



P20 BBM rice program now serving more groups in Bacoor City

CITY OF BACOR, Cavite (PIA) — More residents in Bacoor City are set to benefit from the government's P20 rice program as the Department of Agriculture (DA) Calabarzon and the Bacoor City government rolled out the expanded "Benteng Bigas, Meron Na!" initiative.

Around 2,500 Bacooreños were able to purchase P20-per-kilo rice during the ceremonial selling held on March 6, which also signaled the start of regular rice distribution by the Bacoor local government unit for qualified residents.

Residents were also registered in the P20 Benteng Bigas Masterlist Registry System (PBBMRS), a web-based application developed by the Information and Communications Technology Service of the Department of Agriculture (DA-ICTS) to facilitate the registration of program beneficiaries.

P20 BBM RICE • 6

Tricycle drivers get fuel subsidy in Cavite

MARAGONDON, Cavite — Tricycle drivers here received 5 liters of fuel on Tuesday as a subsidy for the rising price of fuel in the country.

Local fishermen and tour guides who own motorboats will also receive cash equivalent to 5 liters of gasoline on March 20.

TRICYCLE DRIVERS • 6



FREE FUEL Hundreds of tricycles line up at the designated gasoline station in Maragondon, Cavite, on March 17, 2026, to avail of the 5-liter fuel subsidy from the local government in response to the fuel crisis caused by the conflict in the Middle East. PHOTO BY DENNIS ABRINA

GOV. AGLIPAY THANKS DOST FOR INNOVATIONS PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES TO CAGAYANOS

Governor Edgar Aglipay expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) for the innovative technologies it continues to promote to improve the lives of Cagayanos.



Governor Aglipay conveyed his appreciation during the visit and attendance of DOST Secretary Renato Solidum at the opening of the Cagayan Innovation Hub (IHub) and the SARAI Provincial Hub at the Provincial Government of Cagayan on Monday, March 16, 2026.

In his message, Gov. Aglipay emphasized the significant contribution of science and technology in advancing innovations that create greater opportunities for the people. He noted that science and technology play a vital role in society, particularly in agriculture and tourism, as they help make work more efficient and broaden public knowledge about machinery and other strategies that enhance productivity.

GOV. AGLIPAY • 5

NEWS

Food entrepreneurs under DSWD-SLP program strengthen food safety practices through DOST-led seminar

Food handler beneficiaries of the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in Batangas strengthened their knowledge on safe food handling during an Awareness Seminar on Food Safety Hazards conducted in partnership with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Batangas and the Local Government Unit of MataasnaKahoy held at the Municipal Compound of MataasnaKahoy, Batangas, March 12.

The participants, who operate food production enterprises as part of their livelihood activities, attended the seminar to enhance their capacity to identify, prevent, and manage common food safety hazards in the handling, preparation,

and storage of food products.

The seminar formed part of the agency's trade fair called "SINSAY: Samasamang laangat ang Negosyong Susulong at Yayabong," which aims to showcase and pro-

mote the products of Sustainable Livelihood Program beneficiaries while providing opportunities for local entrepreneurs to expand their market reach and strengthen their livelihood ventures.

Ms. Renalee L. Reyes,



DTI Laguna Empowers MSMEs to Run Efficient^ Transparent^ and Consumer-Responsive Businesses

Calamba City, Laguna — March 12, 2026 — To help local Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) run more efficient, transparent, and consumer-responsive businesses, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Laguna, in partnership with the Calamba City Government through the Cooperatives and Livelihood Development Department (CLDD), conducted a seminar on Business Operations, Records Management, and Consumer Education at the CLDD Training Center, Mercado de Calamba, Barangay V (Poblacion).



Featuring resource speakers from Negosyo Center Paete and Negosyo Center Magdalena, the seminar aimed to equip MSMEs with practical skills to improve daily operations, maintain organized records, and foster fair and responsible business practices.

Mr. Kent Arvin D. Cainto, Business Counselor of Negosyo Center Paete, led the session on Business Operations and Records Management. Participants learned about common MSME business models—including service, manufacturing, and merchandising or trading—and key aspects of the production process, from sourcing raw materials to processing, packaging, and distribution.

Practical strategies

such as organizing workflows, monitoring inventory, maintaining accurate records, and regularly evaluating business performance were also emphasized to support more effective day-to-day management.

The session also covered the importance of proper records management in promoting transparency, accountability, and informed decision-making. Entrepreneurs were encouraged to adopt simple recordkeeping systems, such as maintaining record books, organizing documents in labeled folders, and using digital tools to track financial transactions. With organized records, MSMEs can make smarter decisions, streamline operations, and run their businesses more efficiently.

Meanwhile, Ms. Mhay Mharidile J.

Nepomuceno, Business Counselor of Negosyo Center Magdalena, facilitated the Consumer Education session, highlighting consumer rights and responsibilities. Participants were encouraged to stay mindful, make responsible purchasing decisions, and remain aware of fair and ethical practices in the marketplace to help promote a more transparent and responsible consumer environment.

Through this initiative, DTI Laguna and CLDD reaffirm their commitment to empowering MSMEs by providing the knowledge and tools to build sustainable businesses that benefit their communities (MMJNepomuceno, DTI Laguna).

member of the DOST-CALABARZON Food Safety Team, served as the resource speaker during the seminar. She discussed the different categories of food safety hazards, including physical, biological, and chemical hazards, and explained their possible sources during food preparation, processing, and handling.

The discussion also

covered appropriate control measures that food entrepreneurs can implement to minimize risks and maintain the safety and quality of their food products. Participants were likewise informed of the potential consequences of neglecting proper food safety practices, including the risk of foodborne illnesses, product contamination, and possible negative

impacts on their businesses.

Through the seminar, DSWD and DOST-Batangas continue to support SLP beneficiaries by strengthening their knowledge on food safety practices that are essential for producing safe and quality food products and sustaining their livelihood enterprises. **(By John Maico M. Hernandez)**



Requirements for Fixed and Permanent Physical Clinics and Limitations on Mobile and Telemedicine Providers for Accreditation of YAKAP Providers and Empanelment of YAKAP Beneficiaries

I. RATIONALE

This Advisory is issued pursuant to PhilHealth Circular No. 2025-0017 to clarify requirements for Fixed and Permanent Physical Clinics and the proper interpretation and application of empanelment rules on Mobile and Telemedicine Providers in the implementation of the PhilHealth YAKAP Benefit Package. It specifically addresses the practice of unaccredited Mobile Health Providers conducting outreach or community visits and representing these as Primary Care Clinic or YAKAP Clinic empanelment events.

II. POLICY CLARIFICATIONS

PhilHealth Circular No. 2025-0017 establishes the framework for the selection and empanelment of beneficiaries for PhilHealth's Primary Care Benefit Package under the Yaman ng Kalusugan Program (YAKAP).

Empanelment under YAKAP is established to ensure continuity of care with a primary care provider — not a one-time health encounter or outreach activity. Empanelment creates an ongoing clinical relationship between a beneficiary and a YAKAP Clinic Provider. A member can only be empaneled to a fixed and permanent YAKAP Clinic of their choice by signing the YAKAP Empanelment Slip (YES)/Mutual Care Agreement (MCA). Mobile units and telemedicine providers cannot be the basis of a valid empanelment.

A. Requirements for Accreditation of YAKAP Provider and Beneficiary Empanelment

The following rules apply to all YAKAP Clinic accreditation and beneficiary empanelment:

a. Accreditation for YAKAP shall be limited to Primary Care Providers with Permanent Physical Clinics.

The following are currently NOT considered as stand-alone Primary Care Clinics and are not qualified for PhilHealth Accreditation as YAKAP Provider:

- Mobile Health Units;
- Telemedicine-Only Providers; or
- Transient Outreach Teams.

b. All beneficiaries must select and be formally empaneled to an accredited YAKAP Clinic of their choice. Empanelment to any unaccredited primary care facility shall not be considered as valid registration into the YAKAP Program and shall not be covered for benefit entitlement, capitation payment and/or claim reimbursement.

c. A member's empanelment is to their chosen accredited fixed YAKAP clinic — not to a mobile unit or telemedicine provider, even if the mobile unit or telemedicine provider was the one that rendered the initial service. The accredited clinic is the member's primary care home and the entity accountable for their care.

d. An accredited YAKAP Clinic (Fixed and Permanent Clinic) must be located within a 30-kilometer radius of the declared residence or office address of the beneficiary. This proximity requirement ensures that the beneficiary can physically and regularly access the YAKAP Clinic provider for follow-up consultations, laboratory services, and other continuity-of-care needs.

e. Pursuant to PhilHealth Circular No. 2025-0017, a beneficiary may select a YAKAP Provider outside the 30-kilometer radius if that is their clear and informed preference, as evidenced by their affirmative selection (YES/MCA) of such clinic through the prescribed YAKAP Clinic selection process. However, this is strongly discouraged, as the proximity standard exists to protect the member's own ability to access continuous and regular primary care.

f. Mobile clinics of an accredited YAKAP Clinic provider that operate beyond the 30-kilometer radius from the provider's permanent physical clinic shall not be considered in compliance with the access standards of the YAKAP Program. Accordingly, services rendered beyond the prescribed 30-kilometer radius shall not serve as a primary basis for empanelment and shall not be eligible for payment by PhilHealth, including other YAKAP primary care services delivered outside the said service area.

B. Role of Mobile Health Units and Telemedicine Providers

Participation of Mobile Health Units and Telemedicine Providers in YAKAP shall be limited to serving as Supplemental Providers to an accredited YAKAP Clinic provider, subject to the following conditions:

- Mobile Health Units and Telemedicine Providers must formally partner with a YAKAP Clinic provider, provided that they are operating within the 30-kilometer radius of the partner accredited YAKAP Provider.
- Services rendered by supplemental Mobile Health Units or Telemedicine Providers (e.g., First Patient Encounter, consultation, laboratory) shall be credited to and shall be the accountability of the accredited YAKAP Clinic Provider where the beneficiary is empaneled to. The payment and capitation for these services shall be issued to the accredited YAKAP Clinic Provider. The terms of any cost-sharing or service arrangement between the accredited YAKAP Provider and the supplemental provider shall be a matter between those parties.
- The availability of Supplemental Providers of the accredited YAKAP Clinic Provider and the limitations of the medical services offered by the partner Mobile Health Unit and/or Telemedicine Provider shall be specifically indicated in the YES/MCA.
- Beneficiaries sourced and registered through mobile outreach activities who have not yet selected a YAKAP Clinic must be accordingly informed and guided to complete the empanelment process with a YAKAP Clinic in accordance with PhilHealth Circular No. 2025-0017.

III. SANCTIONS ON NON-COMPLIANCE

Any YAKAP Clinic found to be enrolling beneficiaries or conducting empanelment activities in violation of or in deviation from the prescribed rules — including empanelment activities by Mobile Health Units and Telemedicine Providers and provision of medical services by Mobile Health Units or Telemedicine Providers absent a valid partnership arrangement with an accredited YAKAP Clinic provider — shall be subjected to the following sanctions in accordance with existing PhilHealth rules and regulations, without prejudice to other administrative sanctions and legal actions:

I. First Violation: First written warning.

II. Second Violation: Final warning.

III. Third Violation: Suspension of YAKAP Provider accreditation, without prejudice to possible other legal remedies/actions including the filing of formal administrative complaints with suspension/revocation and/or imposition of fines, and all other criminal, civil, and other legal actions.

PhilHealth further reserves the right to recover payments/reimbursements made for invalid empanelment or claims arising from non-compliance with existing rules and regulations.

IV. ISSUANCE OF SUPPLEMENTAL PHILHEALTH CIRCULAR

PhilHealth recognizes that in certain geographically isolated or underserved areas (GIDA), no YAKAP Clinic providers may be available within the 30-kilometer radius. Accordingly, a supplemental PhilHealth Circular shall be issued to detail applicable guidelines on out-of-facility YAKAP service delivery, including standards for community-based and mobile health activities undertaken in partnership with accredited YAKAP Clinic Providers.

(Sgd.) EDWIN M. MERCADO, MD, MHA, MMSc
President and Chief Executive Officer
Philippine Health Insurance Corporation
Date signed: March 9, 2026

Editorial

Looming crisis for an oil importer like PH

THE turmoil in the Middle East has put into sharp focus the woes confronting countries like the Philippines that rely heavily on imported oil.

Because oil is a major driver of the global economy, affecting almost all aspects of modern production, its price has become sensitive to disruptive events like wars, natural disasters and pandemics.

When oil prices surge, the effects ripple across the planet and create what economists call a "negative supply shock": Production becomes more expensive. As the prices of goods get higher, inflation climbs, and economic growth slows down.

This is the scenario the Philippine government wants to avoid, as the country begins to feel the initial aftershocks of the bombing blitz that the United States and Israel have launched against Iran, and Tehran's retaliatory attacks on targets across the region.

A massive spike in local fuel prices looms this week, with diesel expected to reach almost P20 per liter, and gasoline by P10 per liter. If it happens, it will be the country's single biggest fuel price hike ever.

In 2023, the Philippines imported about 7.55 billion liters of crude oil, paying \$4.17 billion for it.

Its main sources are Saudi Arabia, which supplies 50 percent; the United Arab Emirates (26.9 percent); and Iraq (22.9 percent). These countries have been sucked into the present conflict and have drastically reduced production.

The Dutch financial giant ING Group considers the Philippines as "among the worst impacted by higher oil prices," and could "see a stronger inflation hit because retail fuel prices are more market-driven and subsidies are limited."

Another financing firm, Oversea-Chinese Banking Corp. Ltd. in Singapore, calculates that "a mere 10-percent increase in oil prices can cause a deterioration in current account balances by up to 60 basis points (bps)." That could widen the account deficit gap and impact heavily on the GDP.

A protracted Middle East conflict could trigger domestic inflation, ING warned. Inflation, coupled with a slumping peso against the US



dollar, could push up fuel and transport prices.

Higher pump prices will make food and other commodities more expensive. And that's just the start of the chain.

A frantic search for stopgap solutions has begun, including legislation authorizing the president to suspend the excise tax on fuel "when extraordinary circumstances arise."

The president has also ordered government offices to shift to a four-day workweek to save on electricity. Fuel subsidies for affected sectors like transport workers and fisherfolk are being rushed.

The Department of Energy (DOE) is also trying to convince oil companies to stagger the price increases, but no agreement has so far been reached.

The DOE is also looking into the possibility of ordering the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC) to procure at least a million barrels of diesel to secure domestic supply.

Perhaps it is time to look at long-term solutions, with particular attention on promoting the use of alternative fuels for transportation like electricity, hydrogen and bioethanol.

The transport sector accounted for 22.8 percent of the country's greenhouse gas emissions in 2020, and the figure is projected to triple by 2030. Bioethanol is the most widely used biofuel

in transport today, mainly because it's a liquid and available in large volumes globally.

Mandated blending of bioethanol for gasoline and biodiesel is already in place. But more needs to be done.

According to one study, increasing the use of biofuels is the fastest route to achieving the highest carbon emissions reductions.

Replacing gasoline and diesel altogether with biofuels will result in a cumulative mitigation potential of 85.70 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO₂e).

Alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs), which are powered by natural gas, electricity, biodiesel and hydrogen, are slowly gaining consumer and fleet operator interest. The government must help further generate this interest by developing and expanding charging and fueling infrastructure.

Tax holidays, priority traffic access and accelerated vehicle registration will also go a long way in opening up the AFV market.

To complement the shift to alternative fuels, the government should step up other approaches, such as expanding bike lanes, improving rail systems, introducing bus rapid transit networks, and modernizing public utility vehicles.

We've been a hostage to oil long enough.

Go Green To Live Long

I wrote this article to correct the misconceptions. Someone says that you should avoid certain types of vegetables if you have high blood pressure. There is no truth to this.

Misconceptions:

1. Green vegetables and high blood pressure – High blood pressure can be attained by excessive saltiness of food and increased cholesterol. Vegetable lowers cholesterol so it can help those with high blood pressure. Anemia and blood pressure deficiency are not the same. Vegetables can also help with anemia due to its iron content.

2. Vegetables such as cabbage, cassava and broccoli - It is not forbidden to eat vegetables in goiter. Goiter can be caused by iodine deficiency. Iodine is obtained in seafood and iodized salt. But of course we should have a balanced diet and eat a variety of vegetables. Clean and cook the vegetable before eating.

Here Are The Benefits Of Vegetables:

1. To complete vitamins – Some of the nutritious vegetables are broccoli, cauliflower, spinach, pechay, tamarind, moringa, spinach, eggplant, okra and sweet potato skins. It's rich in vitamins, minerals and other healthy ingredients.

2. Anti-Disease - Vegetables are also good anti-disease such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and stomach pain.

3. Prevent cancer - According to research, eating enough vegetables and fruits daily can reduce can-

DOKTOR NG MASA

ni Dr. Willie Ong



cer by 3 to 10%. Vegetables can help prevent colon cancer, breast cancer and many other cancers.

4. To make pollution regular - Vegetables are of great help to our stomach and intestines. It's high in fiber that acts as a broom that cleans our gut. Reduce your meat and fiber deficient fat.

5. Anti-stress – Vegetables are high in vitamin B, which can help our nerves (nerves) and reduce stress.

6. To keep the body young and healthy – Eating 2 cups of vegetables and 2 cups of fruit per day is the recommendation of experts.

To those who still don't want to eat vegetables, what are we planning to eat? Pork or beef? Fried pork chop, roast and pata? Oh my, that's so high in cholesterol and can cause heart attacks and strokes.

People who love vegetables live longer. But if you only eat meat, you get sick quickly and die early.

So don't believe the rumors. Vegetables and fruits are what God purposely made for man to eat. Good luck

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6 Months	P 120.00	One Year	P 240.00

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LEGAL NOTICES

Republic of the Philippines
Fourth Judicial Region
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF COURT
City of Bacoor
Email: rtc1bcrocc@judiciary.gov.ph
Telephone No. 09273707489

AFC SME FINANCE, INC.,
(Represented By: **Judy P. Ignacio**)
Mortgagee,

-versus- **Foreclosure No. 2026-25**
For: Extra-Judicial Foreclosure of
Real Estate Mortgage

SPS. HERMINIGILDO B. BALETE
AND GILDA A. BALETE,
Mortgagors.

X----- X

NOTICE OF EXTRA JUDICIAL FORECLOSURE

Upon Extra-judicial Petition for Sale under Act 3135 as Amended by Act 4118 filed by the mortgagee, **AFC SME FINANCE, INC., (Represented By: Judy P. Ignacio)**, at Unit 310 AIC Gold Tower, Emerald Ave., Corner Garnet St., Ortigas Center, Pasig City, and against the mortgagors, **SPS. HERMINIGILDO B. BALETE AND GILDA A. BALETE** at L12 B4 Mondale St., Parkdale 1, Perpetual Village 7, Mambog V. Bacoor City, Cavite, Philippines, to satisfy the mortgagee indebtedness which as of October 28, 2025, amounts to **NINE HUNDRED NINETY ONE THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED SEVENTY TWO PESOS (P991,472.00)**, Philippine Currency, inclusive of interest, and penalty charges but exclusive of other fees incident to this foreclosure, the undersigned or her duly authorized representative will sell at the public auction on **April 14, 2026 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning** or soon thereafter, at the main entrance of the Hall of Justice of Bacoor City, Cavite, to the highest bidder for CASH and In Philippine Currency, the following described property with all the improvements thereon, to wit;

TRANSFER CERTIFICATE OF TITLE NO. (T-288423)
057-2025013480

"A PARCEL OF LAND (LOT 12, BLK. 4 OF THE SUBD. PLAN PSD-04-022102, BEING A PORTION OF LOT 4740-A, FLS-1689-D, LRC REC. NO.), SITUATED IN THE BO. OF MALUMOT, MUN. OF BACOOR, PROVINCE OF CAVITE. X X X, CONTAINING AN AREA OF **ONE HUNDRED TWENTY (120) SQUARE METERS.**"

"All sealed bid must be submitted to the undersigned on the above stated time and date."

"In the event the public auction should not take place on the said date, it shall be held on **April 21, 2026**, without further notice."

Prospective buyers or bidders are hereby enjoined to investigate for themselves the title to the said property and encumbrances, if any there be.

City of Bacoor, March 2, 2026.

(Sgd.) **MELY C. HERMOSURA-VISTA**
Clerk of Court VI

By: (Sgd.) **TRISTAN C. MIRANO**
Sheriff IV

Copy Furnished:

AFC SME FINANCE, INC.
Unit 309, AIC Gold Tower, F. Ortigas Jr. Road (Ex-Emerald Ave.) Ortigas Center, Pasig City

SPS. HERMINIGILDO B. BALETE AND GILDA A. BALETE
L12 B4 Mondale St., Parkdale 1, Perpetual Village 7, Mambog V. Bacoor City, Cavite, Philippines

WARNING: It is absolutely prohibited to remove, deface or destroy this notice of Extra-judicial Sale on or before the date of sale.

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Dates: March 9, 16 & 23, 2026

Lantern

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The event brought together guests and foreign delegates to celebrate Chinese culture while honoring the important role of women in society. The program began with a guided tour of the Bahay Tsinoy Museum, conducted in two batches for the participants.

Bahay Tsinoy, known as the Museum of Chinese in Philippine Life, showcases the rich history, culture, and contributions of the Chinese community in the Philip-

tions, and up to the present time.

According to Teresita Ang-See, founding chairman of the Movement for Restoration of Peace and Order, around 60 foreign delegates attended the celebration.

Ang-See also expressed gratitude to Francisco "Isko" Moreno Domagoso, Mayor of Manila, for allowing the use of the Bahay Tsinoy Museum as the venue for the event.

The celebration featured various displays of

the Dream, Tsinoy: The Story of the Chinese in Philippine Life, Chinese in the Philippines, Dr. Jose Rizal's Chinese Ancestry, and The Philippines in Ancient Chinese Maps.

A cultural performance featuring the Chinese folk song "Start of the Joy Season" was presented using a traditional Chinese musical instrument similar to a harp. Guests also watched a video presentation of Chinese Kung Fu integrated with robotics technology.

Another highlight of the program was a presentation promoting the Asia-Pacific Economic

Cooperation (APEC) 2026, shown through China Central Television (CCTV), featuring segments titled "Gather in Shenzhen" and "Amazing Shenzhen."

The event concluded with a tribute to women in celebration of International Women's Day, carrying the message that "Women Hold Up Half the Sky," emphasizing the vital role of women in society and nation-building.
—**G.I.E.C.E.L., AN-PAPI VP Visayas Courtesy of Noon Break Balita (Raffy Rico) and Mabuhay News Online (Perfecto T. Raymundo)**



DSWD

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"As part of the efforts to reach out to more families and individuals who live on the streets, the DSWD, through its Field Office (FO) 4-A (Calabarzon), recently signed a Deed of Usufruct

Agreement with the City Government of Bacoor to set up a new processing center in the locality," DSWD spokesperson Assistant Secretary Irene Dumlao said in a news release on Tuesday.

EXTRA JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT OF THE ESTATE

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late **MILAGROS M. PARAS**, who died intestate on May 13, 2021 at the **Imus, Cavite**, that the said deceased at the time of her death left the following properties to wit Bank Account maintained with **SECURITY BANK**, Aguinaldo Highway, Imus, Cavite **Branch Account Number 0000019633157 (0814-C45682-002)** in the amount of **SEVEN HUNDRED FIFTY SEVEN THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED TWENTY FIVE & 54/100 (P757,325.54) PESOS** as of September 4, 2025, and was Extra-Judicially Settled among the legal heirs, executed on 24th day of October 2025 and ratified before Notary Public **Atty. Hobert N. Lluz**, under Doc. No. 179, Page No. 37, Book No. 13, Series of 2025.

Publication: PMC Pulso ng Makabagong Caviteño News Publication
Dates: March 9, 16 & 23, 2026

The partnership was formally signed by DSWD 4-A Assistant Director for Administration Alkent Bacolod and Bacoor City Mayor Strike Revilla at the **S.T.R.I.K.E. Gymnasium** on March 9.

The Deed of Usufruct grants the DSWD the temporary rights to establish a Pag-abot Regional Processing Center in Barangay Poblacion (formerly Barangay Camposanto).

"Considering Calabarzon's proximity to Metro Manila, the establishment of the new Pag-abot processing center will enable the DSWD to provide various immediate interventions, using a rights-based approach, to reach out to people living and staying on the streets in the Southern Tagalog region, one of the highly urbanized areas in the country," Dumlao said.

Started by the DSWD in 2023, the Pag-abot Program was institutionalized in

January 2024 through Executive Order 52, signed by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.

The program provides a wide array of comprehensive interventions, as well as opportunities, to improve the social and economic status and fundamental rights of FISS.

These interventions include medical assistance, food aid, transportation and relocation assistance, livelihood opportunities, transitory family support packages, and emergency financial and transitory shelter assistance, among others.

To connect with the program or refer someone in need, interested parties can reach the DSWD Pag-abot Program via their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/DSWDPagabot/>, email them at pagabotcms@dswd.gov.ph, or call their hotline at 8-931-9141. (**PNA**)

DOST urges

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"true capacity" of Filipino scientists and institutions—but it must also be translated into tangible benefits for the people.

"It must move forward—toward application, innovation, and commercialization. But, development must never come at the cost of our rights, dignity, or integrity," Solidum said while underscoring the DOST's Three-Horizon Science, Technology, and Innovation Economic Strategy.

DOST-NRCP President Dr. Ma. Louise Antonette de las Peñas seconded "responsible research" is not only responsive to national needs and public welfare but also upholds truth, fairness, and accountability.

"Research that is not grounded in ethics and a genuine commitment to the common good is not progress, it is failure," de las Peñas emphasized.

The council president also reaffirmed that DOST-NRCP will help shape the ethical direction of research in the country, as well as dedicate efforts to "understand the world to improve it for the Filipino people."

Former DOST secretary Fortunato T. de la Peña, on the other hand, stressed the need for inclusive collaboration in achieving the goals of the nation, including the Sustainable Development

Goals (SDGs).

"If there is no collaboration, there will be difficulty in achieving the common aspirations. There is a need for inclusive collaboration, co-creation of solutions across disciplines, capacity building, and strategizing, as well as the ethical practices that are needed," he stated in his keynote message.

Highlighting leverage on collective effort among various sectors, de la Peña also mentioned that transdisciplinary research hones the visibility, coherence, and sustainability of national initiatives through its programs.

"When we are able to follow this transformation, then we open doors to opportunities and solutions that truly matter for our people, our nation, and our shared future," de la Peña added.

In addition, further tracing the event's theme, "Transdisciplinary Capacity Building and Ethical Research towards a Progressive, Unified, and SDG-Driven Nation," five experts took

turns discussing research collaborations, policy-making, and inclusive development.

Among the speakers were DOST-NRCP regular members Dr. Fidel R. Nemenzo, Dr. Maria Lourdes G. Rebullida, Dr. Agnes C. Rola, and Dr. Marita V.T. Reyes, along with business luminary Dr. Rosalind L. Wee.

Meanwhile, DOST-NRCP welcomed 178 new regular members and 252 new associate members during this year's ASC and GMA, and recognized 13 researchers for their contribution to research excellence in their respective fields and national development.

The National Research Council of the Philippines is one of the attached agencies of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) aimed at providing science-based, innovative, and inclusive solutions across four strategic pillars: human well-being, wealth creation, wealth protection, and sustainability. These pillars embody the mantra OneDOST4U: Solutions and Opportunities for All. For more information, visit www.nrmp.dost.gov.ph. (By **Karl Jerome M. del Mundo, DOST-STII**)



DOST Soccsksargen

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Discussions focused on updates on the preparations for NSTW 2026, presentation of proposals, review of the Special Orders for the NSTW 2026

Steering Committee, and the proposed monthly schedule of committee meetings to ensure the smooth and coordinated implementation of the

event.

The meeting marked an important step in mobilizing the organizing teams as SOCCSKSARGEN gears up to host one of the country's biggest celebrations of science, technology, and innovation (STI).



Gov. Aglipay

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"I can't thank enough Sec. Solidum for what they have done for our people here in Cagayan. I think this is a big lead to where they are now, considering that we will be using technology, robots, and artificial intelligence in providing information for our farmers to be able to produce more," Gov. Aglipay said.

Meanwhile, Secretary Solidum commended the initiatives of Gov. Aglipay's administration in advancing science and technology-driven programs that benefit Cagayanos.

According to Sec. Solidum, it is important for the government to take the lead in introducing innovative approaches, as these are essential to good governance that the public aspires to.

"Thank you for inviting me here to the Provincial Government of Cagayan

and the rest of the DOST Team. It is always a privilege to stand with local governments that are committed to serving their people and strengthening their communities... We must apply science, technology, and innovation in governance, and I see it here in the province of Cagayan. Applying science, technology, and innovation in governance makes the Local Government ASTIG," Solidum said.

In line with this, Gov. Aglipay assured that his administration will continue to advance programs and projects that strengthen the science, technology, and agriculture sectors in Cagayan under his E.G.A.Y Governance Platform, aiming to achieve progress and development for every Cagayano, especially farmers and fisherfolk.

Meanwhile, DOST also

presented to Gov. Aglipay and Provincial Government of Cagayan employees the first innovation launched by DOST and Cagayan State University's Electromobility Research and Development Center (CSU-EMRDC), showcasing various electric vehicles such as eTranvia, eBuggy, and C-Trikes.

The regular flag-raising ceremony at the Cagayan Capitol was led by Gov. Aglipay, together with Provincial Administrator Atty. Maria Rosario Mamba-Villaflores, Chief of Staff Felipe Buena Jr., Secretary Renato Solidum, DOST Undersecretary for Regional Operations Engr. Sancho Mabborang, DOST Region 2 Director Virginia Bilgera, Handicappables President Amalia Decena, Board Members, consultants, and employees from various offices of the Provincial Government of Cagayan. (**Rachell Galamay/CPIO**)



BMC opens

from
page 8

and children who have experienced abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and other forms of violence.

Governor Daniel R. Fernando emphasized the Provincial Government's commitment to protecting vulnerable sectors, particularly women and children.

"Ang pagbubukas ng Women and Children Protection Unit ay isang konkretong hakbang sa pagtiyak na ang mga biktima ng pang-aabuso ay hindi naiwanang nagiisa sa kanilang pakikibaka. Ang pasilidad

na ito ay nagsisilbing aming pangako na ang Pamahalaan ng Panlalawigan ng Bulacan ay patuloy na poprotektahan ang dignidad, kaligtasan, at mga karapatan ng bawat babae at bata," the governor said.

According to WCPU Head Dr. Jose Emiliano T. Gatchalian, the facility was designed not only to protect victims but also to ensure proper intervention for individuals involved in abuse-related cases, recognizing that some perpetrators may have themselves experienced

past trauma.

Meanwhile, Dr. Violeta M. De Guzman explained that the center will operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, ensuring that victims arriving at the hospital can receive appropriate care immediately.

Patients with physical injuries will initially be treated at the hospital's emergency room before being referred to the protection unit, where trained personnel will provide further medical, psychological, and social interventions.

Bulakenyos are encouraged to report cases of violence and abuse through the WCPU hotline at +639397624522.

NEWS

DOST launches innovation and agriculture hubs in Cagayan

TUGUEGARAO CITY — The Department of Science and Technology (DOST), in partnership with the Provincial Government of Cagayan, formally launched the Cagayan Innovation Hub, the SARAI Provincial Hub, and the SciTech Philippines Awards on March 16, 2026, strengthening efforts to promote innovation, data-driven governance, and climate-resilient agriculture in the province.



The initiative is anchored on Project SARAI and aims to position Cagayan as a model for smart and sustainable provincial development by integrating science, technology, and innovation into local planning and economic growth.

Leading the launch was DOST Secretary Renato U. Solidum Jr., who highlighted the province's strong partnership with the national government in advancing innovation-driven development. Innovation hubs are envisioned as spaces where students, researchers, startups, and

communities collaborate to transform ideas into practical solutions and technology-based enterprises.

At the center of the initiative is the Cagayan Innovation Hub, which will serve as a platform for enterprise incubation, modernization of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and collaborative innovation. The facility will connect industry, academe, and government to provide mentoring, technical support, and digital transformation opportunities for entrepreneurs and emerging enterprises in

the province.

Supporting this effort is the Cagayan Decision Intelligence Center, a facility designed to strengthen local governance through real-time analytics and integrated data systems. The center enables provincial leaders to make evidence-based decisions, improve resource allocation, and respond more effectively to development and disaster-related challenges.

Meanwhile, the SARAI Regional Hub brings science-based agricultural information closer to farmers. Through satel-



lite data, climate modeling, crop forecasting, and suitability analysis, the hub delivers localized advisories on crop selection, planting schedules, and risk management to help farmers improve productivity and adapt to climate variability.

The initiative comes as the Philippines continues to face increasing climate risks. The country experiences around twenty tropical cyclones annually, with the agriculture sector accounting for more than sixty percent of disaster-related economic losses. In provinces like Cagayan, where agriculture remains a primary economic driver, these challenges directly affect ru-

ral livelihoods and food security.

Cagayan Governor Edgar Aglipay acknowledged the initiative as a major opportunity to strengthen local enterprises and bring innovation directly to farming communities.

DOST Undersecretary for Regional Operations Sancho A. Maborang and Virginia G. Bilgera also emphasized the strong collaboration between DOST and its partners in advancing the initiative, noting that the hubs are expected to help transform various sectors and industries in the region through science, technology, and innovation.

Together, the facilities

support the vision of ONE Cagayan D.R.I.V.E.S. (Development of Rural Industries through Value Chain Enhancement and Sustainability), demonstrating how integrated science and technology systems can strengthen agriculture, empower enterprises, and enable smarter governance at the provincial level.

Through the Cagayan Innovation Hub and SARAI Provincial Hub, DOST and its partners aim to establish Cagayan as a Smart Province where data-informed decisions, innovation-driven enterprises, and science-based solutions contribute to inclusive and sustainable development. **(Nelson Santos)**

2026 first quarter Nationwide Simultaneous Earthquake Drill conducted across offices

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) - CALABARZON, together with its Provincial Science and Technology Offices (PSTOs), joined the First Quarter National Simultaneous Earthquake Drill earlier today, March 12, 2026, at 3:30 PM to strengthen earthquake preparedness across the region.



Personnel promptly performed the Duck, Cover, and Hold procedure during the simulated ground shaking and proceeded to evacuate in an orderly manner once the alarm signaled. The DOST-CALABARZON regional office recorded a

swift evacuation time of 1 minute and 44 seconds. At the designated assembly area, facilitators conducted headcount, reinforced key safety reminders, and reviewed proper emergency protocols to ensure accountability and readiness.

By simulating earthquake scenarios nationwide, the NSED strengthens institutional coordination, enhances situational awareness, and fosters a proactive culture of safety and readiness. **(By Vence Ralf D. Llorente)**

P20 BBM rice

from page 1

According to the city government, around 200,000 Bacooreños are expected to benefit from the P20 rice program, which prioritizes vulnerable sectors such as senior citizens, persons with disabilities (PWDs), 4Ps beneficiaries, solo parents, farmers, fisherfolk, public transport drivers, minimum wage earners, and public school teachers and non-teaching staff.

Other groups, including teachers, jeepney drivers, students, house helpers, and the city

government's job order workers, will also be included among the beneficiaries as endorsed by Bacoor City Mayor Strike Revilla.

According to Assistant Secretary for Agribusiness, Marketing, and Consumer Affairs Atty. Genevieve E. Velicaria-Guevarra, the program's scope has been expanded in its second rollout in Bacoor City to allow more residents to benefit.

Meanwhile, Efren Capacite, a resident of Barangay Niog III, ex-

pressed gratitude after purchasing 10 kilograms of rice at the subsidized price. He said that as a senior citizen whose wife is currently ill, the program greatly helps reduce their household expenses.

Farmers' groups in Cavite were also allowed to sell their products through KADIWA, which was part of the activity.

DA Calabarzon reaffirmed its commitment to assist local government units in the region in rolling out the Benteng Bigas, Meron Na! program to benefit more residents and help ensure food affordability for vulnerable sectors. **(FC, PIA)**

Tricycle drivers

from page 1

The Maragondon government has listed 494 tricycle drivers and 60 motorboat owners as beneficiaries for the free fuel.

Municipal councilor Miguel Arca, chairman of the Committee on Tricycle Franchising and Regulations, said the local government is aware of the burden that drivers are carrying due to the petroleum crisis caused by ongoing con-

flict in the Middle East.

"Munting tulong po ito sa ating mga tricycle driver at banca owners. Ipagdasal natin na malampasan natin ang krisis na ito (This is a little help to our tricycle drivers and motorboat owners. Let's pray that we overcome this crisis)," said Arca, who purchased the fuel.

Arca said the free gasoline was purchased from his own pocket.

Meanwhile, in the town of Silang, also in Cavite, another aid program is being prepared.

More than 5,000 tricycle drivers are set to receive P1,500 each as fuel subsidy from the local government. The distribution will be made on Thursday after the finance committee approved the release of the funds for the program.

The Silang government said the aid aims to alleviate the impact of the continuing rise of gasoline prices.

MAGLIBANG TAYO

KAPALARAN

ARIES (Mar. 21-Apr. 19) - Nagbabago ang takbo ng iyong kapalaran at mas lumalaki ang pagkakataon upang yumaman ka. 'Wag mo munang asikasuhin ang mga bagay na wala namang kinalaman sa pagpapayaman. Masuwerteng kulay-burgundy. Tips sa lotto-9-18-23-29-35-42.

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20) - Maghanda ka sa masasayang kaganapan na inilaan sa iyo ng langit. Para masulit mo ang iyong kasiyahan, ngayon pa lang ay dapat munang alisin ang iyong pagiging mahiyain. Masuwerteng kulay-blue. Tips sa lotto-2-17-20-28-35-40.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) - Huwag mong sayangin ang iyong karisma. Gamitin mo sa paraang mas lalago ang kinikita mo. Tandaan mo, ang karisma ay hindi lang sa karelasyon ginagamit. Masuwerteng kulay-black. Tips sa lotto-5-11-15-21-26-39.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) - Huwag mong pansinin ang mga nasa tabi mo na hindi naniniwala sa iyo. Hayaan mo lang sila, dahil sa huli, makikita rin ng kanilang mga mata na maunlad na ang buhay mo. Masuwerteng kulay-violet. Tips sa lotto-3-18-25-33-37-44.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) - Makakaporma ang mga karibal mo kapag lumabis ang tiwala mo sa sarili mo. Pero kung mananatiling buhay ang ningas ng iyong sigla't sigasig, sila ay sama-samang mapapahiya. Masuwerteng kulay-peach. Tips sa lotto-6-18-23-27-32-41.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) - Ganito ang sabi, kapag kumilos nang nakatodo ang galing at husay, magtatagumpay ka. Pero sa iyo, kahit hindi sagad ang galing at husay mo, makukuha mo pa rin anumang gusto mo. Masuwerteng kulay-red. Tips sa lotto-7-19-21-36-39-43.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) - Labanan mo ang hamon ng kapalaran na nasa iyong harapan. Tandaan mo, ang panalo ay para lang sa mga taong nakikipaglaban. Masuwerteng kulay-lilac. Tips sa lotto-1-16-22-29-31-45.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) - Walang katapusan ang pagpapalit ng araw at gabi. Kaya sa dilim ng buhay, isinisilang ang liwanag. Ipanatag mo ang iyong kalooban, sa araw na ito magliliwanag na ang iyong kapalaran. Masuwerteng kulay-white. Tips sa lotto-9-11-15-26-39-42.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) - Kung sino ang nakakasama mo, magiging ganu'n ka rin. Kaya ang payo, dumikit ka sa mgaangat ang buhay para umangat din ang iyong kalagayan. Masuwerteng kulay-green. Tips sa lotto-4-12-25-30-35-41.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) - Matatalo mo ang mga babangga sa iyo, pero mag-ingat ka at huwag mong patulan ang mahal mo na maaaring sumalungat sa iyong kagustuhan. Masuwerteng kulay-yellow. Tips sa lotto-9-10-17-21-27-34.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) - Nakakasawa ang lahat ng bagay sa mundo. Ito ang tagong dahilan kung bakit parang ayaw mo sa masarap na buhay at naghahanap ka ng mga bagong pakikipagsapalaran. Masuwerteng kulay-purple. Tips sa lotto-1-10-14-20-37-44.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20) - Ipanatag mo ang iyong kalooban. Hayaan mo lang ang mga gigil na gigil na yumaman. Makikita mo, sila ang unang babagsak, at sa kanilang pagbagsak, saka mo samantalain ang pagkakataon. Masuwerteng kulay-pink. Tips sa lotto-7-16-22-32-36-40.

SUDOKU

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

SAGOT: SUDOKU VOL. 23 #2

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

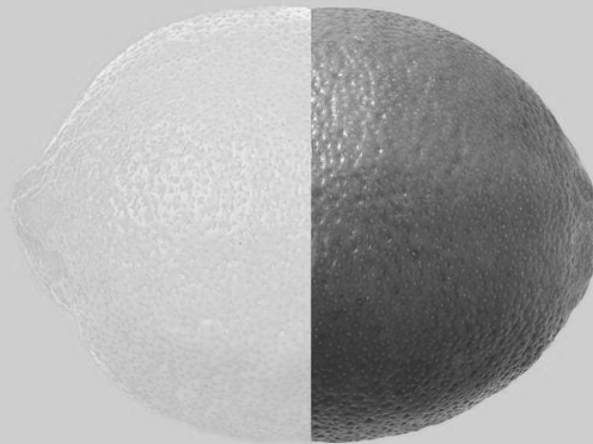
HOW TO PLAY: Sudoku puzzle is made up of a 9-by-9 grid with nine 3-by-3 sub-grids called boxes. There are 9 rows, 9 columns and 9 boxes in every puzzle. The object of the game is to fill all squares in the grid with the correct number.

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?



LEMONS FLOAT, BUT LIMES SINK

Try this easy science experiment, and you'll find that lime slices drop to the bottom of a glass, while lemon slices float at the top. But why? This is one of those things to wonder about that you need the answer for, so here it is: Limes are denser than lemons.

WORD HUNT

Carbohydrates

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

OATS
MUESLI
WEETBIX
SEMOLINA
GRAINS
COUSCOUS
SPELT
QUINOA
CEREAL
BREAD
RYE
CRUMPET
NOODLES
POLENTA
FRUIT
BARLEY
CORN
BUCKWHEAT
PASTA
RICE

DOST urges PH researchers toward responsive, cross-sector research



The Department of Science and Technology urged the Filipino research community to commit to a cross-sectoral, ethical, and responsive approach to accelerate national progress during the Annual Scientific Conference and 93rd General Membership Assembly of the National Research Council of the Philippines (DOST-NRCP) held at the Philippine International Convention Center, Pasay City, last March 13, 2026.

In his speech, DOST Secretary Renato U. Solidum Jr. highlighted that progress cannot be made if “remained confined within rigid boundaries, hence reinforcing transdisciplinary and ethical practices.

“[It] encourages us to cross [...] between disciplines, institutions, and even scientific expertise and lived experience in communities. It allows us to combine perspectives, deepen understanding, and produce solutions that are practical and grounded,” said Solidum.

Solidum pointed out that knowledge, when visible, cited, and utilized, reflects the DOST URGES • 5

DOST SOCCSKSARGEN Joins Preparatory Meeting for NSTW 2026



As the next host of the National Science and Technology Week 2026, the Department of Science and Technology SOCCSKSARGEN joined the preparatory meeting held on March 6, 2026 at the DOST Main Building, Bicutan, Taguig City. The meeting was led by Undersecretary for Regional Operations Engr. Sancho A. Mabborang and Host Region Regional Director Engr. Sammy P. Malawan to begin key planning activities for the national event.

DOST SOCCSKSARGEN • 5

BMC opens its Women and Children Protection Unit

CITY OF MALOLOS— In line with the celebration of National Women's Month, the Provincial Government of Bulacan formally opened the Women and Children Protection Unit at the Bulacan Medical Center on March 11.

The newly-established facility aims to provide specialized medical care, psychological support, and coordinated social services for women BMC OPENS • 5



WOMEN AND CHILDREN PROTECTION UNIT OPENING. Rev. Fr. Ricardo Moraga leads the blessing during the opening of the Women and Children Protection Unit of the Bulacan Medical Center (BMC), City of Malolos, Bulacan on March 11. Also in the photo are (left of Fr. Moraga) BMC Chief of Hospital Dr. Angelito Trinidad, (right of the priest) Dr. Violeta M. De Guzman, BMC Administrative Officer Ma. Cecilia Ongleo, and Dr. Leoncia Angeles.

Lantern Festival and International Women's Day Celebration Held at Bahay Tsinoy Museum



MANILA, Philippines — The Lantern Festival and International Women's Day celebration was successfully held on March 6 at the Bahay Tsinoy Museum in Manila through the auspices of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Philippines.

LANTERN • 4

DSWD to open 4th Pag-abot Program processing center in Cavite

More vulnerable families and individuals in street situations (FISS) will be protected from hazardous and untoward incidents as the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is set to open a new Pag-abot Program processing center in Bacoor City, Cavite.

DSWD • 4



REACH OUT PROGRAM. The Department of Social Welfare and Development's Pag Abot Program reaches out to individuals living on the streets in this undated photo. The DSWD said Tuesday (March 17, 2026) it is set to open a new Pag-abot Program processing center in Bacoor City, Cavite to help more families in a street situation. (DSWD Oplan Pag-Abot Program Facebook)