



Tens of thousands expected to lineup for Nazareno image 'pahalik'

Tens of thousands of devotees are expected to line up for the pahalik, an old tradition that allows the faithful to venerate the revered image of Jesus Nazareno, organizers said.

Quiapo Church technical adviser Alex Irasga said the turnout is expected to be comparable to previous years for the devotional practice, in which devotees express reverence by kissing and touching the image.

"The number is very fluid... but it's always in the thousands (of devotees)," Irasga said.

The pahalik is set to begin at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Quirino Grandstand, following a 6 p.m. Mass for volunteers. The activity will run continuously until Jan. 9, ahead of the grand procession marking the Feast of Jesus Nazareno.

It will be briefly suspended at midnight on Jan. 9 to **TENS OF THOUSANDS** • 4

Top 10 legacy projects of Cavite announced

CAVITE CITY — Mayor Denver Chua announced the city government's top 10 legacy projects during the opening of the year 2026, highlighting programs focused on health, education, sports, tourism, and technological advancement.

Chua said the projects reflect long-term programs designed to directly benefit Cavite City residents and show how taxpayers' money is being utilized.

Among the projects are the Cavite City State University Sea Breeze campus, a play park, aviary and chess hub at Samonte Park, a new tennis court and clubhouse,

TOP 10 LEGACY • 4



BAGONG TAON PARA SA KALIKASAN, 217 NA BATANG PAWIKAN NAGBALIK SA KANILANG TAHANAN

Isang makabuluhang pagsalubong sa Bagong Taon ang isinagawa ng Samahan ng Labac Pawikan Patrollers (SLPP) noong Enero 1, 2026 sa Barangay Labac, Naic, Cavite nang 217 pawikan hatchlings ang pinakawalan pabalik sa dagat upang simulan ang kanilang buhay sa natural na tirahan.



Ang mga batang pawikan, na kabilang sa Olive Ridley species, ay unang inalagaan ng mga pawikan patrollers matapos silang matagpuan sa baybayin noong Oktubre 31, 2025.

Pinangalagaan ang mga itlog sa kanilang hatchery para maiwasan ang panganib mula sa mga predator at masiguro ang mas mataas na pagkakataon na mapisa ang mga ito.

BAGONG TAON • 4

NEWS

Ending 2025 Stronger as DOSTOneSCIGLAT Family: DOST Ilocos Region's Year-End program with a Purpose



The Department of Science and Technology Ilocos Region (DOST Ilocos Region) meaningfully closed the year 2025 through its Year-End Program held on December 18–19, 2025, at EM Royale Hotel and Beach Resort in Taboc, San Juan, La Union. The two-day activity brought together employees not only to celebrate the year's accomplishments but also to reflect, give back, and prepare for the year ahead.



Through the guidance and leadership of Regional Director Teresita A. Tabaog, the Year-End Program emphasized unity, appreciation, and shared purpose. Director Tabaog encouraged everyone to take time to reflect on both individual and collective efforts that contributed to the successful implementation of DOST programs and services across the region.

One of the key activities was the 2025 Individual Performance Accomplishment Review for Contract of Service (COS) employees. This activity provided a platform for employees to reflect on their accomplishments, strengthen accountability to their assigned tasks, and share innovative ideas, actions, and initiatives implemented throughout the year.

The spirit of the holidays was also shared with the community through a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Gift-Giving Activity held at San Fernando South Central Integrated School. The activity brought joy and meaningful support to learners under the

Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN) Program, highlighting the DOST Ilocos Region's commitment to inclusive and people-centered service.

Adding excitement to the celebration was the Search for Mr. and Ms. SCIGLAT 2025, where six candidates confidently represented their respective teams. The event showcased confidence, creativity, and teamwork, with strong support from colleagues. Dr. Ismael D. Gurtiza, former Assistant Regional Director for Field Operations and current member of the Regional Technical Evaluation Committee (RTEC), served as one of the board of judges together with Director Tabaog and Ms. Carla Joyce B. Cajala, SRS II of DOST Ilocos Region.

Team spirit continued with indoor and outdoor team-building activities, where participants took part in physical and mental challenges designed to promote collaboration, trust, and camaraderie. The friendly competitions fostered stronger connections among team members and reinforced

the value of working together toward common goals.

Beyond celebration and reflection, the Year-End Program also focused on future planning. A review meeting was conducted under the leadership of Director Tabaog in preparation for the 2026 Regional Science, Technology, and Innovation Week (RSTW). The meeting served as an important first step to ensure smooth planning, effective coordination, and informed decision-making, drawing insights from the successful conduct of the 2025 National Science, Technology, and Innovation Week (NSTW).

As DOST Ilocos Region closes 2025, the Year-End Program stands as a strong reminder that its greatest strength lies in its people. United as DOSTOneSCIGLAT family, the region moves into 2026 with renewed purpose, strengthened partnerships, and a clear focus on bringing science, technology, and innovation closer to communities, creating meaningful impact and lasting change for the region.

LECSON PUBLISHING and SERVICES, Inc.

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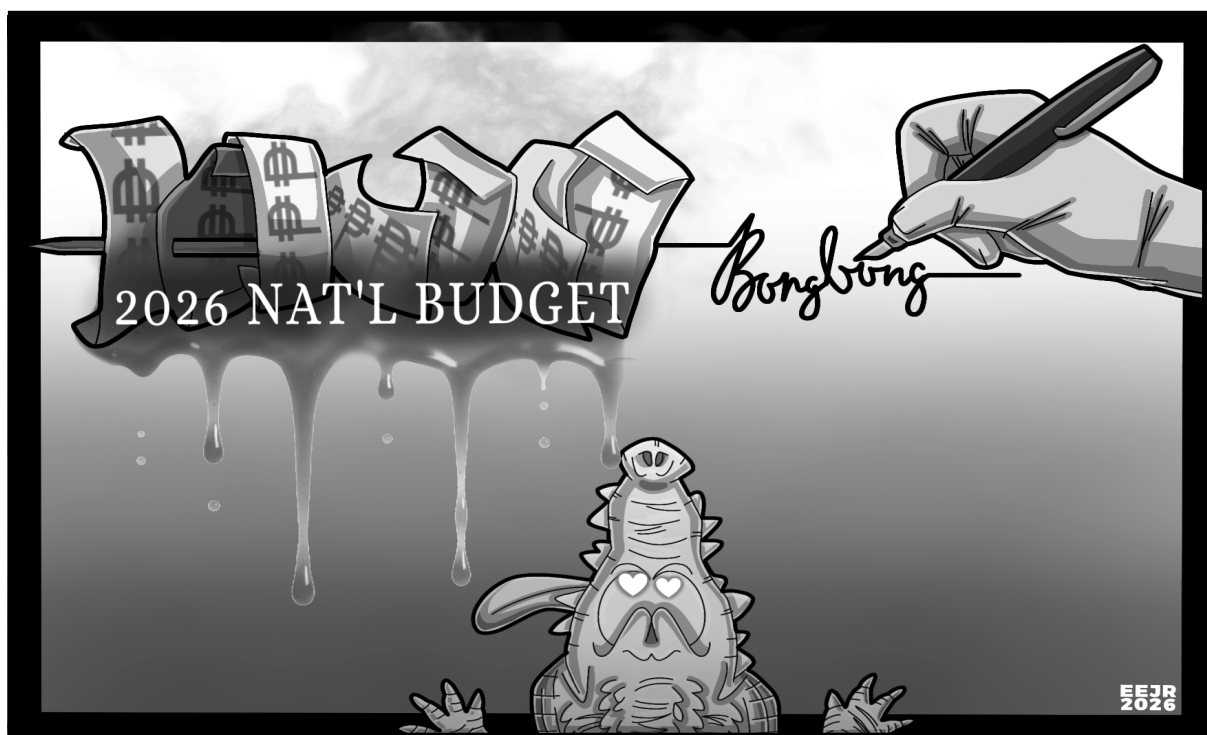
Editorial

CHR is off the mark on call for PhilHealth funds 'accountability'

OVER the weekend, Commission on Human Rights (CHR) Chairman Richard Palpal-latoc sounded off on the now-resolved controversy over the transfer of P60 billion in Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth) funds to the national treasury, saying that the government officials responsible for it "must be held liable." This followed earlier, and equally baseless, accusations of malfeasance from some quarters, and is yet another example of this country's unfortunate and unproductive preference to seek villains instead of real accountability when such controversies arise. It is particularly irresponsible in this case, as Palpal-latoc is a government official who should know better, and if he did not, could have informed himself with a few minutes of basic research.

To recap the chain of events, the transfer of funds from PhilHealth began with then-Albay representative Joey Salceda's revelation in 2023 that the state-run insurance fund had P203 billion in excess funds, and that other government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) also had "idle funds." That eventually resulted in the passage of HB 9513 by the House, an act authorizing the use of excess GOCC funds for unprogrammed appropriations, but of course, those appropriations that would still require the approval of Congress as part of the annual budget bill. HB 9513 or a counterpart bill did not advance in the Senate, but the matter was handled by Congress' inclusion of a Special Provision 1(d) under Chapter XIII (Unprogrammed Appropriations) of the 2024 General Appropriations Act. That provision allowed the use of GOCC funds "from any remainder resulting from the review and reduction of their reserve funds to reasonable levels, taking into account the disbursement from prior years, and consistent with pertinent laws and regulations." It then directed the Department of Finance (DOF) to issue guidelines within 15 days to implement this provision.

The DOF did this with Circular 003-2024, which covered all GOCCs, and then took the necessary steps to identify the applicable amounts and direct their transfer to the Treasury. PhilHealth's useable excess was tagged at P89.9 billion, considerably pared down from the P203 billion identified by Salceda. A total of P60 billion had been transferred, in several tranches, before the Supreme Court put the brakes on it last month by declaring Special Pro-



vision 1(d) and Circular 003-2024 unconstitutional and violative of the Universal Health Care Act (RA 11223).

Contrary to what Palpal-latoc and other critics desperately searching for scapegoats in a matter that has been effectively resolved, from beginning to end the PhilHealth fund transfer was handled according to proper legal process. Congress passed the provision authorizing it, and directed the DOF to implement it. Before any funds moved from PhilHealth according to these instructions, they first had to be approved by the PhilHealth board, and cleared by the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG), the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel (OGCC), the Governance Commission for GOCCs (GCG), and the Commission on Audit (COA). The Supreme Court ruling striking down the fund transfer was part of the process, too, one that the administration has accepted and is now taking the needed steps to comply with.

So, who, exactly, should be "held liable?" Granted, the subject of excess funds at PhilHealth was controversial from the moment Salceda first raised the issue, with questions being asked about how those

funds accumulated in the first place. Critics have made the assumption these were funds from PhilHealth members' contributions. PhilHealth for its part has consistently maintained that they were not, but rather unused government subsidies and investment returns. With its ruling last month, the Supreme Court made the issue moot by emphasizing that under the Universal Health Care Act, all PhilHealth funds regardless of their provenance, are restricted to use for the provision of health care.

The only possible villains in all this are the entire 19th Congress, who crafted and passed the law that authorized the fund transfer in the first place. As Congress represents the people, that is a ridiculous notion; thus, the real fault lies in a process. And unfortunately, fixing a faulty process is not as easy, and does not bait the public's outrage as much as simply suggesting that some person or persons are to blame. There are many critical issues that need the expert attention of the CHR and its leadership. The PhilHealth fund transfer matter is not one of them.

Mga Pagkain para sa Lalaki

Ilong mga pagkain ang bagay sa mga lalaki. Para maging masigla at malusog:

1. Matabang isda (fatty fish) tulad ng dilis, sardinas, bangus, tanigui, tuna, tawilis. Ang sustansyang nakukuha sa isda ay ang omega-3 fatty acids. Ang fatty fish ay posibleng tumutulong laban sa sakit sa puso, stroke, hypertension, depression, joint pain, lupus at rheumatoid arthritis.

2. Mga beans at munggo. Mababa sa taba, ang mga beans ay isang mahusay na pinagmumulan ng protina at fiber. Maaaring magkaroon ng proteksiyong epekto ang beans laban sa sakit sa puso at kanser.

3. Kamatis at Tomato sauce. Ang kamatis ay may lycopene, isang mabisang panglaban sa prostate cancer sa lalaki at sakit sa puso. May tulong ang lycopene sa balat at pagprotekta laban sa UV light ng araw.

4. Pulang karne (red meat) at hindi taba. Ang karagdagang protina ay nakapagpapalusog. Ang protina ay gumagamit din ng mas maraming calories at nasusunog ang protina. Ang amino acid leucine ay matatagpuan sa pulang karne (red meat). Mahalaga ang amino acid dahil sa pagpapatatag ng masel sa katawan. Piliin ang lean meat na walang taba. Kumain ng katamtaman

5. Seafoods. Ang mga alimango, tulya, talaba, hipon at iba pang shellfish ay may Zinc, mababa sa calories at mataas sa protina. Kailangan ng lalaki ang zinc para makabuo ng semilya. Tinutulungan din nito ang iyong prostate. Kung ikaw ay kulang sa Zinc, tataas ang tsansa na ikaw ay magkaroon ng prostate cancer.

6. Saging at potassium. Para sa mga masakit na kalamnan at pulikat. subukan ang mga saging. Kung sapat ang potassium ay pwede maka-iwas sa mga

DOKTOR NG MASA

ni Dr. Willie Ong



ito. Ang mga saging ay puno sa potassium. At kung ikaw ay may mataas na presyon (high blood), ang potassium ay mahalaga bilang pagbawas ng sodium para mapababa ang blood pressure.

7. Berdeng Gulay (Green Leafy Vegetable). Madahon at berdeng gulay ang kangkong, malunggay, spinach, alugbati, dahon ng sili at lahat ng talbos. Ito ay mayaman sa antioxidants lutein at zeaxanthin na mabuti sa paningin. Ang phytochemicals sa gulay ay pinatataas ang cellular health at makatutulong sa pagpapababa ng tsansa na magkaroon ng kanser.

8. Orange na gulay. Subukan ang mga karot, kamote, kalabasa at orange bell peppers. Ang orange na gulay ay may maraming bitamina C, lutein at beta-carotene. Mabuti ito sa mata at pinipigilan ang sakit sa puso at kanser. Kaya kumain ng maraming mga gulay na iba't iba ang kulay.

9. Itlog. Ang itlog ay masarap at masustansyang protina na puwede idagdag sa iyong pagkain. Ang isang malaking itlog ay mayroong 6 grams protina, 63 mg potassium at 78 calories lamang. Puwede kumain ng isang itlog bawat araw.

10. Luya. Ang luya ay may tulong sa masakit at pagod na kalamnan. Ang luya ay mabisa sa pamamaga, tulad ng pain relievers. Sa pag-aaral sa mga pasyenteng may arthritis sa tuhod, ang katas ng purong luya ay nakababawas ng paninigas at sakit ng 40%. Ang salabat ay maganda rin sa pagduduwal, mabilis na paggaling at pag-alaga ng boses.

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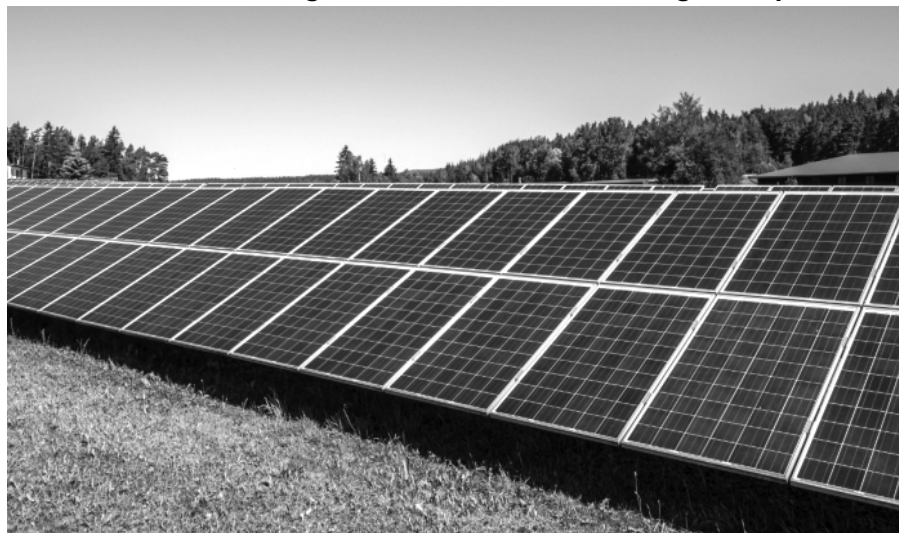
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NEWS

Schneider Electric Powers All Cavite Facilities With 100% Renewable Energy Through Partnership With ACEN RES

American Power Conversion (APC) by Schneider Electric, a global leader in uninterruptible power supply systems and data center infrastructure, has transitioned all five of its manufacturing facilities in the Cavite Economic Zone to run entirely on renewable energy. This marks a major sustainability milestone for the company and reinforces its long-term commitment to reducing carbon emissions across its global operations.



The achievement was made possible through a renewable energy supply agreement with ACEN RES, the retail electricity supplier of the Ayala Group. The arrangement was established under the Philippine government's Green Energy Option Program (GEOP), which enables qualified electricity consumers to choose renewable energy as their

primary power source.

The GEOP, created by the Department of Energy, allows organizations with an average monthly electricity consumption of at least 100 kilowatts to directly contract renewable energy providers rather than relying on traditional distribution utilities. This mechanism supports businesses in advancing their sustainability objec-

tives and accelerating the country's clean energy transition. ACEN RES currently leads the green energy supply market under GEOP, holding a 57 percent share. Schneider Electric's five Cavite facilities—primarily involved in semiconductor manufacturing—began operating on 100 percent renewable energy in December 2025. The

agreement covers both office and production sites and is expected to prevent approximately 11,600 tons of carbon dioxide emissions each year.

Antonio Cheng Jr., Plant Director for the Cavite Cluster at Schneider Electric Philippines, emphasized the significance of the transition, describing it as a major step toward achieving the company's Net Zero ambitions. He noted that the Cavite Smart Factory is set to become the first facility within a government eco-zone in Luzon, and the first Schneider Electric factory in East Asia, to operate entirely on re-

newable energy. Cheng highlighted that this milestone reflects the company's strong commitment to climate action and positions the Philippines as a leader in sustainable industrial development.

Eric Francia, President and CEO of ACEN, said the partnership illustrates how global manufacturing companies can play an active role in driving the country's renewable energy transition.

He added that Schneider Electric's shift to 100 percent renewable energy for complex industrial operations demonstrates that large-scale decarbonization is both achievable and

practical today.

Schneider Electric's move aligns with the Philippines' broader sustainability goals and reinforces its own global climate commitments. To recognize the company's adoption of renewable energy, ACEN RES awarded Schneider Electric its "Powered by Renewable Energy" badge. This proprietary seal is the first of its kind in the Philippines and publicly acknowledges organizations that have fully transitioned to renewable power. The badge has now been awarded to nearly 100 facilities across the country that are powered entirely by renewable energy.

Estudyante

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nominado ni Roberth Gallardo III ng Modelo Icons Management, na nakakita ng kanyang potensyal at m a k a b u l u h a n g impluwensya bilang isang kabataang lider.

Bilang isang model at beauty queen, malinaw ang paninindigan ni Janelle: ang tunay na ganda ay lampas sa pisikal na anyo.

Para sa kanya, ito ay makikita sa paraan ng paggalang sa buhay, pag-angat sa kapwa, at pagprotekta sa mga taong madalas makaramdam na sila'y hindi napapansin. Ginagamit niya ang kanyang plataporma upang itaguyod ang self-worth, mental health awareness, at kabutihan, palaging ipinapaalala na ang bawat buhay ay may halaga—lalo na sa mga sandaling pinakamabigat

ang pinagdaraan.

"Choosing life means choosing hope, empathy, and purpose," ayon kay Janelle.

Kung mabibigyan ng mas maraming pagkakataon, patuloy niyang gagamitin ang kanyang boses upang magbigay inspirasyon sa iba na pahalagahan ang buhay, simula sa kanilang sarili.

Isang mensahe rin ang nais niyang ipaabot sa kanyang kapwa estudyante at sa mga kabataang tumitingala sa kanila:

"Your life matters, exactly as you are. You don't have to be perfect to be worthy. Ang iyong mga pagkukulang, pagkakamali, at pinagdaraan ay bahagi ng kung bakit ka natatangi at matatag. Yakapin mo ang sarili mo, maging mabait ka sa

iyong sarili, at huwag ikahiya ang iyong mga imperpektyon—patunay ang mga ito na ikaw ay tao, patuloy na lumalago, at buong-buhay."

Ang kanyang mga magulang ay nagsilbing matibay na haligi ng kanyang mga pangarap. Ang kanyang ama ay isang Production Manager sa Danam Philippines Inc., habang ang kanyang ina naman ay Barangay Treasurer ng Barangay Wawa II—mga propesyong nagpakita kay Janelle ng halaga ng sipag, serbisyo, at responsibilidad sa komunidad.

Si Janelle Mica Pugeda ay hindi lamang reyna sa entablado. Siya ay tinig ng pag-asa, larawan ng kabataang may direksyon, at patunay na ang ganda na may layunin ay may k a p a n g y a r i h a n g magbigay-liwanag sa marami. (sid samaniego)

DOST Batangas

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SETUP accepts applications from Filipino-owned firms operating in the Philippines that seek to upgrade their existing processes through appropriate technologies. Associations, cooperatives, and community-based

groups may also apply through their respective local government units.

Interested applicants must submit a project proposal, letter of intent, business permits and licenses, financial statements, and other re-

quired documents to DOST-Batangas.

Through SETUP, DOST-Batangas continues to deliver science- and technology-based interventions that strengthen MSMEs, promote innovation, and contribute to sustainable economic development in the province. (DOST Batangas)

Tens of thousands

from page 1

give way to the Misa Mayor, which will be presided over by Bishop Rufino Sescon of Balanga.

Irasga said organizers have deployed sufficient security personnel throughout the event, noting that the pahalik is

typically the most orderly activity during the feast celebrations.

"The pahalik is usually the most orderly event we have," he said.

Devotees are advised to line up along South Drive or at the Kalaw Avenue Extension, in front

of the Rizal Park Hotel. Organizers have also adjusted the exit route this year.

"After doing the pahalik, they will go up a few steps to the top of the Quirino Grandstand and then return to South Drive," Irasga said, adding that devotees will no longer exit via Katigbak Road near the Manila Hotel.

more projects are in the pipeline, including improvements and additional facilities at the city hospital to reduce the need for residents to seek medical services outside Cavite City. (Dennis Abrina)

The mayor added that

Top 10 legacy

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an animal center, and a new barangay multipurpose hall.

Also included are the Unlad Mobile Clinic, a new Sangley Point Na-

tional High School building, solar street lights along major roads, and free WiFi in strategic areas of the city.

Bagong Taon

from page 1

Sinaksihan ang ceremonial release ng mga hatchlings ng mga lokal na pinuno kabilang ang dating kapitan del baryo ng Labac na si Roger Bilugan, pati na rin ng ilang mga opisyal ng Cavite police. Ayon kay Bilugan, ang pagpapakawala ng mga pawikan ay simbolikong mensahe ng pag-asa at pagmamahal sa

kalikasan para sa bagong taon.

Ayon sa SLPP, mula pa noong Setyembre 2025 ay umabot na sa 106 na naitalang pugad (nest holes) ng pawikan sa kanilang talaan, na nagpapakita ng aktibong itinataguyod na nesting at conservation efforts sa lugar. Ang ganitong mga aktibidad ay mahalaga para sa pagtulong sa

pagpreserba ng mga pawikan, na kabilang sa mga nanganganib na species at nangangailangan ng proteksyon para sa kanilang patuloy na pagiral.

Ang pagpapakawala ng pawikan hatchlings ay isa ring paalala ng kahalagahan ng pangangalaga sa marine biodiversity at ng aktibong pakikilahok ng mga lokal na komunidad sa konserbasyon ng kapaligiran. (sid samaniego)

ATI Calabarzon training program to focus on 'modernizing' agriculture

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA) – The Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Training Institute (DA-ATI) in CALABARZON will prioritize providing responsive training aimed at modernizing local farming and fishing practices in 2026.

Dr. Rolando Maningas, Center Director for ATI CALABARZON, emphasized that the center will also focus on inclusive and technology and skills-based training.

"We will solidify our efforts to modernize and mechanize the agri-fishery sector by reinforcing technologies, innovations, quality extension services, inclusivity, and skills-based training that respond to the evolving needs of our farmers and fishers," he said.

As the training hub for farmers, fisherfolk, Agri-

culture Extension Workers (AEWs), as well as hobbyists and enthusiasts, Maningas also noted that the region's programs integrated modern technology and sustainable farming practices to create a resilient agriculture sector.

"Training and other extension initiatives by the DA-ATI CALABARZON primarily focused on good agricultural practices, farm mechanization, climate-resilient agriculture, smart farming, and integrated nutrient and pest management,"

he added.

Maningas underscored that training for agricultural workers goes beyond production—it also hopes to transform the region's strengths in agrobusiness.

"The agency also provided technologies along the agricultural value chain, including post-harvest technologies, processing, and marketing—across different banner programs."

This effort will focus on key programs, including rice, corn, livestock, Coconut Farmers and In-



dustrial Development Plan (CFIDP), High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP), organic agriculture, and National Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture Program

(NUPAP).

In 2025 alone, the ATI CALABARZON has equipped over 4,783 farmers; 1,209 agricultural extension workers (AEWs) from various lo-

cal government units; 555 DA staff; and 537 students, agri-enthusiasts; and individuals with essential skills in agriculture. **(PB-PIA4A, ATI CALABARZON)**

Taiwan community flag-raising in Cavite signals deeper bilateral ties

THE Taiwanese business and overseas community in the Philippines marked the New Year with a flag-raising ceremony in Carmona City, Cavite, symbolizing the steady advancement of relations between Taiwan and the Philippines.



Organized by the Taiwanese Chamber of the South Philippines (TCSPI) on January 1, the gathering at the TCSPI clubhouse drew approximately 200 participants. The event brought together prominent business leaders, volunteers from Taiwan's Overseas Community Affairs Council (OCAC), and representatives from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in the Philippines to celebrate the new year.

Taiwan's Representative to the Philippines, Ambassador Wallace M. G. Chow, lauded the

event as a reflection of the strengthening bond between the two neighbors. He cited 2025 as a milestone year, pointing to increased official exchanges, the implementation of visa-free entry for Taiwanese travelers, and impactful trade and investment missions to hubs like Subic, Clark, and Metro Manila.

"These initiatives have laid a solid foundation for deeper cooperation in areas such as manufacturing, logistics, agriculture, and technology," Ambassador Chow said. He expressed strong optimism that economic partner-

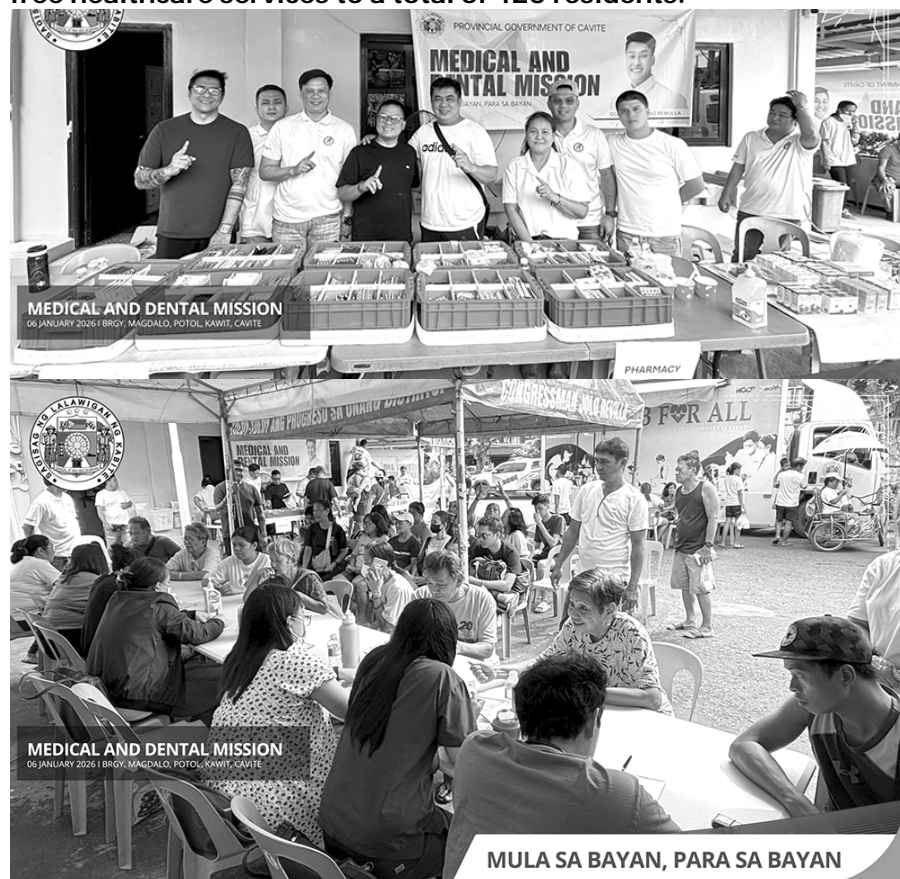
ships and people-to-people exchanges would further expand in 2026.

TCSPI President Jeff Yu highlighted the resilience of the community, noting that Taiwanese enterprises have driven economic development in southern Luzon for over two decades. He emphasized their ability to adapt to global economic challenges while maintaining a strong local presence.

The ceremony underscored the community's unity and their active role in fostering economic growth and cultural understanding between the nations.

PGC Conducts Medical and Dental Mission in Kawit

The Provincial Government of Cavite (PGC), through the collaborative efforts of the Office of the Provincial Governor and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, successfully conducted a medical and dental mission in Brgy. Magdalo, Poto, Kawit on January 6, 2026, delivering free healthcare services to a total of 425 residents.



The activity provided essential health interventions, with 350 residents receiving medical check-ups, 49 availing of dental extractions, and 26 underwent electrocardiogram (ECG) examinations. Free medicines were also distributed to beneficiaries. Medical and dental professionals from OPHO

shared their expertise, underscoring the importance of preventive care and the promotion of healthier communities.

The mission was made possible through the combined efforts of the provincial government, healthcare practitioners, and the barangay officials led by Brgy. Chair-

person Francis V. Fernandez, ensuring the smooth and efficient delivery of services.

This health initiative reaffirms the Provincial Government of Cavite's commitment to bringing accessible, responsive, and quality healthcare services closer to communities. **(R. Dones)**

CBCP NEWS

Vatican says more than 33 million pilgrims took part in Jubilee

VATICAN— More than 33.4 million pilgrims traveled to Rome to participate in the Jubilee of Hope, surpassing initial projections, the Vatican said Monday.



Pilgrims approach the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica on July 29, 2025. ROY LAGARDE/CBCP NEWS

Archbishop Rino Fisichella, pro-prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization, said 33,475,369 pilgrims ultimately took part in the Jubilee — nearly 2 million more than the Vatican's initial estimate of 31.7 million.

He also said the final group to pass through the Holy Door on Monday will be staff from the Dicastery for Evangelization, the principal organizers of the Holy Year, at 5:30 p.m. local time.

The solemn closing of the Holy Year will take place Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. local time, when Pope Leo XIV is scheduled to close the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica in a ceremony expected to be attended by Italian President Sergio Mattarella, civil authorities, and large numbers of faithful.

The Holy Door is scheduled to be opened again in eight years, in 2033, for the Jubilee of the Redemption.

In his assessment of the Jubilee, Fisichella described the year as extraordinary in many respects and noted its unusual historical arc: The Jubilee began under Pope Francis and concludes under Pope Leo XIV — a transition he said underscored the complexity of the organizational effort.

He also pointed to major events that unfolded alongside the Jubilee calendar, including the funeral of Pope Francis on April 26 and the election of his successor, Leo XIV, on May 8, saying those developments were integrated into the Jubilee schedule amid an exceptional succession of events.

Pilgrims from 185 countries

According to official Vatican data presented Monday, pilgrims from

185 countries took part in Jubilee events. By geographic area, Europe accounted for 62.63% of participants, followed by North America (16.54%), South America (9.44%), and Asia (7.69%). The remaining pilgrims came from Oceania (1.14%), Central America and the Caribbean (1.04%), Africa (0.95%), and the Middle East (0.46%).

By country, Italy represented 36.34% of pilgrims, followed by the United States (12.57%) and Spain (6.23%). Other leading countries included Brazil (4.67%), Poland (3.69%), Germany (3.16%), the United Kingdom (2.81%), China (2.79%), Mexico (2.37%), and France (2.31%). The Vatican also recorded significant participation from Argentina, Canada, Portugal, Colombia, Australia, the Philippines, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Austria.

Fisichella said that beginning in May — around the time of Leo XIV's election — Rome saw an unexpected increase in pilgrims, which he said was managed with close attention in a city that remained under international media focus throughout the year.

How the count was made

Fisichella said the initial projections were based on a study by the Faculty of Sociology at Roma Tre University and were intended as an early planning guide.

He said the primary count was made at St. Peter's Basilica's Holy Door, where a camera automatically recorded the number of pilgrims passing through each day.

For the other three papal basilicas — St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major, and St. Paul Outside the Walls — the Vatican ap-



Pope Leo XIV closes the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica, concluding the Jubilee of Hope, on January 6, 2026. VATICAN MEDIA

Pope Leo XIV closes St. Peter's Holy Door, concluding Jubilee of Hope

VATICAN— Pope Leo XIV on Tuesday closed the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica, bringing the ordinary Holy Year to an end — a time of grace that invited Catholics to conversion, reconciliation, and hope.

The pontiff processed toward the Holy Door as the antiphon *O clavis David* was sung. Reaching the threshold, he knelt before the door and remained for a few minutes in silent prayer. He then rose and, at 9:41 a.m., pushed shut the two large bronze doors — a gesture that visibly marked the end of the jubilee season.

"With thankful hearts we now prepare to close this Holy Door, crossed by a multitude of faithful, certain that the Good Shepherd always keeps the door of his heart open to welcome us whenever we feel weary and oppressed," Leo XIV said in an address before the concluding gesture that ended the ecclesial event, ordinarily held every 25 years to offer the faithful the possibility of obtaining a plenary indulgence.

With these words, Leo XIV emphasized that

even though the Jubilee has ended, God's mercy remains ever open to believers.

Before closing the doors, the Holy Father pronounced in Latin the formula prescribed by the rite, following a practice established in 1975 and later simplified by St. John Paul II during the Jubilee of the Year 2000.

In keeping with the simplified celebration, the public rite did not include the portion involving the construction of a brick wall and was limited to the closing of the bronze doors. The masonry work itself will be carried out later, privately, about 10 days after this public rite.

The act will be overseen by the Office of Liturgical Celebrations of the Supreme Pontiff. The so-called *sampietrini* — personnel of the Fabric of St. Peter, including carpenters, cabinetmakers, and electricians who nor-

mally handle basilica maintenance — will build the brick wall inside the basilica to definitively seal the Holy Door.

During this private rite — without cameras or journalists — the traditional metal capsule (capsis) will be inserted into the wall. It will contain the official act of closure, coins minted during the jubilee year, and the keys of the Holy Door, as a material and symbolic testimony of the Holy Year that, as the pope noted, has ended on the calendar but not in the spiritual life of the Church.

Leo XIV then recited the prayer of thanksgiving for the ordinary Holy Year, proclaiming: "This Holy Door is closed, but the door of your mercy is not closed."

The formula concluded with an invocation that the "treasures" of divine grace would remain open "so that, at the end of our

earthly pilgrimage, we may confidently knock at the door of your house and enjoy the fruits of the tree of life."

The Jubilee of Hope was instituted on Dec. 24, 2024, by Pope Francis but, after his death in April, was concluded by his successor, Leo XIV — a situation not seen since the year 1700. The last ordinary Jubilee (celebrated every 25 years) took place in 2000.

Jubilees may also be celebrated at "extraordinary" moments, such as the Jubilee of Mercy celebrated by Francis in 2015, or the one to be convoked in 2033 to commemorate the two millennia of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

After closing the Holy Door, Leo XIV presided over Mass for the solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord inside St. Peter's Basilica, bringing the day's liturgical celebration to its conclusion.

plied percentages based on the flow recorded at St. Peter's, supplemented by volunteer counts using manual clickers. Attendance at major Jubilee events and audiences was also tracked and cross-checked with registrations made through the official Jubilee website.

Rome mayor cites

lasting legacy and spending

Rome Mayor Roberto Gualtieri said the Jubilee of Hope has left a lasting legacy for the city, both in infrastructure and in institutional governance, pointing to what he described as a "Jubilee method" of sustained cooperation among public

administrations.

Gualtieri said the Jubilee program included 332 interventions, with 204 already completed or partially completed. He added that street works in Rome were about 90% finished, with the remaining 10% scheduled for completion in 2026.

He also said govern-

ment funding specifically allocated for Jubilee-related works totaled 1.725 billion euros. According to Gualtieri, 75% of those resources were used for interventions completed or partially completed, while spending for essential, non-deferrable interventions reached 90%.

MAGLIBANG TAYO

KAPALARAN

ARIES (Mar. 21-Apr. 19) - Ito ang araw na aalisin ng langit ang kahinaan mo. Kaya anuman ang pinaplano at pinapangarap mo, gawin mo na agad ngayon. Masuwerteng kulay-peach. Tips sa lotto-3-10-18-30-33-45.

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20) - Ganda ang magiging puhunan at pang-akit ng suwerte mo sa araw na ito. Kaya wala kang dapat gawin ngayon kundi ang magpaganda. Ito ang mensahe para sa iyo. Masuwerteng kulay-red. Tips sa lotto-6-17-22-28-36-41.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) - Umiwas ka sa mga nagpapahirap sa iyo na walang ibang ginawa kundi pintasan at punahin ang ginagawa mo. Siya ngayon ay mamalasin, kaya para hindi ka madamay, layuan mo siya. Masuwerteng kulay-silver. Tips sa lotto-5-14-19-21-37-42.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) - Hindi mo kailangang malungkot. Ang mga nangyayaring hindi mo gusto ay kailangang maganap upang mabigyan-daan ang pagdapo ng malalaking suwerte sa buhay mo. Masuwerteng kulay-white. Tips sa lotto-2-13-23-34-38-44.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) - Dala-dala mo ang suwerte sa mga naghahangad na sila'y suwertehin. Magpasalamat man sila o hindi, langit pa rin ang magbibigay sa iyo ng malaking gantimpala. Masuwerteng kulay-green. Tips sa lotto-7-11-15-27-31-40.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) - Huwag kang hihinto ngayon, lalo na't papaganda na nang papaganda ang takbo ng buhay mo. Ituloy mo lang ang iyong pangarap. Masuwerteng kulay-yellow. Tips sa lotto-1-18-20-26-32-43.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) - Umiwas ka sa mga nagpapakita sa iyo ng maganda dahil ang kanyang pagkagusto ay pansamantala lamang. Kumbaga, walang katiyakan kung magtatagal ba siya sa buhay mo. Masuwerteng kulay-purple. Tips sa lotto-8-14-21-30-33-45.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) - Hindi na maaawat ang pagdating ng magagandang kapalaran mo na pansamantalang naantala dahil kumukuha pa ito ng malakas na buwelo. Masuwerteng kulay-pink. Tips sa lotto-9-12-22-35-38-41.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) - Kakaibang sigla ang regalo sa iyo ng langit—isang sigla na kayang tumunaw sa mga negatibong puwersang gustong sumira sa iyo. Masuwerteng kulay-beige. Tips sa lotto-3-16-25-29-35-44.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) - Ito ang araw na dapat mo pang pag-ibayuhin ang pagtitipid at pagsi-save. Sa ganyang paraan, pagkatapos ng holiday season, matatagpuan mo ang iyong kabang-yaman na marami pang laman. Masuwerteng kulay-blue. Tips sa lotto-4-18-23-27-34-42.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) - Susuwertehin ka at ang magara pa nito, magiging malaki pa ang suwerteng darating sa iyo. Ngunit mangyayari lamang ito kung patatawarin mo na ang mga taong nagkasala sa iyo. Masuwerteng kulay-black. Tips sa lotto-7-11-28-30-33-45.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20) - Humingi ka muna ng payo bago ka sumabak sa negosyong gustong-gusto mo. Sa ganitong paraan, maiwasan mo ang mga panimulang problema. Masuwerteng kulay-violet. Tips sa lotto-2-14-21-26-31-40.

SUDOKU

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

SAGOT: SUDOKU VOL. 22 #44

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

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?



THE GOLDEN GIRLS DUG INTO MORE THAN 100 CHEESECAKES

Over the course of The Golden Girls's seven-year run, Dorothy, Sophia, Blanche and Rose ate around 100 cheesecakes, according to the baker who made them, George Geary. "For the run of the show, I would create seven cheesecakes for the Friday-night taping. ... I would box up seven cheesecakes by 4 p.m., all identical," he said. That was just in case they had to do multiple scene takes. "Every season, the cakes changed: Season 1, plain. Season 2, whipped cream trim. Season 3, berry topping. And so on."

In one episode, Dorothy asks rhetorically, "Do you know how many problems we've solved over a cheesecake at this kitchen table?" In true Rose fashion, she asks, "No, Dorothy, exactly how many?" "147, Rose," Dorothy snaps. Turns out, she was close!

WORD HUNT

Super Mario

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

TOAD
MARIO
KOOOPA
TROOOPA
STAR
CHAIN CHOMP
BOWSER
FLAG POLE
CASTLE
MUSHROOM
PEACH
YOSHI
GOOMBA
EXTRA LIFE
COIN
GAME OVER

DOST Batangas opens SETUP application, offers financial, technical assistance to MSMEs

BATANGAS CITY (PIA) — The Department of Science and Technology (DOST)-Batangas has opened the application for the Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP), providing financial and technical assistance to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) across the province, January 05.



Through SETUP, DOST-Batangas supports MSMEs in improving productivity and competitiveness by offering zero-interest financial assistance for technology acquisition, along with technical consultancy, workforce training, product testing, and assistance in packaging and labeling.

Qualified MSMEs may avail of financial assistance of up to ₱5 million, payable over three years with a one-year grace period. The program prioritizes enterprises in food processing, metals and engineering, agriculture and forestry, aquaculture, halal products, furniture, gifts and handicrafts, health and wellness, information and communications technology, creative industries, energy and environment, and other regional priority sectors.

DOST BATANGAS • 4

ESTUDYANTE MULA CAVITE, PAPARANGALAN SA SOUTHEAST ASIAN ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Sa murang edad na 17, patuloy na pinatutunayan ni Janelle Mica Pugeda, Grade 12 STEM student ng Rosario Institute, na ang tunay na kagandahan ay hindi lamang nasusukat sa anyo kundi sa layunin at malasakit sa kapwa.

Siya ang bunso sa apat na magkakapatid at nag-iisang babae, bagay na humubog sa kanyang katatagan, disiplina, at malasakit sa pamilya.

Ngayong taon, isang malaking karangalan ang matatanggap ni Janelle sa 11th Southeast Asian Achievement Awards, kung saan siya ay pararangalan ng Ultimate Icon of Beauty and Runway Distinction Award of Excellence.

Ang prestihiyosong pagkilalang ito ay bunga ng kanyang dedikasyon sa mundo ng modeling at pageantry, gayundin ng kanyang malinaw na adbokasiya para sa buhay at kabutihan.

Siya ay opisyal na

ESTUDYANTE • 4



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