

CLEXPRESS



DTI-3 HOLDS SHARED SERVICE FACILITIES SUMMIT 2023

By: Jose Antonio F. Toledo, IV

Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) play a major role in closing socio-economic divide and income inequality. According to the SME Finance Forum, they play a crucial role for growth and job creation, as MSMEs account for nearly 86% of employment opportunities in developing countries.

MSME Development is a key strategy to achieve Government's goal of inclusive growth and reduction of poverty incidence. Thus, in 2013, the Department of Trade and Industry started one of its flagship programs for MSMEs, the Shared Service Facilities (SSF) program.

The program aims to increase productivity and efficiency of MSMEs to help achieve the goal of poverty alleviation with inclusive growth.

The program also aims at improving the quality and productivity of MSMEs by addressing the gaps and bottlenecks in the value chain of priority industry clusters through the provision of processing equipment for the common use of MSMEs within the priority industry clusters in every region.

>> turn to page 2

NEWS AND FEATURES

Ambiente Int'l Trade Fair	3
PBBM Kadiwa	5
Subic Freeport OTOP Hub	13
NE Tinapa Festival	15
DTI-SOMAGO partnership	16
Baliwag SSF Awarding	17
Women's Month Celebration	19

>> continued from page 1

At present, a total of 310 SSF projects have been established in Central Luzon since its commencement in 2013. A total of Php185,599,629.54 was disbursed and utilized in establishing these facilities across the region. With the use of modern machinery and equipment granted under the SSF Program, the MSMEs have improved their production capacities, enhanced the quality of their products and increased their market shares. As a result, 133,910 MSMEs were assisted/benefitted to date since the program's inception.

Thus, on January 18, 2023, at the Orchid Gardens, City of San Fernando, Pampanga the annual regional summit was held to gather all SSF stakeholders in one venue to celebrate the successful implementation of the SSF Program in Region 3 for the past year. The yearly event provides an avenue for SSF cooperators to share their success stories and best practices to serve as inspiration to other cooperators.



Shared Service Facilities
"Shared Success for Filipino MSMEs"

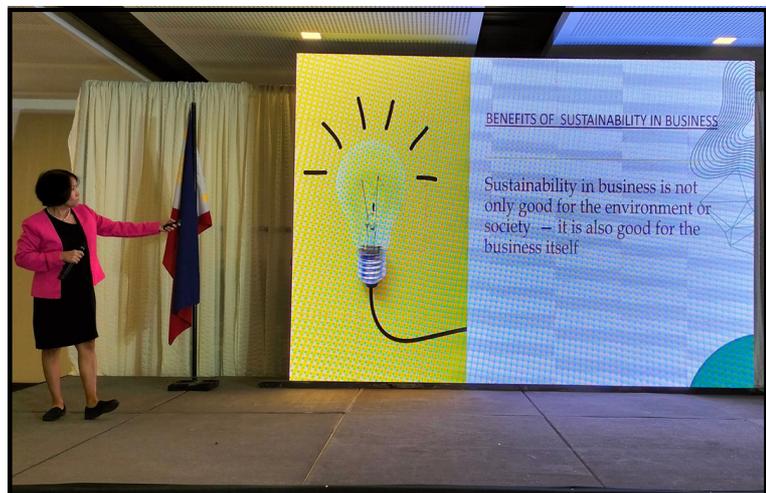
The recognition of Best SSF Cooperators per province also provided the highlights during the Summit. Corollary to this, a learning session on "Sustainable Management" was conducted by Ms. Rita I. Pilarca of RGIP EmpowerBiz to enhance and hone the skills, capabilities and productivity of our SSF cooperators.

As a side event, a product showcase displaying the different products of SSF cooperators was held simultaneously.

"The success of our SSF program is in its simplicity of concept. We help and assist our cooperators so that in turn, they may help a greater majority of our MSMEs and other beneficiaries. To borrow from Mr. George Schultz, an economist, statesman and former United States Secretary of State, *'Success is best when it is shared'*," DTI-3 Regional Director Leonila T. Baluyut said in a message delivered by Atty. Garcia.



Division Chief Cynthia C. Dela Cruz of BSMED presenting the national performance of DTI's SSF.



Ms. Rita I. Pilarca, Managing Consultant of RGIP Empowerbiz Consultancy Services lecturing on Sustainability during the event's learning session.

TARLAC JOINS 2023 AMBIENTE INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR IN GERMANY

By: Ma. Fatima A. David



Images by: Ambiente, Design Philippines, Design Center of the Philippines, Ronald Rommel Viloria

A total of 10 Micro, Small, & Medium Entrepreneurs (MSMEs) from Tarlac showcased their handcrafted products at the Ambiente Trade Show in Frankfurt, Germany, from February 3-7, 2023, with the theme "Moving the Future".

Ambiente, one of the world's leading international trade shows for the consumer goods sector, made an astounding comeback in 2023 after being canceled for two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The staggering array of goods in the event was divided into four categories: dining, living, giving, and the newly added working section. More than 4,500 exhibitors from around the world came together to show off their latest kitchen and household goods, gifts, home decor, and furniture that took sustainability, design, and lifestyles into account.

ambiente

The Provincial Government of Tarlac (PGT), the Department of Trade & Industry - 3 (DTI-3) through DTI Tarlac Provincial Office, and the Center for International Trade and Mission (CITEM) collaborated to enable 10 MSMEs from the province of Tarlac to partake in the Ambiente 2023 Trade Show. This time, there were more Tarlac MSMEs present as compared to Ambiente 2020, where a total of eight Tarlac MSMEs joined.

Over the course of the five-day event, the participating exhibitors interacted with 152 buyers and booked a total of \$28,954 in sales, while sales under negotiation totaled \$488,193.

>> turn to page 4

>> continued from page 3

"Tarlac's participation in the Ambiente Trade Exhibition demonstrates the readiness and competitiveness of its products. With adequate planning, strategies, and actions, MSMEs have the potential to adapt to the highly competitive markets of Europe and the rest of the world." DTI Assistant Secretary (DTI ASec) Leonila T. Baluyut, former DTI-3 Regional Director, said.

The MSMEs that took part were Red Slab Pottery, Betis Crafts Inc., PumiceUnlimited Ventures, Northshine Lightings and Decors Manufacturing, Oricon Corporation, Louriza Furniture Center, JCS Beatus Trading, Inc., Car-Ofel Woodworks and General Merchandise, Pascasio Pottery & General Merchandise, and Gracia's Amor Rattan Products Manufacturing. The latter five joined the trade show for the first time. Bath accessories, house decor, furniture, pottery, and lanterns are among the products exhibited by the participants. The PGT sponsored the MSMEs' booth rental, product shipping fees, and travel and lodging costs.

DTI Tarlac, CITEM, and the PGT, through the leadership of Governor Susan A. Yap, have been consistently working together in providing assistance to the MSMEs in Tarlac to expand their market by enhancing their skills, developing their products, and taking part in international trade fairs. The exposure of Tarlac products to the international market started in 2017 at the International Furniture Fair in Tokyo, Japan.



In addition, the team explored the potential market in China by taking part in the 2018 and 2019 China-ASEAN Expos in Nanning, China. Tarlac also took part in the Ambiente Trade Show in 2020 and was named the first CITEM artisan community partner.

"Ambiente's return in 2023 is definitely a success.

Though five out of the 10 exhibitors were first-timers, with the help of seasoned exhibitors, they were still able to effectively market their products. The friendship, teamwork, and positive attitudes of the MSMEs, along with the oversight and coaching provided by the DTI and the PGT-Provincial Cooperative and Enterprise Development Office (PGT-PCEDO), contributed to the overall success of the MSMEs' participation in the trade show." DTI - Tarlac Officer-In-Charge Provincial Director (OIC-PD) Zaida F. Garibay said.

Going forward, the collaborative team will continue to strengthen the 10 participants and develop more MSMEs by organizing higher levels of training programs for existing exporters and basic export training and mentoring sessions for potential exporters. With the effective convergence of government organizations and private MSMEs, Tarlac will eventually be able to establish itself in the global market.

PBBM LAUNCHES KADIWA IN BATAAN

By: Teresita E. Magtanong



Limay, Bataan - President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. led the launching of the “Kadiwa ng Pangulo” and the distribution of government assistance on March 31, 2023 in Limay, Bataan.

Kadiwa's goal is to deliver agricultural products and other basic commodities directly to consumers in order to further increase the income of farmers and provide cheaper products compared to the market price.

“Ang konseptong ito, ang ginagawa natin ay pinag-uugnay natin ang magsasaka mismo hanggang sa palengke at ito na iyong palengkeng Kadiwa. Ngayon, lahat ng bagay na binabayaran hindi lang ng magsasaka at ng mga nandito sa palengke halimbawa ang pagtransport, packaging, lahat ng iyan ay tinutulungan ng gobyerno para mabawasan ang presyo ng ating mga bilihan”, PBBM said in his speech.

“The activity was also attended by House Speaker Martin Romualdez, DTI Secretary Fred Pascual, DTI Asec Dominic Tolentino, DTI-3 OIC-RD Brigida T. Pili, DTI-Bataan OIC-PD Eileen E. Ocampo, DTI-Zambales PD Enrique Tacbad, and staff from the DTI Office of the Secretary (OSEC).



>> turn to page 6



>> continued from page 5

Seventy-six (76) small businesses joined the caravan. Twenty-eight (28) of them were assisted by DTI. Some of the products featured in the caravan are bags, fresh mangoes, tuyo or dried fish, buko pie, cashew nuts, coffee, araro cookies, honey, turmeric tea, spicy dilis, squid and other processed food.

After the launch, PBBM also led the distribution of various government assistance to qualified beneficiaries. Key officials from DSWD, DOLE, TESDA, and DTI awarded livelihood packages to the recipients.

DTI Secretary Pascual led the sharing of financial assistance for small businesses mostly in food processing under the Resilient, Innovative, and Sustainable Enterprises Unleash your Powers (RISE-UP) Multipurpose Loan Program of the Small Business Corporation (SBCorp), the financing arm of DTI. Secretary Pascual distributed loan checks amounting to PHP10.9 million to forty-four (44) beneficiaries. RISE UP Program is a loan program that aims to sustain the gains of MSMEs that have survived the past two years of crisis, by providing multi-purpose loans that have soft terms and can be easily accessed.



EMPOWERING CONSUMERS THROUGH CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITIONS

MARCH 15



DTI - 3 RET monitors Mandatory Products

By: RO3-Consumer Protection Division

The DTI3 Regional Enforcement Team (RET) conducted a regionwide monitoring and enforcement on mandatory products in the month of March 2023.

A total of fifty-five (55) establishments and hardware stores have been monitored among ten (10) municipalities and five (5) cities of Central Luzon.

During the monitoring, the RET issued one (1) notice of violation to an establishment for manufacturing and selling of fire extinguishers without the required Philippine Standard (PS) in violation of the Standardization Law. Consequently, the RET sealed and confiscated the uncertified products during the enforcement activity, and eventually destroyed the same after the establishment has been administratively charged and finally penalized.



On the other hand, RET also reported that other establishments monitored are found to be compliant as to PS and ICC marking requirements.

Reports also showed that five hundred seventy-seven (577) products were covered during the monitoring which includes deformed steel bars, angle bars, cement, steel and plastic pipes, lighting and electrical products, household appliances, break fluid, ceramic tiles, and sanitary wares.

DTI Tarlac holds Diskwento Caravan in support of the World Consumer Rights Day

By: Mary Ann Estacio

The Department of Trade and Industry - Tarlac invited retailers in the province to join the In-Store Diskwento Caravan on March 15-17, 2023. The activity was initiated in observance of the World Consumer Rights Day which was globally celebrated on March 15, 2023.

While the event promotes upholding consumer rights, DTI also aligns programs in the advocacy of consumer welfare and protection. This year's theme is "Empowering Consumers through Clean Energy Transitions." It focuses on the consumer's shift to clean energy and at the same time, ensuring the availability of clean energy sources.

>> turn to page 8

>> continued from page 7

“The DTI’s Diskwento Caravan aims to offer consumer products at discounted prices that customers may take advantage of,” DTI Tarlac Division Chief Florencia Balilo said.

“Several retailers and hardware stores including DTI Bagwis Awardees took part in the in-store Diskwento Caravan. Bagwis Awardees are those establishments that promote and support consumer rights while observing ethical business practices,” she said.

DTI aims to extend the availability of discounted product prices to various municipalities in the province. Among the participating establishments were Wilcon, Judea Electrical Products, Puregold, Abenson, 1st Megasaver, BHF 3B & A, and Capas Fortune Hardware.



Other activities held in recognition of the World Consumer Rights Day were price monitoring of basic necessities and prime commodities, monitoring of products under mandatory certification, conduct of Consumer Awareness and Responsiveness Education Seminar (CARES), and distribution of consumer information materials.

DTI-BULACAN CONDUCTS WEBINAR ON CLEAN ENERGY TO CELEBRATE WORLD CONSUMER RIGHTS DAY

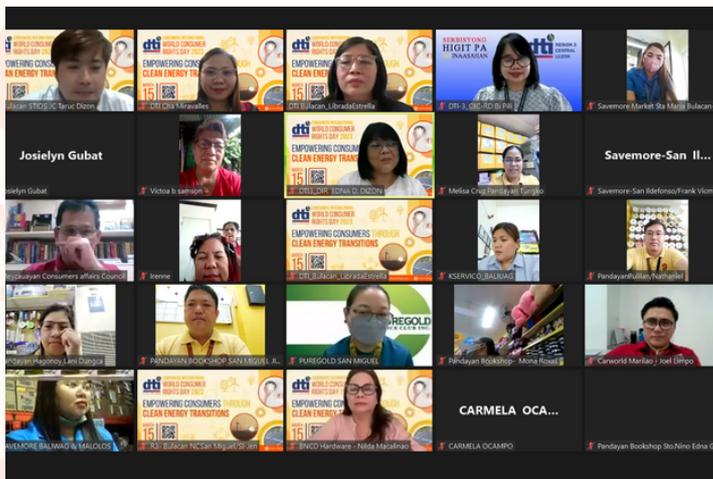
By: John Crist T. Dizon

In celebration of the World Consumer Rights day, DTI-Bulacan, thru its Consumer Protection Division (CPD) conducted a webinar for the Bagwis Awardees and Consumer Organizations last March 15, 2023. DTI R3 OIC RD Brigida T. Pili and OIC ARD Edna D. Dizon, graced the occasion and in their messages, they stressed the importance of understanding rights and responsibilities of consumers.

The webinar focused on the discourse of Handling Consumer Complaints in Business Establishments, lectures on Consumer Empowerment in Clean Energy Transitions and Philippine Renewable Energy. It was attended by 53 participants across the province.

In addition, DTI-Bulacan presented the organization and operationalization of the Bulacan Bagwis Circle. This aims to boost the cooperation and commitment of DTI certified establishments in the implementation of Bagwis program by policing member establishments to build harmonious relationship and linkages among the members. Said move provides strategy to promote Public-Private-Partnership towards consumer welfare and protection.

As the celebration comes to its end, DTI Bulacan also facilitated the awarding of the Gold Bagwis Seal to Savemore Supermarket (Primark) in Plaridel, Bulacan and conferred the certificate of recognition to Pulilan’s People Council as a recognized Consumer Organization (CO) in Region III.



DTI-3 ASSOCS UNDERGO WRITESHOP AND SOCMED MANAGEMENT TRAININGS

By: Nerson Ray F. Romero

A three-day writeshop and one-day social media management cum crisis communication training for select DTI-3 associates were conducted in Ephatha Development Center, Maimpis, City of San Fernando last May 8-10 and 30, respectively.

The writeshop aims to enhance the participants' skills in news and feature writing while the social media management training seeks to capacitate the associates in handling their unit's social media accounts. In addition, the participants were also trained in crisis communication management.

The trainings were facilitated by the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) Gitnang Luzon. PIA-3 Assistant Regional Director Carlo Lorenzo J. Datu, Pampanga Provincial Manager Marie Joy S. Carbungco, and Information Officer Trixie Joy Manalili served as resource persons for the activities.

As part of the activity, the participants were required to present an output applying what they have learned during the training. They were tasked to write news and feature articles, make social media cards, present a sample mobile journalism video, and simulate a press conference.



DTI-3 associates join PIA-3 ARD Carlo Lorenzo Datu (3rd fr L - seated) and Pampanga Provincial Manager Marie Joy Carbungco (4th fr L - seated) during the writeshop training at SACOP, Maimpis, CSFP on March 8-10, 2023



A group of participants simulating a press conference as output for the crisis communication management training.



PIA-3 ARD Carlo Lorenzo Datu lecturing about news writing



DTI-3 associates conceptualizing their mobile journalism output.



PIA-3 Pampanga Prov. Manager Marie Joy Carbungco discussing about feature writing

DTI CONDUCTS FORUM WITH MSMES IN THE BAMBOO INDUSTRY

By: Honeylen Marie P. Fernando



The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), in partnership with Nueva Ecija Small and Medium Enterprise Development Council (NESMEDC) and Nueva Ecija Bamboo Industry Development Council (NEBIDC), held a forum with MSMEs in the bamboo industry on January 20, 2023, at NEUST Campus in Gabaldon.

The Micro Small and Medium Enterprise Development Council, (MSMEDC), and the Bamboo Industry Development Council (BIDC) met in Nueva Ecija to discuss upcoming projects and programs that they could work on together for the benefit of the industry. The meeting also aims to expand the cooperation between private businesses and government agencies for the growth of numerous industries in the province, including weaving.

DTI Provincial Director Richard Simangan claims that the aforementioned industry is poised for many more developments, one of which is the desire to raise public awareness for its local production.

DTI continuously work with cooperatives especially those that could assist in the development of the bamboo and weaving industry in terms production, training, and market research. Some of the successful partnerships with DTI are the group of women in General Tinio, the Papaya Kababaihan Sinag Tala or PAKASITA who are providing skills to those who are just starting out in business. There is also Bambuhay from Carranglan which actively supports the propagation of bamboo and is providing nursery for those who are interested to forge partnership with them. In terms of the skills in weaving, some of the experts in Nueva Ecija in this particular industry are found in the towns of Bongabon, Carranglan, Gabaldon, General Tinio, and Llanera.

The NESMEDC, NEBIDC and DTI hope to further strengthen the bamboo and weaving industries in the province by attracting additional bamboo producers or cooperators that could assist weavers by identifying possible markets.



BULACAN TO HOUSE LARGEST GREENHOUSE FACILITY IN THE COUNTRY

By: Maria Cristina V. Valenzuela

Metro Pacific Agro Ventures, the agribusiness subsidiary of Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC) in partnership with Israel-based LR Group will be investing in a vegetable greenhouse complex on a 22-hectare lot in San Rafael, Bulacan. According to Metro Pacific Fresh Farms (MPFF), its greenhouse operation will be the biggest in the nation.

The facility would be able to offer 1,600 metric tons of vegetables a year, Metro Pacific Agro Ventures President and Chief Executive Officer Jovy I. Hernandez stated during the groundbreaking ceremony last February 20, 2023. The 7 hectares of the site will be used for two greenhouses, with the other 15 hectares being used for the irrigation centers, logistics warehouse, packing facility, and energy facilities.

A one-hectare greenhouse will be utilized for nutrient film technique hydroponics, and the other 6 hectares will be used for the drip irrigation system. These cutting-edge facilities will provide year-round production. Outputs are expected every 27 days while using 90% less water, 90% less land, and 90-99% less fertilizer and pesticides. With an expected investment of P800 to P1 billion, it will cover the full vegetable value chain, including the production of vegetable seedlings, vegetable growing, sorting, packaging, and marketing.



From right, seated: Founder and Chairman of LR Group Ami Lustig, Metro Pacific Investment Corp.'s Chairman, President, and CEO Manuel V. Pangilinan, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Israel to the Republic of the Philippines His Excellency Ilan Fluss; standing: PLDT officer, Asec. Leonila Baluyut and OIC-ARD and concurrent Provincial Director Edna Dizon.

MPFF will supply farm-to-fork produce to Metro Manila and the surrounding provinces. Even with this infrastructure, just a small portion of the Metro Manila vegetable market can be served, according to Mr. Hernandez.

The initiative, according to Manny V. Pangilinan, chairman, president, and chief executive officer of MPIC, promotes the government's goal of food security. An independent Philippines in terms of agriculture is the goal of these investments, he claimed. "We want to help build a nation that's capable of feeding all of its people."



Ms. Jerahmeel Grace Afan of NC Arayat conducting business opportunities seminar to Arayat PDLs

BJMP Arayat, DTI - Pampanga provide Business and Livelihood Training to PDLs

By: Jerahmeel Grace P. Afan

The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) Arayat in Pampanga has partnered with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to provide business and livelihood training to Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL). The initiative aims to help prepare the PDLs for their eventual reintegration into society by providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge to start their own businesses and become self-sufficient.

Jail Officer 1 Manolet Caranto, welfare and development officer of BJMP Arayat, approached the business counselor of Negosyo Center (NC) Arayat, Grace Afan, to discuss the possible partnership between BJMP and DTI. It was agreed that NC Arayat will conduct business opportunity seminars and other relevant seminars for the PDLs who are set to be released soon. The seminars will help the PDLs gain confidence and equip themselves with the necessary skills to start their own businesses and become financially independent.

The first run of the seminar was held last February 7, 2023, at the BJMP Arayat compound. Business Counselor Grace conducted a business opportunity seminar for 17 PDLs and other jail officers and OJTs.

Negosyo Center Arayat and BJMP Arayat also plan to partner with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) to provide skills training for the PDLs. The partnership aims to make the initiative more holistic. Financial literacy will also be incorporated in the seminar line-up.

The BJMP Arayat believes that these intervention programs are necessary to help the PDLs in their personality development through skills and livelihood training, education enhancement, and spiritual nourishment. The programs are also designed to promote the welfare of marginalized people in the society.

Moving forward, the BJMP Arayat, DTI, and TESDA will continue to work together to ensure the preparedness of the PDLs for their reintegration into the society. The partnership is a testament to the government's commitment to provide support and assistance to those who need it most.

DTI OPENS OTOP HUB IN SUBIC FREEPORT



By: DTI Zambales
Reia Pabelonia / PIA-3

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) opened a One Town One Product (OTOP) Hub in Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

Located at the 2nd Floor of Ayala Malls Harbor Point, it is a retail one-stop shop that provides opportunity to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to promote and sell their products.

In her message, the then DTI Assistant Regional Director and now OIC-RD Brigida Pili said this is one of the agency's marketing strategies in helping MSMEs bounce back after the pandemic.

The OTOP Hub in Subic is the fifth in Central Luzon. Similar facilities were opened in Bulacan, Aurora, Tarlac and Pampanga.

It features mango-based products, bamboo-based products, bags, food, arts and crafts, and other products of Zambales MSMEs.

For his part, DTI Zambales Provincial Director Enrique Tacbad thanked all participating MSMEs and stakeholders for making the event a success.

"We are lucky in Zambales, we have Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority. We are lucky because we have a good tourism destination," Tacbad said.

"We are now ready to cater to the public our locally made products," he added.





NC BC Maria Liezelle Perez (seated 3rd from left), BPLO/LEIPO Jammie Eloisa Amazona (seated in the middle) and CPD Head Pacita Bandilla (seated 3rd from right) pose with participants in a photo opportunity during the Financial Technology Seminar on March 16, 2023 in Dingalan, Aurora.

DTI AURORA URGES MSMES TO ADOPT FINANCIAL TECH

By: Maria Liezelle P. Perez

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) – Aurora Provincial Office, in collaboration with the local government of Dingalan, urged Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to go digital during a financial technology seminar held on March 16, 2023 at Maedup Hall and PAGCOR Building in Poblacion and Ibona.

The seminar was part of a month-long celebration of Araw ng mga Negosyante in Dingalan with the theme, "Negosyong Progresibo: Agresibo sa Kaalaman, Positibo sa Kaunlaran, Asset 'yan ng Bayan!".

It aims to guide and educate MSMEs in Dingalan about the importance of becoming digital financial literate and encourage them to go digital and use online financial platforms in their day-to-day business operation.

"Financial Technology may appear intimidating, but if you could register a load to your mobile number using Gcash, pay your bills in 7-11, check your savings deposit online, or scan a QR code to send money, you already used fintech



BC Maria Liezelle Perez teaches Financial Technology to MSMEs on a seminar during the 7th year Araw ng mga Negosyante held on March 16, 2023 in Dingalan, Aurora.

It changes our way of life and makes us reinvent how we behave towards money," Negosyo Center (NC) Dingalan Business Counselor (BC) Maria Liezelle Perez said.

Aside from Financial Technology, DTI Aurora Consumer Protection Division (CPD) Head Pacita Bandilla discussed handling consumer complaints in the business establishment to equip business owners to deal with customers.

The one-day seminar was held in two sessions, each with 50 existing and potential MSMEs.



DTI - NE MSMES JOIN TINAPA FESTIVAL

By: Debbyriza T. Hidalgo

The Municipality of San Leonardo in Nueva Ecija celebrated the first Tinapa Festival in the region on February 19, 2023.

The festivities started with a parade where locals marched on the streets dressed in tinapa-inspired costumes. A cooking competition followed where participants prepared delicious tinapa dishes such as sisig, shanghai, ginataang bangus tinapa, and the winning dish ginataang laing with tinapa.

DTI-3 has assisted tinapa producers in this town through the Shared Service Facilities (SSF) program.

“Our barangay is known for our Tinapa and it is through this business that many families here were able to sustain their daily needs, particularly during the pandemic. The SSF given to us by the DTI gave us the inspiration to continue improving our product and innovate,” SSF beneficiary Mary Ann Sagum said.

In addition, through DTI’s One Town One Product (OTOP) Program, the packaging and product presentation created a safe and cleaner impression on tinapa products.



Vacuum-sealed smoked fish products were made more competitive with their improved packaging and label through the DTI-SSF and OTOP. The usual tinapa sold alongside the national highway of Nueva Ecija is now frequently exhibited at DTI local Trade Fairs. It can also be brought abroad as “pasalubong” without worrying about its smoky smell and spoilage.

Another highlight of the festival is the ceremonial awarding of the Best SSF in Nueva Ecija for LGU of San Leonardo, with the presence of Mayor Froilan Nagaño of San Leonardo and Dr. Richard V. Simangan, Provincial Director of DTI Nueva Ecija.

DTI PARTNERS WITH SOMAGO E-COMMERCE PLATFORM

By: Carla S. Cunanan-Pangan

📷 Maria Cristina Valenzuela / DTI Bulacan

The Department of Trade and Industry Region III partnered with Somago Philippines, a locally-based online shopping platform, to support MSMEs in expanding their market reach through e-commerce.

In a meeting with the DTI Regional Operations Group and DTI Region III, Somago Philippines committed to help OTOP-assisted MSMEs gain wider market access through various marketing tools offered in their online platform.

“Our intention is to educate, support and assist MSMEs in doing and embracing e-commerce as a means to expand their market locally and even abroad”, said Ting Zhou, CEO of Somago Philippines.

An OTOP online marketplace dedicated for selling OTOP products was also established on the Somago online platform.

Undersecretary for Regional Operations Group Blesila Lantayona said that the partnership was a welcome initiative for DTI. “DTI conducted various e-commerce initiatives to capacitate and support micro enterprises. However, at present, doing end-to-end e-commerce process remains to be a challenge for local MSMEs, especially in terms of the logistics and payment process”, USEC Lantayona said.



SOMAGO CEO Ting Zhou, DTI ROG Usec Blesila Lantayona, DTI-3 RD Leonila T. Baluyut and other Somago officials and DTI associates during the E-com Park site visit in Marilao, Bulacan.



DTI-ROG Usec Blesila Lantayona (4th from left), DTI-3 RD now Asec Leonila T. Baluyut (3rd from left), PEUA President Mr. Ting Zhou (2nd right) and Ms. Jaquelyn Castro (extreme right), the General Manager during the onsite visit to PEUA in Marilao, Bulacan on January 10, 2023

An initial orientation and onboarding session on Somago Online Platform was conducted on January 15, 2023 for Bulacan and Pampanga MSMEs. During the activity, Somago presented the services they offer to MSMEs for free, including content creation, product photo shoots, and product promotion through social media influencers. Security Bank, Somago’s partner bank, also discussed the different financial services offered to MSMEs under the platform. A similar activity was also conducted to MSMEs from the rest of the provinces in the region on March 10, 2023.

As of March 30, 2023, 43 Central Luzon MSMEs have onboarded with Somago. These MSMEs have product photos posted on the Somago online shopping platform and have already started selling online.



SOMAGO CEO Mr. Ting Zhou (in red) with DTI-RO3 OIC-RD Brigida T. Pili (5th front L) and DTI Bulacan PD/OIC-ARD Edna Dizon (6th front L) together with some of the MSME attendees on January 25, 2023

DTI LAUNCHES COMMUNITY PLASTIC STATION PROJECT IN BALIWAG



By: Lota M. Yasa

DTI-Bulacan launched a Shared Service Facility (SSF) project at the Central Kalikasan Center in Tarcan, Baliwag City on March 23, 2023.

The project is intended to be a community-based plastic waste resource sorting, shredding and processing facility to complement Baliwag LGU's Material Recovery Facility for materials that can be recycled or upcycled into new products. This will provide a community plastic station eco-cast processing that will produce casts and grasscretres from the shredded plastic wastes.

The launching was graced by special guests headed by Senator Joel Villanueva, DTI Asst. Secretary of the Regional Operations Group Leonila Baluyut, Green Antz Builders COO Enrique Llagas, BCCI Trustee Ms. Ofelia Mangulabnan, DTI OIC- Regional Director Brigida Pili, and Baliwag City Mayor Ferdinand Estrella.

DTI's SSF program aims to address the gaps and bottlenecks in the value chain of priority industry clusters. It is one of the major programs of the department that envisions to graduate micro and small enterprises (MSMEs) to the next level by improving their productivity and competitiveness through the provision of machineries and equipment.



DTI Asec. Leonila Baluyut stated that the project is the 3,497th SSF in the country. "The launching is just the beginning for DTI will be providing several capacity building programs to strengthen and capacitate the cooperator. The bottomline objective is to earn profit for we want to increase economic activity through the assistance of micro enterprises," Asec. Baluyut said.

Baliwag City Mayor Ferdinand Estrella thanked the initiative's supporters and also pledged to use the hollow blocks produced by the project in the construction of the bypass marker so that it will have a story -- the hollow blocks infused with plastic wastes.

Mr. Joven Guevarra, chairperson of Baliwag Green Producers Cooperative pointed out the uniqueness of their cooperative which is focused in the recycling of wastes. He said that the project will benefit both the residents of Baliwag and the environment. The goal of sustainable development is to create a better and more secure future for everyone without compromising the environment for future generations.

DTI TARLAC CONDUCTS FREE SEMINARS IN LINE WITH THE WOMEN'S MONTH CELEBRATION

By: Grace S. Lugtu

The Department of Trade and Industry Tarlac Provincial Office in partnership with SM City Tarlac joined the celebration of Women's Month through the conduct of seminars.

Entrepreneurial Mind-setting Seminar and Business Opportunity Seminar on Handicrafts, Home Furnishings, Processed Food, and Agri-business were conducted on March 15, 2023 at SM City Tarlac. They were participated by a total of 80 students, employees, potential entrepreneurs, and MSMEs.

Seven women entrepreneurs from Tarlac were invited to share their insights on business opportunities as well as their entrepreneurial journey.



"We hope that this activity and the sharing of the resource speakers have inspired the participants to become entrepreneurs. We feel that they (speakers) represent most of the would-be and existing MSMEs," Senior Trade-Industry Development Specialist Ana Marie Tabamo said.

After the talk and open forum, the participants shared their favorite learnings from the seminar.

Tarlac opens Pasalubong Center at Magic Star Mall

By: Grace S. Lugtu and Ana Marie S. Tabamo

Another home for Tarlac products was opened on March 25, 2023, at Magic Star Mall, Tarlac City.

17 Tarlac Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) pooled their resources together to establish the pasalubong center. In support of this initiative, DTI Tarlac took charge of the store set-up and promotion.

DTI Tarlac OIC Provincial Director Zaida F. Garibay praised these MSMEs for taking the challenge of operating another pasalubong shop.

"We are very much impressed with how empowered our entrepreneurs have become," Garibay said.



She also acknowledged the mall management for being accommodating to the different MSME-related projects of DTI Tarlac.

"We are grateful that Magic Star Mall offered a strategic location for the MSMEs to showcase their products," she said.

The pasalubong center is located at the basement level near Magic Star Supermarket. It features food products such as snacks, condiments and spices, baked products, and delicacies. It also offers non-food products like gift items, fashion accessories, footwear, furniture, and home furnishings.

DTI-3 CELEBRATES WOMEN'S MONTH

DTI-3 CONDUCTS WEBINARS, INFO SESSIONS FOR WOMEN

By: Jose Antonio F. Toledo IV

In giving due recognition to women-led MSMEs, DTI3 thru the SME Development Division conducted several webinars and information sessions to spur awareness on Gender Equality and Development.

To provide a backdrop on the importance of women in the field of business, a virtual seminar entitled, "Balancing Family and Business" was held on March 22, 2023. It was attended by 55 MSME and DTI3 participants from all over the region. It emphasizes on the need to have work/business-life balance to support a healthy and productive family life. Mr. Reiner Gorospe, DSWD Information Officer talked on the strategies and tips on how to achieve the "elusive" equilibrium between family and business.



Atty. Coco Chanel Garcia, Legal Officer of DTI-3, talked about the salient points of Republic Act No. 9710, otherwise known as the Magna Carta of Women. Trade-Industry Development Specialist Abigail Calilung, for her part, discussed the eight (8) Basic Rights and five (5) Responsibilities of Consumers.

To cap the celebration of National Women's Month, online learning session in savings, debt management and digital payment was conducted by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

These relevant activities reaffirm DTI3's commitment in advancing the rights and opportunities for women-led or owned MSMEs and at the same time recognize their valuable contribution to the economy and society.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS HIGHLIGHT LIKHA NG BATAEÑO TRADE FAIR

By: Cindy M. Jaime
Teresita S. Magtanong



The Likha ng Bataeño Trade Fair was conducted on March 10-14, 2023 at the Vista Mall, Balanga City, Bataan. The event was held in celebration of Women's Month.

City Councilor Joey Nisay-Zabala, DTI Bataan OIC-Provincial Director Eileen E. Ocampo, Division Chief Ma. Concepcion B. Sanico, representatives from Vista Mall, and the Business Development Division team graced the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The successful 5-day trade fair generated total sales of P 454,009.00 with 33 local exhibitors consisting of 9 non-food manufacturers and 24 food processors.

The participants were so grateful as evidenced from the CSF rating and feedback. According to Ms. Lea Tolentino of Leaj Food Products', "I am very satisfied of DTI staff assistance for their concern and kindness. They always invite us to join trade fair to promote our products."

DTI PAMPANGA, HAU TEAM UP FOR PAMIADWANGAN EVENT

By: Darby Raul L. Bognot



The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Pampanga has recently partnered with Holy Angel University's School of Business Administration to organize a large event at the campus premises. The event is dubbed "Pamiadwangan", a Kapampangan term which means "collaboration". The event aims to promote local entrepreneurship.

Last March 29, 2023, an initial planning session was conducted with the students to discuss the event's details and scope. As part of the partnership, three sections of the project management class from Holy Angel University's School of Business Administration will be assisting DTI Pampanga in organizing the event come April 17-18, 2023.

The Pamiadwangan event will consist of three main components. The Lugud Trade Fair, which will feature 18 local entrepreneurs showcasing their products and services, will be held at the event. The Trends and Updates seminar will also be conducted to provide small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with the latest industry trends and updates for 2023.

Finally, the launching of the three coffee table books created by the DTI Pampanga team during the pandemic will be held.

The primary objective of this partnership is to expose the students of Holy Angel University to the event organization of DTI Pampanga, providing them with a practical experience that will help them develop their skills and knowledge in the field of project management. Furthermore, this partnership is expected to promote and support local entrepreneurship, ultimately contributing to the growth and development of the local economy.

Overall, the Pamiadwangan event is expected to be a significant collaboration between DTI Pampanga and Holy Angel University, promoting local entrepreneurship and empowering the students of the School of Business Administration through practical, hands-on experience. The event is also anticipated to be a success in boosting the local economy and supporting SMEs.

DTI-3, PGA-IPO PUSH COMPETITIVENESS REORIENTATION FOR LGUS

By: Judelyn L. Peneyra

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) – Aurora Provincial Office and Provincial Government of Aurora – Investment Promotions Office (PGA-IPO) conducted a Reorientation Meeting for Local Government Units (LGUs) on the Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Index (CMCI) held at the PGA Conference Room, Capitol Building in Suklayin on March 24.

The activity aims to continuously improve local and provincial competitiveness rankings and increase intervention among local government offices to gather the most relevant data according to different pillars and indicators of CMCI.

“We want other LGU offices to be involved because data for various CMCI indicators does not come solely from the Business Permits and Licensing Office (BPLO) and the Local Economic Investment and Promotions Office (LEIPO),” DTI Aurora Provincial Director Aldrin Veneracion said.

Most of the essential information during data gathering shall be provided by other offices such as the Municipal Planning and Development Office (MPDO), Municipal Engineering Office (MEO), Municipal Health Office (MHO), Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office (MDRRMO), Municipal Tourism Office (MTO), and others,” he added.

Meanwhile, Provincial Planning and Development Coordinator (PPDC) Armida Palispis commended each LGU's contribution to the province's competitiveness .



Provincial Administrator/Provincial Agriculturist Arnold Novicio encourages each LGU to continually improve its competitiveness ranking to attract more investors.



DTI Region 3 Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Index (CMCI) Focal Person Barry Bernabe Pangilinan discusses data on the CMCI portal

“The scores of each LGU in different indicators of CMCI may complement one another, increasing the province's overall score,” Palispis explained.

Provincial Administrator and Provincial Agriculturist Arnold Novicio has attended on behalf of Governor Christian Noveras. “I was amazed by our provincial ranking's 27-notch jump from 45th to 18th on the recent CMCI data. With the strong collaboration of DTI and IPO, I am optimistic that we will be able to improve our ranking even further,” Novicio said.

Moreover, investments and promotions concerns were highlighted during the meeting. Provincial Investment and Promotions Officer (PIPO) Cecilia Marino encouraged LEIPOs to prepare and submit business offers and a database of locations ready for occupancy that could be presented to future investors. Localization of CMCI awarding was also proposed to recognize the most improved LGUs and motivate them to strive for more.

DTI-3 Regional CMCI Focal Person Barry Bernabe Pangilinan facilitated the orientation and addressed data gathering and validation concerns.



DTI-Aurora PD Aldrin Veneracion addresses some issues during the CMCI Reorientation Meeting.



CENTRAL LUZON OTO PRODUCTS AT THE PHILIPPINE SENATE

By: Carla S. Cunanan-Pangan

Central Luzon OTO products were featured during the OTO PH Showcase at the Senate of the Philippines, Pasay City on March 6-9, 2023. The showcase was conducted in support for the approval of the Senate Bill No. 1594 or the OTO Philippines Act of 2022.

Among the products that were showcased were Bottled Bagoong from Amanda's Marine Products, Pastillas de Leche from Aling Ilah's Sweets and Delicacies, Pinya Silk Barong from LJRM Enterprises, and Geo Wall Clock from Woodinspirations Crafts.

Boxes of Bambuhay Plantable Bamboo Toothbrush were also included as part of the OTO Souvenir Bags presented to the 24 senators. These bags served as product reference materials in the deliberations for the OTO Bill.



An additional ad hoc selling activity was also arranged by the Office of Sen. Mark Villar. Total sales generated for OTO Central Luzon products during the selling activity amounted to P11,960.00

Sponsored by the Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship, together with the Committees on Local Government, and Finance, the OTO Bill aims to institutionalize the OTO program as one of the government's stimulus programs for micro, small and medium-scale enterprises (MSMEs) to drive inclusive local economic growth.

The bill was approved on 3rd Reading by the Senate of the 19th Congress of the Philippines with 22 votes on March 20, 2023.

DTI-3 JOINS PIA-3 KAPIHAN NG MAMAMAYAN

By: Nerson Ray F. Romero

DTI Central Luzon joined the Philippine Information Agency Region 3 in the latter's Kapihan ng Mamamayan at SM Pampanga, Mexico on March 24, 2023.

The activity, entitled #ExplanExplainExplain Kapihan ng Mamamayan: (KnM): Pulong-Tulong sa Kaunlaran is a community engagement communication program, where programs, projects, and services of government agencies are presented directly to the people.

The forum was attended by at least 100 female community leaders from Mexico town.

DTI-3 Regional Information Officer Nerson Romero presented the agency's programs and other projects such as Negosyo Centers, Business Name registration, Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa, Livelihood Seeding Program-Negosyo Serbisyo sa Barangay, Shared Service Facilities, and the Kapatid Mentor Micro-Entrepreneur Program.



DTI-3 Information Officer Nerson Romero presents the agency's programs during the PIA-3 Kapihan ng Mamamayan at SM Pampanga on March 24, 2023



PIA Deputy Director-General Karl Louie Fajardo stated that KnM gives the public the chance to know the government better, including its systems and processes, and take advantage of the different opportunities available to them.

"Bringing the services nearer to the people will allow them to know that the government cares, and that it has available programs for their advantage," Fajardo said.

A booth for business counseling and other DTI services was also set-up during the event. Trade-Industry Development Analyst Marlon P. Apostol Jr. and Business Counselor Chris Lean Tungol manned the booth and provided assistance to clients.



DTI-3 Information Officer Nerson Romero (standing) together with TIDA Marlon Apostol (seated left) and BC Chris Lean Tungol (seated right) manning the DTI booth

DTI3 CARES MPC DECLARES DIVIDENDS TO MEMBERS

By: DTI3 CARES MPC

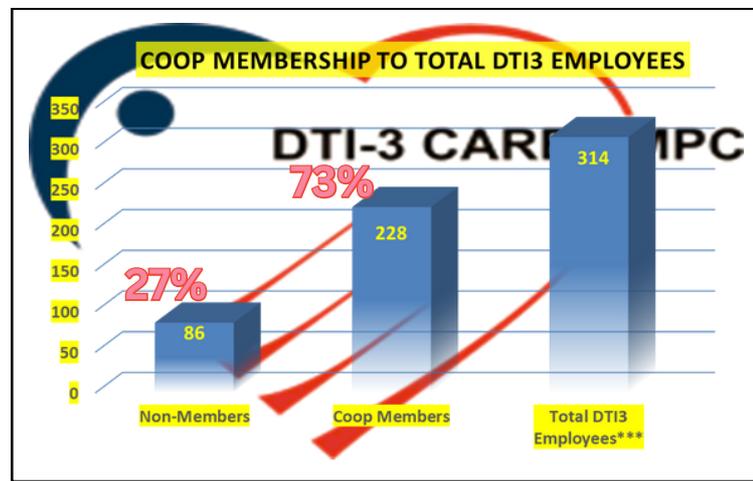
During the February 15, 2023 meeting of the DTI3 CARES MPC, the Board of Directors (BODs) declared the distribution of dividends to its member amounting to 75% of its net income for 2022. The dividend declared is distributed at 60% capital contribution and 40% patronage refund.

The DTI3 CARES MPC is now categorized as a medium-sized cooperative with assets amounting to more than P28M as of December 2022. Total dividend distributed amounted to P1.48M, which is 75% of the total income for 2022.

Membership to the cooperative include all associates working at DTI Region 3 whether they are regular and contractual employees of DTI or those under Job Order or Contract of Service status including third-party service providers like the security personnel of the office. As of February 2023, total cooperative members are at 228.

The Annual Cooperative General Assembly was also held on March 24, 2023 via Zoom platform. The GA was participated by 225 members or 98.68% attendance. The first part of the assembly was the Financial Management Webinar facilitated by Ms. Jasmin P. Barroga of the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA). Financial Management is a mandatory seminar for all cooperatives engaged in credit and savings activity. The Chairman of the Board, Richard V. Simangan, gave the State of the Cooperative Report to all members.

Aside from the provision of the dividends, which was distributed early part of March, the most awaited part of the assembly was the raffle draw, where all attendees received cash



prizes. Additional cash prizes and a microwave oven were some of the major prizes given away to lucky cooperative members.

The last part of the assembly was the awarding of certificate of appreciation to outgoing board of directors and committee members and the oath-taking of newly elected board of directors. The oath of office was led by OIC-RD Brigida T. Pili of DTI Region 3.

The board of directors who were elected and who will be serving for 2 years are from the Regional Office, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga and Zambales Provincial Offices. The new set of Election and Audit Committee members were likewise elected. The other BODs who will continue for another year of service are from Aurora, Bataan and Tarlac Provincial Offices and the Regional Office.

Result of the election is as follows:

Board of Directors	
Bulacan	Lota M. Yasa
Nueva Ecija	Debby Riza T. Hidalgo
Pampanga	Darby Raul L. Bognot
Zambales	Enrique D. Tacbad
Regional Office	Rowena S. Miranda
Election Committee	Audit Committee
Jan Ricardo I. Pilarca	Ma. Providencia P. Dizon
Joseph D. Pineda	Sofia Sandra P. Cruz
Evangeline S. Bulda	Riza Lina V. Dayrit

Happy Birthday

April

Aldrin M. Veneracion
Ma. Charisse R. Miravalles
Sofia Sandra P. Cruz-Sanchez
Jemima Joy V. David
Lunabelle A. Sison
Filipina M. Mon
Marilou C. Arcega
Nerson Ray F. Romero
Elizabeth Cruz
Jonah Fortin
Erwin Dalusong
Alfredo Marchan

May

Lealyn May B. Ramos
Marissa D. Dela Cruz
Cindy M. Jaime
Flora M. Cruz
Ricamari S. Juangco
Ronan B. Rosete
Eugene L. Lazatin
Rowena S. Miranda
Rayciel V. Regalado
Jesusito D. Maregmen Jr.
May Ann A. Bermas
May Joy G. Policarpio
Irha Joyce C. Aquino
Lyka Marie Z. Viola
Jay-Ar S. Manansala
Mae G. Jacob
Ana Angeilica E. Valdez
Jonathan Mark G. Dagdag
Denise Ayshin M. Fajardo
Ruth Christel Ann G. Canlas
Krizia Ann O. Dela Cruz
Ranjee T. Mañalac
Richard C. Ramos
Ma. Jesalyn M. Buccat
Aldrey C. Pinlac
Eddie Boy M. Cruz

June

Marisol G. Bunoy
Marilou A. Santos
Darwin P. Manumbali
Janyne A. Luna
Araceli Isabel P. Lising
Jan Ricardo I. Pilarca
Norlito L. Tiglao
Charrisse M. Montoya
Riza Lina V. Dayrit
Maria Teresa R. Bondoc
Oliver Allan Macalandong Y.
Mark Anthony P. Soriano
Lyra Mae J. Cuento
Jumarie F. Bruno
Danilo F. Aquino III
Mharjet Coleen P. Giron
Francis John Phillip C. Cruz
Queency C. Tumolva
Precious Anne G. Sunga
Arcelie D. Watiwat

Congratulations! - newly promoted associates

Coco Chanel G. Garcia

Chief Trade-Industry Development Specialist - DTI Bulacan Office

Neil John M. Fabay

Senior Trade-Industry Development Specialist - DTI - Zambales Office

Ma. Charisse R. Miravalles

Trade-Industry Development Specialist - DTI - Bulacan Office



**Turnover Ceremony of DTI-3 Directorship cum Send-off for Asec Leonila T. Baluyut
March 27, 2023 - DTI-3 Regional Office Conference Room**



CONGRATULATIONS!

Assistant Secretary
LEONILA TARUC- BALUYUT

Newly-appointed
Assistant Secretary
of the Department of
Trade and Industry

We are so
proud of you!

*from your
DTI - 3 family*





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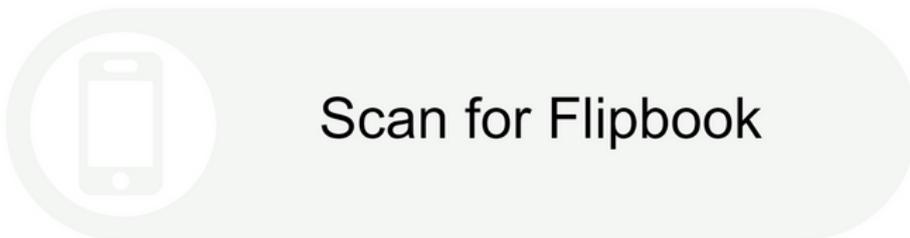
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