

SUNDAY TRIBUNE

NEWS PUBLISHING

VOLUME I • NO. 15

NOVEMBER 13 - 19, 2022

10.00

PGC facilitates turnover and blessing of floating assets to Coast Guard Station Cavite

To reinforce the response capability and support its maritime partner especially during calamities and crisis, the Provincial Government of Cavite facilitated the ceremonial turnover and blessing of floating assets to the Philippine Coast Guard Station in Cavite (CGS Cavite) on November 4, 2022 at Villa Excellance Beach and Wave Pool Resort, Sitio Postema, Brgy. Sahud Ulan, Tanza, Cavite.

The event was attended by CG LCDR Ailene G Abanilla, Commander of CGS Cavite, CG COMMO Hostillo AE Cornelio, the Acting Commander of CG D NCR - CL, Ms. Cynthia Castro and Mr.

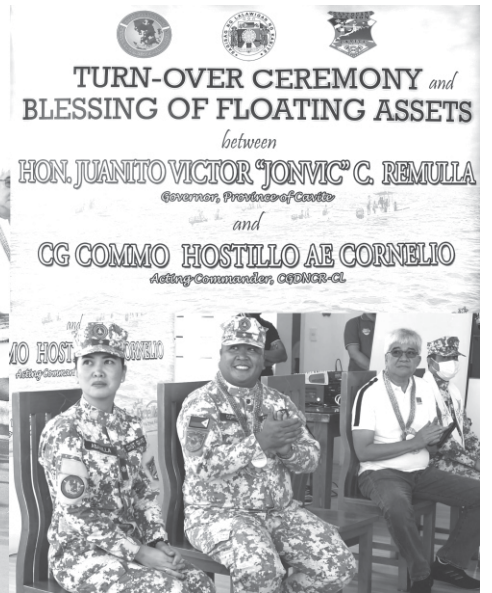
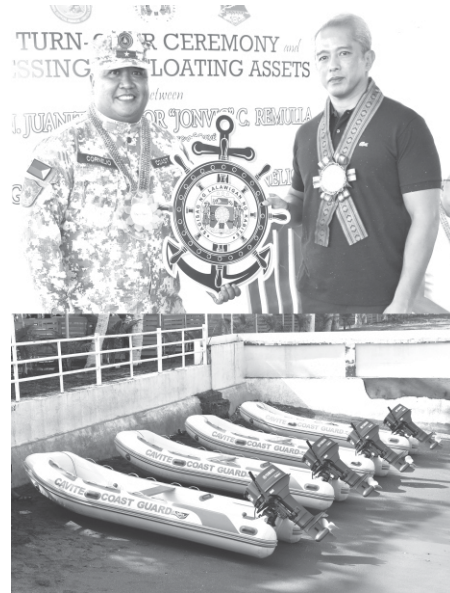
Carlo Antonio Castro, owners and CEO of Villa Excellance, who were joined by Governor Juanito Victor C. Remulla.

CG LCDR Ailene G. Abanilla gave the introductory remarks to welcome all the attendees of the said event. In her statement, she shared that throughout the years of her service, she had seen the struggles that come with the conduct of operations due to insufficient resources, especially the floating assets. She added that the PCG is dedicated in providing the country and the citizens with exceptional service but the limited resources make it difficult for them to do so. Thus, the

floating assets that the provincial government provided them will greatly help in executing their duties and operations as coast guards. She then promised that they will do their best and will utilize the floating assets effectively and efficiently in order to better serve the country, the community, and the people.

Meanwhile, Governor Remulla hoped that for whatever assistance they provide, the coast guards will return the favor with honest service – "tapat sa bayan, tapat sa usapan, at tapat sa mga tao". During times of crisis, people are most in need of help, hence, he

► **PGC FACILITATES • 3**



PGC Medical Mission team extends health care services to Imuseños

Continuing to provide basic health care services in the midst of the pandemic, the Provincial Government of Cavite through the Office of the Provincial Governor – Extension, in partnership with the Sangguniang Barangay of Anabu II-C, extended their free medical consultation to the residents of Brgy. Anabu II-C, City of Imus, Cavite on November 8, 2022.

Three hundred fifty-nine (359) patients availed the free check-up by doctors from General Emilio Aguinaldo Memorial Hospital composed of Dr. Merry Louise Bautista, Dr. Joshua Solis and other medical practitioners, as well as doctors from the City Health Office of Imus – Dr. Gelyn Golanco and Dr. Cherrie Lyn Tumilba-Boque.

Patients underwent antigen swab testing and screening prior to the consultation proper for the safety of everyone. Minimum safety health protocols were followed throughout the duration

of the program.

COVID-19 vaccination was also provided during the said outreach program which was led by Mr. Tyron Fernandez, head of the Imus City mobile vaccination team.

The Imuseños who availed the free health care services received free

prescribed medicines, vitamin supplements and a 5 kilos of rice.

With the support of barangay officials headed by Barangay Captain Joey B. Sarte as well as the barangay health workers, the medical mission was successfully accomplished.



Indangeños receive free medical consultation. On November 4, 2022, the Office of the Provincial Governor – Extension in collaboration with the Provincial Health Office delivered free health care services to the Indangeños in Brgy. Guyam Malaki, Indang, Cavite. Medical team from Cavite Collaboration Center for Public Health composed of Dr. Promise Joy Tio, Dr. Ma. Lealyn Reyes, Dr. Gilbert G. Mortel and other medical professionals examined the health and wellness of a total of 197 patients. The constituents then received free prescribed medicines and vitamins supplements. During the course of activity, minimum safety health protocols were observed. Patients underwent screening process and antigen swab testing preceding medical consultation. Brgy. Chairman Vivencio Ginete Matilla, barangay officials, and health workers of Guyam Malaki showed their appreciation to the provincial government for successfully providing consistent health care services to their residents. (PICAD)



EDITORIAL

LGUs and 'One Town, One Product' strategy

There is a bright prospect that after 18 years, an economic-boosting program launched through the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) by the administration of then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (2001-2010) to provide much-needed stimulus to the economic growth of towns, cities, provinces and regions of the country is on the way to being institutionalized by the present 19th Congress.

This can be gleaned from recent developments in both the Senate and the House of Representatives with regard to the "One Town, One Product" (OTOP) Philippines strategy which was conceived to be a vital cog in the promotion of micro, small and medium-scale enterprises (MSMEs) nationwide.

Mrs. Arroyo, an economist who has been vice president, senator, Department of Social Welfare and Development secretary, and DTI undersecretary before succeeding President Joseph Estrada in Malacañang, implemented the program in 2004 to improve the country's economy after the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis.

I happened to be the executive editor of the Presidential News Desk (PND) in Malacañang when the OTOP program was begun by the PGMA administration in 2004. It came on the heels of another program designed to boost domestic tourism in the different regions of the country. We were instructed by then Press Secretary Ignacio R. Bunye to give the implementation of the program maximum coverage.

Earlier, PGMA put in place through an executive order another flagship strategy called "Holiday Economics" under which the observance of certain holidays in the country's calendar were moved to other dates, either in the same or the following week, to provide Filipino workers with extended rest days to spend with their families.

For instance, in the event that a holiday falls on a Wednesday, its observance is moved to Monday of that week to give workers three straight holidays from Saturday, Sunday and



Monday. Another way is to move the holiday to Friday, thus giving the people the opportunity to enjoy three days off from Friday until Sunday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday.

In any case, the Office of the President has to issue an official proclamation on the resetting of such holidays.

The primary reason for the holiday economics is that the extra holidays would be spent by well-off families in other places away from home, giving the residents of the places they visit an opportunity to have a bigger share of the amount the visitors spend.

The strategy was hailed by local government officials for spotlighting the tourist attractions of their localities, prompting the 13th Congress under Senate President Manuel B. Villar Jr. and House Speaker Jose C. de Venecia Jr. to institutionalize it on July 24, 2007 as Republic Act 9492.

However, after PGMA left Malacañang on June 30, 2010, President Benigno S. Aquino III modified the law, saying, "There are important holidays whose celebration should not be moved to other dates so the people would not forget their significance."

Meanwhile, the DTI has continued implementing the OTOP strategy even after PGMA's term on June 30, 2010 and she has since been replaced by Presidents Aquino (2010-2016), Rodrigo R., Duterte (2016-2022) and now Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (2022-2028).

There have been significant developments in the present 19th Congress and the previous one with regard to the institutionalization of the OTOP program.

In the Senate, Senator Christopher Lawrence Go recently filed a bill seeking to make the DTI's "One Town, One Product" (OTOP) program an official part of the country's economic system, saying that it will help boost recovery and promote innovation among micro, small and medium enterprises.

The senator stressed that it is the duty of the government to "provide protection and recognize the profound and undeniable contributions of MSMEs in nation building, continuing national economic growth, and the realization of our economic objectives."

Go's measure also seeks to assist and capacitate MSMEs in developing new, innovative and more complex products and services through significant improvement in the areas of quality, product development, design, packaging, standards compliance, marketability, production

capability, brand development, sustainability, and securing licenses, product registration and other market authorization, among others.

The report of the Senate Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship of the 18th Congress was adopted in the bill, he said.

While the DTI will serve as the lead agency of the program, an OTOP Management Committee will be created to be designated by the DTI secretary which shall have the main responsibility of directing the implementation of the proposed law.

The Department of Tourism, Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines, Philippine Ports Authority, Land Transportation and Franchising Regulatory Board, and other similar agencies are also tasked to support the construction and allocation of spaces for the establishment of OTOP Philippines hubs.

In the House of Representatives, the Philippine News Agency (PNA) has reported that House Bill 9350 seeking to institutionalize the "One Town, One Product" (OTOP) Philippines program to promote inclusive and sustainable economic development has hurdled final reading approval.

"It mandates the DTI to provide a package of assistance for MSMEs to help them develop innovative and more complex products with significant improvement in the areas of quality, product development, design, packaging, compliance with standards, marketability, production capability, and brand development," PNA reporter Filane Cervantes wrote, quoting Magsasaka Party-list Rep. Argel Joseph Cabatbat, the author of the bill.

Cabatbat noted that since its implementation in 2004, the OTOP program has proven its ability to aid and develop the MSMEs capability to generate jobs, increase domestic sales and exports, and equip the business skills of entrepreneurs while showcasing Filipino culture, tradition and creativity.

The institutionalization of the program is expected to be easier and faster in the present Congress as House Speaker Martin Romualdez has said that under the revised House rules and policies, bills passed on third and final reading by the chamber no longer need to be refiled.

Editor's note: The opinions expressed in the foregoing article are solely the author's and do not reflect the opinions and beliefs of the Philippine News Agency (PNA) or any other office under the Office of the Press Secretary.

(By Severino C. Samonte)

SUNDAY TRIBUNE NEWS PUBLISHING

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Sunday Tribune News Publishing is a weekly newspaper of general circulation in the Province of Cavite with Editorial and Business address at 155 Brgy. Panamitan Kawit, Cavite 4104 CP No. 0917-109-1919 E-Mail Add: sundaytribunenewspublishing@gmail.com

SUBSCRIPTION RATE

1 Month P40.00 6 Months P240.00
3 Months P120.00 One Year P480.00

ADVERTISING RATE

Commercial — P200/col.cm

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Ginebra basketball import closes in on naturalization

MANILA — Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) import player Justin Donta Brownlee, who is a member of the Barangay Ginebra San Miguel basketball team, has hurdled a key step to becoming a Filipino citizen.

This, after the House Committee on Justice chaired by Representative Juliet Marie Ferrer (4th District, Negros Occidental) on Wednesday approved House Bill (HB) No. 825, a measure seeking for his naturalization as a full pledged citizen of the Philippines.

HB 825, which was authored by Rep. Michael Romero, Ph.D. (Party-list, 1-PACMAN), was approved after a brief discussion on Brownlee's personal information and matters surrounding his desire and willingness to become a member of the Filipino community.

The hearing actually took around 30 minutes before Cavite Fourth District congressman Pidi Barzaga moved for the approval of the bill. Several government agencies such as the Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), and Bureau of Immigration (BI) had no objection over the import's naturalization.

The approval of Brownlee's citizenship on the first reading marked the initial step in his bid to play for Gilas Pilipinas in

international competitions.

Romero said Brownlee, an American professional basketball player, has brought enormous pride and joy to the Philippine Basketball Association, as well as to all basketball enthusiasts in the country.

Brownlee said he has a lot of love from the fans and the people of the Philippines, "and it would be great to be a part of the country, and keep helping out as much as I can with the national team."

Brownlee, who was born on April 23, 1988 in Georgia, USA, thanked committee chair Ferrer after the hearing: "Maraming salamat po."

SBP hails House panel's move

Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas president Al Panlilio thanked the House Committee on Justice for swiftly passing Brownlee's naturalization bill.

"The Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas and I, in behalf of all basketball-loving Filipinos who eagerly await the sixth and final window of the FIBA World Cup Asian Qualifiers at the Philippine Arena in February next year, would like to thank the House Committee on Justice, chaired by Rep. Juliet Marie de Leon Ferrer, for approving on initial hearing the application for naturalization of Justin Brownlee," SBP

president Al Panlilio said in a statement on Wednesday night.

Panlilio also thanked Romero and Deputy Speaker and Antipolo Rep. Robbie Puno and other members of the Justice Committee, for their prompt approval of the bill.

There is no timeline yet on when the second reading will be made, although Ferrer asked Congress to approve the bill in the final reading before they take a break from December 14 to January 22.

The SBP hopes that Brownlee would attain his Filipino citizenship in time for the sixth window of the FIBA World Cup Qualifiers, in which he is eyed as Gilas Pilipinas' naturalized player.



"As celebrated as Gilas Pilipinas' Middle East victories over Jordan and Saudi Arabia in Window 5 of the Asian Qualifiers were, the hometown crowd, I believe, would want nothing more than to savor two more Gilas PH triumphs – against Lebanon and Jordan – right in our own country to wrap up preparation and as (a) prelude to the FIBA World Cup in August 2023.

Hopefully, we can achieve that, and this time with Justin Brownlee leading the way," Panlilio said.

If approved at the congressional level, the Senate can now tackle its version of the Brownlee naturalization bill authored by Senator Bato dela Rosa.

If approved as well, the agreed upon bilateral version of the bill will be transmitted to President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. for

the final signature to turn it into law.

While the SBP is waiting for it, Panlilio is already thanking the legislators for their quick action.

"Again, my sincerest thanks to the House and the Senate for their unbridled support to Philippine basketball," Panlilio said. **(With a report from Ivan Stewart Saldajeno/PNA)**

Meralco beats TNT for 3rd straight win

MANILA — Meralco continued its last dash to the PBA Commissioner's Cup playoffs after beating TNT, 97-91, on Wednesday at the Smart Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City.

The Bolts turned to their defense in the second half to flip the switch against the Tropang Giga, holding them to just 37 points to overturn a 49-53 deficit at halftime and score

their third straight win after a dismal 1-5 start.

KJ McDaniels continues to pace Meralco, which tied its victim in seventh place at 4-5, with 26 points, 15 rebounds, four assists,

and one block.

Raymond Almazan added 21 points on 9-of-14 shooting, 11 rebounds, four blocks, and one steal, while Aaron Black chipped in 17 points, 11 rebounds, six assists, one steal, and one block.

Cam Oliver put up 25 points, 20 rebounds, five blocks, and one steal for TNT.

Mikey Williams reintroduced himself after a team-imposed ban with 15 points in the first half, but he was limited to just five the rest of the way even as he committed six turnovers the entire game. **(PNA)**



PGC facilitates... from page 1

hoped that they could work together in addressing and solving it.

The ceremonial turnover of floating assets was done by Governor Remulla received by CG COMMO Cornelio in the form of an anchor which symbolizes stability and security. In closing, CG COMMO

Hostillo AE Cornelio expressed their appreciation to the Provincial Government of Cavite for being one of the most supportive government institutions to the Philippine Coast Guard.

Blessing of all floating assets was led by CG LTSG Alejo B Serrano, PCG Chaplain. **(PICAD)**

National Children's Month... from page 8

with the Miriam College Child Rights Advocacy Center (CRAC), National Play Advocacy Week (NPAW) Partners' Play Toolkit launch, and the relaunching of the Mental Health Literary Pieces for Children: Sarilaysay Activity Book and Eroplanong Papel Comic Book.

Video documentaries on the success

stories of Local Government Units on Child Participation and the Local Council for the Protection of Children (LCPC Functionality) will also be shown. The Makabatang Buhay Talk Show on Child-Friendly Local Governance will also be held with Mayor Dahlia A. Loyola from the municipality of

Carmona, Cavite as speaker.

Republic Act 10661 or the National Children's Month Act is celebrated every November and commemorates the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on 20 November 1989. Under section 3 of the law, the CWC, National

Youth Commission, and the Department of Social Welfare Development were designated as the lead agencies for the conduct of the celebration.

The month-long celebration aims to instill in the Filipino consciousness as well as sustain the promotion and protection of children's rights. **(CS/PIA-PMD)**

PBBM says gov't on track in pursuing key railway projects; bent on solving traffic woes

MANILA -- The Philippine government is pursuing key railway projects seen to address the "terrible stories" about lack of quality time for many Filipinos due to traffic congestion, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. said on Thursday.

Marcos made this remark during the signing of the Metro Manila Subway Project (MMSPP) Contract Packages 102 and 103 in Malacañang.

The chief executive said the project is seen to reduce the "terrible stories we hear" from those who come home late due to heavy traffic. "We will reduce the terrible stories that we hear of people who no longer see their children because they come home at 1:30 in the morning and the children are asleep," Marcos said.

"They have to wake up at four o'clock in the morning to get back on the bus to fight with the traffic coming back to work. And that the

subway and all our public transport systems will be able to help and to remedy," the President pointed out.

Marcos said his administration is also pursuing other key railway projects, such as the Metro Rail Transit (MRT)-7, the Light Rail Transit (LRT) -1 Cavite Extension, and the Philippine National Railway (PNR) Clark Phases 1 and 2, to make the country's rail transit system a more viable option for Filipino commuters.

"We owe it to the Filipino people to build major roads and critical infrastructure that will not only spur progress and social change but also promote interconnectivity, ease traffic, and reduce their travel time," Marcos said during the Palace event. The chief executive expressed confidence that the country can move full speed ahead towards building better and more infrastructure projects for the Filipino people.

Marcos invited them to work harmoniously with the government towards the shared goal of an efficient public transportation system that enhances people's mobility, improves interconnectivity, and spurs equitable development.

"Let me assure you that the government remains dedicated to maximizing its resources to pursue even more ambitious endeavors that will bring comfort and progress to Filipinos all over the country," he said.

Once completed, the MMSPP is expected to significantly reduce travel time between Quezon City and Pasay City from one hour and 30 minutes to just 35 minutes and is also projected to benefit more than half a million passengers a day from Valenzuela City to Parañaque City.

It is also seen to create millions of jobs and opportunities for Filipinos. (PND)



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VOLUME I • NO. 15 • NOVEMBER 13 - 19, 2022 • 10.00

National Children's Month to focus on children's mental health issues



Health care services extended in Brgy. Mahabang Kahoy Cerca, Indang, Cavite: Cavite Provincial Government extends health services in Brgy. Mahabang Kahoy Cerca, Indang through a medical mission conducted by the Office of the Provincial Governor-Extension headed by Ms. Charlene Ann P. Samala. Around one hundred thirteen (113) children and adults were accommodated during the free check-up and consultation rendered by the medical doctors from General Emilio Aguinaldo Memorial Hospital composed of Dr. Evelyn Agdon, Dr. Michael Joe Medina and Dr. Ma. Jhenina Santos. Patients were given free maintenance medicines, multivitamins and Vitamin C supplements. Screening and antigen testing were done prior to the conduct of the activity and minimum safety health protocols were strictly observed. The success of the event was made possible thru the support of Brgy. Captain Romeo Babaan and the Barangay Health Workers. (PICAD)

The Council for the Welfare of Children will seek to address the mental health and well-being of children as the council marks the 30th National Children's Month observance.

Highlighting the theme "Kalusugan, Kaisipan at Kapakanan ng Bawat Bata Ating Tutukan," the kick-off ceremonies will gather participants from national government agencies, non-government organizations, civil society organizations, and local government units.

Undersecretary Angelo Tapales, CWC Executive Director, said this year's theme is

anchored on the World Health Organization's statement that health is "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

"Many were affected during the Covid-19 pandemic. But the silent victims of the pandemic are the youth and children as there were no discussions on how the pandemic has affected them," Tapales said in a press briefing last Tuesday, October 25.

He added the CWC will also push for the review of the Mental Health Law to include children's welfare.

In 2018, the

Philippines had published findings from the 2015 National Baseline Study on Violence against Children (NBS-VAC) showing that children and youth aged 13-24 years, experience high levels of physical (64.2 per cent), psychological (61.5 per cent), sexual (22.4 per cent) and peer (65 per cent) violence.

It was the first study to measure prevalence of all forms of violence against children across the country.

Some activities lined-up during the kick-off are: ceremonial launching of the CWC MAKABATA Helpline, partnership launching