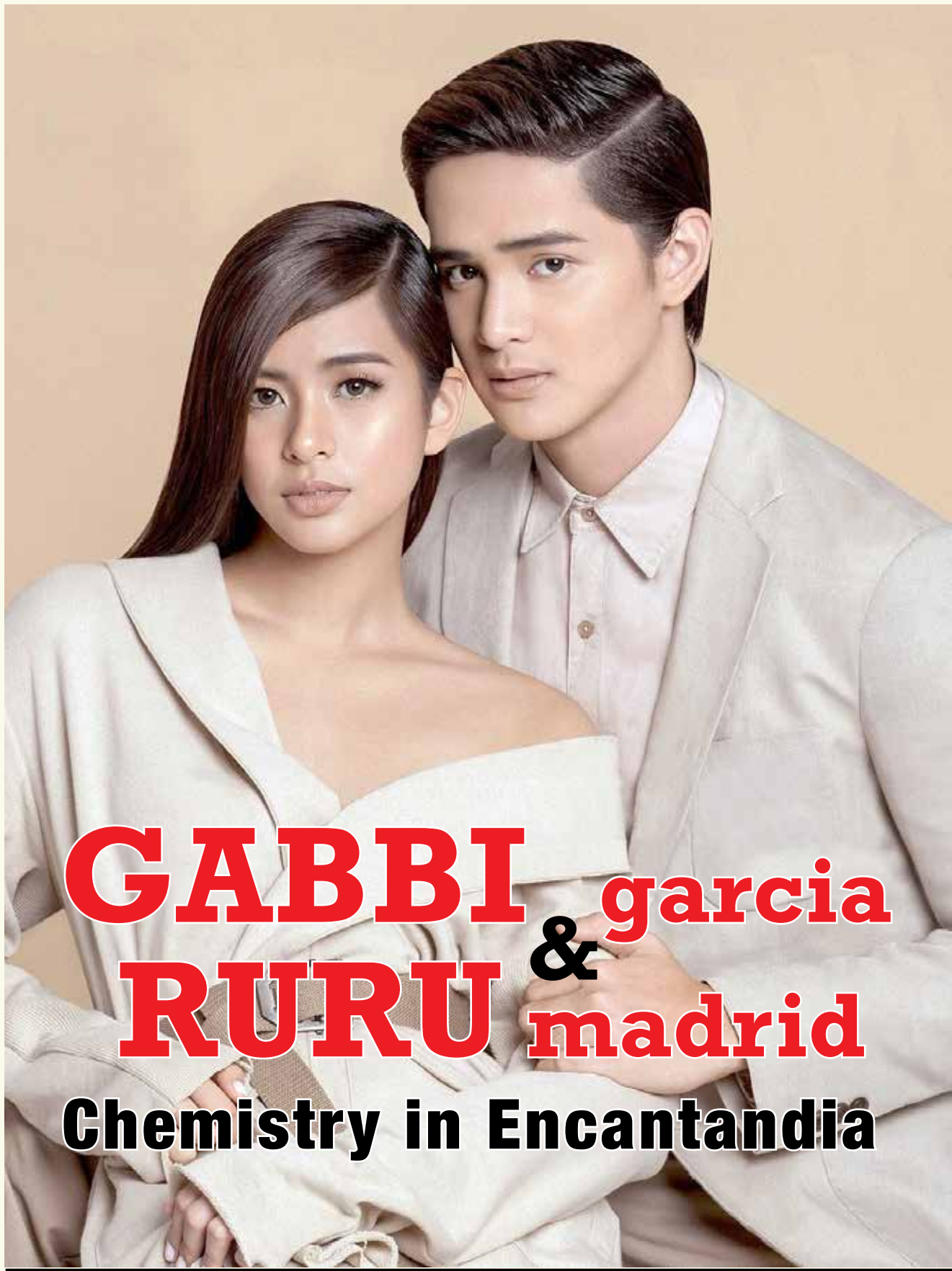




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Free Prescription Drugs For Poor STORY INSIDE



GABBI RURU & garcia madrid Chemistry in Encantandia

Is Bato a scapegoat?

MANILA - Senator Leila de Lima said the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte may be using Philippine National Police chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa as a scapegoat amid the issue of “tokhang for ransom.”

“With House Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez’s call for the resignation of the PNP Chief, it appears the administration is in need of a scapegoat for the scandal of a PNP force gone rogue,” De Lima said in a statement.

The senator noted, however, that a major responsibility for the spate of “tokhang for ransom” incidents of course, lies with dela Rosa.

The PNP chief admitted that Jee, an alleged victim of “tokhang for ransom,” was killed inside Camp Crame, the PNP’s national headquarters.

Following Dela Rosa’s admission, Alvarez, a Duterte-ally, called on the PNP chief’s resignation to “save President Rodrigo Duterte from further embarrassment and restore respect to the Office of the PNP Chief.”

De Lima condemns the drug war policy that has produced human rights violators and criminals out of the men and women of the PNP.”

She argued that a police force that is given license to be judge, jury and executioner is not expected anymore

SCAPEGOAT
continued on page 19

Achievement



PC Candidate for MPP Mississauga-Centre Angely Pacis poses with Ontario PC leader Patrick Brown.
STORY INSIDE

Happiness



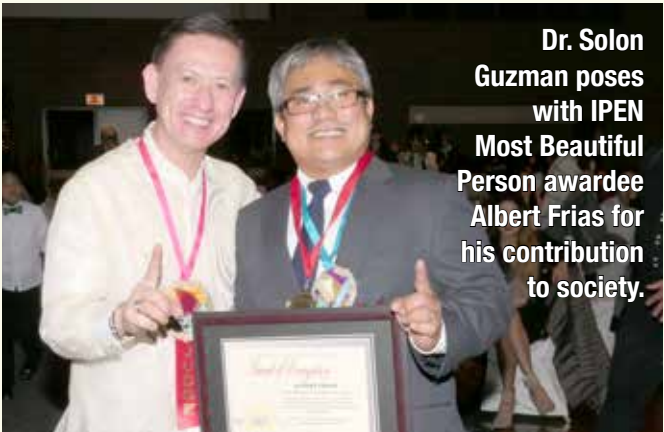
Happiness is FV Foods President Mel Galeon livestreaming his birthday celebration with family and friends.

Charity



Philippine Canadian Charitable Foundation (PCCF) Ms. Teen Philippines Chiara Silo cuts the ceremonial ribbon at the turnover of 7 houses by PCCF to Tala Vilalge in Caloocan.

Altruism



Dr. Solon Guzman poses with IPEN Most Beautiful Person awardee Albert Frias for his contribution to society.



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Duterte apologizes for Korean's killing

MANILA (UPDATE) – President Rodrigo Duterte on Thursday issued an apology for the abduction and killing of a South Korean man allegedly by rogue cops, warning those involved in the gruesome crime will pay big.

"I apologize for the death of your compatriot. We are very sorry that it had to happen, but I can assure you those responsible are known to us already and they will go to prison and I will see to it that they are sentenced to the maximum," Duterte told several South Koreans during his speech at a switch-on ceremony of a coal plant in Sarangani.

Duterte also warned those involved in the crime that they will suffer for their acts.

"I'm very sorry for that sordid incident, but I can assure you, I will see to it. Better if they escape [from] prison. T*** i** kayong mga pulis. Bantay kayo. Hindi ko kayo papalusutin. You will suffer," he said.

"Maybe I can send your heads to South Korea."

This is the President's first public reaction to the scandal that has gripped

APOLOGY
continued on page 13

Honey Shot



The Smart Kid

A second grade teacher was having trouble with one of her students. One day, she asked Jimmy what his problem was. He replied, "I'm too smart for the second grade, my sister is in the fourth grade, and I'm smarter than her too."

The teacher took him to the principal's office and explained the situation to the principal. The principal told her that he would give Jimmy a test. If he failed to answer one question, then he would have to go back to the second grade and be quiet. The teacher and Jimmy both agreed.

Principal: "What is 3 x 3?"

Jimmy: "9."

Principal: "6 x 6?"

Jimmy: "36."

Finally, after about an hour, he told the teacher "I see no reason why Jimmy can't go to the fourth grade, he answered all of my questions right."

The teacher asked if she could ask him some questions. The principal and Jimmy agree.

Teacher: "What does a cow have 4 of that I only have 2 of?"

Jimmy: "Legs"

Teacher: "What do you have in your pants that I don't have?"

The principal gasps but before he can stop him from answerin gJimmy says, "Pockets."

Teacher: "What does a dog do that a man steps into?"

Jimmy: "Pants."

Teacher: "What starts with F and ends with K and means a lot of excitement?"

Jimmy: "Firetruck."

The principal breathes a big sigh of relief and says "Put Jimmy in the fourth grade. I got the last 4 questions wrong myself."

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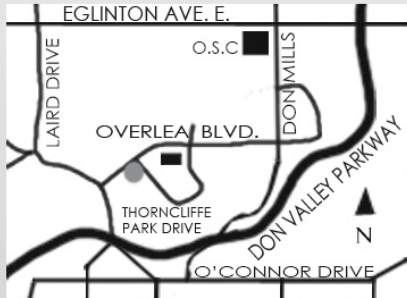
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Killing a Dog for Art is Despicable

I am not sure if there is a criminal charge in Philippine law for killing a dog. But to kill a dog in making a movie is despicable. Whether it is criminal or not is irrelevant. You don't have to kill a dog. I can imagine any number of scenes but I still do not see how killing a dog is necessary. I have not watched the movie "Oro," one of the entries at the 2015 Metro Manila Film festival where a dog or 2 dogs were killed.

What for?

When I was still in the Philippines, I was watching a TV show and the cast was bragging that the bullets used in the movie were real. Then, they showed the villains shooting at a pond. Well, there's nothing special about that. As long as they don't do it in a scene shooting people, that's fine. But killing a dog is not integral in a movie. A character can just say "we killed our dog to serve you this," would do. End of Story. Did they do it to attract more viewers who are curious? They say that in Hollywood movies, an Oscar win can add to a box-office receipt, specially for a boring movie that nobody is watching. People start watching it out of curiosity. But in this case, to kill a dog, for whatever reason in making a movie is unnecessary and inhumane.

Fake news is Bad?

Maybe social media like Facebook, Twitter, Google and others should remove fake news. But who decides what is fake news? If you make government decide what is fake news, the only news you will see is pro-government? Remember when everybody who is "intellectual" ignored those supermarket tabloids becasue they had headlines like 'Woman from Outer Space Make Love to Elvis'? Then, they started getting the scoop on Bill Clinton and his shenanigans. The Washington post and the New York Times were caught off-guard. So, what then is fake news? Is the news fake because the result you wanted did not come true? That's one-sided.

Propaganda is Fake News?

Isn't that what fake news used to be called? It was called propaganda. Pr was it advertising? Or was it called advertorial? Or was it called press release. So, if you censor "fake news," will practitioners of advertising and public relations be charged with a felony

jsut because they put out only their side? If a person reads the newspaper or watches the newscast and the person spreads only the aprts that he wants to spread to his friends and soical media, does it make that fake news?

Citizen Journalism?

While supermarket tabloids may have scooped the Washington post and NY Times, it does not mean that the so-called citizen journalism is more believable. Those 2 newspapers stil ahve a battery of fact-chjeckers and a huge legal department to make sure that what they report are true and factual. Do citizen journalists have fact-checkers? They do not. They do it themselves. If it is not fact-checked by anyone, does it mean that the CJ is motivated by truth. Well, CJ's are motivated by what they believe is truth, not necessarily the whole truth. I still believe in the newspapers that I hold in my hand and the newscast on TV.

Is MMFF 2016 a big success?



MMFF Best Supporting Actress Phoebe Walker in a scene from Erik Matti's "Seklusyon" (left photo), and festival Best Film "Sunday Beauty Queen" (right), which follows a group of expatriate domestic workers in Hong Kong

In November, after Mano Po 7 failed to make it to the list of official entries (Magic 8) to the 2016 Metro Manila Film Festival, Regal Entertainment matriarch Mother Lily Monteverde said that Christmas is no time for indie films.

Christmas day came and the 42nd edition of MMFF commenced. According to our reliable source, the Magic 8 only managed to gross around P48.25 million. It's just a fraction of what the MMFF entries earned last year. In the 41st MMFF, the eight entries already raked in a total of P150 million on its first day and breached the P1 billion mark by the end of its two-week run.

Film Development Council of the Philippines' (FDCP) Liza Diño was concerned about the low audience turnout in the first two days of the MMFF. Yet, the actress was still optimistic the audience would have a change of heart after the Gabi ng Parangal.

Before the Gabi ng Parangal, a number of netizens took to social media to raise a concern about the move of some cinema owners. Some people were disappointed that some entries were already not being shown.

There were cinema owners that replaced some entries with mainstream movies Enteng Kabisote 10, Mano Po 7, and Super Parental Guardians. Moreover, the Hollywood film Rogue One: A Star Wars Story was luring the public away from the MMFF entries.

The readiness of local cinemagoers to these kinds of films is not the issue. The quality of the films being exhibited is. While Die Beautiful, Seklusyon, Sunday

Beauty Queen, and Oro shone in the eyes of film critics and moviegoers, the same thing cannot be said of the rest of the entries.

First, we have to acknowledge the fact that the audience always views film as a means of entertainment and not a business.

The public is well educated that success of a movie does not solely depend upon how much profit it made but also in its ability to amplify, through good storytelling, some of its key messages, whether it's a drama, horror or comedy, to be one of the most memorable and entertaining movies they've seen.

Perhaps we should adapt what's being done by Telefilm in Canada. Telefilm, a federal cultural agency devoted to the development and promotion of audiovisual documents produced by the Canadian private sector, came up with a success index in 2001 (revised in 2011) to measure the success of their films. The measurement takes 60 percent of a film's score based on sales figures domestically and internationally (commercial), 30 percent on awards and film-festival appearances (cultural), and 10 percent on how much of a film's funding was private as opposed to public (industrial).

This is very applicable in the Philippines since some movies make money while the others just win awards. It gives productions equal footing without sacrificing the real intention of movie producers and cinema owners. In this way, we could easily say shut up to those people who think that they are the last word in the world of big screen entertainment.

Duterte has an army of online trolls' - US JOURNALIST

SAN FRANCISCO – An American journalist has reported on President Rodrigo Duterte's use of a social media army of trolls to generate fake news and adulatory propaganda and attack his critics.

Sean Williams details his finding in an article titled, "Rodrigo Duterte's Army of Online Trolls," published in January issue of The New Republic.

When Williams was reporting on the violence in the Philippines and in September tweeted about Duterte's war on drugs, a woman named Madelyn replied to him writing him off as a "troll," and a "foreigner who knows nothing bout my country."

Williams noticed that Madelyn's Twitter stream was filled with adulation for President Duterte, and she seemed to tweet about him constantly throughout the day, according to a story about his experience told by Public Radio International. He had stumbled on President Duterte's "keyboard army" of paid and unpaid online trolls.

Anyone speaking critically of Duterte gets attacked by them.

Duterte's social media strategy takes advantage of the Philippines' young population—the average age is 23; nearly half of its 103 million residents use social media. From Facebook trolls, they get a steady diet of pro-Duterte propaganda.

Some people are paid to promote Duterte online, and often they create fake social media accounts.

He notes that in the Philippines Twitter, Facebook and other social media platforms, once seen as belonging to the masses, have been co-opted by bigger players.

"They're kind of being used by the people with the most money and the bigger means to get that message across, and that's kind of a worrying development," Williams told PRI.



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Ed Tubale

‘In fairness, hindi na ako trip ng mga DOM ngayon’

Umamin ang aktres na si Ara Mina na may mga nagpaparamdam sa kanya ngayon. Pero hindi muna raw niya ito masyadong pinagtutuunan ng pansin.



Natatawag sabi ni Ara, “May mga nagpaparamdam, all ages...”
“Hindi naman DOM [dirty old man], in fairness, hindi na ako trip ng

mga DOM ngayon. May mga siguro five years younger, may mga 10 years younger. May celebrity, may hindi. Open naman ako sa dating, kaso, as of now, hindi ko pa sila mabigyan ng time, kasi medyo may ginagawa akong soap.”
Ang tinutukoy na soap ni Ara ay ang upcoming Kapuso afternoon drama series na Pinulot Ka Lang Sa Lupa.
Dalawang taon na ang nakalilipas mula nang maghiwalay sila ng dating nobyong si Mayor Patrick Meneses, kung saan mayroon siyang isang anak na babae.
Ayon kay Ara, naka-move on siya sa ginawang pag-iwan sa kanya ng alkalde ng Bulacan, Bulacan.
“Dalawang taon na si Mandy and single pa rin ako. Pero we’re friends, magkaibigan naman kami.”
Paano nila napapanatili ang kanilang maayos na pakikitungo sa isa’t isa? Saad ng aktres, “I think mabait ako.
“Hindi ko ipinagdadamot ang anak ko, kaya kung mapapansin niyo yung anak ko, very jolly, very full sa pagmamahal. “Kasi kapag ipinagkait mo, bitter-bitter-an ka pa...
“Oo, masakit yung nangyari na hindi kami nagkatuluyan o iniwan niya ako, pero I think we need to move on. Naka-move on na ako.
“Anytime na gusto niyang kunin, nahihiram niya.
“Basta every Sunday, nasa kanya, nasa lola niya, tsaka pag may mga special occasions.
“Maganda kasi yung may nagigisan siyang tatay.”

Bela Padilla and ex-bf agree to compromise

Bela Padilla said she has ended her four-year romantic relationship with businessman Neil Arce, but not their “artistic/creative partnership.”
“I would like to think that I’m quite mature for my age,” the 25-year-old actress said during the press conference of “My Dear Heart,” ABS-CBN’s newest drama program to premiere on Jan. 25. “That’s why Neil and I were able to come up with a compromise. We’ve agreed to still work together.”
“We jive where new and interesting concepts are concerned. In fact, we are currently working on a movie,” Bela pointed out.
She was referring to Dan Villegas’ “Luck at First Sight,” starring Jericho Rosales. She cowrote the script with Neil. The ex-couple also conceptualized Irene Villamor’s comedy flick, “Camp Sawi.”
She insisted that there was no bad blood between them. She said: “I can see us being friends for a long time. We will work on more concepts in the future. When it comes to these things, I still value his opinion more than anybody else’s.”



Mutual decision
Bela refused to reveal the reason for the split, but insisted that it was “a mutual decision.”
She then pleaded with show biz reporters to “please be nice to him. You can criticize me all you want, just spare him. I don’t want him to read writeups that could make him feel bad. He has no control over this. I’m the only one present at this press con, and it was just my side of the story that you heard.”
She claimed that the break-up was still so fresh that “it hasn’t sunk in yet. I guess it’s because I’m busy with work. I tape for our teleserye every Monday, Wednesday and Friday; study (scriptwriting under Ricky Lee) every Sunday; and work on the film during the remaining days. Besides, I’m here to talk about the show and not about my personal issues.”
In “My Dear Heart,” Bela plays Clara de Jesus, the mother of child heroine Heart (Nayomi Ramos), and wife to Jude (Zanjoe Marudo).
Bela said she doesn’t mind portraying mother roles. This was her second since she transferred to ABS-CBN. The first was in “FPJ’s Ang Probinsyano.”
“First and foremost, I’m an actress. My character’s personality and status in life are not always similar to mine. That’s what actually makes it challenging,” she pointed out, adding that she fell in love with Nayomi on Day One of taping.
“I’m very patient with kids. On the set, I treat Nayomi as my little sister. I don’t see myself having my own kid just yet. I don’t think I’m ready to take on that responsibility at this point.”
“My Dear Heart” also features Joey Marquez, Rio Locsin, Eric Quizon, Susan Africa, Ria Atayde, Jameson Blake, Mark Oblea, Hyubs Azarcon, Sandino Martin and Robert Arevalo.—

Announcement!
To all Bicolanos and Bicolanas

The 2nd month Novena Devotions to the Virgin of Penaf-rancia will be on February 19, 2017, Sunday.

Feast Day Celebrations will be on the 3rd Saturday of September, September 16, 2017.

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Place : Our Lady of Assumption Church (OLA) 2565 Bathurst St. Toronto
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We encourage all bicolanos from Catanduanes to attend and participate in the sponsorship of this novena to the Virgin, for abundant blessings for the province of Catanduanes and the Bicol Region.
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Duterte signs EO backing family planning

President hopes SC will act ‘Fast’ on Impediments to implementaion of RH Law

MANILA - President Rodrigo Duterte has signed an executive order intensifying access to modern family planning amid a Supreme Court temporary restraining order (TRO) on some provisions of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act (RPRH Law).

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia told reporters on Wednesday that Duterte signed executive order no. 12 on Monday, January 9.

“It’s Executive Order No. 12 and the full title of the EO is Attaining and Sustaining Zero Unmet Need for Modern Family Planning Services through the Strict Implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act, Providing Funds Therefore and for Other Purposes,” Pernia



said in a Palace briefing. “This Order aims to intensify and accelerate the implementation of critical actions necessary and sustain ‘zero unmet need for modern family planning’ for all poor households by 2018, and all of Filipinos thereafter, within the context of the [RH] Law and its implementing rules,” the executive order read.

Pernia said the EO was “really for modern family planning services, modern contraceptives to be adopted by women of reproductive age.”

The Cabinet official said the implementation of the RPRH law “got stymied” due to the petition filed by pro-life groups before the SC.

In December 2012, RPRH Law was approved by Congress and was signed by former

President Benigno Aquino III on December 21.

In 2014, the high court ruled that the RPRH law was constitutional although it struck out certain provisions of the law.

The high court also issued a TRO in connection with the government’s procurement, selling, distributing and promoting contraceptive implants.

“But with this EO from the President, we hope that the Supreme Court will act expeditiously in terms of lifting the TRO,” he said.

“In fact, with the EO, some, you know, there might be some municipalities or local governments that can, you know, get around the TRO by letting NGOs implement or, you know, yeah implement the RPRH Law because the private sector is not covered by the TRO. It’s just the government agencies. So, in fact, there are some implementation of the RPRH Law but it’s very limited,” he added.



Maja ready for Paulo romance rumors

She is certain she’ll get linked to her ‘favorite’ leading man as they team up in new rom-com

Pardon actress Maja Salvador if the question has lost all sense of urgency by now.

It’s certainly not the first time she is being linked to her leading man, so she’s used to the prying queries—this time, involving Paulo Avelino, her partner in the coming romantic-comedy, “I’m Drunk, I Love You.”

“That cannot be avoided,” she conceded, in an interview with the Inquirer. “It’s part of our industry. You can’t hide anything in show biz.”

She asserted that she is totally comfortable working with Paulo, who was her costar on both the big (“Status: It’s Complicated”) and small (“Bridges of Love”) screens.

“With Paulo, what you see is what you get,” she quipped. “I always enjoy hanging out with him. I can say that he is my favorite leading man. He’s really special and easy to work with.”

Maja recounted that she always looked forward to reporting to work—primarily, because of the good vibes and breezy rapport among the cast and crew, led by debuting director JP Habac.

“It was JP’s first time to direct, but that was actually more of an advantage [than a liability],” she pointed out. “Each artist is different. But I am happy I got to work with someone so young and inspired. It was refreshing.”

She explained that the film was a “passion project” for the youthful filmmaker.

Engrossed for years

“He knows the script inside and out,” she volunteered. “He knows every line, every character... the continuity. This script is his baby. He has been so engrossed by this story for years.”

The romantic musical-comedy tells the story of college buddies as they embark on life’s biggest adventure, venturing into the grown-up world post-graduation.

Although she never had the chance to attend college, she insisted she could relate with her character’s travails and tribulations.

“At least, I was able to experience college life through this film,” she noted. “I was able to see what students go through.”

And yes, she got to survive getting soused for the flick.

“Here, lasengga ako (I’m a drunk),” she admitted. “I got to undergo that, too, in this movie.”

Even though she had already read the script, she still got “goosies” on the set.

“I already knew what would happen next, but I was still caught by surprise by the movie,” she admitted.

She hopes the audience will be pleasantly surprised by the film, as well—particularly by her solo song, “Huling Gabi,” composed by poet and spoken word artist Juan Miguel Severo.

“It’s my first time to sing in a movie,” she enthused.

“I’m Drunk, I Love You” opens in theaters on Feb. 15.

Duterte on killing criminals:

Those who believe me are ‘stupid’

MANILA -President Rodrigo Duterte on Thursday said people who believe that he killed criminals when he was still Davao City mayor are “stupid”.

“I’m facing stupid people so, I cannot really do anything for them,” Duterte said.

“If you do not find out, spend time to validate and verify, it’s your problem,” Duterte said when asked to clarify about his previous statements that he killed and would

be “happy to slaughter” three million drug addicts.

“Ang masama nito, mga g*** na ito, sabi killing suspects. I was fighting criminals,” Duterte added.

(The bad thing about it was these people kept on saying I killed suspects. I was fighting criminals.)

When asked to further clarify his confusing rhetoric, Duterte said,

Youth groups hit Duterte on ‘false promise’ of free education

MANILA - Student groups criticized President Rodrigo Duterte for his false promise of free education following his recent statements which reversed previous pronouncements warranting free tuition in state universities and colleges (SUCs).

“Limiting free tuition for ‘poor and qualified’ students puts undue burden on the part of students in exercising their right to education,” Rara Ada of Sanlakas Youth said in a statement.

“Distorting the recently passed law ensuring free tuition in SUCs through its implementing rules betrays the promise of free tertiary education flaunted by the Duterte administration and its allies in the Congress,” she added.

Ada also said this burdened only under-

privileged students who wished to pursue their tertiary education in SUCs because they would still have to prove they were “poor enough” to be eligible for free tuition.

“What is being flaunted as a progressive step in ensuring tertiary education as a right to be accessed by those who choose to is really just a deceptive mechanism in justifying the increase of tuition and other fees, as those who were considered unqualified for free tuition are deemed rich enough to cope with higher fees,” she said.

“If the President is serious in his promise of delivering change, he must do so by prioritizing the SixWillFix Bill as urgent, ensuring that free quality education will not suffer from arbitrary changes, nor be subjected to annual competition with other parts of the

national budget,” Zaira Baniaga of Kaisa-UP said.

The SixWillFix is a legislation that aims to ensure the automatic appropriation of six percent of the country’s gross national product to the budget for education. The bill aims to ensure free education in all levels without having its quality and accessibility suffer, and it also targets fair wages for teachers and workers and quality facilities for students.

The said bill has been lobbied in both houses of the Congress.

“The right to education in all levels by all citizens is not up for debate,” Baniaga said.

“If the President believes in investing in the country’s future, he must not be among those who stand in the way of free education,” she added.

Martin del Rosario tackles new role in new Kapuso reboot

Count on Martin del Rosario’s acting brilliance to breathe life to a new role in GMA-7’s remake of the 1987 flick, Pinulot Ka Lang Sa Lupa, which originally starred Lorna Tolentino, Gabby Concepcion, and Maricel Soriano.

For this year’s reboot, the new Kapuso TV drama finds Martin sharing top billing with Benjamin Alves, Julie Anne San Jose, LJ Reyes, and Jean Garcia. He plays Arthur “Kiko” Villaraza.

“I think they wanted to give the plot a different twist,” Martin reveals.

“Kasi in the original plot, it’s the usual triangle. They thought it would be more in-



teresting to see someone else adding tension to that equation. That’s me.”

Martin del Rosario adds tension in the new Kapuso series, “Pinulot Ka

Lang Sa Lupa”

Since he will be playing a totally new role, Martin finds it liberating not to be pressured into referencing the original story.

And just how challenging is this new role for him?

“Very challenging,” he admits. “Because my role is yung medyo bugoy na makulit. I rarely play that character. That’s why I really put a lot of effort and detail in my role here.”

The Kapuso actor was also intrigued by the original story, which he reviewed out of curiosity.

“Yes, I got to read the plot of the original story. But then again, the remake is an entirely new story altogether. Not at all faithful to the original,” he clarifies.

Being a perfectionist, Martin actually watches most of their outtakes to nitpick and find areas for improvement.

He says, “I watch the actual takes, and if I have time, I also do watch the episodes on TV, just to see if I need to improve my execution.”

Martin also feels thankful for Direk Gina Alajar’s professionalism.

President wants to set up ‘Iglesia ni Duterte’

DAVAO CITY – President Duterte told Filipinos not to believe Catholic priests and urged them to join the “Iglesia ni Duterte,” a religion he would establish where there is no prohibition and men are allowed to have five wives.

The Catholic Church has been critical of Duterte’s drug war, which is marked by summary killings and human rights violations.

Duterte blasted the Catholic Church anew after the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines and other churches, including the Redemptorist Church in Baclaran, launched exhibits of photos of summary killings under Duterte’s bloody drug war.

In response, Duterte threw insults at the Church during the Christmas party of 2,000 barangay captains and councilors in his hometown Davao City yesterday.

“You say Duterte killer. You priests, you blame me for the death of thousands of drug addicts, even those who died in hospitals, you still blame me. But you are the ones who killed Christ,” Duterte said.

The President also claimed that the Catholic Church has been so hypocritical of his drug war and yet it has not lifted a finger to help the more than four million drug addicts in the country despite collecting large amounts of money during mass.

“They always shout in protest and yet they did not do anything against illegal drugs. They never bothered to help,” he said. “There is something new these days. (Iglesia ni Duterte, where there is no prohibition, you can even have five wives. But make sure you are responsible for your problems). “The Church is not giving anything even if they collect so much. My statement is full of sarcasm because they (priests) have been criticizing me. They are hypocrites,” he added.

Duterte also said that he believes there is a God and he believes in Allah, but he does not believe in religion, particularly the Catholic Church because it is sowing fear among its faithful about the existence of heaven and hell. “Do not believe it. That is what that religion is all about, they are instilling fear that you will go to hell if you are a sinner. But you will only know if there is indeed a hell if you die,” the President said.

Duterte told barangay officials to wait for him to die because he would come back and tell them if there is really heaven or hell.

Duterte also likened the Catholic Church to the United States under President Barack Obama, the United Nations and the Commission on Human Rights that have all called his attention to the rising number of summary killings in the drug war.

“America did not do anything for the four million Filipino addicts. And they even scold me,” he added.

The President claimed he knows the Catholic Church so well since he studied at Cor Jesu College in Digos City, Davao del Sur and at the Ateneo de Davao University, where he was taught about mortal sin and venial sin.

“Catholic is a sordid religion. It is about time to

show you its history. There were popes who sired a child and even had sex with his child, that was Pope Leo,” the President claimed.

“Why? Is there a God who is evil who makes hell?” he further asked.

He also urged Filipinos not to believe in the priests blessing the dead with holy water. He noted that the faithful even pay for the rites as well as for the holy water.

“Basbas basbas kayo diyan. Eh, galing lang naman yang tubig niyo sa Davao City Water District (You keep on blessing. Yet the water you use is from Davao City Water District),” he added.

Duterte: No blessing, no hero’s burial for me

Duterte also said that he does not want his remains to be blessed by a priest. He wants his body to be cremated within 24 hours after his death just like what was done to the remains of his mother Soledad in 2012. “Cremate me within 24 hours. And there should be no blessing of holy water. I do not hold on to anything. If I go, I go,” he said.

“Spare me the drama of all those ceremonies. I do not like it, nakokornihan ako (I find it corny),” he added. And despite being president, Duterte said he does not want to be buried at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, where Duterte allowed dictator Ferdinand Marcos to be buried despite public outrage over the hero’s burial for one whose regime committed plunder and atrocities.

“Do not bury me there at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, sa kanila na lang ‘yan (give it to them),” Duterte said.

Millions in illegal drugs seized

As Duterte continues to defend the drug war, the police seized millions worth of illegal drugs.

In Bukidnon, police seized P20 million worth of suspected shabu loaded in a car intercepted at a checkpoint. The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), on the other hand, intercepted 11 kilos of marijuana at the Port of Dumangas in Iloilo on Dec. 23.

A report to the PCG headquarters showed that the contraband was discovered after the two suspects identified as Tonichi Ami and Abdullah Ishaq refused to submit their backpacks for inspection before boarding the ship. “The two suspects ran away outside the port area and were later intercepted hiding in nearby houses,” the PCG said.

The seized marijuana was turned over to the local police for proper disposition, the PCG added.

just have to submit some other documentary requirements,” Sison said, adding that Health officials inspected the hospital early this month.

“This facility will cater to Manilans as well as non-Manilans,” he stressed.

Based on the HIV/AIDS Registry of the DOH, 841 new HIV cases were reported in June 2016 and 103 of these cases developed into full-blown AIDS. This number was the highest ever recorded in a single month since 1984, when HIV was first detected in the country.

Of the 841 cases, 92 percent were acquired through sexual transmissions, mainly through MSM (men having sex with men).

Last month, Estrada offered free HIV testing and treatment to bona fide manila residents. The free HIV tests and treatment are being conducted at the Manila Social Hygiene Clinic in Sta. Cruz.

As chairperson of the City Peace and Order Council (CPOC), the mayor earlier directed the inter-department body to intensify its HIV/AIDS information and awareness drive in the city’s 896 barangays.

While the rate of HIV infections in Manila remained “manageable,” the increasing number of people infected by the deadly virus is a cause of alarm and has become a major public health issue among the local government units, Estrada said.



A Tax for having too many gadgets?

MANILA - Following the controversial measure seeking to impose taxes on vanity products, a lawmaker is planning to push for a bill imposing additional taxes on excessive purchases of electronic gadgets as well as appliances.

PBA Party-list Rep. Mark Aeron Sambar will propose the bill.

“We need cellphones but we don’t need five or six cellphones or 10 cellphones. That’s the aim of this bill, it’s just to prevent people from buying too much on a certain product and at the same time generating income for the government,” Sambar said.

The report noted that the framework for the measure is still in the works in order to identify and provide clarity on what electronic gadgets are needed to be taxed in case of excessive buying, what gadgets are exempted, and how to monitor the buying behavior of a consumer.

According to Sambar, the tax identification number could be presented to a cashier for monitoring of the number of gadgets purchased.

This will be reflected in the records of a tax payer.

If the number of items bought did not exceed the limit stated in the bill, the customer could show receipts to the Bureau of Internal Revenue to avail of a tax rebate.

Sambar wants to impose a five-percent tax, wherein part of the proceeds collected will be allocated for Electronic Waste Disposal and Management Program for old gadgets.

People interviewed by GMA News expressed mixed reactions to the proposed measure.

The Department of Finance said it would look into the bill but it took note that there are already other forms of taxes such as value added tax and importation dues imposed on gadgets and appliances.

“We have to review first kasi unang-una sa lahat kailangan natin malaman ano ba yung target na income na kailangang ma-generate at kung paano nila ito ita-tax. Kung ano bang kind of tax, ‘yung specifics para makita natin kung magagamit natin siya or kung is it legal?,” DOF spokesperson Paola Alvarez said.



Joshua Garcia, on being dubbed as ‘The Next John Lloyd Cruz’

MANILA -- Following his performance on the Metro Manila Film Festival 2016 blockbuster “Vince & Kath & James,” young actor Joshua Garcia received praises from both fans and non-fans.

But perhaps, the biggest praise of them all is that he is now being dubbed as the next John Lloyd Cruz of Philippine showbiz. This, after netizens noticed his strong similarity with the award-winning actor.

In an interview on “Tonight With Boy Abunda,” the 19-year-old Garcia admitted that he feels overwhelmed with the title “The Next John Lloyd Cruz.” But he added that he also wants to be recognized as himself.

“Kinikilig ako,” he quipped. “Honored ako, masaya ako, at darating naman ‘yong time na mare-recognize naman nila ako as Joshua Garcia.”

The self-professed JL fan, however, said that he will not change anything just to build his own brand.

Joshua Garcia planning to court Julia Barretto?

MANILA – Joshua Garcia was at a loss for words when asked if he plans to court Julia Barretto, his leading lady in the Metro Manila Film Festival movie “Vince & Kath & James.”

After a few seconds of being speechless, he said: “Wala pa [akong balak ligawan siya]. Sa ngayon, trabaho muna po. Magfo-focus muna kami.”

Nonetheless, Garcia went on to enumerate the qualities of Barretto which he only discovered after they worked together in the movie.

“Mabait siya at napaka-down to earth na tao. Wala siyang kaarte-arte sa katawan. Inglisera lang talaga siya kasi lumaki siya sa [well-off na family] pero kapag nakita mo ang personality niya, mama-mangha ka. Jologs talaga siya. Isipin mo ang ganda-ganda nya tapos mas lalaki pa sa ‘yo,” he said.

According to Barretto, finding love was not their first priority going into this project.

“Our first priority was to portray the roles well that were given to us. Ang second priority is to build a good friendship kasi doon magsisimula ‘yun,” she said.

Asked if Garcia stands a chance in case he decides to pursue her, Barretto said: “I think time will tell naman. Ang hrap sagutin niyan lalo na kung you’re not in that situation yet. I don’t know. Iba-iba ang priorities naming tatlo as we speak. Love will come. We don’t when that will come.”

Aside from Garcia and Barretto, “Vince & Kath and James” also stars Ronnie Alonte.

Filipino Leaders Active in World Vision Goals



Rise Up Daughters of India – Edgar Gonzales, Joe Daniel, Manuel Arnaldo, Iqbal Ali, Cherrian Thomas, Dr. Doaa Mohsen, Harry Dhaliwal, Rose Tijam, Lara Dewar, Jamie McCintosh, Abu Becker, Leo Liu, Tommy Tam, Richard P.

TORONTO - Three Filipino Canadian community leaders, active in their respective professions and leadership in community work, were tapped by the prestigious international World Vision Canada as Multicultural Council Ambassadors. They were appointed last spring, after undergoing a rigid screening and interview. Since then, they had been attending World Vision meetings and related activities, representing the Filipino Canadian community. They are Rose Tijam (this writer), Manuel Arnaldo, and Rafael Nebres. Nine other Multicultural Council Ambassadors also holding responsible professional and leadership positions in their respective communities , represent their countries of origin like Egypt, Japan, China, India, and Armenia.

Their mandate as World Vision Canada’s Multicultural Ambassadors is to help establish connections and cultivate relationships with multicultural communities in Canada. Two of their major roles is to identify opportunities for long-term

community engagements, and launch fundraising campaigns to help support identified World Vision projects.

The first project , hosted by the South Asian Multicultural Ambassadors in November 2016, launched “ Rise Up Daughters of India,” a fundraiser for building toilets for girl students in India. Without toilets, the girl students were compelled to relieve themselves in open air, and fearfully place themselves in danger to sexual predators and abusers, thus they were afraid of going to school. Going to school means having education which lead to equality, respect and financial independence – without it, illiteracy, ignorance, and poverty. The fundraiser program provided an eye-opening information and understanding of the importance of giving aid to seemingly simple yet crucial needs in society.

In December 10, Filipino Canadian Multicultural Ambassadors Rose Tijam, Manuel Arnaldo and Rafael Nebres,

in close coordination with outstanding singer, music teacher and entrepreneur Josie de Leon, who owns and manages the JDL School of Performing Arts planned with World Vision executive Edgar Gonzales, to present an evening of Philippine Christmas program. More than fifty children of varying ages presented numerous Filipino and western Christmas songs to the delight of the audience, and to the pride of their families. A representative “tindahan “ of Philippine food and delicacies provided victuals and beverages at reasonable cost. For several hours, a large portion of the World Vision hall was transformed into a bright Philippine “barrio” aglow in Christmas lights and spirit. Proceeds from the fundraiser goes to “Pinoy Para sa Pinoy” program, which supports various developmental activities in rural Philippines.

Edgar Gonzales, Multicultural Development Advisor at World Vision Canada expressed appreciation to Josie de Leon of JDL School of Performing Arts and “her children,” who displayed a lot of talent, joy, and eagerness in singing their musical numbers. The school , now five (5) years old, have branches in Scarborough and Mississauga, and aims to build character, confidence, and make their students shine.

Tijam, Arnaldo and Nebres plan to develop with World Vision Canada more fundraising events for various developmental programs in the Philippines. Conscious that the home country sits on a typhoon path, there is a need for contingency funds throughout the year. As well , the trio is cognizant of the need of developing the earning capacity of the village folks at home.



Nadine, kinuyog ng bashers!

GRABE ang pamba-bash sa social media na tinatanggap ni Nadine Lustre sa ilang netizens who claim na dati silang tagahanga ng other half of the JaDine loveteam.

Isnabera daw siya, they say. And even cited na may mga pagkakataon na diumano’y binalawala sila ni Nadine. Which could be true din, someone close to Nadine said. Sa sobrang busy nga naman ng dalaga, obvious na naliisnab nga naman niya ang kanyang fans.

Sana nga lang daw, said the same friend ni Nadine, intindihin na lang nila ang aktres.

Recently nga naman, ultra busy ang dalaga dahil ang tandem nila ni James (Reid) ang isa sa busiest among a few loveteams, na ang bilang ay wala pa sa sampu. They have not only a trending teleserye, Till I Met You, kahit pa magtatapos na ito sa linggong ito, the most number of endorsements and offers to make personal appearance ‘di lang dito sa Pilipinas kung hindi imaging sa ibang bansa.

May movie kaagad silang gagawin right after Till I Met You.

Happily, according nga pala kay Nadine, solid ang romance niya with James.

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200,000 teen moms expected

PHL population is 112.6M by 2022

MANILA - The Commission on Population (POPCOM) revealed that the Philippine population to reach 105,758,850 by December 31, 2017.

POPCOM sees an increase of women of reproductive age (15 to 49 years old) to 27,293,422. These women are usually the beneficiaries of Reproductive Health services under the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law.

The Philippine population is expected to reach 112.6 million within the 6-year term of President Rodrigo Duterte.

POPCOM projected the figure by estimating that around 1.8 million is added every year to the country's population.

In 2017, the country's population is seen to reach 105.75 million.



Topping the most populated region is CALABARZON with almost 15 million this year, followed by the National Capital Region (NCR) with more than 13 million, and third is Central Luzon with 11.4 million.

"Alam natin na 'yung (we know that) minimum wage sa (in) NCR at (and) Region 4 ay mas malaki, ay mas mataas kaysa ano-mang region sa Pilipinas (is higher than any region in the Philippines). So, they tend to go there looking for better opportunities," said

POPCOM executive director Juan Antonio Perez III.

The data gathered by POCOM will be used in planning the delivery of services to the public.

Women's life expectancy is higher than men's which is 72 and 67 respectively.

"Ang mga kalalakihan tend not to pay much attention sa kanilang kalusugan," Perez said.

(Males usually tend not to pay much attention to their health.)

Even if the life expectancy of women is greater, they have more disabilities.

The Philippine's working population now is 62% with ages ranging from 15-64. But POPCOM said it will only be wasted if they will not be accommodated for jobs or will not be provided with a quality health care.



Coco Martin shares plan to do online series

MANILA -- "Ang Probinsyano" star Coco Martin shared his plan to do an online series.

"By 2017, hindi man ako 'yung artista ay gagawa ako ng isang series, bubuo ako ng isang series. Honestly, 'yun yung way ko para mas marami tayong taong matulungan," Martin said in a press conference on Thursday.

(By 2017, even if I will not star in it, I will do a series. I will create a series. Honestly, it's my way to help more people.)

"Online po. Kasi pwede naman na ako ang magpo-produce at the same time ay saka natin siya ipapalabas," the actor added.

(It will be online. It is possible that I will produce then we will show it at a later time.)

Martin said he could seek help from his friends, directors and people from the movie industry, both mainstream and indie.

"Ang ikinaganda nito, hindi sa pino-promote ko, pero madali siyang makapasok international kasi through internet siya eh kumbaga madami ang makakapanood di lang sa Pilipinas," he added.

(What is good in this venture is that, not that I am promoting it already, it would be easier to penetrate the international market because this will be shown through the internet. This can be watched from outside the Philippines.)

Aside from doing an online soap, Martin also expressed his hope to do a new FPJ film.

Asked if he would do FPJ's "Batang Quiapo," Martin said: "Narinig ko po siya pero never napag-usapan ng management 'yung about sa 'Batang Quiapo.' Pero kung mabibigyan ng pagkakataon kahit di soap opera sana magawa ko siya. Kung basbasan ako ni Tita Susan sana po kahit sa pelikula ay magawa ko po siya."

(I heard about it but management and I haven't talked about "Batang Quiapo" yet. If given the opportunity, I would love to do it. If Tita Susan (Roces) will give her blessing, I am looking forward to doing it.)

NO TO NO-CAROLING

Marcos-era mendicancy law to be scrapped?

MANILA - President Duterte enjoys caroling in the streets during Christmas season despite claims that the practice places children at risk. He wants the law banning it repealed.

"One of the things I really hate is the prohibition of caroling, I tell you," the President said.

The President was apparently referring to a Marcos- era law prohibiting mendicancy enacted in 1978.

"I could not even see the rationale (behind the measure against) mendicants," Duterte said.

"There are many laws that I do not like that I want repealed. But anyway, that would come," he added.

Presidential Decree 1563 or the Anti-Mendicancy Law was signed by former president Ferdinand Marcos to "prevent the exploitation



of infants and children through mendicancy and provide rehabilitative services for those already exploited or in immediate danger of exploitation."

Under the decree, individuals who are 15 and below found begging or are being used as a mendicant to beg shall be apprehended and placed under the custody and care of the social

services department or any duly licensed child placement agency or individual.

The same decree penalizes mendicants with a maximum fine of P500 or by imprisonment for a period of up to two years or both.

A habitual mendicant shall be slapped with a fine of up to P1,000 or by imprisonment for a period of up to four years or both. Any person who abets mendicancy by giving alms to mendicants, exploited infants and minors on public roads, sidewalks, parks and bridges shall be fined up to P20.

Social welfare officials during previous administrations have asked local governments to stop children from caroling on busy streets to avoid accidents. They also discouraged motorists from giving money to carolers, saying the practice endangers the lives of street children.

Casino tycoon wants to make Philippines 'next Hawaii'

MANILA - Japanese gambling tycoon Kazuo Okada, who is opening a new \$2.4 billion casino resort in Manila, said he hoped to make the Philippines "the next Hawaii" as he looks to expand his business there.

In addition to Manila, Okada said he was also exploring the possibility of operating resorts on the Philippine islands of Palawan and Boracay, both major tourist attractions, in a bid to tap the lucrative Chinese market.

"I would like to make the Philippines the next Hawaii, given that there are a lot of great

beaches here," he told ABS-CBN.

"China, Beijing, the air is polluted and I feel there are people (there) who would want to get away, go to a fresh place and I think the Philippines would be one of the best tourist spots for everybody," he said through a translator.

Okada's new property in the capital will initially employ around 10,000 people and is one of four mega-casinos planned on a glittering strip fronting Manila Bay dubbed Entertainment City.

The country is targeting revenues of \$7 billion, roughly the levels of Singapore and Las Vegas, by 2020, as part of its bid to become one of the world's top gambling destinations, after the Chinese enclave of Macau, the gaming industry's capital.

Okada's project -- now set to open during the first quarter of 2017 -- has been dogged by delays that saw the Philippines' gambling regulator threaten to suspend the company's license last year.

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First Filipino-Canadian Attorney Angely Pacis Wins Mississauga-Centre MPP Nomination

TORONTO - On December 10, 2016, Filipino-Canadian immigration and constitutional law lawyer Angely Pacis won the nomination election and became the official Ontario PC candidate for Mississauga-Centre in the upcoming 2018 Ontario elections. She is the first Filipino-Canadian in Ontario's history to win the nomination to become a Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP).

Pacis, who was born in North York and grew up in Mississauga, was at the lead of four highly-qualified candidates in an election race with record voter turnout. Getting up on stage with her three-year-old daughter to celebrate her victory, she thanked her dedicated volunteers and urged the hundreds of Ontario PC supporters in attendance to join forces to win the election in 2018.



Social media recognized the historic occasion of a Pinoy being nominated to represent Mississauga at Queen's Park. Ontario PC party leader and Premier candidate Patrick Brown announced that "A proud Canadian of Filipino origin, Angely brings a wealth of experience and a unique perspective to our modern, inclusive and pragmatic Ontario PC team."

Patrick Brown also joined the Team Pacis volunteers for a celebratory reception at Berto's Cuisine restaurant on Dundas in Mississauga on January 6, 2017, where Ontario PC supporters new and old, of all ethnic and national origins, joined together for Halo Halo.

Congratulations to Attorney Angely M. Q. Pacis on her victory, and we hope for more to come!



Free feeding program in public schools pushed

MANILA - Sen. Grace Poe is optimistic her colleagues will support a measure institutionalizing a free feeding program in all public schools.

Poe, co-sponsor of Senate Bill 1297 (an Act Creating a National School Feeding Program to Combat Hunger and Under-nutrition for all Basic Education Students), said proper support and investment in children would prepare them to become productive citizens.

"The day when not a single public school pupil is left behind on account of poverty and poor health is now on the horizon. This piece of inclusive legislation should be supported by every legislator," the senator said.

"Improving the nutritional well-being of our children requires government intervention because majority of Filipino families today still cannot afford to feed their children sufficiently," she noted.

Despite years of much-touted economic growth, involuntary hunger and child malnutrition continue to be endemic in the Philippines.

Sen. Paolo Benigno Aquino III, chairman of the Senate education, arts and culture committee, endorsed the measure earlier this month for plenary consideration.

The United Nations Children's Fund reported that the Philippines was the ninth country with the largest number of stunted children in the world in 2013.

The overall economic loss consists of P166.5 billion worth of lost income as a result of the lower level of education achieved by the working population who suffered from childhood stunting, P160 billion in lost productivity due to premature deaths among children who would have been members of current working-age population, and P1.23 billion in additional education costs to cover grade repetitions linked to undernutrition.

"Investing in the nutritional well-being of our school-children is money well-spent. Every P50 spent on school feeding, we could save P5,150 in future health, education and lost or low productivity costs brought about by childhood malnutrition," Poe said.

Empirical data showed school feeding program helped improve overall academic performance of students and reduced absenteeism.

The Senate had added P1 billion to the children's feeding budget of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, raising the amount to P4.427 billion, to enable the agency to serve one hot meal daily to 1.74 million two-to four-year-olds for 120 days next year.

Senate Minority Leader Ralph Recto introduced the additional P1 billion in the P3.3 trillion national budget for 2017 as he thanked his colleagues for supporting the move.

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Drew Arellano at Iya Villania, masaya sa kanilang game show ngayong 2017 na 'People vs. The Stars'

Malapit nang magsimula ang kauna-unahang game show ng celebrity couple na sina Drew Arellano at Iya Villania. Ano kaya ang pakiramdam ng dalawa ngayong na mayroon silang pagsasamahang show ngayong 2017?

Kuwento ni Drew pabor sa kanilang mag-asawa ang maging hosts ng People vs. The Stars.

"It's convenient. That's the term that we want to use. Convenient and it's just so natural and easy to work with her (Iya)." Pagpapatuloy ni Iya, "One is not being away from the other. We're working together."

Bukod sa kanilang pagsasama sa People Vs The Stars, ikinuwento rin ng mag-asawa ang saya na kanilang nararamdaman dahil sa kanilang anak na si Primo.

Kuwento ni Drew, isa lang ang mood nila sa bahay.

"Ugh, horrible! Sad and angry all the time," biro nito.

Dagdag pa ni Drew, sa social media accounts makikita ang saya nila bilang isang pamilya.

"What you guys see on TV I guess and on social media is what we are talaga. Such a joy for us lalo na nung dumating si Primo sa buhay namin. I guess we're also very generous to capture stills, every moments, videos, we share it on social media."

Si Iya naman ay umamin na hindi nila mapigilan na matuwa kay Primo kaya ibinabahagi nila ito sa kanilang followers.

"Siyempre hindi namin mapigilan kasi sobra kaming natutuwa kahit kaunting ngiti lang, kaunti coo lang niya."

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DSWD offers free prescription drugs for the poor



Department of Social Welfare and Development Sec. Judy Taguiwalo

MANILA - According to Social Welfare Secretary Judy Taguiwalo, the one billion-peso fund for the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) from the office of President Rodrigo Duterte and Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) has not been downloaded yet to the department since the guidelines for using the fund has just been finalized.

Nevertheless, those who cannot afford to buy medicines can avail of DSWD's as-

sistance by presenting their valid prescription and certificate of indigence to DSWD field office.

Instead of giving cash, DSWD will replace valid and updated prescriptions with guarantee letters and referrals to pharmacies and hospitals.

"Hopefully, ma-implement natin ito by the start of next year 2017. Kahit ngayon hindi pa na-download sa department ang one billion, inumpisahan na ho natin ito," Sec. Taguiwalo said.

(Hopefully, we can implement it by the start of next year 2017. The one billion-peso fund has not been uploaded to the department but we have already started it [program].)

"Kung may mga reseta ho na valid at indigent ho yung nangangailangan, hahanapan ho ng paraan ang department na maibigay ito dahil alam natin ang usapin ng gamot ay nag-i-spell out ng buhay o kamatayan lalo na sa mahihirap natin," she added.

(If you have valid prescription, and you are

indigent and in need, the department will look for ways to provide you the medicines because we know the issue of medicines spells out life or death particularly for the poor.)

The talks for memorandum of agreements with major hospitals and generic drugstores that will help in the implementation are still ongoing.

Currently, DSWD has signed MOUs with six hospitals in different areas of the country.

An individual can ask for medical assistance amounting to five to 25 thousand pesos quarterly through the recommendation of a field social worker. Above these amounts, requests have to be facilitated and approved by social welfare and development officials.

"In extremely justifiable cases, the amount of assistance beyond 25,000 but not to exceed 75,000 may be granted subject to the approval of the assistant secretary for protective programs for DSWD central office to the regional director to DSWD field office," said Taguiwalo.

MAGDALO GROUP DOUBTS OVERTHROW TIP US coup plots vs. Duterte admin, not credible



President Rodrigo Duterte (left) and Magdalo representative Gary Alejano.

MANILA - The Magdalo group does not believe the news of a planned coup attempt against President Rodrigo Duterte.

According to Magdalo Party-list representative Gary Alejano, despite the President's anti-US statements, reports of US-led destabilization plots are not credible.

"Sa akin, wala akong nari-receive na information. Ang alam ko dismayado ang US sa kaniya. Given naman yun. Ibig sabihin,

sino naman hindi madismaya sa ginagawa ni Duterte sa kanila?" Rep. Alejano said in a phone interview.

(For me, I didn't receive any information. What I know is US is dismayed with him. It's already a given. Meaning, who will not be dismayed by what Duterte has been doing against them?)

Rep. Alejano said, there may be those who want to create new issues like coup plans to justify the declaration of martial law.

"Ang gusto talaga ni Duterte ay revolutionary government. Malayo yun. Pero hindi basta-basta makarating tayo doon. Kaya matagal nang pino-float ang martial law kasi that's what he desire," Alejano added.

(What Duterte really wants is a revolutionary government. That's way off. We don't get there just like that. So, they've been float-

ing the idea of martial law for some time now because that's what he desires.)

Meanwhile, House Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez already said that he wants Congress to investigate the matter of coup plots against the administration.

For its part, the Makabayan bloc acknowledges reports of such coup plot against the Duterte administration.

This is the reaction of the opposition group after news of US' involvement in alleged destabilization plan surfaced.

According to Anakpawis party-list representative Ariel Casilao, this is because there are definitely some forces that do not agree with the leadership style of President Duterte.

US Embassy deny Duterte Overthrow plot

MANILA - The United States embassy denied yesterday that there is a US plot to oust President Duterte.

The embassy, through an email sent by press attaché Molly Koscina to The STAR, categorically denied the existence of a "blue-print" to oust Duterte.

This developed as lawmakers from the administration-dominated House of Representatives, led by Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez, threw their support behind Duterte, who former US ambassador Philip Goldberg reportedly wants ousted before 2018.

"We are throwing our full support towards

the move by the Speaker to look into the matter. A House inquiry will definitely iron out some things that need to be fleshed out based on such alarming reports," Davao City Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles said.

"That being said, let me emphasize that President Duterte's support is rock solid, and all attempts to unseat the President will be defied," the chairman of the House committee on appropriations added.

Nograles said they were "alarmed over reports of an alleged coup plot," adding "any sovereign state should respect the independence of other states regarding matters that

pertain to its domestic concerns."

"I don't think any plans to destabilize the government will succeed, especially with the overwhelming mandate this administration received. Instead of being distracted by such plots, we must focus on the work that needs to be done," Parañaque Rep. Gus Tambunting, another administration lawmaker, said.

For his part, Quezon City Rep. Alfred Vargas said it would be foolhardy for any group or individual to attempt to unseat an overwhelmingly popular Chief Executive.



AIDub still the most popular love team

The tandem of Alden Richards and Maine Mendoza, otherwise known as AIDub, is still the hottest onscreen pair in the country as far as Google Search is concerned.

After dominating the Google Philippines' "Year in Search" report in 2015, AIDub has proven once more that its popularity online is still unmatched in 2016. For one, in the search categories listed by the California-based technology company, there are no other local showbiz stars or love teams that appeared, not even in the individual categories that named the most searched male and female personalities in the land.

On the list topped by reigning Miss Universe Pia Wurtzbach, Maine Mendoza ranked second as the most searched female personality in the country. Alden Richards, on the other hand, is the sixth most searched male personality in 2016. The list, which puts President Rodrigo Duterte as no. 1, is dominated by Korean superstars Song Joong Ki (no. 2) and Gong Yoo (no. 4).

Alden and Maine, apart from Pia Wurtzbach, are the only local celebrities that made it to Google Philippines' list of most searched male and female personalities

Meanwhile, in the "Who is...?" search category, the search term "who is AIDub?" ranked second to Harley Quinn, the fictional supervillain appearing in American comic books published by DC Comics, and in the box office hit film, The Death Squad.

Alden and Maine made headlines early this month when GMA Network announced that the onscreen couple would finally star in a television series, the only project that they can't include in their resume yet as a love team. The two are set to star in their very first primetime series, Destined To Be Yours scheduled next year.

If in case this primetime soap would be successful and generate interest among TV viewers, AIDub will likely still dominate 2017, that is if Google Trends is really that reliable in terms of measuring someone's success and popularity. Remember, Pokemon Go that triggered worldwide craze is the most searched term in 2016 but it's not the top income generating app.



Officers and members of PPCO gets inducted and pose for a picture.

'Legally Blind' star Janine Gutierrez, may planong sumali sa beauty pageants?

Marami ang nagsasabing pang-beauty queen ang ganda ni Kapuso actress Janine Gutierrez noon pa man. Dahil dito, marami rin ang naghihintay na sumali ang aktres sa beauty contests.



Ayon kay Janine, thankful daw siya sa mga taong nagsasabi na qualified siya sa beauty pageants ngunit hindi raw ito ang career na gusto niyang tahakin.

"Nafa-flatter ako siyempre pero hindi ko kasi talaga pangarap eh. Wala talaga sa plano kong sumali sa pageant," paliwanag ni Janine.

Pero kahit na sa ngayon ay hindi interesado si Janine, aminado siyang fan siya ng beauty contests. "Excited ako manood ng Miss Universe kasi dito siya [gagawin] sa Philippines and sana manalo tayo this year," saad niya.

Nang tanungin tungkol kay Philippines Miss Universe 2016 bet Maxine Medina, hindi raw niya personally kilala ang pambato ng bansa. "Never ko pa siya na-meet pero I wish her the best. Sana maiuwi niya 'yung korona," pagtatapos ng upcoming Legally Blind star.

APOLOGY continued from page 3

the entire Philippine National Police, the institution most vital to his war on drugs.

Murder most foul: Timeline of 'tokhang-for-ransom'

Previously, Duterte turned down PNP chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa's offer to resign in the wake of the controversy.

The abduction of Jee Ick-joo and his alleged killing inside Camp Crame is considered a smack in the face of police chief Dela Rosa's much-vaunted "Oplan Tokhang" anti-drug campaign, after it was discovered that the victim was kidnapped in October 2016 under the guise of an anti-drug operation.

"I want to disappear from this world because of so much shame after what my men did," Dela Rosa earlier said.

Jee's killing also shocked the South Korean community, which has a big presence in the Philippines.

Jee's kidnap-slay is the latest in a long list of controversies which has been hounding the PNP, considered as one of the most corrupt institutions in the Philippines.

Prior to assuming his post as the country's top cop, Dela Rosa dismissed fears that rogue policemen will take advantage of then President-elect Duterte's anti-drug push.

However, a string of controversies such as the killing of Albuera, Leyte Mayor Rolando Espinosa Sr. under questionable circumstances did not stop Dela Rosa and Duterte from pushing through with their controversial war on drugs. Even Duterte chose to side with policemen behind Espinosa's killing, led by Supt. Marvin Marcos.

Duterte has always defended the police, saying he will provide them assistance should they face charges in the performance of their duty.

Ryza enjoys being other woman



RYZA Cenon never expected that playing an aggressive and shameless other woman in the big Afternoon Prime hit, "Ika-6 na Utos", will give her career its much needed boost. "Grabe ang feedback sa'kin, lalo sa social media kunsaan bina-bash 'yung character ko, si Georgia, and I'm happy it means I'm so effective in my role," she says. "And I'd like to thank Direk Laurice Guillen for helping me every step of the way in interpreting my role. Sabi niya, mag-isip ako ng isang bagay na gustung-gusto kong makuha, pero iba ng may ari kaya aagawin ko."

Doesn't she feel bad when her haters threaten to harm her? "No, okay lang. Kung anu-ano ang sinasabi nila sa'kin, like bubuhusan ka namin ng asido, sasabunutan ka namin, kakalibuhin ka namin. So I just tell them si Georgia po 'yun, hindi po si Ryza. Pero meron din namang

kapag nakikita ako in public, tinatawag akong Georgia then tinatanong kung magkakabalikan pa raw ba sina Gabby Concepcion as Rome and Sunshine Dizon as Emma pagkatapos kong maging homewrecker sa kanila. Bentang-benta rin sa kanilang 'yung tagpong nagkita kami ni Sunshine at nagsampalan kami nang husto. So dahil nag-click 'yun, uulitin daw at pinaghahandaan ko na ang another round of sampalan with her. Actually, learning experience din for me to portray an other woman kasi nalaman kong iba-ibang klase pala ang kabit. May mga pera lang ang habol dun sa lalaki. Pero meron ding talagang nai-in love dun sa lalaki kahit alam na nilang may asawa, gaya ng nangyari sa'kin kay Gabby Concepcion. Kulang din kasi siya sa atensiyon from his own family, kaya kay Gabby niya 'yun hinahanap. But the show stresses hindi tama 'yung pagiging kabit. Gusto lang namin ipakitang tao rin sila, maaaring nagkamali, pero nagmamahal din lang sila, may emosyon din sila."

Off cam, Ryza is so happy in the arms of her loving BF, Cholo Barretto (nephew of Gretchen, Marjorie and Claudine), who says he's watching "Ika-6 na Utos" everyday. "Number one critic ko 'yun, e. May mga suggestion pa siya kung paano ko mas mapapaganda ang acting ko. Very supportive siya, kahit sa love scenes ko with Gabby, okay lang sa kanya."

Cholo has taken her with him to the social gatherings of the Barretto family and they welcome her warmly. It seems he's serious with her. Does she see herself walking to the altar with him?

"Sana, kasi let's face it, 29 na ako, I'm not getting any younger. Tapos, 'yung mga friends ko in the business may mga baby na, like LJ Reyes and Chynna Ortaleza. But I want to wait pa bago kami pakasal. Siguro two years pa para mas mapaghandaan, mas maplano namin nang husto, emotionally and also financially, ang pag-aasawa."

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“GABBI IS MINE!” – Ruru

Everytime na lang talaga na makakakita kami ng posts ni Ruru Madrid kasama o patungkol kay Gabbi Garcia, lagi talagang kaaya-aya ang dating. Sobra kasing sweet ng young actor sa dalaga.

Kamakailan nga, muli na naman niyang ipinagmalaki sa Instagram ang aktres at sinabing “Stop. She’s mine”.

Nakakaloka, ‘di ba? Kaya nga kahit sa kanilang GMA hit telefantasya na Encantadia, hindi magkamayaw ang GabRu fans na pigilan ang pagmamahalang nabubuo between Ruru’s character na si Ybarro at Amihan (Kylie Padilla). Ano na nga kaya ang mangyayari sa dalawa?

18 year old na ang Kapuso star na si Gabbi Garcia. Kahit sinasabi pareho nina Ruru Madrid at Gabbi Garcia na 18 man ito, hindi pa rin talaga ina-allow na magkaroon ng boyfriend ng mga magulang.

Pero, very vocal si Ruru palagi ng pagmamahal niya sa Kapuso star, ka-loveteam at isa sa mga Sang’gre ng Encantadia bilang si Sang’gre Alena. So, sila na nga ba?

Grabe ‘yung caption ni Ruru sa post niya sa picture nilang dalawa ni Gabbi na “Stop. She’s mine.” Ano ‘to, inangkin na? Huh!

Parang warning ni Ruru sa mga magkakainteres o baka may nagpaparamdam na nga na gustong manligaw kay Gabbi? May pananakot? Huh!

Wondering, ano kaya reaksiyon ni Gabbi sa sinabing ‘yun ni Ruru o katulad din kaya si Gabbi ng mga GabRu fans na todo-kilig siyempre sa post na ‘yun.

So ‘yun na nga, kaya sa Encantadia mismo, parang rigodon din ang mga fans. Talagang umaasa ang mga ito na ang ending, sina Ybarro at Alena talaga at hindi sina Ybarro at Amihan (Kylie Padilla) na in a way, nakabuo na rin naman ng sarili nilang hukbo ng tagahanga. So, paano, makuha rin kaya sa “stop, she’s mine” caption ni Ruru ang kahahantungan nila sa kanang primetime fantaserye?

What Arci realizes in the end

AFTER her primetime show “Magpahanggang Wakas” ended last Friday, to be replaced by “A Love to Last”, Arci Muñoz is happy to star in a new movie, “Extra Service”, an action comedy that is Star Cinema’s first offering for 2017.

There’s something new in her life this 2017: she’s now loveless. Yes, she has broken up with her rocker boyfriend of more than three years, named Badi del Rosario, whose other name as a band vocalist is Bones Frankenstein. The guy is also the son of a Brunei prince. Friends inquire how she’s doing and she assures them she’s okay. “I’m happy that I now have more time to spend with my family,” she says. “Kasi lately, puro work na lang ako palagi. E, di ba we just lost my dad last year, so I want to spend more time with them. In the end talaga, I realized na mas importante pa rin ang pamilya.”



Scenes in the City

James, proud sa revealing photo ni Nadine

James, proud sa halip na magalit sa revealing photo ni Nadine
HINDI dapat mag-alala si Nadine Lustre na magagalit ang mahal niyang si James Reid sa pagsu-suot niya ng bikini na kita ang kanyang behind.

Katwiran niya: “Kasama ko naman sa picture ang kapatid niya (James Reid) na si Lauren. Hindi ko naman gagawin iyon kung ayaw niya.”

Balitang proud pa nga ang teen idol sa halip na nagalit.
Mukhang hindi lamang si James ang nakaka-like ng sexy photo na ‘yon kung hindi ang utol niyang si Jack (Reid).

Pinayagan na ni James ang mga kapatid niyang pasukin ang showbiz. May nagawa nang pelikula si Jack, ang “Dark Room” mula sa Viva Films at si Lauren naman ay in-demand as a model.



ABOVE, Birthday boy Mel Galeon (LEFT) celebrates with friends. And with employees at picture on Left.



BELOW AND ABOVE, Enfield Place Dental Clinic celebrated their Christmas party at the Wok of Fame in Brampton. LEFT, Dr. Annette Simbulan (SEATED LEFT) and the staff of Enfield Place Dental enjoy the night away.



ABOVE, Melissa Saldua Ventocilla, her mom Flora Saldua and Michelle Jucar attend the Canadian Asian Fashion week awards dinner.

LEFT, Michelle Jucar and Melissa Ventocilla pose after the show.



Believing that people get united with a bottle of San Miguel beer, Dr. Solon Guzman happily poses with one at his New Years’ eve party as he and his family celebrates New Year’s Eve with family and friends.



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Mel Galeon's Birthday

Mel Galeon, owner and President of FV Foods celebrated his birthday in the company of friends, family and employees at the FV Foods Lawrence Avenue East branch last January 6, 2017. Obviously, there were lots of delicious foods. Dancing and games made the night more fun and exciting. With the frigid cold temperature outside, it was nice to be inside, celebrating a special occasion with friends, enjoying the warmth brought about by good company.



Hello World, this is the Philippines

An insider in this sunrise industry reveals how BPO employees deal with late working hours, raging hormones, and the generous compensation package that brings with it security concerns, an indulgent lifestyle and risky sex practices

It's a sunrise industry where night turns to day and day to night. At the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry, employees forsake restful sleep, fueled by cups of java 24/7 to serve countries several time zones away.

With revenues second only to OFW remittances, the BPO industry in the Philippines has attracted young, hip, tech-savvy IT professionals mainly enamored with its generous compensation package. Eastwood City in Libis, Quezon City, the first approved IT center with its bandwidth-enabled towers, hosts a wide range of call center companies that provide outsourcing services for both local and global companies.

Now at 61, I am defying ageism as my contemporaries dandle grandchildren or welcome retirement with glee. Competition and the whole notion of a corporate setting acquire a new meaning in the BPO industry for people my age who are latecomers to the Internet. Nevertheless, I learned computer jargon and basic troubleshooting skills, and navigated software side by side with the young' uns.

Although the outfit where I work is located at Eastwood City and employs the same technology, Benito, 40, our HR Manager, makes it clear that ours is not strictly a BPO company doing backroom operations.

HIV-AIDS risk

But our workforce similarly has to contend with issues and concerns that hound the BPO industry—like that Health Department report some years back which said that call center agents have a higher risk of acquiring Human Immuno Virus-Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV-AIDS). The report said that because of their environment and peer pressure, call center agents tend to indulge themselves and engage in risky sex practices.

My fellow trainer, Sharline, 31, who has worked in our company for seven years ends her shift at 10 p.m. She uses the morning hours



to do freelance work as a writer. At the end of a grueling workweek, she ends up organizing Friday nights-out with friends. And Eastwood is uniquely geared for this, offering bars, bistros, band gigs, and tianghies (bazaars and flea markets) for its still wide-awake denizens.

But Rocky, 34, a 12-year call center veteran, who remained on night shift throughout his career, says the body never quite acclimatizes to this day-for-night reversal. “The body rebels against this,” he says. On weekends, he would catch up on sleep only to be jolted back into the same reversal mode on Monday, making Mondays tortuous for him.

Still, the generous paycheck somehow makes up for his disrupted body clock. But that extracts a price as well.

Back in 2003 when Rocky started his career as a call center agent, entry-level salaries averaged P15,000. Today, it's currently in the P20,000 to P25,000 range, luring young BPO workers to indulge in spending sprees on devices, travel, real estate, and the habit of

conspicuous consumption.

Nest egg

In 2003, Carlo, 33, with a total BPO experience of 10 years, started as an outbound agent with an average net pay of P14,000, a windfall for a new graduate. Such rates have made many BPO workers family breadwinners, while some have attained independence. Rocky was able to move out of the parental fold into his own place and built his own nest egg in financial investments.

Sharline was able to travel “at least once a year” to nearby Asian destinations, help her OFW mother support the family, and buy the badly-needed family van on a salary double that of her former job as a lifestyle magazine writer. Like Rocky, she was able to move into her own flat with another trainer.

All those perks however leave most BPO employees prone to hypertension, obesity, cardiovascular disorders, insomnia, and diabetes.

Fortunately, one of the priceless offerings of the BPO industry is its health package. As one of a handful of senior employees, I have mainly praise for this package as my contemporaries in other fields complain of losing their company-sponsored medical insurance upon retirement. I gratefully availed myself of physical therapy sessions for cervical strain and underwent an angiogram without shelling out a centavo.

Holdups

But there are safety and security risks as well in working in a sleepless industry, as indicated by media reports on how BPO workers have been targeted by muggers, holduppers and other criminals because of their ungodly work hours. A recent case is that of Teng Santaromana Gamboa, widow of the late Filipino musician Dominic “Papadom” Gamboa, who died shortly after logging off from work, apparently a victim of a holdup inside the cab she hailed to go home. Gamboa was working in a call center in Legaspi Village, Makati City, and had left the office in the early hours of Feb. 10 when tragedy struck.

Because of their payday schedule every other Friday, Rocky's colleagues became similarly vulnerable to muggings, robberies, and taxi holdups in Manila. To address this, Carlo's company had an ATM unit installed within the office building to save employees the trouble of withdrawing their pay in public.

Some companies arranged for batches of homeward-bound employees to be escorted by their security patrols to the nearest MRT station. Others organized shuttle services for employees with fixed drop-off points. The Human Resource department at Rocky's company also published a list of safe and reputable taxi companies that employees can call instead of hailing cabs on the street. Our firm has developed a

CALL CENTER
continued on page 20

BLOCKED:

Some porn sites inaccessible in PH

Some pornographic websites were blocked in the Philippines as of Saturday, January 14. Top porn sites like Pornhub, Xvideos, and Redtube do not load anymore when accessed in some devices. It appears, however, that this filter does not yet apply across all Internet service providers (ISPs) in the country. As of this posting, there is neither a list of porn sites that would be blocked, nor a list of ISPs that have implemented this filter.

MIKA AND BARBIE
continued from page 25

ng artista nila. I trust my Ate so lumipat
ng ako and so far, no regrets naman.
Enjoy naman ako. Napi-feel ko 'yung pag-
aalaga nila sa handlers ko who make me
feel valued at inaasikaso ako nang husto."

She was glad when she was informed she'll be in Barbie's show. "Bata pa lang kami ni Barbie, nagkatrabaho na kami sa movie na 'Ang Darling Kong Aswang', mga 7 years ago na 'yun. Mga anak kami ni Bossing Vic Sotto. So parang reunion namin itong 'Meant to Be'. At saka hindi lang ako ang galing sa Dos dito sa show, kundi sina Ivan Dorschner, Addy Raj at mismong director naming si L.A. Madridesong. Lahat sila nagsimula sa a Kapamilya."

So it's a reunion for them to be working together again in "Meant to Be"? "Yes, lalo na si Direk L.A., sobrang saya kong nagkasama kami uli. Kasi noong bata pa ako,

pinapasan pa niya ako sa likod niya. I feel so blessed na sa first project ko sa GMA, siya ang nakasama ko kasi nga comfortable na ako sa kanya. Nagpaalam naman ako nang maayos sa ABS na susubukan ko munang magtrabaho sa iba at pumayag naman sila.”

Does she live with her sister? “No, she has her own house with her family. I live with my mom and dad, pero ‘yung mom ko, umuwi ngayon sa kanila sa Austria for a vacation.”

Eventually, her relationship with Barbie in "Meant to Be" will go sour and she'll be a *contravida*. Does she mind? "No. Enjoy nga akong magcontravida. Mas tumatagal sila sa industry at mas maraming nagagawa. But dito, hindi naman ako salbaheng villain kundi kulang lang sa attention."





Barbie sees Ivan go to-tally nude

BARBIE Forteza has reason to feel ecstatic as her primetime show, “Meant to Be”, has been rating very high since it started two weeks ago. The feedback is great every night and her four leading men now have their own cheerleaders.

“I’m really surprised na lagi kaming trending sa social media at gulat din ako sa dami ng fans ng show na iba-iba ang boy na gusto para sa akin,” says Barbie. “May mga maka-Ken Chan, maka-Addy Raj, maka-Jak Roberto, maka-Ivan Dorschner. Each of them, may kanya-kanyang kilig na dulot sa fans. Sobrang haba ng hair ko, o. Sabi ko nga, ano kaya, daanin na lang sa text votes as to who should you win my heart? Sino kaya ang makaka-receive ng pinakamaraming text votes?”

This week, Barbie as Billie continues to work as the girl Friday of the four handsome boys in their sports bar. What’s nice about the show is the touches of comedy that make the viewers laugh out loud, like when Ivan as Ethan takes a shower without knowing that Barbie is inside and sees him going totally nude.

Viewers who complain that Barbie has more scenes with Ken as Yuan will see this week that Barbie is now getting closer to Ivan who she advises to be in good terms with his own mom who he addresses as Mi. Barbie often hears him arguing on the phone with his Mi. But Ivan, it turns out, already has a girlfriend, and her name is Mia. In fact, she’s the one that Ivan addresses as Mi, not his mommy.

Another element in the show that viewers find interesting is the story among the Triplets: Manilyn Reynes as Amelia, Tina Paner as Suzy and Sheryl Cruz as Beatriz. It seems all the three of them have had a previous connection with Manilyn’s husband, Keempee de Leon as Wilton, making their relationship very, very intriguing.

ADDY, INDIAN WHO WANTS TO BE FILIPINO ACTOR

ADDY Raj is being officially introduced in “Meant to Be” as one of Barbie Forteza’s four leading men. He was an exchange student at the Ateneo when he met a talent scout who asked him to join ABS-CBN’s singing contest for foreigners, “I Love OPM”. “I auditioned and I passed,” he says. “But I didn’t win. I only made it up to the top 24.

But because of that, I learned how to speak Tagalog because I was made to sing a Tagalog song.” Born in New Delhi, India on August 30, 1995, his full name is Adhiraj Gaur. “My screen name now is from my real first name, na ginawang Addy Raj. I never really planned to join showbiz. I had an offer from MTV India but I wanted to go out of India and work in another Asian country. I enjoyed my stay here in the Philippines so much, so I decided to come back here.

I had a contract with ABS-CBN then but it has expired and then GMA had a better offer, a lead role in ‘Meant to Be’, so I grabbed it.

But does he know that the image of Indians or Bumbays here is as the main source of 5-6 money lending? “Yes and I was so surprised. People will come up and tell me they want to borrow money from me, so I’d tell them, I’m not rich. Dito lang ‘yan, kasi hindi naman kami ganyan sa India.”

His family remains in New Delhi. He is now enjoying taping “Meant to Be”. “Everyone is nice on the set. So relaxed and light sa taping. And I’m also making new friends with all my co-stars. Someday, I plan to take all my family to live here.”

“Meant to Be” comes right after “Alyas Robin Hood”. We told the show’s very stylish program manager, Hazel Abonita, that this might be a late slot for the young fans of Barbie. “Hindi naman,” she replies. “Na-develop na ng GMA ang slot na ‘yan for this kind of romantic comedy, like in ‘Because of You’ nina Gabby Concepcion and Carla Abellana, and ‘Juan Happy Love Story’ nina Heart Evangelista and Dennies Trillo, which are both topraters. So we’re confident na magiging mataas din ang rating ng ‘Meant to Be’ na talaga namang mai-in love ang viewers sa character ni Barbie as Billie at ng four leading men niya.”

Stars to Watch Out for in 2017

+ other stories

2016 has brought us a lot of memorable highlights with our favorite stars. Be it the overflowing kilig courtesy of real-life sweethearts JaDine, the nostalgic vibe of Encantadia’s comeback, or Liza Soberano’s internet-breaking beauty, we have been truly blessed with incredible fan moments this year. And as we wrap 2016 up, we are now looking forward to the near future and giving you our fair prediction of who to lookout for in 2017.

From 2016 breakout star Lauren Reid to GMA’s newest darlings and every pretty heartthrob in between, check out our short list of 2017’s next bright young things below:

Gil Cuerva
Much to our surprise, Filipino-Spanish model Gil Cuerva was just recently announced to star opposite seasoned actress Jennylyn Mercado in the GMA remake of Korean hit, My Love From the Stars. With his long hair and chinito charm, there’s no doubt this guy will be every girl’s favorite leading man on TV come next year.



Lauren Reid
Lauren Reid has broken through everybody’s radar this year by gracing print and online publications with her candid beauty and laid-back appeal. For 2017, we are more than excited to witness more of her hosting dreams come to reality from our television screens.



Klea Pineda
With her mesmerizing looks and statuesque figure, it’s hard to ignore Klea Pineda’s regal beauty. Currently playing as Muyak in GMA’s Encantadia, we’re thrilled to see this stunner’s career bloom even more in 2017.



Ronnie Alonte
Quite the irresistible charmer, Hashtag member Ronnie Alonte co-stars with Julia Barretto in the film Vince and Kath and James for this year’s Metro Manila Film Festival. His boy-next-door appeal and crazy fan-base are only a couple of reasons as to why he’s going to make it big in the next few months.



Michelle Marquez Dee
With a distinct beauty that is very much attributed to her genes, Michelle, daughter of Filipina beauty icon Melanie Marquez, is starting to capture attention for herself. We don’t know much about her yet, but we think she fits the bill as fashion’s next top muse.



Ivan Dorschner
Fresh from his two-year hiatus in the States, ex-Pinoy Big Brother housemate Ivan Dorschner is making a comeback with a new series on GMA entitled Meant to Be. We’re all excited to see him play Ethan Spencer Hughes, one of teen actress Barbie Forteza’s four dashing leading men in the light-hearted TV show.



Kira Balingier
Currently playing as Y opposite Joshua Garcia’s Z in ABS-CBN’s afternoon series The Greatest Love, Kira is one of Star Magic’s newest faces this year. We’re betting her doll-like beauty and promising talent will lead her to greater things in the new year.



Jameson Blake
Hashtag member Jameson Blake caught our attention after winning Best Supporting Actor at this year’s Cinema One Originals Festival for his role in the film 2 Cool 2 Be 4gotten. With his Filipino-American looks and outstanding acting chops, his peers better watch out.



Kate Valdez
Kate is often compared to Angel Locsin and Liza Soberano, but we think that this girl is GMA’s newest It-face out of her own merit. With her morena complexion, pointed nose, and overall exotic charm, Kate, who plays Sang’gre Lira in Encantadia, will surely take her spot as showbiz royalty sooner than later.



Joshua Garcia
Also starring in Vince and Kath and James with Julia Barretto, Joshua is surely a star on the rise. With his nice guy charm that’s easy to fall for, everyone is saying that he might just be the next John Lloyd Cruz.



New challenges for Janine, Kris

JANINE Gutierrez faces the most challenging role in her career as a blind lawyer in one of the first shows to start taping for 2017 at the Kapuso Network, “Legally Blind”. “Maganda nga ang pasok ng new year for me dahil may bago agad akong show,” she says. “At napakaganda pa ng role ko.”

She will play a law student who gets raped and brutally beaten up that she loses her eyesight. Despite her disability, she continues to pursue her law degree and becomes a Bar topnotcher who will help oppressed people. For her role, she has to study how actual blind people behave and learn how to read the Braille alphabet for the visually challenged.



She’ll also train with actual lawyers to familiarize herself with her role. We’re personally advising her to also watch good TV series about lawyers, notably our personal favorites, “The Good Wife” and “Suits”, and also “Daredevil”, where the hero is also a blind lawyer.

Another Kapuso star to have a challenging project for 2017 is Kris Bernal, who was earlier reportedly plan to move to ABS-CBN. Obviously, her plan didn’t prosper and she’s now slated to do the remake of “Impostora”, first shown by GMA-7 exactly ten years ago starring Sunshine Dizon in dual roles as twins where one is good and the other is evil. Kris is a good actress, as shown in her last soap, “Little Nanay”, and we have no doubt she can tackle the twin roles competently.

JAK’S TIME TO SHINE

JAK Roberto’s time has come. After being

one of the nameless performers in the late Kuya Germs’ midnight show, “Walang Tulugan”, he’s finally given leading man status on primetime in GMA’s new show, “Meant to Be”. Jak used to be part of the trio, Threelogy, with Jeric Gonzales and Abel Estanislao, which has been disbanded after Abel left GMA Artist Center. His breakout role is in “Dear Uge”, where he is often shown shirtless to display his chiselled torso, which he also does in ‘Bubble Gang’. This earned him the title Pambansang Abs because of his very pronounced abdominal muscles.

“Marami na rin akong ginawang shows before that, doing supporting roles, like ‘Cielo de Angelina’, ‘Half Sisters’, ‘With a Smile’, ‘Ilustrado’, ‘Hanggang Makita Kang Muli’, ‘Usapang Real Love’, pero sa ‘Dear Uge’ talaga ako unang



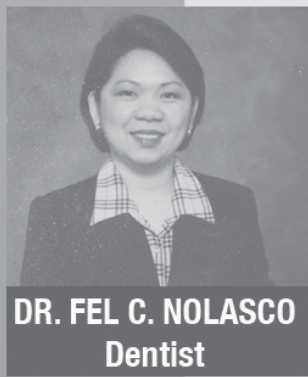
napansin nang husto,” he says. ‘At ngayon, grateful akong mabigyan ng lead role on primetime in ‘Meant to Be’. When I was first informed about it, hindi agad nagsink in sa akin. But now, feeling ko, nasa cloud nine ako sa sobrang saya ko for this opportunity. At least, may acting akong maipapakita at hindi puro pagtatanggal lang ng shirt ko sa harap ng kamera.”

Being assigned a lead role has multiplied his followers in his social media accounts. “Biglang naging 141,000 sa Instagram at 20,000 sa Twitter ang followers ko. Pero siempre, dumami rin ang bashers. I guess normal naman yun. I understand them. Sana, panoorin na lang nila ang ‘Meant to Be’ starting this Monday night sa GMA7.”

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Drew describes wife Iya as 'phenomenal'



IYA Villania and husband Drew Arellano are hosting the original GMA game show, "People vs. the Stars". At its presscon, they brought their 4-month old son, Primo, with them. "Kasi I'm breastfeeding him at ayokong masanay siya sa bottle kaya isinasama ko, pati

sa taping. I want him to need me. Ayokong ma-feel na hindi na niya ako kailangan," Iya laughs.

Drew says he's hats off to Iya when it comes to being a good mom. "She's a first time mother but she's very phenomenal in doing her job. She's a working mom but, at night, she still wakes up to feed our son without kicking me on the bed to help her. I think everyday is a Mother's Day for her."

"In fairness to Drew, he's also a hands on dad. When he's not working, he just stays home helps me in changing Primo's diapers. He even carries our baby at isinasayaw niya to put him to sleep, until someone warned him na huwag sanayin at baka maghanap," says Iya.

It's a lot of fun for them to be working together in one show. "We hosted a cooking show last year, 'Home Foodie', pero ten minutes lang 'yun, unlike this one that runs for one hour. It's nice kasi we can leave home together and sabay rin kaming umuwi," says Drew.

"People vs. the Stars" will feature three guest stars each week. They will be asked 8 questions with a corresponding cash value. If they'd give

the correct answers in all the 8 questions, they can win as much as P200,000.

In the presscon, some press people acted as contestants and they got only one correct answer. It's because most of the questions are trick questions so you have to really think carefully first before giving an answer. If the stars fail to give a correct answer, the question's cash prize goes to the viewers who can text their answer to the People Question of the Week.

In the first episode they taped, the guests are Kapuso Heartthrobs Alden Richards, Derrick Monasterio and Kristoffer Martin. Featured in the second episode are Kapuso actresses Rhian Ramos, Solenn Heussaff and Carla Abellana. "They are such good contestants, they made our job as hosts easier, lalo na sina Alden kasi barkada talaga sila at sila mismo, maraming punchlines, lalo na si Kristoffer who's so kult and is the clown in their group. Never a dull moment at laugh trip talaga. With this type of game show format, it's not only the viewers who'll enjoy but also the guests themselves."

"People vs. the Stars" airs coming Sunday from 5 to 6 p.m. on GMA7.

KEN: DI AKO BALIW

KEN Chan was so convincing as the trans-woman in "Destiny Rose" and he even won an acting award for it. He says the role made people think he's really gay so he's happy that this time, in his new show, "Meant to Be", he projects a totally different persona as Yuan Lee.

"Nakabigote ako rito, masyadong maangas, galit sa mundo kasi masama ang loob ko sa father kong Chinese tycoon dahil anak lang niya ako sa labas," he says. "Malayong-malayo ito sa transgender role ko before kaya, hopefully, maiba na ang tingin sa'kin ng tao after they've seen me in my more macho role in 'Meant to Be'."

He just laughs off rumors that he was seen kissing with another guy in a bar in BGC. "Malayong mangyari 'yun kasi hindi ako mahilig lumabas at mag-bar. I'm often just at home with my family. At baliw ba akong gagawa ng something like makikipaghalikan sa kapwa ko lalaki, na siguradong makakasira sa'kin, in public? Malinis ang conscience ko kasi secure akong girls pa rin ang gusto ko. Wag na lang pansinin ang ganyang tsismis."

BROMANCE

Ivan and James

Ivan Dorschner belongs to the same batch of "Pinoy Big Brother: Clash of 2010" where James Reid emerged as the winner. Both of them were given supporting roles in ABS-CBN but their careers didn't really prosper.

James hit it big when he moved to Viva while Ivan decided to just go back to California. Now, he's back in circulation and has moved to GMA-7, given his biggest break so far as one of the four leading men of Barbie Forteza in "Meant to Be."

"It was James who convinced me to return to Manila and make a showbiz comeback when we saw each other in L.A.," says Ivan, who's now 26.

"For sure, people would compare me to him, but between us, there's no competition. We're good friends and he's very supportive of me. But I'll just do my best on my own." They're so close folks say they have a "bromance." "Well, bahala na ang mga tao kung gusto nilang lagyan ng malice ang friendship namin. Go ahead, it's fine. Actually, James is also close to Bret Jackson, na kasama



rin namin noon sa PBB. Kasi nawala ako, 'di ba? At sila, nag-ing magkasama sa Viva. But we're all just good friends."

So is he happy now with GMA?

"Sobra. They gave me a really warm welcome at lahat kami ng cast ng 'Meant to Be,' nagkakasundo. I gained new friends here."

The show's very fashionable program manager Hazel Abonita says they're very happy with the high ratings and very positive feedback that the show got in its pilot telecast. Congratulations!

SCAPEGOAT continued from page 1

to respect the rule of law or enforce the law. "It will only continue to deteriorate and eventually cease to be the major law enforcement agency of the government," she said.

De Lima put most of the blame to Duterte, who according to her transformed the PNP into a "death squad."

"This is not the sole fault of its PNP chief, but mostly of his President who has transformed a once professional institution into nothing more than 'tokhang' death squads engaged in "tong" shakedown rackets," she said.

Gina apologizes to Ara: ‘Sana, maayos na’+ other stories

GINA Alajar is one of most trusted directors today. She’s always something, like “Villa tana”, “Yagit”, “Let Love Begin”, “Half Sisters” and now “Pinulot Ka Lang sa Lupa”. In between, she also acts, like playing the main villain in “Magkaibang Mundo”. She’s now challenged to adapt National Artist Ishmael Bernal’s hit drama movie, “Pinulot Ka Lang” for the small screen.



“Maraming napanood noon kasi pinagsama sina Lorna Tolentino and Maricel Soriano,” she says. “But for TV, marami kaming binago para mas kumapal ang story. Isa na rito ‘yung role ni Eddie Garcia as the patriarch in the movie na ginawa naming babae ngayon, si Jean Garcia. Binigyan din namin ng back story ang characters nina Julie Anne San Jose as Santina and LJ Reyes as Angelie. May mga magulang sila rito na nawalay sa kanila. Si Allan Paule ang ama ni Julie at si Ara Mina ang ina ni LJ.”

What can she say about the rant of Ara Mina against the show in her Instagram account? “Hindi ko nabasa, e. When someone told me about it, I checked it pero deleted na. But sana maayos kasi if she’d really quit the show, sayang naman dahil ang dami na niyang nakuhang eksena. Magiging kawalan siya kasi in fairness to her, she’s really very good. Nakatrabaho ko na siya bilang artista sa ‘Tatlo Magkasalo’ before na bagets pa siya at magaling talaga. Ngayon ko lang uli siya nakatrabaho at ako nang director niya and she has really transformed herself into a very good actress. At okay siyang katrabaho, hindi mareklamo. Once, napaghintay ko siya nang matagal sa gabi and I said sorry and she said, ‘No, Ate Gina, okay lang.’ Mabait talaga siya. I don’t know the reason kung anong hindi niya nagustuhan but, siguro, ‘yun ‘yung na-delay ang airing ng show at nainip na siya sa kahihintay. Kasi dapat, October pa ang airing namin pero naurong nang naurong dahil na-extend ‘yung ‘Sa Piling ni Nanay’. Pero heto, finally, we’ll start on January 30. Baka may ibang offers sa kanya na hindi niya natanggap dahil dito. Sana naman, maayos na nang husto ng production para makabalik na siya uli sa taping.”

GMA ANNOUNCES NEW SHOWS FOR 2017

‘PINULOT Ka Lang Sa Lupa’ is the second

GMA-7’s tors directing Quin-the

new show introduced by GMA-7 this year after the highly successful toprater, “Meant to Be”. This will be followed by “Destined to be Yours”, a Valentine offering starring Alden Richards and Maine Mendoza, co-starring Janice de Belen, Lotlot de Leon, Gardo Versoza, Dominic Roco, Sheena Halili, Ina Feleo, Juancho Triviño, RJ Padilla, Koreen Medina and Boots Anson-Roa. Janine Gutierrez stars in “Legally Blind”, where she plays a law student raped and beaten up and loses her eyesight but goes on to become a hotshot lawyer. She’s paired with Mikael Daez and Rodjun Cruz, co-starring Lau Young, Marc Abaya and Chanda Romero, directed by Ricky Davao.

Kris Bernal has dumped her plan to be a Kapamilya and will star in a remake of “Impostora”, which starred Sunshine Dizon before. Her leading men are Rafael Rosell and Ryan Eigenmann. Then there’s the adaptation of the Koreanovela, “My Loved from the Star”, starring Jennylyn Mercado and new discovery Gil Cuerva.

Regine Velasquez will have two new shows. One is a comedy-musical show on Saturdays starting February 18, “Full House Tonight”, co-starring Miguel Tanfelix, Bianca Umali, Solenn Heussaff, Joross Gamboa and several comedians led by Kim Idol and Philip Lazaro. Regine’s other show will be the telefantasya, “Mulawin vs. Ravena”, with Dennis Trillo, Derrick Monasterio, Bea Binene, Miguel Tanfelix, Bianca Umali, Chynna Ortaleza, Dion Ignacio, Winwyn Marquez, Kiko Estrada and Roi Vinzon, directed by Dominic Zapata and Don Michael Perez.



The game show, “Celebrity Bluff”, will be back, this time as a daily show, still with Eugene Domingo but no longer with Jose Manalo as co-host but with Edu Manzano as Master Bluffer. Dingdong Dantes will host his own docu-drama, “Case Solved”, about crimes complete with actual footage, interviews with victims and dramatization. Wifey Marian Rivera will also have her own show on primetime, now being cooked up. Heart Evangelista will be hosting “Project Achieved”. Other shows lined up are “Text Serye”, “Daig Kayo ng Lola Ko”, “Lip Sync Battle Philippines Season 3” and the hit Koreanovela, “The Big One” starring Park Seo Joon and Choi Siwon. Will Kris Aquino have a show with them? The answer is none.



Nadine inaway-away ng ilang fans nina Kathryn at Daniel

TANONG ng ilang fans today ay kung in-unfollow na ni Nadine Lustre si Kathryn Bernardo sa Instagram.

This came after lumabas sa isang website ang isang post where it showed na hindi na pina-follow ng dyowa ni James Reid ang girlfriend ni Daniel Padilla.

Super depensa naman ang fans ni Nadine laban sa ilang matataray at palabang fans nina Kathryn at Daniel.

Baka natoxic si Nadine sa mga pina follow nya so she just unfollowed everyone tapos follow na lang ulit sa mga people that she really like.

“Is it that far-fetched na impossible mangyari? Haha, be analytic din kase. If she unfollowed na isa-isa, then for sure big issue na yan and I’m pretty sure she’ll get bashed for it.

“Mas realistic pa sayo yung ‘nasira’ yung IG nya or na-hack, given na verified account siya? THINK!” wailed one fan.

“Itong mga kampon ng Kathnyek, kung makagawa ng intriga ganun na lang tapos pag pinatulan kayo, banas naman kayo.

“IG ni Nadine yan, wala kayong paki kung sino gusto niya ifollow or unfollow. Lahat ng lang ng galaw ni Nadine, inaalang ninyo. Stalkers!” mataray na comment ng isang maka-JaDine.

“Isa kang reyna ng nega. Kung yung ibang kaibigan ni Nadine di pa rin nya follow uli lahat eh. Ilan araw nga after nya nagkaproblema sa Instagram si James lang muna ang kaisa isa follow nya. Lawakan ang isip ha at di puro paggawa ng gulo at galawang troll ang asa isip,” one guy said.

“Mga jejecakes na itez, ano bang pakealam niyo kung inunfollow ni ate Nadz si Kath? Kasalanan ba sa Diyos yun? Nag-react ba kame for the longest time nung hindi pina-follow ni kath si ate nadz????” said another fan.



Kylie to give birth in Australia?

KYLIE Padilla turned 24 years old last Wednesday, January 25, and she spent her birthday quietly to avoid any nosey people who’d inquire about her infanticipation. She just continues to post cryptic messages like: “Whichever you are, be proud.” This made netizens feel that she’s proud of her pregnancy and she doesn’t intend to hide her condition. But it’s also bruited about that she’ll soon fly to Australia (where her mom lives) to give birth there. This has yet to be confirmed, though.

What is sure is that even if they have yet to admit her condition, the latest development on her current situation is that her manager, Betchay Vidanes posted on the net that she and Aljur Abrenica are now officially engaged. That means, a wedding is probably imminent, even if they have different faiths since Kylie is officially a Muslim like her dad Robin Padilla and Aljur is a Christian.

What’s nice is that her fans continue to tell Kylie that they love her and that they’ll support her, so she should remain strong and brave for her baby. One supporter wrote to her: “Be proud because God sent you an angel from above that’s going to love you for life. Lucky you!” They say that this is not the end of her career since other female stars got preggy but were able to comeback, like Jennylyn Mercado who was impregnated by Patrick Garcia and LJ Reyes who has a son with Paulo Avelino.

But they add that they’ll miss her character in “Encantadia” as Amihan, whose death has already been leaked in social media. And if the fans are very kind to Kylie, it’s totally the opposite in the case of Aljur. The fans are mad at him and they say: “Wala ka nang career, idinamay mo pa si Kylie kung kailan sumisikat na siya dahil sa ‘Encantadia’.” “Ang kapal ng mukha mo, binalikan mo si Kylie, bubuntisin mo lang pala.” They’re asking what he will feed Kylie and their baby, considering he has no work at the moment.

What the fans seem to forget is that it takes two to make a baby. If Kylie didn’t open her legs for her boyfriend, then he could not get in during their vacation in Japan last September where it’s said that the baby was conceived.

CALL CENTER continued from page 17

system of alerting employees to any event or act of nature that could threaten our safety. Adds Adam: “Companies generally provide transportation when there are typhoons or flooding, with emergency provisions so people can crash [in the office] in [unforeseen] circumstances.”

Close proximity

As for the perception of promiscuity among its mostly young workforce and the resulting spike in HIV/AIDS cases, the BPO industry is like any other in that love can bloom amid work deadlines. But yes, “the median age of 23 to 25, plus the sheer number, the close proximity among employees, and the unorthodox work hours” can breed new rules when it comes to relationships.

Ramona, 26, a trainer whose five-year experience includes working for small BPO companies, says many employees rotate part-

ners within the company, often breaking the unwritten code about not dating a friend’s ex. George, 48, another trainer with about 10 years of experience in the BPO industry, notes how short-lived most pairings are, with many of them lasting only weeks. In BPO companies he has worked for, stories of amorous tussles in the sleeping quarters are not unheard of. To avoid such encounters, Ramona recounts how some companies have installed separate male and female sleeping dorms.

But there are enduring relationships as well that have led to the altar, such as George’s love story with fellow trainer, Chin, 38, which started with him giving her and other colleagues a lift home. A shared devotion to their families drew them closer. The couple made the union official in 2014 and are now parents to a daughter born this year.

Says Rocky, whose current partner is not in the industry: “I felt I needed to get daytime

work to be more in sync with him.”

Burnout

But while I and fellow trainers in our senior years feel blessed to be enjoying this second wind, younger employees remain open to other career options. Benito says burnout in the job arises from the routine work. Carlo observes

that the average length of stay is about six months for about half of the employees. “These moves are

often spurred by the ease with which employees can transfer to other BPO companies.

Despite the revolving-door careers, the BPO industry does try to build a culture of job security. Carlo cites their janitor who moved up from agent to supervisor. He himself has climbed from being an outbound agent to becoming a

More int'l cruises set to dock in Philippines



SINGAPORE — More international cruise companies have started to express interest to dock in the Philippines, further strengthening the government's bid to make the country a major hub for international cruise ships.

Tourism Secretary Wanda Teo revealed the agency was in discussions with cruise giants Carnival Cruise Line and the Genting Group.

"I've been meeting with the executives of Carnival Corp. and Genting. Both agreed that the Philippines has great potential to become

one of Asia's cruise hubs," Teo said.

Star Cruises, a subsidiary of Genting Hong Kong, earlier announced its fleet flagship, Superstar Virgo, was set to establish Manila as its new home port this summer. This is the first time a company has chosen the city as its vessel's base.

Michael Goh, SVP of Genting's Dream Cruise Line, said the ships would start docking in Manila waters in March until May.

From January to October 2016, a total of 19

cruise ships carrying 24,712 passengers made calls to the Philippines. This was still short of the 72,350 passenger target set by the DOT under its National Cruise Tourism Strategy.

This year's target, meanwhile, is to attract 85 port calls, bringing in 75,000 travelers into the country.

Tourism undersecretary for Administration Rolando Canizal said having a cruise home port in Manila would make it more affordable and convenient for locals to buy cruise packages. "This means to say Flipinos don't have to go to Hong Kong to take the cruise because they can just take the cruise from Manila," the official said.

Meanwhile, Canizal said the DOT was scheduled to meet with representatives of Royal Caribbean.

"The vice president (of Royal Caribbean) will be seeing the Tourism Minister to discuss attracting more cruise visits to the Philippines, and also how they would be able to help us develop our cruise products and infrastructure," he said.

Jean says holding hands with Jomari has no malice

JEAN Garcia says that although it's true that she and Jomari Yllana are very close and were even seen holding hands in public, it doesn't mean that they have a romantic relationship.



"We call each other Kaps, meaning, Kapatid," she says. "But honestly, hindi talaga kami on. Kapag tina-tanong ako about him, I really say, si Jom, love ko 'yun, but walang malice 'yun, kundi as friends lang. Siguro mahirap maintindihan 'yung ganung relationship namin. Kasi sa atin, kapag babae't lalaki, ang conclusion, magkarelayon na kayo agad. May relasyon kami, but only as friends talaga. More than one year kaming magkasama sa 'The Half Sisters', di ba? Doon talaga kami naging magka-vibes nang husto. Pero bilang mag-kaibigan lang talaga, wala pong anything sexual, sa maniwala kayo't hindi."

Meanwhile, as the adoptive mother of LJ Reyes and Julie Anne San Jose in "Pinulot Ka Lang sa Lupa", what can she say about the quality of their acting? "Both of them are okay, pareho silang maganda at magaling. Sana, ma-maintain nila at maging consistent sila sa commitment nila sa work at yung pagiging professional nila. In fairness sa lahat ng mga kasama ko rito sa 'Pinulot Ka Lang', walang itatapon sa cast, lahat mahusay, pati si Geleen Eugenio as my confidante, si Tiya Yoleng, ibang-iba siya rito. Hindi siya mag-sasayaw kundi a-acting talaga."

KATRINA WANTS TO GROW OLD WITH GMA

KATRINA Halili's current soap, "Sa Piling ni Nanay", will end on January 27 while her contract with GMA7 is expiring this April. Will she renew her contract as a Kapuso? "Wala pang napag-uusapan," she says. "Siguro sa April na lang. Pero siyempre, first preference ko pa rin ang GMA kasi more than ten years na ako rito at hindi naman nila ako pinababayaan. Mula pa noong na-discover ako sa StarStruck, lagi akong may show sa kanila kahit na noong nagkaroon ng issues about me then I got pregnant pa. Kaya nga feeling loyal

ako sa GMA, e, dito na siguro ako tatanda."

So how's "Sa Piling ni Nanay" doing? "Naku, lalong gumaganda ang mga eksena. Sa gubat ang set namin ngayon kasi naghahabulan kami nina Yasmien Kurdi as Ysabel. Nagkita kami sa gilid ng bangin at naglaban. Muntik na akong mahulog, pero niligtas pa rin ako ni Yasmien.

Kaya lang, nakabawi ako at gusto



ko siyang lunurin sa ilog. Si Jillian Ward as Katherine, nakuha ni Antonio Aquitania as Rod pero dumating sina Mark Herras as Jonas and Gabby Eigenmann as Benedict para iligtas siya. Abangan nyo kasi ang daming action scenes na ginawa namin kaya lalong very exciting ang mga eksena hanggang sa ending nito sa January 27."

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Lovi on new guy: Just showing our true colors to each other + other stories

LOVI Poe won't forget the year 2016 as it's been a very good one for her. She has a hit movie, "The Escort", and a hit primetime soap that now rules its time slot, "Someone to Watch Over Me". And we add: she has found a new love in European guy, Chris Johnson who she said will be with her this holiday season.

"Actually, nandito na siya," she says when we visited her on the final taping day of "Someone to Watch Over Me". So what's the real status of their relationship? "Wala pang status. We're just enjoying each other's ship. I don't believe in courtship where you put your best foot forward, so we're just showing our true colors to each other. No pretensions. Even my mom and my sister like him. We get along fine. We're leaving for Thailand with other friends after Christmas. We'll go island hopping."

How does she feel now that "Someone to Watch Over Me" will end on January 6? "I'm gonna miss everybody. I love this show kahit sobrang mahirap siyang gawin kasi physically and emotionally draining. Every episode, umiiyak ako as Joanna, the wife who has to make a lot of sacrifices for her ailing husband. But it's very fulfilling, kahit kung minsan, nadadala ko 'yung lungkot ng character ko sa bahay."

Na-attach ako sa kanya kasi she's fighting for a love that is not reciprocated by her husband who has totally forgotten her. It's good Tom Rodriguez and I have good teamwork. He's very giving and that makes my job easier."

What does she do so she won't run out of tears when she faces the camera for a heavy dramatic scene? "I drink a lot of water para 'di ako maubusan ng luha. Pero madali na rin once I'm in character kasi this is the most painful role I've ever played so far. This will be hard to top and I'm thankful this role was given to me."

What's next for her in 2017? "I'm looking forward to a new TV series."

Pinag-uusapan na raw but I don't know the details yet. Mukhang mas maganda ang 2017 kasi everything is moving forward for me. I've also moved to a new house."

Does she have a new year's wish or resolution? "My wish is for people to have kindness in everyone's heart, less greed. Ayoko ng mag-resolution kasi hindi ko naman natutupad, but my plan is to eat less snacks, sweets and junk food kasi sobrang lakas kong kumain niyan."

We tell her she need not worry since she seems to have a very strong metabolism and she doesn't get fat at all.

Benjamin on relationship with Julie Anne: Not hiding

JULIE Anne San Jose reprises Maricel Soriano's role as Santana in "Pinulot Ka Lang sa Lupa", GMA-7's adaptation of the 1987 hit Ishmael Bernal drama made by Regal Films. Playing the role of Lorna Tolentino as Angeli is LJ Reyes. But the story has been changed. In the original movie, the one who adopted them was Eddie Garcia. This time, it's a woman, Jean Garcia as Diony.

"I really want to thank GMA-7 for giving me this project," she says. "It's a great acting opportunity kasi puro magagaling ang mga kasama ko and I get to be directed by a great actress herself, Gina Alajar."



And she is paired with her own inamorato, Benjamin Alves. Is it true they've been officially on for four months now? It's the other members of the cast who chorused with a big "YES!"

It's Benjamin who replies: "Wala naman kaming itinatago. What you see is what you get. Basta maganda ang pasok ng 2017 sa amin kasi magkasama kami sa show and we're happy to be working together."

In the TV version of "Pinulot Ka Lang sa Lupa", Jean Garcia is married to Victor Neri but when their daughter dies in a fire caused by Allan Paule, Victor leaves her with their son Ephraim (who'll grow up to be Benjamin Alves). She puts up a small carinderia that succeeds and becomes a big restaurant. She takes two girls under her wing, Santana (who becomes Julie Anne San Jose), the daughter of Allan Paule, and Angeli (who becomes LJ Reyes), the daughter of Ara Mina who's estranged from her own mom. Eventually, Julie and LJ become bitter rivals for the attention of Jean and the affection of Benjamin. Also in the cast are Geleen Eugenio as Jean's confidante, Yoleng; Janna Dominguez as a former Japayuki who oppresses Julie; and Lharby Policarpio as Benjamin's friend, Boggs.

LJ's son by Paulo looking for father: 'He's busy'

LJ Reyes doesn't mind if she was without a show for over a year. She was last seen in "Yagit" with Yasmien Kurdi in 2015. Yasmien has since appeared in "Sa Piling ni Nanay" that run for seven months but it's only now that LJ has been given a new soap, "Pinulot Ka Lang sa Lupa", which will replace "Sa Piling" on GMA-7's Afternoon Prime starting January 30.

"Kahit wala akong regular show, nagkaroon naman ako ng guest-ings sa 'Magpakailanman', 'Wagas', 'Dear Uge', 'Karelasyon', and I had extended guest roles in 'Marimar' and 'Poor Senorita', so hindi naman ako nabakante," she says. "Tapos, I won best actress awards pa in Russia and Urian for 'Anino sa Likod ng Buwan'. At itong role ko as Angeli in 'Pinulot Ka Lang sa Lupa', it's worth the wait naman kasi challenging talaga siya and I get to work again with Direk Gina Alajar na siya ring director ko in 'Yagit'."

Ara Mina plays her mom in 'Pinulot Ka Lang sa Lupa'. How did she feel when Ara ranted against the show in social media and threatened to leave it? "Wala akong alam kasi nasa States ako noon. Hindi ko naman nabasa what she posted. Nagulat na lang ako pag-uwi ko, may ganun palang issue. Marami na kaming na-tape na eksena, e. Sayang naman kung ayaw na niya. At enjoy naman akong katrabaho siya. Friend ko rin ang sister niyang si Cristine (Reyes), so sana nga, maayos na para makapag-resume na siya ng taping."

About her love life, it's common knowledge she and Paolo Contis are now together. Do they have plans to walk down the aisle? "As of now, wala, marami pang kailangang ayusin."

How about her son Aki's dad, Paulo Avelino, does he visit their boy regularly? "No. Busy siya, e."

Does Aki look for his dad? "Siyempre. Alam naman niya kung sino ang father niya, so hinahanap niya. Nakikita naman niya, sa TV."

She gave a very daring performance in "Anino sa Likod ng Buwan". But we heard she now refuses to go sexy again. How true? "Yes, ang laki na kasi ng anak ko. Ayoko namang ma-call pa niya ang attention ko."



YASMIEN CELEBRATES BIRTHDAY WITHOUT HER HUSBAND

YASMIEN Kurdi also celebrated her birthday on January 25. "Yes, magkasabay kami ng birthday ni Kylie Padilla," she says.

Like Kylie, she was also 23 years old when she got pregnant. "Pero kasal na kami noon ng husband ko (Rey Soldevilla, a pilot) and I gave birth when I was 24. Now, 4 years old na ang daughter naming si Ayesha. When we were married, birthday ko rin kaya ang wedding anniversary namin coincides with my birthday."

So do they intend to have another baby soon? "Naku, hindi muna. Mahirap, kasi wala kaming yaya. Ang hirap maghanap. 'Yung last yaya ko, na-in love sa security guard in the condo in BGC where we live."

What's her birthday wish? "Actually, I already feel so blessed. I'm in 'Sa Piling ni Nanay' na ang taas ng rating and now that it's ending this Friday, may isang existing show which I will join. And I just renewed my contract with GMA7 for a long, long time. Kung may wish man ako, it's good health for my family. I also wish I'd be given the chance to play different kinds of roles and makapag-movie sana uli ako, kasi my last movie was 'Bahay Kubo' with Maricel Soriano in 2009 pa. Ang tagal na. Sana rin, makapag-recording na ako ng bagong songs kasi I miss doing yung mall shows na kahit wala kaming bayad to promote our songs, it gives me naman the chance na kumanta and connect with my fans. I want to do more love songs kasi Filipinos are hopeless romantics."

So how will "Sa Piling Ni Nanay" end? "Na-tape na namin ang ending the other week pa, pero hindi nila nagustuhan, so tinapon yung scenes na nakunan na namin and just this last Monday, nag-tape kami uli ng mas magandang ending. Abangan nyo kung paano ang magiging katapusan ni Katrina Halili as the kontrabida, si Scarlett, at kung ano ang mangyayari sa amin nina Mark Herras and Gabby Eigenmann. Ibang klase siya. Somehow, mami-miss ko yung mga sapakan at sampalan namin ni Katrina. Dahil dun kaya naging mas close kami."

So how will she celebrate her birthday with her husband Rey? "Wala siya. May flight sa Vietnam, so pagbalik na lang niya at saka kami magse-celebrate."

To what will she attribute the success of her marriage? "Siguro 'yung trust namin sa isa't isa. And also, we know how to give each other space. But si Rey, whenever he's abroad, sabik na sabik na siya laging umuwi sa amin ng anak niya. Miss na miss niya ang lutong bahay ko."



LEFT, PPCO officers and members enjoy dinner at Max's during the induction. CENTER, IPEN boss Edgar Sulit announces the winner beside the jr president. RIGHT, Jemilie Cunanan Adajar, Emely Abuno Gavin, Ma El, and Liezel Bermejoabuno Tupas Castillo enjoy the despedida for Shanaia.



Sarah Geronimo teases John Lloyd Cruz about settling down

Sarah Geronimo and John Lloyd Cruz are finally reuniting in a movie four years after their last one. “Very excited po ako kasi galing din sa bakasyon. Maganda to start the year na magtrabaho ulit,” said Sarah in an interview during their movie Dear Future Husband’s story conference together with John Lloyd and their new director Ted Boborol. According to Sarah, the project came unexpectedly as she already wanted to veer away from rom-coms. “Nagkataon nung umakyat si Ma’am Charo [Santos-Concio] nung Christmas special, sabi niya ‘O, gagawa pa ba kayo ng movie ni Lloydie?’ Nagulat ako. Siyempre si Ma’am Charo, nakakahiya mag-decline,” she shared about what made her say “yes” to the project. The box office actor also expressed his excitement about their reunion project.



Escolta, 1950s

“Matagal-tagal na yung huling pagsasama namin. Kapag tumagal pa, baka hindi na mangyari,” he said. “Dapat mangyari na siya. Life is short.” In order to differentiate their film from their past three projects, Sarah said she would make a conscious effort to act according to her age. “Galing sa title mismo ng pelikula na Dear Future Husband, siyempre dadating sa buhay natin na gusto din natin magkaroon ng sariling pamilya,” she said. To which John Lloyd replied with “Ganon?”

Sarah then asked her leading man, “Ikaw kaya Lloydie kelan? Ikaw ba Lloydie hindi pa? Ano ba ang mindset mo ngayon?” “I’m forever young,” said John Lloyd. The actor was honest enough to admit that he doesn’t see himself settling down any time soon even if he’ll “always be a lover.” “Marami pa tayong gustong ma-achieve sa buhay natin since nabalitaan ko na life is short nga daw,” he explained. While he initially reiterated that there’s more to life than just settling down, John Lloyd revealed the real reason why he hasn’t

walked the aisle yet. “Meron pa tayong ibang aspiration sa buhay in both personal and work-related. [Pero] siguro kahit naman anong sabihin ko, siguro ang totoo naman diyan, hindi ko pa nakikita,” he ended. Without revealing much about their story Direk Ted shared that they are slated to start filming by end of January or early February. He also shared that they are looking into hitting the theaters by second quarter of the year.



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What People talked about in 2016 + other stories

As we welcome the New Year, we are listing down the newsmakers of 2016 from the world of show business.

Alden Richards



He had a concert in London in October. It was sold out. Thousands of his Filipino fans flocked to Troxy in Stepney East London to watch the Kapuso star live in the flesh. This concert was just one of the shows Alden staged sans his onscreen partner, Maine Mendoza, whose career (according to some kibitzers) is close to stagnation. But what really made 2016 his biggest year yet? This is the same year when he received a Diamond Record award for his album Wish I May. The album was certified by PARI (Philippine Association of Record Industry) after it sold more than 150,000 physical copies. This recognition put the showbiz golden boy as the biggest recording artist of the year.

Jessy Mendiola

Last summer in Boracay, the 24-year-old Kapamilya star made headlines when a photo of her in a red bikini circulated on the web. In what supposed to be just a fun photo that celebrates her being comfortable in her own skin elicited a barrage of hate comments with trolls calling her fat and her photo deceitful. Two months later, Jessy felt vindicated when FHM, via an online poll, declared her as the sexiest woman in the land after receiving more than half a million votes. But controversy on body shaming didn't stop there. Her name was then dragged into the Luis Manzano-Angel Locsin split with fans creating social media memes just to call her names.



Star Cinema

Once again, ABS-CBN's film production arm has proven that it's the only home of commercially successful films. The production outfit produced a total of 11 films this year and only one of which didn't breach the P100-million mark in terms of box office receipt. It's most recent offering, My Super Parental Guardians, is now considered as the biggest film of 2016 after it grossed more than P400 million at the tills. Previous record holder was Barcelona: A Love Untold, which Star Cinema released in September.

Jaclyn Jose



Her "As is, Where is" method of acting, which we learned from Eugene Domingo in Ang Babae sa Septic Tank, proved to be a hit at Cannes Film Festival. Her gritty portrayal of a drug-dealing matriarch in Ma'Rosa, an indie film helmed by Brillante Mendoza, helped Jaclyn become the first Filipino to win the Best Actress award in the prestigious film event.

Encantadia

The return of the immensely popular fantasy show on the small screen was one big TV event. On July 18, when the "requel" of Encantadia premiered, two generations of TV viewers were glued in front of their TV sets. The pilot was very successful. It topped the Twitter trending topics, and made competing programs, including the one-year-old FPJ's Ang Probinsyano, eat dust. Encantadia posted a 26.1 percent TV ratings, which is the highest primetime premiere in 2016.



Pia Wurtzbach



In a month's time, the Philippines' third Miss Universe will relinquish her crown. Now, looking back at her entire year as Miss Universe, Pia was able to prove that she deserved the title. The confidently beautiful with a heart beauty queen has been travelling the world spreading awareness on well-meaning causes including cyber bullying and aids awareness. And because of her being the "best Miss Universe ever," Pia will still do a lot of work for MUO even after her reign.

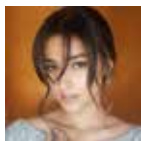
James Reid

He is a walking example of a perfect transformation. From a lanky lad when he joined PBB Teens, James sports a muscular physique now that looks desirable in every angle. And this physical change put the 23-year-old Kapamilya star in a league all his own. Apart from being a platinum recording artist, a certified box office actor, James also a sought-after product endorser. He is the top choice of high profile brands making him one if not the top celebrity endorser of the year.



Liza Soberano

It's hard to argue when people call her the face of 2016 for looking effortlessly beautiful in every angle. In fact, even Pia Wurtzbach admires her beauty. No other local celebrity broke the Internet this year for just looking pretty. Liza did it several times, most memorable



of which was her sensational look at the 10th Star Magic Ball in October. In an interview with Manila Standard, Liza said she doesn't want people to remember her for just being someone with a pretty face. She wants them to see what's between her ears, too. Little did many people know, Liza is actually a geek.

Pangako Sa 'Yo

People anticipated the premiere of the Daniel Padilla and Kathryn Bernardo-starrer series playing the star-crossed lovers Angelo



Buenavista and Yna Macaspac. The series, which ended in February, made history in 2016 for registering the highest rating for a primetime TV

show finale. The remake of the classic series posted 27.5 percent ratings according to AGB Nielsen and 44.7 percent according to TNS Kantar. It was the only time that the two ratings provider agreed on something.

German Moreno

A showbiz pillar passed on in 2016 but the Master Showman's passing was the most talked about when the entire showbiz mourned. Kuya Germs died on Jan. 8 at the age of 82. He was known as a star builder in his youth-oriented show in the 1980s called That's Entertainment for aspiring actors, dancers, and singers. He also initiated the "Walk of Fame" in Eastwood, Quezon City, which is the local counterpart of the "Walk of Fame" in Hollywood, USA to recognize artists, broadcasters, singers and others who made significant contributions to the showbiz industry.



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Sheena Halili renews contract with GMA Network

Sheena Halili, who is co-managed by GMA Artist Center, continues her journey as a Kapuso as she renewed her contract with GMA Network recently.

Sheena said she is very happy to renew her contract with GMA 7 which has been her home network for many years.



"I'm really happy kasi everytime naman na nagre-renew ako ng contract dito, nafi-feel ko talaga na dito ako sa GMA; that I am meant for and to be with GMA. Kasi second family ko talaga ang GMA Network. This is where I grew up talaga, where I developed my talent and skills as an artist."

Sheena is in the upcoming primetime series, Destined To Be Yours, starring the phenomenal love team—Alden Richards and Maine Mendoza.

"Excited ako kasi ang ganda ng start ng year ko since makakatrabaho ko sina Alden and Maine sa Destined To Be Yours. Wala akong masabi sa dalawang yun kasi napaka-professional nila. Nung first taping day nga namin, basang-basa na kami sa ulan, maputik pero wala akong narinig sa lahat ng kasama ko," she added.

SHOWBIZ ROMANCES continued from page 26

Borromeo, team captain of the Philippine Azkals. Both her parents Gabby Concepcion and Sharon Cuneta have expressed their approval for Aly.

Other stars who have found romance in a non-showbiz partner are Sunshine Cruz, the ex-wife of Cesar Montano, who found new love in the arms of Macky Mathay, the half brother of actress Ara Mina who's also separated from his first spouse. Both of them have kids from their past relationships.

Alex Gonzaga finds a new beau with non-showbiz guy Mikee Morada who's said to have come from a well-to-do family. After her controversial relationships with Jake Ejercito and Albie Casino, Andi Eigenmann found new romance in non-showbiz guy Emilio Arambulo. Kapamilya matinee idol Sam Milby was last

linked to Anne Curtis. He now finds comfort in the arms of a Japanese-English model, Mari Jasmine.

Kim Chiu and Xian Lim used to deny that they are on but when they did their soap this year, "The Story of Us", they finally admitted that they're romantically involved with each other. Still, this did not help the show to achieve high ratings.

At the Kapuso Network, love bloomed between Tom Rodriguez and Carla Abellana after they did "My Husband's Lover" and "My Destiny". They were also paired in the movie "No Boyfriend Since Birth". At first, they said they were just exclusively dating but this year, they officially admitted that they're indeed going steady.

Another couple who were linked to each other but finally admitted their romance officially only this year is Miss World 2013 Megan Young and Mikael Daez.

Max Collins and Pancho Magno also finally confessed this year that they've been together for four years now.

Another pair of Kapuso lovebirds who owned up to their relationship are Mark Herras and Winwyn Marquez and they just celebrated Mark's recent 30th birthday in Boracay a couple of weeks ago.

Julie Anne San Jose and Benjamin Alves also got cozy after they did a music video. They're now paired in the new soap "Pinulot Ka Lang sa Lupa".

Meantime, their co-star in the same soap, LJ Reyes, has found love in Paolo Contis. LJ has a son with Paulo Avelino while Paolo has two daughters with former Sexbomb dancer Lian Paz.

Another Kapuso actress, Louise de los Reyes, is now lovey-dovey with Hale band's main singer Champ Lui Pio.

Kapuso stars Barbie Forteza and Kiko

Estrada got cozy while doing the soap "That's My Amboy". Barbie quickly admitted their relationship but Kiko seems to be shy about it and denied it. Reporters quickly concluded, "Hindi magtatagal 'yan." And that's exactly what happened.

Valeen Montenegro was reported to be the cause of the break up of Ciara Sotto's marriage to TV exec Jojo Oconer, but she says she has a non-showbiz boyfriend, a Filipino-Spanish guy named Selu Lozano.

Stars who officially got engaged are Anne Curtis with chef husband Erwan Heussaff, Billy Crawford and Coleen Garcia, Erich Gonzales and Daniel Matsunaga, Rochelle Pangilinan and Arthur Solinap, Gwen Zamora and Jeremy Marquez, widow Camille Prats and new found love JB Yambot, Desiree del Valle and Boom

SHOWBIZ ROMANCES continued on page 26

Mika reunites with Barbie: No regrets



MIKA de la Cruz is the younger sister of Angelika de la Cruz. Both of them used to be with ABS-CBN but Angelika transferred to GMA-7. Mika now also does her first soap on GMA-7 in “Meant to Be”, where she plays Mariko, the first cousin of Barbie Forteza.

“It was my Ate who advised me to move to GMA and to be managed by her manager, si Tito Perry Lansigan,” she says. “11 years na rin naman po ako sa Channel 2. Nag-start ako sa kanila as a child actress. So for a change, lumipat ako. Sabi ng Ate ko, i-try ko sa GMA kasi mabait sila at magaling mag-alaga

MIKA AND BARBIE continued on page 17

Hunk Shot

17 year old IPEN model Hebrew stays in shape by playing basketball. His ambition is to be a graphic designer. We wish him all the luck in his endeavour.

Hebrew Miller

Angeline Quinto admits she fell in love with a ‘taken’ man

During the bloggers’ conference for Regal Films’ offering, Foolish Love, lead actress Angeline Quinto talked about the “foolish” things she did for love.

According to her, she fell in love with a man who is already taken during that time. Talking about a non-showbiz guy, the Queen of Teleserye Theme Songs said, “Two years na po na mahal pa rin kahit na nakita ko na po at alam ko na na mayroon na siyang ibang partner. Parang ilang mga theme songs din po na siya ‘yung naging inspirasyon ko.”



The next foolish thing she experienced in love was similar to the first.

“Sa Sampaloc (Manila) pa po ako nakatira. Mayroon po akong mahal na mahal na lalaki na may girlfriend siya pero alam niya naman na gusto ko siya so pumunta ako minsan sa bahay ‘nung guy kahit alam kong nandoon ‘yung babae. Gusto ko lang siyang kausapin,” she said.

In former interviews, Angeline admitted not thinking about herself when she falls in love. However, she said she has no regrets.

“Ako kasi, kapag nagmahal ako, hindi ko na iniisip ang sarili ko. Nagiging priority ko ‘yung love ko, hanggang sa matauhan kang bigyan mo rin ng priority ang sarili mo. Pero kung naging tanga man ako sa pag-ibig, no regrets kasi marami akong natutuhan doon. Hindi ko na babalikan ang ganung experience kasi mas nag-mature na ako,” she said.

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Showbiz Romances

NOW that another year is over, let's take one last look at 2016. As usual, we give what our readers prefer: The report on the colorful love life of our celebrities. First, those who became romantically involved with each other this year, those who got married and those who got officially engaged.

First, wedding bells rang for three of the so called IT Girls: Solenn Heussaff married live-in partner Nico Bolzico in France on May 21. Georgina Wilson had her wedding with Arthur Burnand in England on April 29. Isabelle Daza and groom Adrien Semblatt chose Tuscany, Italy for their nuptials on September 11.

Cristalle Belo, daughter of Dr. Vicki Belo, also married hotelier Justin Pitt in Lake Como, Italy on September 15.

Vic Sotto finally walked down the aisle with much younger bride and "Eat Bulaga" co-host Pauleen Luna on January 30. TV5 entertainment reporter MJ Marfori also faced the altar with GMA news reporter Oscar Oida on the same date. Another couple who got married in January was Cristine Reyes and Ali Kathibi.

Singer-theatre actor Nyoy Volante married theatre actress Mikkie Bradshaw in February. Former GMA stars Stephanie Henares and Gino de la Pena got married in March.

Rufa Mae Quinto also tied the knot with Fil-Am balikbayan Trevor Magallanes on November 25 and they're now waiting for the delivery of their first baby.

Karel Marquez married non-showbiz groom



Carla Abellana and Tom Rodriguez

at Santuario de San Antonio on December 1. Kaye Abad walked down the aisle in Cebu with PBB discovery Paul Jake Castillo just this December 9.

Movie, TV and theatre actress Cris Villonco also got hitched and married businessman Paolo Valderrama in May, while former sexpot Francine Prieto married her American molecular biologist groom Frank Shotkotski in Italy last September.

A controversial relationship involves that of sexpot Ellen Adarna and presidential Baste Duterte, simply because Baste already has a model girlfriend with whom he has a child.

Those who got together include Luis

Manzano and Jessy Mendiola. Jessy earlier rekindled her romance with JM de Guzman, which crumbled once again when JM was reported to not have succeeded in kicking an old habit. Jessy was later accused of causing the break up of Luis and Angel Locsin, which was also just rekindled, but Luis says his relationship with Jessy started long after his split from Angel.

JaDine loveteam's James Reid and Nadine Lustre finally admitted that they're on after working together for nearly two years. Their "On the Wings of Love" soap was a big hit when they still kept people guessing about the real score between them. Sadly, after they admitted that they're really on for reel and real, their new soap "Till We Meet Again" failed to hit the high ratings of their past soap.

Following in the footsteps of JaDine, the KathNiel loveteam of Kathryn Bernardo and Daniel Padilla also admitted that they're officially together and this resulted in the big box office hit that was "Barcelona: A Love Untold".

Just like Jennylyn Mercado and Dennis Trillo whose romance was rekindled, it's also a case of love is lovelier the second time around for Kylie Padilla and Aljur Abrenica who broke up in 2014 and got together again after two years. While they were off, Kylie was linked to teen actor Julian Trono, with whom she had a break up, according to Aljur himself.

After Piolo Pascual and Paulo Avelino, KC Concepcion seems to have gotten tired of actors and is now on with athlete Aly

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More stars to watch in 2017

Kim Domingo

For a long time, nobody knew who she was until the audience watched her regularly in Bubble Gang and a cover of a popular men's magazine featured her sexy self. To start off a very promising year, Kim is cast as Vhong Navarro's leading lady in the remake of Mang Kepweng. It's her first major role in a film in eight years, not to mention her first lead role.

Gabbi Garcia

The 18-year-old actress earned a place in our shortlist for 2017 breakout contenders when she joined the cast of the hit series Encantadia as Alena. Although she's already appeared in a few Kapuso shows, it's only recently when people started noticing the young star as the love team with Ruru Madrid also gains numbers among TV viewers.



Elisse Joson

Her biggest break was her being cast in a fast-food commercial, which promoted the concept of welcoming change and moving forward after a heartbreak. The TVC itself went viral online and trended worldwide on Twitter. She then became a part of the "lucky" group of housemates in the reality TV series Pinoy Big Brother: Lucky Season 7 and then in the primetime TV series FPJ's Ang Probinsyano. It's just going to be a busy year for the millennials' "hugot queen."



Philippine Independence Day Council 2017 Annual Beauty Pageant Now Underway

By Tony A. San Juan, OCT

The annual beauty - and - talent competition for Miss Philippines and Little Miss Philippines PIDC 2017 titles is now underway. The widely popular contest is being sponsored by the prestigious Philippine Independence Day Council (PIDC), a 19- year old not-for-profit, cultural and societal - responsive organization in the Filipino Canadian and mainstream communities. PIDC has been prominently showcasing Pinoy heritage - centred programs such as the Mabuhay Philippines Festival, Salo Salu sa Earl Bales Park, Mabuhay Cup Volleyball Tournament, Mabuhay Golf, Mabuhay Cup Invitational Basketball Tournament and the Philippine Independence Day Flag-Raising rites at Queen's Park.

Coronation Night is going to be held on June 3, 2017, Saturday at the Isabel Bader Theatre, UT- Victoria University , 93 Charles Street W., Toronto. The Little Miss Philippines contest will begin at 2:00 until 5:00

PM and the Miss Philippines final selection is scheduled at 7:00 PM. Ticket Admission Price: \$15.00/person (children 5 below free).

Prizes for all major winners will receive a crown, sash and flowers including the following cash awards : Miss Philippines PIDC 2017 - One round trip ticket to the Philippines ; First runner up- \$400.00; Second Runner Up - \$200.00 and for Little Miss Philippines PIDC 2017 - \$800.00; First runner up- \$400.00 & Second Runner up- \$200.00.

On January 22, 2017, the PIDC officially launched the pageant with a meet-and- greet event at the Toronto City Hall. The second launching day is slated on February 19, 2017, from 2:00 to 5: 00 PM at the same venue.

According to PIDC pageant coordinators, Rehearsals will start on Sunday, March 26, 2017, from 2:00 to 5:00 PM for Little Miss Philippines contestants and 4:00 to 6:00 PM for Miss Philippines candidates at the Gotta Dance Studio, 3581 Dundas St. West, Toronto.. The rehearsals will continue every Sunday until May 28, 2017.

The rehearsals will focus on preparations and instructions for every contestant 's opening performance, catwalk and program presentation in casual dress, talent, gown

competitions. The same rehearsal sequence is to be observed for both events including a Question-and-Answer portion for the Miss Philippines only. Other vital schedules include : 1) a photo opportunity on April 23, 2017, Sunday; 2) dress rehearsal on June 2, 2017, Friday , from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.at the Gotta Dance Studio, Toronto.

The PIDC officers and directors tasked to organize and coordinate the yearly pageant include the Overall Pageant Chair: Rory Elefano; Miss Philippines Chair: Gene Pardo-Elamparo; Little Miss Chair: Helen Lao and Pageant Coordinator: Ophelia Santiago. Program Director: Karen Pascual-Binaday; Stage Director: Aris Elefano and Ric Nerona with Website administrator Randy Bucio and long-serving President Norma Carpio as Pageant Adviser. Board Members Ben Corpuz, Aimee Maravilla, Al Tupe, Verth Bugtong, Filomena Ticzon, Tom Tan, Chyrell Samson, Suzy Llanera, Roy Start, Jun Villaruz, Nanding Ticzon and Rose Cruz have rendered additional support and assistance.

For further information or anyone who is interested in joining this prestigious pageant - please e-mail: pageant@pidctoronto.com or visit the PIDC website www:pidctoronto.com

Candid SPOOF

(Pop-ups are not supposed to be taken seriously - EDITOR)



Dr. Solon Guzman doesn't seem to be impressing his daughters Princess and Angeline on how to dance the Hawaiian. Well, they should know better than to follow their dad's dancing. After all, they are enrolled at Siony's Dance School.



Dr. SolonGuzman poses with an IPEN beauty at the IPEN pageant at Rembrandt Banquet Hall.

SHOWBIZ ROMANCES continued from page 24

Labrusca, Luis Alandy and non-showbiz fiancée Joselle Fernandez, and Bangs Garcia and British boyfriend Lloyd Birchmore who already have a wedding date, January 17, in Boracay, where they first met.

An actress who had a same sex wedding in December is Rosanna Roces with transgender Jessy Arias. Transwoman Ate Glow (impersonator of former Pres. Gloria Arroyo whose real name is Rene Facunla) also married a British guy last July in London and is now known as Renee Hampshire.

The actress daughter of Rez Cortez, Cai Cortez, also revealed she got married in civil rites with Tunisian businessman Wissem Rahkmi and she just gave birth to their son, Habib.

Other folks who found romance in each other this year are actor Geoff Eigenmann and singer Maya, singers Michael Pangilinan and Garie Concepcion, Brazilian import

Scenes in the City+



Song and dance binds these young girls together. And for Marissa Andrada's 50th birthday, they came in force. LEFT, Katherine Reyes, Grace Datu, April Joyce Bulangcao, Jheo Navarro, Edessa Andrada and Jeanette Ricasio helped make the night special. RIGHT, Marissa Andrada poses with her family at the Rhythm of the Dance to the Rhythm studio.



RIGHT, Angela Castillo blows the candles on her cake. ABOVE RIGHT, Charms, with Samantha Gavin, Shanaia G, KC Adajar and Angela Castillo has last minute fun before Shanaia departs for the Philippines to pursue a showbiz career. ABOVE, Chris and sister Samantha try the karaoke.



PCCF Charity

Philippine Canadian Charitable Foundation (PCCF) went to the Philippines and embarked on their annual charity projects which included dental and medical missions, handover of 7 houses to Tala Village in cooperation with ANCOP, giving meals to poor children and giving bags of necessities to poor recipients. Below are some photos of PCCF in action.



LEFT, Miss Teen Philippines Canada 2016 Chiara Silo gets interviewed by GMA7. RIGHT, Chiara Silo assists in dental mission in Davao.



ABOVE, Giving goods RIGHT, Mass before dental mission in Davao; Chiara at Aldevinco night market in Davao; Chiara and her police escorts in Davao



Fabio Ide and ex-beauty queen Bianca Manalo. Zsa Zsa Padilla broke up with Architect Conrad Onglao but patched things up and have since gone back into each other's arms. Also reported to have gotten back into each other's arms when they were paired in the movie "How to Be Yours" are Bea Alonzo and Gerald Anderson, but they have yet to admit it formally in public. Bea used to be on with Zanjoe Marudo and reports of their split were reported late in 2015 and confirmed early last year. After her breakup from Rocco Nacino, Lovi Poe seems to have found a new romance in a non-showbiz foreign guy, Chris Johnson. He is currently in Manila to spend the Christmas holidays with Lovi, then they will fly to Thailand for the New Year, but Lovi insists they're not yet officially on even if their action speaks louder than words. Aiko Melendez found new romance in an Iranian named Shahin Alimirzapour in April and seems so happy about it even if she's 12-years older than him. But five months later in September, the relationship was over. Aiko's ex-husband, Jomari Yllana, is said to be romancing his "The Half Sisters" co-star Jean Garcia and they're constantly seen together. But they have yet to admit their romance in public.

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