

**E-mail Address: [frontpagenews2018@gmail.com](mailto:frontpagenews2018@gmail.com)**

   @AguinaldoArmie

p.6



DepEd... fr pg. 1

MANILA – The Department of Education (DepEd) on Tuesday turned over a four-story, 16-classroom school building at the Santiago Elementary School in General Trias, Cavite in line with the directives of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to address classroom shortage.

In a statement, Education Secretary Sonny Angara said the turnover shows the government's resolve in easing the current pressure on both time and space in public schools.

“Proven naman po yan, kapag siksikan ang mga silid, hindi makapagturo nang maigi ang teachers. Ayaw na po natin ng (That's proven, when rooms are overcrowded, educators cannot teach efficiently. We do not want) shifting as much as possible,” he said.

The four-story building boosts the school's capacity, which currently caters to more than 2,400 primary learners.

It comes with smart televisions, armchairs, and safety features, including fire alarms and emergency lights.

The accelerated school building construction was made possible through the partnership between the DepEd and the city government, which utilized its Special Education Fund.

In less than three years, more than 100 classrooms have been constructed or are under construction across the schools division of General Trias City.

Angara previously said that similar flexible measures are in place to speed up classroom construction and delivery nationwide, with the help of the expanded public-private partnerships, as well as the Adopt-A-School Program. (PNA)

“Being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience.”  
..Colossians 1:11..

DA Calabarzon sustains Kadiwa ng Pangulo in 2026

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna (PIA) — The Department of Agriculture (DA) in Calabarzon is sustaining the Kadiwa ng Pangulo and Kadiwa Pop-Up markets in 2026, bringing affordable agricultural products closer to consumers while supporting local farmers and fisherfolk across the region.

In partnership with local government units (LGUs), law enforcement agencies, and other stakeholders, DA Calabarzon stated that it will continue rolling out Kadiwa activities in key areas of Quezon, Cavite, Laguna, Rizal, and Batangas starting January 2026.

In Quezon Province, Kadiwa Pop-Up markets will be held on January 29 at the Quezon Police Provincial Office (PPO) Covered Court in Camp BGen. Guillermo P. Nakar, Lucena City, and the Kadiwa ng Pangulo will take place on January 21 at Perez Park, Quezon Provincial Capitol, also in Lucena City.

Meanwhile, Cavite started hosting Kadiwa Pop-Up on January 16 at the Cavite PPO Covered Court in Camp Gen. Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City. Kadiwa ng Pangulo activities are also scheduled on January 23 and 30 in Barangay Maitim 2nd East, Tagaytay City.

In Laguna, a Kadiwa Pop-Up is set on January 29 at the Police Regional Office in Camp Vicente Lim, Calamba City. Kadiwa ng Pangulo will be con-



ducted on January 16 at the Municipal Compound in Lumban and on January 30 at the Calamba City Hall Lobby.

For Rizal, a Kadiwa ng Pangulo market will be held on January 28 at Sumulong Park, Antipolo City.

In Batangas, multiple Kadiwa Pop-Up activities are lined up, including on January 16 at Fernando Airbase in Lipa City and Malvar's Park in the City of Sto. Tomas, January 27 at BATELEC I in Calaca City, and January 28 at the Batangas PPO Covered Court in Camp Gen. Miguel C. Malvar, Batangas City.

Regular Kadiwa Pop-Up markets are also conducted every Monday at the LARES Compound in Barangay Marawoy, Lipa City. A Kadiwa ng Pangulo activity is scheduled on January 30 at Recto Gym in Ibaan.

DA Calabarzon emphasized that the Kadiwa ng Pangulo program continues to serve as a direct marketing platform, linking producers to consumers.

The agriculture department added that Kadiwa is helping stabilize food prices while promoting food security and supporting the livelihood of local farmers and micro-entrepreneurs.

The public is encouraged to visit the nearest Kadiwa sites to avail of fresh and affordable agricultural products. (PIA4A/DA4A)

200 Aurora fisherfolk access primary healthcare through PhilHealth YAKAP Caravan



About 200 fisherfolk and their families in Barangay Zabali, Baler, Aurora, access primary healthcare services through the Yaman ng Kalusugan Program or YAKAP Caravan of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation. (PhilHealth Region III)

BALER, Aurora (PIA) — About 200 fisherfolk and their families in Barangay Zabali, Baler, Aurora, accessed primary healthcare services through the Yaman ng Kalusugan Program (YAKAP) Caravan of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth).

The beneficiaries were among those who were severely affected by Tropical Cyclone Uwan in 2025, highlighting the need to bring essential health services closer to vulnerable coastal communities.

PhilHealth Local Health Insurance Office Baler Chief Social Insurance Officer Annabelle Imana said the YAKAP Caravan supports government efforts to expand access to primary healthcare while strengthening awareness of PhilHealth programs.

“Through this holistic approach, we address the health needs of fisherfolk while engaging barangay officials and community leaders,” Imana said.

The YAKAP Caravan provided free medical consultations, essential medicines, preventive health guidance, and referrals to higher-level medical facilities, addressing the immediate healthcare needs of fisherfolk and their families in the coastal barangay.

In addition to medical services, PhilHealth facilitated the distribution of food and clothing to further assist families affected by previous super typhoons, helping support their recovery and overall well-being.

Local officials welcomed the initiative, noting that bringing healthcare services directly to coastal areas enables fisherfolk to seek timely medical attention without disrupting their livelihood.

Meanwhile, Imana added that PhilHealth implements monitoring mechanisms such as the Mutual Care Agreement and the YAKAP Empanelment Slip to ensure proper service delivery, supported by quarterly surveys among partner healthcare providers.

PhilHealth has already conducted 25 YAKAP caravans across Aurora, benefiting 73,160 individuals through 16 partner providers as part of its sustained efforts to strengthen primary healthcare delivery in local communities. (CLJD/MJRD, PIA Region 3- Aurora)

Bacoor... fr pg. 1

The City Government of Bacoor, under the leadership of Mayor Strike B. Revilla, officially kicked off the week with a Flag Raising Ceremony hosted by the Sports Development Unit on January 19, 2026, at the STRIKE Gymnasium.

The ceremony opened with a prayer, followed by the Entrance of Colors by BJMP Bacoor personnel. The Bacoor Unity Band led the Philippine National Anthem, while the Panunumpa sa Watawat ng Pilipinas, Panunumpa ng Lingkod Bayan, Panata sa Bagong Pilipinas, and the Quality Policy Statement were solemnly recited. The Bacoor Hope Children's Chorus delivered inspiring performances of the Bagong Pilipinas Hymn, Cavite Hymn, and Bacoor Hymn.

Hon. Palm Angel Buncio, SK Federation President of Bacoor, delivered the opening remarks, followed by the awarding of Latin Honors and Special Recognition for Outstanding Bacooreños. The City of Bacoor was also recognized as one of the two awardees of the 2025 Gawad para sa Kaagapay sa Kalusugan at Kapaligiran for Desludging Availment in Cavite.

An AVP highlighting the accomplishments of the Sports Development Unit, headed by Mr. Sidney Solis, was presented, along with an intermission number from the unit's staff. The program also included birthday greetings for City Councilor Karen Sarino Evaristo.

Mayor Strike B. Revilla capped the ceremony with a special message, reaffirming the city's strong support for sports development and its continued recognition of the achievements of Bacooreños. Stay connected with the City of Bacoor!

Pag-IBIG housing loan releases reach P140.54B in 2025

MANILA – More Filipino workers were able to secure homes as the Pag-IBIG Fund's housing loan releases reached PHP140.54 billion in 2025, marking an 8-percent increase from the PHP129.73 billion released in 2024.

Pag-IBIG Fund, in a news release on Wednesday, reported its home loan programs benefited 90,727 Filipino workers, who used the loans to purchase housing units or finance home construction, renovation, or improvement.

The agency said the milestone reflects sustained momentum in affordable housing finance, noting that Pag-IBIG Fund was recently cited by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. during the National Housing Expo last October for its efforts to expand access to affordable housing nationwide.

“We are pleased to report that Pag-IBIG Fund's housing loan accomplishment in 2025 reflects our sustained work under the Expanded Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino Program, or Expanded 4PH, to help more Filipino workers secure decent homes,” Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development Secretary Jose Ramon Aliling said.

Aliling, who also chairs the Pag-IBIG Fund Board of Trustees, added the agency will build on these gains in 2026 by working more closely with shelter partners to speed up loan releases.



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Pag-IBIG Fund chief executive officer Marilene Acosta said the agency's housing loan programs are designed to keep homeownership affordable for Pag-IBIG Fund members in the Philippines and overseas, while supporting the government's goal of uplifting Filipino families through access to decent shelter.

Of the total housing loans released in 2025, Pag-IBIG Fund said 7,056 Expanded 4PH socialized housing units worth PHP7.63 billion were financed under the program's subsidized 3-percent interest rate.

Another 4,811 housing units worth PHP6.2 billion were financed under the agency's 4.5 percent promotional rate for loans of up to PHP1.8 million.

“Pag-IBIG Fund remains fully aligned with the directive of President Marcos Jr. to expand access to quality and affordable housing, especially for minimum wage earners and middle-income members,” Acosta said.

She added Pag-IBIG Fund rolled out various home loan programs last year to address members' varying needs, including subsidized and promotional interest rates, as well as financing for home repair and improvement.

Under the Pag-IBIG Housing Loan for the Expanded 4PH, qualified local members and all overseas Filipino workers who are first-time homebuyers may avail of loans to purchase socialized housing units at a 3-percent annual interest rate for the first five years, extendable for another five years for qualified borrowers.

The agency said the subsidized rate lowers monthly payments to PHP4,005 for house-and-lot units priced up to PHP950,000 and about PHP8,432 for condominium units priced up to PHP2 million.

Pag-IBIG Fund acquired assets within socialized housing price ceilings are also covered, with the first 30,000 qualified borrowers eligible for the subsidized rate for the first 10 years under the Early Bird Promo.

It also offers a 4.5-percent promotional rate for qualified first-time homebuyers on loans of up to PHP1.8 million, which the agency said significantly reduces monthly amortization compared with the regular rate.

For members seeking to improve their current homes, Pag-IBIG Fund said it continues to offer the Pag-IBIG Home Improvement Loan, allowing qualified members to borrow up to PHP300,000 for repairs or upgrades, payable within five years, with simplified requirements and a promotional 3-percent annual interest rate for the first 10,000 borrowers. (PNA)





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INTHEMATTEROFSURRENDER LRC Case No. 4229-25  
OF WITHHELD OWNER'S  
DUPLICATE CERTIFICATE OF  
TITLE NO. (057-2014054241) 071-  
2015006139 OF THE REGISTRY OF  
DEEDS OF CAVITE,

MEG NICOLE EBILANE,  
*Petitioner,*

-versus-

RONNIE DE GUZMAN and  
REGISTER OF DEEDS OF  
THE PROVINCE OF CAVITE,  
*Respondents.*

x-----x

#### ORDER

Acting upon and finding merit in the petitioner's Omnibus Motion (*Motion for Reconsideration in the Order dated October 20, 2025 and Amended Motion with Leave of Court to Serve Summons by Publication*) filed through counsel on December 5, 2025, the same is hereby **GRANTED**.

Considering that the summons cannot be served upon the respondent, Ronnie de Guzman, and he cannot be found at the said address and his whereabouts are still uncertain, let the service of Summons as well as this Order, annexed the Petition, be effected through summons by publication chosen by raffle, pursuant to Section 16, Rule 14 of the 2019 Proposed Amendments to the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure, for the account of the Petitioner, to be published once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks, in a newspaper of general circulation, in which case the petitioner shall, likewise, send copy of this Order, the Summons and the Petition by registered mail to the last known address of the said respondent.

The defendant, Ronnie De Guzman, is given a period of sixty (60) days from the last date of publication within which to file his Answer.

Furnish copy of this Order thru the email address and registered mail of parties' counsels.

Imus City, Cavite, December 11, 2025.

GIOVANNIE E. PALMA  
Presiding Judge

Copy furnished: weng  
1. **Meg Nicole Ebilane** – *Petitioner*  
3rd Floor Cecilia Residences,  
Villa Ramirez Tabon I, Kawit, Cavite

2. **Ronnie De Guzman** – *Respondent*  
012 Greenville Heights, Tabon I, Kawit, Cavite

3. **Atty. Carly Kathleen B. Delfin** – *Counsel for the Petitioner*  
Public Attorney's Office  
City of Imus, Cavite  
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4. **Office of the Provincial Prosecutor**  
Imus City, Cavite  
[oppcavite@doj.com](mailto:oppcavite@doj.com)

5. **Office of the Solicitor General**  
134 Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City  
[efile@osg.gov.ph](mailto:efile@osg.gov.ph)

6. **Register of Deeds for the Province of Cavite**  
Trece Martires City, Cavite  
[rd.provinceofcavite@fra.gov.ph](mailto:rd.provinceofcavite@fra.gov.ph)

7. **Atty. Armie A. Francisco**  
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INTHEMATTEROFSURRENDER LRC Case No. 4229-25  
OF WITHHELD OWNER'S  
DUPLICATE CERTIFICATE OF  
TITLE NO. (057-2014054241) 071-  
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MEG NICOLE EBILANE,  
*Petitioner,*

-versus-

RONNIE DE GUZMAN and  
REGISTER OF DEEDS OF  
THE PROVINCE OF CAVITE,  
*Respondents.*

x-----x

#### SUMMONS (by Publication)

TO: **RONNIE DE GUZMAN**,  
012 Greenville Heights, Tabon 1  
Kawit, Cavite

#### GREETINGS!

WHEREAS, on July 09, 2025, petitioner through counsel, filed an Amended Petition which reads as follows:

#### REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FOURTH JUDICIAL REGION REGIONAL TRIAL COURT BRANCH 121 IMUS CITY, CAVITE

IN THE MATTER OF SURRENDER OF  
WITHHELD OWNER'S DUPLICATE  
CERTIFICATE OF TITLE NO. (057-  
2014054241) 071- 2015006139 OF THE  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS OF CAVITE,

MEG NICOLE EBILANE,  
*Petitioner,*

-versus-

LRC CASE NO. 4229-25

RONNIE DE GUZMAN and  
REGISTER OF DEEDS FOR  
THE PROVINCE OF CAVITE,  
*Respondents.*

x-----x

#### AMENDED PETITION

Petitioner, **MEG NICOLE EBILANE**, by counsel and unto this Honorable Court respectfully states:

1. Petitioner **MEG NICOLE EBILANE**, is a Filipino citizen, of legal age, single with residence at 3rd Floor Cecilia Residences Villa Ramirez Tabon 1, Kawit, Cavite;

2. Private respondent **RONNIE DE GUZMAN** is likewise a Filipino citizen, of legal age, single/married with residence at 012 Greenville Heights Tabon 1, Kawit, Cavite, while public respondent **REGISTRY OF DEEDS FOR THE PROVINCE OF CAVITE**, impleaded as a nominal party, is a government agency and repository of Certificates of titles under the Torrens system holding office at Provincial Capitol Complex, Trece Martires City, where they may be served with summons and other legal processes of this Honorable Court.

3. Petitioner is the registered owner of a parcel of land located at Batong Dalig, Kawit, Cavite which may be more particularly described in its entirety as follows:

**Transfer Certificate of Title No. (057-2014054241) 071-2015006139**

Lot No.: E-3-A-1

Plan No.: PSD-04-220724

Portion of: LOT-3-A, PSD-04-220724  
Location: BATONG DALIG KAWIT, CAVITE  
Owner: MEG NICOLE G. EBILANE, OF LEGAL AGE FILIPINO CITIZEN, SINGLE  
Address: NO. 012 GREENVILLE HEIGHTS, TABON, KAWIT, CAVITE  
Case No.: Record No.: N-29275  
Orig. Reg. Date: 09 27 1966 Decree No.:  
Original RD: PROVINCE OF CAVITE OCT No.:  
Volume No.: N-111445 OCT No.:  
Original Owner: Page No.:

x x x containing an area of FIVE HUNDRED (500) SQUARE METERS. A copy of the title is hereto attached as Annex "A".

4. On or about September 19, 2023, private respondent surreptitiously took the said Owner's Duplicate Copy of the Title TCT No. (057-2014054241) 0712915996139 issued in the name of MEG NICOLE EBILANE, as owner, and which was placed inside the bolt in the house of petitioner's mother, **MARICEL DE GUZMAN** located at 012 Greenville Heights, Tabon 1, Kawit Cavite, without the knowledge and consent of the petitioner and **MARICEL DE GUZMAN**.

5. Despite several demands both oral and written the private respondent refused and failed to turn over the said title to the herein petitioner. A copy of the demand letter is hereto attached as **Annex "B"**.

6. This petition is being refiled following the dismissal of the original petition (LRC Case No. 4200-25) due to non-compliance with verification and certification against forum shopping.

7. That the name of witnesses and summary of their intended testimonies together with their Judicial Affidavits, as well as the documentary evidence in support of the allegations in the petition will be presented in court:

- MEG NICOLE EBILANE** – To testify on the material allegations in the petition; To identify important documents relative to the case;
- MARICEL G. DE GUZMAN** – To corroborate the testimony of the petitioner Meg Nicole Ebilane;
- Others – reserved

8. That pertinent documents relative to the persons of the petitioner are hereto attached and made an integral part of this petition, to wit:

- (a) Transfer Certificate of Title No. (057-2014054241) 071-2015006139
- (b) Demand Letter
- (c) Others – reserved

#### RELIEF

**WHEREFORE**, it is respectfully prayed of this Honorable Court that after notice and hearing judgment be rendered in favor of the Petitioner and against the private respondent:

a. Ordering private respondent **RONNIE DE GUZMAN** to voluntarily surrender the Duplicate Owner's Copy of the TCT No. (057-2014054241) 071-2015006139 of the Registry of Deeds of Cavite;

b. That in the event private respondent failed or refused to surrender said title, to order public respondent **REGISTRY OF DEEDS FOR THE PROVINCE OF CAVITE** to cancel the same, and issue a new Owner's Duplicate Copy of the title in lieu of the withheld title to herein petitioner; and

c. To direct private respondent to reimburse the petitioner's attorney's fees in the amount of Php 150,000.00.

Petitioner's further prays for such other relief as may be deemed just and equitable.

Bacoor City for Imus, Cavite  
July 09, 2025

ATTY. ANTHONY L. NICOLAS  
Counsel for the Petitioner  
025 Pagtakhan St., Poblacion, Bacoor, Cavite  
Attorney's Roll Number 27875  
PTR No. 2775770-/1/02/2025/Bacoor Cavite  
IBP No. 517870-/1/21/2025  
MCLE Compliance No. VIII-0030940-/04/14/2028

Copy furnished:

**Office of the Solicitor General**  
134 Amorsolo St., Makati City

**Land Registration Authority**  
Unit 204 LRA Building, East Avenue Corner Nia Road, Quezon City

**Registry of Deeds for the Province of Cavite**  
Trece Martires, Cavite

**Registry of Deeds**  
Imus City, Cavite

#### VERIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION OF NON-FORUM SHOPPING

I, **MEG NICOLE EBILANE**, of legal age, Filipino, and a resident of 3rd Floor Cecilia Residences Villa Ramirez Tabon 1, Kawit, Cavite, after having duly sworn in accordance with law, hereby depose and say:

- That I am the Petitioner in the above-entitled case;
- That I have caused the preparation of the foregoing petition;
- That I have read and understood the contents of this petition and all allegations of facts herein are correct based on my personal knowledge and belief and my authentic records;
- That the pleading is not filed to harass, cause unnecessary delay or needlessly increase the cost of litigation;
- That the factual allegation therein has evidentiary support or if specifically so identified will likewise have evidentiary support after a reasonable opportunity for discovery;
- That I have not commenced any other action or proceeding involving the same issue before the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals or any other court, tribunal or agency and to the best of our knowledge, no such action or proceedings is pending before the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals or any other court, tribunal, or agency;
- That if I should hereafter learn that a similar action or proceeding involving the same issued has been filed or is pending before any court, tribunal or agency, whereby undertake to report that fact and status of such within five (5) days therefrom to this Honorable Court;
- That my signature further serves as a certification of the truthfulness of the allegation in the pleading.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, we have hereunto affixed our signatures on this \_\_\_\_ day of 11 JUL 2025, Bacoor City, Cavite, Philippines.

**MEG NICOLE EBILANE**  
Affiant  
ID NO. CRN-0111-8156724-1

**SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO** before me this \_\_\_\_ day of 11 JUL 2025 at Bacoor City, Cavite.

Doc No.: 104  
Page No.: 22  
Book No.: 1  
Series of 2025

ELIXERA A. SERRANO  
Notary Public  
Commission No. 2025-12  
Valid until: 24-June 2027  
Rol No. 78373

IBP No. 500583/01/07/2025; Cavite Chapter  
MCLE Compliance No. VII-0030927  
J. Ocampo St., Brgy. Poblacion, City of Bacoor, Cavite

Attempts were made to serve the Summons by proceeding to the address on record on July 28, 2025, during the weekends of August 9 and 10, 2025 and August 13, 2025, as contained in the Sheriff's Report and Return.

**WHEREAS**, on August 14, 2025, an Order was issued, the fallo of which states:

"Pursuant to the above provision, the Petitioner is ORDERED to serve summons to the Respondent, together with the Court Sheriff, to any other means available under the Rules.

Sheriff Dwight Aldwin Geronimo is DIRECTED to immediately coordinate with the Petitioner.

xxx  
**SO ORDERED."**

**WHEREAS**, on October 6, 2025, a Sheriff's Report and Service of Summons Together with the Petitioner was received by this Court wherein the Amended Petition with all its annexes was returned UNSERVED.

**WHEREAS**, on October 16, 2025, a Motion to Serve Summons by Publication was filed to this Court praying that the

Summons be served by publication.

**WHEREAS**, on October 20, 2025, an Order was issued denying the Motion.

**WHEREAS**, on November 3, 2025, the counsel withdrew his appearance in his Withdrawal of Appearance as Counsel filed to this Court.

**WHEREAS**, on November 12, 2025, an Entry of Appearance with Motion for Extension of Time to File Appropriate Pleading was filed by the new counsel.

**WHEREAS**, on December 4, 2025, petitioner through counsel, filed an Omnibus Motion praying that and Order be issued admitting the Amended Motion with Leave of Court to Serve Summons by Publication, as well as the affidavits of the petitioner, Meg Nicole Ebilane, and Maria Jeziel Lastima, and allowing the petitioner to serve summons to the respondent by publication.

**WHEREAS**, on December 11, 2025, an Order granting the Omnibus Motion (Motion for Reconsideration in the Order dated October 20, 2025).

**NOW, THEREFORE**, you are hereby required, within sixty (60) days from the date of the last publication of this Summons within which to file your Answer to the verified Amended Petition, copy of which is contained above.

The private respondent, Ronnie De Guzman, is reminded of the provision in the IBP-OCA Memorandum on Policy Guidelines dated March 12, 2002, to observe restraint in filing a motion to dismiss, and, instead, allege the grounds thereof as defenses, in the Answer.

If you fail to answer within the time fixed, the Petitioner will take judgment by default and may be granted the relief prayed for in the verified Amended Petition.

Witness my hand under the seal of this Court this January 6, 2026, Imus City, Cavite.

**ROWENA C. JUSAY**  
OIC / Acting Branch Clerk of Court

Copy furnished: weng

1. **Meg Nicole Ebilane**– *Petitioner*  
3rd Floor Cecilia Residences,  
Villa Ramirez Tabon I, Kawit, Cavite  
2. **Ronnie De Guzman**– *Respondent*  
012 Greenville Heights, Tabon I, Kawit, Cavite  
3. **Atty. Carly Kathleen B. Delfin**– *Counsel for the Petitioner*  
Public Attorney's Office  
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**FRONTPAGE NEWS PUBLISHING:**  
January 26 & February 2, 2026

## DepEd: Enhanced ALS aligns with K-12, boost learners' skills

MANILA – The Department of Education (DepEd) has enhanced the Alternative Learning System (ALS) to better align it with the formal Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K to 12) curriculum and strengthen pathways to allow out-of-school children, youth and even adults to acquire education, life skills and increase employability credentials.

In a news release Thursday, Education Secretary Sonny Angara said the enhanced ALS is designed to function as a credible and flexible alternative to formal schooling rather than a stopgap program, anchored on President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s push for inclusive growth.

"Sa malinaw na direksyon ng Pangulo, isinusulong natin ang edukasyong may dangal at oportunidad, lalo na para sa mga naiwan o napag-iwanan ng sistema (Under the clear direction of the President, we are promoting education with dignity and opportunity, especially for those left behind or marginal-

ized by the system)," he said. Angara noted the human impact of the reforms, citing the experience of 81-year-old Eduardo Saplala, a member of the Aeta Indigenous Cultural Community in Porac, Pampanga, who is currently enrolled in the Basic Literacy Program (BLP) under ALS.

He said Saplala's return to learning was made possible by community-based instruction, flexible pacing and competency-based assessment — features that are now embedded more formally under the updated guidelines. "Patunay si Mang Eduardo na walang edad ang edukasyon. Sa Alternative Learning System, may ikalawang pagkakataon ang bawat Pilipino (Mang Eduardo is proof that education has no age limit. In the Alternative Learning System, every Filipino has a second chance)," Angara said.

"Pinapalakas natin ang ALS para maging tunay na alternatibo—hindi pansamantala, hindi panghuli, kundi isang lehitimong landas ng edukasyon (We are strengthening ALS to make it a true alternative—not temporary, not a last resort, but a legitimate path to education)," he added.

Under DepEd Order No. 1, series of 2026, the implementation of ALS has been standardized nationwide, with its competencies more closely aligned with the K to 12 curriculum.

DepEd said the policy institutionalizes flexible learning modalities, recognition of prior learning, and micro-certification, allowing learners to progress based on demonstrated mastery rather than age or length of enrollment.

The revised framework also formalizes individual learning agreements and portfolio-based assessments, allowing learners to enter, pause, and resume their studies depending on personal, work, or family circumstances. It also clarifies equivalent pathways across ALS programs, including Basic Literacy, Accreditation, and Equivalency at the elementary and junior high school levels, and senior high school offerings.

Depending on their competencies and goals, ALS completers may transition to formal schools, pursue technical-vocational certification, or enter the workforce.

The enhanced framework also strengthens partnerships with local governments, higher education institutions, non-government organizations, and private entities in operating community learning centers and providing access to facilities, learning resources, and specialized instruction.

To ensure quality and consistency, DepEd also institutionalized capacity-building programs for ALS teachers and implementers, covering the revised curriculum, learner assessment, and blended learning delivery.

Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms were likewise tightened to track learner completion and transition outcomes across regions.

"Beginning School Year 2026–2027, all schools division offices are directed to fully implement the revised ALS curriculum for Basic Literacy and Accreditation and Equivalency programs, with separate guidelines to follow for a strengthened ALS senior high school track," DepEd said. (PNA)







## Power Play at the Port: De Vera Tightens the Net on Fishery Trade

When regulators talk, smugglers listen—and at the Manila International Container Port (MICP), the message was loud and unmistakable.

On January 7, 2026, BOC–MICP District Collector Atty. Felipe Geoffrey K. De Vera IV received BFAR-NCR Regional Director Noemi SB. Lanzuela and her senior officers for a courtesy call that quickly turned into something far more consequential: a strategic alignment aimed at tightening control over fishery imports and exports passing through the country's busiest port.

This wasn't a photo-op. It was a clear signal that Customs and fisheries regulators are closing ranks. At the center of the discussion was information sharing, regulatory alignment, and faster—but stricter—procedures on inspection, clearance, and enforcement. In plain terms: less room for loopholes, more pressure on violators.

For Atty. De Vera, the message was direct and unapologetic. Close coordination with regulated agencies is no longer optional—it's essential. With fishery products among the most abused commodities in smuggling and misdeclaration schemes, the MICP chief made it clear that compliance with fisheries and aquatic resources laws will be non-negotiable.

Under De Vera's watch, MICP has been pushing a brand of Customs leadership that balances speed with scrutiny. Legitimate traders move faster. Rule-breakers hit a wall.

The presence of BFAR-NCR at the table strengthens Customs' enforcement backbone, ensuring that imported and exported fishery products are properly declared, correctly documented, and lawfully cleared—not sneaked through by technicalities or weak coordination. It also reinforces the government's commitment to protect local industries, food safety, and marine resources from abuse.

Insiders say this growing inter-agency synergy at MICP reflects a bigger shift inside the Bureau of Customs—one where district collectors are no longer operating in silos, but acting as frontline commanders in the government's fight against smuggling and regulatory evasion.

For Atty. Geoffrey De Vera, the equation is simple: efficient ports demand disciplined enforcement, and disciplined enforcement requires agencies to move as one. As the country's main gateway for containerized trade, MICP remains under intense scrutiny. But if this meeting is any indication, the walls are closing in on violators—and Customs, under De Vera's firm hand, is making sure the rules are enforced without fear or favor. In today's ports, cooperation is power. And at MICP, power is clearly being exercised.

CvSU... fr pg. 1

was built to modernize barangay recordkeeping to ensure that local services are more responsive to community needs.

"Yung real-time access sa mga data, mas mabilis 'yung pag-issue ng certificates, at mas organized 'yung blotter and permit tracking. Mayroon rin itong built-it analytics para sa planning, and reporting."

By integrating resident profiling, certificate issuance, and blotter management into a real-time database, the One Bayani, One System can help barangays transition to digitized and data-driven governance.

"Yung records ay standardized at nao-audit, at nakakapag-generate agad ang mga barangay ng reports na nasesent nila sa DILG [Department of the Interior and Local Government]."

Slated for adoption across all barangays in Silang, the three-year project began in 2025 with a goal of streamlining government services.

According to Santiago, the local government and barangay leaders have shown strong support for the project.

"[By] 2028 ay dapat ginagamit na ng lahat ng barangay. Actually ngayong 2026 ay maa-achieve na namin yun. Yung ibang barangay kasi ay nagrerequest na. In 2026, start na namin yung cluster 2 with 16 barangays."

Once fully implemented in Silang, the One Bayani, One System for possible adoption in the entire Cavite Province. (PB-PIA CALABARZON)



Jan. 26-Feb. 1, 2026

## DILG Celebrates 207 Personnel Who Passed 2025 Bar Exams

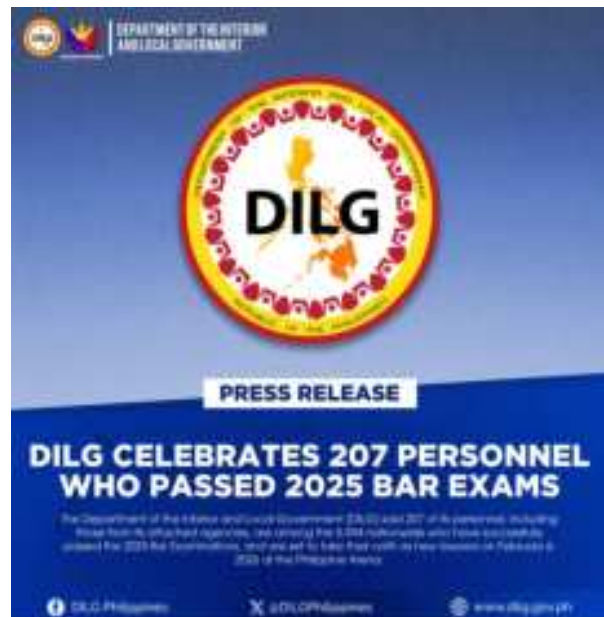
The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said 207 of its personnel, including those from its attached agencies, are among the 5,594 nationwide who have successfully passed the 2025 Bar Examinations, and are set to take their oath as new lawyers on February 6, 2026 at the Philippine Arena.

Of the 207 passers, 2 are from the DILG-Central Office, 15 from regional offices, 109 from the Philippine National Police (PNP), 40 from the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), 29 from the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), 8 from the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM), and 3 from National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF). Some of the bar passers said their decision to take the Bar was inspired by their firsthand experience in public service and their aspiration to protect people's rights and welfare. Hana Rea Pagapong of DILG Region 10 reaffirmed her plan to continue serving the people of Misamis Occidental. "I plan to use this opportunity to further serve my community in Misamis Occidental by building on my ongoing work of guiding elected public officials, particularly at the barangay level," Pagapong said.

Kareen Estabillo of the DILG Bureau of Local Government Development said passing the Bar strengthens her work at the Local Fiscal Reform and Development Division (LFRDD). "This equips me with legal knowledge necessary in reviewing proposed and existing policies to ensure its compliance with the law while ensuring at the same time that it will benefit the LGUs and their constituents," she said. Senior Fire Officer Gilbert Berou of the National Fire Training Institute (NFTI) said his experience as a first responder shaped his journey to becoming a lawyer. "My service in the BFP and my calling as a lawyer are united by one purpose: to serve with honor, competence, and dedication to the public good," he added.

Nesreen Abdulrauf Hadjirasid of the NCMF, highlighted how passing the Bar strengthens her role in NCMF in advancing inclusive and responsive governance. "Passing the Bar Exams strengthens my role now as a public servant in NCMF, an attached agency of DILG, because I have legal knowledge useful in policy and program development and budget proposals for the advancement of the well-being of Muslim Filipinos," she said.

The DILG said the success of its personnel reflects the Department's culture of excellence and commitment to building a competent, ethical, and responsive bureaucracy.



Jan. 26-Feb. 1, 2026

## CARD MRI clients win Microentrepreneur Awards for Digital Innovation

Four clients from institutions under the CARD Mutually Reinforcing Institutions (CARD MRI) were honored as Digital Champions at the 4th Digital Financial Inclusion Awards (DFIA) held at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Assembly Hall in Malate, Manila.

The awardees include two clients of CARD, Inc. (A Microfinance NGO), and one client each from CARD Bank, a microfinance-oriented rural bank, and CARD SME Bank, a thrift bank.

As a mutually reinforcing network, CARD MRI integrates financial and social development services with digital innovations to support client enterprises and improve quality of life. "It's such an honor for us to support these award-winning entrepreneurial journeys. Their success inspires us to keep our mission moving forward," said CARD MRI Managing Director Aristeo A. Dequito.

Inspiring stories of digital transformation

Among the awardees is Carmelita Dapanas, a CARD, Inc. client from Manticao, Misamis Oriental. She operates a hydroponic farm producing green bell peppers and salad tomatoes, alongside coconuts and cacao that she processes into tablea. By leveraging Facebook, Messenger, and mobile cash services, she connects with customers nationwide and now supplies hotels, restaurants, and public markets in Iligan City and nearby areas. Another CARD, Inc. awardee,

Annalisa Monil from Bilal, Bohol, transformed the Bilal Stem Vegetable Farm into a thriving enterprise that supplies resorts and restaurants in Panglao Island, while also operating a retail store in Tagbilaran City. By accepting orders through Messenger and processing payments via mobile cash services and online banking, she has significantly expanded her market reach—creating more livelihood opportunities within her community.

Raquel Lanaban, a CARD Bank, Inc. client from Bilusa, Davao City, was also recognized for her batik and handcrafted products business, which she established in 2010. By leveraging Facebook and Messenger, she increased her sales by 90%, adopted digital payment options, and now supports a network of resellers across five areas in Mindanao.

Meanwhile, Niel Danica Polong, a CARD SME Bank, Inc. client from Silang, Cavite, transformed her pancit business into an online favorite after launching a Facebook page during the pandemic. With the introduction of cashless payment options and an expanded menu, 60 to 70 percent of her orders now come from online customers.

Digital Financial Inclusion Awards

The Digital Financial Inclusion Awards (DFIA) is a financial inclusion initiative funded by the Citi Foundation, in partnership with Microfinance Council

and supported by Citi Philippines and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP). Now in its fourth year when it spun off from the previously known Citi Microentrepreneurship Awards (CMA), it recognizes outstanding microentrepreneurs and microfinance institutions that effectively use digital solutions to conduct financial transactions, strengthen enterprises, and expand livelihood opportunities.

BSP Governor Eli M. Remolona Jr. highlighted the shifting narrative around microentrepreneurs during the awarding ceremony, noting that digital tools were long perceived as too technical, costly, and complicated. He emphasized that the awardees have proven this notion outdated, demonstrating that with simple yet innovative solutions—such as online selling, QR payments, and digital business systems—Filipino entrepreneurs are redefining what is possible in the digital economy.

The ceremony also recognized 13 other microentrepreneurs and three MFIs. Each awardee received PHP 100,000 in cash and a laptop to further support their digital transformation.

The recognition of CARD MRI clients at the DFIA highlights the growing role of digital innovation in inclusive finance. These awardees showed how technology can empower communities, strengthen livelihoods, and pave the way for sustainable growth across the Philippines.



## SSS commits to improved service delivery and benefits in 2026

QUEZON CITY (PIA) — The Social Security System (SSS) is gearing up for a more service-driven 2026 as it rolls out initiatives aimed at improving member experience, expanding digital services, and strengthening workforce capacity.

During the flag-raising ceremony at the SSS Head Office on January 5, SSS President and Chief Executive Officer Robert Joseph Montes De Claro underscored the agency's commitment to delivering better and more efficient services to its members, particularly through digitalization and process improvements.

Speaking on behalf of Finance Secretary Frederick D. Go, De Claro welcomed the New Year by thanking SSS employees for their performance in 2025, which he said laid a strong foundation for the agency's goals in 2026. He also paid tribute to retirees and honored colleagues who have passed away, recognizing their lasting contributions to the institution.

De Claro reported that SSS closed 2025 with solid financial indicators, including significant growth in assets, a strong income position, and a stable fund life. He noted that benefit enhancements for pensioners and lower interest rates for loan products were among the improvements implemented last year.

Building on these gains, SSS will prioritize

better service delivery in 2026, with the transition to paperless transactions as a key strategy. The agency also aims to boost workforce effectiveness by hiring around 1,800 additional personnel and strengthening internal systems to support frontline services.

To ensure sustainability while improving member benefits, SSS will intensify its collection drive, backed by information technology upgrades. De Claro described 2026 as a demanding but promising year as the agency balances service expansion with operational efficiency.

Among the programs lined up for members this year are the second tranche of pension increases under the Pension Reform Program, the continued implementation of the Emergency Loan Program, and the rollout of the Micro Loan Program to support short-term financial needs.

De Claro also highlighted plans to deepen collaboration with fellow social protection agencies such as Pag-IBIG Fund and PhilHealth, particularly through shared digital

initiatives designed to make government services more accessible and seamless for the public.

In addition, SSS will continue supporting capital markets, exploring overseas investments, pursuing land banking opportunities, and expanding services for overseas Filipino workers, including the planned opening of offices in Madrid and San Francisco.

Reiterating the message of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. for the New Year, De Claro called on SSS employees to face 2026 with discipline, confidence, and a shared commitment to national progress.

On behalf of the Social Security Commission, he assured that good governance will remain central to SSS operations as the agency works toward a more responsive, inclusive, and digitally enabled social security system.

"Together, let's make 2026 another successful year for SSS and for the members we serve," De Claro said. (AVS / PIA-NCR) (Photo by SSS)

