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Toll discounts for PUVs, PUBs, freight start March 23

MANILA (PIA) — Public utility vehicles, buses and freight services will receive temporary toll discounts beginning March 23, following President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s directive to ease the impact of rising fuel prices on the transport sector.

The Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) said private concessionaires San Miguel Corp. and Metro Pacific Tollways Corp. will implement the discounts for two months, with possible extension subject to review. The relief applies to Class 1 public utility jeepneys, Class 2 buses and Class 3 freight vehicles.

Transportation Secretary Giovanni "Banoy" Lopez welcomed the move, saying it would help stabilize commuter fares and the cost of goods.

"We thank San Miguel Corp. under Mr. Ramon Ang and Metro Pacific Tollways Corp. under Mr. Manny Pangilinan for this assistance. It will greatly benefit drivers, commuters, consumers and businesses amid the current oil crisis," Lopez said.

According to the TRB, toll rebates will be credited weekly to qualified vehicles. Class 1 vehicles could save up to 18 pesos per end-to-end trip, while Class 2 and Class 3 vehicles may save as much as 47 pesos and 72 pesos, respectively.



The initiative comes as the administration seeks measures to cushion the transport sector from global fuel price volatility linked to the Middle East crisis. (JCO/PIA-NCR)

Bacoor Offers Free Late Birth Registration for Public School Children

As part of the birthday celebration of Mayor Strike B. Revilla, the City Government of Bacoor, in partnership with the Federated Parents-Teachers Association and through the Office of the City Civil Registry, is launching a Free Late Registration of Certificate of Live Birth for public school children this coming March 27, 2026 at Talaba Elementary School.

This initiative aims to provide every child with a legal identity and open doors to better opportunities for

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28 MSMEs, lumahok sa Women's Trade Fair sa SM Center Imus

Dalawmpu't walong Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) ang lumahok sa Women's Trade Fair na isinagawa sa SM Center Imus mula nitong Lunes, Marso 16,at nagtapos nitong Marso 22, 2026, sa pangunguna ng Office of the City Cooperatives Development Officer (OCCDO).

Bilang bahagi ng pagdiriwang ng Women's Month, tampok sa naturang trade fair ang

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OFFICE ADDRESS: Purok 8, San Agustin, Trece Martires City
Cellphone No. 0908-6395697
Email Address: caviteweeklychronicle@gmail.com

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Publisher-Emma R. Apanay
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ATI Calabarzon
Agricultural Training Institute/DA

AEWs Undergo Specialized Training to Strengthen Agricultural Extension Services in CALABARZON



To better prepare the Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs), especially the new technicians, in serving farmers and the community more effectively, thirty-three (33) participants underwent the Basic Agricultural Extension Course (BAEC) conducted by DA-ATI CALABARZON.

Over the five-day workshop, participants will hone their skills in agricultural extension, communication, and community engagement, skills essential for delivering knowledge and technology to farmers.

Through activities such as case analysis, presentations, and community immersion, they deepen their practical knowledge that can be used directly in their communities.

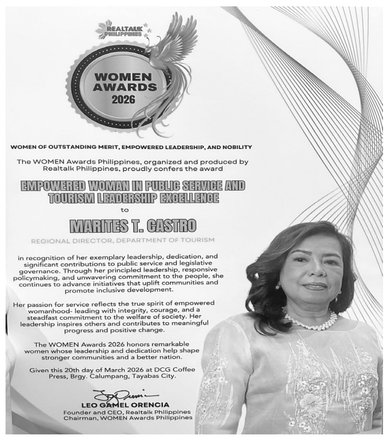
In the opening message, Sherylou C emphasized. Alfaro, RAgr, Assistant Center Director, on the importance of training as the foundation of the effective role of AEWs in the development of agriculture and rural communities.

Training is currently underway in Trece Martires City from March 23–26, 2026.

REGIONAL DIRECTOR Marites T. Castro Honored with WOMEN 2026 Award in Tourism

Regional Director Marites T. Castro was recognized yesterday as one of the recipients of the prestigious WOMEN 2026 Award (Women of Outstanding Merit, Empowered Leadership and Nobility) in the tourism industry.

The awarding ceremony was held at DGC Coffee Press, Tayabas City, March 20, 2026, bringing together leaders and advocates who champion women's empowerment and excellence in their fields.



Director Castro's recognition underscores her unwavering commitment to advancing sustainable tourism, empowering communities, and inspiring women leaders across the region. Her leadership reflects the values of merit, vision, and service that the WOMEN 2026 Award celebrates.

This honor not only highlights her personal achievements but also affirms the vital role of women in shaping the future of Philippine tourism.

Here is Director Castro's full transcription of her speech:

"Good evening everyone!

Thank you so much to Sir Leo of Real Talk for this recognition. I'm truly honored—and honestly, a little surprised… but in a good way, I promise! □

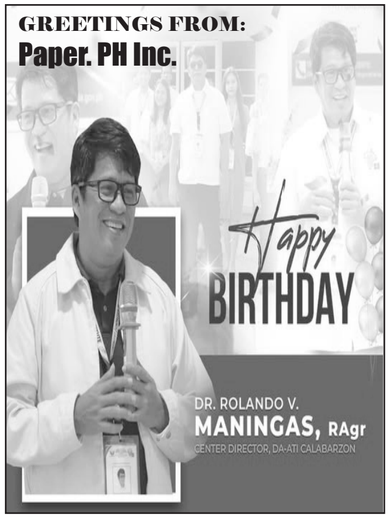
This award isn't just mine—it belongs to every woman who keeps showing up, even on days when showing up is already a victory.

Women's Month reminds us of our strength, but let's be real—we've been strong all year. We just don't always get trophies for it… so this one, I'm happily accepting on behalf of all of us.

To all the women here: keep going, keep rising, and keep being unapologetically you.

And if you ever doubt yourself, just remember—if you can survive Mondays, you can survive anything.

Thank you, and happy Women's Month!



DepEd to public schools: Hold simple graduation rites amid fuel price hike

The Department of Education (DepEd) directed all public schools nationwide to keep graduation ceremonies simple and reasonable amid the increase in fuel prices due to ongoing tensions in the Middle East.

Education Secretary Sonny Angara said the move is in line with the directive of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. to reduce the burden of families due to the oil price hike.

"We must ensure that this milestone remains a celebration of achievement rather than a financial ordeal for our parents, especially as we navigate the economic impact of rising fuel costs," said Angara.

He added that schools must prioritize the welfare of learners by keeping these ceremonies simple, meaningful, and entirely free of unnecessary expenses.

Under Memorandum No. 015 series of 2026, DepEd emphasized that graduation and moving-up rites should be conducted without excessive expenses or lavish attire.

School heads were also reminded that a student's participation in graduation should not be dependent on the payment of any contribution.

Schools are also encouraged to use simple and free venues such as school grounds or covered courts to avoid expensive rent.

In addition, the education department clarified that non-academic activities, such as field trips and prom nights, should not be made a requirement for graduation. For public schools, all necessary expenses should be taken from the school's Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) funds.

Under this year's theme, "Pilipinong Nagsipagtapos: Handang Mamuno nang May Kakayahan at Mabuting Pagkatao," the program recognizes the holistic education of young people who are not only academically proficient but also ready to serve their communities and the country.

According to DepEd, for School Year 2025-2026, an estimated 1.9 million Grade 6 learners and 1.8 million Grade 12 learners are expected to graduate nationwide. All graduation and moving-up activities are scheduled for March 30 or 31, 2026. (JEG/PIA-NCR)

DOT holds 1st cruise tourism meet

MANILA – The Department of Tourism (DOT) convened the first high-level meeting of the Philippine Cruise Tourism Development Committee following its reconstitution.

The DOT, in a news release on Monday, said the discussion held at the Hilton Manila in Pasay City aims to accelerate the growth of cruise tourism.

DOT officer-in-charge Secretary Verna Buensuceso led discussions on cruise infrastructure development, harmonization of tourism data, utilization of cruise visa waivers, and updates on the Maritime Industry Development Program.

The Philippines is looking to receive 127 cruise ship calls in 2026, describing this as a reflection of cruise operators' "sustained engagement" with the country.

The initial figure comes as the Philippines strengthens collaboration with cruise stakeholders to

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PHILHEALTH, PNP CLAMP DOWN ON FAKE HEALTH IDS

In a unified effort to protect Filipino healthcare beneficiaries from digital fraud syndicates, a reinforced interagency alliance has been formed to intensify a nationwide crackdown on cyberscams involving the use of fake health IDs.

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) Regional Office National Capital Region (PRO NCR) and the Philippine National Police Anti-Cybercrime Group (PNP-ACG) renewed their partnership to synchronize online monitoring and field operations to dismantle criminal networks exploiting the national health insurance system.

"In today's digital age, fraud and deception are no longer limited to physical transactions. They have evolved into cybercrimes ranging from fake PhilHealth identification cards and fraudulent official receipts, to individuals posing as PhilHealth employees, unauthorized online selling of free medical supplies, and even the illegal collection of accreditation fees," said PRO NCR Vice President Dr. Bernadette C. Lico, stressing the importance of convergence in establishing a more aggressive defense against cyber-criminals to ensure that legitimate members are not deprived of their essential health benefits.

The crackdown on these syndicates has yielded significant results since 2023, with 16 individuals arrested and prosecuted through targeted entrapment operations. Penalties imposed by the court range from a minimum of four months to four years of imprisonment, while one high-profile case resulted in a sentence of eight years and one day.

PGen Wilson C. Asueta, for his part, reaffirmed the shared commitment of the PNP-ACG to safeguard public resources, protect members' data, and ensure that services intended for citizens are not compromised by fraudulent schemes.

"Together, we move forward with a shared mission: to protect the public, uphold integrity in public service, and ensure that technology remains a force for good," said Asueta.

The expanded partnership between agencies now covers a broader spectrum of cyber-related offenses, ranging from the falsification of official receipts and the unauthorized online sale of free medical supplies to fraudulent ac-

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Blood Donation Drive & Wheelchair Distribution sa Bayan ng Naic

Naganap ang Blood Donation Drive bilang bahagi ng Blood Heroes Month, kasabay ng Wheelchair Distribution, nitong March 22, 2026, sa Stadium Shopping Strip, Naic, Cavite, sa pakikiisa ni Mayor Rommel Magbitang.

Ang programa ay para makatulong sa mga nangangailangan ng dugo at magbigay ng suporta sa mga benepisyaryong nangangailangan ng mobility assistance, bilang bahagi ng patuloy na serbisyong pangkalusugan at malasakit sa bayan ng Naic.



Calabarzon PUV drivers...p6

a jeepney driver from Laguna, the financial assistance to be distributed by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) will help cover their daily expenses, particularly fuel costs, allowing them to continue operating.

"Malaki po, gawa ng siyempre yung kakarampot lang na kita ay napupunta na lang sa pang-krudo, tapos 'pag hindi naman kami naghanapbuhay at hindi nakakapamasada, wala din kaming kikitain, wala kaming kakainin, saktuhan lang po sa pambili ng pagkain, boundary pa, eh siyempre kakayod ka talaga," Castor said.

Although the said financial assistance will be rolled out in other regions in April 2026, the P5,000 fuel subsidy under the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS) of the DSWD is expected to ease the burden on PUV drivers—but it also leaves many wondering, what happens once the aid runs out?

"Makakatulong din naman kahit papaano, dahil para rin iyon sa pambili ng krudo. Pero sa tingin ko, hindi rin ito magtatagal dahil mahal pa rin ang presyo ng krudo. Mas mabuti sana kung pagkatapos ibigay ang tulong, bababa agad ang presyo kahit ilang araw lang. Gayunpaman, makakatulong pa rin ito, lalo na sa iba pang gastusin sa bahay tulad ng pagkain."

Despite the anticipated government assistance, PUV drivers acknowledge that rising petroleum prices remain inevitable due to ongoing international crises. Still, they express hope that measures will be implemented to help lessen the direct impact on their livelihood.

Roberto Macapagal, a tricycle driver from Calamba, Laguna, said that they are fully aware of the ongoing crisis and recognize themselves as among the most affected sectors.

"Talagang aray po kami sa hina na nga rin po ng pamamasada namin wala na rin po kaming maisakay minsan, lalo na ngayon na tumaas talaga ang gasolina hindi naman po kami makapagtaas ng presyo gawa ng meron din po kaming taripa, yun po ang iniisip namin kaya po kami ngayon ay talagang tiyaga din po talaga para po at least meron din po kaming pangtustos sa aming pamilya," Macapagal stated.

Amid the challenges posed by the ongoing crisis and rising fuel costs, he expressed appreciation for the government's move to provide financial assistance, noting that it still offers some relief to drivers struggling with daily expenses.

"Sa ipagkakaloob po ng Malacañang na ibibigay sa amin, malaking tulong na rin po 'yun; 'yun po ang magiging karagdagan na rin po para masapatan yung pang-araw-araw namin na minsan wala kaming kita, at least merong dumating sa amin na subsidy na gano'n, malaki din ang pasasalamat namin na mangyari yung gano'n kapag ganyan na may krisis.

"With ongoing tensions in the Middle East, sectors like theirs are among the hardest hit, but the government has assured that aid will be provided to ease the impact.

In line with this, prices of basic commodities such as canned meat and sardines are being closely monitored, with manufacturers guaranteeing adequate supply despite global uncertainties. (COP/PIA-CALABARZON)

Bacoor Offers...from p1

a brighter future—because in Bacoor, everyone belongs.

The program will run for an entire year and will be rolled out across different barangays in the city. Residents are encouraged to stay tuned for announcements regarding the schedule in their respective areas.

Parents and guardians are advised to coordinate with their respective PTA for proper registration and identification of beneficiaries.

The first rollout of this service will take place at Talaba Elementary School, marking the beginning of a broader and more inclusive effort to serve Bacooreño families.

DOT holds 1st cruise...p3

boost the sector's recovery and growth.

In the meeting, the participants outlined collaborative measures to improve port operations, streamline passenger processing, and enhance the overall cruise experience.

Participating agencies included the Department of Transportation, Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Information and Communications Technology, and Department of Public Works and Highways, along with attached agencies and port authorities.

Also present were representatives from the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority, Philippine Ports Authority, Maritime Industry Authority, and the Bureau of Customs, Immigration, and Quarantine, as well as private sector stakeholders. source: (PNA)

GenTri Strengthens Safety and Anti-Drug Efforts in Productive First Quarter Council Meeting



City Government of General Trias headed by Mayor Jon Jon Ferrer in its First Quarter Joint City Peace and Order Council and City Anti-Drug Abuse Council (CADAC) Meeting proved to be productive, as key agencies—including the PNP, BJMP, BFP, TMO, and CADAC—presented updates on the current peace and order situation in the city.

Discussions focused on next steps to further enhance security in General Trias, including plans to build and expand police and fire stations across various barangays, as well as the provision of additional equipment for emergency responders.

The meeting also highlighted CADAC's ongoing programs in the fight against illegal drugs, such as barangay drug-clearing operations and community-based rehabilitation initiatives.

Overall, the gathering aimed to strengthen coordination among agencies and the City Government, reinforcing their shared commitment to maintaining safer, more peaceful, and orderly communities in General Trias.

CvSU...p6

persons and Board Member Aldrin Anacan, highlighted the shared commitment to community development. Representatives from partner agencies, including J/CINSP Marc Francis Bauya of BJMP and Ms. Myrachel Cuadra of OPCDO, also showed their support for the initiative.

By ensuring that these programs remain accessible and inclusive, CvSU aims to create opportunities for all members of the community to grow and succeed, regardless of their background.

More than just a formal agreement, the event symbolized a unified pledge to foster inclusive growth and sustainable community empowerment.

Eala exits...from p5

Third seed Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan downed No. 27 Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine, 6-3, 6-4, to advance against Talia Gibson of Australia, who stunned No. 18 Iva Jovic of USA, 6-2, 6-2.

Americans Coco Gauff, Jessica Pegula, Amanda Anisimova, and Hailey Baptiste also secured round-of-16 slots.

No. 4 Gauff prevailed over compatriot Alycia Parks, 3-6, 6-0, 6-1; No. 5 Pegula clobbered No. 26 Canadian Leylah Fernandez, 6-2, 6-2; No. 6 Anisimova beat Ukrainian Yulia Starodubtseva, 6-4, 6-2; and unseeded Baptiste shocked No. 9 Ukrainian Elina Svitolina, 6-3, 7-5.

Other winners were No. 12 Swiss Belinda Bencic over Diana Shnaider, 6-3, 6-3; No. 20 Romanian Sorana Cirstea over No. 21 Belgian Elise Mertens, 6-3, 6-2; No. 25 Latvian Jelena Ostapenko over No. 7 Italian Jasmine Paolini, 5-7, 6-2, 7-5; and Romanian Jaqueline Cristian over No. 11 Ekaterina Alexandrova, 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (5). (PNA)

28 MSMEs, lumahok...p1

iba't ibang produktong ng mga kababaihan sa Imus.

Nagbigay-suporta rin sa aktibidad ang ilang mga konsehal at opisyal ng Pamahalaang Lungsod ng Imus sa kanilang pagbisita.

Ayon sa OCCDO, layunin ng trade fair na mapalakas ang mga kababaihang negosyante sa pamamagitan ng pagbibigay ng plataporma upang maipakita ang kanilang mga produkto at mapalawak ang oportunidad sa merkado.

DOST Cavite Joins Partnership Meeting For The Upcoming Launch of Farm Business School 2.0



The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Cavite took part in a partnership meeting on March 19 at the DAR Office in Trece Martires City, Cavite, together with the Daine 1 & 2 Farmers Association, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), and other partner agencies. The meeting aimed to strengthen collaboration and finalize preparations for the upcoming implementation of the Farm Business School (FBS) 2.0.

The initiative seeks to empower farmers by equipping them with essential knowledge and skills in financial management, marketing, and value-adding—helping them transition into successful agri-preneurs. Through this collaborative effort, partner agencies reaffirm their commitment to providing science-based solutions, innovative approaches, and sustainable opportunities for the farming communities.

Provincial Agrarian Reform Program Officer and Cavite Director III James Arthur Dubungco highlighted the importance of strong partnerships in driving inclusive growth in the agriculture sector. With DOST Cavite's continued support, the Farm Business School 2.0 is set to open new opportunities and contribute to the development of resilient and progressive farming communities.

SPORTS NEWS

Eala exits Miami Open after losing to world no. 14 Muchova



Filipino Alexandra Eala

MANILA – Filipino Alexandra Eala bowed out of the WTA 1000 Miami Open following a 6-0, 6-2 loss to world No. 14 Czech Karolina Muchova on Monday.

No. 31 Eala, a semifinalist last year, did her best, but it was not good enough against the former world No. 8, who claimed victory after one hour.

The 5-foot-11 Muchova, who won the WTA 1000 Qatar Open last month, will face the winner between No. 8 Mirra Andreeva and No. 10 Canadian Victoria Mboko.

Andreeva defeated No. 32 Czech Marie Bouzkova, 7-6 (4), 6-2, while Mboko conquered Anastasia Zakharova, 6-1, 7-5.

Meanwhile, top seed Aryna Sabalenka outplayed American Caty McNally, 6-4, 6-3, to forge a fourth-round duel with No. 23 Chinese Qinweng Zheng, who ousted No. 16 American Madison Keys, 4-6, 6-2, 6-4. **Cont. on PAGE4**

Philhealth, PNP clamp down...from page 3

creditation activities.

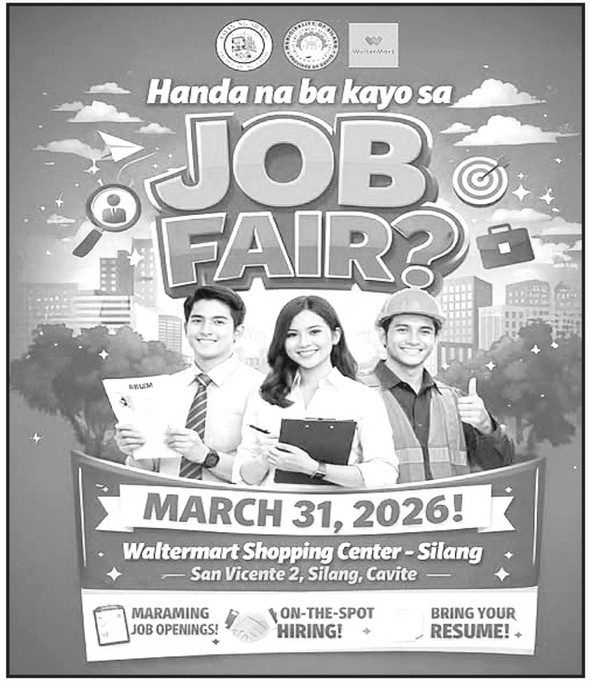
In addition, the interagency cooperation will prioritize the investigation of individuals impersonating PhilHealth staff and those responsible for posting malicious or defamatory content online against the agency and its workforce.

Meanwhile, PhilHealth reiterates its warning to the public that PhilHealth IDs and Member Data Records (MDR) are strictly not for sale. Members and healthcare professionals are encouraged to make use of the official PhilHealth Member Portal or visit any Local Health Insurance Office for legitimate transactions.

PRO NCR and the PNP-ACG initially joined forces in 2022 to combat a surge in fake PhilHealth IDs and MDRs, specifically targeting unauthorized online fixers who exploit unsuspecting citizens.

The public is urged to remain vigilant and report any suspicious online activities or unauthorized transactions immediately. Concerns may be directed to the PhilHealth Action Center via landline at (02) 8662-2588, mobile at 0998-857-2957, or email at actioncenter@philhealth.gov.ph.

Alternatively, reports can be filed with the PNP-ACG through their Smart hotline at 0968-867-4302 or landline at (02) 8723-0401 local 7491. (JMP/PIA-NCR)



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CvSU–Trece Martires Launches Program H.O.P.E., Strengthens Community Partnerships Through MOA Signing



Campus Administrator Prof. Noel A. Sedigo



TMC Mayor Gemma Buendia-Lubigan



Launching and MOA Signing of Project HOPE, a community development program of CvSU Trece Martires Campus for the barangays of Trece Martires, in partnership with the LGU.

Cavite State University – Trece Martires City Campus proudly marked a significant milestone with the official launch of Program H.O.P.E. (Holistic Opportunities for People's Empowerment) and the ceremonial signing of its Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on March 23, 2026.

This landmark initiative reflects the university's enduring commitment to its core values of Truth, Integrity, Excellence, and Service. Program H.O.P.E. serves as a comprehensive framework that unites key extension projects—2Lungan, CSL, BEED, and IKONEK—each aimed at empowering partner communities through knowledge-sharing and resource collaboration.

The ceremony began with a warm welcome from Campus Administrator Prof. Noel A. Sedigo, followed by the formal introduction of Program H.O.P.E. Attendees also gained valuable insights from the project leaders, who presented their respective strategic visions: Dr. Khenilyn P. Lewis (IKONEK), Ms. Lorelei V. Sobremonte (2Lungan), Asst. Prof. Cristza dO. Manlapig (CSL), and Asst. Prof. Lilian O. Sidamon (BEED).

The event was further honored by the presence of Dr. Racquel G. Agusti from the University Extension Services Office, whose support continues to strengthen the university's outreach initiatives.

Strong collaboration with the City Government of Trece Martires—led by Mayor Gemma Buendia-Lubigan and Vice Mayor Romeo "Bobby" Montehermoso Jr.—alongside the 13 Barangay Chair-

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Calabarzon PUV drivers hopeful for fuel subsidy rollout to ease costs

Some Public Utility Vehicle (PUV) drivers in the Calabarzon region praised the expected rollout of the government's fuel subsidy which aims to help them cope with rising oil prices amid tensions in the Middle East.

Since the effects of the crisis have been felt across the world, jeepney drivers have become one of the most vulnerable sectors, as they are heavily affected by the rising cost of fuel, particularly diesel, which they rely on for their operations.

Once the financial assistance is distributed to other regions following the National Capital Region (NCR), PUV drivers are expected to feel some relief, as it will help ease their financial burden.

For Julius Castor,

Cont. on PAGE4