

## Sec. Dar inaugurates 3 R4D facilities in Cagayan Valley



Dr. Ricmar Aquino (left), ISU president, and Dr. William Dar (right), agriculture secretary, unveil the facility marker of the Cacao Processing Center. PHOTO: JALAXAMANA

AGRICULTURE Secretary William Dar graced the inauguration of three newly established research for development (R4D) facilities located at the Isabela State University (ISU) on 12 December 2019 in Echague, Isabela.

Funded by the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR), the inaugurated R4D facilities in the Cagayan Valley region were the following: Multi-Purpose Facility in support to Climate Change R&D, Cacao Processing Center, and Artificial Insemination Center for Dairy Cattle.

Also present during the activity were the officials and staff of DA, ISU, and DA-Cagayan Valley led by Dr. William Medrano, DA assistant

secretary for livestock; Dr. Ricmar Aquino, ISU president; and Narciso Edillo, DA-Cagayan Valley regional executive director. Accompanying them were researchers and other national and local staff.

During the event, Secretary Dar emphasized the importance of developing new strategies as well as the importance of academic institutions, such as ISU, in the advancement of innovative researches and discoveries.

To unlock the utmost potential of the sector, Secretary Dar asked the agricultural government agencies to continually support the establishment of facilities that would cater to various research undertakings for the benefit of the bureau's stakeholders.

DA-BAR, through its Research Facility Development Grant (RFDG), supports the establishment and upgrading of agriculture and fisheries R4D facilities, and acquisition of equipment by providing funds and support to its research, development, and extension network members. ###  
*(Jireh Alodia R. Laxamana)*

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# 2019 year-end performance assessment conducted by DA-BAR

TO present the accomplishments and milestones of the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR) for 2019, key officials and staff of the bureau convened for its year-end program assessment on 18 December 2019 in Diliman, Quezon City.

Anthony Obligado, Technology Commercialization Division (TCD) head, delivered the opening remarks on behalf of Dr. Nicomedes Eleazar, DA assistant secretary for special affairs and bureau director.



TCD Head Anthony Obligado delivers the opening remarks on behalf of Dr. Nicomedes Eleazar, DA assistant secretary for special affairs and DA-BAR director. PHOTO: JALAXAMANA

Among the major accomplishments of the bureau include the conduct of its major events such as the 15<sup>th</sup> Agriculture and Fisheries Technology Forum and Product Exhibition alongside the 32<sup>nd</sup> year anniversary of the bureau, the 31<sup>st</sup> National Research Symposium (NRS), and the 4<sup>th</sup> National Community-based Participatory Action Research (CPAR) Congress.

Highlights of the said events include feature presentation of technologies that were developed by the bureau's various partner research for development (R4D) institutions, screening of 188 submitted entries from various researchers and final deliberation of 27 entries, and the participation of more than 300 participants comprised of farmers, fishers, and partner implementers across regions, respectively.

Meanwhile, updates and accomplishments of various programs supported by the bureau were presented by assigned R4D focals: CPAR by Amavel Velasco, Program Monitoring and Evaluation Division (PMED) assistant head; National Technology Commercialization Program by Glenn Dimayuga, TCD

technical staff; and Institutional Development Programs by Engr. Marvin Evangelista, Institutional Development Division (IDD) technical staff, who elaborated the 2019 programs' milestones of IDD, such as the Human Resources Development Program and Research Facilities Development Grant.

Also presented during the assessment were bureau-coordinated R4D programs. The Rice Program was presented by Raymond Patrick Cabrera, Program Development Division (PDD) technical staff; Corn and Cassava Program by Apolonia Mendoza, PMED technical staff; Organic Agriculture Program by Jude Laguna, PDD technical staff; High-value Crops Program by Candice Guilaran, PDD technical staff; and Biotechnology Program by Matthew Janssen Ty, PDD technical staff.

As the lead coordinating agency for agriculture and fishery R4D, DA-BAR persists on ensuring the optimum utilization of research-generated information and technologies toward attaining *"Masaganang Ani at Mataas na Kita."* ### (Jireh Alodia R. Laxamana)



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# DA-BAR joins agribusiness summit



Rodolfo Vicerra, DA undersecretary for policy and planning, presents the situation on the agriculture sector and the guidelines for the 51 industry roadmaps on behalf of Agriculture Secretary William Dar. PHOTOS: CMABAO

TO gather support for the Cabinet Economic Development Cluster, and as part of the push of the Department of Agriculture (DA) for increased agricultural productivity and increased income for farmers, as well as to consult the agriculture sector stakeholders, particularly those from Mindanao, the Department of Finance and DA partnered to conduct the Sulong Pilipinas 2019: Agribusiness Summit on 17 December 2019 in Davao City.

With around 500 participants, the summit was attended by stakeholders in the agribusiness value chain ranging from producers, government offices, non-government organizations, and the private sector. Meanwhile, stakeholders come from prioritized categories and commodities such as poultry and livestock; grains (e.g. corn, rice);

fisheries; coconut; high value crops; infrastructure, technology, and financing for industrialization; and farm consolidation and clustering.

“Policy reforms in agriculture sector should be developed in close collaboration with the stakeholders of the agriculture industry as they are the ones who truly understand the real problems on the ground,” said Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez as he formally welcomed the participants of the summit.

Representing Secretary Dar, DA Undersecretary for Policy and Planning Rodolfo Vicerra underscored the way forward of the agriculture and fisheries sector towards attainment of a food-secure Philippines with prosperous farmers and fishers. Vicerra also presented the accomplishments of the department in each of its eight

paradigms, as well as the updates and guidelines for the 51 industry roadmaps for the agriculture and fisheries sector.

To represent Dr. Nicomedes Eleazar, DA assistant secretary for special affairs and DA-BAR director, Assistant Director Digna Sandoval graced the activity along with select staff, namely, Maria Elena Garces, DA-BAR Technology Commercialization Division (TCD) assistant head; Glenn Dimayuga, DA-BAR TCD technical staff; and Clarisse Mae Abao, DA-BAR Office of the Director executive assistant for communications.

Ensuring that all the actionable recommendations are widely consulted, government offices such as Office of the President, DA regional offices, staff bureaus and attached agencies; the Department

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# UPLB presents project on corn program

To share the results of their project on the corn program, the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) presented the significant findings and highlights of their project to the respective regional corn coordinators of the regional offices of the Department of Agriculture (DA) on 9 December 2019 in Quezon City.

Present during the project presentation were Dr. Lorenzo Caranguian and Dr. Candido Damo of the DA Corn Program; and Apolonia Mendoza, corn focal person of the DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research.

Dr. Dormita del Carmen of UPLB spearheaded the presentation by highlighting the big role of corn in attaining food security and feed sufficiency in the country to alleviate poverty.

Some of the highlights presented by Dr. del Carmen included: 1) the identification of problems and opportunities encountered by regional corn clusters; 2) evaluation of program performance in selected regions through measurement of tangible and intangible indicators of target output and measures of program integrity; and 3) assessment of project impact in terms of the economic, technological, environmental, and social indicators. Further recommendations were also laid out.

Representatives from the DA Corn Program and regional corn coordinators provided further comments and suggestions for the improvement of the project which is set to end this December. ### (Jhon Marvin R. Surio)



Dr. Dormita del Carmen of UPLB gives the participants an overview of the project, as well as the corn cluster program status. PHOTO: JMSURIO



**MUSHROOM R4D AREAS ASSESSED.** Dr. Nicomedes Eleazar (right), Department of Agriculture (DA) assistant secretary for special affairs and DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research director, discusses research for development (R4D) initiatives to Franco Bundese (center), municipal agriculturist of Padre Burgos, Quezon during the monitoring activity at DA-Quezon Agricultural Research and Experiment Station on 5 December 2019. The activity is in line with the directive of Agriculture Secretary William Dar to scope R4D initiatives on oyster, *shiitake*, and button mushroom in the region. PHOTO AND TEXT: JALAXAMANA

# DA-BAR holds annual strat plan, crafts roadmap



Audie Masigan, subject matter expert on strategic planning management CSC-CSI, discusses the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) and SOAR (strengths, opportunities, aspirations, results) analyses. PHOTO: JALAXAMANA

TO reflect collectively whether the vision and mission of the bureau represent the direction and path of the Department of Agriculture (DA) for the next five years, the DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research conducted its Strategic Planning Workshop on 2-3 December 2019 in Clark, Pampanga.

The workshop was attended by key officials and selected staff of the bureau. Audie Masigan, subject matter expert on strategic planning management Civil Service Commission-Civil Service Institute (CSC-CSI), served as resource speaker. Together with Masigan was Agustina Peñalosa, a course coordinator from CSC, who served as the activity's facilitator.

Dr. Nicomedes Eleazar, DA assistant secretary for special affairs and bureau director, highlighted the importance of the activity toward

aligning the bureau's plans and programs to the twin goals of DA, "*Masaganang Ani at Mataas na Kita.*"

"With the strategic plan serving as every organization's roadmap for success, we are looking at a clearly formulated mission and vision as a needed step that would enable our bureau to develop this plan," Dr. Eleazar said.

"With this plan aided by programs of action, all our divisions, units, and program coordinators will be guided accordingly on the implementation process, and in ensuring that all programs are strategically synergized," he added.

Discussion of perceived strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results (SOAR) of the bureau, as well as the analysis of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and

threats (SWOT) were also included. On the other hand, the lead and lag indicators of each division were also discussed, while a pre-test and post-test were given to participants as means of measuring their stock knowledge and understanding of the topics discussed.

"While change and transformation may result and flow from it, the goal of this workshop is to make our work better and map out the very functions and goals of our organization. It is about the bureau's operational performance and effectiveness, and of each of you as individual contributors to it. It is about empowering people to make decisions, setting our targets, and making sure that everyone knows what must be executed by when," Dr. Eleazar emphasized. ### (*Jireh Alodia R. Laxamana*)

# Region 8's YLP bags 2019 reg'l outstanding dev't proj award

THE Yamang Lupa Project (YLP) of the Department of Agriculture (DA)-Eastern Visayas won this year's Regional Outstanding Development Project during the 31<sup>st</sup> Joint Visayas Consortium for Agriculture, Aquatic & Natural Resources Program-Regional Research & Development, and Extension Network (ViCARP-RRDEN) RDE Symposium under the development studies category on 26-27 November 2019 at the RDE Hall of the Visayas State University in Baybay City, Leyte.

Implemented in 2014, the project "Yamang Lupa Program: Adoption of Bhoochetana Principles and Approaches for Natural Resources Management Towards Sustainable Agriculture in Samar," led by Dr. Elvira Torres was among the many R&D projects under the said program funded by the DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research.

Piloted in CALABARZON, Eastern Visayas, and Zamboanga Peninsula, the YLP is an approach that aimed to rejuvenate the soil by studying and applying principles to improve upland and rainfed areas through the use of scientific technologies while promoting sustainable use of natural resources. Likewise, it seeks to increase productivity and income of farmers by 20 percent through improving soil health condition as an entry point.

Implemented by DA-regional offices in collaboration with state universities and colleges (SUCs) and local government units (LGUs), the program was a result of the partnership between DA and the Indian-based International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropic, led by then Director General and now Agriculture Secretary, Dr. William Dar.

Also present during the said symposium were Dr. Jose Bacusmo, director for research of VSU; Dr.



DA-Eastern Visayas officials and staff receive the award for the project, Yamang Lupa Program: Adoption of Bhoochetana Principles and Approaches for Natural Resources Management towards Sustainable Agriculture in Region 8, during the 31<sup>st</sup> Regional RDE Symposium PHOTOS COURTESY OF RGULA/DA-EASTERN VISAYAS



L-R: Dr. Jose Bacusmo, director for research of VSU; Dr. Othello Capuno, vice-president for research and extension of VSU; Dr. Leonarda Londina, research manager of DA-Eastern Visayas; and Rufelie Gula, senior science research specialist of DA-Eastern Visayas during the awarding ceremony

Othello Capuno, vice president for research and extension of VSU; Dr. Leonarda Londina, research manager of DA-Eastern Visayas; and Rufelie Gula, senior science research specialist of DA-Eastern Visayas.

Around 173 officials and staff from the national agencies, SUCs, government institutions, and LGUs throughout Eastern Visayas participated in the said activity. ###  
**(Jireh Alodia R. Laxamana)**

# In-house seminar highlights grafting technologies for vegetables

MORE than 80 attendees composed of individuals, government employees, and students joined the in-house seminar of the Department of Agriculture (DA)-Bureau of Agricultural Research on 12 December 2019 in Diliman, Quezon City. This month's seminar featured production technologies using grafting techniques for selected fruit-bearing vegetables.

Serving as resource speaker was Niña Rosales, agriculturist of the DA-Bureau of Plant Industry-Los Baños National Crop Research Development and Production Support Center.

Rosales introduced a technology that will help farmers adapt to different weather disturbances that affect crop productivity, especially fruit-bearing vegetables particularly solanaceous and cucurbits species.

"Most of the farmer's varieties of cucurbits and solanaceous species were less tolerant of

water-logged conditions during rainy months. Strong seasonality affects the availability, prices, and consumption of vegetables in the country. Grafting technology was identified as an easy and effective technique among the several methods of rootstock propagation," said Rosales.

Soil-borne diseases such as bacterial and Fusarium wilt significantly lowered the yield of vegetables during off-season planting. Off-season grafted techniques of planting and marketing result in profitable crop production during the hot rainy periods in the Philippines. The seasonality problem was thought to be solved by generating technologies and management practices responsive to stressful environmental changes to sustain year-round production. Rosales stated that the purpose of grafting is to physically combine the desirable

characteristics of two separate plants into one plant, the grafted plant, in this case, to provide a flood and bacterial wilt resistant rootstock to the high yielding scion.

A 15 to 18 percent decline in damages was noted with the grafted plants in contrast to the 23 to 30 percent in non-grafted plants.

"However, the technology is recommended for off-season production, usually from June to October when the rainy season starts and more typhoons and incidence of flooding occur," Rosales explained.

The seminar activity aimed to disseminate generated technologies on grafting specifically for cucumber, bitter melon, sweet pepper, and eggplant for a year-round production.

The monthly conduct of the free in-house seminar series was spearheaded by the Applied Communication Division of the bureau. #### (Leoveliza C. Fontanil)



Niña R. Rosales of the DA-BPI Los Baños, presents the topic, Promotion and Commercialization of Grafting Technology for Selected Fruits and Vegetables. PHOTOS: LFONTANIL



**PROMOTED STAFF TOOK OATH.** Dr. Nicomedes Eleazar, Department of Agriculture (DA) assistant secretary for special affairs and DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research director, officiates the oath-taking ceremony of three newly-promoted staff on 2 December 2019 in Clark, Pampanga. The three staff were Marnelie Gadong-Subong, Agriculturist II; Jay Invinsor Bermas, Agriculturist II; and Alan Palevino, Administrative Aide VI. PHOTO AND TEXT: JALAXAMANA

*DA-BAR joins...from page 3*

of Trade and Industry; Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas; Land Bank of the Philippines, and Development Bank of the Philippines were also present during the activity.

Furthermore, representatives from the private sector in the agriculture and fisheries value chain industry, namely: Harbest Agribusiness Corporation, Chen Yi Agventures, Agrea Agricultural Systems International, Manly Plastics, Inc., among others, also participated and shared their inspiring accomplishments during the activity.

“We welcome and consider the recommendations from representatives [from various institutions and organizations], with the same decisiveness, courage, and commitment to improve the lives of our Filipino farmers and fisherfolk,” said Usec. Cayanan as he closed the summit.

Sulong Pilipinas is an annual conference between the government and the private sector. Held annually since 2016, it has been the avenue for the government to consult the private sector on key economic priorities. Through the previous Sulong Pilipinas events, top recommendations such as the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program, National ID Law, Ease of Doing Business Law, Universal Health Care Law, and the Build, Build, Build program were crafted through the help of the various stakeholders who participated. ### (Clarisse Mae N. Abao)

*DA-BAR trains staff...from page 12*

Procurement Planning and Monitoring; Project Costing; Specifications Writing; Philippine Bidding Documents; Standardized Bidding Procedure for Goods, Infrastructures, and Consulting Services; and Alternative Methods of Procurement.

Apart from that, the three-day session also included workshops to supplement the information given out during the lecture and give the participants a hands-on experience on the topics discussed. The lecturers also gave strategies and tips about the queries and concerns raised by the participants for future references.

RA 9184 or the Government Procurement Reform Act and its IRR provide government offices and other attached agencies the rules and guidelines for the modernization, standardization, and regulation of procurement activities. This also encompasses the promotion of good governance, transparency, accountability, equity, efficiency, and economy in the procurement process in adherence to the commitment of the Government of the Philippines.

During his opening remarks, Dr. Nicomedes Eleazar, DA Assistant Secretary for Special Affairs and BAR Director, hoped that the seminar-workshop would be an avenue for the bureau’s further growth. “I hope that the discussion in the workshop and the information shared will be applied effectively in our workplace. ### (Chantale T. Francisco)



# DA-BAR funds first ever nanotech facility in the country

Story by Jhon Marvin R. Surio

ONE of the key points of Agriculture Secretary William Dar in his “Eight Paradigms to Level Up Agriculture” is the continuous modernization of the agriculture and fisheries sector of the country. As such, the conduct of researches for the development of relevant information and technology for the said sectors is deemed necessary.

The Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR), in its mandate to lead and coordinate the national research for development efforts for the country’s agriculture and fisheries sector, has been in the forefront of advocating the exploration of fields that can help in the growth of the said sectors.

In its recent undertaking, DA-BAR supported and funded the establishment of the first ever nanotechnology facility in the country.

DA Assistant Secretary for Special Affairs and DA-BAR Director Nicomedes Eleazar graced the inauguration of the said facility, in which a series of training-seminars was also conducted.

“Recognizing the many

potentials of nanotechnology, especially in delivering outputs that will improve the field of agriculture and fisheries specifically on innovations on precision farming techniques, efficient use of inputs, and effective systems for processing, storage, and packaging, BAR will always be in support of initiatives like this,” Asec. Eleazar said.

Nanotechnology is a multi- and interdisciplinary branch of technology with various applications in more popular and familiar branches of science such as biology, material science, chemistry, physics, and electronics. It deals with the manipulation of matter on an atomic or molecular level, typically less than 100 nanometers.

While nanotechnology and its applications are becoming more and more popular in many first world countries and, now, in the country as well, its use in the agriculture and fisheries sector is yet to be discovered. Hence, the Central Luzon State University (CLSU) envisioned the project titled, “Establishment of Nanotechnology R&D Facility,” funded by BAR.

According to CLSU, the immense benefits of nanotechnology in the agriculture and fisheries industry can be further realized through the projects that it has outlined with the establishment of its nanotech R&D facility. In addition, other fields like food processing and packaging will also benefit greatly from the said research facility.

The facility is comprised of an office, laboratory rooms, conference room, and some staff room. In display were sample products and prototypes.

Prior to this, CLSU has already ventured on nanotechnology research and procured modest equipment in collaboration with R&D institutions. Some university personnel were also trained in its commitment to the said cause.

With this, CLSU hopes to make significant contributions on modernizing the agriculture and fisheries sector, in order to enhance the profitability of farmers and fishers, and prepare the said sectors for the challenges of globalization through an adequate, focused, and rational delivery of necessary support services. ###





# Value-adding tech boosts calamansi industry in Oriental Mindoro

Story and photo by Rena S. Hermoso

ONE ingredient that has sunk its roots deep into traditional Filipino cuisine is the *Citrus macrocarpa*, a green citrus fruit more popularly known as calamansi or calamondin.

Its omnipresent influence in local dishes ranges from being used as a souring agent or as additional marinade flavoring. Iced calamansi juice is also a popular drink option tailored for our tropical tongues.

Expectedly, the Department of Agriculture (DA) has identified calamansi as one of the most important fruit crops grown in the country. In terms of area and production, it ranks fourth after banana, mango, and pineapple.

In September 2019, calamansi production has reached 66.76

thousand metric tons according to the Philippine Statistics Authority.

More than half of the country's total production was from the MIMAROPA region. Oriental Mindoro is the largest producer of calamansi in the country.

Despite this, the calamansi industry in Oriental Mindoro has been facing major drawbacks.

Among the constraints in calamansi production in the province were lack of supply of quality planting materials, low prices during the peak season, lack of access to service providers, and poor farm-to-market road.

The Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture, in

collaboration with the University of the Philippines Los Baños and Mindoro State College of Agriculture, conducted a project titled "Upgrading the Calamansi Value Chain towards Improving the Calamansi Industry of Oriental Mindoro."

Funded by the DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR), the project aimed to increase the income of calamansi growers and improve the enterprises of calamansi-based products processors.

The project is being implemented in close coordination with the local government units in the municipalities of Victoria—the largest producer of calamansi in the

province, Naujan, and Pola.

Among the package of technologies promoted in the project were integrated pest management, improved postharvest handling practices, hot water treatment and modified atmosphere packaging and off-season fruiting through pruning, use of plant growth regulators, and nutrient and water management.

Moreover, one component of the project is the value chain analysis (VCA) of processed calamansi-based products in Oriental Mindoro.

The Victoria Kalamansi Farmers Federation (VKFF) was the partner-beneficiary of the VCA as part of the project.

Through the monitoring activity conducted on 19-21 November 2019, representatives from DA-BAR were able to confirm with the VKFF members the problems that emerged during the VCA.

Some of the challenges encountered were low price of calamansi especially during peak

season, lack of crop insurance, limited capital, and lack of irrigation.

VKFF has their own processing facility provided through the assistance of the local government unit. However, some members supply fresh calamansi to other processors in Victoria rather than processing it in their own facility due to its unstable processing schedule.

The VKFF processing facility operates by demand. Thus, if no orders are placed then no products will be processed.

During the monitoring activity, VKFF expressed their intent to register their processing facility with the Food and Drug Administration and to facilitate other required documents for the operation of the facility.

After accomplishing these tasks, they are hoping to attract more orders from their target market.

Through the project, a seminar-workshop on the status and prospects of the calamansi industry in Oriental

Mindoro was conducted to level-off the understanding among stakeholders to plot short and long term plans.

The project will come full circle on October 2020. By then, the project team hopes that the calamansi growers will continue utilizing the mature technologies introduced to them.

The Provincial Local Government of Oriental Mindoro through its Provincial Agriculturist's Office pledged their technical assistance to the calamansi growers after project completion. ###

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**QUINOA R4D IN PH PUSHED.** To fine tune arrangements regarding the slated research for development (R4D) collaboration on quinoa, the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR) met with Chilean Ambassador to the Philippines José Miguel Capdevilla Villarroel in Makati City on 5 December 2019. Agriculture Secretary William Dar ordered DA-BAR to explore the potential of quinoa in the local condition. Quinoa is a pseudo-cereal known for its high nutrient content, complete protein content, and high dietary fiber. It is a good source of calcium, magnesium, and manganese. PHOTO AND TEXT: MJTY

# DA-BAR trains staff, holds workshop on gov't procurement reform act



Dr. Cheryl Ramos (inset), Central Luzon State University (CLSU) vice president for administration; and Ronnie Gutierrez, CLSU procurement office head and bids and awards committee secretariat head, serve as resource speakers. PHOTO: CFRANCISCO

TO further improve the efficiency of its staff in financial and procurement functions, the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) of the Department of Agriculture (DA) organized a training on Republic Act (RA) 9184 and its 2016 Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) on 11-13 December 2019 in Diliman, Quezon City.

Spearheaded by the Administrative Division of the bureau, the training focused on activities involving procurement, delivery, and payment of goods and services following RA 9184, and in fulfillment of the bureau's mandate.

Leading the discussion were Dr. Cheryl Ramos, vice president for administration; and Ronnie

Gutierrez, chief of the procurement office and head of the bids and award committee secretariat of the Central Luzon State University.

The topics covered during the lecture include: the General Provisions of RA 9184 and its IRR; Protests, Sanctions, Termination, and Blacklisting;

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