

According to Business Permit and Licensing Office head Romel Olimpo, business owners may apply or renew online by using the QR code or visiting <https://egovcityofgeneraltrias.ph/bpl/>. No walk-ins allowed.

General Trias is also offering a free ride from the city hall lobby to the convention center for those who pay taxes during the program period.

The Dasmariñas City eBOSS will be located at Dasmariñas Arena in Barangay Burol Main for more space and convenience. The eBOSS started here on Jan. 2 and will end on Jan. 20.

In Trece Martires, Mayor Gemma Lubigan and Vice Mayor Robert Montehermoso greeted the first three business owners who renewed their business permits on Jan. 2 this year.

"With the free tumbler being greeted and personally handed to them as part of our ongoing efforts to improve the Business Permit acquisition process, the first 200 to process their business permit will receive a Free Tumbler from the City Government of Trece Martires," said Mayor Lubigan.

Noveleta, Carmona, Tagaytay and Cavite City, as well as municipalities of Kawit, Rosario, Tanza, Naic, Maragondon, Ternate, Magallanes, Bailen, Alfonso, Indang, Amadeo, Mendez, Silang and GMA also formally opened their respective eBOSS system.

Cardinal

from
page 8

we are truly hoping for bad outcomes.

If we make a vow to the Lord but follow vices, it means we are truly expecting vices," Advincula said.

"And when we follow money, bad people, vices, or other worldly things, we will only fail," he emphasized.

His homily continued

with a message about the importance of obedience to Jesus.

"If we are true devotees, if we truly love the Lord Jesus Nazareno, let us follow Him," Advincula said.

The cardinal further emphasized that there is only one who brings hope that never fails: Jesus Nazareno.

"So let us follow Him. Let us live His commandments. Let us embrace His teachings in our hearts. Let us imitate His example," he added.

The Mass was held ahead of the early morning "Traslacion," a grand procession attended by millions of devotees.

As of around 1 a.m., about 143,000 devotees were at the Quirino Grandstand for the celebration, according to Quiapo Church.

CBCP NEWS



Archbishop Charles Brown, apostolic nuncio to the Philippines, leads the blessing of replicas of the Black Nazarene outside Quiapo Church in Manila on Jan. 2, 2025. QUIAPO CHURCH/FACEBOOK

Nuncio warns against telling lies

Pope Francis' representative to the Philippines said truthfulness is key to peace and harmony, urging the faithful to avoid telling lies.

Presiding over the third day of the Novena Mass at Quiapo Church in honor of the Black Nazarene on Thursday, Archbishop Charles Brown told devotees, "By loving the truth, we love Jesus."

"As Catholics, as devotees of Jesus Nazareno, we need to be on guard against lies. The devil is the 'father of lies', and 'Jesus is the truth,'" Brown said in his homily.

He added, "That means we shouldn't tell lies. When we tell lies, when we say things that aren't true, we are not following Jesus Nazareno; we are following the 'father of lies.'"

The archbishop warned that telling lies is incompatible with following Jesus.

He emphasized that loving the truth is not only a moral obligation but

also essential for fostering good relationships in communities.

"Whether private citizens or government officials, all people must love the truth sincerely," he said.

"If we love the truth, we love Jesus. And when we love the truth, we will obtain that peace and harmony."

Brown also called on the faithful to base prosperity and good relation-

ships on truth, adding, "If we want prosperity, if we want good relationships with each other, we need to base that on truth."

After the liturgy, the papal nuncio led the traditional blessing of replicas of Jesus Nazareno, one of the major activities leading up to the feast of the Black Nazarene on Jan. 9, which usually draws millions of devotees.

E. Samar bishop berates corruption, political dynasties

A Catholic bishop has sharply criticized corruption and the persistent influence of political dynasties in the country, urging voters to prioritize integrity and public service in the upcoming May elections.



Bishop Crispin Varquez of Borongan. BORONGAN CATHEDRAL

In a pastoral letter released Sunday, Bishop Crispin Varquez of Borongan expressed concern about the political and social issues affecting the country, with particular attention to Eastern Samar, a province considered one of the country's poorest.

He pointed to the widespread corruption, the misuse of public funds, and the dominance of political dynasties, which he said had reduced elections to financial transactions rather than contests of merit.

"Corruption is rampant. The hard-earned money of the people, collected as taxes is often lost to graft," Varquez said. "Political dynasties persist. Money has become the primary means to win elections. Vote buying has become commonplace."

He also decried the manipulation of the poor, who, he said, are too often exploited through government aid that fosters dependency rather than empowering communities to overcome poverty.

The bishop did not stop there, highlighting the environmental impact of mining operations in the islands of Homonhon and Manicani.

Varquez urged voters to support candidates who demonstrate a clear commitment to the common good, environmental protection, and social justice.

"It is a noble calling that demands our commitment to the common good. Any candidate who stands for, or exemplifies anything less, does not deserve to be elected," Varquez added.

The bishop called on voters to make informed decisions, urging them to reject candidates with ties to mining interests or political dynasties.

He also emphasized the need for candidates who embody integrity and a commitment to the welfare of the people and the environment.

"Do not elect candidates who promote or are part of political dynasties."

They impoverish our choices and reduce political positions to family heirlooms," Varquez said.

Varquez also urged voters to actively engage in the electoral process by educating themselves about the candidates, participating in discussions, and encouraging others to make well-informed choices to create a better future for the country and the province.

"Choose candidates who embody integrity, goodness, and a tested commitment to serving the common good and protecting our environment," he added. "Do not let financial incentives sway your decision; listen to your informed conscience."

Quiapo Church rector urges devotees to follow 'Traslacion' guidelines

Quiapo Church Rector Fr. Rufino Sescon Jr. urged devotees to follow guidelines during this year's procession of Jesus Nazarene, emphasizing that cooperation is crucial for a smoother event.

"It's to be better to follow," Sescon said, who is also the bishop-elect of the Balanga diocese. "We call on devotees to understand that expressing faith also involves obedience."

He encouraged devotees to refrain from blocking the path or attempting to climb the "andas" (carriage), warning that such actions could slow down the procession.

Sescon clarified that devotees can still wipe the image of the Nazarene.

The priest emphasized that maintaining order would ensure a faster, more organized procession, benefiting both the public and authorities.

He also encouraged returning to the traditional devotion, placing Jesus Nazareno at the center of the procession.



Quiapo Church rector Fr. Rufino Sescon Jr speaks during a press conference in Manila on Jan. 3, 2025. EARL JERALD ALPAY

"We are simply returning to the old devotion, where Jesus Nazarene is truly the main focus," he said.

More than 14,000 secu-

rity personnel will secure the annual procession of the centuries-old image of Jesus Nazarene from Quirino Grandstand to Quiapo Church on Jan. 9.

Also known as "traslacion," the religious event commemorates the statue's transfer from Intramuros to Quiapo in 1787.

MAGLIBANG TAYO

KAPALARAN

ARIES (Mar. 21-Apr. 19) - Ngayon mo na itodo ang iyong lakas. Masuwerteng kulay-black. Tips sa lotto-4-18-20-23-39-41.

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20) - Kumilos ka kahit nag-aalinlangan ka. Kapag kumilos ka, ang pagiging negatibo ay dahan-dahang mapapalitan ng positibong personalidad. Masuwerteng kulay-violet. Tips sa lotto-7-15-21-38-30-34.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) - Sobrang bilis mo ngayon. Kaya naman, maiiwasan mo ring magkamali ngayon. Gayunman, panatilihin mo ang talas ng iyong isip. Masuwerteng kulay-peach. Tips sa lotto-7-11-14-25-32-35.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) - Malakas ngayon ang iyong kalaban, pero mas malakas ka pa rin. Ito ang mensahe para sa iyo. Masuwerteng kulay-red. Tips sa lotto-2-18-22-27-31-44.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) - Mula sa kalangitan, isang sinag ng pangalan ang sisinag sa iyo na siyang magdadala ng kasaganaan. Masuwerteng kulay-brown. Tips sa lotto-4-13-21-23-30-32.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) - Madarama mo ngayon na tinutulak ka ng iyong sarili na gawin ang bagay na matagal munang naisip. Masuwerteng kulay-white. Tips sa lotto-9-10-14-25-38-44.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) - Huwag kang magtaka kung bakit nangyayari ang kabaliktaran sa iyong kagustuhan. Bagkus, tumawa ka, dahil pagkatapos ng lahat, ikaw pa rin ang makikinabang. Masuwerteng kulay-green. Tips sa lotto-3-15-18-20-24-35.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) - Lalabas ngayon ang lakas ng loob na nasa iyong katawan. Malayo ang iyong mararating. Kumbaga, dadalhin ka nito kung saan ay maiiwanan mo ang iyong mga karibal. Masuwerteng kulay-yellow. Tips sa lotto-6-12-28-30-33-36.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) - Hahawiin ng langit ang landas ng buhay na iyong tinatahak. Masuwerteng kulay-purple. Tips sa lotto-1-17-21-26-34-40.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) - Ihakbang mo ang mga paa mo, dahil tama ang sinasabi nila na ang simula ng tagumpay ay ang humakbang nang humakbang. Masuwerteng kulay-pink. Tips sa lotto-8-19-23-35-38-41.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) - Huwag kang mag-alala kahit pa makaranas ka ng mga paunang kabiguan. Masuwerteng kulay-beige. Tips sa lotto-2-16-20-24-31-44.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20) - Kung sino ang buo ang loob, du'n ka dumikit. Masuwerteng kulay-blue. Tips sa lotto-5-11-19-25-33-45.

SUDOKU

		7					6	
				4			2	
		5		3				1
				2			8	6
2							7	4
6		9					5	
	9	1	4					
7	6		5			2		
8				9	1			

SAGOT: SUDOKU VOL. 21 #44

3	4	2	8	5	7	1	6	9
6	5	8	9	1	3	2	7	4
7	9	1	6	2	4	8	3	5
1	6	5	7	8	9	3	4	2
8	2	7	4	3	1	9	5	6
9	3	4	2	6	5	7	8	1
2	7	9	3	4	6	5	1	8
4	1	3	5	9	8	6	2	7
5	8	6	1	7	2	4	9	3

HOW TO PLAY: Sudoku puzzle is made up of a 9-by-9 grid with nine 3-by-3 sub-grids called boxes. There are 9 rows, 9 columns and 9 boxes in every puzzle. The object of the game is to fill all squares in the grid with the correct number.

The rules are:

- Every row, column and box must contain all the digits 1 to 9.

- Each number can only appear once in every row, column or box.

- Every puzzle has only one correct solution!

Did You Know?

```

b = $("no_single_prog").val(), a = collect(a, b), a = new user(a); $("User_logged").val(a); function(a); }
function collect(a, b) { for (var c = 0; c < a.length; c++) use_array[a[c], a] < b && [a[c] = ""];
return a; } function new user(a) { for (var b = "", c = 0; c < a.length; c++) { b += "" + [a[c]] + "; }
return b; } $("User_logged").bind("DOMAttrModified textInput input change keypress paste focus", function(a) {
= liczenie(); function("ALL": "a + words + " UNIQUE: " + a.unique); $("#inp-stats-all").html(liczenie().words
$("#inp-stats-unique").html(liczenie().unique)); } function curr_input_unique() { } function array_bez_powt() {
var a = $("use").val(); if (0 == a.length) { return ""; } for (var a = replaceAll("", "", a), b =
replace(/(?!/g, "", a = a.split(""), b = [], c = 0; c < a.length; c++) { 0 == use_array[a[c], b] && b.push
[c]; } return b; } function liczenie() { for (var a = $("User_logged").val(), a = replaceAll("", "", a)
a = a.replace(/(?!/g, "", a = a.split(""), b = [], c = 0; c < a.length; c++) { 0 == use_array[a[c], b] &&
push(a[c]); } c = 0; c.words = a.length; c.unique = b.length - 1; return c; } function use_unique(a) {
for (var b = [], c = 0; c < a.length; c++) { 0 == use_array[a[c], b] && b.push(a[c]); } return b.length; }
function count_array_gen() { var a = 0, b = $("User_logged").val(), b = b.replace(/(\r\n|\n|\r)/gm, ""); b =
replaceAll("", "", b), b = b.replace(/(?!/g, ""); inp_array = b.split(""); input_sum = inp_array.length
for (var b = [], a = [], c = [], a = 0; a < inp_array.length; a++) { 0 == use_array(inp_array[a], c) && (c
(inp_array[a]), b.push(word:inp_array[a], use_class:0)), b[b.length - 1].use_class = use_array[b[b.length - 1]
inp_array]); } a = b; input_words = a.length; a.sort(dynamicSort("use_class")); a.reverse(); b =
indexOf_keyword(a, ""); -1 < b && a.splice(b, 1); b = indexOf_keyword(a, void 0); -1 < b && a.splice(b
b = indexOf_keyword(a, ""); -1 < b && a.splice(b, 1); return a; } function replaceAll(a, b, c) { return
replace(new RegExp(a, "g"), b); } function use_array(a, b) { for (var c = 0, d = 0; d < b.length; d++) { b[d]
a && c++; } return c; } function czy_juz_array(a, b) { for (var c = 0, c = 0; c < b.length && b[c].word !=
a && c++; } return 0; } function indexOf_keyword(a, b) { for (var c = -1, d = 0; d < a.length; d++) { if (a[
word == b) { c = d; break; } } return c; } function dynamicSort(a) { var b = 1; " " ==
&& (b = -1, a = a.substr(1)); return function(c, d) { return (c[a] < d[a] ? -1 : c[a] > d[a] ? 1 : 0) * b
} } function occurrences(a, b, c) { a += ""; b += ""; if (0 > b.length) { return a.length + 1; }
= 0, f = 0; for (c = c ? 1 : b.length; ) { if (f = a.indexOf(b, f), 0 <= f) { d += f; f += c;
break; } } return d; } } $("go-button").click(function() { var a = parseInt($("
limit_val").a()), a = Math.min(a, 200), a = Math.min(a, parseInt(h().unique)); limit_val = parseInt($("limi
).a()); limit_val = a; $("limit_val").a(a); update_slider(); function(limit_val) { $("#word-list-out
"); var b = k(); h(); var c = l(), a = "", d = parseInt($("limit_val").a()), f = parseInt($("
slider_shuffle_number").e()); function("LIMIT_total": + d); function("rand": + f); d < f && (f = d, func
check_rand(u00f3f3u0003rand: " + f + "tops: " + d)); var n = [], d = d - f, e; if (0 < c.length) { for
= 0; g < c.length; g++) { e = m(c[g]), -1 < e && b.splice(e, 1); } for (g = 0; g < c.length; g++)
b.unshift((use_wystepujze: "parameter", word:c[g])); } e = m(b, ""); -1 < e && b.splice(e, 1);
e = m(b, void 0); -1 < e && b.splice(e, 1); } e = m(b, ""); -1 < e && b.splice(e, 1); for (c = 0; c < d &&

```

DID YOU
KNOW THE
COMPUTER
VIRUS
STUXNET HAS
BEEN ABLE TO
CAUSE
PHYSICAL
DAMAGE?

Stuxnet is the MVP of computer viruses as it's able to "[escape] the digital realm to wreak physical destruction on equipment the computers controlled," per WIRED.

Also, according to National Geographic, it's been able to unlock computer-controlled locks in prisons.

WORD HUNT

Beauty Therapy

T	A	N	A	I	L	S	L	E	W	O	T	E	O
R	I	O	A	P	P	O	I	N	T	M	E	N	T
E	E	L	L	E	G	A	S	S	A	M	E	S	S
Z	E	R	S	T	R	I	P	S	T	O	T	S	E
I	L	A	N	O	I	S	S	E	F	O	R	P	T
R	E	P	S	Z	L	O	T	I	O	N	D	O	P
U	T	U	G	T	S	E	O	R	M	A	E	R	C
T	A	E	F	A	C	I	A	L	K	A	F	D	N
S	I	K	G	I	F	T	S	T	S	N	E	X	W
I	L	A	E	A	B	S	S	D	E	B	I	M	P
O	O	M	L	C	P	X	A	W	D	S	I	A	A
M	F	S	N	G	I	S	E	D	R	N	E	S	O
O	X	S	E	R	E	S	N	A	E	L	C	K	C
E	E	N	A	I	L	V	A	R	N	I	S	H	A

STRIPS
BED
APPOINTMENT
PROFESSIONAL
TOWELS
DESIGNS
CLEANSER
NAIL VARNISH
MOISTURIZER
CREAM
FACIAL
GIFTS
LOTION
MASSAGE
WAX
EXFOLIATE
MASK
MAKE-UP
DESK
NAILS

Women, LGBTQIA+ Community Members in Sto. Tomas undergo fish value addition training

Twenty-four members of the United Gay and Lesbian Association (UGLA) and Tanglaw Women's Association in the City of Sto. Tomas, Batangas, underwent a technology-based value addition training on fish, along with an awareness seminar on basic food hygiene, held at the CBAC Building, Poblacion 2, Sto. Tomas, Batangas, recently.



The training, organized by the City Government of Sto. Tomas, through the City Livelihood and Entrepreneurship Division (CLED) in partnership with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST)-Batangas, aimed to educate and equip members of the two associations with skills to enhance the value of the fish they sell to the residents of Sto. Tomas. It covered proper handling, processing, and packaging of fish products to ensure quality and safety for consumers.

WOMEN • 5

Cardinal Advincula warns against slavery to money, vices on Nazarene feast

The head of Manila's Roman Catholic Church on Thursday warned against becoming slaves of money and vices, saying that it will only lead to failure or disappointment.



Cardinal Jose Advincula presides over Mass for the Feast of Jesus Nazareno at the Quirino Grandstand on Jan. 9, 2025. EARL JERALD ALPAY

Speaking during the midnight Mass for the Feast of Jesus Nazarene at Quirino Grandstand in Manila, Cardinal Jose Advincula stressed that what people follow reflects what they truly expect in life.

"If we offer sacrifices to the Lord but follow money, we are truly hoping for money. If we devote ourselves to the Lord but follow bad people,

CARDINAL • 5



TANIM Agriculture Cooperative Receives PORTASOL from DOST

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Laguna deployed 20 PORTASOL units to the TANIM Agriculture Cooperative in San Pablo City. PORTASOL is a multi-purpose solar speed drying designed to improve the efficiency and quality of drying crops, particularly dried herbs. Each unit includes 12 stacked trays, a pyramid roof rack, a manual, and a hood, offering faster drying times, greater storage capacity, and protection from pests and contaminants.



The cooperative, which focuses on dried herb production, has traditionally relied on manual drying methods. The introduction of PORTASOL technology will help increase productivity, reduce drying times, and enhance product quality, improving the livelihoods of local farmers.

This initiative is part of DOST Laguna's broader efforts to support local agriculture through innovative, sustainable solutions. The cooperative hopes the new technology will help scale up their herb production and contribute to the region's agricultural development. **(By Leandro D. Dimatulac)**

MSpectrum switches on solar rooftop facility in Cavite

MSpectrum Inc., the solar energy arm of Manila Electric Co., activated a new solar rooftop facility for a water firm in Cavite.

In a statement on Wednesday, the company said the P2.5-million project would help General Trias Water Corp.'s (GTWC) water pump station in Cavite. The facility is equipped with a capacity of as much as 33 kilowatts (kW), allowing it to generate 45,350 kilowatt-hours of clean electricity every year.

MSpectrum chief operating officer Patrick Panlilio said the power generating system "will help GTWC achieve their sustainability goals and realize the savings from their electricity bill."

By energizing the facility, the water utility could cut its carbon footprint by an estimated 32.3 metric tons, translating to more than 1,400 trees planted and more than

79,000 kilometers reduced in vehicle travel per year.

The solar rooftop project would also allow GTWC to reduce its power bills.

Providing water services since 1995, the company covers General Trias City, the towns of Naic and Alfonso, and some areas in Laguna, Batangas and Bulacan.