

# Three cities in Cavite launch eBOSS

Story by Dennis Abrina

**GENERAL TRIAS CITY** — This city and three other cities in Cavite formally launched their respective Business-One-Stop-Shop on Jan. 2 to afford the residents and investors some ease of tax payment. >> P2

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

## Legarda calls on Filipinos to cut back on single-use plastics

In observance of National Zero Waste Month, Senator Loren Legarda reiterated her call for Filipinos to lean into recyclable materials and contribute to a more sustainable waste management cycle.

"The Philippines has been tagged as one of the top ocean polluters worldwide, primarily due to our dependence on single-use plastics," said the senator who authored and principally sponsored the Republic Act (RA) 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act. "It is time to break free from this harmful practice by

>> P2



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

## Meralco Announces Power Interruptions in Metro Manila, Cavite, Laguna

BY GABRIELL CHRISTEL GALANG

The Manila Electric Company (Meralco) has announced scheduled power maintenance in several cities, municipalities, and provinces across Luzon.

Starting Wednesday, January 8, Balara, Quezon City, and Mendez-Núñez, Indang, Cavite, will experience the first round of maintenance. This is due to pole replacements and line reconductoring in the area.

Residents in Balara should expect fluctuating

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## Bacoor Computer Center Recognized as Digital Transformation Center in 2025

In 2025, the Bacoor Computer Center has been recognized as a Digital Transformation Center. Partnering with the City Government of Bacoor and the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), our office continues to provide free services to all citizens of Bacoor. This initiative is part of Mayor Strike B. Revilla's primary programs to expand the digital technology knowledge of Bacooreños.

The Bacoor Computer Center offers a wide range of digital literacy services to support the community. These services include providing internet access, which allows residents to stay connected and access important online resources. Additionally, the center offers document printing services, making it convenient for citizens to print necessary documents for various purposes.

For those needing assistance with vaccination

>> P2



## VM Rowena distributes wheelchairs to Bacooreños

Bacoor City, January 6, 2025 — The City Government of Bacoor, under the leadership of Mayor Strike B. Revilla, conducted a special wheelchair distribution program today at the Strike Gymnasium. The event was a testament to the city's commitment to providing accessible and inclusive services for its residents, especially those with disabilities and senior citizens.

The distribution was attended by Sangguniang Panglungsod members, led by Vice Mayor Rowena Bautista Mendiola, and a number of beneficiaries from Bacoor's PWD and senior citizen communities. The event was a heartwarming display of compassion and support, as the city government provided much-needed mobility aids to those who require them. This initiative is part of the

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## Bong Go Calls for Healthcare Reform After Cavite Man's Tragic Death



SENATOR Christopher "Bong" Go, Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Health and Demography, expressed deep concern over the tragic death of a man in Rosario, Cavite, which has sparked discussions about the state of the country's healthcare system.

The victim, who reportedly experienced severe pain, was found lifeless on the side of the road after leaving

>> P3

Story by Elijah Felice Rosales

Commuters may have to wait longer before they can travel to Cavite faster through the Light Rail Transit Line 1 (LRT-1) as the government needs to redesign the extension to resolve a project conflict.

Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista yesterday said the LRT-1 Cavite Extension would have to undergo redesigning to make way for a project of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). Bautista said the train extension could

>> P3



Government to redesign LRT-1 Cavite line © Released / Light Rail Manila Corporation



# PHINMA completes P431.8-M acquisition of Cavite school

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

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

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

The share and asset purchase agreement

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

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

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

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



chology, Hospitality Management, and Computer Science. Other schools within the PHINMA Education network include PHINMA Araullo University in Nueva Ecija, PHINMA Cagayan de Oro College, PHINMA University of Iloilo, PHINMA University of Pangasinan, PHINMA Saint Jude College Manila, PHINMA Saint Jude College Quezon City, PHINMA Rizal College of Laguna, PHINMA Union College of Laguna, and Southwestern University PHINMA.

The company also has a presence in Indonesia through Horizon Karawang. PHINMA Corp. shares fell by 2.7% or 50 centavos to P18 apiece on Wednesday. — Revin Mikhael D. Ochave

## Bacoor Computer Center << P1

certificates, the center provides Vaxcert assistance to help individuals obtain their vaccination records. The center also facilitates online appointments for passports and NBI clearances, streamlining the process for residents.

Furthermore, the Bacoor Computer Center offers computer and laptop check-ups to ensure that devices are functioning properly. SIM registration

services are also available, helping residents comply with telecommunications regulations. One-on-one tutorials on basic computer skills are provided to enhance digital literacy among the community members.

Lastly, the center offers access to the SSS, PAG-IBIG, and PHILHEALTH portals, enabling residents to manage their social security, housing, and health insurance needs online.

## Meralco announces power << P1

power between 11:30 PM and 5:30 AM. A portion of Cavite will experience power interruptions between 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM.

On Thursday, January 9, facility replacement work will affect power in Matandang Balara, Quezon City, and Santa Cruz, Laguna.

The entire Don Antonio Royale Subdivision will be

affected between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM. A portion of Quezon Avenue and Purok San Luis in Barangay Calios will have power disruptions from approximately 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

On Friday, January 11, Meralco will conduct pole relocation and facility replacement in San Roque, Pateros, due to a road widening project by the local

government unit (LGU).

Parts of Dasmariñas City in Cavite will also undergo maintenance that same day, between 8:00 AM and 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM and 4:00 PM.

Portions of Laguna and Quezon provinces will experience power interruptions on January 11 and 12. Parts of Majayjay and Luisiana will be affected

by facility replacement work at Meralco's Tayabas substation. These interruptions will occur between 11:00 PM and 11:59 PM on Friday, and again between 4:00 PM and 5:00 PM on Sunday.

Areas in Tayabas City, Lucban, and Sampaloc in Quezon Province will also experience a similar power disruption.

## Legarda calls on Filipinos << P1

harnessing our ingenuity and resourcefulness to develop and promote reusable alternatives for our everyday lives," she stressed.

The country has been celebrating National Zero Waste Month every January since the late Pres. Benigno S. Aquino, III signed Proclamation No. 760, s.

2014. The proclamation urges all government agencies and instrumentalities to participate in endeavors related to the celebration.

"I call on all government agencies to take the lead in creating to help find innovative ways to reuse everyday products and reduce waste," said Legarda.

"With successful implementation, we can achieve our goal of transitioning to a circular economy by 2030," she continued.

The four-term senator, a staunch advocate for environmental protection, has consistently pushed for the strict implementation of

the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, which prohibits open burning of solid waste, introduces waste segregation at source for better disposal practices, and supports local government units in establishing ecological solid waste management programs.

## Three cities in Cavite << P1

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

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

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

For questions and other requests, they can contact

the Business Permit and Licensing Office by sending an email to [imusbpl@gmail.com](mailto:imusbpl@gmail.com), or call the landline numbers (046) 888-9910/ 12 local 101 or mobile number 0998-990-0909.

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

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

in Barangay Sampalucan (Poblacion).

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

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

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

In Trece Martires, Mayor Gemma Lubigan

and Vice Mayor Robert Montehermoso greeted the first three business owners who renewed their business permits on Jan. 2 this year.

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

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

Southern Tagalog email: [herald\\_group@yahoo.com](mailto:herald_group@yahoo.com)

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# Reductions in budget to have ‘minor’ effect on DOTr projects: Bautista

By Ruth Abbey Gita-Carlos

Department of Transportation (DOTr) Secretary Jaime Bautista on Tuesday said the cuts in its 2025 budget would have a minimal impact on its 16 infrastructure flagship projects (IFPs) that need to be implemented as soon as possible.

While Bautista admitted that the DOTr suffered “some reductions” in its budget from foreign-assisted projects, it would still be able to fund its flagship transport projects from the loan proceeds.

“It has a very minor effect,” Bautista said in a

Palace press briefing, when asked if the budget cuts would affect the implementation of its flagship transport projects.

“The ones that were reduced basically are the loan proceeds but these are foreign-assisted projects. But in spite of that not being included in the budget ‘no, we can still avail of the loans, so that we can fund these major projects like the Metro Manila Subway and the North-South Commuter Railway,” he added.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Tuesday presided over the first full Cabinet meeting at Malacañan

Palace in Manila where the delays in the implementation of IFPs were discussed.

Bautista said the acquisition of properties, right-of-way and site acquisition, funding, relocation of informal settler families, relocation of utilities, and registration of properties are some of the issues that are causing delays in the implementation of the DOTr’s flagship projects.

During the Cabinet meeting, Marcos has instructed the DOTr and concerned government agencies to work together to ensure that the flagship transport projects would be implemented before the end of his term in 2028, Bautista said.



Bautista said an inter-agency committee has also been formed to resolve the issues about the right-of-way, which is the “biggest problem” in the implementation of infrastructure projects.

The inter-agency committee, Bautista said, is composed of the DOTr, the Department of Public Works and Highways, the Department of Justice, the Office of the Solicitor General, and the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development.

“So, ang (the) instruction ng (of the) President is to coordinate with all government agencies so that all the issues are resolved,” he said. “Yung (The) Office ng Solicitor General will really help us, especially in pursuing expropriation cases so that we can take possession of those properties that we

need, so that we can implement our projects.”

Some of the DOTr’s flagship projects include the North-South Commuter Railway, the Metro Manila Subway Project, Metro Rail Transit (MRT) Lines 4 and 7, Light Rail Transit (LRT) Line 1 Cavite Extension, the New Cebu International Container Port, the Philippine National Railways (PNR) South Long Haul, Mindanao Railway, and the New Dumaguete Airport Development.

Bautista said the current administration remains optimistic that the flagship transportation projects would be implemented on time.

“With all those projects and ways forward plans that we will implement, we are expecting that we will be able to resolve these problems and implement the projects still on time,” he said, adding that the election ban would not hinder the implementation of the DOTr’s infrastructure projects. (PNA)

## Expanded Centenarians Act: Honoring Filipino Elders



The Republic Act 11982, also known as the Expanded Centenarians Act, has been enacted to honor and provide benefits to Filipino centenarians. This act recognizes individuals who have reached significant age milestones, specifically those who are 80, 85, 90, 95, and 100 years old. For instance, individuals born between January 1, 1945, and June 30, 1945, are recognized as 80 years old, while those born between January 1, 1925, and June 30, 1925, are celebrated as centenarians at 100 years old.

To avail of the benefits under this act, centenarians must present valid identification documents. These include an original PSA-issued valid birth certificate registered at the time of birth or a valid Philippine passport. In cases where the birth certificate is late-registered, other valid government-issued IDs such as PhilHealth ID, COMELEC ID, SSS/GSIS/PVAO/UMID, PRC ID, Postal ID, or a driver's license can be used. Additionally, valid PSA-issued marriage certificates, birth certificates of the centenarian's children, authenticated old school or employment records, and valid baptismal or confirmation records certified by the parish church are also acceptable.

For centenarians with surviving relatives, a special power of attorney or an affidavit of adjudication is required, along with a warranty and release from liability, certified true copies of the death certificate, and IDs of the claimants. This comprehensive documentation ensures that the benefits are rightly claimed and distributed to the deserving centenarians and their families.

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## Bong Go calls for healthcare << P1

a nearby clinic without being examined. Initial investigations on Thursday, January 2 revealed that the victim had boarded a mini-bus from Cavite City heading toward Rosario. The bus driver, noticing the man in distress, dropped him off near the municipal hall so he could seek medical attention at a nearby clinic. However, the man quickly left without consulting a doctor and was later discovered lifeless by the roadside.

The incident has drawn criticism from netizens, many of whom blamed the country’s healthcare system. Several comments highlighted that poor Filipinos often hesitate to

seek hospital care due to the fear of overwhelming medical expenses.

Senator Go, who has been a vocal advocate for accessible healthcare, lamented the loss of life and called for immediate action to address systemic issues.

“Hindi dapat mangyari na ang isang Pilipino ay mawalan ng buhay dahil hindi niya nakuha ang kinakailangang atensyong medikal. Quality healthcare is not a privilege for only a few—it is a basic right that must be available to all, especially the poor who need it most,” Senator Go said.

It can be recalled that concerns over the state of healthcare have also been

heightened by reports that PhilHealth holds substantial reserve funds, reportedly amounting to over PhP 500 billion, while many indigent patients struggle with inadequate benefits. These issues have prompted some legislators to propose a zero-budget subsidy for PhilHealth next year.

For his part, Senator Go, as a crusader for health reforms, called for immediate improvements within PhilHealth, particularly in expanding its benefits and utilizing its substantial unspent funds. However, he also questioned the rationale behind the proposed zero-budget subsidy, labeling it “anti-poor” and inconsistent with the objectives of the Universal Health Care (UHC) Law.

“Sa halip na bawasan ang pondo, dapat ayusin natin ang sistema. Ang pangangalaga sa kalusugan ay hindi dapat maging pabigat, lalo na sa mahihirap,” he emphasized.

In recent months, Senator Go has been vocal in urging PhilHealth to address its deficiencies, including its outdated policies and lagging reforms. He emphasized the importance of accelerating the expansion of benefit packages to include coverage for leading causes of mortality, dental care, and other critical healthcare services.

The senator also emphasized the need to bolster healthcare infrastructure and expand services to ensure that no Filipino is left behind. He

pointed to initiatives such as the Malasakit Centers program, which aims to provide medical assistance and streamline access to medical services.

A brainchild of Go, the Malasakit Center program was first launched in 2018 and was institutionalized under Republic Act No. 11463, which the senator principally sponsored and authored. To date, 166 operational centers have helped more than 15 million Filipinos nationwide, according to the DOH.

Senator Go likewise vowed to continue pushing for legislative measures to enhance the country’s healthcare system, including increased funding for medical facilities, the construction of Super Health Centers, and the establishment of Regional Specialty Centers to bring healthcare services closer to communities.

“Ang insidenteng ito ay muling nagpapaalala sa atin na kailangan nating paigtingin ang ating sistema ng pangkalusugan. Dapat nating tiyakin na ang bawat Pilipino, anuman ang estado sa buhay, ay may access sa abot-kayang at de-kalidad na serbisyon medikal,” he added.

The senator also called on healthcare providers and government agencies to work together in addressing barriers to medical access. “We need a healthcare system that is compassionate, responsive, and accessible. No one should feel afraid or hesitant to seek medical attention,” he stressed.

## Government to redesign << P1

no longer run on its original alignment as the DPWH constructed a flyover in a segment where the railway was supposed to be built. He informed President Marcos about the matter, noting it as a priority issue that must be resolved as soon as possible.

The LRT-1 Cavite Extension has been facing delays due to problems involving right-of-way (ROW).

“One area that we talked about is the realignment of the LRT-1 extension to Niog (in Cavite). We already have an existing alignment, but the

DPWH constructed a flyover in the area and because of that, we need to redesign the project,” Bautista said.

The LRT-1 Cavite Extension will expand the existing train line by nearly 12 kilometers south of the Baclaran Station, adding new stops in Parañaque, Las Piñas and Bacoor in Cavite.

Before 2024 ended, LRT-1 operator Light Rail Manila Corp. (LRMC) opened the initial segment of the extension, consisting of stations on Redemptorist and MIA Roads as well as PITX, Ninoy Aquino Avenue

and Dr. Santos in Sucat. The timeline is unclear as to when the LRMC can complete the remaining phases of the extension project.

The second leg of the project spans 3.2 kilometers and covers the Las Piñas-Zapote stations.

The third and final segment runs for 2.4 kilometers to Niog in Bacoor.

Once the LRT-1 Cavite Extension is completed, the railway is projected to increase ridership to 800,000 passengers per day.

The project, which costs P64.92 billion, will cut travel

time between Pasay City and Cavite to 25 minutes.

Recently, the government and private sector were compelled to adjust big-ticket railway projects to consider ROW and traffic impact.

San Miguel Corp., for instance, had to relocate the final station of the Metro Rail Transit Line 7 in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan upon the request of the local government.

The changes caused another delay to the project that has been ongoing since 2016.

## VM Rowena distributes << P1

City Government’s ongoing efforts to improve the quality of life for all Bacooreños. The event highlighted the

city’s dedication to creating a more inclusive and accessible environment for all. The City Government of Bacoor

continues to prioritize the needs of its most vulnerable citizens, and this wheelchair distribution is a testament

to their commitment to providing essential support and services to those who need it most.





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# Jubilee pilgrim churches in Cavite identified

Story by Dennis Abrina

IMUS CITY, Cavite — Church officials have identified 20 Catholic churches in the province that are part of the Jubilee Celebration this year.

Bishop Reynaldo Evangelista officiated the kickoff celebration on Sunday, Dec. 29, 2024, at the Diocesan Shrine and Parish of Our Lady of the Pillar-Imus Cathedral in Barangay Poblacion here.

Evangelista spoke before parish priests of eight cities and 15 towns of the province including the upland towns of Magallanes, Bailen, Maragondon and Ternate for the opening of the yearlong Jubilee Celebration.

"The Jubilee Year comes once every 25 years, so your

sacrifices are not for naught by coming to the cathedral. We don't know if we will still be alive in 2050, the next Jubilee Year," he said in Filipino.

2025 is a Catholic Holy Year, also known as Jubilee, which is considered a time of peace, forgiveness and pardon.

The list of the Jubilee Churches in Cavite declared by the Jubilee 2025 - Diocese of Imus for the Ordinary Jubilee Year 2025 are Our Lady of Pillar Cathedral in Imus; Our Lady of La Salette in Silang; St. Gregory, the Great in Indang; Diocesan Shrine and Parish of Immaculate Conception in Naic; Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Binakayan, Kawit; Our Lady of Immaculate Conception in Dasmariñas City; Our Lady of Lourdes in Maharlika

Highway, Tagaytay City; Our Lady of Assumption in Maragondon town; St. Michael, the Archangel, Sto. Niño de Molino in Bacoor; St. Augustine Parish in Mendez-Núñez town; Our Lady of Holy Rosario in Rosario town; Nuestra Señora de Porta Vaga (San Roque Church) in Cavite City; St. Joseph Parish in Carmona City; Nuestra Señora de Candelaria in Silang town; St. Francis of Assisi in General Trias City; St. Mary Magdalene in Kawit; St. Jude Thaddeus in Trece Martires City; and St. Augustine Church (Santa Cruz Church) in Tanza.

These churches were declared Jubilee pilgrim churches and will serve as places of pilgrimage for the special "time of spiritual renewal and grace for the universal Church," emphasizing



IMUS CATHEDRAL The Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar or Imus Cathedral is one of 20 Jubilee churches in the province of Cavite. PHOTO BY DENNIS ABRINA

the call of Pope Francis to strengthen and revive faith through pilgrimages in local churches and shrines during the Holy Year of Hope. Since many cannot travel to Rome for a pilgrimage, bishops worldwide designated their cathedrals and shrines as special places of prayer for pilgrims.

## DBM OKs guidelines on P7-K medical allowance for gov't workers

By Darryl John Esguerra

Government workers may now receive their medical allowance as the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) approves the guidelines on the grant of the PHP7,000 medical allowance for 2025. The DBM said Budget Secretary Amenah Pangandaman approved Budget Circular 2024-6, which lays out the guidelines, rules and regulations on the grant of the medical allowance.



Budget Secretary Amenah Pangandaman (PNA photo by Joan Bondoc)

The grant is in line with Executive Order (EO) 64 s. 2024, which also prescribed the salary increase for government personnel, signed by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Aug. 2, 2024. "This is a promise fulfilled," Budget Secretary Amenah Pangandaman said in a statement Thursday. The annual medical allowance will be given to qualified civilian government personnel as a subsidy to avail of health maintenance organization (HMO)-type benefits. "Matagal ko na pong pangarap ito para sa ating mga kababayan. Pagpasok po ng 2025, maaari na po silang makatanggap ng medical allowance para makatulong sa pagkuha nila ng HMO para sa kanilang health-related expenses o gastusin (This has been my dream for a long time for our fellow public servant. By 2025, they can receive a medical allowance to help them get an HMO for their health-related expenses," Pangandaman said. The DBM circular covers all civilian government personnel in the national government agencies, including state universities and colleges and government-owned and controlled corporations not covered by Republic Act 10149 and EO 150, s. 2021. All government workers, regardless of appointment status, whether regular, casual, or contractual; appointive or elective; and on a full-time or part-time basis, are eligible for the medical grant. Employees in the local government units and local water districts are also covered.

The allowance may be granted in the form of HMO-type product coverage, which could be availed by either government agencies concerned or their respective employees' organizations/groups. It can also be in cash form for those who will avail their own or pay/renew their existing HMO-type benefit. The Budget chief thanked the President for putting premium on state workers' health. "This medical allowance is not just a benefit, it's a vital investment in safeguarding a healthy workforce and ensuring that they perform at their best," Pangandaman said. (PNA)

## DA to launch 'Sulit rice' in 24 Kadiwa ng Pangulo centers, kiosks

By Stephanie Sevallano

The Department of Agriculture (DA) on Monday said the "Sulit rice" will soon be available in 24 Kadiwa ng Pangulo (KNP) Centers and kiosks.

Sulit rice is 100 percent broken but white and sells at PHP36/kg.

In an interview, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said they will finalize the official rollout of the Sulit Rice program following a "positive public reception" during its trial run in two select KNP sites in Metro Manila. "This week we will finalize the rollout kasi kailangan namin since successful at medyo nagustuhan ng tao doon sa (because we need it since it's successful and the people wanted it in the) select areas," he said.

"We have to plan now how to roll it out and make sure we have enough stocks to use it," he added, citing a possible rollout next week.

In a separate interview, DA Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said the cheaper rice option will be available in existing KNP sites.

"So, iyong 24 na pamilyan at LRT, MRT stations, doon din ilalagay muna. And then target natin nga na madagdagan pa ito (So, it will be available in the exist-



CHEAPER RICE. Buyers line up to buy PHP40/kg. rice at the Kadiwa ng Pangulo kiosk in Malabon Central Market in Malabon City on December 5, 2024. The Department of Agriculture on Monday (Jan. 6, 2025) said Sulit rice, which will be sold for PHP38/kg., will be soon be available in 24 KNP sites in Metro Manila. (PNA photo by Yancy Lim)

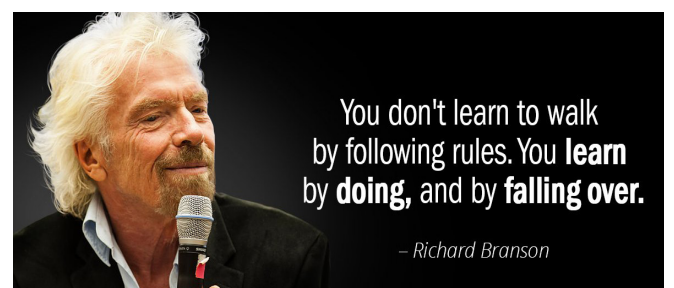
ing 24 stores and LRT, MRT stations. And then, we target to expand it)," he said.

He said the initial expansion will include Central Luzon and Calabarzon.

"So, ang (the) next target outside of Metro Manila ay (are) Regions 3 and 4-A, specifically Bulacan, Pampanga, Rizal, Cavite, Laguna," De Mesa said.

He said the sale of Su-

lit rice in KNP sites may be expanded to the said areas by February or March. Currently, other affordable rice options available at KNP sites include mixed of local and imported well-milled rice at PHP40/kg. under Rice for All; and PHP29/kg. aging but good quality stocks of rice from the National Food Authority (NFA) for the vulnerable sector. (PNA)



You don't learn to walk by following rules. You learn by doing, and by falling over.

— Richard Branson