

THE  
**VOICE**  
NEWSWEEKLY

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From Angeles to Congress:  
Felix the Cat starts new chapter as 'official' mouser P6

# Mayor Jon puts off environmental fee



**Mayor Carmelo 'Jon' Lazatin gets down to business and signed Executive Order No. 2025-001, suspending the collection of the Environmental Fee under existing septage and water management ordinances. With him are the newly installed and reelected city councilors.**

**A**NGELES CITY – On his first day in office, newly installed Angeles City Mayor Carmelo “Jon” Lazatin II signed Executive Order No. 2025-001, suspending the collection of the Environmental Fee under existing septage and water management ordinances.

Joined by members of the 20th Sangguniang Panlungsod, Mayor Lazatin emphasized that the move reflects his administration’s commitment to responsive governance and addressing stakeholder concerns, particularly from residents and the business community.

The EO temporarily halts the enforcement of relevant

**SEE PAGE 4  
MAYOR JON**

**Yap calls for unity**



In her first message as Mayor of Tarlac City, Susan Yap expressed gratitude and optimism as she met with the city’s government employees on July 1.

“It is a great honor to meet the hardworking, courageous, and cheerful staff of our City Hall,” she said.

As she begins a new chapter in public service, Yap urged everyone’s cooperation in building an inclusive and people-centered government.

“Let us stand as one in our mission—for a happier, more vibrant, and just Tarlac City,” she added.

For nearly a decade, Governor Yap championed programs that uplifted lives across the province, leaving behind a legacy of inclusive development, responsive governance, and heartfelt leadership.

Her transition to a new chapter was met with cheers and warm wishes, as she serves as the newly elected Mayor of Tarlac City.

## Uy: Take small steps toward AI adoption

**ANGELES CITY** — Artificial intelligence may seem daunting, but for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), it can be a powerful ally if approached gradually, according to Converge ICT Solutions Inc. CEO Dennis Anthony Uy.

Speaking at the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry’s (PCCI) North Luzon Area Business Conference, Uy emphasized that AI tools are not exclusive to large corporations. He encouraged MSMEs to explore how AI can streamline operations, reduce costs, and open opportunities for growth.

“Globally, companies are racing to adapt to AI,” Uy said. “Here in the Philippines, we’re just beginning. MSMEs must not be left behind as new technologies—especially generative AI—become more mainstream.”

Uy, who also chairs the 51st Philippine Business Conference and Expo (PBC&E), noted that even

small players can find value in AI-driven solutions. “AI adoption, even in small steps, can lead to meaningful improvements in business processes and competitiveness,” he said.

Fresh from a visit to Taiwan—the global leader in semiconductors—Uy shared insights on how AI is reshaping manufacturing value chains. He believes the Philippines can find its own niche in this ecosystem, especially through upskilling and digital innovation.

“While MSMEs may not immediately tap into the global tech supply chain, they can still benefit by embracing AI tools tailored to their scale,” Uy added.

Bataan Governor Jose Enrique “Joet” Garcia III echoed Uy’s push for digital readiness, expressing the provincial government’s support for tech-enabled businesses and startups.

**SEE PAGE 4  
UY**

**Converge ICT Solutions Inc. CEO and 51st Philippine Business Conference and Expo (PBC&E) Chairman Dennis Anthony Uy delivers the Akeynote address during the opening ceremony of the North Luzon Area Business Conference of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) held in Bataan.**



**Gov. Lilia Pineda and Vice Gov. Dennis Pineda buckle down to work during the inaugural session of the 12th Sangguniang Panlalawigan.**

## Pinedas rally new SP behind 14-Point Agenda

**CITY OF SAN FERNANDO** — A new chapter of governance officially began in Pampanga as former Governor Dennis “Delta” Pineda assumed his role as Vice Governor, while three-term Vice Governor Lilia “Nanay” Pineda was formally welcomed back to the Capitol as Governor during the inaugural session of the 12th Sangguniang Panlalawigan.

In his first address as presiding officer, Vice Governor Delta Pineda rallied the members of the new provincial board to craft responsive legislation aligned with the 14-point agenda laid out by Governor Nanay—underscoring a smooth

transition of leadership, shared vision, and continuity of public service.

“Clear na po ang direksyon ng ating mahal na Governor Nanay,” said Vice Gov. Delta. “Ang ating tungkulin ngayon ay siguraduhing may sapat na batas at pondo ang bawat programa para mabilis, maayos, at epektibong maipapatupad ito para sa mga Kapampangan.”

The 14-point agenda focuses on core governance priorities including: Strengthening the Provincial Health System; Food Security and Agricultural Resilience; Youth Empowerment; Education, and Skills

**SEE PAGE 4  
PINEDAS**

## DPWH: Tarlac City hospital ready by 2027, not 2025

**CLARK** — The Tarlac City General Hospital, long anticipated by residents, will not be operational this year as previously claimed by the former city administration.

This was clarified by officials from the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) during a press briefing held at the 2.6-hectare hospital grounds on June 30, 2025.

The briefing, attended by newly-installed Tarlac City Mayor Susan Yap, Department of Health Provincial Head Maria Noel Borromeo-Lim, and representatives from Tarlac Provincial Hospital, revealed that while construction is ongoing, the hospital still has significant work to be done, especially in its main building.

According to the DPWH, the hospital — originally envisioned to have a 108-bed capacity — may become operational by 2027 due to remaining construction work and budgetary gaps. To date, the project has incurred ₱1.135 billion in costs, with an additional ₱280 million needed to complete construction. For 2025, the remaining ₱180 million allocated for the hospital has yet to be bidden out and implemented.

### No funding for equipment, furniture, or manpower

Even if construction progresses with the 2025 budget, the hospital still lacks funds for essential equipment,

furniture, and personnel. The Department of Health has only allocated ₱100 million for furniture and medical equipment. According to City Councilor Jude Joseph David, no funds were allocated by the previous administration for hospital staffing, and the former mayor even vetoed the city's 2025 budget — leaving a major gap in operational planning.

### Former mayor's company confirmed as contractor

DPWH officials confirmed that Northern Builders, the construction company associated with former Mayor Cristy Angeles, is the main contractor of the hospital. Based on Commission on Audit (COA) project billboards, Northern Builders handled several phases of the hospital's construction, including multiple annexes with contract amounts ranging from ₱48 million to nearly ₱98 million per segment.

### Yap: Hospital won't be ready by 2025

Mayor Susan Yap stated that the hospital is far from ready, citing the absence of an approved operational plan, equipment, and licensed medical personnel.

"While the building for the Outpatient Department (OPD) may be completed soon, there's no allocation for doctors or support staff. Without services, the building itself is meaningless,"

**SEE PAGE 4  
DPWH**



Tarlac City Mayor Susan Yap inspects the Tarlac City General Hospital, which the DPWH says will be ready by 2027.

## ₱2-M marijuana products seized in Mabalacat

**MABALACAT CITY** — Authorities seized over ₱2 million worth of marijuana-based products during a buy-bust operation in Barangay Bical recently.

Three high-value suspects were arrested during the operation. They were identified by their aliases: "Jek-Jek" from Brgy. Bical; "Josh" from Brgy. Dau; and "Ana" from Brgy. Balibago, Angeles City.

Confiscated from the suspects were two kilograms of dried marijuana leaves valued

at ₱240,000; 520 grams of kush with an estimated street value of ₱858,000; 218 marijuana-flavored vape cartridges worth ₱872,000; and 19 bottles of marijuana oil valued at ₱30,000.

The suspects are currently under the custody of the Mabalacat City Police Station as the proper filing of charges is being processed.

The operation was part of the intensified anti-illegal drug campaign of the Philippine National Police in Central Luzon.

## DSWD to build regional disaster hub at Clark Aviation Complex

**CLARK** — A major boost to disaster preparedness in Central Luzon is on the horizon, as the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) prepares to build a Regional Disaster Response Command and Logistics Center within the Clark Aviation Capital complex.

Set on a one-hectare site inside the Clark Civil Aviation Complex managed by the Clark International Airport Corporation (CIAC), the new facility will enhance the region's capacity to respond swiftly to emergencies and calamities by serving as a strategic storage and distribution hub for relief goods.

"We welcome this initiative as part of our commitment to national disaster preparedness,"

said CIAC President Jojit Alcazar. "The center will allow faster, more efficient deployment of aid to affected communities throughout Central Luzon."

DSWD Secretary Rex Gatchalian, together with Undersecretary Diana Rose Cajipe, Assistant Secretary Irene Dumla, and CDC Director Atty. Nicolette Henson-Hizon, conducted a site visit recently. They were joined by Pampanga Governor Lilia "Nanay" Pineda, PGENRO Chief Art Punsalan, and CIAC Director Rommel Santiago.

The project reinforces Clark's growing reputation as a national disaster resilience hub. Alongside the upcoming DSWD facility, the Freeport is already home to key disaster and logistics institutions, including the

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DSWD**



DSWD Secretary Rex Gatchalian, together with Undersecretary Diana Rose Cajipe, Assistant Secretary Irene Dumla, and CDC Director Atty. Nicolette Henson-Hizon, conducted a site visit along with Governor Lilia "Nanay" Pineda, PGENRO Chief Art Punsalan, and CIAC Director Rommel Santiago.

## SDC, CIAC eye expansion of Glory Hotel and Residences

**CLARK FREEPORT ZONE** — Continuing its path of growth and stability, Stellavia Development Corporation (SDC) has recently signed a new lease agreement with Clark International Airport Corporation (CIAC).

The lease expansion will allow SDC to develop additional facilities to complement and enhance operations of The Glory Hotel and Residences, a modern full-service hotel located within the Clark Civil Aviation Complex

— just minutes from Clark International Airport.

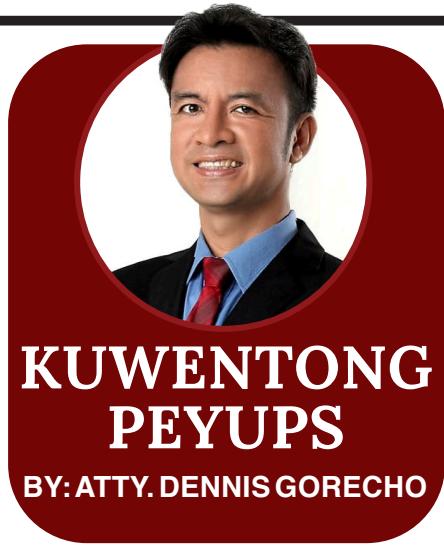
Included in the development plan are a new cascade feature, access road, cafeteria, and additional parking area, all designed to elevate guest experience and meet the growing demands of clientele.

The move further solidifies Clark's reputation as a rising hub for hospitality and tourism investment in Central Luzon.



Representatives from the Stellavia Development Corporation (SDC) recently signed a new lease agreement with Clark International Airport Corporation (CIAC).





## KUWENTONG PEYUPS

BY: ATTY. DENNIS GORECHO

### “MakiBeki. Huwag Mashokot”

is the gay lingo for the activist slogan “Makibaka. Huwag Matakot” that reverberated during this year’s Pride March and Festival last June 28, 2025 held at the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman in Quezon City.

Not even the heavy rains could dampen the spirit of celebration as the campus was streaked with rainbow flags, vibrant floats and creative costumes for the third edition of Lov3Laban and the 30th Pride March in Metro Manila.

There were also food stalls, arts and merchandise, health services, and advocacy hubs.

Pride Month commemorates the 1969 Stonewall riots in Manhattan, New York where individuals protested against police harassment and persecution commonly experienced by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+) community.

The first Metro Manila Pride was held in 1996 with 30 organizations in attendance.

The event is part of the campaign for the passage of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Expression

(SOGIE) bill.

It is a series of House and Senate bills that were introduced in the 17th, 18th, and 19th Congress which aims to set into law measures to prevent various economic and public accommodation-related acts of discrimination against people based on their SOGIE.

The bill lists the practices to be considered discriminatory and unlawful, which include the denial of rights to LGBTQ+ community on the basis of their SOGIE, such as their right to access public services, right to use establishments and services including housing, and right to apply for a professional license, among others.

The bill also deems as discriminatory the differential treatment of an employee or anyone engaged to render services, denial of admission to or expulsion from an educational institution, refusal or revocation of accreditation to any organization due to an individual’s SOGIE.

The act of forcing any person to undertake any medical or psychological examination to alter his SOGIE, the publication of information intending to “out” a person without his or her consent, public speech meant to vilify LGBTQ+, the harassment and coercion of the latter by anyone especially those involved in law enforcement, and gender profiling will also be penalized.

With a rainbow-colored clenched fist as logo, the organizer Pride Ph described the event as “joyful rage and resistance with glitter” adding that, “We are enraged, and we are inspired. Inspired to rise higher, to march prouder, to love harder.”

Participants carried placards and banners with varied messages calling for inclusivity, love, and equal rights: “Pride is a protest”, “Stop the Attacks”, “Pride not Prejudice”, “Don’t hide your pride”, “Pride keeps people alive”, “Lahat ay pantay, Lahat ay Mahalaga”.

UP Chancellor Dr. Edgardo Carlo Vistan II expressed pride in the university’s role in the movement.

“This reflects our commitment in creating mechanism for advancing knowledge in this field and advocating for and protecting the rights of our community and others regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression,” he said in a video message.

An Iska herself, Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte said the partnership underscores the city’s long-standing commitment to inclusivity: “For years, QC has stood as a proud ally of the LGBTQIA+ community—not merely in words but through concrete policies and programs that truly champion gender equality. We are happy to host this festival once again as a testament to our support for the community’s fight for equal rights and celebration of their love and identities.”

“Social change is built on countless acts of courage—on the willingness to listen, to learn, and to stand up for what is right. It is strengthened by the visibility of LGBTQIA+ people who refuse to be silenced, and by allies who use their voices to advocate for inclusion and love,” UN Philippines Resident Coordinator Arnaud Peral said in a speech.

Akbayan Partylist representative Perci Cendaña holds the historical distinction of being the first openly gay chairperson of the UP Diliman University Student Council in the mid-1990s. He was part of UP’s LGBT group Babaylan, UP SAMASA, and was also a former head of the National Youth Commission.

“Don’t let the ‘agents of hate’ try to block the SOGIESC Equality Bill. Let’s put it to a vote to find out who is pro-discrimination and pro-equality. For the pro-discrimination legislators, it’s time to come out of your closets,” Cendaña said.

From the first time UP Babaylan members marched in the 1993 Lantern Parade to the present, UP has long provided a safe space for the LGBTQIA+ community.

UP’s website states: “Aware that UP students, staff, and faculty remain vulnerable to instances of discrimination, ostracism, harassment, and violence inside and outside the campus gates, including experiences of grappling with mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression, the university consistently exerts efforts to create a caring and safe space that promotes inclusion, diversity, and individual self-expression and protects the rights of all its stakeholders.”

\*\*\* (Peyups is the moniker of the University of the Philippines. Atty. Dennis R. Gorecho heads the Seafarers’ Division of the Sapalo Velez Bundang Bulilan Law Offices. For comments, e-mail info@sapalovelez.com, or call 09175025808.)



## From Angeles to America and Back: My Fourth of July Story

“The very essence of freedom is the ability to choose.” — Jose Rizal

perhaps, absorbed a bit of the rhetoric about freedom and independence. But even then, there was an underlying awareness that our experience of “freedom” was distinctly different.

My own journey has further complicated this perspective. Half of my adult life was spent in the United States, in New Jersey, where I eventually became a naturalized American citizen. I pledged allegiance to that flag, embraced the freedoms and responsibilities that came with it, and built a life there. So, when the Fourth of July rolls around, it’s not just an observation; it’s my Independence Day too.

The connection between the American Fourth of July and Philippine history is, to put it mildly, complicated. While Americans celebrate their declaration of independence from British rule, our own journey to sovereignty was significantly influenced, and at times, directly shaped, by the very nation celebrating

its freedom.

We cannot forget the Philippine-American War, a brutal conflict that followed our declaration of independence from Spain in 1898. The irony is stark: a nation born of revolution and a fight for self-determination then found itself in the position of an imperial power, suppressing another people’s desire for the same. The “Benevolent Assimilation” proclamation, issued by President McKinley, aimed to sugarcoat the reality of American occupation, but the scars of that conflict run deep in our collective memory.

Yet, alongside this painful history, there’s also the undeniable fact of America’s role in our post-war reconstruction and the establishment of many of our democratic institutions. The period of American tutelage, while controversial, also introduced concepts of

## THE GLOBAL BEAT

BY GERALD LACUARTA

July 4, 2025, Angeles City—As the fireworks illuminate the skies over America today, marking their 249th Fourth of July, a familiar yet complex echo resonates here in the Philippines. For many of us, especially those of us who grew up in the shadow of Clark Air Base, the Fourth of July isn’t just an American holiday; it’s a day deeply etched into the tapestry of our own history, a reminder of the intricate and often paradoxical ties that bind our two nations.

I was born in Angeles City in 1973, a stone’s throw from the gates of what was then a bustling US Air Force installation. My childhood was punctuated by the sights and sounds of American culture – PX goods, American muscle cars in Balibago, and yes, the annual fanfare of the Fourth of July. We saw the parades, heard the speeches, and

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**THE GLOBAL BEAT**

THE  
**VOICE**  
NEWSWEEKLY

ISSN 0115-6845

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Legal Rate: PHP 160 per column centimeter  
Commercial Rate: PHP 200 per column centimeter  
Subscription Rate: 1 year - P2,000 / 6 months - P1,000



THEVOICENEWWSWEEKLY

## Rotary Club of Balibago kicks off district-wide community project

by ARLYN E. LUKBAN

**ANGELES CITY** — The Rotary Club of Balibago (RCB) kicked off the District-Wide Community Project "Handog ng District 3790" with a day filled with fun, games, prizes and surprises at the Santo Domingo Integrated School in Angeles City.

The event, which officially served as the opening salvo of the Rotary Club of Balibago Presidency of Beautéderm CEO Rei Anicoche Tan, packed in glam and star power with the presence of Beautéderm ambassadors and Kapuso stars Miguel Tanfelix and Ysabel Ortega and host Dj JhaiHo.

According to Tan, for the first time in the proud history of community service, the Rotary Club of Balibago added a touch of star power to its mission—with no less than Tanfelix and Ortega lighting up the event.

The Rotary Club of Balibago president, joined by Tanfelix and Ortega, led the distribution of custom-made Beautéderm school bags, food mugs and hygiene kits to Grade 3 students, who also participated in fun games facilitated by DJ JhaiHo.

### MAYOR JON... FROM PAGE 1

city ordinances, pending review and amendment, to ensure they are aligned with the current needs and welfare of Angeleños.

### UY... FROM PAGE 1

One example of AI in action was the recent 'Byte Forward Hackathon,' co-organized by Converge, PCCI, the Department of Trade and Industry, and Rev21 Labs. The event paired MSMEs with college students who crafted AI-powered solutions to real business challenges.

The initiative showcased how AI can be applied in practical, accessible ways—even by small businesses with limited resources.

### PINEDAS... FROM PAGE 1

Development; Good Governance and Anti-Corruption Oversight; Environmental Monitoring and Climate Resilience; Expanded Social Welfare under the 'Alagang Nanay' Program; Employment and Micro-Enterprise Promotion; Digital Governance; Cooperative Development and Financial Inclusion; Overseas Kapampangan Welfare and Reintegration; Inclusive Education Access; Provincial Housing and Human Settlements; Barangay Empowerment; and Peace, Public Safety, and Sectoral Protection.

Vice Governor Delta emphasized that the board will support legislation particularly in areas of health, education, livelihood, disaster preparedness, and youth development—hallmarks of Nanay's brand of people-first governance.

Present during the session were Board Members Cherry Manalo and Christian Halili (First District); Olga Frances "Fritzie" David-Dizon, Atty. Claire David Lim, and Sajid Khan Eusoff (Second District); Lucky

Mayor Lazatin, who officially assumed office on July 1, 2025, vowed to lead with action, echoing his call: "Memalen ing magsalita, y Jon ing gawa."

Looking ahead, Uy said AI and technology will be at the forefront of the 51st Philippine Business Conference and Expo happening October 20–22 at the SMX Convention Center.

"We want MSMEs to leave the conference with real, actionable tools," Uy said. "This is our way of making the future of business more inclusive, innovative, and technology-driven."

Ferdinand Labung, Shiwen Lim, and Michaeline "My-My" Gonzales (Third District); and Dr. Kariza "Kaye" Naguit and Atty. Vincent Angelo Calara (Fourth District).

In a show of gratitude, the governor and vice governor extended their heartfelt thanks to members of the outgoing 11th SP—Krizannel Garbo, Benjamin Jocson, Atty. Analias Canlas Jr., now Representative Alyssa Michaela Gonzales, Macabebe Councilor Rolando Balingit, and Nelson Calara—for their contributions to the province's progress.

As Pampanga's top leaders trade places but remain united in purpose, the Capitol signals a renewed focus on inclusive growth, stronger governance, and public trust anchored on continuity and compassion.

"Magtulungan tayo para sa mas progresibong Pampanga," Vice Governor Delta said, closing his remarks with a call for solidarity.

### DPWH... FROM PAGE 2

she said.

Yap emphasized that proper licensing, procurement, and testing of hospital equipment take time, and stressed that quality and safety must not be sacrificed for speed.

Yap's health agenda: Mega RHUs and universal healthcare

Instead of focusing on an incomplete facility, Yap said her administration will strengthen the city's existing 10 Rural Health Units (RHUs) and construct three new Mega RHUs to improve health service delivery.

Anchored on the Universal Health Care

(UHC) Law, Yap aims to reduce out-of-pocket expenses by making essential medicines and services available at the RHU level. She also expressed openness to aligning services with the Tarlac Provincial Hospital (TPH) and its Service Delivery Network (SDN), especially if the city hospital remains limited to OPD services.

"Our goal is not just to build infrastructure but to deliver inclusive, quality, and sustainable healthcare," Yap stressed. "Governance is a shared responsibility. It's time to roll up our sleeves and work together for real transformation."

### DSWD... FROM PAGE 2

Philippine Disaster Recovery Foundation (PDRF), the National Government Administrative Center (NGAC), and the Integrated Operations Center for Disaster Response Management.

This planned logistics center also aligns with CIAC's long-term strategy to develop Clark as a central logistics and disaster response corridor. Previous initiatives have already brought in

facilities for the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), and Philippine Pharma Procurement, Inc.

With its strategic location near Clark International Airport, seaports, and major highways, the Freeport is poised to become a critical lifeline for Central Luzon in times of disaster.

### THE GLOBAL BEAT... FROM PAGE 3

public education, sanitation, and a legal framework that, in many ways, mirrored their own. The Fourth of July, for many years, was even observed as "Filipino-American Friendship Day" here, a testament to the enduring, if sometimes uneven, relationship.

For my generation, growing up near Clark, the American presence was palpable. It meant jobs, opportunities, and a certain global exposure. But it also meant grappling with the nuances of our sovereignty, the economic dependencies, and the cultural influences that sometimes felt overwhelming. We witnessed firsthand the power dynamics at play, the ebb and flow of a relationship forged in conflict and maintained through various agreements.

Now, having slowly reestablished myself back in the Philippines, I find myself standing on a bridge between two worlds. My heart holds a deep affection for both the land of

my birth and the nation that adopted me. This dual identity gives me a unique vantage point on the Fourth of July. It's a day for me to appreciate the hard-won freedoms of the United States, a country that became my home and offered me so much. But it's also a powerful reminder of the Philippines' own enduring struggle for complete self-determination and the complex legacy of our shared past.

#### My Own Fourth of July Reflection

Today, as the distant thuds of firecrackers reach my ears here in Angeles City, I won't just be thinking of parades and barbecues on a hot New Jersey summer day.

Instead, I'll be reflecting on how my identity, born under the Philippine sun and shaped by the American dream, continually navigates these historical currents. This dual citizenship isn't just about passports; it's about a constant,

personal negotiation of loyalty, memory, and hope. Jose Rizal's words, "The very essence of freedom is the ability to choose," resonate deeply with me on this particular day. For a long time, it felt like the choices for our nation, and even for individuals like myself, were often constrained by larger forces. But as I look back at my journey—from growing up in the shadow of a US base, to choosing to become an American citizen, and then, ultimately, choosing to return and re-root myself here in my homeland—I see the powerful, quiet truth in his statement.

The Fourth of July, for me, has become a mirror reflecting not just America's past, but also the enduring, evolving spirit of the Philippines, and my own place within that intricate dance. It's a reminder that true freedom, for nations and individuals alike, is a journey, not a destination, one that I'm still very much on, here, in the place I call home again.



Rotary Club of Balibago President and Beautéderm CEO Rei Anicoche Tan grants the wish of five students of the Sto. Domingo Integrated School during the club's District-Wide Community Project 'Handog ng District 3790'. Also in photo is Dj JhaiHo.

### NOTICE OF ADDENDUM TO EXTRAJUDICIAL SETTLEMENT OF ESTATE

NOTICE is hereby given that an ADDENDUM to the extrajudicial settlement of estate of the late EDGARDO M. LOPEZ, who died intestate on October 20, 2022 in California, U.S.A., has been made by including in his estate two (2) condominium units located at **Rooms 1502 & 1503 Monaco Tower, Azure North**, Jose Abad Santos Ave. Cor. NLEX, Brgy. San Jose, San Fernando City, Pampanga, Philippines, as described and bounded under **Condominium Certificate of Title Nos. 042-2024000626 and 042-2024000613**, respectively, of the Registry of Deeds for San Fernando, Pampanga, which addendum has been executed by all the legal heirs: **ZACHARY KYLE PAGSIBIGAN LOPEZ** and **EDGARDO NICHOLAS LOPEZ, JR.**, through their attorney-in-fact **ROWELITO C. ROQUE** on April 23, 2025 in Angeles City, Philippines, notarized by Atty. Junald S. Dionaldo, recorded in his notarial register as Doc. No. 909, Page No. 106, Book No. 71, Series of 2025.

THE VOICE NEWSWEEKLY July 6, 13, 20, 2025

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
CITY OF ANGELES )  
 )SS.

#### NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL

I, RONALD HERBERT TOMLIN RHODES, of legal age, with postal address at Philexcel Business Center 9, Philexcel Business Park, Clark Freeport Zone, after having been duly sworn in accordance with the law, do hereby depose and state as follows:

1. I am the Resident Agent of **CONNEXT LLC**, a foreign corporation duly organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the United States of America and duly licensed to do business in the Republic of the Philippines by virtue of its **License No. FS201507032** issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission on April 15, 2015;

2. By virtue of Section 153 of the Revised Corporation Code of the Philippines, **CONNEXT LLC** is **WITHDRAWING FROM THE PHILIPPINES** and shall cease to operate and conduct its business in the Philippines.

3. All interested parties, creditors, and other entities are hereby given notice of **CONNEXT LLC**'s withdrawal from the Philippines.

4. I am executing this Notice of Withdrawal to attest to the truth of the foregoing facts and for whatever legal intents and purposes the same might serve.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand on this 23rd day of April 2024 in the City of Angeles, Philippines.

SGD RONALD HERBERT TOMEIN RHODES  
Affiant

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me on this 23rd day of April 2024 in the City of Angeles, Philippines by the affiant **Ronald Herbert Tomlin Rhodes**, who has sufficiently identified himself to me by way of his competent evidence of identity consisting of a \_\_\_\_\_ with issuance/expiry on \_\_\_\_\_.

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SGD. YODH JAMIN D. ONG  
NOTARY PUBLIC- ANGELES CITY  
Roll of Attorney's No. 86749  
PTR No. AC- 2030825 / 01-04-2024  
IBP No. 397905 / 01-04-2024 Pampanga  
Until December 31, 2025  
Comm. No. 2023-1082  
256 Sto. Rosario St., San Jose, Angeles City

THE VOICE NEWSWEEKLY June 22, 29, July 6 2025

# Bataan school named finalist in World's Best School Prizes 2025

**BALANGA CITY** — The Mariveles National High School (MNHS) - Poblacion in Bataan has earned international recognition as one of the top 10 finalists in the World's Best School Prizes 2025 under the Supporting Healthy Lives category for its Changing Lives Through Sports program.

The school is the only finalist from the Philippines this year, bringing pride not only to Bataan but to the entire nation.

Department of Education (DepEd) Bataan Assistant Schools Division Superintendent Armando Capili expressed full support for the school's achievement and encouraged Filipinos to rally behind them.

"We support the school as one of the top 10 finalists of the World's Best School Prizes 2025 and stand behind their campaign for their program," Capili said.

The Changing Lives Through Sports program has transformed the lives of many students, according to the school's profile on the T4 Education website.

Learners who once experienced bullying, depression, and addiction have found positive outlets through sports. Many have become national champions, student leaders, and role models in their community.

Several graduates have pursued careers in physical education, coaching, and sports development, while the school has seen consistent growth in enrollment since the program's implementation.

The World's Best School Prizes, launched by

global education organization T4 Education, honor schools that drive positive change in five key areas: Community Collaboration, Environmental Action, Innovation, Overcoming Adversity, and Supporting Healthy Lives.

These prizes are guided by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and aim to strengthen schools while contributing to global progress.

An expert judging academy will select the winners for each of the five categories based on rigorous criteria.

Meanwhile, all top 10 finalists are eligible for the Community Choice Award, which will be determined through a public vote.

Capili called on the public to show their support by voting online.

"Your vote is not only for the school but for stories of all students whose lives were changed by their simple program," he emphasized.

The public can vote for MNHS - Poblacion through this link: <https://vote.worldsbestschool.org/publicvote25/entry/2691> until July 9, 2025.

T4 Education launched the World's Best School Prizes in 2022 in partnership with Yayasan Hasanah, Templeton World Charity Foundation, Accenture, and American Express.

The global community was established during the COVID-19 pandemic to support teachers and schools in adapting to new challenges and improving education worldwide.



Mariveles National High School - Poblacion in Bataan earns international recognition as one of the top 10 finalists in the World's Best School Prizes 2025 under the Supporting Healthy Lives category for its Changing Lives Through Sports program. (1Bataan)

## PCC showcases innovations in carabao farming

**SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ** — The Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) has showcased innovations and investment opportunities in carabao farming at the recent Livestock and Aquaculture Philippines Expo 2025.

This year's expo, themed "Empowering agri-fisheries through modern technology and innovation," serves as a platform to promote a variety of technologies, products, and services from over 200 exhibitors, including agencies from the Department of Agriculture (DA) focused on livestock and fisheries.

PCC Planning and Information Management Division Chief Zadieshar Sanchez served as one of the speakers during the event, where he emphasized the importance of carabao farming in promoting rural economic development in the country.

Sanchez discussed how the role of the carabao has evolved from being a traditional draft animal to becoming a reliable source of daily income through various commercial ventures.

"There's a daily income in dairy," Sanchez stated.

He highlighted the consistent revenue stream that dairy farming offers in contrast to seasonal crops.

In his presentation, Sanchez introduced scalable business portfolios designed with varying investment capacities for dairy, meat, and other enterprises.

Startups, small-scale operations,

and commercial ventures for dairy production are all supported by processing facilities, including the Dairy Box brand, which is registered under the intellectual property system.

The meat portfolio features fattening and growing systems as well as "Kardeli," another PCC-developed brand that focuses on buffalo meat.

Additionally, there are allied enterprises such as silage production and vermicast, which offer sustainable and supplementary income sources for farmers.

In the same activity, PCC at Central Luzon State University (PCC at CLSU) Center Director Ericson Dela Cruz discussed Cara Cuero, a brand they promoted that specializes in producing and marketing leather products made from carabao hide.

The Cara Cuero project aims to utilize the hides of slaughtered carabaos as raw materials for creating leather goods.

Dela Cruz highlighted that products from Cara Cuero have been used as institutional tokens by various universities and have been featured in fashion shows, showcasing garments made from carabao hide.

Furthermore, the PCC at CLSU plans to launch new initiatives in August, which will include the creation of folding beds and bolos crafted from carabao horns, bones, and teeth, intended for both local and international markets.

**CARA CUERO**

The Cara Cuero project originated from a capstone project by Dr. Dela Cruz for his Executive Course on Leadership, Innovation, Communication, and Knowledge Management (CLICK) Batch 3 for Senior Government Officials in 2022. The project, titled "Utilizing hide of deceased carabao for leather production," aims to use the hides of slaughtered carabaos as raw material for leather products.

**Introduction**

DA - Philippine Carabao Center (PCC), created through RA 7307, is mandated to conserve, propagate, and promote the carabao as a source of milk, meat, draft power, and hide.

**The Philippine Carabao Center (PCC), through Planning and Information Management Division Chief Zadieshar Sanchez and PCC at Central Luzon State University Center Director Ericson Dela Cruz (in photo), present innovations and investment opportunities in carabao farming during the Livestock and Aquaculture Philippines Expo 2025 held at the World Trade Center in Pasay City. (PCC)**

## DOST promotes renewable energy in Aurora

**BALER, Aurora** — The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) is promoting renewable energy solutions to strengthen rural livelihood through hands-on food processing training in Dipaculao, Aurora.

Implemented under the agency's Community Empowerment through Science and Technology program, the capacity building activity benefited about 43 members of the ASCOT Shelter Bulos Association, Dinadiawan Fish Processors and Vendors Association, and the Upland Coconut Farmers Association.

DOST Aurora Science Research Specialist Regine Maines-Agumboy said the initiative aims to maximize the use of solar energy in boosting local industries and driving inclusive economic growth.

"We capacitated fisherfolk and crop growers who were affected by past typhoons by helping them develop value-added products and sustainable livelihood opportunities through science-based solutions," Agumboy shared.

Participants were trained in food processing using solar-powered technologies, including multi-purpose drying trays, a solar food processing system, and a vacuum packaging machine.

The equipment was procured in partnership with the Aurora State College of Technology who also helped identify the most suitable tools for the community.

Among the products now being processed are dried and smoked fish, fish sardines, kamote fries, kamote chips, and kamote powder—enhancing product quality, extending shelf life, and improving market value.

"By shifting to solar-powered technologies, we're not only cutting production costs but also helping communities build more resilient and sustainable livelihoods," Agumboy emphasized.

Meanwhile, DOST continues to implement science-based programs in Aurora to strengthen local industries by enhancing productivity, promoting innovation, and supporting long-term economic growth.

These include the Manufacturing Productivity Program which provides technical consultancy to improve efficiency in micro, small, and medium enterprises; and the Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program which supports the adoption of innovative technologies in business operations.



The Department of Science and Technology promotes the use of renewable energy for livelihood development through hands-on food processing training in Dipaculao, Aurora. A total of 43 members from various local associations were trained to use solar-powered equipment to support sustainable, typhoon-resilient income sources. (DOST)

## Best Western International, SGH sign Developer Agreement

Global hospitality leader Best Western International is set to formalize a major partnership with Savers Group Holdings through the signing of a Developer Agreement on July 7, 2025, in Angeles City.

Signatories for Savers Group Holdings include Chairman Jaime 'Jack' Uy, President and COO Jansen Ivan Uy, and Executive Vice President Justine Shaun Uy. Representing Best Western International, on the other hand, are Vice President for Asia Pacific Olivier Berrivin, Managing Director for Operations Rodney Simpson, Managing Director for Development Cyril Czerwonka.

As Best Western's newly appointed Developer in the Philippines, Savers Group Holdings, a diversified conglomerate with a robust footprint in real estate, retail, and hospitality, will have exclusive rights to identify, assist, and develop hotels seeking to upgrade or affiliate with Best Western's family of trusted brands — including Best Western®, Best Western Plus®, and Best

Western Premier® and SureStay®. The partnership aims to accelerate the brand's nationwide expansion, particularly in high-growth areas such as Clark, Subic, Metro Manila, and other emerging destinations.

Uy believes that the partnership aligns with the Savers Group's strategic vision of transforming Central Luzon — especially Clark — into a thriving hospitality and tourism hub.

"We are proud to be entrusted by Best Western to help grow its footprint in the Philippines," he said, adding "Through this Developer Agreement, we look forward to working with hotel owners who share our passion for excellence, innovation, and service."

This collaboration positions both Best Western and Savers Group to meet the increasing demand for world-class accommodations in the Philippines, while contributing to regional tourism development and economic growth.



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JAIME 'Jack' UY, Chairman and CEO



JANSEN IVAN UY, President and COO



JUSTINE UY, Executive Vice President

### From Angeles to Congress:

## Felix the Cat starts new chapter as 'official' mouser



It was business as usual for Felix the Cat on July 1, 2025 — except this time, instead of prowling the halls of Angeles City Hall, he began his new assignment at the House of Representatives.

Felix, a 5-year-old domestic shorthair or 'Puspin' (Pusang Pinoy), made the leap from local to national service alongside his long-time human, former Angeles City Mayor and now Pampanga First District Representative Carmelo "Pogi" Lazatin, Jr.

A fixture in Mayor Lazatin's office since 2019, Felix was first rescued as a kitten within city hall grounds by the City Veterinary Office's Eder Pasamonte. He was later adopted by then Executive Assistant IV Reina Manuel and officially named the office's "Rat Control Officer" — a role he performed with quiet dedication for six years.

Now taking up residence in Lazatin's new congressional office, Felix brings not only his pest control expertise but also a dose of fury charm. Though his job remains largely the same—keeping the workplace rodent-free—insiders say his day will likely include more naps and the occasional pantry

patrol.

Felix's health and welfare continue to be a priority. He has been neutered and receives regular vaccinations, courtesy of the City Veterinary Office.

Beyond his presence, Felix represents a broader advocacy that Lazatin has championed throughout his public service: animal welfare.

During his tenure as mayor, Lazatin signed into law Ordinance No. 668, s-2023, the Animal Welfare and Protection Code of Angeles City. This landmark ordinance led to the creation of a "no-kill" Angeles City Dog Pound and Animal Shelter, inaugurated in July 2023, which shelters rescued animals and facilitates their rehoming or adoption.

As he begins his first term in Congress, Lazatin has vowed to continue advancing animal welfare as part of his broader legislative platform anchored on the principle of "Alang Malakwan"—a pledge to leave no one, and no creature, behind.

With Felix now at his side in the national arena, that promise seems just a little more paw-sible.