

# STCIERD conducts webinar on artificial intelligence and data science for its member agencies



The Southern Tagalog Consortium for Industry and Energy Research and Development (STCIERD), together with DOST-CALABARZON, conducted its "Webinar on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Science: Pillars of the Future" last 29 July 2022 via Zoom for the consortium's member agencies. The said webinar aims to orient and introduce the relevance of AI and Data Science in research and how they can affect various industries and disciplines.

"Our research now really necessitates artificial intelligence and data science. We are all taught how data can be useful in evidence-based decision making." He encouraged everyone to pay attention to the introductory discussion to gain more insights on the applications of the topic. "I hope that our webinar speaker will be able to give us more enlightenment, and will give us more insights on how to engage properly on data science and artificial intelligence." Engr. Elmer Joaquin, Educator and Data Scientist from the Adventist University of

the Philippines, led the discussion which included the subtopics about the Fourth Industrial Revolution, Data-centric organizations, and AI and Data Science for Nation-building. Towards the end of the discussion, he expressed his hopes on finding more local and competent talents in the field. "At the end of the day, somebody must help you with the big data that you are holding. And it will be nice if they will be coming from our own institutions," he remarked. Meanwhile, Dr. Lorcelye Taclan,



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Consortium Director, delivered the closing remarks. Dr. Taclan thanked Engr. Joaquin as well as the member agencies

and other invited institutions beyond the region, for attending the event. She said, "I believe all of us now have a greater

knowledge about the subject. Ngayon ko lang din po medyo naintindihan ang topic na 'to." (By Halyn Lunel Gamboa)

## CALABARZON PinasLakas for plaza settings launched in Teresa



The Municipality of Teresa and Department of Health - Center for Health Development (DOH-CHD) 4A launch the "Sa Booster PinasLakas" vax campaign for a plaza setting this August 12. Teresa Mayor Rodel Dela Cruz welcomed DOH CHD 4A Assistant Regional Director Leda Hernandez, Rizal Vice Governor Reynaldo "Junrey" San Juan Jr. and CHD 4A Family

Health Cluster Head Restituta Magpantay who headed the launch followed by a ceremonial vaccination of locals at the town plaza. The Teresa launch marks the first PinasLakas leg in Calabarzon in a plaza setting following the recent factory-setting launch in Cavite province. "Kami po sa DOH-CHD Calabarzon ay

lubos na natutuwa dahil sa inyong aktibong pakikiisa sa ating pinalakas na kampanya na tinatawag nating "Sa Booster, PinasLakas," ARD Hernandez said. (We from DOH-CHD Calabarzon are glad because of your active participation in our strengthened campaign themed "Sa Booster PinasLakas.") ARD Hernandez emphasized the urgency

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## Cavite stakeholders cap nutrition month celebration



TRECE MARTIRES CITY, Cavite (PIA) - Stakeholders Cavite local government units gathered recently, July 27 in a Nutrition Forum to culminate the 48th Nutrition Month celebration with the theme, "New Normal sa Nutrisyon, Sama-Samang Gawan ng Solusyon." The forum held at the Cavite Collaboration Center for Public Health promotes the message of Strengthened Action on Nutrition: A Collaborative Action of the BNC has called on LGU nutrition forerunners to intensify and invest in nutrition programs in their respective communities

## DOST-CALABARZON RSTL maintains its ISO/IEC 17025:2017 accreditation this 2022

The Regional Standards and Testing Laboratory (RSTL) of the DOST-CALABARZON maintained its PNS ISO/IEC 17025:2017 accreditation granted by the Philippine Accreditation Bureau (PAB) last 15 July 2022. Specifically, the said laboratory accreditation programs include Biological Testing and Chemical Testing on foods, waters, and beverages which are valid until 23 December 2023 and 28 August 2024, respectively. An approved signatory status has been granted to Ms. Shaine M. Fonacier for the Biological Testing while Ms. Agnes C. Morales, Ms. Jasmin C. Hamid, Ms. Maria Teresa A. Pamplona, and Ms. Ma. Lorelie P. Dorado for

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## DOH: Ten additional LGUs de-escalated to COVID19 Alert Level 1 status for Aug 1-15, 2022

The Department of Health (DOH) as Chair of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) announces that for the period August 1 to 15, 2022, 10 additional LGUs all over the country are de-escalated to Alert Level 1 status. The DOH noted, based on IATF-EID metrics, that these areas were able to de-escalate by maintaining their case classification and total beds utilization rates at low risk, and reaching or nearing the vaccination thresholds for target population and target A2 (senior citizens) priority group. The National Capital Region shall remain under Alert Level 1 for the same period. Also placed under Alert Level 1 during the same period are the following areas: For LUZON, Cordillera Administrative Region: Abra, Apayao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, and Baguio City; Region I: Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Pangasinan, and Dagupan City; Region II: Batanes, Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, and City of Santiago; Region III: Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales, Angeles City, and Olongapo City; Region IV-A: Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Rizal,

EDITORIAL

ONE of the major crises stemming from current geopolitical tensions that the world is facing today is the global fertilizer shortage threatening food production and mass starvation in many parts of the globe, and the Philippines is not exempted from this danger. It is fortunate that due to correct political principles and practice, China is unaffected by these crises, particularly in fertilizer supply, and in March of 2022 donated millions of pesos worth of fertilizer to the Philippines.

During the turnover of the fertilizer donation, China's ambassador to the Philippines, His Excellency Ambassador Huang Xilian expressed understanding of the crisis the Philippines faces, "At present, there are concerns about supply shortages and high prices of fertilizers affecting farmers around the globe. I am fully aware that Filipino farmers and consumers are currently experiencing the effect of the problem" and promised that the People's Republic of China will continue to support the welfare of Filipino farmers.

In response, then Philippines' Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary William Dar intoned, "Let us nurture and enhance the relationship with the People's Republic of China.

I think the farmers are now ready to be more receptive to newer technologies..." and to the media, "We have been talking with Ambassador Huang Xilian on the country's ongoing request to buy fertilizers from China, and we are optimistic about the positive result of our discussions regarding the potential trade."

Philippine newspapers and news sites headlined, "Department of Agriculture banking on China fertilizer deal." China is extending special assistance to the Philippines for internally China has imposed an export ban but has made an exception to the Philippines which I surmise is to help President Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos Jr. to achieve his stated goal: the PHP20/kilo rice supply to the Filipino consumers. That is the impressive extent to China's concern and commitment to the Filipino government and people.

**China-Philippine agri cooperation's long history**

If we are to do a comprehensive history of Philippine-China agricultural cooperation, we could go back to hundreds of years when in the 15th century China acquired through the Galleon Trade the potato crop from the Philippines, according to Wu Jiewei, Deputy Dean of the Southeast Asian Cultural Studies Department of Peking University. We will limit ourselves to our present times when the full bloom of the "enhanced relations" between China and the Philippines is enjoying a renaissance.

We trace back the current cooperation between China and the Philippines to the efforts of China's "Father of the Hybrid Rice" Yuan Longping, who made the first of his 30 visits to the Philippines in 1979 and eventually sent

**China-Philippines agricultural teamwork crucial**

75-hybrid-rice strains to the Philippines for trial which helped local planters reach 15-tons/hectare rice entrepreneur Henry Lim Bon Liong. Secretary Dar said, "The Philippine government, especially in the agriculture sector, will be forever grateful for his [Longping's] involvement in teaching the hybrid rice cultivation method to our local farmers,"

The boom and bloom in China-Philippine agricultural cooperation and productivity in this 21st Century really erupted when President Rodrigo R. Duterte won the Philippine presidency and thereupon made China his first state visit to a global superpower instead of the traditionally pilgrimage to the United States by all past Philippine presidents. Subsequently, USD25 billion worth of assistance and projects were signed between the two countries that highlighted infrastructure and agricultural projects.

**Lineup of agricultural projects**

The star of the many China-Philippine cooperation projects are the infrastructure constructions that present impressive public monuments and are most appealing to publish on newspaper front pages and feature in audio-visual reports on TV and the Internet.

Hence, the most popular and well-known to the public are the majestic bridges China has donated such as the Estrella-Pantaleon and Binondo-Intramuros bridges which are treated like celebrities, but the agricultural project often tucked in the rural areas and boon docks are no less significant.

Agriculture is the most significant foundation for a free and independent nation as it provides food security, although the other component to achieve that vital security aspect also include infrastructure, energy and industry. Hence, one can say that the China-Philippines cooperation which includes all the components is indeed a holistic approach to national development. But we are focusing on agriculture and the list in this aspect is long and continues to grow. Meantime, we provide this list below and its impact over time:

On top of the list is the Philippine-Sino Center for Agricultural Technology (PhilSCAT) Program that has been in place for 22 years starting with an initial USD5-million dollars donation from the People's Republic of China, it's now cultivating 226,500 hectares of commercial hybrid rice, boosting yields by 308,000 tons and benefiting more than 134,000 farmers. DA Secretary William Dar had this to say about PhilSCAT with China:

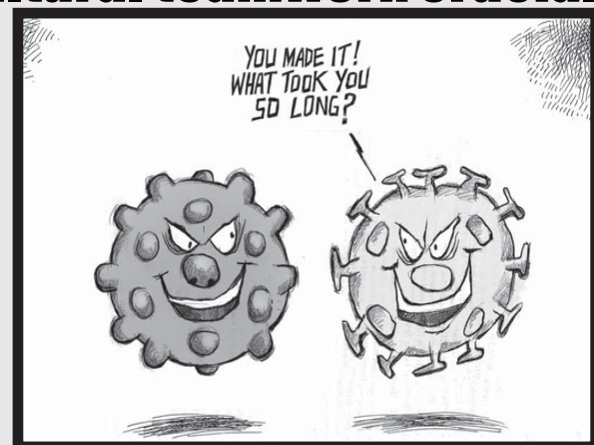
"Together, we have since worked to increase investments in research and development and training. The results have been nothing less than rewarding. We now know things that we couldn't have ever known before because of the work of the men and women behind PhilSCAT—and what we have learned enables us to help our farmers reduce their production costs—and increase both their yields and their incomes," said Dar. On its third phase, PhilSCAT continues to serve with technological breakthroughs in hybrid rice research, genetics and farmers' training.

In infrastructure for irrigation, there is the PHP11.247-billion Agno River Integrated Irrigation Project which provides irrigation services for 34,450 hectares of farmland in Pangasinan 12-months a year followed by the recently launched PHP4.37-billion Chico River Pump Irrigation Project which now serves to irrigate 8,700 hectares of farmland and benefit more than 4000 households in Cagayan and Kalinga in Northern Luzon.

In aquaculture, China has engaged the Philippines in the Leopard Coral Grouper Seeds (CALLED "SEEDS OF HOPE") Donation Project has provided 200,000 seeds in two batches to the Philippines as part of China's "program of sharing aquaculture know-how and seedling". The Leopard Coral Grouper Seeds when fully grown increases value by 120 times. Expansion of this program is expected as success breeds more interest.

Agricultural and aquaculture training continues as over 400 Philippine officials and experts have attended training courses in China and nearly 200 Philippine officials and experts have received training online from China. As the Covid-19 pandemic eases up, it is hoped that more such educational and training exchanges are conducted, especially with the new interest in China's "saline rice" or "seawater rice" farming trials, and upland water impounding projects with downstream mini-hydro-electric projects, and floating "cage aquaculture".

Agricultural trade cooperation with China is a key interest of the Philippines as the pandemic economic recovery and "sanctions war" in the West has deepening the



economic crisis in the Philippines. Cooperation with China has made China the third largest export destination of the Philippine agricultural products, and the second largest import source of agricultural products of the Philippines. For example:

Philippine bananas have accounted for more than half of the market share in China since the China-Philippines engagement in 2016. Philippine fresh coconuts have entered the Chinese market for the first time, and the Philippines has become the first Asian country to export avocado to China which used to all come from Latin America and the Caribbean. At the same time, China continues to be the second largest foreign investor in the Philippines with investment in agriculture making major strides.

Major and minor crises visit the Philippines regularly especially during typhoon seasons, but this year a significant crisis visited early due to the crisis in Ukraine. It is fortunate that China's assistance of 10,000 metric tons of rice donation arrived in as part of its assistance to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) National Operations Resources Center (NROC) for food needy families from the pandemic and now aggravated by the rice in food prices.

At this point, I should reiterate the timely anticipation of China's authorities to the situations in the Philippines as seen in the March 2022 fertilizer donation intended to "sustain rice production in the country" faced with skyrocketing world fertilizer prices. While negotiations for further supply in the months ahead aims to be priced at USD500 per metric ton almost 50 percent lower than the USD1,000 global market price. It is here that we see the exemplary concern China has for the Philippines.

**The Philippines will rise with China**

The greater part of the developing world is facing a debt crisis due to the twin mega-crisis that has descended on the world this past two years. The first crisis if the Covid-19 pandemic that is gradually lifting yet lingers on with feats of new mutations, the second is the unexpected Ukraine war severely aggravated by the US-led "sanctions war" against resource-dominant Russia which has precipitated an energy and food crisis. The Philippines will be spared in large part due to China's steady support from its holistic cooperation.

At the bottom of all crises is the food and energy crisis, and both issues are being addressed by China-Philippine cooperation programs. It is, therefore, not surprising that Philippine President Ferdinand E. Marcos Jr. has chosen to first among the many invitations for a state visit after inauguration China's invitation, and it will likely be the first foreign travel and call of the new Philippine President before any other. If that will be the case, it will indeed be the wisest decision.

China is the only major economy growing despite the pandemic and the Ukraine "sanctions war" by staying clear of the conflict, treating all nations equally, focusing on helping build global peace and prosperity and not taking one side of the "small blocs" against another. The rest of the developing world agrees hence the China-led BRICS is also growing. China is now the indispensable partner of any nation that seeks stability and growth, and most certainly of the partner of choice of the Philippines.

Teamed up with China, the Philippines is not only safe but also assured to be able to benefit from the Asia-Pacific regional tranquility and growth but also ensured to be able to exert its influence in promoting peace amongst all nations as part of the concert of nations. It is certainly essential that China-Philippines agricultural cooperation be further expanded by the new Philippine government to guarantee its success in the six years to come.

**Hero's welcome awaits 'best-ever' Asean Para Games squad**

SURAKARTA, Indonesia – The triumphant Philippine team that competed in the just-concluded 11th Asean Para Games can expect a grand hero's welcome on Sunday.

With the exception of the wheelchair basketball squads, majority of the Filipino contingent that took part in the regional sportsfest will touch down at the Ninoy Aquino International

**NU stars banner PH team to AVC Cup**

The main girls behind National University's (NU) University Athletics Association of the Philippines (UAAP) women's volleyball title conquest will headline the Philippine team to the Asian Volleyball Confederation Cup for Women that will take place later this month in Pasig.

The Philippine National Volleyball Federation (PNVF) announced on Saturday night that 12 players from the Lady Bulldogs have been called up to the national team, namely Ivy Lacsina, Bella Belen, Shaira Jardio, Evangeline Alinsug, Cess Robles, Sheena Toring, Jen Nierva, Nicole Mata, Alyssa Solomon, Camilla Lamina, Kamille Cal and Joyme Cagande.

Initially, only Nierva, Solomon, Lacsina, Belen, Lamina and Cal were selected to the pool as announced by Head Coach Jorge De Brito last month.

However, the PNVF eventually decided to stick with the NU core, which won a UAAP title for the first time after 65 years, paving the way for Jardio, Alinsug, Robles, Toring, Mata, and Cagande to be called up as well.

"The women's national team coaching staff led by Brazilian Jorge Edson Souza de Brito and assistant coaches Karl Dimaculangan and Cherry Macatangay

Airport Terminal 2 aboard a Philippine Airlines charter flight a little past noon. The para-athletes will be given the red-carpet treatment by officials, led by Philippine Paralympic Committee (PPC) president Mike Barredo and Commissioner Bong Co of the Philippine Sports Commission's (PSC).

Competing in 14 disciplines, the Filipinos, most of whom

competed in their first international meet after five years, will return home with their best-ever finish of 28 gold, 31 silver, and 47 bronze medals. They exceeded the previous best of 24-24-26 in the 2009 edition in Kuala Lumpur.

The country was running fifth in the unofficial medal standings as of noon here Saturday.

The event's website showed the host on top

national team will see action in the semifinals of the PVL Invitational Conference.

The Nationals accepted the invite to be a guest squad at the 11th hour after Kobe Shinwa Women's University, the one initially invited to play, begged off due to coronavirus disease 2019 concerns.

"The Kobe Shinwa Women's University told us that they won't be able to fly to the country last night because one of their players tested positive and the rest of the team were close contacts," said Sports Vision president Ricky Palou, whose company runs the PVL.

"The PNVF has agreed to field in the national squad, replacing the Japanese team, saying it would benefit the national team."

The Philippine team will play five matches in six nights, beginning with three straight days of action.

The Nationals will first face Creamline on Monday before facing Army on Tuesday, both matches at the Mall of Asia Arena in Pasay, and Signal on Wednesday at the FilOil EcoOil Centre in San Juan City.

The Philippine team will take the Thursday off before returning to the FilOil EcoOil Centre to face the other guest team in the tournament, KingWhale-Taipei, on Friday and PLDT on Saturday. (PNA)



Para Chess - Men's B2 category gold medalists Darry Bernardo, Menandro Redor, and Arman Subaste (PSC photo)

with a 177-141-110 gold-silver-bronze haul, followed by Thailand (117-116-87), Vietnam (64-60-56), and Malaysia (36-20-14).

"We are all so proud of our Filipino para-athletes in overcoming many severe challenges so they can excel and come back to the country with their best performance yet in the 11th Asean Para Games," Barredo said in

**PH deals Vietnam vengeful 3-1 win in World Chess Olympiad**

The Philippines dealt regional rival Vietnam a vengeful 3-1 victory in the 10th and penultimate round Monday night to move on the verge of carving its best ever performance in the World Chess Olympiad in Chennai, India.

Woman Grandmaster Janelle Mae Frayna and Woman International Masters Marie Antoinette San Diego and Kylen Joy Mordido came through with masterful wins on boards one, three and four, respectively, to seal the upset win.

Of the four, only WIM Jan Jodilyn Fronda suffered the loss—a stinging result to WGM Nguyen Thi Ma Hung on the second board.

But it was hardly felt as the Filipinas, who are backed by the Philippine Sports Commission, won their games in the other boards that sealed

a news release on Saturday. "Although we finished in fifth place once again, the marked improvement in our medal output showed how determined and hungry our athletes were."

Coo said the athletes brought pride and honor to the country anew.

"We cannot thank you enough for your courage and hard work

and lifting our country's pride! For Philippine sports and for the greater glory of God!" she said in a statement.

PSC Executive Director and acting officer-in-charge Guillermo Iroy Jr. said they are in the process of arranging a courtesy call in Malacañang.

The next Asean Para Games will be held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in June 2023. (PR)

place effort in the last over-the-board edition of the biennial tournament in Batumi, Georgia four years back regardless of the results of their last match.

Meanwhile, the Filipinos routed the Guatemalans, 4-0, to move up to an 18-nation tie at 41st spot with 12 points.

If the country could beat fancied Norway, a team spearheaded by reigning world champion Magnus Carlsen, in the final round, it would improve on a 39th-place performance the last time. (PR)

also surpassed its 67th

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# IT'S BACK-TO-SCHOOL SEASON AT SM STATIONERY

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## Calabarzon...

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for boosters for protection against various COVID variants.

As of August 9, DOH 4A targets a total of 1,171,398 individuals due for at least one booster dose through the PinasLakas campaign from Rizal Province, 23,456 of which are from Teresa.

Vice Governor San Juan highlighted the need for safe efficient accessible vaccines for all during the program proper and expressed the province's full support for the program.

"Ang pamahalaang lalawigan ng Rizal ay nakikiisa sa layunin ng DOH na tuldukan na itong COVID-19," Vice Governor San Juan said.

(The Rizal provincial government is one with

DOH's aim to put an end to COVID-19.)

"Nakita namin ang pagbubukas ng ekonomiya at nagsisimula na uli ang face to face classes ng ating mga anak at nagawa natin ito sa pamamagitan ng pagbabakuna," he adds.

(We have seen the economy reopen and our children's face-to-face classes are beginning again and this is possible through vaccination.) Dr. Magpantay then emphasized the need for further education of the public in the importance of vaccines especially those have not been vaccinated or have not yet received booster shots.

"Inilunsad natin ang PinasLakas sa bayan ng

Teresa upang iparating natin sa ating mga kababayan na kailangan pa rin natin ng booster doses ng COVID-19 para lumakas kaniyang immunity at kung dumating ang COVID sa kanila ay hindi na sila mao-ospital at magiging mild na lang ang kanilang symptoms," she said.

(We launched PinasLakas in Teresa to tell our constituents that they still need booster doses to strengthen their immunity and in case they get COVID, they would not be hospitalized and will only experience mild symptoms.) Dr. Magpantay added that the initial doses are not enough which is why the government continues to hold ceremonial vaccinations.

(GG/PIA-Rizal)

## Cavite...

from page 1

behalf of Vice Governor Athena Bryana Tolentino) as she stressed strengthening nutrition interventions and shifting from pandemic to endemic paradigm through evidenced-based and innovative solutions.

The plenary started with a dialogue on "Why Invest in Nutrition" delivered by Ms. Lourdes Orongan where she shared the eight compelling reasons for putting premium and investing in nutrition ranging from its implications on health, economy, and the overall development of

the country.

Ms. Marinelle Juangco from the Department of the Interior and the Local Government-Cavite talked about Unifying the Direction in Nutrition and the different legal bases that mandate local government units specifically at the barangay level to pursue and implement nutrition programs.

City Councilor Jojit Desingano shared best practices of Barangay San Jose, Tagaytay City during his term as Barangay Chairman.

The innovations and firm resolve to

implement nutrition programs targeting not only the health aspect but other concerns including the environment have won them various recognition from the city, the province, and the region.

Their barangay has also been chosen in many benchmarking activities of different LGUs and organizations.

Participants signed a commitment of support to nutrition programs and the advocacy to invest more in successful nutrition interventions.

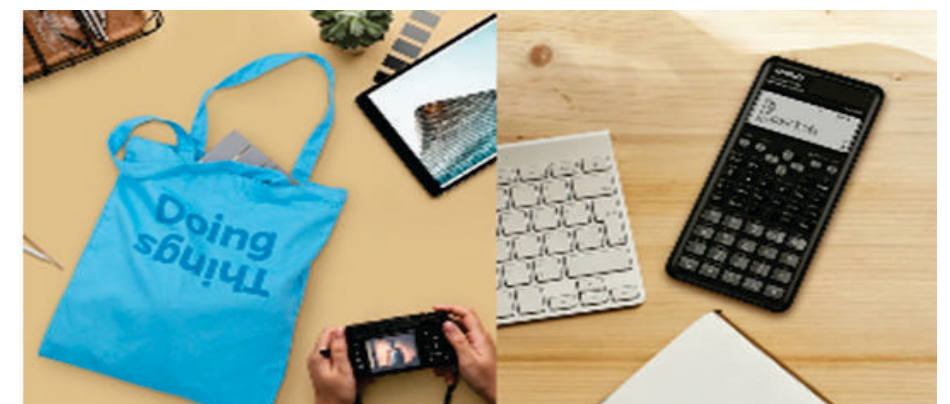
(RBF/PIA-Cavite with reports from PICAD)



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# Cavitex braces for traffic increase as schools reopen



Free circumcision for the constituents of Imus City: The Office of the Provincial Governor - Extension headed by Ms. Maribel Bernal was once again carried out a successful Operation Tuli Program in Bucandala 3, Imus City, Cavite on August 4, 2022. Medical team from General Emilio Aguinaldo Memorial Hospital (GEAMH) led by Dr. Jhonelle Prodigalidad and Dr. Lynoelle Kyle Arayata and some staff from OPG-Extension rendered free circumcision to forty-three (43) young males, aged 10-15 years old. During the activity, health and safety protocols were observed. With assistance of Barangay Captain Amado "Ajoy" Sareal and Barangay Health Workers of Bucandala 3, the operation program accomplished a feat. (PICAD)

## DOH: Ten additional...

from page 1

and Lucena City; Region IV-B: Marinduque, Oriental Mindoro, Romblon, and Puerto Princesa City; and Region V: Albay, Catanduanes, Naga City, and Sorsogon. For the VISAYAS, Region VI: Aklan, Capiz, Guimaras, Iloilo Province, Bacolod City, and Iloilo City; Region VII: Siquijor, Cebu City, Lapu-Lapu City, and Mandaue City; and Region VIII: Biliran, Eastern Samar, Southern Leyte, Ormoc City, and Tacloban City. For MINDANAO, Region IX: Zamboanga City; Region X: Camiguin, Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental, Cagayan de Oro City, and Iligan City; Region XI: Davao City and Davao Oriental; Region XII: South Cotabato and General Santos City; CARAGA: Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Sur and Butuan City; and BARMM: Cotabato City.

The following component cities and municipalities shall likewise be newly placed under Alert Level 1 for the same period: For the VISAYAS, Region VI: Barbaza, Antique; and Region VIII: Bato and Tabontabon, Leyte. For

MINDANAO, Region IX: Bohol, Cebu, and Negros Oriental; and Region VIII: Leyte, Northern Samar and Western Samar. For MINDANAO, Region IX: City of Isabela, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte, and Zamboanga Sibugay; Region X: Lanao del Norte; Region XI: Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Davao de Oro and Davao Occidental; Region XII: North Cotabato, Sarangani, and Sultan Kudarat; CARAGA: Dinagat Islands and Surigao del Norte; and Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao: Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

Cities and municipalities previously de-escalated shall remain under Alert Level 1.

Meanwhile, the following provinces, highly urbanized cities (HUCs), and independent component cities (ICCs) shall remain under Alert Level 2, without prejudice to their respective component cities and municipalities which may be under a different alert level classification: For LUZON: Cordillera Administrative Region: Benguet, Ifugao; Region IV-A: Quezon Province; Region IV-B: Occidental Mindoro and Palawan; and Region V: Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, and Masbate. For the VISAYAS, Region VI: Antique and Negros Occidental; Region VII:

Cavitex Infrastructure Corporation (CIC) and joint-venture partner, Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) announce the readiness of the Manila-Cavite Expressway (CAVITEX), for the expected increase in traffic volume due to the government mandate of full implementation of face-to-face classes by November, with some expected to start as early as August.

With more vehicles expected to ply the 14-kilometer CAVITEX going to different schools and universities in Metro Manila, CIC foresees a 5-10% increase in daily average vehicle count vs current traffic. At present, an average of 150,000 motorists traverse the expressway on a daily basis. To help manage the increasing number of traffic that has now surpassed pre-pandemic numbers, CAVITEX had been activating counterflow lanes for Class 1 vehicles at Manila-bound (in front of Waste Transfer Facility and after Paranaque Toll Plaza) and

Cavite-bound (in front of PITX and after Paranaque Toll Plaza) during rush hours of morning and afternoon, respectively and as needed. Aside from traffic management on-ground, CIC continuously reminds customers to avail of its free Easytrip RFID to avoid long queues at cash lanes and for faster lane transactions. Expressway motorists can drop by CAVITEX Customer Service Centers (Manila and Cavite-bound) and at other stations along the expressway for free RFID installation and reloading services.

Available for both iOS and Android devices, CIC promotes the use of the Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation's (MPTC) latest digital venture, the MPTDriveHub app.

"Our MPT DriveHub app was developed to further elevate our customer experience, so we really encourage them to download it. The app not only allows them to monitor their balance and passages but also provides them with traffic

updates that are useful in planning their trips. The app may also be used to connect with us for queries or emergency roadside assistance," said CIC President and General Manager, Mr. Raul L. Ignacio. CIC also reminds motorists to perform BLOWBAGETS (Battery, Lights, Oil, Water, Brake, Air, Gas, Engine, Tire, Self) prior to traveling "It is important for our expressway users to ensure the roadworthiness of their vehicles to avoid vehicular breakdowns that may cause inconvenience to him and other motorists. We remind our motorists to perform BLOWBAGETS, and to ensure sufficient balance when passing through RFID lanes for seamless travel" said CIC Vice President for Operations Management, Ms. Ella Francisco. Cavitex Infrastructure Corporation (CIC) is a subsidiary of MPTC, the toll road development arm of Metro Pacific Investments Corporation (MPIC).

## DOST...

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Chemical Testing.

One of the main benefits of being an ISO/IEC 17025:2015-accredited is that the laboratory will gain international recognition for its commitment to quality, reliable results. It is an objective way to assure the customers that the laboratory has the technical competence to provide reliable and accurate test results. This serves as an unbiased guarantee that the lab is performing at its highest level. It demonstrates that the laboratory ensures that the required quality levels and the satisfaction of the customers' needs are met.

RSTL has successfully transitioned from ISO/IEC 17025:2005 to the 2017 version in 2021. The International Laboratory Accreditation

Cooperation (ILAC) is an organization promoting international arrangements between member accreditation bodies based on peer evaluation and mutual acceptance to develop and harmonize laboratory and inspection body accreditation practices and to fully implement this new standard from the date of its publication. At the end of the transition period, laboratories not accredited to the ISO/IEC 17025:2017 will not be allowed to issue endorsed test reports and will not be recognized under the ILAC MRA terms.

The RSTL offers analytical testing services for water, wastewater, foods, feeds, and others such as fertilizer and hand sanitizers through its laboratory units: Chemical Laboratory (Chem Lab), Halal Verification Laboratory

(HVL), and Microbiological Laboratory (Micro Lab). The Chem Lab and the HVL, operated by three registered chemists and four registered chemical technicians, offer physico-chemical testing on food, water, and other matrices and shelf-life testing of food. The Micro Lab is operated by a food technologist, a registered microbiologist, and a biologist, and offers microbiological testing for food and water. RSTL is supported by a customer relations officer (CRO) and two laboratory aides.

Want to learn more about RSTL? Visit our website at <https://region4a.dost.gov.ph/services-main/testing-and-calibration/regional-services-and-testing-laboratory-space> or like us on Facebook at <http://facebook.com/dostcalabarzon>! (By Halyn Lunel Gamboa)

# One million rice farmers receive RCEF seeds

Three years after its implementation, more than 10 million bags of certified seeds were distributed to about one million farmers from the 42 target provinces under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF).



Estimates also show that rice areas planted with RCEF seeds reach 1.5 million hectares yearly.

As of July, 1.57 million bags were distributed to more than 630,000 farmers in 731 cities and municipalities, with an estimated area coverage of 720,000

hectares for 2022 wet cropping season.

The RCEF-Seed Program, being implemented by the Department of Agriculture-Philippine Rice Research Institute (DA-PhilRice), continues to operate in 42 provinces that have high potential to adopt

Ifugao, Kalinga, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Pampanga, Zambales, Cavite, Laguna, Quezon, Albay, Masbate, and Sorsogon in Luzon.

RCEF-Seed Program also reached Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Negros Occidental, Bohol, Negros Oriental, Biliran, Samar (Western Samar), Southern Leyte in Visayas. For Mindanao, the Program also served Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay, and Lanao Del Norte.

Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental, Davao de Oro, Davao Del Norte, Davao del Sur, Davao Oriental, Sarangani, South Cotabato, Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Sur, Lanao del Sur, and Maguindanao are also included in the program. Meanwhile, a study conducted by the Socioeconomics

certified inbred seeds. With the OneDA approach, which aims to maximize resources and unify efforts of the agencies under DA, provinces not included in RCEF are being assisted by the National Rice Program.

The RCEF-Seed provinces include



PGC Free Circumcision Program in Brgy. Punta 1, Tanza, Cavite: Forty-five young males aged 10-17 years old from Brgy. Punta 1, Tanza, Cavite, benefited from the Operation Tuli Program of the Provincial Government of Cavite on August 11, 2022. The free circumcision services were rendered by the medical team from General Emilio Aguinaldo Memorial Hospital, led by Dra. Mae Razel Acquioben together with the staff from the Office of the Provincial Governor-Extension Beneficiaries underwent screening process and antigen swab testing prior to the free circumcision activity. Minimum safety health protocols were also strictly observed during the conduct of the event. The program was made possible through the help of barangay health workers and officials headed by Barangay Captain Anacleto Clamosa. (PICAD)



Division of DA-PhilRice showed that certified seed adoption in the RCEF provinces increased from 48% in the 2019 wet season (prior to RCEF's implementation) to 84% in the 2021 wet season. High utilization rates were also recorded as 98% of the farmer-beneficiaries have planted the RCEF seeds within the actual season they received the provision. The study affirmed that farmers plant the seeds when they receive it in time for their planting dates. "In close coordination with our partner-local government units, we carefully plan the seed delivery schedule in every city and municipality. This made seed distribution activities timely based on the planting period of various localities," said Flordeliza Bordey, head of the DA-PhilRice RCEF Program Management Office.

Around 97% of the farmers in the 2021 wet season also mentioned they were satisfied with the germination rate of the RCEF seeds.

The seasonal monitoring of farmers' yields indicates steady improvement from 3.63t/ha in the 2019 dry season to 4.20t/ha in the 2022 dry season. For the wet season, yield increased from 3.69t/ha in the 2019 wet season to 4.03t/ha in the 2021 wet season.

"Napakalaking tulong po ng RCEF-Seed Pogram sa akin at sa kapwa ko magsasaka

dahil nakatipid po kami sa binhi. Di na po namin ito bibilhin at nakakasiguro pa po kami na ito ay sertipikado. Pantay na pantay at mabilis pong sumibol ang binhi, hindi malahok, at malaki pong umani (The RCEF-Seed Program was a big help for me and my fellow farmers because we were able to save on seed cost. We do not need to buy [because it's free] and we are sure that these are certified. The seeds grow fast and uniformly, pure, and, yields high)," Jorge Acero of Siniloan Laguna showed.

Acero said he harvested 138 cavans, averaging 55.3kg/cav, when he planted the NSIC Rc 402 he received from the program.

Meanwhile, the RCEF-Seed Program has initiated the development of site-specific fertilizer recommendations to further help farmers increase their yield and ensure that their fertilizer inputs are cost-efficient.

Through clustering barangays based on their soil type, the program assessed the nutrient status of the rice areas using Minus-One Element Technique (MOET), a diagnostic tool for detecting soil nutrient deficiencies in actual field conditions based on the crop growth response.

Its results, which will include recommendations on the right element, amount, and timing of

fertilizer application, will be packaged through information, education, and communication materials that will be disseminated in the target areas. The program is collaborating with the RCEF-Rice Extension Services Program in this initiative.

"Through this, we want to help farmers make more informed decisions in their crops' nutrient management. With the expensive fertilizer prices and farmers' existing resources, it is important that they use what only is useful and beneficial for their rice crops," Bordey noted.

PhilRice studies show that knowing the right element, amount, and timing of fertilizer application can help increase efficiency in input cost and nutrient uptake.

The RCEF-Seed Program is a component of Republic Act 11203 or Rice Tariffication Law, which allots P10 billion funds every year for the rice farmers from the rice tariff earnings of the country. The program is a six-year government initiative to help farmers improve their competitiveness. The local government units and lawmakers assist in its implementation. Mandated to help ensure a rice-secure Philippines, DA-PhilRice leads the RCEF-Seed Program. It is also the government's lead agency on rice research and development. (DA-RCEF)

# How to upgrade your historical knowledge with NHCP

Often times we look at history books for lessons taught by significant people before us. People that gave us the kind of freedom that we are currently experiencing. The freedom to express who we are, what is on our mind, and the freedom to live as we seem fit.

As we celebrate this year's history month, these are the official National Historical Commission of the Philippines' (NHCP) activities that you can join to learn, refresh, and gain a new insight of our country's rich history.

NHCP will formally open the History Month celebration on August 3 at Fort San Pedro in Cebu City.

Aside from the opening program, the NHCP will announce a historic celebration, which will be available to the public from 2023 until 2026.

### Physical Activities 144th Birth Anniversary of President Manuel Quezon

Start your day by celebrating the 144th Birth Anniversary of President Manuel Quezon on August 19 at Museo ni Manuel Quezon in Quezon City. The program will start at 8 in the morning.

### A Don Ricardo Carcinero: An Exhibit of Jose Rizal's guardian in Dapitan

Learn about the person who took care of 'Pepe' during his stay at Dapitan during the Museo ni Jose Rizal Fort Santiago's "A Don Ricardo Carcinero: An Exhibit of Jose Rizal's guardian in Dapitan" exhibition on August 26. You may also retrace Rizal's final steps in the historic military hold.

**National Heroes Day**  
Join NHCP as they honor those who sacrificed for the country at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig City for the National

Heroes Day on August 29.

### 125th Anniversary of Battle of Pinaglabanan

Go to Museo ng Katipunan - Pinaglabanan Memorial Shrine in San Juan City on August 30 and walk through the First Battle of Katipunan led by Supremo Andres Bonifacio. You may also check out the exhibit highlighting Teresa Magbanua, Santiago Alvarez, Noriel Luga.

### Online Activities

Starting August 1 until August 31, the NHCP will conduct webinars in partnership with various academic institutions such as the Asian Center of the Philippines, Philippine Historical Association, and other Cultural and Historical Affairs Office about the trading between the Ilaya and Ilawod, as well as a series of lecture dubbed, "Panaysayon 2022."

Moreover, numerous NHCP-run museums will conduct an online exhibit which will be available through their Facebook Page.

For the complete list of activities, you may go to <https://qrco.de/bdCuER>: The NHCP launched on July 28, 2022, the official logo for the celebration of History Month at the NHCP Museo ni Emilio Aguinaldo in Kawit, Cavite. (PIA-NCR)



## Muntinlupa places 8th among PH cities in local revenues collection efficiency

The Muntinlupa City Government has bagged eighth place among cities in the Philippines in collection efficiency of local revenues in 2021.

The Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) under the Department of Finance (DOF) announced the top performing provinces, cities, and

municipalities based on locally sourced revenues (LSRs). LSRs "are collections generated by LGUs [local government units] from real property tax, tax on business, other taxes, regulatory fees, service/user charges, and receipts from economic enterprises," according to the BLGF.

"External Sources, on the other hand, are from Internal Revenue

Allotment (IRA), other shares from national tax collection, inter-local transfer and extraordinary receipts/grants/donations/aids while other receipts include interest income and miscellaneous income," according to the bureau.

Based on collection efficiency of LSRs, Muntinlupa LGU recorded a collection rate of 129.8 percent

when its LSRs in 2021 totaled P3.728 billion, exceeding the target of P2.871 billion.

"Congratulations, Muntinlupa City! With a collection efficiency of 129.8%, Muntinlupa City is Top 8 in Collection Efficiency of Locally Sourced Revenues Nationwide for fiscal year 2021," Muntinlupa Mayor Ruffy Biazon posted on Facebook.

The top 10 cities in

collection efficiency of LSRs are Urdaneta City in Pangasinan, Taguig, Dasmariñas in Cavite, San Pedro in Laguna, Valenzuela, Roxas City in Capiz, Lapu-Lapu in Cebu, Muntinlupa, Cagayan de Oro City, and San Juan. Here are the top 10 cities in the Philippines in collection efficiency of locally sourced revenues (LSRs): (Muntinlupa PIO/PIA-NCR)