

Hospitalization will be free for poor Filipinos

STORY INSIDE



Ayesha de Guzman and Kayla Vitasa enjoy a night out at the Philippine Canadian Charitable Foundation / AFCM / OLA Christmas Party.

Hannah Alilio performs at the Christmas party of Forex Cargo.

Pacquiao help Cambodia manage traffic

PHNOM PENH – Philippine boxing icon Senator Manny Pacquiao has been tapped to help the Cambodian government in raising public awareness on traffic management and safety. Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen made the “personal request” to Pacquiao in the ASEAN country’s bid to reduce road traffic injuries in the country.

MARCOS
continued on page 7

WHY JANUARY IS THE MONTH FOR SINGLES

STORY INSIDE

Who’s The Dancer In The House Now?



Dr. Solon Guzman seems to be trying to teach his daughters Princess and Angelina new moves at the Dundas Tower Dental and Milton Dental Annual Christmas party.

Lovebirds



Forex and THD man Ted Dayno is all smiles at the Forex Christmas dinner with his lovely wife Rhodora.

Charms



Star Entertainment Circle's Charms relaxes prior to the start of the Star Circle Christmas Variety Show.

Friends



Journalist Jojo Tadiran poses with Irene Reeder, wife of former Canada Ambassador to the Phil Neil Reeder.



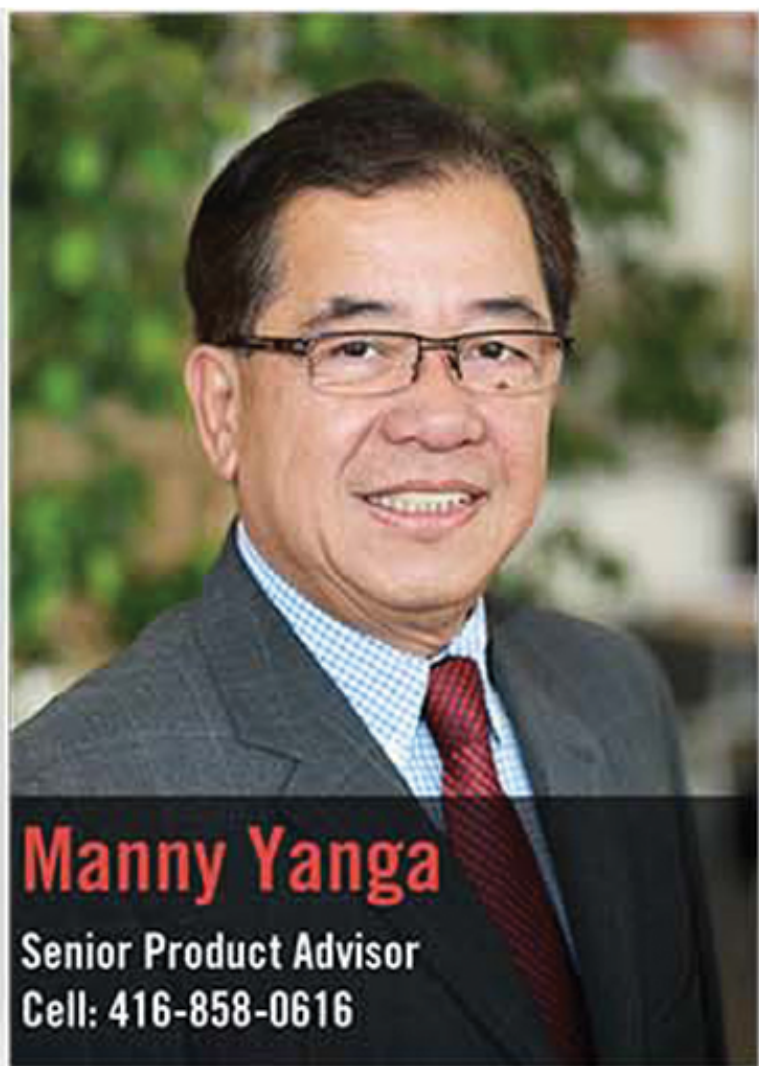
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Paolo Contis to LJ Reyes:
“I promise to protect your heart so it will never get hurt ever again”

Paolo Contis shares the sweetest message to LJ Reyes for her birthday on December 25.



In his Instagram account the actor poured his heart out as he shared a collage of LJ’s photos and captioned it with, “I know nobody is PERFECT...

but if there is someone close enough to perfection, that would be YOU.” Paolo continued, “You are a very very beautiful person... You are so funny and you make everyone around you happy. Your smile and your laugh never fails to bright up someone’s day. You are a brilliant actress. You are a great sister. You are great daughter. You are a great partner/ best friend! And everybody knows that you are the best mother to Aki... and the best Tita to my kids.” The Kapuso actor also took notice of LJ’s kindness, “You do all of these things without asking anything in return. You are the most unassuming person I know and I am in awe of your kindness.” In the last part of his birthday message, Paolo expressed his feelings towards LJ. He disclosed, “These are only a few reasons why I love you and why I’m never going anywhere. You have so much love to give and I promise to protect your heart so it will never get hurt ever again. Happy Birthday, my Love... I always want to see you happy!”

Honey Shot



Cassandra is a memeber of Charms. She sings, she dances. Her dream is to become a famous star in the Philippines to make her parents proud. We wish her all the luck.

Cassandra Adajar



Alden and Maine in a TV series, finally

Every popular love team has their own TVCs (a lot of them), big screen projects and a television series. Alden Richards and Maine Mendoza, otherwise known as AIDub, have done almost everything except starring in a soap opera. Since their astronomic rise as one of the most popular love teams in local tinsel town, fans have been clamoring to see their idols in a regular show other than the Eat Bulaga segment “Kalyeserye.” There were even jokes that The Baes were given their own show first while AIDub’s debut in a television series is still on hold. Almost two years after becoming a TV phenomena, the Pambansang Bae and the Dubsmash Queen are finally set to star in their own soap opera on GMA next year. The romantic drama is entitled Destined To Be Yours and will start taping next week in Quezon province. The show will be directed by Irene Villamor, who helmed the surprise box office hit, Camp Sawli. Initially titled Hiling, Destined To Be Yours revolves around the story of a rich architect (Alden) while Maine’s character is a barrio lass and an environmentalist who rallies against the construction project. Maine Mendoza and Alden Richards will now star in a TV series that they can call their own

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(GUM SPECIALISTS):
- DR. SALLY SAGHI SAFA
 - DR. MASSOUD SAFA
- HYGIENISTS:
- CARLA NAVA-LONGMIRE
 - REINALYN TORADO
 - AGNES MUNOZ
 - VICTORIA TEJARES
 - JEAN MAY DIONISIO

Extra Judicial Killings

It seems Extra Judicial Killings (EJK) is the talk of the country these days in the Philippines. While there is no consensus as to who is doing all these killings, the media likes to point the fingers towards the government. However, if you are not going to catch the perpetrators, it makes it impossible to get straight answers to these. To the critics of President Duterte, it's him. The the fans of DU30, these are drug dealers killing each other, their low level dealers and / or buyers. What is the reason for the killings? According to some people that you ask, they say "if the drug dealers feel that you are the weak link, and if they feel you are about to expose them, they will kill you. So, the killing spree continues unabated.

Fake news in facebook...

Comedian George Carlin said "Never underestimate the power of stupid people in large groups." In the last US



Presidential election, Senator Hillary Clinton had no problem about fake news in facebook when the polls showed she was leading. She said "the more, the better." She

reversed her position now that she lost. Now, they want facebook to police fake news. What is fake news? What is satire, like the Onion? Is that fake news? Who are asking for the removal or censorship of news in facebook? Is it the losing side? If that is the case, then, it seems the "elite" still cannot accept the reality of Donald Trump becoming president. You are not hearing President Trump asking facebook to remove fake news. Apparently, the netizens still cannot accept the fact that they are not the majority. That there are people out there who have a life outside their absement, that are not glued to their computer screen, who are mad as hell and that they are going to take it anymore. And they

voted for Trump. The same non-elite that also voted for DU30. The losing side should get over it.

In Facebook, How many will reply if...

NOBODY. Posting that asks how many of my friends will answer me if yada yada yada...because it has the same appeal of a fake email from a bank "Dear Client, your account has been compromised so please the click the link to change your user name and password." A real security breakdown notice from your bank will address you by your name. So, if you just say, to all my friends in facebook, it has the same effect.

If we follow the logic who never took flu shots...

Why do we hear the few who get flu shots and still get sick but never the ones who got the shot and stayed well? Why do we hear the ones who stay well despite not getting the shot and make it sound like it is a major accomplishment? Let's put it this way, if every couple listened and followed the couple who did not use any contraceptive wherein the female did not get pregnant, what do you think will happen?

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EDITOR: Jose Baking
TEL: 416-945-2336

EMAIL: pleasurelife@email.com
PUBLISHED BY: Match International Group

CORRESPONDENTS:



Noli Gumapac



Froilan Baking



Sheila Camangian



Raymond Santos



Jojo Taduran

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Andrea denies tiff with Marian, Megan



THERE'S a rumor that Marian Rivera got jealous and stormed the set of "Alyas Robin Hood" unannounced to confront Andrea Torres for flirting with her husband Dingdong Dantes in her role as Venus, who's always wearing seductive outfits in her scenes with Dingdong.

"That's not true," says Andrea when we visited the set of "Alyas Robin Hood". "Hindi ko nga alam kung bakit ginagawaan kami ng issue ni Ate Yan ganung okay naman kami. Ever since magka-kasama kami sa 'My Beloved' in 2012, Ate at Kuya ang tawag ko sa kanila. We text each other and kung minsan, I send Ate Yan some food na ako mismo ang gumagawa, like polvoron and bread pudding. Tapos, 'yun nga, lumabas na kinausap daw niya ako sa taping. It's true na dumating siya sa set, kasama pa si Baby Zia, pero hindi kami nagkita kasi late ang calltime ko that day. Nalaman ko na lang from the staff that she dropped by earlier. Kung sinuman ang nagbalita niyan, mali ang source niya kasi imposibleng magkaroon kami ng friction ni Ate Yan dahil lang sa mga eksena namin ni Kuya Dingdong sa show. Alam niyang 'yung pagpi-flirt, part 'yun ng role ko sa Venus."

She says the production staff provides all the sexy outfits she wears in the show. "Sila'ng bumibili at binibigay na lang nila sa'kin. Hindi ako puwedeng tumanggi o humindi."

But she's really pleased to be part of a hit show like "Alyas Robin Hood". "Dahil dito, my first primetime show na lead ako, nakilala ako as an action star sa dami ng fight scenes ko. At dahil sa pagsusuot ko ng sexy outfits, lalo ng two-piece swimsuit, mas dumami ang fans ko, lalo among the male viewers. Napakasarap ding katrabaho ni Kuya Dong dahil wala siyang kaere-ere na big star siya."

It's said Megan Young is sore at her as she now has more scenes in the show. "Naku, hindi, a. We get along fine, kahit pinagsasabong at may confrontation scene pa kaming pareho, kaming naka-identical red bikini. Lahat kami, tuwang-tuwa dahil laging mataas ang rating ng aming show."

How is she and rumored BF Sef Cadayona? "Single po ako." So they've broken up? "How can we break up, never naman naging kami. Hanggang ngayon, friends lang kami. Ang tagal na nga nam-ing hindi nagkikita mula nang naging busy ako sa 'Alyas Robin Hood' at hindi na ako nakapag-taping uli with him sa 'Bubble Gang'."

TOM NOT SPENDING CHRISTMAS WITH CARLA

TOM Rodriguez is doing some

advanced taping for his hit soap on GMA7, "Someone to Watch Over Me", since he is leaving next week to spend Christmas with his family in the States, especially with his dad who's battling the big C. Because of this, he won't be spending the holidays with his inamorata, Carla Abellana.

"Hindi naman ako magtatagal," he says. "I have to come back right after the holidays and resume taping for 'Someone to Watch Over Me'. This will be a good break for



me kasi very emotionally draining ang mga eksena ko sa show lately.

CHRISTIAN GETS BIGGEST BREAK

CHRISTIAN Bables is one lucky newcomer who is given his biggest break as the best friend of Paolo Ballesteros in "Die Beautiful". Director Jun Lana says he first noticed Christian as the gay 'kabarkada' of Kiray Celis in "I Love You to Death".

"Nakita ko, mahusay siya, at dahil doon, kinuha ko siya as Barbie, ang gay confidante ni Paolo in 'Die Beautiful'," says Direk Jun. "Sa galing niya rito, tiyak na mapapansin siya at, sa tingin ko, puwede siyang ma-nominate as best supporting actor."

Two gay roles in a row? So is he really gay in real life? "Hindi po," Christian tells us at the presscon of "Die Beautiful". "Straight po ako."

He says he's long been trying to get into acting. "I took up several acting workshops sa ABS-CBN under Direk Rahyan Carlos, including 'yung master class ni Ivan-na Chubbuck na acting coach from Hollywood. Na-touch nga ako kasi dun sa book niyang ibinigay sa



akin, may sinulat siyang dedication na she's so impressed with me and she has seen me grow as an actor. After that, nakuha ako sa teleserye, 'Nasaan Ka ng Kailangan Kita', at sa indie movies na 'Anino' and 'Bang Bang Alley', pero puro small roles lang. Akala ko nga, walang mangyayari sa career ko, until dumating itong 'Die Beautiful', kaya nagpapasalamat ako kay Direk Jun Lana for this big break."

Isn't he afraid he might be typecast in gay roles? "No. Yung mga dati nang nakakakilala sa akin, alam naman nilang straight ako."

Calling all Devotees to the Virgin of Penafrancia !

The Devotions and Celebrations of the Feast of the Virgin of Penafrancia, Patroness of the Bicolandia for the year 2017 in the GTA , hosted by the Devotees of the Virgin of Penafrancia, supported by the Bicol Canada Community Association (BCCA) starts on January 2017.

Schedule of Events :

I - 9 Monthly Novena Devotions starts from January 2017 to September 2017.

Venue : Our Lady of Assumption Church
2565 Bathurst St. M6B 2Z3
Toronto, Ontario
Time : Starts 2:00 pm Rosary and Novena prayers
followed by a Holy Mass
Fellowship after the Holy Mass – 3 to 4:30 pm

Novena Dates		Fellowship Venue
January 15. 2017	3rd Sunday	Church Hall
February 19, 2017	3rd Sunday	Church Hall
March 19, 2017	3rd Sunday	Church Hall
April 9, 2017	2nd Sunday	Church Hall
May 14, 2017	2nd Sunday	Rectory Grounds
June 18, 2017	3rd Sunday	Rectory Grounds
July 16, 2017	3rd Sunday	Church Hall
August 20, 2017	3rd Sunday	Church Hall
September 10, 2017	2nd Sunday	Rectory Grounds

Devotees of the Virgin from the 6 provinces of the Bicol Region are invited to Sponsor a Novena Month as per schedule on a first come first serve basis.

The Virgin will be happy to see that each Novena Month will be sponsored by a province, (Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte, Sorsogon, Masbate and Catanduanes) OR from Bicol, representing a Province.

For Information to Sponsor a Novena Month please call : Paeng Nebres - Tel # 416 618 1362

II - 9 Days Evening Novena before the Feast Day on September 16, 2017 starts September 7, 2017 to September 15, 2017. (House to House)

For Information in Sponsoring an evening please call:

Felix and Mayette Reyes – Tel # 905 896 4958

III - Feast Day on September 16, 2017 (3rd Saturday). More information and final arrangements will be published on a later date.

Announcements by : Paeng Nebres , Devotees to the Virgin of Penafrancia and BCCA .

Moving to Canada now a crapshoot for parents, grandparents

Canada will hold a lottery in 2017 for parents and grandparents seeking to immigrate and reunite with their offspring, the government announced Wednesday.

The new system, which would see winners moving in 2017, aims to level the applicant field and clear a processing backlog.

Immigration Minister John McCallum said it is fairer than the old oversubscribed first-come, first-serve visa program.

That system reportedly saw couriers charging hefty fees to get applications to the top of the pile for spots in January and others camping out for hours at immigration offices.

“We’re listening to what past applicants had to say and making the process fairer for people who want to sponsor their parents or grandparents,” he said in a statement.

“We’re ensuring everyone can access the application process by giving them the same chance to have their name chosen.”

Starting January 3 for 30 days, sponsors will be able to submit an online form.

The ministry will randomly select 10,000 individuals from those who filled out the form, and those people will be invited to send in a completed application package.



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Agri chief returns gift Rolex watch worth P450-K



This photo shows Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol holding a Rolex watch that he has since returned to its sender. Photo by John Pagaduan/Piñol's Facebook page

MANILA - "It is the season of giving, but sorry, we can't receive."

So said Agriculture Chief Emmanuel Piñol on Wednesday as he shared how he returned a Rolex luxury watch worth P450,000.

On Facebook, Piñol wrote he received the

gift during a dinner hosted by the executives of "a very large agricultural company" that he declined to name.

He said he did not give much importance to the box containing the gift since he often receives small tokens and handicraft items as part of the courtesies during formal meetings and events.

"The one I received recently was just stuffed in a bag along with the other mementos which I usually receive during ceremonial exchange of gifts," he narrated.

"It was not until I was in my farm in Kidapawan City,

when I decided to open the box and I almost fell off my seat when I saw what was inside the box. It was a Rolex submariner, a watch which almost every man dreams of owning."

Piñol said a friend back in 1995 gave him a Rolex Oyster Perpetual before he entered politics. He said he seldom uses the watch that is now "so old that it spends more time in the repair shop than on my wrist."

The Secretary said he checked the price of the new Rolex online and found that it costs

about P450,000.

"I would be lying if I say that the thought of keeping it did not cross my mind. Who does not like to own a Rolex anyway?" he said.

But he decided to return the gift because doing otherwise is illegal.

"I explained that I could not take the gift because not only because the company is involved in activities which would require the supervision of the Department which I head but also because the law prohibits officials like me from accepting expensive gifts," he said.

"I added that I could go to jail if I was found to have kept the watch or accepted expensive gifts from people with interests in the Dept. of Agriculture."

After turning over the watch to the giver, Piñol said: "I felt as if a huge burden was taken off my back."

"Now, I can look at anybody straight in the eye and tell them that I am following President Rody Duterte's directive that members of his Cabinet must not be linked to any act of corruption," he added.

The Agriculture chief also urged his fellow public officials to carefully discern the gifts they would receive this Christmas.



Awra is thankful to Coco Martin and Vice Ganda for their guidance

Masayang masaya ang Internet sensation turned child actor na si McNeal Briguela o mas kilala bilang Awra para sa naging mainit na pagtanggap ng mga manunuod ng Maa-laala Mo Kaya noong nakaraang episode nito noong December 10.

"Sobrang masaya po kasi maraming pumuri at nag congratulate sa akin na ang galing ko daw po."

Aminado din si Awra na nahirapan siya habang binubuo nila ang kaniyang storya dahil sa pag aalinlagan sa mga humuhusga sa kanya.

"Siyempre po nahirapan pero tinanggap ko po yun ng buo kasi para malaman na rin nila kung sino ako at para hindi na rin nila ako husgahan."

Ayon din kay Awra, pagkatapos nilang gawin ang kanyang life story sa MMK ay naayos ang mga gusot sa kanyang pamilya.

Pinasalamatan din ni Awra ang mga nagsisilbing gabay niya na sila Coco Martin at Vice Ganda na siyang naging inspirasyon niya sa kanyang karera bilang artista.

"Thank you po kasi lahat naman po ng mga ito ay dahil kay kuya Coco and Ate Vice sila po yung gumabay sa akin," kuwento ni Awra.

Dagdag pa ni Awra ang lahat ng tagumpay niya ay ang kanyang maituturing na pinakamagandang regalo ngayong kapaskuhan.

"Siguro po yung regalo ko para sa sarili ko ibibigay ko nalang po muna sa family ko kasi para sa kanila naman lahat ng ito," pagtatapos ng child actor.

Ellen Adarna says Baste Duterte is 'important' to her

Sexy actress Ellen Adarna admitted that she dehydrated herself - the reason why she passed out during her recent nude photo shoot for a men's magazine,

"Three days before the shoot, which I normally do 'pag mayroong photoshoot, I dehydrate," she confessed, adding that it makes her lose five pounds of water weight.

"Para mas payat. Mas makita 'yung cuts," Ellen said, although she advised people to never follow suit.

"Hindi ko inexpect na it will be under the heat of the sun kasi usually 'pag shoots, sa studio lang so 'yun, nahimatay."

"We had to stop (the pictorial) and then, nagdecide na nga sila na parang i-pack up na 'coz my blood pressure was really low na raw and then I said na wala ng other time kasi adlis na rin ako, may vacation ako that time," she said and asked for an hour to rest instead.

Ellen said, "Kumain ako so balewala 'yung diet ko kasi pinakain ako ng sugar and salt and everything."

When asked about presidential son Baste Duterte, Ellen just laughed and told Boy Abunda that she will post about their status on her social media.

She however described Baste as caring and a very down-to-earth person.

Trying not to give the TV host a direct answer, Ellen also admitted Baste is an 'important' person in her life.

Duterte, Singapore PM Lee agree to pursue fight vs. terrorism, illegal drugs

Published December 16, 2016 8:28am President Rodrigo Duterte and Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong have agreed to pursue the fight against terrorism and illegal drugs, both being their areas of mutual cooperation, Foreign Affairs Secretary Perfecto Yasay Jr. said.

"We talked a lot about the areas of mutual cooperation, particularly the field of the fight against illegal drugs. These are the basic

things we both agreed we want to pursue," Yasay was quoted.

Duterte is currently in Singapore after his state visit in Cambodia.

In a state banquet prepared by Singaporean President Tony Tan Keng Yam on Thursday night, Duterte praised the cooperation between the Philippines and Singapore on political issues while respecting each other's independence.

"We work closely on political issues, pursu-

ing principled positions on the rule of law in the peaceful settlement of disputes," Duterte said.

"We reaffirm, respect an independence and the non-interference in the internal affairs of the states," he added.

Duterte is set to meet around 7,000 members of the Filipino community in Singapore before he goes back to the Philippines Friday night.

Customs men open Balikbayan box, find 'stolen diamonds'

MANILA - The Bureau of Customs (BOC) said it had found 22 pieces of "stolen diamonds" when it opened a balikbayan box sent from Malaysia.

BOC Commissioner Nicanor Faeldon said the diamonds were contained in a plastic resealable pouch that was neatly hidden in a wallet inside the box sent by one Arturo R. Rivera from Kuala Lumpur.

The package was consigned to one Lajane Basilio of Purok 1, Luakan, Bataan.

"It is disheartening to confiscate a balikbayan box believing it contains gifts and other items for the loved ones of overseas Filipinos.

However, we cannot tolerate Filipinos abroad who use these boxes for smuggling as it violates our laws," Faeldon said.

According to Faeldon, the BOC found the diamonds based on information relayed by National Bureau of Investigation Director Dante Gierran.

The BOC statement did not provide other details, like the diamond's real owner and how the diamonds were stolen.

Faeldon and the BOC's communication officer could not be reached for an interview at press time.

Citing Gierran's information, the BOC

chief said the box arrived in the country on Dec. 5. It was transported in a freight container holding 245 other packages onboard the vessel Sima Genesis 0231 from Port Klang's Westport.

Based on BOC records, the designated agents of the shipment were LBC Express.

The BOC has yet to determine the value of the 22 diamonds, which were placed in the custody of Manila International Container Port District Collector Philip Maronilla.

The bureau said charges were being prepared against Rivera and Basilio.

DECEMBER CELEBRANTS

December birthday celebrants got together on Christmas Day at their former home in North York. From Left to Right are Steve, May, Jiron, Emil, Kevin, Nancy, and Neng.

PHOTO BY
ARIEL RAMOS



Janella Salvador reveals she wants to audition for Miss Saigon this year

As part of “Mano Po 7: Chinoy,” Janella Salvador said she did not hesitate when Regal Films offered her another project after doing “Haunted Mansion” in the Metro Manila Film Festival last year.

“Of course it’s ‘Mano Po’ so no matter what they say, kahit sabihin na hindi ikaw yung pinaka-main (character) it’s still ‘Mano Po.’ It’s something I wouldn’t even think to have second thoughts about. So in-accept ko naman siya agad. Yun lang. (laughs),” Janella shared.

Meanwhile, the 18-year-old actress admitted that it was the highlight of her year to be tapped by Disney to sing the local release of the “Moana” theme song.

“I’m actually so happy kapag nakakakita ako ng mga reaction videos and I see some international bloggers na nakikinig sa version ko and it just makes me so happy kasi siyempre hindi naman ako yung original na kumanta and yet they liked my version.

“Working with Disney is really such an experience so sobrang blessed lang ng pakiramdam. Sana maka-work ko pa ang Disney.



Sana maka-work ko rin si Mu-lan so yun lang (laughs). Oo naman gusto ko,” she said

The young star also said being part of an international brand she loves has in-spired her to audition for even bigger things in 2017.

“Siguro medyo nakaka-pressure siya. Pero I’m actually having fun because I’m just being myself. I

really love Disney. Since I was small, maka-Disney talaga ako and I guess it’s not hard talaga for me kasi I’ve always believed in doing what’s right naman.

“Actually after doing the Disney concert mas lalo ko na-realize na gusto ko pala talagang i-try yung theater like my mom. And I was actually supposed to audi-tion for Miss Saigon nung nagpa-audition sila nung March dito kasi hindi ako umabot kasi nasa Japan ako nun nag-fi-film (ng ‘Born For You’). Hopefully next time pag meron. Any production naman pero favorite ko kasi yung Miss Saigon. Kung mabigyan ako ng chance next year I’m going to go,” she remarked.

Darren Espanto considers his fans as his extended family

Young Kapamilya singer Darren Espanto dominated the public voting results of the category ‘ASAP Pop Heartthrob’ in the recently-concluded ASAP Pop Teen Choice Awards .

He garnered 58.98%, besting out nominees McCoy de Leon (19.81%), Ronnie Alonte (12.62%) and Bailey May (8.59%).

Darren expressed his gratitude towards his fans who continuously support him. “Maraming, maraming salamat po sa mga Darrenatics sa walang sawang suporta po ninyo kahit minsan pagod na po kayo, you guys still do your best and I see your efforts parati. You guys are the best and I love you, guys, so much. Thank you always for making it happen.”

At the young age of 15, Darren has already developed a loyal following who never fails to support him in all of his endeavors and even nominations from award-giving bodies.

Talking about how he takes care of them, the In Love Ako Sa ‘Yo singer shared, “I guess it’s just being relatable to them and having a good relationship with them, of course. Also, interacting with them, of course and para sa akin, sila po ‘yung extended family ko that I can always feel support from and who are always there.”



LINDSAY GIVEN A CHANCE

GMA-7 gives newcomer Lindsay de Vera her biggest break in the current primetime hit, “Alyas Robin Hood”. Lindsay’s real name is Lindt Johnston and she started as a child star and TV commercial model when she was eight years old. Now a sweet 16, she plays Dingdong Dantes’ niece named Lizzy. This is their second time together as she was introduced in Dong’s tele-serie last year, “Pari Koy”.

“Napakabait po niya and my dream is one day, maging leading lady rin sana ako ni Kuya Dong,” she says. “as joined “Alyas Robin Hood”. They are held captive by Dina and her cohorts, along with Dingdong Dantes as Pepe. Lindsay keeps on crying, scared of what Dina might do to them. But Dingdong manages to fight back and holds one of the guards hostage (Michael Flores). He then warns the other guards that he will kill Michael if they will not give him back his freedom.

Tea is more dangerous than Beer: Pliz avoid drinking tea. I discovered this last night, I had 8 beers🍺🍺 till 3am at the pub while my wife was having tea at home. You should have seen how violent and angry she was when I got home. I was peaceful and silent and headed to bed as she kept on shouting at me until morning. Tea is not good I tell you🤔☕. 20:14

MARCOS continued from page 1

Pacquiao, widely popular among Cambodian boxing fans, is part of the President’s official delegation in his two-day state visit to Cambodia. He was among those present in the President’s expanded bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister and his Cabinet ministers at the Peace Palace here.

“Part of the discussion is the personal request of Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen for Senator Manny Pacquiao to assist to the traffic information drive in Cambodia,” a statement from the Presidential Communications Office (PCO) read.

The PCO did not provide other details about Pacquiao’s role in the traffic information campaign here.

Road safety has become a public issue in Cambodia amid concerns of rising traffic accidents. Many drivers in Cambodia reportedly violate traffic laws while drunk driving is supposedly common.

Meantime, President Duterte and his Cambodian counterpart also discussed

measures to enhance diplomatic, economic, and security relations between the two countries during their closed-door meeting at the Peace Palace.

The two leaders have agreed to increase trade volume between the Philippines and Cambodia, including the holding of a trade fair between the two countries.

Also discussed were technology transfer from the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) to improve rice seeds as well as the construction of 100 percentFilipino-owned rice warehouses in Cambodia.

The two nations also agreed to increase tourism exchange “with attention on direct flight from Manila to Siem Reap to increase tourism on both sides,” according to the PCO.

The two leaders also affirmed to intensify cooperation in fighting cross border crimes, including drug trafficking.

They also discussed “60 Philippine education scholarships for Cambodians, particularly in science and engineering courses, and defense cooperation.”

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Albay solon sees economic gains under Duterte

A worker watches the first presidential debate between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump inside an appliances showroom in Manila on Sept 27, 2016. A



posted
December 15,
2016 at 10:00
pm by Manila
Standard

With 2016
about to close,
what positive
prospects can
Filipinos look
forward to next

year and the years ahead?

Albay Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda, a noted economist, said Filipinos have good reasons to be optimistic based on the “significant positive gains” registered by the national economy during the first six months of President Rodrigo Duterte’s administration.

The Albay lawmaker has identified the positive economic events of 2016 under Duterte. First on his list was the “peaceful, orderly and democratic transition of power following Duterte’s landslide victory last May 2016 elections. Investors hate uncertainty,” he said.

Albay Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda

Duterte garnered 16.6 million votes in the last elections, beating his closest rival by over six million votes, Salceda noted. “The outcome cemented the stunning populist victory, founded on his promise to eradicate crime and corruption. It brought back people’s belief in good governance, and restored investors’ confidence,” he added.

Second is Duterte’s “empowered Cabinet of solutions-driven practitioners and economic managers” that include Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno, Finance Secretary Sonny Dominguez, Trade and Industry Secretary Ramon Lopez, and Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia.

“This team of battle-tested men hauled from both government and the private sector has shown a decisive posture early on, and gives Duterte’s economic team and clarity of purpose and doable objectives,” he pointed out.

Third is the “formation of supermajorities in the House of Representatives and the Senate, the closest to a government of national unity,” and a viable response to Duterte’s pledge of clean government, which is the popular public clamor.

Fourth on Salceda’s list was the “demonstrated seriousness” of the President’s dynamic Cabinet, which

“hit the ground running with 10 full Cabinet meetings and two Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council consultations in the first five months. This means faster and better results,” he stressed.

Fifth, the lawmaker said, are the peace talks and indefinite ceasefire with the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People’s Army and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, started in the first months of the Duterte regime, compared to the years of preparation by former administrations.

Sixth is the huge business potential from Duterte’s China pivot and the forging of an independent foreign policy, all in one instance, “debunking long held myths about PH-US relations, and highlighting a promising PH-China’s partnership.”

Seventh is the Philippines’ registered fastest economic growth in Asia and the resurgence of the country’s manufacturing industry. The country posted a 7.1 percent on-year July-September hike—its most robust growth pace in three years, Salceda noted.

The figure surpassed the 6.7-percent median growth estimate of 15 economists survey by Bloomberg and matched an estimated 1.2-percent GDP rise against the previous quarter. It also stacked favorably against China’s third quarter growth rate of 6.7 percent and Vietnam’s 6.4 percent.

Eighth is the rollout of “AmBisyon Natin 2040,” the Duterte administration’s 10-point economic agenda and the preparation of 2017-2022 development plan.

“AmBisyon 2040 represents the collective long-term vision and aspirations of the Filipino people for themselves and for the country in the next 25 years,” Salceda said. “It describes the kind of life Filipinos want to live, and how the country will be by 2040. As such, it is an anchor for development planning across at least four administrations.”

The substantial improvement in peace and order with 80 percent reduction in drug volume and 39 percent drop in crime is ninth on Salceda’s list. The peace and order gains “represents a decisive effort at ridding the country of specific crime problems never given so much serious attention before.”

Tenth is the government’s commitment to deploy funds, with an 83 percent increase in infrastructure spending and improved absorptive capacity. Salceda said this thrust could drive the Philippines’ GDP to 9 percent in three years, with Duterte’s policy strengths and a blueprint for growth hinged largely on infrastructure.

“This could usher in a golden age of infrastructure,” he noted.

Based on economic forecast models developed by a group of econometricians, Salceda said the country can hit 9 percent GDP growth by 2019, with “infrastructure spending from 5 to 6 percent of GDP, funded by new taxes and tax efficiencies.”



US ex-envoy plotting Duterte fall

LISBON, PORTUGAL: The Philippines may be in for another rough ride in 2017.

Not only did former United States Ambassador Philip Goldberg leave the Philippines with a legacy of fractured relations between the two countries, he allegedly left behind a “blueprint to undermine Duterte,” a strategic recommendation ostensibly to the State Department for the ultimate removal of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte from office, according to a highly placed source. It is not clear, however, if the State Department in Washington DC had given its imprimatur to the recommendation by its former ambassador to the Philippines.

A document received over the weekend by The Manila Times from that source said Goldberg had outlined a list of “strategies” to undermine President Duterte and called for his eventual ouster. The blueprint gave a timetable of one-and-a-half years.

Quoting Goldberg, it said the “political actors (the opposition) would need all the political weapons in their arsenal to replace the Duterte administration and replace it with something more to the opposition’s liking.” He noted, however, “that (deposing Duterte) would be a challenge for the opposition.”

To bring down Duterte, the Goldberg plan calls for stoking public dissatisfaction with the President over unfulfilled election promises, isolating the Philippines from the rest of the Asean by extending military assistance to member countries except the Philippines, and/or through economic “blackmail” that aims to limit trade by some Asean member countries with the Philippines.

Goldberg predicts a worsening of the US-Philippine relations, more so on the issue of the US military presence in the Philippines, more particularly during the last two years of the Duterte administration.



Dominic Roque reveals having butt exposure in ‘Seklusyon’

Dominic Roque did not bat an eyelash when he revealed that he did a love scene that had him doing butt exposure in his 2016 Metro Manila Film Festival entry Seklusyon.

“Nasa international cut siya,” said Dominic in an interview during their recent blogger’s conference.

The Erik Matti film became the Philippine entry to the non-competition Hidden Dragons category of the 1st Macao International Film Festival just a few days ago.

Dominic added, “Actually, ang ganda noong pinanuod namin yung buong movie ng international cut. Iba yung pagka-intense ng mga eksenang natanggal.”

Without revealing too much about how the scene went, Dominic described the moment as “Kahit ako po, yun siguro yung pinakamalalang eksenang ginawa ko sa showbiz po.”

The former Pangako Sa’Yo star went on to joke that he had to undergo a “butt audition” for that moment.

“Makinis naman daw po [yung puwet ko]. May audition kasi yung puwet, e. Titignan kung ano yung pinaka okay!” he said.

Does he want to local viewers to see his behind?

“Siyempre, mas gusto pa rin po nating makakuha ng maraming audience para sa pelikula. Feeling ko, kung sa PG-13 [ilagay], baka po matanggal eh,” he said. “Pero ako, okay lang po kung mapanuod ng lahat.”

Dominic, along with Hashtags member Ronnie Alonte and newcomers Johnvic de Guzman, and JR Versales, play the role of the four deacons sent to a seclusion house to resist temptations from the devil to attack their faith.

‘Bye-bye America’ and we don’t need your money

Duterte tells U.S. to prepare to leave the country

MANILA - Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte told the United States to prepare for repeal of an agreement on deployment of troops and equipment for exercises, declaring “bye-bye America”, and we don’t need your money.

But Duterte suggested relations could improve under a President Donald Trump.

“I like your mouth, it’s like mine, yes Mr President. We are similar and people with the same feathers flock together,” he said, recalling his phone conversation with the president-elect early this month.

Returning his focus to the present U.S. administration which has criticized him over reports of extra-judicial killings in his campaign against drugs, he said:

“We do not need you,” Duterte said in a news conference after arriving from visits to Cambodia and Singapore. “Prepare to leave the Philippines. Prepare for the eventual repeal or abrogation of the VFA.”

The Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), signed in 1998, accorded legal status to thousands of U.S. troops who were rotated in the country for military exercises and humanitarian assistance operations.

“Bye, bye America and work on the protocols



that will eventually move you out of the Philippines,” he said, adding his decision would come “any day soon” after reviewing another military deal, Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA).

The firebrand leader was visibly upset and vented his anger on Washington because of a decision by the Millennium Challenge Corp (MCC) board to defer vote on the re-selection of Manila for compact development due to human rights issues.

“We do not need the money. China said they will provide so many,” he said. “The politics here in Southeast Asia is changing.”

Obama signs bill awarding Congressional Gold Medal to Filipino World War II vets

WASHINGTON, USA - President Barack Obama has signed into law a bill recognizing the sacrifices and contributions of over 260,000 Filipinos and Filipino Americans who fought alongside allied forces during World War II.

The legislation approved on Thursday, December 15 awards the Congressional Gold Medal—the nation’s highest civilian honor—to veterans whose service had been largely dismissed by prior acts of Congress.

“The Filipino veterans of World War II overcame many challenges in their fight for compensation, family reunification, and verification of wartime service,” said Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI), one of the lead sponsors of the legislation, in a statement published on Thursday.

The Rescission Act of 1946 barred Filipino soldiers from receiving veterans’ benefits awarded by measures enacted by the U.S. government after the end of WWII. It also officially labelled their contributions as inactive service, according to the Filipino American National Historical Society.

In 2009, a portion of the federal economic stimulus package gave surviving Filipino veterans a one-time lump sum of \$15,000 for citizens and \$9,000 for non-citizens.

“After enduring 75 years of injustice and humiliation, our Filipino World War II



veterans regained their honor and dignity,” Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba (Ret.), the chairman of the Filipino Veterans Recognition Project (FilVetREP), said in a statement released on Thursday.

Decades after their service ended, fewer than 18,000 Filipino veterans are still alive to personally celebrate the acknowledgment of their sacrifices.

“...[T]his recognition is a testament to each and every one of our Filipino WWII

veterans who earned and deserve their place amongst our greatest generation,” Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI) said in a statement. “To our Filipino veterans, their families, and all who worked so hard to make today a reality, maraming salamat sa inyong lahat.”

The pair of companion bills submitted to Congress in June of 2015 and eventually signed into law on Thursday was introduced by Hirono in the Senate and Gabbard in the House of Representatives. The

Senate version won unanimous approval on Wednesday, July 13. Its counterpart passed in the House on Wednesday, November 30.

Another bill resubmitted to Congress in May, the Filipino Veterans Fairness Act, would officially recognize the active service of those Filipinos who took part in allied military operations. It would also give them full access to programs and benefits administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Both Gabbard and Hirono said they would work with FilVetREP to organize Congressional Gold Medal ceremonies.

The signing of this bill comes after a series of actions earlier this year to give some recognition and benefits to the Filipino veterans.

The California State Board of Education recently approved curriculum changes of the state’s high schools to incorporate more information about Filipinos’ roles in the war in Grade 11 U.S. History lesson plans.

In the summer, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) rolled out a new family-based immigration program for Filipino WWII veterans and their families called the Filipino World War II Veterans Parole Program.

Coleen and Jessy: No scene stealing



Arci, Coleen and Jessy: No scene stealing

ARCI Muñoz, Jessy Mendiola and Coleen Garcia are together for the first time in a sexy action comedy movie that opens the new year 2017 for Star Cinema and Skylight Films, “Extra Service”, directed by Chris Martinez. Arci is

paired with Ejay Falcon, Jessy with Enzo Pineda who’s from GMA7 and Coleen with Vin Abrenica, a transferee from TV5. They play convicted felons who meet in jail and recruited by Carmi Martin to be secret agents. They are named Au, Em, Gee and work undercover as masseuses at the Touch Mahal Spa of Tessie Tomas. So they’re spa workers by night

and spies by day.

“I play Au, short for Aurora,” says Arci. “Nabilanggo ako for robbing a bank. I’m called the Kapitana kasi sobrang strong ng personality ko.”

“I’m Em for Emerald,” says Coleen. “I’m called Maldita. Ako ‘yung hothead sa amin, laging

nang-aaway, fierce. Lagi kong kinontra si Au kaya lagi kaming nag-aaway.”

“I’m Gee na nabilanggo naman for hacking,” says Jessy. “Ako ‘yung pinakamatatino sa’min, tech savvy, but bobo rin kasi I’m not streetsmart. I’m called Genia.”

Chris Martinez says the script is written by Alpha Habon and echoes “Charlie’s Angels” and “Mission Impossible,” but with a very Pinoy flavor. Carmi Martin as the girls’ boss speaks carabao, Visayan-accented English. “I’m glad to be part of this film kasi I started in showbiz as one of Dolphy’s Angels,” says Carmi. “Nakaka-relate ako sa kanila kasi sila ang modern version ng Dolphy’s Angels.”

So, how did the girls prepare for their roles? “As masseuses, may totoong masahista sa set to teach us what to do sa massage scenes,” says

Arci.

“Mahirap ‘yung roles namin kasi maraming action scenes,” adds Jessy. “So may standby rin na fight instructor to guide us in our stunts and fight scenes.”

“We guarantee the viewers they will have a good time watching ‘Extra Service’,” says Coleen. “It’s a combination of fun, adventure and yes, plenty of sexy scenes dahil kami ang Ultimate Sexy Squad dito. So don’t miss it when it opens in theaters on January 11 to welcome 2017.”

Is there no sapawan or scene stealing between them while shooting the movie? “None,” it’s Direk Chris who answers. “This is a team effort and everyone collaborated well. First time nilang mag-comedy like this at magaling silang lahat.”

Pitting Liza Soberano against Maine Mendoza



Stemming from the ongoing skirmish between ABS-CBN and GMA 7 is the clash of celebrities and talents associated with the respective media outfits. Indeed, network war, which most of the time fueled by fans’ fervent support for their idols, goes beyond the ratings game.

Kapamilya darling Liza Soberano and Kapuso star Maine Mendoza are the latest subject of a celebrity face-off that threw fans into rabid frenzy.

Liza Soberano excitedly announces that she is the newest ambassador of TechnoMarine and along with the announcement comes a viral photo taken during her first campaign shoot for the brand

In one of the trending videos on YouTube this week, netizens were engaged in a virtual word war when Mofo Daily, a popular American channel on the video sharing site known for curating pop trends across the globe, pitted the 18-year-old Kapamilya against the 21-year-old Kalyeserye star. The video is entitled “For The Win: Maine Mendoza vs Liza Soberano.”

In three rounds, the three pairs of judges, who are all Americans, compared the Dolce Amore star with the Dubsplash Queen based on their Instagram feed, respective

Nescafe coffee commercials and film trailers (Imagine You and Me for Maine and Everyday I Love You for Liza)

During the voting rounds, one of the judges claimed that she is a big fan of Maine after seeing her Dubsplash clips but admitted that she has not heard of Liza yet.

“She’s way too prettier than this dude,” the panelist said of Maine referring to her movie poster with his onscreen partner Alden Richards.

A male judge, on the other hand, commented that Liza’s beauty needs no advertisements as he goes through the young actress’s Instagram feed.

“She’s super cute, it’s not so much personality and I’m into that,” another panelist said describing Liza.

Maine Mendoza’s almost 7 million fans on Instagram and Twitter believe that her star is far from waning, and they are ready to rally behind the television darling to prove that.

Maine dominated the first two rounds and Liza won the hearts of the panelists

during the last round. But in the end, the panelists made a unanimous decision and chose Maine over Liza and shouted in unison, “Maine Mendoza for the win!”

Maine has a special participation along with Alden in the latest installment of the Enteng Kabisote film series. The film received unfavorable reviews from critics and the film producers are still mum on the box office performance of the Vic Sotto-starrer comedy. Most cinemas owners are starting to pull the movie out of their theaters due to its anemic performance at the tills.

Meanwhile, Liza set the Internet ablaze once more when her photo wearing a black leather jacket with her left shoulder exposed hit the online world. In less than 24 hours since it was posted, Liza’s stunning photo already garnered close to 200,000 “likes” and more than 2,100 comments. The 18-year-old Kapamilya also made it to Twitter’s trending topics that day proving nobody gets tired of her look.

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Philippines is open for business

an end to protectionism in industries monopolized by a few companies.

“More competition would only mean better services and affordability of quality products for all,” he said.

Singapore is the country’s largest trading partner and the largest source of investments among members of the Association of South-east Asian Nations (Asean).



Anne, Erwan engaged

ANNE Curtis is one actress we saw growing up before our eyes, from the time she started as a child star in Peque Gallaga's "Magic Kingdom" to being one of the hottest stars of her generation.

On the big screen, she won best actress for "Baler." She's no singer but has a hit album, "Annebisyosa", which also became a hit concert at the Big Dome.

And now, she's getting married. She's officially engaged to her boyfriend of six years, chef Erwan Heussaff, the younger brother of her good friend, Solenn. You can see Erwan officially proposing to her on a video posted in YouTube when they had a trip to New York last November where they joined a marathon.

Erwan kneeled in front of Anne then gave her an engagement ring and proposed marriage to her. Anne was visibly surprised but looked so happy. They both cried during that momentous event in their lives. The fans are jubilant and they were flooded with congratulatory notes. Anne is now 31 years old while Erwan is 29, so they're both of the right age to settle down and start their own family.

In a photo with Amy Perez, Anne proudly showed off the solitaire diamond engagement ring that Erwan gave her. Her co-hosts in "Showtime" then offered her a special song number for her engagement to Erwan.

Anne later delivers this message on the air: "Erwan and I are engaged. I am happy to share with all of you the great news. And being someone who's always in the public eye, I think it's very, very important that I share it with all of you. Thank you everyone. It was all over the news and social media. To those who sent their well wishes and love to both Erwan and I, *sobra kaming nagpapasalamat po sa inyo*. And I'm just hoping na until the end of this whole journey and as I enter the whole chapter in my life, *kasama ko pa rin ang 'It's Showtime' family ko*. And *sana po*, even when I become *misis na*, *patuloy pa rin po ang suporta n'yo*. *Isa itong bagay na hindi ko talaga ini-expect na mangyayari ngayong taon na 'to*. But it came as a beautiful surprise. Para sa akin, what a beautiful way to end 2016. As in, it's so, so beautiful. And I have no one else to thank but my mon amour, Erwan. I love you so much."

Anne's best friends, Solenn Heussaff, Georgina Wilson and Isabelle Daza all got married abroad this year. And they all expressed their happiness for her. Let's wait for further announcements about the details of Anne's wedding to Erwan.

Opposition to death penalty seen in Senate

against death penalty... We would continue with our anti-death penalty campaign and inform the politicians that this is not the solution to our problems,” Pabillo said.

He said that they would also encourage the lay faithful to write to their congressmen.

Batangas Archbishop Ramon Arguelles admitted he had communicated to the lawmakers representing the province.

“I am confident that all the Batangueño congressmen and women will oppose the re-imposition of the death penalty. Batangas is pro-God, pro-life; pro-people and pro-environment,” he said.

Activist priest Robert Reyes said the congressmen who would allow the death penalty are those who “are addicted to power and money.”

He believes that the primary change the country needs is a “change on politics, not on drugs.”

Sociology professor May Racelis said the Duterte administration’s war on drugs could have adverse effects on children, youth and women from the urban poor – making them think that “violence is the new normal.”

ABS-CBN apologizes to Pagasa

MANILA - Television network ABS-CBN has apologized to employees of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) for a kids television gag show's joke over unreliable weather forecasts.

The media giant said the different meaning given to the acronym Pagasa in an episode of "Goin' Bulilit" "was said in the context of a joke and should not be deemed as a fact or criticism."

The Philippine Weathermen Employees Association, the union of Pagasa employees, the next day demanded a public apology

from the producers of the comedy show for belittling the weather bureau and endangering public safety.

"It was not our intention to hurt or demean the agency and we apologize to the employees of Pagasa who may have been offended by the joke that we aired," ABS-CBN said.

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'My Love from the Star' cast announced



AT LAST! Kapuso network has introduced Gil Cuerva and Jennylyn Mercado as Matteo Do and Steffi Cheon, the well-loved characters in the top-rating Koreanovela 'My Love from the Star'

GMA Network has revealed the identities of the lead stars in the TV adaptation of the phenomenal Korean hit My Love from the Star.

The series, one of the Network's highly-

anticipated programs in 2017, promises to delight the viewers by bringing back the mala-aso't pusang kilig of Steffi and Matteo with Jennylyn Mercado and Gil Cuerva.

Jennylyn plays Steffi, the popular, beautiful and sought-after actress and endorser. She is rich, successful but over confident and feeling entitled.

Mercado is excited to begin work on the adaptation. She is looking forward to give the audience a whole new viewing experience with her role as Steffi. "Dito, they will see another side of me—the one na nakita nila sa films ko. Kasi kung dati sa pelikula ko siya ginagawa ngayon dadalhin natin 'yun dito sa GMA. And finally, dumating na si Matteo, and I saw na very willing siya na matuto and open siya sa lahat ng mga ideas at mabait. That's why excited ako na mapanood na ito ng mga viewers natin."

Meanwhile, bagging the role of Matteo the extremely intelligent yet cold and aloof extra-terrestrial being who lived as a hu-

man on Earth for 400 years ever since his spaceship crash-landed, is commercial and print model Gil Cuerva.

After going through a series of auditions, the newbie actor is thankful that the Network chose him to play the role of Matteo. "Naninibago ako. This is all new to me but at the same time I'm very grateful and honored na ako ang pinili at may tiwala po ang production, si Direk Joyce (Bernal), si Jennylyn sa akin. Sa totoo lang po there's a lot of pressure on me na mag-deliver. Kim Soo-hyun is very big in Korea so siyempre may comparisons po doon but I'm up to the challenge. I'm excited to do it and hopefully I will be able to deliver."

Completing the cast are Gabby Eigenmann, Christian Bautista, Jackie Rice, with Glydel Mercado, Spanky Manikan, Renz Fernandez, Melissa Mendez, and Nar Cabico.



Marian Saves Boobay

Comedian Boobay, who had a stroke recently, is now getting better

Boobay's partner Kent Juan Resquir said the comedian's vital signs are stable now

Comedian Ate Gay expressed gratitude to actress Marian Rivera for saving Boobay's life.

On Instagram, Ate Gay posted a photo of him with Rivera and Boobay and captioned it with a heartfelt message of thanks for the actress.

"Di ako nagkamali ng pakiramdam mabuting tao si Marian. Salamat sa pagsagip kay Boobay ha. Mamahalin ko kayo habang ako'y nabubuhay. Salamat salamat salamat," Ate Gay said.

[I wasn't wrong when I felt that Marian is a good person. Thank you for saving Boobay. I will love both of you for as long as I live. Thank you, thank, you, thank you.]

Boobay suffered from stroke earlier this week. His partner Kent Juan Resquir said the comedian is getting better now.

"Boobay's condition is getting better. He is conscious and vital signs are stable. Strength of both upper and lower extremities is not impaired. Comprehension is preserved but has trouble speaking fluently. Still in Acute Stroke Care for further observation," Resquir stated.

Boobay, who is Norman Balbuena in real life, is a Filipino actor, comedian and television host. He is best known for appearing in several GMA News and Public Affairs shows as a co-host. He was also a regular host in the award-winning comedy-game show Celebrity Bluff, along with Jose Manalo, Brod Pete, and Eugene Domingo.

Rivera and Boobay first became friends after they worked as hosts of Extra Challenge Extreme in 2012. After hearing what happened to Boobay, Allan K said Rivera immediately transferred the comedian to St. Luke's Medical Center in Global City.

Will Philippines score a back-to-back win at Miss Universe?

That's possible and that's what we've been hoping for."

These were the words of Jonas Gaffud when interviewed during the Miss Universe 2016 kick-off party that was spearheaded by Miss Universe 2015 Pia Wurtzbach along with Miss Universe Organization President Paula Shugart and the executives of the pageant's major partners and sponsors.

Gaffud, or popularly known to pageant fans as "the beauty queen maker," was positive on the chances of Maxine Medina, the Philippine delegate to the pageant, in clinching the Miss Universe crown on Jan. 30.

He said that the 5-foot-8 stunner is 100 percent prepared and is focused on making her countrymen proud. Medina went through rigorous training at the gym to work on her core to achieve her perfect figure in time for the pre-pageant events. She's undergone personality development and Q-and-A training to prepare



her for the more technical aspects of the beauty contest.

"The are a few little things that she needs to improve on but now when we see her onstage, we are confident that she will deliver. She looks classy and very stunning," Gaffud said.

Medina said that she is grateful for the support her predecessor is giving her.

Gaffud and his team of pageant contestant trainers have been credited for the successful placements of the Philippine representatives at international beauty pageants. Most notable of them, of course, were Miss World 2013 Megan Young, Miss International 2016 Kylie Versoza, and Miss Universe 2015 Pia Wurtzbach.

His team believes Medina has a big chance to win as the 26-year-old interior designer has been doing her homework seriously. Though most pageant fans are not sold to Medina's performance during the Question and Answer portion at the Binibining Pilipinas early this year, Gaffud acknowledged Medina's waterloo and said they made sure the Philippine bet would overcome this hurdle.

"We always tell her, 'you just need to answer from your heart.' People expect that candidates would give pageant patty answers during Q and A but when you answer from the heart, you can answer the question well," Gaffud shared.

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‘PH can’t stop China’

Govt: Sino militarization up to US, Europe to take action



MANILA - FOREIGN Affairs Secretary Perfecto Yasay Jr. admitted that the Philippines cannot do anything about China’s move to militarize a series of contested artificial islands in the South China Sea.

“There is nothing that we can do about that now, whether or not it is being done for purposes of further militarizing these facilities that they have put up,” Yasay told journalists in Singapore.

“We cannot, we cannot stop China at this point... and saying do not put that up. We will continue to pursue peaceful means [by] which all of these can be prevented,” he added.

Yasay said the Philippines would tolerate Beijings actions so that there will be “no further actions that will heighten the tensions between the two countries,” particularly in the Scarborough Shoal.

“We will leave it at that. For the Phil-

ippines, we have our bilateral engagements with China... and our efforts have paid off. As you can see, our fishermen are allowed to... not allowed—But our fishermen now have free access, insofar as Scarborough Shoal is concerned,” Yasay said.

On Thursday, the US-based think tank Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative showed new satellite imagery showing that China has installed “significant” defensive weapons in its seven islets in the Spratly Islands in recent years, built up from much smaller land protuberances and reefs.

Although Beijing has said it does not intend to militarize the contested waters of the South China Sea, ongoing satellite imagery has shown the installation of military equipment and longer runways.

They appear to be large anti-aircraft guns and close-in weapons systems, the AMTI said.

Despite these threats however, Yasay said that the issue about the militarization and the construction of permanent facilities by China “has already been passed upon by the arbitral tribunal and decision there is very clear.”

“We will move forward in the future insofar as pursuing the enforcement of the decision of the arbitral tribunal,” he added.

He said the freedom of navigation in

the South China Sea was a major concern for the United States, Japan and the European Union.

“Let them take whatever action is necessary in the pursuit of their national interest... and we will leave it at that. For the Philippines, we have our bilateral engagements with China,” Yasay said.

He said the country would continue to engage China in other aspects of their relationship—trade, investments, people-to-people contact, cooperation, infrastructure development and other such assistance “that will have no strings attached.”

A leftist Duterte ally in the House, however, assailed China for its militarist actions.

“This is highly deplorable as it further militarizes an already militarized maritime zone. It raises the stakes for a potential regional dispute as US President-elect Donald Trump claimed he is ready to confront Beijing on territorial issues,” Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Carlos Zarate said.

What is worse though, Zarate said, is that the action was done despite President Xi Jinping’s pledge not to militarize the islands in the Spratly archipelago.

“There should be a stop to these militarist activities both from China and the US because it would be very disadvantageous to the region and its people if this situation escalates,” Zarate said.



Lolita Rodriguez or Dolores Maiquez Clark in real life was a multi-awarded actress, she starred in more than 80 films between 1953 and 1992

Remembering Lolita Rodriguez

Stars never die, they just fade away.

The country mourned the passing of Lolita Rodriguez, one of Philippine cinema’s legendary actresses, who died at the age of 81 in Hemet, California where she and family migrated in 1977.

Born in Majayjay, Laguna to an American father and Filipino mother, Lolita made her movie debut at the age of 18 in Sampaguita Pictures Ating Pag-ibig in 1953, which starred Tita Duran and Pancho Magalona. She made her first starring role in Sabungera in 1953 and co-starred with Dolphy in the now classic Jack and Jill in 1954.

Lolita Rodriguez or Dolores Maiquez Clark in real life was a multi-awarded actress, she starred in more than 80 films between 1953 and 1992

Lolita made a mark in “love-triangle” movies in the 60’s with Eddie Rodriguez and Marlene Dauden, like Sapagkat Kami’y Tao Lamang (1963), Kapag Puso’y Sinugatan (1967) and Kasalanan Kaya? (1968).

Her most memorable role was the town’s outcast Kuala in the landmark 1974 film Tinimbang ka Ngunit Kulang by Lino Brocka, part of the 70’s golden harvests in Philippine cinema. Rodriguez won her second Famas Best Actress award for this film, 18 years after her first in Gilda in 1956.

Lolita was incomparable in her team-up with the great Brocka in Stardoom (1971), Tubog sa Ginto (1971), Lunes, Martes, Miyerkules, Huwebes, Biyernes, Sabado, Linggo (1976) and Tatlo, Dalawa, Isa (Bukas, Madilim, Bukas) (1974)

In 1979, Lolita made two Brocka films considered as “acting coup team-up.” First was Ina, Kapatid, Anak, which pitted her for the first time against Charito Solis, with one of the most dramatic confrontational scenes ever in local film. This was followed by the Manila Film Festival entry Ina ka Ng Anak Mo in which Lolita won best actress in a tie with co-star Nora Aunor.

Indeed, if there is one local actress that can match Rodriguez’s quiet intensity and depth in style, it is Aunor who got the rare chance to appear with her in the Brocka opus. Aunor was said to have gotten more enamored and awed with the veteran actress whom the Superstar considered her biggest idol because of her unselfish behavior on the set.

COUNTERING BATO’S REVERSAL

Top PNP official claims he received cash gift from Duterte

MANILA - Despite the pronouncement of Philippine National Police chief Dir. Gen. Ronald “Bato” Dela Rosa to the contrary, a ranking police official revealed that he had received a cash gift supposedly from President Rodrigo Duterte.

In a report by Sandra Aguineldo on “24 Oras,” the police official said said he received the bonus in cash at the PNP General Headquarters and not through their payroll like their other incentives.

During the PNP Christmas Party on Monday, Dela Rosa said high-ranking officials will receive cash gifts ranging from P50,000 to P400,000 from Duterte.

“Kunin niyo pamasko na

galing kay presidente. Love na love niya yung PNP kaya ganon. Lahat tayo happy,” Dela Rosa said.

But Dela Rosa took back his statement, saying no cash bonus will be coming from Malacañang.

“Gusto ko sanang mag-share sa inyo kung meron akong malaking matatanggap kahapon dahil akala ko may ibibigay na bonus ang Malacañang. Kaso kinulit ng media, saan daw ang source, saan galing hanggang sa sige lang tayo hintay, walang dumating,” he said.

But the police official who spoke to GMA News said he and other colleagues received the



bonuses after Dela Rosa’s speech.

The amount varied depending on the rank of PNP officers.

Malacañang had earlier denied that cash gifts will be given

to officers.

“It has not been released and apparently is not forthcoming. Those who do their work well deserves the reward they can get,” Presidential Spokesperson Ernesto Abella said.

Disappointing

GMA News spoke to police officers of lower rank, who

admitted that news of top officials receiving huge Christmas bonuses comes as a disappointment to them.

Meanwhile, PNP spokesperson Senior Superintendent Dionardo Carlos said a paper trail should be present if police generals indeed received their bonus.

“Kung meron ngang natanggap, may resibo yan. Kasi yung sinasabing pipirmahan, malalaman kung ano yung purpose or intention of whatever amount was released,” Carlos said in an interview on QRT.

Carlos added such documents should also bare the identity of the giver and he source of the fund.



Officers and members of PCCF pose for a picture.

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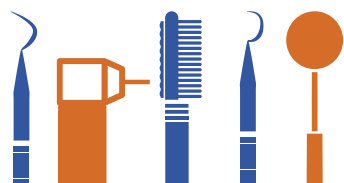


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Community leaders Doctors Solon and Josephine Guzman held their 19th annual Christmas party at their home in Mississauga. As expected, staff, family and friends experienced the warmth hospitality of the philanthropic couple, with a variety of dishes from halal, Japanese, Mediterranean and of course, Filipino food. There was a performance by the choir Handmaids of the Lord, a group by Couples for Christ and also dance numbers including tinikling by the Siony Dance Company with their daughters Princess and Angeline. There were words of gratitude by staff and former staff that Doctor Solon hired again. One was Eleanor, who lost her husband in 2014.

“I just want to share my good life with everyone, spread happiness,” said Dr. Solon.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone.

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Oras ni Maine sa ‘Bulaga,’ mababawasan

SIMPLE subalit fruitful ang maliit na pasasalamat ng Triple A sa showbiz press na nakatuwang na nila mula noong si Marian Rivera pa lang ang artist nila.

Ngayon ay lumalaki na ito at bukod kay Yan Yan, pasok sa Triple A management sina Kris Aquino, Maine Mendoza, Andrea Torres, Jerald Napoles, ang Baes ng Eat Bulaga, Taki, Andrew Garcia at Baby Baste.

Ibinalita ni Rams David, presidente ng Triple A, na kasado na ang paggawa ng GMA primetime series nina Alden Richards at Maine Mendoza.

Kaya naman hindi na sila kukulitin ng fans ng dalawa.

After ng storycon nu’ng nakaraang mga araw, next year na raw ang taping sa Quezon.

Target itong ilabas ng Kapuso Network by February.

Walang sinabing title ang series, pero ayon sa fans nina Alden at Maine, ito’y Destined to be Yours. Base naman sa ilang nasulat, si Irene Villamor ang director, ang gumawa ng movie na Camp Sawi.

Komo location ang shooting, malamang mabawasan ang oras ni Meng sa Eat Bulaga. Hindi biro itong series nila dahil usually ay three to four days ang taping.

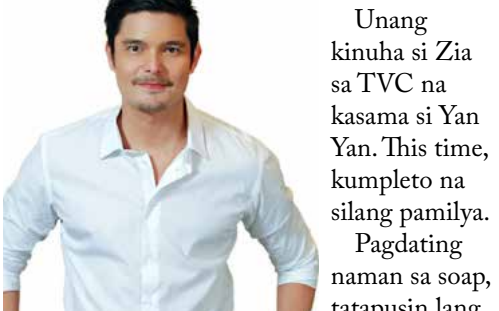
“Pero hindi pa rin siya mawawala. Nandoon pa rin siya,” sabi ni Rams.

Ilan sa nabalitaan naming kasama sa series ay sina Janice de Belen at Lotlot.

Kamakailan naman ay muling ininyterbyu ni Kris Aquino si Maine. Mahaba-habang intebyuhan ang naganap na ilalabas uli ng host-actress sa kanyang Facebook Live.

IBINALITA pa rin ni Rams na bahagi na raw ng Johnson & Johnson si Dingdong Dantes.

Ang ibig sabihin, may TV commercial na ginawa si Dong at sila naman ang sentro ng anak nilang si Zia.



Unang kinuha si Zia sa TVC na kasama si Yan Yan. This time, kumpleto na silang pamilya. Pagdating naman sa soap, tatapusin lang ni Marian ang

pagpapadeda sa anak bago sumabak sa tra-baho. May duration pala ang pagpapasuso sa anak kaya hindi muna tumanggap ng trabaho si Yan Yan.

Eh, sa isyu namang may away sina Marian at Andrea Torres na umano’y pinagselosan sa taping ng Alyas Robin Hood, “Walang away sina Marian at Andrea. Magkasama sila sa isang management team kaya ’wag silang pag-awayin. Hindi sila aabot sa ganoon!”

May offer din daw ang TV5 sa kanila na gumawa ng programa, but as of now, wala sa priority’yong ng APT Entertainment.



Forex Christmas Party

Forex held their Christmas party at Estate banquet Hall. There were good food and even more good company. There were games and as always, the Kris Kringle. Of course, there was the yearly awards for employees who have the done beyond the call of duty. It was a great night and in good company. There were gifts for everyone. Even I got a gift jacket. Thank you to Forex for inviting me to join your merry party. Merry Christmas to everyone and a Happy New Year.



Star Circle Christmas Variety Show

Star Circle Academy held their Christmas Variety Show and their first Lip-Sync Battle - Kid's Edition at the Oriental Centre at the corner of Brimley and Sheppard. It was a fun afternoon for everyone and brought much-needed life to the mall. While the weather outside was not delightful (it was snowing

a bit), Star Circle kids put much needed warmth and merriment inside the mall. The contestants were very excited and very much into the battle as they gamely impersonated stars like Lady Gaga and other pop stars.



How a Failed Peaceful Revolution Led to Rodrigo Duterte

Cleve Kevin Robert Arguelles, University of the Philippines / The Conversation

The Philippines president’s drug war shows what happens to democracies when the public is forgotten

How can this be explained in a country that a mere 30 years ago brought down a dictator without resorting to violence?

Duterte’s rise is an evolving lesson in the vulnerability of democracies in the face of a neglected public. The democratic institutions of the Philippines have little power when faced with a populist president determined to channel frustrations into immediate actions.

Unfulfilled promise

In 1986, millions of Filipinos ended Ferdinand Marcos’ dictatorship through sustained civil resistance against government violence and electoral fraud. This culminated in a massive peaceful protest in the capital along Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue (EDSA). The event is now popularly known as the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution.

Marcos was ousted after 21 years in power. He had been democratically elected as president in 1965, but essentially ruled as a dictator from 1972 to 1986.

To the disappointment of many, an elite-dominated democracy replaced Marcos’ authoritarian rule. From 1987, a small number of families started to restore their control of the government and rotate the seats of power among themselves. They included the Marcos family, who returned from exile in 1991 and were welcomed by their allies.

But three decades later, the post-EDSA pact is far from being fulfilled.

A neglected public

The post-EDSA leadership has failed to solve

many of the problems that concern Filipinos. Despite promising national growth rates, the gains appear to have largely benefited the rich. More than 26 million Filipinos remain impoverished. And unemployment rates are said to be the worst in Asia.

Democracy’s discontent

Amid political and economic exclusion and malaise came Duterte. He offered empathy to the economic strugglers and protection from the violence of criminals and politicians. His was a twin campaign narrative of care and power. His supporters often highlighted how they felt that Duterte truly cared for them.

And he was not just all talk. Duterte is seen as a man of action: decisive and quick. His “authenticity” is manifest in his everyday language coupled with humour that comes from the streets.

Many felt that Duterte rose from the ranks of ordinary citizens despite coming from a traditional political family and holding various political offices for 30 years. This is especially evident in his overwhelming support in the southern Philippines, as the first president from a region long neglected by the capital.

How did it come to this?

When democracy doesn’t deliver, its legitimacy becomes difficult to defend. And when successive elite-dominated governments have used democracy for their own ends, the balance tilts towards authoritarianism.

Under post-EDSA democracy the richest families amassed more wealth than ever while poverty, hunger, homelessness, and crime continued to afflict ordinary Filipinos. It’s not difficult to imagine why some are nostalgic for

the authoritarian past. Although national statistics show otherwise, people felt those were the country’s golden years.

Extrajudicial killings are a regular feature of post-EDSA governments as they were of the martial law years. Examples include the 1987 Mendiola massacre, 2004 Hacienda Luisita massacre and 2009 Maguindanao massacre, to name a few.

Perpetrators have not been brought to justice. Even before Duterte, the Philippines was known as the country with the worst state of impunity. Government critics were the usual victims until Duterte took aim at alleged drug dealers and users.

In my fieldwork in a massive poor urban community in Quezon City, residents have welcomed Duterte’s war on drugs. They now feel more secure in what they call their “drug-infested community” even though drug use has substantially declined compared to previous decades, according to one village official.

Residents argue that their perceptions of community security are just as important as the numbers in government records. For people to feel safe in a city where 92% of villages face drug-related crimes and in a nation where crimes against persons and property are rising is no easy thing.

When Duterte’s campaign translates to perceived everyday safety, it is no wonder that drug-war murders have not met considerable resistance.

Anyone with experience of the country’s institutions of justice knows how elusive criminal justice is. Around 80% of drug cases end up being dismissed and it may take a decade to achieve a conviction.

Most people do not trust the judiciary and many are convinced that power and money are needed to claim justice.

Previous administrations also made a mock-

ery out of the national justice system; even convicted corrupt politicians enjoy their freedom while innocents languish in jail. A corruption whistleblower, Jun Lozada, was recently convicted, while ex-president Gloria Arroyo was acquitted and set free.

The legislature has been used to turn issues of justice into a public circus, such as in the impeachment of Supreme Court Chief Justice Reynato Corona and the hearings on allegations of graft and corruption against former vice president Jejomar Binay.

Is it surprising then that Duterte’s supporters find calls to follow the rule of law and due process hypocritical? When institutions do not work, it becomes unreasonable to rely on them.

Duterte’s narrative plays on the temptations for a disgruntled public to claim swift justice. In the context of his rise to power, it’s no surprise that calls to respect human rights or the rule of law fall on deaf ears.

The election of Duterte may be seen as the nadir, but possibly also a turning point, in the long-standing democratic deficit in Asia’s oldest democracy. His rejection of the rule of law and liberal democracy represents a rupture in the post-EDSA consensus.

It’s not a stretch to say that the Philippines’ elite democracy had it coming. The failure to deliver on the promises of the People Power revolution made the rise of Duterte politically possible.

Cleve Kevin Robert Arguelles is Instructor of Political Science at University of the Philippines

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James Reid and Nadine Lustre say their 10-month relationship has been perfect and very smooth

“We enjoy sharing this with the fans,” James Reid says of his relationship with Nadine Lustre. Awww! PHOTO: Coco-nuts Manila

Sweethearts James Reid and Nadine Lustre are turning out to be our relationship goals.

The couple expressed their gratitude for having a pretty solid 2016. The year, James said, has been the “highlight” of their young careers, especially after headlining a successful soap opera and a concert tour.

“It has been the highlight of our career because it was the finale of On The Wings of Love, which I think is our greatest achievement. It was the year that we became international because of the tour, the concert. It’s been a long year,” the 23-year-old actor-singer said.

Of course, 2016 is also the year the popular love team turned their onscreen partnership into a real-life romance.

James and Nadine described their relationship so far as perfect and very smooth.

“It’s been perfect so far. It has been easy. Very smooth,” Nadine said.

James said: “I think so far it’s been a very smooth relationship. I think the only thing, I guess you know, is privacy as a couple. But we’re enjoying it. We’re having a lot of fun. Of course, we enjoy sharing this with the fans.”

Nadine is also thankful for their travels together. They’ve been to a lot of countries this year thanks to their concert tour and their TV and movie projects.

“Lahat ng pinuntahan namin super nag-enjoy talaga kami. Favorite talaga namin mag travel pareho,” she said.

(We enjoyed all our travels. Traveling is really our favorite.)

James and Nadine faced fans and members of the press during a Jollibee Live event (to the promote the fast food chain’s Burger Steak meal, which they endorse) at the Century City Mall in Makati City on Sun, Dec 11.

Coincidentally, the day marks their 10th month as a couple (they officially became an item on Feb 11).

Despite being famously aloof and mum about their personal lives, they’re happy to share a personal milestone with their loyal fans.

During the event, James even performed a spoken word poetry piece (written by former co-star Juan Miguel Severo) for Nadine. In turn, Nadine performed a song that remind her of James.

James and Nadine currently star in the ABS-CBN drama Till I Met You. But they say their fans have a lot to look forward in 2017.

“Basta surprise na lang. Marami kaming suprisas para sa lahat, magugulat kayo. And syempre, album ni James next year. Hindi na namin sasabihin sa inyo para surprise na lang talaga pagdating ng 2017,” Nadine said.

(It’s a surprise. We have a lot of surprise for everyone. Of course, James has an album next year. But we won’t tell you what else we have planned for you so it will be a surprise in 2017.)

We can’t wait.

No more hiding for Jennylyn and Dennis + other stories

JENNYLYN Mercado was absent from her hosting duties in “Superstar Duets” last

Saturday because she was vacationing in Amsterdam, Paris and Belgium with her inamorato, Dennis Trillo. This time, they’re apparently no longer hiding the real score about this as they’ve been posting their pictures on their social media account together, looking very much the sweet lovebirds that they are.

GMA allowed her to take a leave of absence from her show as they know she needs a break after her Mommy Lydia’s long illness at the hospital that ended with her passing away. It’s good Dennis served as a ready and willing shoulder to cry on during Jen’s hour of bereavement.

Their fans quickly registered their messages of approval on the internet upon seeing the sweet photos of the lovebirds and added they are so “kinikilig” seeing the two of them together. Some of them are even asking as to when they are going to walk down the aisle. But Jen said then that they’re not in a hurry to do that and she’s willing to wait for five more years before wedding bells start ringing for them.

Early this year, both Dennis and Jen will be busy with their own new shows. Dennis was already shown attending the initial meetings for the revival of “Mulawin”. He was also part of the first “Mulawin” more than ten years ago. As for Jen, it looks like her own local version of the Korean hit, “My Love from the Star”, will finally start grinding, but it’s still a guessing game as to who her leading man will be.

ABS-CBN’S NEW MORNING ATTRACTIONS

ABS-CBN’s new morning soap that starts airing today, “Langit Lupa”, just before “Showtime”, offers three new tandems to viewers of all ages. First is that of cute 7-year old child stars Yesha Camile and Xia Vigor who play the best of friends whose lives are affected by the fact that their parents are at war with each other. Both of them are very talented. When asked who’s the better actress between them, Yesha played safe and replied: “Parehas lang po kami.”

But Xia gave a very humble answer: “Mas mahu-say po siya kasi mas matagal na siyang artista sa’kin. Mas marami na siyang nagawang teleserye. Ako, mas bago kaya kulang pa ko sa training.”

When asked which of the scenes they’ve shot for the show they liked the most, Yesha replied: “Yung pong naliligo ako sa ulan using a firetruck.” As for Xia, “yun pong haunted house scene kasi nakakata-kot po talaga.”

Then there’s the teen love team of Jairus Aquino and Sharlene San Pedro, both of them also former child stars who graduated from “Goin’ Bulilit”. Jairus plays Junjun, the brother of Jason Abalos who is the father of Yesha, while Sharlene is Corazon or Heart, a probinsyana who arrives in Manila and becomes Jairus’ love interest.

Finally there’s the love team of young adults Tommy Esguerra and Miho Nishida from Pinoy Big

Brother 737. Miho was the big winner and Tommy was her runner up and their on and off cam romance bloomed while they’re both inside Bahay ni Kuya. Miho plays Cindy, a “kasambahay” in the home of Xia Vigor working for her mom, Yam Concepcion.

Tommy is Kit, the tutor of Xia who falls in love with Miho. Let’s see if these three tandems will help attract more viewers who’d be glued to the show.

PAOLO, THE RELUCTANT ACTOR REDISCOVERED

PAOLO Ballesteros is on cloud 9 as his “Die Beautiful” is now an official entry in the Metro Manila Filmfest, with Regal Entertainment releasing it. His manager, Joji Dingcong, says Paolo has always been lackadaisical in his career.

“Actually, noon pa maraming kumukuha sa kanya, pero lagi niyang sinasabi, happy na siya sa ‘Eat Bulaga’. It’s his own decision na huwag tumang-gap ng projects nang sabay-sabay, huwag maglagari. Lagi kong sinasabi sa kanya, hindi na siya bumabata at hindi rin siya yumayaman. So blessing in disguise nga na na-suspend siya dahil nakagawa siya ng two movies at nanalo pa siyang best actor sa isang international filmfest.”

Direk Jun Lana says that when he wrote the script for “Die Beautiful”, he had no particular actor in mind. “But when we presented it sa Hong Kong Film Financing Forum in 2014, kailangang may maipakita kaming trabaho and I asked Paolo, puwede ba mag-pictorial ka. Kunwari, ikaw ang bida para makahingi kami ng funding. At ‘yun nga, natuloy ‘yung project at ang laking tulong na si Paolo ang kinuha namin kasi siya mismo ang nagme-make up sa sarili niya para sa kanyang transformations, kaya nakatipid kami. But more than that, he really has so many talents. Yung acting na pinakita niya rito sa dramatic scenes niya with his daughter, Inah de Belen, he’ll surprise a lot of people. Like ‘yung members ng jury sa Tokyo Filmfest, galing na galing sa kanya. Napatawa na niya, napaiyak pa.”

“Malaki rin ang nagawa ni Direk Jun,” says Paolo. “Kasi kahit akala mo, light lang ‘yung eksena, nag-uusap lang kayo. Yung last scene ko sa best friend ko, hindi ko alam, nagpapaalam na pala ako kasi mamamatay na ko. Kapag pinanood mo na on screen, maiiyak ka. At saka perfectionist siya, paulit-ulit ang eksena. Kung minsan, may isang strand lang ng buhok ko na nakita niyang nakatikwas, paulit ang eksena. E, ang hirap kayang padapain ng buhok kasi wig nga, e. Ha ha ha!”

Isn’t he afraid he’d be typecast in gay roles? “Wala namang kaso kung gay role uli ang ibigay sa’kin. Basta ibang klaseng bading naman. Hindi yung gaya ni Trisha rito sa ‘Die Beautiful’ na nagawa ko na.”

What if it’s a gay role where he’d do nude hot love scenes and torrid kissing scenes with his leading man? Is he ready? “Ang tanong is: ready na ba sila sa’kin?”

Duterte promises translate to freebies in 2017 budget

Hospitalization will be free-- -DOH CHIEF

MANILA - The bicameral committee approved a P3.35-trillion budget for 2017, an appropriation described by Senate Finance Committee Chair Loren Legarda as a “compassionate” budget.

“People can’t believe but it’s true because we have resources, we have funds...It’s a compassionate budget. It’s really for the welfare of the Filipino people,” she said on ANC’s Headstart Monday.

She shared the highlights in her interview.

FREE TUITION IN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

Legarda noted, as a lawmaker, she had

received tons of requests for endorsements for scholarships. “Why should it be that a Filipino child or a Filipino who wants to go to college must know a politician,” she said.

With the budget infusion, undergraduate studies in state universities and colleges will be free of tuition.

“Anyone who is enrolled or will be enrolled in a state university and college, who’s a Filipino citizen should be free in terms of tuition,” she said.

P300-million of the P8.3-billion allocation, she added, shall go to the SUCs which offer medical courses.

Also in the 2017 budget for the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) is an approximate P5-billion allocation for scholarship and student assistance, including Tulong Dunong, a

special fund for the indigent.

“That allows scholarships for state universities and colleges and even private educational institutions as long as they apply and go through the process,” explained Legarda.

However, the Senate is leaving the accomplishment of the implementing rules and regulations to CHED.

“Itong mga operationalization, how to avail of it, nasa eskwelahan yan kung papaano. What we’re saying is we provided the funds. CHED should now talk to the SUCs, how much should be downloaded per SUCs depending on the number of students enrolled and projected to enroll, how much is their tuition,” she said.

Legarda believes, this kind of allocation is “very sustainable” and is a practical allotment from a P3.35-trillion budget as it would be an

investment for the youth of the country.

For 2018, she added, she hopes that the budget would also cover miscellaneous fees, dormitory expenses, and food and transportation allowances for the indigent.

FREE HEALTHCARE

Although the Universal Healthcare Law had long been passed, Legarda lamented that the law which she authored had not been implemented, allegedly due to a lack of funding.

“Ang parating sinasabi, kulang ng pondo, walang pondo. Kaya naman pala e,” she said.

She added, there are approximately 8 million

FREE

continued on page 24

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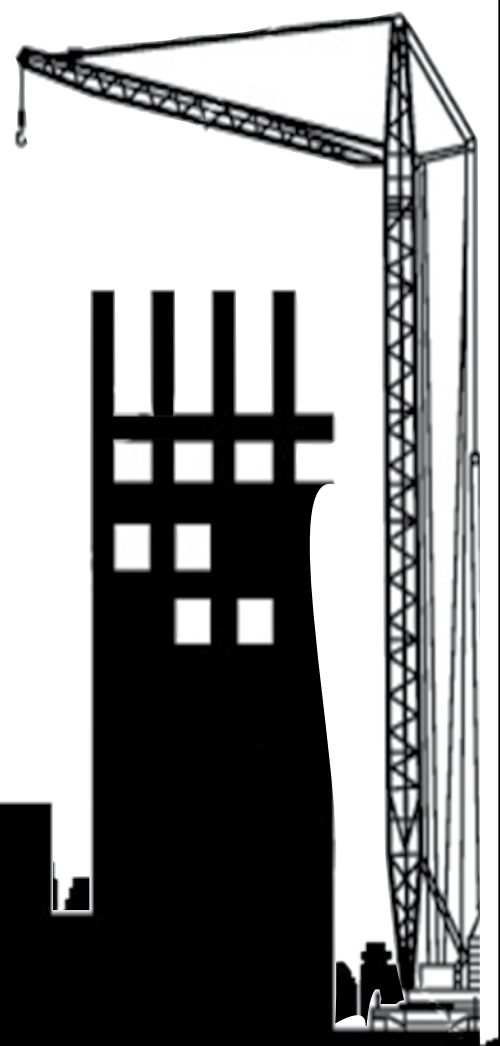
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Andrea happy with Dingdong: Sabay kami + other stories



ANDREA Torres is elated over the positive feedback she's getting for her role as Venus in the hit GMA primetime show, "Alyas Robin Hood".

"Ang daming nagko-comment na ang sexy ko raw kasi medyo revealing ang outfits na pinasu-suot nila sa'kin sa show," she says. "But more than that, I'm happy to get the chance to do action scenes in the show. Bale sabay kami rito ni Dingdong Dantes as Pepe sa pakikipaglaban sa mga masasamang-loob and I really trained well para magampanan ko nang tama ang fight scenes na pinagagawa sa akin. Basta magagawa ko, I myself do my action scenes and my own stunts."

She also wants to thank Dingdong for guiding her. "Talagang he's very helpful sa akin. Very exciting ang 'Alyas Robin Hood' this week kasi itatakas ni Michael Flores as Joerel si Dingdong as Pepe at hahabulin namin sila ni Gio Alvarez as Jekjek and Antonette Garcia as Frida, pero hindi namin aabutan. Nabihag din ni Dina Bonnevie sina Lindsay de Vera as Lizzy and Dave Bornea as Julian para isali sa patayang cosplay game called Anger Games na pay per view ang laban. Bubugugin sila ni Liezel Lopez as Miaka sa gitna ng arena, pero dun din pala dadalhin si Dingdong at siya ang lalaban kay Miaka as Askal. Hindi magpapatalo si Miaka at hihingi ng tulong sa Cinco Masculados na five muscled men na siyang sasagupa kay Dingdong. Action-packed talaga ang sequence na ito at inabot ng madaling araw ang pagshoot dito."

BARBIE HAS FOUR LEADING MEN IN NEW SERIES

BARBIE Forteza's fans who are asking as to when she'll have a new show will be glad to know that she's about to start taping a new soap, tentatively titled "Meant to Be", to be aired early next year. We're happy for Barbie as she's really one of the most competent young actresses we have today, as she has proven with the awards she has won for films like "Puntod", "Mariquina" and "Laut" for which she won in an international filmfest in Portugal.

In "Meant to Be", she will have not just one but four leading men no less. "I hope maging okay ang working relationship naming lahat," she says. "First time ko silang makakasama and I'm looking

forward na sana magkatulungan kaming lahat para mapaganda at mag-rate nang husto ang aming show."

One of them is Ken Chan, who finally has a follow-up show after he won acclaim as a trans-woman for "Destiny Rose". This time, he'd play a Chinoy, the illegitimate son of a rich Chinese tycoon, who's a bad boy because he has a big chip on his shoulder.

The other one is Jak Roberto, who gained fame showing off his six-pack abs in "Dear Uge". The other two are both foreign guys who both started with the Kapamilya Network: Ivan Dorschner and Addy Raj.

Ivan is a Fil-Am actor who is the runner-up of James Reid in PBB Teen Clash of 2010. Addy is an Indian singer who made waves in ABS-CBN's talent search for foreigners, "I Love OPM". Ivan did a lot of supporting roles in ABS-CBN soaps but his career did not take off, so he went back to the U.S.A. and it's only recently when James became a big star with the help of Viva that he decided to renew his showbiz career here in Manila. Here's hoping he'll be luckier this time as a Kapuso.



VIC'S NEW 'ENTENG' FOR TODAY'S VIEWERS

VIC Sotto's 'Enteng Kabisote 10 and the Abangers' is the first in Vic's Enteng franchise that will not be shown as part of the annual Metro Filmfest. Too bad because it's very now in story and execution, showing Enteng's skills in ironworks and robotics industries ala-Tony Stark

in the "Ironman" series which clicks so well with kid viewers who flock to movie theaters on Christmas Day.

The new addition in this family film-fantasy-adventure franchise is the fact that Enteng is now a grandfather, with his son Benok (Oyo Sotto)

giving him a cute grandchild called Benokis. Complications in the story arise when the villain Kwak Kwak (Epy Quizon) was expelled from the fairyland Engkantasya and wreaks havoc through a virtual video game.

This makes Vic form the Abangers to fight the bad guys, led by his son Oyo. The Abangers are made up of OEW's, which stands for Overseas Engkantasya Workers, and this includes the triumvirate of the Eat Bulaga Kalyeserye Lolas of Wally Bayola, Jose Manalo and Paolo Ballesteros. Also appearing in special roles are Joey de Leon, Vic's wife Pauleen Luna, child actor Alonzo Muhlach, and the Aldub love team of Alden Richards and Maine Mendoza. "Enteng Kabisote 10" is under the twin direction of Marlon Rivera and Tony Y. Reyes.



Jessy ok with Luis

JESSY Mendiola is thankful to Regal and Mother Lily for getting her to be the leading lady of Enchong Dee in "Mano Po 7: Chinoy". "I'm thankful and proud na napasama ako sa ganito kalaking movie na puro magagaling ang artista," she says.

"Very challenging din ang role ko as a former drug addict na tinulungan ni Enchong. Nagdrama rin ako rito."

How does it feel to do a love scene with Enchong? "Wala namang problema kasi ilang beses na kaming nagkasama. Palagay na ang loob ko sa kanya."

At the movie's presscon, Enchong was very candid in admitting that he finds their kissing scene "masarap". Because of this, it was reported that her BF Luis Manzano got jealous.

"Walang ganun. Kinuwento ko 'yun sa kanya before it was shot and he doesn't have any negative reaction kasi he knows part 'yun ng work ko. Alam din naman niyang best of friends kami ni Enchong kaya sanay na kami sa isa't isa."

So after the aborted love affair with JM de Guzman, is she happy now? "Happy namin ako lagi, e. Pero kung dati, happy lang. Ngayon, mas haping-happy na ako. Si Luis, very supportive siya. Papanoorin daw niya ang 'Mano Po 7: Chinoy' kapag ipinalabas na ito sa December 14."

What else does she appreciate in Luis? "His sense of humor. Lagi niya akong pinapatawa kasi natural comedian siya. He also inspires me to go on kapag nai-stress ako sa pressure at dami ng work. He reminds me to always be thankful sa maraming blessings na dumaraming sa buhay ko."

What can she say about a recent video of JM looking okay now and back to normal? "I haven't seen it. May nagsabi lang po sa'kin, but hindi ko alam, wala akong direktang balita sa kanya. Kung totooang okay na siya, I'm happy for him. 'Yun naman ang laging wish ko para sa kanya."



Lovi hints on post at new lovelife

LOVI Poe says 2016 is a very good year for her as she has a hit movie, 'The Escort', and a hit TV show, 'Someone to Watch Over Me', so for the Christmas season, she chose to share her blessings by visiting the wards of Child of Hope Asia, which cares for deprived street children.

"I encourage everyone to extend their help to our needy countrymen," she says. "Maraming nangangailangan ng tulong, so let's open our hearts and pay it forward by sharing the graces that the Lord has given to us."

Lovi intrigued her fans when she posted in social media her latest photo with rumored European boyfriend, Chris Johnson. For her caption, she wrote: "All smiles because Chris...tmas is here." Does this mean that the guy is coming over this Christmas season to be with her? Lovi continues to deny that they have a romantic relationship but her most recent posts indicate that there is more between them than what meets the eye.

Meantime, in "Someone to Watch Over Me", Lovi as Joanna continues to carry her personal cross as the suffering wife of Tom Rodriguez as TJ. Tom has a very active sex drive and wants to make a baby with Max Collins as Irene, who refuses him. Another complication occurs when a new character is introduced: Dave. Who is Dave? It turns out he is the husband of Max abroad but they are already estranged and just waiting for their divorce. But now that Dave has followed Max, he wants them to reconcile. Tom sees Dave and attacks him.



Guardians Brotherhood Toronto Chapter held their Induction-Christmas dinner last December. (LEFT) Inductees pose with retired General Patricio Abo (5TH FROM RIGHT). LEFT, Nena Gumapac (3rd from right) pose with friends.

People...are talking about:

Angel Locsin



Is she the best actress of her generation? The Inding-Indie Short Film Festival believes she is. During the film fest's third edition held last Saturday, Angel was named "Best Actress of the Decade" relegating her contemporaries as just television and movie talents. The Kapamilya star, on the other hand, took to Instagram to share the recognition with her million fans and thank them for their unwavering support.

Sandara Park

Even if 2NE1 is no longer together, Filipinos still continue supporting the "Pambansang Krung Krung." A testament to her being the brightest Korean star in town, her solo performance during the finale of Boy Band Superstar trended on

Twitter and the video of her performance went viral on YouTube shortly after the show ended. Her fans will support her all the way whatever she does or decides to do as a solo artist.



Maine Mendoza

Some say her star is fading but her supporters say otherwise. And to show that they are right, and that they are big in numbers, they trooped to a mall in Quezon City where the Dubsmash Queen was having a show. As a result, Maine's brief tour caused commotion and traffic congestion in the area. You know, something that only happens when superstars arrive. If only Maine had a regular show other than Kalyeserye, then it would be easy for her to silence her detractors.

People...are not talking about

Ogie Alcasid

Over the weekend, the singer-songwriter was officially introduced as a Kapamilya. Although he's already appeared in several Kapamilya shows in the past few weeks, it's only now that Ogie's change of network was formalized. The 49-year-old OPM singer is joining the rest of other Kapuso singers who recently joined the Kapamilya network.

Cesar Montano

He's been appointed to head the country's Tourism Promotion Board. As the COO, his duty is to promote the Philippines domestically and internationally. Although we don't know yet if Cesar would stop doing movies and TV shows since he's got a few projects underway, one thing we are very sure of. If he couldn't promote his own movies, how could he promote effectively the country's tourism?



Kris Aquino

People will no longer see her on TV unless she has a special guest appearance or interview that normally involves, well, her life and her ongoing struggle to be part of the mainstream media. Kris, instead, will be seen by her fans doing a series of shows that can be viewed online via Facebook Live. We heard networks are a bit reluctant in giving Kris the media mileage she is asking for. Now it can be said, Kris is no longer a queen, not even of social media.



Duterte still enjoys people's trust—Palace

President Rodrigo Duterte still has the support of the people. Malacañang issued this statement on Tuesday after a newspaper report claimed former US Ambassador to the Philippines Philip Goldberg made a "blueprint to undermine" Mr. Duterte's six-month-old administration. Ernesto Abella, the President's spokesperson, said the US State Department had already denied participation in a supposed plot to unseat the President. "The President continues to enjoy the trust of the people and... (they) apparently appreciate what he's doing," Abella told a news briefing. He also pointed out that Goldberg himself purportedly admitted that ousting Mr. Duterte would be "difficult." Asked if agreed with the former US ambassador's assessment, Abella said: "I don't have any opinion. I'm just a spokesperson. I don't need to agree." Despite the spiraling drug killings in the country, Mr. Duterte has kept his popularity as he registered "excellent" ratings in recent surveys.

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Jean explains rumored ‘liaison’ with younger men + other stories

JEAN Garcia plays a cougar in her recent film, “The Escort”, and also in her new one, “Mano Po 7: Chinoy”. She had sizzling love scenes with Derek Ramsay in the former and she now has a similarly hot love scene with Jake Cuenca in “Mano Po 7”. “At pareho rin akong unfaithful wife in both movies,” she adds. “Sa ‘Escort’, asawa ko si Rommel Padilla na pinabugbog si Derek. Dito naman sa ‘Mano Po 7’, asawa ako ng isang very rich Chinese taipan, si Richard Yap, but he’s always busy with his business kaya napabayaan ang buong family namin, pati ako, kaya nagka-affair kami ni Jake.”

Reporters at the presscon of “Mano Po 7” kidded her that even in real life, she seems to be a cougar reported to be having love affairs with younger guys like John Lloyd Cruz and Polo Ravales. The last younger guy linked to her was Jomari Yllana.

“Naku, kayo naman, mahilig kayong maniwala sa mga tsismis,” Jean says. “Mga katrabaho ko lang ‘yun na naging kabarkada. Si Jomari, naging co-stars kami sa maraming soap, like ‘Alakdana’, ‘Kakambal ni Eliana’ at last nga, sa ‘The Half Sisters’, na inabot ng two years sa ere kaya naging close talaga kami. Tapos, when he ran sa last election as councilor, na nanalo naman siya, he asked me to help in his campaign at ‘yun, sinuportahan ko naman siya. Marami kasi kaming naging fans dahil sa ‘The Half Sisters’. Pero parang magkapatid lang kami talaga. Walang malice ang friendship namin. May nakarinig daw na nag-a-I love you kami sa isa’t isa. Parang I love you nang magkapatid lang ‘yun. Maski nga sa Facebook, we say I love you, pero wala kaming romantic relationship. Hindi ko talaga maisip na magiging magdyowa kami. Dalawang taon na akong walang boyfriend at hindi naman ako naghahanap. If ever, magiging maingat na ako kasi 47 na ako. I don’t want to make another mistake at aksaya lang ng oras. Isa pa, lola na ako ni Mori (daughter of her own daughter, Jennica), ano?”

LIZA CONDEMNS BARON’S ACT OF ‘DISRESPECT’

BARON Geisler is controversial once again for urinating on the face of his co-star, Ping Medina, in the shoot of the movie, “Bubog”. Baron said he asked the permission of their director, Arlyn de la Cruz, who says all Baron said was “May gagawin ako, direk”, without clarifying that what he’ll do is to answer the call of nature on the face of his co-actor who was all tied up in that scene as Baron was supposed to be torturing him.

Of course, Ping was irate when he realized what Baron was doing to him. He could not move but after the take, he slapped Baron repeatedly. Baron obviously needs professional help. Whatever his excuse is, what he did is just plain sick. Even Liza Diño Segueria, head of FDCP, sided with Ping Medina. This is what her latest post on this case says:

“Baron did this appalling act without his co-actor’s consent. Ang sabi niya, nagpaalam daw siya. Pero siya na mismo ang nagsabi na ang sabi niya sa direktor at kay Ping Medina, ay “may gagawin siya” pero hindi niya sinabi kung ano. If you’re accepting his logic, halimbawa sa isang eksena, naisip ni Baron na saksakin nang totohanan ang ka-eksena niya...ok lang ‘yun kasi nagpaalam siya na “may gagawin” siya?

Walang aktor ang tatanggap sa logic na ito. This is not the first time that Baron committed something like this. Alam nating lahat yan. So how could you give one the benefit of the doubt when he has countlessly offended co-actors sa set? -Harassment against women. -Minumura ang mga staff at trabahador sa set. -Umiinom sa shoot. -Nakikipagbugbugan. At ngayon, inihian sa mukha ang co-actor nyang nakatali at walang chance mag-react

at magpumiglas?

Please enlighten me if there is any justification in this.

Baron, you have been getting away with this behavior far too long. That is precisely why I am saying something about this. You were given a free pass, look where it brought you? Wala kang respeto sa sarili mo at sa trabaho mo. Buti sana kung sarili mo lang ang apektado pero hindi eh. You are endangering the safety and well-being of your colleagues. This is where the line is drawn. I will not allow this. Not under my watch.

As head of this film council, I have a responsibility to this industry. And it is to make sure that we can all work safely together ng may respeto sa bawat isa. You should be sanctioned.”

CLAUDINE VS RAYMART AGAIN

IT’s shame and scandal in the family all over again between Claudine Barretto and estranged hubby Raymart Santiago. Claudine is fuming because their son Santino was physically hurt by Raphael, his cousin, son of Raymart’s elder brother, Randy Santiago. She will reportedly file a case of serious physical injuries against Raphael.

She accused Raymart of being a “walang kuwentang ama” who even sided with his nephew and not his own son. Raymart says it’s just a case of “away bata na pinalalaki lang” but Claudine says: “Nagtataka lang ako kung bakit sa lahat ng lalaki sa mundo dito ako napunta sa lalaking Duwag! Stupid!”

How sad that this has to happen just when their relationship has become cordial and friendly again after their separation.

Phoebe goes nude for ‘biggest break’

PHOEBE Walker gets the biggest break in her career in the Metro Filmfest horror entry, “Seklusyon”, as the very controversial Sister Maria Cecilia, the mysterious nun who takes care of a child faith healer and ends up seducing and making love to a young priest, played by Dominic Roque. What makes their love scene more controversial is that they both have nude scenes. Dominic has butt exposure while Phoebe goes full frontal.

The first time we saw Phoebe was at the TV5 presscon of the local version of “Amazing Race Season 2” in 2014, where she won with her former boyfriend, Matt Edwards. They were tagged then as the Dating Couple. We quickly noticed even then that she’s a deadringer for Cristine Reyes.

Managed by Viva, she then played bit roles in movies like “Trophy Wife” and “Etiquette for Mistresses”, and also got to play a meaty role in the QCinema indie entry, “Gayuma”, where she played a model who had sizzling scenes with a painter, Benjamin Alves. That movie came and went without too many people seeing it.

She says doing “Seklusyon” with Direk Erik Matti is a big blessing for her. “I saw kasi his past works, like ‘On the Job’ and ‘Honor Thy Father’ and I really like them,” she says. “Sabi ko sa sarili ko, kailan kaya ako maididirek ng isang Erik Matti? Tapos, heto nakatrabaho ko na nga siya.”

Direk Erik Matti says he’s very pleased with Phoebe as Sister Maria Cecilia. “Markado ‘yung role at ang lakas ng dating ni Phoebe on screen kaya tiyak na matatandaan siya ng mga manonood dito,” he adds.



Why January Is Going to Be the Best Month for Single People

Struggling to make it through “engagement season” without deleting your Facebook account? Take heart, single folks: January could be the best month yet.

Clover, a dating app described as “the offspring of OkCupid and Tinder if they had a one-night stand and forgot to use a condom,” has tantalizing new data from a survey of 150,000 users: December has seen a 300% increase in sign-ups from people already in relationships, with women signing up more than men.

In other words, as a Clover rep put it in a press release, “Our data shows that women are more likely to shop for a new mate over the holidays.”

December is for breaking up... and January is for getting busy? The data isn’t conclusive, of course, but Clover’s logic points to a preexisting trend. The holiday season has already been referred to as “breakup season” — back in 2008, David McCandless and Lee Byron charted peak breakup times throughout the year via Facebook statuses. Their major finding: Breakups started rising around mid-November (the infamous “turkey drop”) and peaked two weeks before Christmas.

November and December might seem like a counterintuitive time to break up, given the cold weather and everyone’s compulsive need to snuggle up (see: cuffing season). Plus, the stretch from Thanksgiving to New Year’s is also known as engagement season, when couples tend to take stock of their relationships in front of family and friends (and strategically plan for summer weddings).

But all the taking stock that sparks engagements might also explain “breakup season.” Heading to your hometown and reconnecting with family can spur some serious thinking about your relationship; as author and sociologist Pepper Schwartz told NBC News, “The holidays put so much weight on everything.” Clover reasoned in their press release that financial strain, seasonal depression and peer pressure could also contribute to the serious evaluating that happens at this time



John Lloyd Cruz Toronto Roadshow was a very successful event; held at Saint Lawrence Arts Theatre on November 27, 2016; Western Union sponsored the event, that the Entrance Fee was covered by Western Union Company. John Lloyd was kind enough to accommodate the request of the audience for a selfie. PHOTOS BY ARIEL RAMOS

of year.

All of which can lead to taking a leap and buying a ring... or realizing it's just not going to work. Hence the spike in dating app activity. It's not just Clover that's seen a boost in signups; Match.com told Today that they also see a 25% to 30% rise in new members in the period around Christmas that stretches to Valentine's Day.

Whether it's people rebounding from holiday breakups or singles inspired by New Year's resolutions, January is clearly the time to get busy. So don't sweat the lonely holidays, singles: January holds serious promise.

‘National holiday for single daters’: why the best day to date online is 3 January

Online dating websites like Plenty of Fish and Match.com see a spike in new users and activity on first Sunday after the holidays are over

Let the swiping begin. Ladies and gentlemen, charge your phones and ready those index fingers, because the first Sunday of the year is almost here and that means just one thing: there are plenty more fish in the online pool of love-seekers.

It's not just all those Christmas engagement photos flooding your Facebook feed, all those questions that your single cousin had to dodge over her relationship status or the fact that you have the FarmersOnly.com jingle stuck in your head after being parked in front of the TV for most of the holidays – the beginning of the year is the busiest time for online dating sites.

Plenty of Fish, a free online dating service with three million daily users, expects to see sign-ups jump 24% over the course of the day, with the peak happening around 6pm ET on the first Sunday of the year. A total of 81,000 people are expected to sign up for the dating site that day.

“The numbers are set to pay off for hopeful singles,” said Shannon Smith, public relations and communications manager at Plenty of Fish. “Users who sign up during the first week of January will find their partner an average of two weeks faster than those who sign up later, taking an average of just 10 weeks compared to an average of 12 weeks



WHEN FLYING WAS SIMPLE & GLAMOUROUS
Manila International Airport - 1960s

throughout the year.”

Match.com also said its busiest time of the year is the Sunday after New Year's Day.

“It's as close to a national holiday for single daters as you can get. Match has proclaimed it ‘Dating Sunday’, and with good reason,” writes Julie Spira, an online dating expert and the founder of Cyber-Dating Expert, on Match.com's blog.

Last year, the site invited users to “come join the biggest online party of the year” – signups generally peak just before 9pm ET.

“Match.com found that 51% of singles' New Year's resolutions will be to socialize more and focus on finding that special someone, making the desire to connect with someone a driving force for singles to get online and holidays,” Amarnath Thombre, president of Match.com, said in 2014.

Other sites have, however, confirmed higher number of sign-ups early in the year. How About We told Today.com that its membership goes up 40% in January and February. For ChristianMingle.com, new memberships go up 41% between Christmas and Valentine's Day.

Even swiping on Tinder will be more plentiful this weekend.

“Generally speaking, Tinder use sees a spike during the beginning of the New Year,” Tinder spokeswoman said.

According to Washington Post, it's not just dating sites that see a spike in traffic around this time of the year. There is also post-holiday spike in searches for pornography, condom sales, conceptions and people changing their relationship status.

A black and white photograph of a wedding party consisting of six women. They are all wearing white dresses and holding bouquets of flowers. They are posed on a staircase with a metal railing, smiling at the camera. The woman at the bottom of the stairs is holding a large bouquet, while the others are positioned higher up the stairs.

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Alden saves Phl’s face in Asian awards night + *other stories*



ALDEN Richards won big in the recent Awit Awards. His album with GMA Records, “Wish I May”, got the Album of the Year Award and Diamond Record Award and he was named the Most Downloaded Artist of the Year. His hit song, “Wish I May”, was named Most Downloaded Song of 2015.

“I really want to thank all my fans who supported me and bought the album and downloaded the song,” he says. “Sana, maging ganito rin ka-successful ang second album ko with GMA Records na ‘Say It Again’.”

Alden is really on a winning streak as his first international hosting assignment at the recent 21st Asian TV Awards held in Singapore International Convention Center

got a lot of acclaim. He looks so relaxed in the company of more experienced co-host Adrian Pang of Singapore, Korean- American TV host model Stephanie Carrington, Malaysian TV host Baki Zainal and Chinese dancer Fiona Su. They were all surprised because the audience reaction inside the convention center was overwhelming and he got a lot of fans rooting for him when he walked on the red carpet.

When asked by Adrian Pang how he feels about being a successful young actor, he replied: “Well you know, being young and being given this opportunity to make people happy in everything that you do, you just basically have to give love in return. Love your job. Love the people who give you support and basically, you just have to be yourself, have fun with what you’re doing and keep the faith.”

Later on, the people handling the awards night told him: “We’ll love to have you back next year.” It’s really good that Alden got a lot of positive feedback for his hosting because it’s so sad that the Philippines didn’t win a single award that night. Michael V was there as a best comedy actor nominee but he, too, went home empty handed.

Meantime, AIDub fans will be pleased to know that the first Alden-Maine Mendoza teleserye, titled “Destined to Be Yours”, will be taping soon. This is slated to be shown early next year, under the direction of Irene Villamor, who helmed the hit rom-com “Camp Sawi”. Maine plays an activist who does all kinds of job to earn money for her family, with Janice de Belen as her mom and Gardo Versoza as her dad.

Triple A one of Busiest Talent Agencies Today

TRIPLE A of Mr. Tony Tuviera is one of the busiest talent agencies in showbiz today. Their roster of talents include Marian Rivera, Maine Mendoza, Andrea Torres, child stars Baste, comedian Jerald Napoles and their latest acquisition is Kris Aquino.

They also manage the stars of the hit morning show that’s a pre-program to “Eat Bulaga”, “Trops”, which include Fil-Japanese singer-actress Taki Saito and the six EB Baes: Kenneth Medrano, Joel Palencia, Kim Last, Jon Timmons, Miggy Tolentino and Tommy Penaflor. Also in their stable is new singer-actor Andrew Gan Calupitan whose screen name will be Andrew Garcia.

Triple A manager Rams David recognizes the big help that the entertainment press does for their talents and held a special thanksgiving party for a select group of writers at Relish Restaurant. It was such a happy affair where no one went home in tears. To Rams, thank you for acknowledging our efforts to help your talents. About Kris Aquino, Rams said the reports that she’ll have a show soon on GMA7 aren’t true.

“We’re cultivating a new digital platform for her, like Facebook and Youtube,” says Rams. “This is the next big thing here and big hit na ito sa U.S. Kris will be the first big artist to venture into this kind of platform.”

VHONG: MAHIRAP MAGPATAWAD SA MGA TAONG ’DI NAGSISISI

VHONG Navarro had a big hit when he made a spoof of Tony Ferrer’s secret agent role in “Agent X44”. He now gets the chance to reprise the role of the late top 60s and 70s comedian, Chiquito, in “Mang Kepweng Returns”. The Mang Kepweng character is based on a popular komiks strip and one of Chiquito’s big hits that it spawned no less than three films. The new version is now written by Volta de los Santos and directed by Giuseppe Bede Sampedro.

“This is not really a remake but more of a sequel, kasi we have to update the material for today’s young audiences,” says Direk GB. “Vhong is Kiefer, or Keps for short. Anak siya ng

original Mang Kepweng pero itinago siya sa publiko for an important reason. Si Jaclyn Jose ang nanay niya at kapatid niya si James Blanco as Doc Zach. May iniwang bandana si Mang Kepweng na nang isuot ni Keps sa ulo niya, nagkaroon siya ng kapangyarihan para manggamot as an albulario.”

Did Vhong get to watch any of the past Mang Kepweng movies? “May napanood ako noong bata pa ako pero natakot ako doon sa multong sumusunod sa kanya, si Piling. Isinama rin si Piling dito sa bagong movie and he’s now played by comedian Tuko. Fan ako ng mga comedian like Dolphy and Chiquito kasi, gaya ko, they started as dancers at magaling silang sumayaw. Kung maghi-hit itong ‘Mang Kepweng Returns’, I hope I’m given the chance to play the other memorable characters he created like ‘Asyong Aksaya’ and ‘Mr. Wong’. Kay Tito Dolphy naman, with whom I had the chance of working sa ABS-CBN, gusto ko sanang i-remake yung hit niyang ‘Facifica Falayfay’.”

“Mang Kepweng Returns” is produced by new producers of Cineko Productions and released by Viva. It has a very big cast. Aside from the stars we’ve mentioned, also in the cast are Sunshine Cruz as the wife of James Blanco, sexpot Kim Domingo (who was absent at the presscon as she had to undergo a medical procedure) as Sunshine’s sister Alyssa who becomes Vhong’s love interest, Kapuso stars Louise de los Reyes and Juancho Trivino as a pair of young lovers, Pen Medina as Vhong’s rival albulario Impong Kapiz, Jackie Rice as the fairy Princess Alesandra who teaches Vhong how to use his magic bandana, comedians Alex Calleja and Jobert Austria as Vhong’s barkada, Crazy Duo Mickey and Bugs as duwendes, and appearing as Vhong’s various patients are Lotlot and Matet de Leon, Ahron Villena, Odette Khan, Marlou Arizala, plus Jhong Hilario, Ryan Bang, Helga Krapf, Shalala, Petite, Gerard Acao and child stars Balang, Joshua and Chun Sa playing different roles.

“Mang Kepweng Returns” opens in theaters on January 4 right after the Metro Filmfest that ends on January 3. “January 4 is my birthday so magandang senyales ‘yan,” says Vhong. “Blessing in disguise na hindi ito nasali sa filmfest kasi malalaking movies ang makakalaban ko kung nataong nakapasok pareho sina Vice Ganda at Bossing Vic Sotto. Now, at least, solong-solo ko ang January 4 playdate.”

On January 22, it would have been two years since Vhong had a sad and ugly experience in the condo of Deniece Cornejo at the The Fort where he was mauled by Cedric Lee and company. So how is the case he filed against them? “Patuloy pa rin po. Mahirap, dahil tuwing may hearing, nagbabalik ‘yung nangyari sa akin. Ganitong magpapasko, ayoko ngang isipin ang ganyang pinagdaanan ko kasi gusto kong maging happy kami ng mga anak ko at ni Tanya, yung girlfriend ko. Ganyang may ipalalabas akong bagong movie, gusto ko sana, good vibes na lang ang lahat.”

Has he forgiven the people who harmed him? “Mahirap magpatawad sa mga taong hindi naman humihingi ng tawad at hindi rin nagsisisi sa mga ginawa nila.”

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“LANGIT LUPA” CAPTIVATES VIEWERS IN PILOT EPISODE

Viewers were easily captivated by the story of love and friendship in ABS-CBN’s newest series “Langit Lupa” as its pilot episode scored high in national TV ratings last Monday (Nov 28).

The morning series topbilled by child stars Yesha Camile and Xia Vigor scored a national TV rating of 17.5%, beating its rival show “Trops,” which only got 8.7%, according to data from Kantar Media.

Netizens also showed their love and support for the series, with the official hashtag #LLFriendshipBegins joining the list of trending topics on Twitter.

In its first episode, viewers witnessed how the friendship of Lala (Yam Concepcion) and Dey (Alessandra De Rossi) started and their journey to fulfilling their dreams together.

However, their friendship was put to test when Dey died after Lala failed to give the money she needed for her medication. To forget all the pain, Joey (Jason Abalos), Dey’s husband, decided to move to Manila and start a new life with their family.

Will Dey’s family find forgiveness for Lala? How will their paths cross again?

Don’t miss the start of friendship that will brighten viewers’ mornings, “Langit Lupa,” weekdays, on ABS-CBN or ABS-CBN HD (SkyCable ch 167). Catch up on the show’s latest episodes on iWanTV or skyondemand.com.ph for Sky subscribers.

Duterte delivers on freebies for 2017

FREE
from page 18

Filipinos who are not enrolled with the Phil-health as most of them are poor.

With this allocation, it should cover basic healthcare coverage for all when availed in state-owned hospitals.

“No balance billing. It should always be free, and they should bill government, not the person,” emphasized Legarda.

She said, there may be some ailments, like cancer, which may not be completely free, but if the patient is indigent, “kailangang gawan ng paraan na masakop ‘yan.”

“Those are things that would have to be worked out by Philhealth with either the regional or specialty hospitals, or the provincial hospitals

Legarda vowed, should the 2017 allocation prove to be insufficient, she will discuss an increase for the following year.

“If the the P3-billion is not enough I will discuss it for 2018 budget,” she said.

FREE IRRIGATION FOR FARMERS

At the moment, farmers pay the National Irrigation Administration dues for the agency’s operational expenses.

Legarda asserted, with the additional funding government would be providing the government-owned and controlled corporation the subsidy so that it would not need to mete payments from the farmers.

“Why do you make the farmers, who feed the

nation, pay for the irrigation they need to till their land and to grow the produce needed to feed the people? That is not fair,” she said.

Legarda also maintained, however, that irrigation would only be one of the problems of Filipino farmers, most of whom are the poor, but is already a big step.

BONUS: “Chalk Allowance” for public school teachers: P770-million

Although the name says “chalk,” Legarda said this is not merely for the purchase of enamel chalk, but a general allowance for the teachers.

Lending for small enterpris-

es: P1-billion

The additional funding would go to the little-known government agency called the “Small Business Corporation,” which is mandated to lend money to micro-enterprises at 0-1% interest rate.

Legarda said, the P1-billion allocation is actually small compared to President Duterte’s goal of providing P1-billion per region for this purpose.

Additional funding for jail and prison: P551-million

FREE
continued on page 26



ABS-CBN OPENS 2017 WITH NEWEST PRIME-TIME FAMILY DRAMA

“A LOVE TO LAST”

ABS-CBN opens the year 2017 with the premiere of the much awaited family

drama, “A Love to Last,” on Primetime Bida.

Topbilled by box office actress Bea Alonzo and sought after leading man Ian Veneracion, “A Love to Last” is a timely story about family and how love isn’t always what it seems to be.

Andeng Agoncillo (Bea Alonzo), a bread-winner and a successful events organizer, has always believed in love. For her, love is being with the man she loves and having a happy family with him.

Unfortunately, her ideal fairy tale love story didn’t have its happy ending after she caught her fiancé cheating on her days before their wedding. But despite this, Andeng remains hopeful that love will still come her way.

Anton Noble IV (Ian Veneracion), meanwhile, thought he already found love. After many years of marriage, his wife Grace (Iza Calzado) decided to leave him and demanded for an annulment. He’s then left with their three children and became a

single father, on top of his job as a president and CEO of his company.

Fate then brings them together in the most unexpected time and place. Never have Andeng imagined that she will find love in an older man--- a much older man. As she takes this risk, she also finds herself caught in the middle of Anton’s complicated life--- dealing with the ex-wife and seeking acceptance from his kids.

How far will Andeng go to fight for the family she wished for and to fight for her place in Anton’s life?

Joining the cast of “A Love to Last” are Enchong Dee, Julia Barretto, Ronnie Alonte, JK Labajo and Hannah Vito. It is under the direction of Jerry Lopez Sineneng and Richard Arellano with creative head Henry Quitain under the business unit headed by Lourdes De Guzman. Star Creatives is led by COO Malou Santos.

Don’t miss the premiere of “A Love to Last” on Primetime Bida soon on ABS-CBN.

Series on infidelity is Kapuso’s centerpiece on its Afternoon Prime

GMA Network opened December with an intriguing drama on infidelity in the Afternoon Prime series now making waves since it premiered.

Ika-6 Na Utos tells the story of Emma, who is fighting to keep her husband from leaving her for another woman.

Sunshine Dizon plays Emma, a sweet and cheerful souvenir merchant who falls deeply in love with a pilot whom she eventually marries. Sunshine appreciates GMA Network for giving her always challenging and offbeat roles.

“I’m just really blessed and happy because through the years, hindi naman tumigil talaga ang GMA from giving me characters that are



The lead cast of ‘Ika-6 na Utos’ Gabby Concepcion as Rome, a pilot, Sunshine Dizon, his wife, and Ryza Cenon, his kept woman

unforgettable. Talagang naalagaan nila ako sa aspeto na ‘yun. I’m very happy and grateful for that,” the Kapuso actress said.

Gabby Concepcion is Rome, a pilot whom Emma marries. He stands up for her despite his mother’s approval. He shares that the show is one that will mark another milestone in his career as an actor as it enables him to experience different things.

“This show is a new thing for me. Ang dami kong firsts dito. First time kong makakatrabaho in a soap sila Sunshine and Ryza.”

“Also, at this point in my career, gusto ko naman na bawat teleseryeng gagawin ko ay may message at pwedeng may maibahaging aral sa viewers natin.” he added.

Ryza considers playing the role of Georgia as an avenue to showcase the other story of a kept woman. “Ang maganda dito kasi ipapakita namin ‘yung side naman ng kabit kung bakit niya ginagawa yun. Hindi naman namin sinasabi na tama ‘yung pagiging kabit. Kumbaga mayroon ding siyang emosyon, tao lang din siya. Nagma-mahal lang,” she said.

Laurice Guillen directs Ika-6 Na Utos.

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Cogie swears he's now a changed man + other stories

COGIE Domingo looks like he gained a bit of unwanted weight when we spoke to him on the set of "Someone to Watch Over Me", where he plays Ian, the new guy in Lovi Poe's life who might be her replacement for her ailing husband, Tom Rodriguez, who's suffering from irreversible Alzheimer's disease. We tell him we remember his very first soap on GMA when he was still a teenager was "Kung Mawawala Ka", where he became a problem 'dahil lagi nga siyang biglang nawawala sa set.' Through the years, he'd come and go and his once promising career failed to fulfill its promise due to reports of being unprofessional.

"Iba na ako ngayon," he says. "31 na ako. I'm back for good. Kung pasaway ako noon, seryoso na ako ngayon. Tanungin nyo sila rito sa 'Someone to Watch Over Me' kung binibigyan ko sila ng problema."

And the show's executive producer, Michelle Borja, confirmed to us that he is indeed very cooperative now and never gives them a headache. Does he somehow regret that he somehow neglected his career before?

"Pag naiisip ko, yes may regret, but then, it's part of my growing up. Siguro kailangan kong pagdaanan 'yun. As of now, may asawa na ako at may anak."

His daughter Rihanna is now four years old, but his wife now is not Rihanna's mom. "Yung mom niya has moved to Australia. Iniwan siya sa akin."

Does his daughter and his wife get along fine? "Oh yes, magkasundo sila. My wife also has a daughter from a past relationship na 8 years old naman. We all get along fine."

"Someone to Watch Over Me" is ending on January 6. What's his next project? "Wala pa. But I hope masundan sana agad. I'm now being managed by GMA Artist Center. Right now, I work out regularly to get rid of my unwanted pounds para mabigyan uli agad ako ng bagong project."

Coleen on wedding with Billy: Not anytime soon

Coleen Garcia says that just because she's now officially engaged to Billy Crawford, it doesn't necessarily mean that they're now making arrangements for their wedding. "It wouldn't be anytime soon," she says. "Marami pa kaming ibang commitments."

She just flew to Spain with Billy and her family to spend the holidays with their relatives there. As such, she won't be able



to help promote her new movie, "Extra Service", where she co-stars with Arci Muñoz and Jessy Mendiola, as she'll be back on January 10 yet, the day before the movie opens on January 11.

Billy reveals that he actually bought the diamond engagement ring he gave Coleen over a year ago. "When I bought the ring, I already knew sa sarili ko na siya na talaga ang babaeng pakakasalan ko," he says. "But then, hindi puwedeng

madaliin ang lahat kasi there are a lot of other things going on in our lives, so kailangang unti-untiin namin and we have to know how to prioritize things. We don't have a wedding date yet but we'll keep you informed kung mayroon ng further developments."

Solenn welcomes Anne as future sister-in-law

SOLENN Heussaff continues to get great feedback for her portrayal of Cassiopeia in "Encantadia". She also got good reviews for her recent daring portrayal as the victim of a gang rape in the "Liberated" episode of "Karelasyon". In both shows, she gets to display her lean and slender body that makes people think she's a vegetarian because of her slim figure.

"Actually, I'm no vegetarian as I love to eat meat," she says. "I love cooking and sometimes I get to show this in 'Taste Buddies'. I just prepared and ate a lot dishes for this holiday season with my favorite ham, CDO Premium Holiday Ham from CDO Foodsphere Inc. It's the ham of choice this season and I don't settle for anything less as my family and friends deserve nothing less this Christmas holidays."

Why did CDO Premium Holiday Ham got Solenn as their endorser? "She's just perfect kasi she loves to cook at kahit ang lakas niyang kumain ng CDO Ham, she's still so sexy," says Category Brand Manager Kim Favis.

And what can she say about the recent engagement of her brother Erwan to Anne Curtis? "I'm very happy for them and I'm very happy to have Anne to be part of our family."

Luis Prepares For Wedding: 'MAGASTOS'

LUIS Alandy plays the man who is truly in love with Paolo Ballesteros as Trisha in "Die Beautiful". "I'm proud to be part of this movie that won awards abroad," he says. "This is my

second time to work with Director Jun Lana after 'Anino sa Likod ng Buwan', kunsaan nanalo rin ng acting award ang kapareha ko, si LJ Reyes. Sana, kung gagawa uli ako kay Direk Jun, ako naman ang mabigyan ng challenging role na puwede ring magbigay sa'kin ng award."

Luis is currently preparing for his church wedding with non-showbiz fiancée Joselle Fernandez. The date is on February 17 but he'd rather keep the other details private. "Nakaka-stress din ang preparation but we're doing it together. Magastos, maraming dapat bayaran na hindi maiiwasan. But you just lift it all up to the Lord and expect more blessings from Him."

At 36, he's really ready to settle down. "Ako na lang ang single sa aming mga magkakapatid."

Did they consider living in? "No. Hindi kami ganun. We value the sanctity and importance of the sacrament of matrimony. My wife to be's family is conservative. And also very supportive, pati sa pagiging artista ko. Alam nilang this is the career that fulfills me."

Jennylyn's Leading Man is Unknown

JENNYLYN Mercado has finally found her leading man in the local remake of the Koreanovela hit, "My Love from the Star". It's total newcomer Gil Cuerva.

"Hopefully, tanggapin ng viewers ang tambalan namin," says Jen. "Ang daming pinagpilian and Gil is lucky na siya ang nakuha to play Matteo Do, the alien who's been on earth for four centuries. Ako naman si Steffi, the actress-model who he'll get involved with him. We promise to do our best para patawanin namin ang viewers and make them fall in love with the story."

"I really didn't expect na akong mapipili," says Gil. "I got an email from my management, Cornerstone, to audition for the role. I was in Hong Kong then at nagkataon namang pabalik na ako to fix some school papers sa La Salle, so I told myself, 'I might as well audition, baka suwertihin ako't makuha'. Na nangyari nga. I'm truly grateful for this opportunity na makatrabaho si Jennylyn and si Direk Joyce Bernal. I'm proud to now be a Kapuso."

Gil's full name is Guillermo and he's 5'11" tall. He's Fil-Spanish but has chinito eyes. He's 20 years old and first appeared in Candy Magazine last year. He has no previous acting experience so he's attending some acting workshops under Joyce Bernal to prepare him for the cameras with Jennylyn. Here's hoping he will give justice to the role of Matteo in "My Love from the Star".



OGIE ALCASID ADDS SPICE TO "TAWAG NG TANGHALAN" AS ITS NEWEST 'HURADO.'

Acclaimed singer-songwriter Ogie Alcasid has joined "Tawag ng Tanghalan" on "It's Showtime" and was officially introduced as one of its 'hurados' or judges in the most talked about competition in noontime Saturday (Dec 10). Like the other hurados, he will evaluate the performances of hopefuls from contestants from Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao, and Metro Manila. In his first appearance in the competition,

Ogie made the audience laugh with his light jokes as he was giving his commentary as a 'hurado.' Last night (Dec 11) at the "Pinoy Boyband Superstar: The Grand Reveal," Ogie was also named one of the judges of "Your Face Sounds Familiar: Kids," which premieres in 2017.

"Tawag ng Tanghalan" is currently in its Last Quarter with Hazelyn Cascano of Metro Manila, Jeramie Sanico of Mindanao, and Sam Mangubat and Froilan Canlas of Luzon as its semi-finalists. Don't miss the talented Pinoy singers as they battle for supremacy in "Tawag ng Tanghalan" in the noontime variety show "It's Showtime," Mondays to Saturdays in ABS-CBN or ABS-CBN HD (SkyCable ch 167).

For more information, log-on to TawagNgTanghalan.abs-cbn.com/livestream and follow "Tawag ng Tanghalan" on Facebook ([facebook.com/TawagNgTanghalan](https://www.facebook.com/TawagNgTanghalan)), Twitter (@TNTABSCBN), and Instagram (@TawagNgTanghalan).

PCCF from on page 16

For the fourth consecutive year, a Christmas Party which is a joint initiative of the Philippine Canadian Charitable Foundation (PCCF), Archdiocesan Filipino Catholic Mission (AFCM), and the Our Lady of Assumption Church, was held in Toronto on December 10th, 2016.

The event was organized by Rosemer Enverga, AFCM Chair of Temporalities, Zeny Uy, AFCM Chair of Workshop Ministry, Jeanette Rosales, AFCM Chair of Social Ministry, Knights of Columbus Council 12582, and the Our Lady of Assumption Parish, led by Lita and Tim Sinclair, and Cynthia Vergara.

In attendance were 400 guests, which included: Rev. Fr. Ben Ebcas, Jr., Pastor of Our Lady of Assumption Church, OLA Parishioners, Philippine Canadian Chari-

table Foundation Officers and Members, led by President Romy Rafael, Ricky Cuenca, President of ANCOP Canada. Dignitaries present were: Canadian Senator Tobias (Jun) Enverga, Jr., MPP Patrick Brown, leader of the Ontario Official Opposition, former Consul General Pedro O. Chan, former Canada Ambassador to the Philippines Neil Reeder and his wife, Irene. Ambassador Reeder's huge contribution and effort during the Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda efforts in the Philippines during his term was recognized during the event.

During the night, the Philippine Canadian Charitable Foundation donated \$ 5,700.00 to OLA/AFCM for the Orphanage in Tacloban; and \$ 11,500.00 to ANCOP for the PCCF Tala/ANCOP Village. PCCF Officers and Pageants will be heading to the Philippines in January 2017 to do more charity work. AFCM

and ANCOP are beneficiaries of PCCF's yearly summer event, the Pinoy Fiesta and Trade Show sa Toronto.

Everyone enjoyed the program emceed by Lita Leano, PCCF Executive Secretary, and the sumptuous spread of food, raffle prizes, line dancing and Santa's gift giving for the children and adults. Gifts were given by GMA Pinoy TV.

Entertainment numbers included numbers from the Little Miss Philippines Canada 2016's Angeline Siao, Amber Rinker, Ranielle Lucero, Monique & Princess Dador, and LittleMr Philippines Canada 2015 Edward Jones and his brother Quiency Jones. Also amongst those present were: Miss Philippines Canada 2016 Krista Bella, Miss Teen Philippines Canada 2016 Chiara Silo and Mrs Philippines Canada 2016 Amelia Arcilla. Major sponsor for the Christmas event was: GMA Pinoy.

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This would mean a P10 increase for the prisoners' food allowance, currently pegged at P50.

At P60, it would still be P20 short of the ideal P80 daily food allowance of the residents of the prison facilities.

Drug rehabilitation: P2.6-billion

This allocation shall go to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, according to Legarda.

Additionally, the Department of Health is also mandated to run the drug rehabilitation centers for the drug addicts. It shall cover the needs for therapists and psychosocial therapists.



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