

**franki RUSSELL**

**New Zealand's Representative in Miss Universe 2024**



**When choosing between two evils, I always like to try the one I've never tried before."**  
MAE WEST

**FAMILY FEUD**

**Marcos, Duterte split has Beijing and Washington concerned**

When Rodrigo Duterte left the Philippine presidency and returned to private life in 2022, public life seemed suddenly quiet. Duterte's brash statements, late-night rants, and off-the-cuff threats directed at his enemies were replaced with the caution of his successor—and then ally—the mild-mannered President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. The two remained uneasy political allies, however, until a rally in January during which Duterte called Marcos a "drug addict" and suggested the idea of a military coup to

MARCOS DUTERTE P16

**This Stinks**

**Philippines compete for durian biz in China**

With the world's durian crop expected to grow by as much as 10 per cent, exporters are making plans to conquer China's large and growing market

The Philippines and Malaysia, both major producers, are hoping to unseat Thailand as Chi-

na's pre-eminent supplier of the tropical fruit

Competition between exporters is expected to intensify in China, the world's largest durian market, as the global crop has been projected to grow as much as 10 per cent by 2030 and vora-

STINKS page 21

**Miss World still eludes Philippines**

The country has only able to win its first, and so far only crown with Megan Young

MANILA — Many Filipino pageant fans expressed their bewilderment at the exclusion of Gwendolyne Fourniol during the 71st Miss World.

Netizens pointed out that the French-Filipino model and student from Himamaylan, Negros Occidental, hurdled the first round of several "fast-track" events, and yet was not able to penetrate the Top 40 announced in Mumbai, India, on March 9.

The Philippines' representative appeared to be a shoo-in for at least the Top 40 with how she fared during the preliminary contests, observers

surmised.

Krystyna Pyszkova from the Czech Republic eventually bagged the crown, besting 111 aspirants for the title.

Yet again, the Miss World pageant has proven to be the most difficult of the major global tilts for the Philippines. The country was only able to win its first, and so far only, "blue crown" when Megan Young emerged victorious in the 63rd edition held in Indonesia in 2013.

More than a decade later, and eight editions afterwards, the Philippines still has not posted a second victory.

For many international pageant followers, the Philippines is a powerhouse in global pageantry considering the wins and high placements Filipino contenders have been posting. But the Miss World is a different story.

If it is any consolation, another international pageant powerhouse failed to get the call in the recent Miss World competition — Venezuela.

From among the three most enduring major global pageants, the Philippines has collected four crowns in Miss Universe, and recorded six

MISS WORLD page 15



**Postcard**  
Sampalo 1960's

**Global Era**

**Philippine Entertainment goes worldwide**

MANILA — Philippine showbiz is now entering its 'global era'

Alden Richards is up-

ping the ante of events production via his company Myriad Entertainment.

SHOWBIZ page 17

**Some Filipinos will invoke 'Filipino pride' even when it is misplaced**

ONLINE PAGE 28

# Hurt by Heart? Pia Wurtzbach prevented from answering query about Heart Evangelista

Miss Universe 2015 Pia Wurtzbach was prevented from answering a question about fellow actress Heart Evangelista.

During a sit-down interview with Pia following L'Oreal Paris' "Sayang? No, I'm worth it" campaign launch in Manila for which she was among the endorsers, Philstar.com asked Pia about being pitted against Heart Evangelista, whose former glam team now works with the beauty queen and even accompanied her at the L'Oreal launch.

Pia and Heart also both attended the recent Milan Fashion Week, with both of them gracing the Fendi fashion show. It is unknown, however, if the two met or spoke at the Fendi event.

But even before we finished asking the question, Pia's handlers said that it was forbidden to ask about Heart. Pia was also mum after she was prevented from answering the query, and she simply smiled. At the event's program prior to the group interview, Pia hinted in her speech of what people say about her attending more fashion weeks lately and becoming a fashion influencer.

"May mga bago na naman akong naririnig, 'Hindi ka bagay d'yan. Beauty queen ka lang. Stay in your lane. Sayang ka," she said.

It can be recalled that the alleged rift between Pia and Heart allegedly began when Heart's former glam team joined the beauty queen's entourage.

In an Instagram live session, Heart mentioned about a certain person who allegedly stole her contacts to enjoy the perks she worked hard for in Europe.

Last February, Heart shared a cryptic post insinuating that someone unauthorized was making decisions on her behalf in regard to her



fashion week attendance.

Before Pia, Heart was among L'Oreal's brand ambassadors. The socialite and the international beauty brand even collaborated for a lipstick collection.

Heart, L'Oreal Philippines said, is no longer an endorser, but the label is open to work again with her for future campaigns.

Pia, together with actress Iza Calzado-Wintle, are part of L'Oreal Paris' new Philippine campaign

"Sayang? No, I'm worth it," which aims to serve as a wake-up call for anyone who still refuses to recognize that all types of women are worth it, no matter their choices and aspirations in life — turning every "Sayang ka.." into "Sayang? No, I'm worth it."

## Barbie Imperial 'forced' to kiss ex-BF JM de Guzman in new movie

Actress Barbie Imperial didn't just act alongside former boyfriend JM de Guzman in the romantic comedy "3 Days 2 Nights in Poblacion," she had to kiss him, too, and this took quite a lot of convincing, revealed director RC delos Reyes.

"The kiss is an important part of the story. Barbie knew this early on because it was included in the script. She was hesitant in the beginning. I guess she felt it was too personal. She even said, 'Direk, puwede bang wala?'" RC said.

"This is a very special film because we made



my muses in Ten17 P, who is Jasmine ("Alter Me," "Siargao"), and in Mavx Productions, who is Barbie ("I Love

Lizzy"), work together in one project. We also thought JM was perfect for the role because, somehow, he and Barbie still have this romantic pull. This is aside from their history as a real-

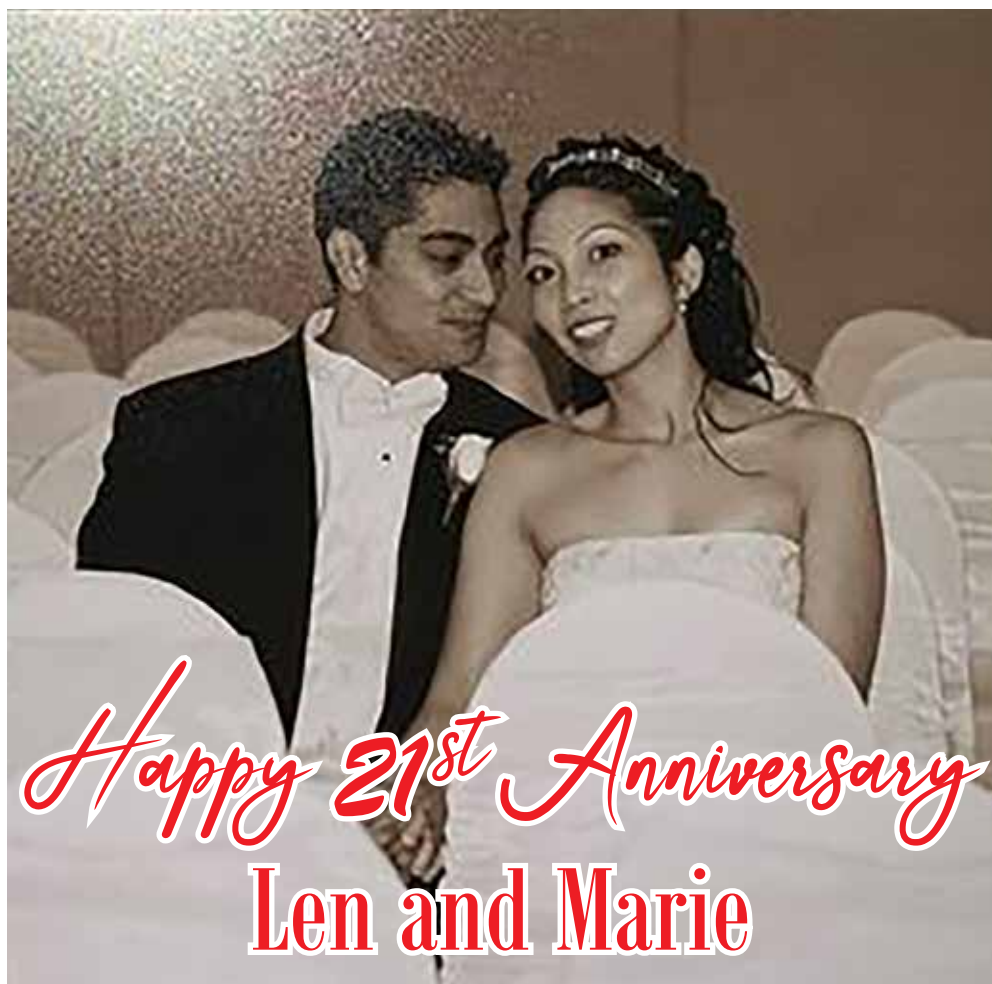
life couple," explained RC, who also cowrote the story with Jules Katanyag. RC said he personally asked Barbie's permission to get JM as cast member

"What really took a lot of convincing was the kissing scene. I told her it's just a one-time thing. On the set, before agreeing to it, she took one deep breath and said, 'Direk, we will only do this once, OK?' That was it, but the kiss had a spark. Even Jasmine said she was pleased with what she saw," the director recalled.

"JM and Barbie are exact opposites.

JM is very quiet. It's like he has a world of his own, but he transforms when he is in front of the camera. Barbie is the boisterous type, while Jasmine is everyone's big sister. The challenge was how to make Barbie and Jasmine look like they're best friends. It was good that the two were committed to their roles," he said.

Since Barbie is a natural in front of the camera, she was able to pull this off. There was no awkwardness in her scenes with JM. They actually joked around a lot."



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## Ruby Rodriguez says she left career in PH for her family



Former "Eat Bulaga" host Ruby Rodriguez said that it had always been her plan to leave her job in the Philippines and pursue a life abroad with her family.

Sitting down on So Jannelle TV, the actress-host revealed that it wasn't a spur-of-the-moment decision to leave the longest-running Philippine noontime show.

"It was planned so it takes years to uproot yourself. You just don't do that on a whim. You know I'm not single. I can do that if I was single but if you're carrying baggage, you have your family, you can't do that in a snap," she said.

Rodriguez, who left the Philippines for good in 2021, revealed that she and her family were supposed to migrate a year before, but that it got derailed by the lockdown implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The "Okay Ka, Fairy Ko" actress shared that the main reason they left the country

Ruby Rodriguez says she left career in PH for her family

works now.

"I was quiet about it because you don't know what will happen. If it pushes through then they will know. If it doesn't push through, no harm done. Image intact," she remarked.

"They didn't know, the only person who knew what I was doing, who's in the business, was Pauleen Luna because she's my best friend. I know she'll keep quiet about it," added the former host.

The 58-year-old actress is currently residing in Los Angeles, California, and every now and then gets reunited with her fellow celebrities from the Philippines.

Recently, she bonded with EB co-hosts Maine Mendoza, Alden Richards and Jose Manalo, as she shared photos with them on her Instagram.

was to give proper education and medication to his son, who has intellectual disabilities and autoimmune disease.

Rodriguez admitted that no one knew about her plans, not even the variety show's management, but only her EB co-host Pauleen Luna, who also knew that she was applying for a job at the Philippine consulate, where she



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Life's brighter under the sun



## Ahron Villena, na-exploit noon sa isang shooting; "Na-feel ko na may something pero hindi ako umangal."

**Naging komportable daw si Ahron Villena sa pinag-usapang recent birthday photoshoot dahil kilala n'ya ang mga katrabaho n'ya sa set. Hindi rin umano n'ya naramdaman na tila na-commodify s'ya.**

Pakiramdam umano ng actor-model na si Ahron Villena ay na-exploit s'ya noon habang nasa shooting ng isang pelikula.

Inamin n'ya 'yan kay Boy Abunda sa TV program nitong Fast Talk With Boy Abunda. Naikuwento n'ya ang tungkol sa karanasang iyon nang mausisa s'ya ng TV host sa kanyang recent sexy photoshoot.

In-upload kasi n'ya ang kanilang BTS o behind-the-scene video sa Instagram.

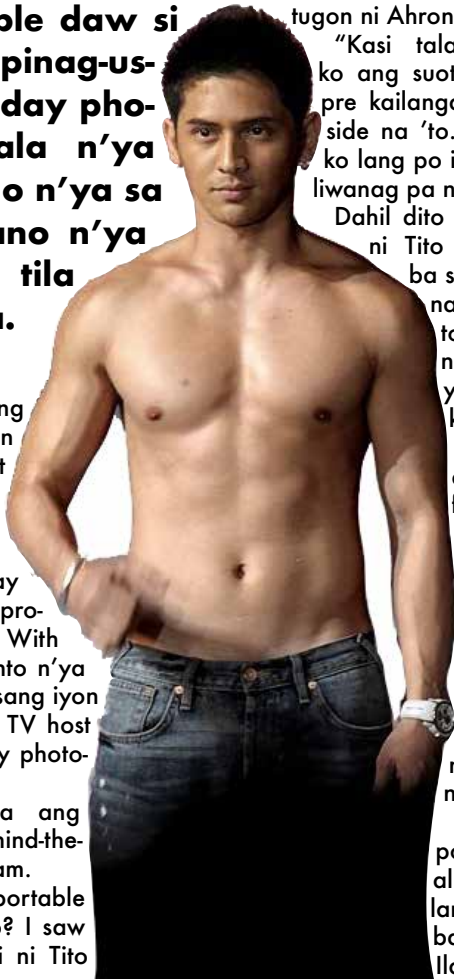
"Ganu'n ka kakomportable talaga sa katawan mo? I saw the pictorial ha," sabi ni Tito Boy.

"That was my birthday shoot po, Tito Boy," sagot naman ng aktor.

Makikita roon na tanging robe at shoes lang ang suot ni Ahron at wala s'yang panloob.

"Dito [sa side na ito] kita, e. Naka-robe ka lang. Tapos nakikipagkuwentuhan ka. Parang wala lang," lahad pa ng King of Talk base sa kanyang napanood.

"Parang wala lang, Tito Boy, pero talagang nakatingin ako sa may baba. Sini-secure ko kasi baka may dumungaw," nakangiting



tugon ni Ahron.

"Kasi talagang tinanggal ko ang suot ko pero s'yempre kailangang secure 'tong side na 'to. Ang pinapakita ko lang po is the tattoo," paliwanag pa n'ya.

Dahil dito ay natanong pa ni Tito Boy kung hindi ba s'ya nakaramdam na parang produktong for sale, lalo na noong nilalagyan s'ya ng oil sa katawan.

"As models, don't you guys feel commercialized? Don't you feel, for a lack of better word, commodified? 'Yong parang nagiging commodity ka kapag ganyan?" sunod-sunod na tanong ng TV host.

"Hindi naman po, Tito Boy. Actually, dinadaan ko lang sa tawa. Kumbaga, 'Sige, more. Ilagay mo na,'" Ahron answered.

Maliban pa roon, kilala raw n'ya ang mga kasama sa photoshoot kaya't komportable naman daw s'ya.

"Kilala ko [sila]. Comfortable po ako, Tito Boy. That's important talaga. Sumasayaw pa ako," paliwanag pa ng Sparkle artist.

**Marco is five years younger than Cristine. Should it really matter? No!**

na po 'yon."

That time ay ni-require daw s'yang mag-suot ng plaster para sa kanyang role at

## Yen Santos greets bday 'best friend' Paolo Contis

Yen Santos showered her boyfriend and "best friend," actor-TV host Paolo Contis, with love as they celebrated his 40th birthday together.

The actress made a birthday greeting through her Instagram page on Thursday, March 14, showing a photo of Contis from when he was young, a video of him blowing out his birthday candle, and a photo of them together.

"Screaming happy 40th birthday to my best friend!" she captioned her post, adding a man-and-woman-holding-hands and a blue heart emoji. "Thank you for everything you do."

Contis liked the post but did not comment as the actress' comments section appears to have been disabled.

Contis, meanwhile, received more greetings from friends and fellow celebrities Kaye Abad and Sparkle GMA Artist Center executive Joy Marcelo.

Contis confirmed his relationship with Santos in January 2023, after over a year of speculation from the public.



Months after the confirmation, he declared that he had plans of marrying Santos sometime in the future.

The pair was recently rumored to have broken up after Contis was linked to his former fellow noontime show host Arra San Agustin. The actor clarified that the videos of him and San Agustin circulating on social media were "maliciously edited."

doon na umano naganap ang pananamantala sa kanya.

"Yong plaster, kailangang mag-plaster. Kailangan ko mag-plaster tapos cameo role lang ako du'n sa movie na 'yon tapos hinanap ako and pagpasok n'ya, 'Oh, bakit sila ang naglalagay n'yan? Ako na ang maglalagay n'yan,'" sabi raw nu'ng taong hindi n'ya pinangalanan.

Hindi raw s'ya nakapalag that time at hindi na rin daw n'ya sinubukang ireklamo ang taong iyon.

"And then sabi ko, 'Sige po.' Tapos na-feel ko na may something pero hindi ako umangal. I was too young and s'yempre kumbaga sa industry natin, sasabihin nila, 'Ang arte naman ni Ahron,'" saad n'ya.

Pero looking back, tingin daw ni ahron ay naabuso s'ya noong panahong iyon.



## Commenting on social media is clout-chasing?

### Why single out just one Commentator?

Picking a verbal fight on social media with just one person kahit marami ang bumabatikos? Bakit that one person lang? Planted kaya iyong netizen? Mas marami write-up, at mapag-uusapan kasi if you pick a fight with one person. Responding publicly about death of Jaclyn Jose para maalala name niya at ma pag-usapan. Resurrecting his career kaya ang intention?

### Responding without Answering

Deflection without explanation. He reminds me of people who use the line "that's not the point," but would not explain or elaborate further. Parang Playing the "victim card" but still "righteous." Usually, they use the line "that's not the point" to end the confrontation because they want to have the last word without explanation. In this case, to end the discussion, he called the netizen a clout chaser. And pointing out grammatical error on social media is very trivial naman. Pero, paano naging clout chaser just for commenting? Pero, in the end, hindi pa rin sila nag-explain ni Andi.

### Politicians respond without Answering

Responding to a comment or question without really answering the

question is mga politicians. Out Prime Minister is an expert on that. But he sounds good without attacking anyone I think Jake Ejercito is copying opposition leader Pierre Poilievre who attacks the media whenever he is asked about an issue. Parang si Jake, inaatake niya ang nag-comment. Baka may balak nang pumasok sa politics si Jake Ejercito.

### ABS Closure makes Actors become OFW's

It seems that our actors are now going all over the world trying their luck. Obviously, the obvious destination is Hollywood. Lovi Poe, Liza Soberano, James Reid and Doly de Leon are just some of the actors who are making their mark. Let's not forget that KC Concepcion has already done a movie there. It seems the closure of ABS has forced some of our actors to try their luck outside the country. Without the financial muscle that ABS used to provide to produce tv shows and movies, everyone is working less, therefore, earning less also. It's ironic that the closure of a studio is what forced us to push our actors, our producers to try and make it abroad.

It used to be that only the poor become ofw's abroad.

It's a brave new world out there for our artistas.

Good luck to them.

## 'Not for me': Cardi B tries, spits out balut

American rapper Cardi B documented herself trying out the exotic Filipino delicacy balut (fertilized duck egg) for the very first time.

"Actually, before TikTok, I've been seeing this a long time. It's called balut. I got it, let's try it, and rate it 1 to 10," she said on her TikTok page March 7.

The rapper continued to describe how the balut's size was huge; that it may fit two yolks. She then cracked the balut open, put lemon and salt on it, and sipped the liquid. Cardi B initially gagged over the food's smell but she covered her nose and went on to sip the soup.

"It's so thick and hard," she exclaimed while peeling off a part of the egg's shell.

Cardi B tried the yolk then immediately spat it out, saying, "No. I don't like it. I don't like it."

"It's very meaty. It literally tastes to me like



an uncooked chicken... Too much meat scent," she added. "But the liquid it had inside was good."

Giving her final verdict, the rapper revealed, "I'm not even gonna rate it at 1 to 10. I'm just gonna say it's not for me."

Despite not liking the balut,

Cardi B said she's glad she tried it.

Most netizens found her video funny, with some even commending her for being "respectful" with her remarks. They compared her food review with how American record producer Benny Blanco judged the fare offered by a cult-favorite Filipino fast food chain.

Cardi B is a Grammy-winning artist best known for her songs "WAP," "Up," "Money," and "Bodak Yellow," among others. Her balut video has so far garnered about 24 million views and more than 3 million likes, as of writing.

## Jake Ejercito calls out basher who accused him of being 'silent' during past paternity issue with Andi Eigenmann

Jake Ejercito called out a social media user who accused him of being "silent" during his paternity issue involving Andi Eigenmann and Albie Casiño in the past.

The social media user commented on a viral Facebook post by Civil Service Exam Masterclass about a certain Jake, which the actor reposted on his page. It's a sample grammar question that reads, "Jake is (at, in, on) home today."

Instead of simply answering the item, the Internet user tagged Jake in the comments and said: "Jake WAS silent during the times when Albie Casiño was being assaulted for allegedly impregnating Andi Eigenman."

"Ivan IS a clout chaser who comments without knowing the facts and the whole story. He can't even spell names right," he wrote.

The A Very Good Girl actor also shared a screenshot of his interaction with the said user in a now-expired Facebook Story. "Baka kailangan mong mag visita iglesia," he wrote, tagging the FB user.

Andi got pregnant in 2011 with her firstborn, Ellie, and identified Albie as the father. It was only in 2016 when it was cleared that Jake is Ellie's biological father through a DNA test, as revealed by Andi's half-sister Max during her guesting in Good Times with Mo podcast.



"No, he is. They did a [DNA] test. Yeah, he's the dad," Max told host Mo Twister. "They're co-parenting. That's why he always posts photos of my niece," she added.

Prior to the confirmation, Albie consistently denied his involvement in her pregnancy.

In a 2023 interview, the Can't Buy Me Love star that he and Andi never talked about the matter.

"I guess at this point of my life, hindi ko na iniisip 'yun eh. Hindi ko na binibigyan ng energy 'yun," he added.

He also said he wouldn't want to work with Andi again, but he would be civil in case they cross paths in the future. "We're humans, right? Hindi naman sa pagiging plastic pero ganto lang (makes peace sign). Eeksena pa ba ko do'n? Hindi na."

He also said in the same interview he has no ill feelings with Jake, revealing that he was the first to approach him when they finally met. "Ako ang lumapit sa kanya. 'I'm sure you know who I am. Wala akong problema sa'yo. I hope you have no problem with me personally,'" Albie told him.

"We shook hands, toast, cheers, gano'n lang," he said, adding that they did not talk about the past issue. "There's no need to talk about it. Parang with me, making that, coming to him, that's like my way of saying na we're done on that part. Closed chapter na 'yun between me and him," he continued.

## OCAD University President to Speak at F.C.T. Recognition Rites

By: Tony A. San Juan, OCT.



Filipino-Canadian Ana Serrano is set to speak at the Recognition Rites of the Filipino Centre Toronto (FCT) on April 7, 2024 (Sunday) at 2:00 pm. Ms. A. Serrano is the current President and Vice-Chancellor of OCAD University, Ontario. The theme is Honour and Heritage: Recognition ("Parangal at Pamana: Pagpupugay").

Sponsored by the Filipino Centre Toronto, the afternoon event is in conjunction with the "17th Annual Outstanding Filipino-Canadian Student Awards Day" at the F.C.T. Social Hall, 4395 Sheppard Avenue East, Toronto, Ontario.

The university president is expected to address the outstanding student honourees, their parents and family, dignitaries and special guests, FCT officers and directors including members of the Filipino Canadian community and media. An award-winning visionary leader, Ms. A. Serrano is expected to speak on "transforming organizations and creating cut-

ting-edge programs to strengthen innovation and skills-building in the arts and culture sectors and creative industries" and as well, to congratulate and encourage students to pursue their studies in the field of arts, design, digital, media, film and theatre.

Ms. A. Serrano assumed the leadership role at OCAD University in 2020. The university is Canada's largest and oldest art and design educational institution. Formerly, she was the Chief Digital Officer of the Canadian Film Centre and founder of the CFC Media Lab. Ms. Serrano is co-chair of the Open Democracy Project, a former trustee of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, and is a member of various boards, including the National Film Board, Toronto Arts Council and Atkinson Foundation.

During the ceremony, 8 Filipino-Canadian outstanding school graduates from elementary, secondary, and post-secondary educational institutions will be honoured. They will be recognized for their distinctive academic excellence, exemplary extracurricular engagements, and admirable community involvement. The awardees include 2 elementary school graduates, three high school graduates, and 3 university graduates. (Tony A. San Juan, OCT.)

## Sarah Geronimo admits she has 'fears, doubts' over becoming a mom

Sarah Geronimo confessed that while she's excited to have a child with her actor husband Matteo Guidicelli, she fears she's not "equipped" enough to be a mom.

The actress-singer made this admission in a YouTube vlog with celebrity doctor Vicki Belo on Thursday, March 7.

"When is the baby coming?" Belo asked, to which Geronimo replied, "Kung ano po, kung ibibigay naman po ni Lord." (When the Lord blesses us with it.)

Geronimo further disclosed that she and Guidicelli are just "relaxed" and not undergoing procedures that may prevent or help her to get pregnant.

"Excited naman po [ako to be a mom]. May mga fears but kung ibibigay ni Lord, so be it," she admitted. (I'm excited to be a mom. I have fears, but if the Lord wills it, so be it.)

Expounding on her answer, Geronimo said, "Madami [akong fears]. Syempre-equipped; [you need] to be really equipped to be a mother." (I have many fears. One of which is being equipped

[because] you need to be really equipped to be a mother.)

"Open book naman po sa tao na late bloomer po ako. Medyo may mga doubts na gano'n, pero if ibibigay ni

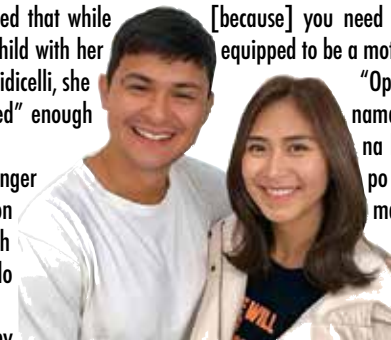
Lord, okay naman po ako—if it's really His will," said the singer, who wishes to have at least two kids.

([My life] has been an open book and the public knows that I am a late bloomer. There are doubts, but if the Lord gives it to us, I'm fine with it—if it's really His will.)

Geronimo also revealed during the interview that they are currently building their dream home, and will hopefully move in within this year.

Geronimo and Guidicelli tied the knot in a secret wedding in February 2020.

Meanwhile, Geronimo recently made history as the first homegrown Filipina to receive the Global Force Award at the Billboard Women in Music Awards.



# No more sexy roles for ex-Viva Hot Babe Andrea del Rosario

Former member of the girl group Viva Hot Babes, Andrea del Rosario, will no longer accept sexy roles in films or shows. The last movie where she essayed a daring role was Mac Alejandre's "May-December-January" in 2022.



In "May-December-January," written by National Artist for Film and Broadcast Arts Ricky Lee, Andrea's character Claire falls in love with her son's best friend.

"No," she directly said when asked if she's open to accepting other sexy roles in the future. She attended the red-carpet premiere night of Jason Paul Laxamana's "A Glimpse of Forever."

"May-December-January" was the last one... It's because of my faith," she said.

In an earlier interview in Boy Abunda's "Fast Talk," she admitted that she didn't like to be labeled as a sexy star before. But her "drive to work" at that time was to help her family, she explained.

She previously starred in movies such as, "Chopsuey," "Rome & Juliet," and "Lupe: A Seaman's Wife." She was part of Star Magic's Batch 3 and won fourth runner-up in Miss Philippines Earth 2001 and bagged the Miss Close Up Killer Smile award.

She also served as the vice mayor of Calatagan, Batangas in 2016.

When queried about how she has maintained

her timeless beauty and sexy figure at the age of 46, she said, "I don't drink, I don't smoke. That's No. 1. I do sports. And you know just be positive. Just be happy. And I think also having a relationship with God, with Jesus Christ. I'm a Christian, so it helps me have a more optimistic outlook in life."

She is currently in a relationship with polo player Anthony Garcia, who is also a Christian.

Meanwhile, Andrea plays the lady boss in the virtual dating studio called ForeVR in "A Glimpse of Forever," a Viva Films offering now showing in cinemas nationwide.

It stars Jasmine Curtis-Smith as Glenda, Diego Loyzaga as Kokoy, and Jerome Ponce as Dante.

The romance-drama with an element of sci-fi is about Glenda, who tries to find companionship and comfort via ForeVR.

"It's a cameo role," said Andrea of her character. "But I always believe, like the saying ni (Constantin) Stanislavski, 'There's no such thing as small roles, only small actors.' So,



**There's no such thing as small roles, only small actors**

I'm happy that kahit papano that I have a small part in the movie."

The moviegoers must watch the film because there's a lot of lessons they can learn from it, tackling the pros and cons of virtual interaction, shared Andrea.

She further offered her personal take on the theme of the film, saying, "We have to go with what's going on in the world. Makikisabay dapat tayo, but (for) me personally, as much as pos-

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sible, I want to connect face-to-face with someone. I don't wanna fall in love or develop our relationship virtually or online. That's it."

Andrea is agreeable to the idea of virtual dating as long as a real-life connection is established among the involved parties.

"Maybe if they will develop their relationship para hindi maputol yung connection, yes. But you still need that actual connection, physical connection. I still believe in that," she said.

Andrea also stars in the GMA Network's drama-thriller series "Makiling."



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## Chocolate Hills resort dismays Anne Curtis

Anne Curtis has joined the conversation on the much-criticized construction of the Captain's Peak Resort beside the grass-colored mounds of Chocolate Hills, right within Bohol's protected area and most popular scenic spot.

The famous Chocolate Hills, a geological formation of over 1,700 rolling hills earned it a recognition from UNESCO as its third National Geological Monument.

Curtis is an ambassadress of UNICEF, another United Nations body.

"Is this true kaya? Sad naman if they are allowing this so close to the beautiful natural wonders of our country [crying emoji]," she remarked.

The "It's Showtime" host likewise agreed with Senator Nancy Binay that government officials such as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and its attached agencies, as well as the Bohol government should be held accountable for allowing the construction of the resort and for it to operate.

For an entrance fee of P110 for adults and P75 for kids, one may already take a dip in their adult and kiddie pools or take the U-shaped water slide looped on the side of a hill. The pool offered a pop of blue against the vast grass-colored mounds. The resort likewise boasts of cottages for P300 and up to P2000 for those who wanted to rent a room overnight.

Soon after, the video became viral



with netizens calling out the Bohol government for allowing the defilement of a national protected site.

Atty. Chel Diokno asked on X how the resort owners was able to obtain clearance to construct the establishment.

"Paano pinayagan magpatayo ng isang resort sa gitna ng Chocolate Hills sa Bohol? Hindi ba ma-disturb ang ecosystem ng paligid? Pwedeng magkaroon ng mga soil erosion and baka masira ang mga hill formations within the vicinity of the resort?" argued X user pauloMDtweets

"The ugliest resort in one of the most beautiful PH destinations. Who the F owns this?!? Who allowed this?!? So evil," remarked another netizen.

Boholana beauty queen Pauline Amelinckx, reminded the public of the need to "balance progress with the protection and preservation of our natural landmarks."

"The Chocolate Hills are part of every Bol-anon. It's part of the land we call home, part of the soul of our island," she said via her Facebook page on Thursday, March 14, showing a photo of herself with the view of the hills in the background.

"Now more than ever, we face the challenge of balancing progress with the protection and preservation of our natural landmarks. We all must play a part, big or small, to regenerate our earth, so it may regenerate us too," she added.

Concluding her statement, Amelinckx wrote: "May we never forget about the beautiful land given by God. 'Hatag ni Bathala.'"

Janno Gibbs was also among the celebrities who disapproved of and criticized the resort, sharing his sentiment on the matter via his Instagram page.

"At binabuy na ang Chocolate Hills," he said, showing an aerial shot of the resort within Bohol's protected area.

TV host-beauty queen Aya Fernandez gave her two cents as well, stressing that the Bohol Island has been recognized as the country's first Unesco Global Geopark and that the government must ensure its

## "At binabuy na ang Chocolate Hills,"

conservation.

"Regardless when the resort was built, may our leaders and everyone uphold political will to conserve and preserve our natural heritage. Regardless of the details. No matter what it takes," she wrote.

Other celebrities who aired their dismay include Gretchen Ho, Gardo Versoza and Winwyn Marquez.

Under Proclamation No. 1037, the Chocolate Hills of Bohol is a National Geological Monument with regards to its scientific importance and high scenic value, making it one of the country's most protected areas.

The DENR said that it had already issued a temporary closure order and a notice of violation against the resort.

## Jerald Napoles bares secrets to 10-year relationship with Kim Molina; no plan to join breakups bandwagon

Celebrity couple Jerald Napoles and Kim Molina have no plans to join the showbiz breakups bandwagon.



In his interview at the sidelines of his new TV5 game show "Barangay Singko," Jerald answered what's the secret behind

his 10-year relationship with Kim.

"Well, ayaw naming ikumpara 'yung sarili namin sa pinagdadaan nila. Iba rin kasi talaga 'yung issue ng bawat couple. Magugulat na lang nga kami na 'Ay ganu'n pala 'yung issue nila,'" he said.

"So different personality, different reasons, but we don't wanna compare ourselves pero kami ni Kim kasi is napagdaanan namin 'yung... sa lahat kasi, 'yung pandemic 'yung matinding pinagdadaan, I think in every relationship," he added.

Jerald shared what he learned based on studies about pandemic residues.

"Meron ding study kasi na what's happening right now, everything that's happening right now is residue ng pandemic, eh. 'Yung the last decision made before moving on to the new world," he said.

"Pero I don't want to give that reason du'n sa mga naghilaway. Siguro, nagkataon lang talaga na it's just... 2023 is the end and it's the beginning para sa iba't ibang tao.

"Ang sa amin, basta meron kami na 'sabihin kaagad natin sa isa't isa kung ano ang problema. Ayusin natin kaagad.

"Kung may problema, sana sabihin mo agad sa akin. Okay lang, mag-away na tayo ngayon, huwag na nating alam mo 'yun, ipunin? Pero hindi ko sinasabing perfect kami ni Kim."

## Paolo Contis happy for 'It's Showtime,' open to guest in new GMA noontime show

Kapuso actor Paolo Contis is glad that ABS-CBN noontime show "It's Showtime" found a new home in GMA.



In a report by "24 Oras," Paolo said he wanted to collaborate with "It's Showtime" hosts.

"Oo. Work is work and I'm very happy na meron silang lugar," he said.

"Lahat, alam mo kaibigan ko naman sila, kaibigan ko karamihan sa kanila. Si Ogie [Alcasid], si Vice [Ganda]. I'm very close to Vhong [Navarro], so lahat naman 'yan very open tayo," he added.

Paolo was one of the hosts of the now defunct "Tahanang Pinakamasaya." "It's Showtime" replaced Paolo's noontime show on GMA.

Television and Production Exponents (TAPE) Inc. officially announced recently that "Tahanang Pinakamasaya" is now off-air.

"It's Showtime" moved to GTV last July after it declined TV5's offer to move the show to a delayed telecast at 4:30 p.m. to give way to the new show to be hosted by "Eat Bulaga!" mainstays Tito Sotto, Vic Sotto and Joey de Leon.

"It's Showtime" will start airing on GMA on April 6.

## Shaira takes down 'Selos' following copyright issue over Lenka song

MANILA, Philippines — Mindanao-based singer and "Queen of Bangsamoro Pop" Shaira Moro has taken down her viral song "Selos" on all streaming platforms after a copyright issue was raised.

The concern was that "Selos" heavily uses the melody of Australian artist Lenka's 2008 song "Trouble Is A Friend."

Lenka acknowledged she was aware of the existence of "Selos" and that they had "taken action" towards it. Soon after, the song was taken off platforms like Spotify.

Shaira's agency, AHS Productions, confirmed in a statement on Facebook the takedown was a voluntary action made as it makes arrangements "with regards to the legality of the publication of the song."



Singers Shaira and Lenka "We have chosen to take it down from all platforms pending our agreement with the original artist's management on securing a cover license for 'Selos,'" the agency said, admitting it indeed used the melody of "Trouble Is A Friend" and they are seeking to make "Selos" an official cover.

AHS Productions extended its gratitude to those who enjoyed the song, pointing out it was initially made public "for the sake of entertainment" and did expect

its popularity leading to Shaira's "Queen of Bangsamoro Pop" title.

The agency reiterated its apologies for the song's takedown and hoped similar support would be displayed when the song is re-uploaded.

In the comments section of the post carrying the statement, AHS Productions teased that Shaira would be releasing original music soon.

"Selos" became a viral hit on TikTok. Shaira made a music video for the song at the tail end of 2023, which has surpassed nine million views on YouTube.

The music video contains a disclaimer that reads, "The content presented here is a work of parody and should be viewed as such. This work is intended for entertainment purposes only and is not associated with the original creators or any entities affiliated with the original work."

Apart from "Trouble Is A Friend," Lenka — who just celebrated her 45th birthday — is also known for her hit song "The Show" from her eponymous debut album, as well as "Heart Skips A Beat" and "Everything At Once" from her 2011 sophomore album "Two."

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## Lovi Poe to star in Hollywood film helmed by Marvel's "Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D" director

**L**ovi Poe's yet unnamed film is based on the true story of Native American fire captain Paul Fullerton whose life changes after a career-changing accident makes him fall into marijuana and conflicts with the local district attorney and his small group of rogue policemen. Lovi will portray Marie, Fullerton's wife, while Canadian actor Adam Beach will give life to the role of the decorated fire captain. The filming of the project will reportedly start later this year in Dallas, Texas.

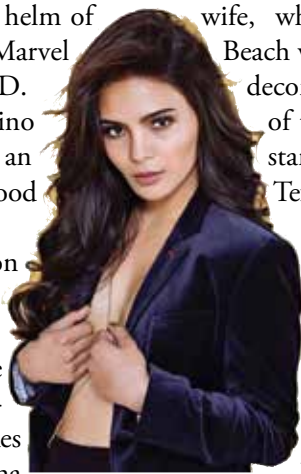
Lovi Poe is set to be a part of a yet-to-be-named international film to be directed by Garry A. Brown, who is

best known for taking the helm of multiple seasons of the Marvel series Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.

The casting of the Filipino actress was announced in an exclusive article by Hollywood news site Deadline.

The film is based on the true story of Native American fire captain Paul Fullerton whose life changes after a career-changing accident makes him fall into marijuana and conflicts with the local district attorney and his small group of rogue policemen.

Lovi will portray Marie, Fullerton's



wife, while Canadian actor Adam Beach will give life to the role of the decorated fire captain. The filming of the project will reportedly start later this year in Dallas, Texas.

"Couldn't be happier to share this with you guys. Really grateful for the opportunity to work with such amazing filmmakers and be part of the inspiring true story of Paul and Marie Fullerton," she wrote on Instagram.

Apart from this movie, Lovi is set to star in a Hollywood independent feature called Bad Man which also

stars Seann William Scott, Johnny Simmons, and Rob Riggle.

Moreover, Deadline also reported that Lovi will star in the Bill Kenwright film My Sister's Bones, with further details about the project yet to be disclosed.

**"Couldn't be happier to share this with you guys."**

In recent times, Lovi starred in the Netflix film Seasons alongside Carlo Aquino. She also signed off on her main role in the ABS-CBN series FPJ's Batang Quiapo at the beginning of the year.

## Sarah Geronimo reveals she is now on speaking terms with Mommy Divine

**Sarah Geronimo has confirmed that she and her mother Divine Geronimo, known to her fans as Mommy Divine, are now on speaking terms.**

The Popstar Royalty made the revelation in an interview with Dyan Castillejo for ABS-CBN, after her husband Matteo Guidicelli expressed how proud he is of her for her back-to-back achievements, which include her recent Global Force Award bestowed by Billboard.

"What I admire most about her is, yes, she's killing it, she's really successful, etc. but she never ever puts the credit only solely on herself, she always credits the people that build her art together with her," he said.

"Very thankful, very grateful for the honor na binigay sa akin to represent our country and Filipino music," Sarah said. "It made me realize that I can do so much more, na parang I can be so much more."

Sarah and Matteo then expressed gratitude towards their parents, who they say play a big part in their various successes.

"Totoo naman. Ang mga mummies po natin ang heroes natin, our parents," she said.

With the topic of parents, Sarah was asked by Castillejo to confirm if she and her Mommy Divine are already talking.

"Yes, yes. Thank you Lord! I love you, ma," she briefly said.

It could be recalled that Sarah gave a

shout out to her mom during the Billboard Women in Music event in Los Angeles, California last March 7 (Manila time) where she emphasized the importance of mothers in one's life.



**"Totoo naman. Ang mga mummies po natin ang heroes natin, our parents."—Sarah Geronimo**

she said during the Billboard red-carpet interview.

It could also be recalled that Sarah's relationship with her parents had been strained when she and Matteo got married in a secret ceremony last February 2020. The wedding caused a rift between her and her parents, according to news reports.

Last October 2022, Sarah posted a lengthy message for her parents on Instagram, apologizing for supposedly causing them pain. The post has since been deleted on the social media platform.

"[W]omen, especially mothers out there—shoutout to my mother, Mommy Divine Geronimo, you are the best, you are my hero, I love you very much—I mean I cannot imagine myself being a mother, all the sacrifices that a mother has to do for their child, it's mind-blowing,"

## Miles Ocampo and ex Elijah Canlas are attempting to rekindle relationship

Miles Ocampo recently admitted that she and Elijah Canlas are trying to rekindle their relationship.

At the presscon of her upcoming series Padyak Princess, the actress hinted at the possibility of rekindling her romance with the GomBurZa actor.

"Let's see. We're working on it," she said with a smile when asked if she and Elijah are back together again.

Previously, Miles has been vocal about her lingering feelings for Elijah. In an interview with TV Patrol news anchor Karen Davila last January, she said her love and respect for him would always remain.

"Tingnan natin ang universe magsabi (Let's see what the universe will say)," Miles said when Karen asked if there is

still a chance for them to get back together.

"May pinagsamahan kami, matagal din kami and kapag gano'n na marami kayong pinag-



daanan together, maraming happiness together, parang I have so much love and respect for that person," she added.

On the other hand, in an interview with ABS-CBN entertainment reporter MJ Felipe, Elijah said that he and Miles are still friends after the break-up while stating that Felipe would be the first to know if they got

back together.

It was last November when Elijah confirmed his break-up with the Eat Bulaga! host but stood firm that he will always be there for her.

"We broke up a couple of months ago," he said then during another ABS-CBN interview with entertainment reporter Ganiel Krishnan. "But I'm always gonna have love for her. I'm always gonna support

her in whatever she does. I'm always gonna be her number one fan basically. But right now, we're just taking our time, figuring out ourselves and our lives right now."

Miles and Elijah went public with their relationship last May 2022. In an interview with Ogie Diaz, the actor said they started dating in 2021.

## Albie Casiño asked if he visited Jaclyn Jose's wake: 'Hindi ako appektado do'n'

Actor Albie Casiño believed that he didn't have to go to veteran actress Jaclyn Jose's wake.

At a recent press conference for his new movie, Albie was asked, "Nakiramay ka ba nang mamatay si Jaclyn Jose?"

Albie said he did not have to: "Unang-una, I just wanna say rest in peace Ms. Jane saka condolences sa lahat ng tao na nagmamahal

sa kanya," he said.

"Pero hindi naman ako appektado do'n," he added.

A post shared by Albie Casin?o (@thestallion09)

"I don't think my presence would be welcome there so ba't ako makiramay, 'di ba?" he



added.

It can be recalled that Jaclyn's daughter Andi Eigenmann claimed that Albie was the father of her daughter back then.

Andi's half-sister Max, however, revealed in "Good Times With Mo" that Jake is the real biological father of

Andi's daughter.

During the podcast with disc jockey Mo Twister, Max was asked to comment about the recent spat between her half-sister and the son of former president Joseph Estrada on Twitter.

"It doesn't bother me, whatever. They're always like that," Max said. "You know he (Jake) is the father of my niece, right?"

Mo clarified with a follow-up question, "Yeah, not biological, right? But still,

father figure."

"No, he is. They did a (DNA) test... Yeah, he's the dad," Max replied.

"They're co-parenting. That's why he always posts photos of my niece," she added.

Albie said then that he felt relieved after an alleged DNA test revealed that he's not the father of Ellie.

It was in 2011 when Andi got pregnant. She pointed at ex-boyfriend Albie as the father of her child.

# US, Japan, Philippines plan joint South China Sea naval patrols

The U.S., Japan and the Philippines will launch joint naval patrols in the South China Sea later this year, according to a U.S. official and a foreign diplomat familiar with the planning. It's a major move to counter China in the region — and one likely to elicit a strong response from Beijing.

The three-country naval maneuvers are part of a package of initiatives that President Joe Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will unveil at their first-ever trilateral summit next month, the official and the diplomat said.

The White House is also expected to announce that it will "seriously consider" having Japan as a technological partner in elements of the "AUKUS" security partnership between the U.S., U.K. and Australia.

The April 11 trilateral summit is seen as key to cementing efforts by the three countries to counter China's regional influence. No further details were given.

The South China Sea has become increasingly tense in recent years as China has used its military might to lay claim to waters internationally recognized as belonging to the Philippines — establishing bases and harassing Philippine Coast Guard units. There are rising concerns in Washington that Beijing and Manila could tip into open conflict. Beijing could also use those military outposts to support a blockade or invasion of Taiwan in coming years.

The joint naval patrols will mark the most robust assertion of the Biden administration's Indo-Pacific Strategy hinged to rallying allies and partners to offset China's growing economic, diplomatic and

military footprint in the region.

This will be the first time Japan's navy has joined with them in doing so — a show of force designed to show Beijing its belligerence won't be tolerated. Japan's involvement also reflects the Kishida government's moves to make Tokyo a bigger player in regional security alongside the U.S. that began with his announcement in 2022 of a doubling of the country's defense budget within five years.

The National Security Council, DOD and the Japanese embassy in Washington declined to comment.

The joint operations also raise the risk of possible confrontations with Chinese forces operating in the region. Beijing has already ignored repeated warnings from the Biden administration that the U.S.-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty obligates the U.S. to intervene if Philip-

pine forces come under armed attack.

In recent months, Chinese vessels have on multiple occasions deployed water cannons against Philippine Coast Guard vessels, injuring Filipino sailors.

Chinese forces "will continue to take resolute steps to safeguard its territorial interests," China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said Monday. Marcos warned on Thursday that his government would respond with a "countermeasure package" aimed to deter "aggressive and dangerous attacks" by China in the South China Sea.

It is not clear how soon the Japan-U.S.-Philippines patrols will start. The three militaries have been laying the groundwork for joint patrols already — they began holding joint maritime training exercises in the region in June.

## Jimmy Kimmel hopes Jo Koy gets a second chance at Golden Globes hosting

Hollywood talk show host Jimmy Kimmel expressed hope for Filipino comedian Jo Koy to get a second chance to host the Golden Globes after his first try received a lot of criticism.



Jimmy Kimmel and Jo Koy

show next year and give him a shot at doing it over. It would be very smart. I think he learned all the lessons, and he's a funny guy. I think it would be nice for everyone," explained Kimmel.

Jimmy Kimmel was asked how he throw insults when he's doing his skit.

Kimmel remarked that not everyone is equipped to receive the joke in the way that a comedian wants them to, stressing that he is not after hurting anyone's feelings when he utters his jokes.

"I have such a fear of standing in front of a quiet audience but as far as people being mad, I don't necessarily operate that way. I'm not interested in hurting anyone's feelings, but sometimes some people are more sensitive than others and you just have to accept that," he said.

"You can't build your monologue around that. And I'm not looking to say anything mean, but not everybody's going to love all the jokes," added Kimmel.

Jo Koy was the first ever Filipino to host the Golden Globes.

Kimmel underscored that circumstances were different for Jo Koy when he was tapped to host the Golden Globes last January, considering he feels like an outsider to Hollywood.

"It's a lot easier for me than it is for Jo Koy. It's like if a stranger walks up to you and goes, "Nice shirt, Tom Selleck." If it's one of your friends, you don't take offense to it, but if it's somebody you don't know, you might smack him one," he said.

The seasoned awards show host remarked that Jo Koy should be considered to host the Golden Globes next year as a way to reclaim himself and apply the lessons he learned from drawing flak the first time.

"Not that I have any business programming the Golden Globes, but I think they should let Jo Koy host the

## Joey de Leon sa panawagang gawing mga national artists ang TVJ (Tito, Vic, and Joey):

## "Ngek, WAG NA."

May mga fans ng TVJ na nagsasabing deserve nilang mahirang bilang mga national artists dahil sa contribution nila sa ating sining at kultura pero meron din namang mga bashers na kumukontra dahil hindi umano sila deserving para sa nasabing pagkilala.

Ayaw ni Joey de Leon na hirangin sila nina Vic Sotto at Tito Sotto bilang mga national artists. Iyon ay base lumabas na panawagan na gawing national artists sila nina Vic at Tito, ang iconic trio ng longest-running noontime show na Eat Bulaga.

"Kami at EB National Artists? Ngek, WAG NA!" pahayag ng tinaguriang Henyo Master sa kanyang post sa X (formerly Twitter).



Mas feel daw n'yang matawag na "function all artists" kesa bilang national artists. Tatalo naman daw ay na-explore na nila ang iba't ibang media platforms.

"Gawin nyo na lang kami FUNCTION ALL ARTISTS! Eh kasi we've covered nearly everything—radio, TV, newspaper, movies, recording, arts, politics, etc," pagsasuggest n'ya.

Umani ng iba't ibang reaksiyon ang tweet n'yang ito.

May mga fans na nagsasabing deserve nilang tatlo na mahirang na national artists lalo pa't haligi na sila ng noontime show sa bansa.

However, meron din namang mga kumontra at sinabing hindi sila deserving para sa highest distinction for Filipino artists.

## Daniel Padilla sends birthday greeting to ex-flame Kathryn Bernardo



Kapamilya star Daniel Padilla greeted his ex-girlfriend Kathryn Bernardo on her birthday.

At exactly 12 midnight, Daniel posted a graphic image of him and Kathryn on his Instagram story.

"Happy birthday to you," Daniel wrote in Japanese characters.

Daniel and Kathryn announced their breakup on Nov. 30, 2023.

Last February, Daniel thanked Kathryn during his renewal of contract with ABS-CBN.

During his speech, Daniel said that their memories together will be forever in his heart.

"Siyempre hindi ko pwedeng kalimutan si Kathryn. Maraming maraming salamat Kathryn sa ating maraming taon na pinagsamahan," Daniel said.

"You know, hindang-hindi mawawala sa puso ko ang magaganda nating memories at ang ating mga adventures at journeys na pinagsamahan. Thank you very much," he added.



## How Jennylyn got caught in the crossfire of Xian and Kim's breakup

**L**iterally a series at its shortest on love that is bound to die with no more repeat. Such is the sad fate that befalls GMA's "Love. Die. Repeat."

(LDR), which goes off the air in the coming days.

A supposed comeback vehicle on TV of Jennylyn Mercado in 2021, filming had to be called off in September of the same year due to the lead actress' medical emergency. It was later found that Jennylyn would become a mother anew, this time with husband Dennis Trillo. [Jennylyn has a 15-year-old son with actor Patrick Garcia].

Meanwhile, LDR was supposedly the "unofficial entry point" of her leading man Xian Lim — a transferee from ABS-CBN — to GMA. In lieu of the temporarily shelved project, Xian was cast in a forgettable fantaserye that hardly competed in the ratings game.

Several months after giving birth, Jennylyn was all set to face the cameras again. LDR resumed taping in April 2023 and wrapped up in November.

Seven months of taping for a three-month airing? Well, that's how it is — or has been — particularly on GMA, with the exception of consistent top-rating programs.

So, is the Jennylyn-Xian show a flop?

The production peeps are quick to justify that, among other things, LDR is a mini-series or a show equivalent to 13 weeks. In TV parlance, a mini-series stays on air for one season. Whether it falls short of expectations is another story.

In LDR's case, an insider shares: "Hindi naman kataasan ang ratings, pero hindi rin naman kababaan." (Its ratings are neither very high nor very

low).

But is it true that between the lead cast members, it is Xian who is taking the blame for LDR's not-so-impressive ratings?

Well-placed sources find a direct link between the rating figures and Xian's bad publicity as of late, involving his erstwhile girlfriend, Kim Chiu.

In the breakup — sensationalized all over social media — it is Kim who is perceived as the aggrieved party and therefore gets public sympathy. Xian, naturally, is considered the bad boy who should await comeuppance.

Netizens sympathetic to Kim reference Ogie Diaz's latest showbiz news feed moments before Xian allegedly broke up with Kim. Backed up by his reliable source, the talent manager-cum-content creator revealed that Xian even had his favorite steak prepared by Kim.

Over dinner, Xian said, "I think it's better if we end our relationship in as much as your family as well as your friends don't approve of me."

He left Kim groping for words, unable to process

**"I think it's better if we end our relationship in as much as your family as well as your friends don't approve of me."**

what she heard.

Ogie's item evoked such an instant reaction that, after a day or so, it was supposedly debunked by people in the know. Correction, please: their breakup was a mutual decision!

While I'm a bit too incredulous about the mutual decision angle, I'm much more inclined to believe that no man in his sane mind would have the audac-



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Life's brighter under the sun



ity to lovingly request his favorite steak from his girlfriend only to use it as an opportunity to break loose from a relationship.

Kim — despite all her childish demeanor — surely knows better than that!

Also, a minus point for Xian is his reported dalliance with his producer, the equally pretty Iris Lee. Ogie further shared that Xian and Iris stayed in a single hotel room while in Bangkok, Thailand, for a possible location hunt in the movie under Xian's helm.

The two were even sighted on the streets "holding (each other's) hands while walking."

Finally, the guessers to the "Is LDR a flop?" question seem to have only two answers to choose from now. Is the

breakup that Xian initiated — as divulged by Ogie — the culprit? Or is it Xian's having found an instant replacement for Kim? Whether it's the first or the second, it is definitely the plethora of bad press that Xian got himself involved in that resulted in LDR's poor ratings.

As far as the TV audience is concerned, the missing piece of the puzzle is that the Jennylyn-Xian mini-series is pitted against "Linlang" — and Linlang, of course, stars Kim (and Paulo Avelino).

Still, Jennylyn — an alumna of GMA's first artista search, "Starstruck," and one of the network's prized possessions at that — does not deserve a mini-series exposure. It's nothing short of putting her on GMA's afternoon block when she's supposed to be on primetime.



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# Joey Baking The Socialist

## Stealing a Scene at Moana

**The Juans, Adie, Unique Salonga & Kean Cipriano.**

Those are the names of the performers. I'm not sure if that is also the name of the concert. It's difficult to write about a concert without a title except the names of the performers. Anyway, the front act was headed by MH Production talents Sher, Hirasol, Pearly, and Jer Flow.

The Ageless Reborn also warmed up the crowd. Mitzify bags were also given away at the start of the show.

Unique Salonga performed first. Then, Kean Cipriano followed. All I know about Kean Cipriano is the duet he made with Nadine Lustre. I was a fan of Nadine Lustre when she had a series On The Wings of Love with ex boyfriend James Reid. And that's why I heard of Kean because of their duet.

To put some life into the concert, Kean invited everyone to come in front. So, the young ones in the audience congregated in front of the concert. After that,



The Juans PHOTO BY MARIVIC FUENTES

every performer followed suit.

Adie got the most shriek from the adoring fans. Well, he is good-looking.

The band The Juans closed the concert.

On the first showing last January 20, theatre goers and critics alike highly praised the performances of the participants composed of students,

artists and volunteers of the JDL Performing Arts schools and some local talents in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Ontario.

It was so good that JDL had a repeat performance of Moana Jr at The City Playhouse. It had a 5 pm and a 7:30 show.

Thea Asedillo played Moana at the 5 pm show and Chloe Tionson played Moana at the 7:30 pm show. It was a well-presented, entertaining show. It was very professional, everybody knew their

lines. This is the first Disney-licensed musical play authorized under a Filipino Canadian production to present the highly-acclaimed 2016 Disney-animated movie on stage. Kudos to everyone involved in the community's trail-blazing event.

On the evening show, Catherine Tionson fell backwards on the prop boat when she took a step back. The cast, including her sister and lead Chloe, tried to stifle their laughter.

"I like the evening show better," I told Josie. "It had a funny moment when the girl in green fell backwards and the cast tried to suppress themselves from laughing"

"Oh yeah. That's Catherine Tionson, but she said she's ok anyway," said Josie.

SOCIALIST page 20

## Pinoy Ontario Vendor First Spring Bazaar Press Conference Marks Successful Launch



ABOVE: dad Paolo Bucud poses with his daughter Kian.

RIGHT, Daughter Kian poses with her Academic Award in Reading.

TORONTO, Ontario - The Pinoy Ontario Vendors First Spring Bazaar Mediacon, held on March 23, 2024, at Maharlika's Restobar in Mississauga unveiled an exciting array of initiatives and collaborations aimed at igniting the spirit of camaraderie among vendors and consumers and promoting charity work through SPAM donations to be distributed to the remote areas in the Philippines.

The event garnered attention from media representatives, influencers, and community leaders alike.

The press conference served as a platform to introduce the vibrant lineup of activities and promotions planned for the upcoming Spring Bazaar which also features the very first Filipino Toy and Cosplay show. The panelists headed by Jaicel Aquino as POV OIC 2024, Ryan Orlanda, Francis Yecla,

city's social calendar.

Pinoy Ontario Vendors expressed enthusiasm for the overwhelming response received at the press conference. The excitement and anticipation surrounding POV's 1st Spring Bazaar Promotion. This event is a celebration of our community, creativity, and the beauty of spring, and we can't wait to welcome everyone to experience it firsthand."

The POV 1st Spring Bazaar promises to be a dynamic celebration of spring's arrival, uniting the community in a festive atmosphere of joy and renewal. Stay tuned for further updates and mark your calendars, on April 21, 2024, or email us at pinoyontariovendors@yahoo.com

### Willie Revillame to return to TV via TV5

Veteran showbiz columnist Cristy Fermin confirmed that Willie Revillame is making his television comeback through TV5.

In her "Showbiz Now Na" program, Cristy said that Willie will sign a contract after Holy Week.

"Ang sabi sa akin ng mga taga-pamuno ng TV5 nu'ng magkausap kami ng Lunes ay nag-

pasintabi, ang sabi, 'Nanay wala pa dahil magmi-meeting pa kami ng Martes ng umaga at hindi pa naming alam kung ano ang kahihinatnan at kung sakali gustong magka-ayusan at magkatulungan kami," Cristy said.

"At saka panahon na rin para mapanood ulit si Willie Revillame sa mundo ng telebisyon," she added.

Cristy's co-host, Romel Chika, asked her, "At saka ikaw ay hindi ka



n a m a n hadlang sa pagbabalik niya sa

telebisyon?"

"Alam ko sa puso ko, alam ng mga boss namin at saka sa One PH sa Signal, Mediaquent ay wala silang narinig," Cristy answered.

"Ako po Semana Santa o hindi, lahat ng naganap ay wala na sa puso ko. Gusto kong makabalik ulit sa telebisyon si Willie Revillame dahil maraming mabibiyang sa mga nangangailangan, bukod pa sa saya na ibinibigay niya sa publiko," she added.

Recently, Cristy said that she will not vote for Willie Revillame for senator in 2025.

"Public servant ka. Ikaw ang dapat na gumawa ng paraan para magserbisyo-publiko ka. Nakakatakot lang ito," Cristy said.

"Kaya sa akin, kung tatakbo siyang senador, sa pipiliin ko, wala ang pangalan ni Willie Revillame," she added.

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1



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3

1. Paul and Jessica Biaoco celebrate the first birthday of Brielle with family and friends; 2. Chloe Tiongson poses after the show; 3. Josie de Leon and students pose after the Moana Jr. show.



### Ex-Momoland member Nancy McDonie signs with GMA's Sparkle

Korean-American singer Nancy McDonie, a former member of the disbanded K-pop girl group Momoland, has signed a contract with GMA Network's talent agency Sparkle.

The agency announced Nancy's contract signing on social media, welcoming the newest international star in its roster.

"Get ready to witness her journey as she shines among the brightest stars in the industry!" Sparkle also said in its announcement.

Filipino-Argentine singer Chanty of Lapillus, another Korean girl group, joined Sparkle

two years ago having previously been with rival talent agency Star Magic.

Nancy debuted with Momoland in 2016 as its lead vocalist and dancer when she was still a teenager, churning out hits like "Bboom Bboom," "Baam," "I'm So Hot," and "Thumbs



Up," before disbanding in early 2023.

The group was popular in the Philippines during its seven-year stint, with many Filipinos noticing Nancy resembling actress Liza Soberano.

The artist was supposed to make her acting debut opposite James Reid — who coincidentally now manages Liza — in the series "The Soulmate Project," but it did push through, the pandemic being a primary reason.

Nancy last visited the Philippines in November 2023 for a one-night concert with fellow Korean artist Lee Seung Gi.

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# Sine Institute to Hold Filipino Film Festival in Toronto

by: Tony A. San Juan, OCT.

The Sine Institute, a cinema and creative organization in Canada will hold its first Filipino International Film Festival in Toronto, Ontario.

Dubbed Sine Film Fest, the inaugural festival and industry conference will be held from April 12 to 14, 2024 at Hotel X Toronto, a downtown premier hotel at 111 Princess' Boulevard, Toronto. This is Sine Institute's contribution to celebrating 75 years of Philippines and Canada Bilateral Relations. It will be an event considered by film professionals and enthusiasts proudly pioneering and trailblazing developments in the history of the Filipino diaspora in Canada. Envisioned by Agnes Miranda, a prominent Filipino-Canadian leader and business executive, the Sine Institute was formed and launched on September 12, 2023, by Filipino filmmakers, producers and actors based in Canada's largest city. The Sine Institute is a not-for-profit outfit serving as a collaborative platform for people in the film and art industry. It aims "to build and lead a com-



munity of Philippine excellence in creative endeavours", according to its co-founder and



president Michael Masangkay. As a creative platform, it is offered for Filipino talents who are

searching and seeking to realize their skills and potential in the art, science and business of acting, producing, and directing on film projects.

Its vision is to become a leading organization for present and future Filipino actors, filmmakers,

Sine Institute Organizers and media tour one of the theatres at Hotel X where the movies will be shown. FROM LEFT, BACK: Jose Baking, Tony San Juan, Michaelangelo Masangkay FROM LEFT FRONT: Joe Damasco, Joy D'Aoust, BK Jimenez, Agnes Miranda, Marita Lee, Rosary Escaño, Anna Wong, Ryan Orlanda PHOTO BY RYAN ORLANDA

and producers in the creative world through contemporary and strategic movie-making, theatre arts, film production, marketing, promotion, and distribution. In pursuance of its laudable initiative, Sine Institute invites people to appreciate the Filipino culture and explore business and employment opportunities for many kababayans and Filipino Canadians in this part of the world.

The 3-day event will include feature movies, short films and docu screening time, a red carpet walk, an awards ceremony, a gala and banquet, film industry seminars, press conferences, and city sightsee-

SINE page 16

## Kim Rodriguez denies involvement with cager Marc Pingris

Kim Rodriguez quashed the rumors linking her to basketball star Marc Pingris through her manager, vlogger Ogie Diaz.



snack store was located. "Hindi po kami magkasama niyan. Kahit itanong niyo po sa girl na 'yan kung magkasama kami ni Marc Pingris or kung pareho niya kaming nakita on that same time, I'm sure alam niya ang totoo," said the actress.

Followers were talking about the issue that broke out during the Holy Week, when the mostly Catholic Philippines are called upon to reflect on their sins and shortcomings.

Ogie relayed Kim's answers through his popular YouTube show "Showbiz Updates" on March 30. Kim is Ogie's ward.

"Tito, hindi po 'yan totoo," Kim said as quoted by Ogie.

Ogie asked Kim to clarify on the two viral photos. In separate photos of Kim and Marc, both personalities were seen with the staff of a popular French fries store and with Sydney Opera House as the background.

Kim said that she was on her way to Subic with her friends when they stopped by a gasoline station where the

She also refuted the Australia photo with the popular Sydney landmark.

"Ang sabi naman sa akin ni Kim, meron siyang dalawang kaibigan na kasama nu'ng nagbakasyon sila sa Australia. Sabi sa akin ni Kim, 'Anong pakialam ko kung may picture doon si Marc Pingris sa Opera House? Eh, ako din may picture. Lahat naman ng nagpupunta ng Sydney dapat may picture ka daw sa Opera House kaya may picture ako," she said.

Marc Pingris and his wife Danica Sotelo had also spoke about and denied the issue.



## Franki Russell to represent New Zealand in Miss Universe 2024

Former "Pinoy Big Brother" (PBB) housemate Franki Russell will represent New Zealand in this year's Miss Universe pageant.

In an Instagram post, Russell was named by a Dubai-based magazine as the official candidate of New Zealand for this year pageant.

"This is her official launch as the new Miss Universe New Zealand. After a four-year hiatus, Franki Russell will carry the torch of

New Zealand to represent her culture at the 72nd Miss Universe in Mexico City," the magazine said in a post.



According to Miss Universe New Zealand, Russell will bring her experience as a reality TV star and raise her cause against cyberbullying not just in New Zealand but in the world.

In 2021, Russell announced her interest in pageant.

The Miss Universe New Zealand franchise is headed by Josh Yugen, the Filipino founder and CEO of Yugen Events.



1. Maui played by Mark Rivera and Moana Jr lead Thea Asedillo; 2. Moana Jr. lead Chloe Tionsong (girl in red top and white skirt) and other cast members try not to laugh after Catherine Tionsong (girl in green and sister of lead Chloe) stepped back, tripped and fell backwards unto the prop boat. The audience thought it was part of the show. I think Catherine was trying to steal a scene 😊; 3. Character TeFeti (green) played by Amber Rinker and Character Young Moana played by Lailah Diaz

Max Collins, walang love life dahil itinaas ang standards pagdating sa pakikipag-relasyon;

# “Maraming nakapila pero wala pang pumasa.”

Ayon kay Max Collins, iniisip muna n’ya ang kapakanan ng anak na si Skye bago ang makipag-date sa iba. So far, wala pa raw pumapasa sa bagong standards n’ya when it comes to men.

Pinanindigan ni Kapuso actress Max Collins ang naging sagot n’ya recently sa programang Fast Talk With Boy Abunda kung saan sinabi n’yang ready na s’yang magmahal muli.

Natanong kasi namin s’ya about it right after ng media conference proper para sa upcoming teleserye



n’ya with Marian Rivera and Gabby Concepcion na My Guardian Alien.

Doon ay inulit ni Max na bukas at handa na muli ang puso n’ya para ma-in love.

“Ready naman. I mean, you know, hindi mo masasabi. But I guess, for the right person at the right time. You’ll never know,” nakangiting sagot ng aktres.

Wala naman na raw isyu sa pagitan nila nang nakahiwalayang si Pancho Magno. Katunayan, hindi rin daw s’ya tututol kung sakaling ma-in love na rin ang dating mister sa iba. “No naman because I want him to be happy and, of course, he wants me to be happy also. ‘Yon talaga ‘yong priority namin in life. It’s just for all of us to be happy,” saad n’ya.

Ganu’n pa man, nananatiling zero pa rin daw ang love life ng aktres at this point.

“Ngayon? Wala talaga,” pagtitiyak ni Max.

Dahil dito ay nausisa s’ya ang entertainment press kung nagkaroon naman kaya kahit papano mula nang maghiwalay sila ni Pancho.

“No naman. Wala namang official. Nothing official,” natatawag sagot n’ya. Pero hindi ikinaila ng aktres na maraming nagpaparamdam sa kanya ngayon pero wala pa umano s’yang natitipuhan.

“Maraming uma-attempt. Maraming nakapila pero wala pang pumasa. Wow!? Dapat confident tayong mga babae,” natatawag pahayag ni Max. Naging choosy na raw s’ya dahil itinaas na raw n’ya ang kanyang standards when it comes to men.

“Wala pang pumapasa, e. You know, tinaasan ko ‘yong standards ko from when I was younger. Now I’m

older, s’yempre iba na ‘yong hinahanap ko,” she said.

Iniisip daw kasi muna n’ya ang kapakanan ng kanyang anak na si Skye bago makipagrelasyong muli.

“Ngayon ang hinahanap ko... Hindi ako makikipag-date to just date now that I have a son. So I have to think of the best situation for him,” she shared. |

“It’s not like someone who is not ready to settle, not serious. I don’t have time for that,” pagtatapos ni Max.

Kung matatandaan, ikinasal sina Max at Pancho noong December 2017. Dumating naman sa buhay nila ang anak nilang si Skye noong July 2020.

However, napabalita na naghiwalay na sila noong 2021, na s’yang kinumpirma ni Max sa Fast Talk With Boy Abunda noong May 2023.

Samantala, mapapanood ang teleseryeng My Guardian Alien nina Max, Gabby, at Marian simula April 1 sa GMA Prime.

## Sine Institute

1. Agnes Miranda and Michael Masangkay
2. Joe Damasco and Tony San Juan
3. BK Jimenez and Ryan Orlanda
4. Rosary Escano and Michael Masangkay in one of the theatres

PHOTOS BY RYAN ORLANDA



## Sarah Geronimo meets with Fil-Am producers in LA

Sarah Geronimo has made two historic feats just weeks apart this month, but the talented singer-actress revealed that she still had hesitations and apprehensions.

Sarah spoke to the press, including Philstar.com, at the blue carpet of the recently held inaugural Billboard Philippines Women in Music. Sarah was named the first honoree of the Woman of the Year award.

During her acceptance speech, Sarah said that she was humbled to have been given the award and that she is happy that in her own little way she was able to inspire other people.



Prior to her awarding, Sarah got candid about what she felt after getting her Global Force award at the Billboard Women in Music held in early March in Los Angeles, United States, and immediately after, being handed the Woman of the Year honor.

“Grateful po. Siyempre may mga apprehensions. Kakabalik ko lang. May mga fears pero sa industriya naman natin, as long as you believe in what you do, [what] you put out there sa mga tao, as long as mahal mo ‘yung ginagawa mo, there’s nothing to fear,” she said to a question by ABS-CBN reporter MJ Felipe.

When MJ followed it up by asking if she still has apprehensions after the Billboard award in the US, Sarah said she still does.

“Parang ‘pag sinabi yatang Sarah Geronimo, kakabit na ‘yung apprehension. Parang part po talaga ng personality ko,

but at the end of the day, there’s a decision to overcome that apprehension, ‘di ba?”

“Ano pa rin, ‘yung passion pa rin nag-overtake ‘yung fear, hesitation, apprehension,” Sarah said.

The singer-actress said she is more inspired to get back to the music and concert scene, even acting, after her recent feats.

Sarah was happy to have met some Filipino-American music producers in Los Angeles.

“Nasabi niya nga po sa akin na Filipino artists don’t need to change anything about themselves. Kailangan lang nila ‘yung confidence at pagmamahal sa sarili nating musika,” she said.

She ended that she’s game for anything, especially the plans or projects that have been conceptualized for her.

### Philippines’ Notable Structural Engineer Visits Toronto

Dr. Eduardo C. Arrojado, a prominent practicing structural engineer and past president of the Association of Structural Engineers of the Philippines (ASEP) recently visited Toronto. He was on a business-pleasure trip in the country wherein he engaged in a professional development tour on the latest practices and systems regarding infrastructure design and development.

A licensed civil engineer, Arrojado is the principal consultant of Eduardo C. Arrojado and Associates in the Phil-



L-R: E. Moya(PEng.), Roy Start, and Engr. E. Arrojado. Back : M. Romano(PEng.), Tony San Juan, & L.Villaruz(PEng.).

ippines. A faculty member also of Adamson University, he has a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the National University and completed a postgraduate program at the Asian Institute of Management. Arrojado is a classmate of Fil-Can community leader Engr. Lorenzo “Jun” Villaruz at the NU’s Department of Civil Engineering in Manila, Philippines.

He was feted to a simple salo-salo in a Chinese buffet restaurant by Jun Villaruz. It was also Jun’s wife Aida’s birth anniversary. In attendance at the welcome gathering were Roy Start, Tony A. San Juan, Engr. & Mrs. Mel Romano, and Engr. & Mrs. Emmanuel Moya. (By: Tony A. San Juan, OCT.)



All smiles after a hearty post birthday buffet lunch with Mrs. Aida Villaruz (in red dress).



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# Rayver Cruz apologizes for being playful during livestream; Julie defends Rayver

Kapuso actor Rayver Cruz found himself at the center of a social media storm when netizens accused him of inappropriate behavior during a livestream.

In a moment that caught many by surprise, Rayver was seen playfully interrupting his girlfriend, Julie Anne San Jose, as she was responding to a fan's question during the livestream.

A separate clip showed Rayver answering a fan's question for their upcoming concert in Canada, but some fans found his response odd.

"Yung paghahanda namin, nag-ano kami sa rehearsal room, naghawak hawak kami ng mga kamay, and then pumikit kami, and then niramdam lang namin yung bawat isa. And then, yeah," Rayver said.

Julie Anne took to social media to defend her boyfriend against critics.

"Minsan lang po ako sumagot sa mga ganto but sobra ka na po. Below the belt and harsh na po itong accusations, please stop," Julie Anne wrote.

Rayver, realizing the impact of his actions, took to social media to issue a heartfelt apology to his fans for his playful behavior.

"Sa mga na offend sa kilos ko kanina sa live stream namin, sorry. But I was just being myself. Playful and happy talaga ako. Lalo na when I'm with my love. She knows that, she



knows me.

"I don't usually speak up pero ibang usapan na ang accusations. Una, hinding hindi ko kayang saktan si Julie. My mom raised me right. Hinawakan ko yung buhok nya na lagi kong ginagawa sa mga iba pa namin videos pag magkasama kami pero kung iba po ang dating sa ibang tao wala na po

ako magagawa don.

"I respect Julie sobra sobra and sobra ko syang mahal pati ang family nya. Pangalawa, may respeto ako sa trabaho ko at sa mga katrabaho ko. Hinding hindi ako gagawa ng makakasira dun.

"At sana, matuto na rin tayo rumespeto sa iba at maging malawak ang pag-iisip. Salamat po and goodnight!" Rayver said.

## Moira's advice to people on weight loss journey: 'Don't be too hard on yourself'

**M**oira dela Torre disclosed that she became bulimic at one point during her weight loss journey.

The hit-making singer-songwriter made this revelation while warning about the effects of having such an eating disorder and offering personal advice to people who are suffering from weight issues.

"Don't be too hard on yourself," cautioned Moira during BonaSlim coffee's event in Quezon City where she was introduced as the brand's latest endorser. "I think that's such a cliché thing. And to be honest po, how I started losing weight, it was when I stopped trying. So in 2020, I actually started all these diets. I was vegan for a while. I did keto, I did intermittent (fasting). I did everything. I tried everything.

"And I'm sorry, I have to say it, trigger warning ba, I became bulimic for two years from 2020 to 2022. And it only worsened my situation. And it got me into gain(ing) more weight, actually. And then when I stopped putting pressure on myself and when I just started allowing myself to just be, dun po parang kumalma yung katawan ko."

Moira began losing weight gradually. "I think our bodies know when they are cared for properly. Our bodies recognize when they are loved properly. So, self-love is not a selfish thing."

And to the people who are on the same journey as her, she told them, "I want you to care more about what you feel about yourself. Because that matters why I had to take so much time to think that I was beautiful, before I saw any change physically. And then the physical change happened. We are beautiful and you have a lot of beautiful traits..."

"Weight can fluctuate but your heart, that's where the real change happens. And I'm just very, very thankful because everything happens



so gradually. It wasn't like a quick thing, it wasn't a quick fix."

So when the slimming coffee brand's team approached her and shared to her about the "gradual change that starts from within," she said yes to be their ambassador. "(With) BonaSlim being something that assists you to feeling good, starting from within, it really made me feel like I can do this. This is something I can do.

"So my message to the people who are going on a journey that I have been on, don't be too hard on yourself. Be unapologetic when it comes to choosing yourself. It's not a bad thing."

The Paubaya singer's life has changed a lot since embarking on a weight loss journey.

"The change really started internally first before it manifested externally," she reiterated.



Happy Retirement Sir Rafael Webres!

Pokwang sa basher na nagsabing "laos na siya" after niyang lumipat sa GMA; "Dapat ito ang tinatapon sa China! Mga mapaggawa ng usaping walang kuwenta!"

Ayon kay Pokwang, happy umano s'ya bilang Kapuso at sa kabila nito, nirespeto raw n'ya ang pinanggalingan niyang ABS-CBN at maging ang TV5 sa pagbibigay ng tiwala at opportunities na ibinigay sa kanya before.

Binanatan ng comedian-actress and TV host na si Pokwang ang isa n'yang basher na nag-imbento ng kuwento tungkol sa kanyang pagiging artista.

Nakarating kasi sa kanya ang pahayag nito sa X (formerly Twitter) na lumamlam umano ang kanyang karera magmula noong lumipat s'ya sa Kapuso Network.

Bukod pa roon, sinabi rin nitong tila nagsisisi raw ang komedyana sa naging desisyon n'yang iwanan ang ABS-CBN.

"[L]aos na si pokwang simula lumipat sa kamuning. Prang nagsisi nga daw na lumipat hehe kala kc nila hindi makakabangon ang absbn [Three face with tears of joy emojis]," walang pakundangang pahayag ng basher sa social media.

Nakarating ito sa Kapuso comedienne na game na bumanat sa kanyang online detractor.

"Jusko saan galing mga animal na ito? dapat ito ang tinatapon sa China! mga mapag gawa ng [u]saping walang

kuwenta!" buwelta ni Pokwang.

Sa isa naman n'yang tweet, sinabi n'yang happy s'ya bilang Kapuso. Sa kabila nito, nirespeto umano n'ya ang pinanggalingan niyang ABS-CBN at maging ang TV5 sa pagbibigay ng tiwala at opportunities na ibinigay sa kanya before.

Bago kasi napunta sa GMA-7 si Pokwang ay matagal s'yang naging contract artist ng ABS-CBN, at nagkaroon din ng shows sa TV5 such as Chika, Besh! and Fill in the Bank.

"[M]asaya po ako sa @gmanetwork at mataas din respeto ko sa @absbn both network at ang @tv5 ay mga malaking pasasalamat kopo dahil binuksan nila ang kanilang mga pinto sa aking talento [Folded hands and red heart emojis] #GratefulHeart," lahad n'ya.

Kasunod nito, isang panibagong tirada ang iniwan ni Pokwang sa mga nag-iimbento umano ng kuwento laban sa kanya.

"[S]a mga mapag gawa ng kwento sa impierno bagsak nyo!" pagtatapos n'ya.

Nagayon, napapanood si Pokwang bilang isa sa regular hosts ng variety show na Tiktok.





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# 'I'm Single': Sarah Lahbati reacts to photo with mystery man

**A**ctress Sarah Lahbati shared her reaction to her viral photo with a mystery man in Hong Kong.

In an interview with the media earlier after the press conference of her upcoming TV5 series "Lumuhod Ka Sa Lupa," Sarah said that the mystery guy is only her friend.

"I went to Hong Kong to experience the art. It's always been a dream of mine to travel around and I was happy that I was able to go," Sarah said.

"And that photo circulating around is my friend. I visited Hong Kong and met up with different friends."

Sarah said that she understands the speculations and there's nothing wrong with that because she is single.

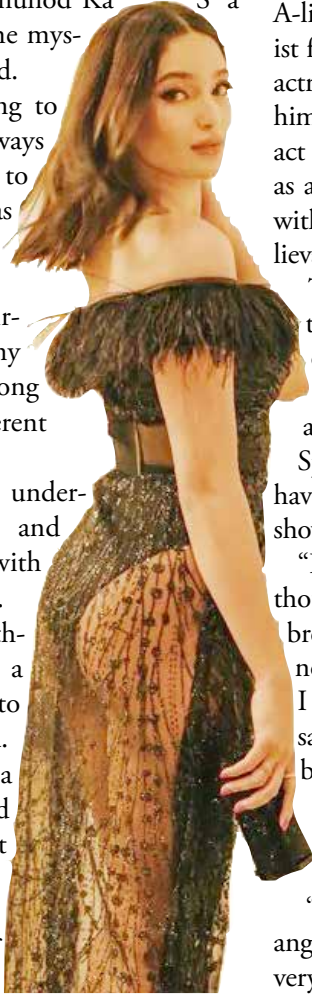
"Is it unfair? Is it bothering me now? It takes a lot more for something to bother me now," she said.

"But I think as, as a woman, we're all allowed to have guy friends but again, it's okay to speculate because again, I'm single and it is part of this whole new thing," she said.

Weeks after she confirmed her split with estranged husband Richard Gutierrez, Sarah was seen dining with a mystery man in Hong Kong.

"May nagpasa lang ng mga litrato sa'kin ng sightings ng isang kababayan na sobrang avid viewer... nakasabay daw niya sa restaurant sa Hong Kong si Sarah Lahbati," Ogie Diaz reported on his YouTube channel.

"Nasa kabilang table si Sarah at merong kasamang lalaki si Sarah," he added.



## Aga Muhlach finds life a great acting teacher

At this point in his career, Aga Muhlach feels lucky to still get to work with the new generation. Budding actors can get an acting tip or two from Aga, who got to work with A-list filmmakers such as National Artist for Film Lino Brocka. His veteran actress aunt, Amalia Fuentes, told him to 'let your audience cry or react for you.' The actor also finds life as a great acting teacher. It is filled with experiences that will help him create a believable character.

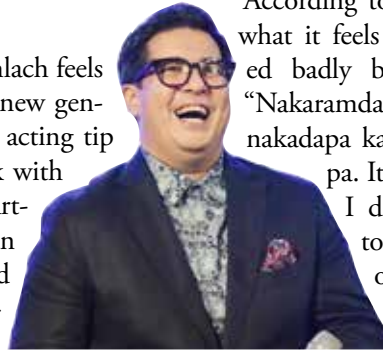
The actor also finds life as a great acting teacher. Life is filled with experiences, so to create a believable character, having insight into every human experience is going to be a significant component.

Speaking of life experiences, Aga admitted having gone through a difficult point in his showbiz career.

"I think people forgot about it already. They thought that after Bagets (in 1984), my biggest break, my career went on smoothly. It was not. After Bagets, Hotshots and Miguelito, I was down financially, walang pumapansin sa akin. It's just the name that lingered there, but there was no career," he shared.

I reminded him that his name is a brand and Aga never denied that he almost turned into a swellhead due to fame.

"Looking back at my past interviews, sabi ko ang presko ko palang magsalita diyan. But I was very careful the whole time, the whole '90s," he



naapakan. As far as I know, I never maltreated anyone," he added.

According to him, he knows what it feels like to be treated badly by other people. "Nakaramdam ako ng taong nakadapa ka na inapakan ka pa. It's true, that's why I do not want that to happen to anyone, especially to newcomers. You should always

try to find kindness in a person because there is. But bad is real. There are really bad people."

I asked Aga what would he choose — to be right or to be kind?

"I choose kindness because we don't have the right to judge (others) na parang malinis na malinis ka. As for me, I know where I am, I know where I stand and I know where my heart is. At the end of the day, if there's anyone who will ask for my help, or if I need to help, then I will."



## You let your audience cry or react for you

recalled.

"I've always been very, very careful. I've remained humble kasi noong nasaktan ako sa buhay, sinabi ko sa sarili ko na hindi ko gagawin 'yun sa kapwa artista ko kaya wala akong

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# Is Willie Revillame's 'Wowowin' coming to TV5?

Speculations about the return of Willie Revillame's game show "Wowowin" have once again made waves on social media after the TV host met up with the network's executives at the TV5 Media Center.

Reports of "Wowowin" making its comeback through TV5 piqued the attention of netizens after Revillame was seen posing with MediaQuest Holdings and CignalTV president Jane Basas, TV5 president Guido Zaballero, MediaQuest Holdings



CFO John Andal, and Atty. Enrique "Buko" Dela Cruz of Divina Law office, as seen on

of Mediaquest and Cignal TV; Guido Zaballero – President

"Wowowin," the game show of Willie Revillame (4th from left) is rumored to be making a comeback on TV5 after he was seen at the TV5's headquarters with the network's executives.

Wowowin's Facebook post on March 15.

"Breaking news! Mga Big Boss ng TV5 at si Kuya Wil Willie Revillame nagkita! Jane Basas – President

of TV5; John Andal – CFO of Mediaquest; and Attorney Buko of Divina Law," its caption read.

Dela Cruz also uploaded a photo of Revillame's meet-up on his Facebook page where he expressed his excitement for the game show's apparent return to the network.

"Wowowee' sa TV5???" his post read.

The parties have yet to make a formal confirmation or

announcement on the matter.

Talks of "Wowowin" returning on the airwaves have been swirling since July 2023, when Revillame teased the game show's comeback through the song "Babalik Ako." It was then speculated the show would be aired on PTV in the same month, and then the final quarter of last year.

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## Kim Chiu bares honest thoughts on love team culture in PH showbiz

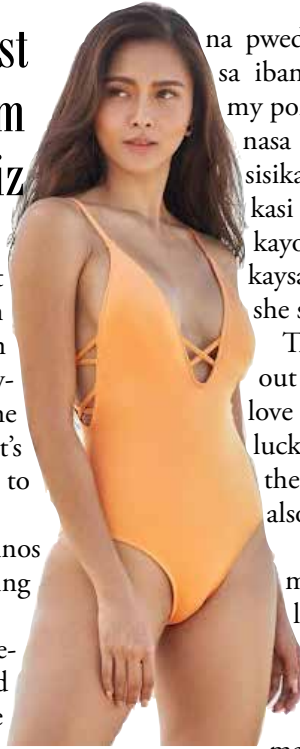
Kim Chiu admitted that being in a love team is an easier way to be famous in Philippine showbiz. However, she's relieved that the public is more aware of what's reel and real when it comes to an actor's personal life.

Chiu noted how Filipinos have a knack for anything about love.

"Nagsimula ako sa isang love-team as KimErald sa 'PBB' and formula talaga siya sa Philippine series and movies. Tayo kasing mga Pinoy, gustong mainlove," she said. "Ang opinion ko is nagbago talaga ang love team ngayon kasi dati, kayo't kayo lang. Kayo ang magka-love team, kayo na sa lahat. [Ngayon], pwede nang umikot."

Chiu then noted how actors involved in a love team have the liberty to choose projects either as a solo act or be paired with someone else, but noted that it's an easier way to be more popular.

"Maluwag na siya kasi natatanggap na natin



na pwede silang mag-pair sa ibang tao. But [from my point of view], kapag nasa love team ka, mas sisikat ka. Mas mabilis kasi magtutulungan kayo paano umangat kaysa as an individual," she said.

The actress pointed out that being in a love team is a matter of luck since being with the "right partner" is also key.

"Kapag nahanap mo na ang perfect love team, mabilis ang pag-angat mo kasi iba ang suporta. Masaya maging isang parte ng love team," she said.

The actress said that the rise of social media and other digital platforms might've played a role in the faster rise of love teams as well.

Chiu, however, said she's

relieved that many are learning to accept that not all love teams would end up together compared to before.

"Mas lumawak na ngayon ang [career reach] at mas understanding ang mga tao. Marunong na silang ihiwalay ang reel at real. Hindi naman ibig sabihin kapag love team, kayo na talaga for life. Magpakasal na kayo, 'yun na 'yun,'" she said.

Chiu was part of the KimErald and KimXi love teams with Gerald Anderson and Xian Lim, whom she eventually ended up dating. Both relationships, however, resulted in breakups.

The actress' team-up with Paulo Avelino has been making waves after work-

### People now accept that not all love teams would end up together like before.

ing together in the series "Linlang" and "What's Wrong With Secretary Kim."

## Maymay Entrata clarifies 'wrong path' not about 'afam' ex-boyfriend

Kapamilya actress Maymay Entrata clarified that it was not her ex-boyfriend Aaron Haskell she's pertaining to when she recently posted about a certain "wrong path."

"Do not take this against him. From the bottom of my heart maraming salamat po," she added.

Maymay posted on Instagram last

Easter Sunday that she got baptized again.



Ps. This is a raw video of my Baptism earlier 10am and then I noticed something, pagkaahon ko mula sa tubig, they were praying for me and while doing that, I noticed that the color of the video suddenly changed, i didn't bother about it but then I remember someone gave me another video earlier, and then i got goosebumps coz the light was from outside, above the sky. i just remember when Jesus was baptized by John.

## Isabelle Daza learns practical living from mom Gloria Diaz

"If you think I'm bossy, she's a dictator," quipped Miss Universe 1969 Gloria Diaz referring to her daughter Isabelle Daza, who is always on the "lookout" for what her mom will post on social media.

Isabelle has a valid reason for keeping an eye on her beauty queen-actress mother. "She just has no filter. I just try to keep her, you know, to not be too controversial. But then again, she says anything."

"You know, I was offered (to do) many talk shows before but she would say, 'Mom, please huwag na lang baka you might make a mistake,'" Gloria chimed in. "With my children, even on Instagram, I cannot say something, or if I said something, Belle would say, 'Delete that right now. Take it down.'"

Isabelle's younger sister Ava knows their mom's password on her social media account which explains why they can easily check her posts. "We both have control. The roles have reversed," Isabelle amusingly said.

I find it such a sweet gesture of children to let the usual advice-giving go from being a one-way street of parents advising on what to do, to the other way around — it's now the children who advise the parents. That, for me, is not a show of disrespect but an expression of love.

Isabelle appreciates how her mom taught her to value relationships, education, family "and I think, also, understanding that is not how much money you make but how much you're able to save."

Gloria revealed she learned the importance of saving money and setting goals from her mother. Glory, as I fondly call her, is one of the 12 children of lawyer Jaime Diaz and socialite Teresa Aspillera.

The first Filipina Miss Universe said she



Gloria with her two daughters Isabelle and Ava.

learned the value of being practical from her mom who taught her not to adore luxury items.

"She's not impressed with name brands. You buy what you can afford and you buy what you like. Instant gratification cannot relate to me."

However, she delights at the fact that her mom is not an impulse buyer. "That's how she is. Before she buys something, she really thinks about it because she knows how difficult it is to earn that money," Isabelle offered.

"Now naman, I've changed a little," Gloria confessed. "I always say, YOLO (You Only Live Once). I'm 72. I better buy it."

Isabelle sees her mom as her greatest influence on humility. She narrated the time when she got home feeling exhausted from taping that lasted in the wee hours of the morning.

"I was so tired and I said, 'I never wanna do this. It's so tiring. And then she said, 'Don't make quitting showbiz a problem. If you quit today, no one will remember you. I've seen the biggest stars come and go and you're replaceable.'"

"It just hit me, the humility and awareness. I was, like, 'That's so true,'" Isabelle added.

Speaking of Miss Universe, mother and daughter readily shared their thoughts re-

garding the new rules of Miss Universe Organization on its inclusivity clause. It now allows women, regardless of age, including mothers, wives and transgender women to compete in the said beauty pageant.

"I agree when my mom said before that if it's Miss Universe and they're just I guess including everybody then it should just be (known as) Universe," Isabelle said before pointing out what American transgender sports personality Caitlyn Jenner (formerly Bruce Jenner) had said before. "She said that people mistake fighting for equality and fighting for fairness to be the same thing."

"So, if you have transgenders in sports, it's not necessarily fair," she continued. "There are some sort of barriers but, of course, inclusivity and equality, I'm all for that."

Gloria, for her part, said that everyone should have their version of the Universe

pageant. "Basically, in ordinary words, (kapag) kailangan transvestite, kailangan may Miss Transvestite. Tomboy, Miss Tomboy Universe. Sa Miss Universe, dapat Miss Universe."

Gloria also reminisced about her beauty pageant days when only women between 18 and 23 years old were allowed to join. She said that during the competition, a 23-year-old contestant would be introduced as "the oldest candidate."

"I guess also times have changed and things have evolved, which is good," Gloria concluded.

## Sine Institute starts a Film Festival

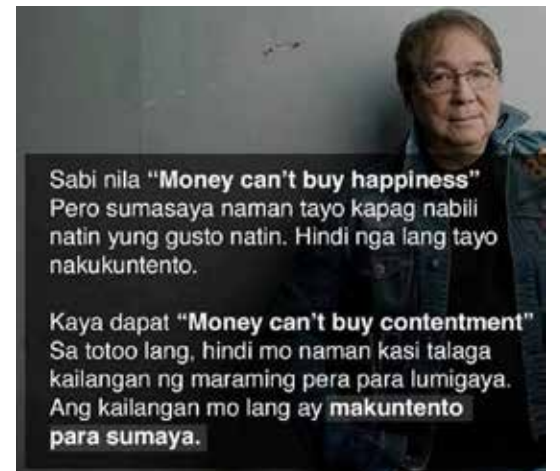
SINE from page 12

ing tours. The Institute's visionary and leadership team is composed of Agnes Miranda as chairman & co-founder, Michael Masangkay as president & co-founder, Rosary Escano as vice president as well as Rhia Alcantara, BK Jimenez, Ed Joaquin, Loretta Levinson, Danny Orbilio, Francis Rementilla, and Kim Villafuerte.

At a pre-event press con held at Hotel X Toronto on March 25, 2024, the Sine Institute management team led a tour of the festival venue's facilities and function rooms. Among those in atten-

dance were Marita Lee of Atin Ito, BK Jimenez of Balita, Joey Baking of LM Confidential, Joy D'Aoust of Pinoy News, Joe Damasco of Filipino Bulletin, Ryan Orlanda of Pinoy Vibes World and the FTV staff reporters.

Working hard to make its first film festival an enviable success, the team is focused towards planning and preparation for the April event. With desirable support, encouragement and appreciation, Sine Institute hopes to notch a mark, achieve its dream, and have a meaningful place in the sun. (by Tony A. San Juan, OCT).



Sabi nila "Money can't buy happiness" Pero sumasaya naman tayo kapag nabili natin yung gusto natin. Hindi nga lang tayo nakukuntento.

Kaya dapat "Money can't buy contentment" Sa totoo lang, hindi mo naman kasi talaga kailangan ng maraming pera para lumigaya. Ang kailangan mo lang ay makuntento para sumaya.

## Marcos, Duterte split concern China, US

MARCOS DUTERTE from P1

unseat the president. The next week, Duterte called for the independence of his home region of Mindanao through a signature-gathering campaign.

Marcos has responded with relative calm.

It was a spectacular break that surprised many in the Philippines. Marcos ran in 2022 on a joint ticket with Duterte's daughter, Sara Duterte-Carpio, and won in a landslide; Duterte-Carpio is now the vice president.

Marcos has also reoriented Manila away from Duterte's policy of seeking closer ties with Beijing, instead reaffirming the deep alliance with Washington that solidified during the rule of his father, the dictator Ferdinand Marcos Sr.

The split between Marcos and Duterte also reverberated in Washington and Beijing, both of which "are watching the developments closely," said Jeffrey Ordaniel, an assistant professor of international security studies at Tokyo International University.

The family feud is, on the surface, rooted in Marcos's attempts to change the Philippine Constitution, which was ratified in 1987 after his father was removed from power.

Marcos has said that he wants to ease constitutional restrictions on foreign investment.

But Duterte has accused the president of a gambit to consolidate power. Marcos and his allies want to switch the country from a presidential to a parliamentary system, where a prime minister is chosen by the congressional majority. This could scuttle plans for Duterte-Carpio to run for president in 2028, when Marcos will be term-limited from running.

Duterte-Carpio's popularity stems largely from that of her father, who broke a dynastic cycle by winning the presidency as an outsider in 2016. The elder Duterte, who is also term-limited and cannot run again in 2028, now seeks to leave behind his own familial legacy. While Duterte-Carpio appears loyal to her father, she has also forged her own political identity, purging loyalists to her father when she served as the mayor of Davao and allying closely with Imee Marcos, the current president's sister.

Duterte also fears an ongoing investigation by the International Crimi-



## Morissette Amon tells why it's important to speak up

Enough is enough for Asia's Phoenix Morissette Amon.

We had a moment with the ever-so-courteous singer at the recently concluded Billboard Philippines Women in Music event in Taguig, where she received the fan-voted recognition of People's Choice Award.

Morissette, affectionately called Mori, wore a shy smile before opening up about the recent issue where an events director lambasted her online for a company event performance. It later came to light that Mori had been, in fact, sick and bedridden the day before.

When we asked Mori how she is doing, she shared, "Okay naman. I just decided to speak my truth because mahirap na ngayon, so many people believe what they hear from just one side but siempre you cannot please everyone. We're just trying to stay positive and stay happy."



She said that her job was almost affected and it was imperative of her to speak her truth since the incident happened last February.

"It has been going on for a while now. Parang lumalaki na siya ng lumalaki at hindi ko na tanggap na iyon na rin yong perception ng mga tao sa akin. Of course, I am trying to protect my work also. Nagkakasakit din naman iyong mga tao," she explained.

After the post of the director went viral, Mori received so many negative comments on her pages that she had to mentally muster strength, even though her side of the story had not been heard yet.

She hoped that it might also serve as a lesson for everyone who has been attacked online.

She said, "What I also got from a friend is that when someone posts an issue publicly, I guess it's also fair to settle it publicly. Because they could also

settle it privately, but they didn't go that route and unfortunately, it also stained my image in the industry.

"It's important nowadays, especially that there's the Internet and it's easy to speak up, and that's a message not just for artistas but for everyone! Try to speak up on very important matters, especially (concerning) mga core values mo talaga."

## GLOBAL ERA

SHOWBIZ from page 1

They were at the helm of the highly-successful 18th Eastwood Walk of Fame induction ceremony.

The local showbiz has entered the global entertainment group chat. Gone are the days when we say hey she's half-Filipino or he's Filipino when we spot a kababayan in a certain international or Hollywood project.

Now, we see our kind everywhere!

Soberano, who is now house-hunting in Los Angeles as she will make it her permanent base after Hollywood debut.

Of course, the most undeniable star making the big move is Liza Soberano who is now house-hunting in Los Angeles as she will make it her permanent base after proving to be successful in entering Tinseltown.

As a Screen Actors Guild (SAG) member, she is now invited to the hottest events in town.

Filipino production outfit 28 Squared Studios premieres its cross-country romance drama film 'Under Parallel Skies' at the 17th Asian Film Awards, which stars our very own Janella Salvador and Thai superstar Win Metawin.

But what or who she is actually a fan of is South Korean Academy Award Best Director Bong Joon Ho. She shared with us her semi-awkward fangirling moment when she met him in Tokyo.

"My management and I were going back and forth. They were saying, go up to him, just talk to him. I said no, can you not? Can you guys just introduce me and make the first move?" she recalled.

"Then my manager is Korean and he did introduce me. I said, 'Hopefully, we can work



Alden Richards is upping the ante of events production via his company Myriad Entertainment. They were at the helm of the highly-successful 18th Eastwood Walk of Fame induction ceremony.

together in the future.' Nagparinig na ako! He said, 'I hope to see you again soon.'"

Her co-Mayra endorser and also Filipina Hollywood actress Dolly de Leon

is also doing a Hollywood series in Germany at the moment.

Alden Richards is upping the ante of events production via his company Myriad Entertainment. They were at the helm of the highly successful 18th Eastwood Walk of Fame induction ceremony.

The Walk of Fame event was extra organized and the venue was grandiose. The inductees had satellite coverage from the hotel.



With Liza Soberano, who is now house-hunting in Los Angeles as she will make it her permanent base after Hollywood debut.

The red carpet program was also well put together and the coordination was flawless. Alden said this is his way of giving back to the industry. "That is the only way to do it! As Filipinos, we have to go global, we have to think global!" he stressed.

Besides this, we have been seeing Lovi Poe starting to try her luck in Hollywood now and was lucky enough to be able to book the film "Bad Man." Ruby Ruiz in "Expats" was also a joy to watch in the Prime Video series as she represented our overseas workers well.

Another first that they also inked is a distribution deal with Warner Bros. Pictures. This makes it the first movie from the Philippines that will be distributed by the global film company in 2024. Through the partnership, the movie will be released in three countries, including the Philippines beginning April 17, Singapore starting May 1, and Thailand premiering May 9.

Producer Richard Juan told us, "The fact that it's the finale or the closing of the whole Asian Film Awards, that's the idea. We're doing cross-country, we're doing it for the world, we also want the creatives to be out there."

Go Philippine showbiz!

## Kiray Celis Says



“Pag hindi kaya ng lifestyle mo, ‘wag makipag sabayan sa ibang tao. Hindi ‘yung mangungutang kapa para lang pasok ka sa uso.”

Kiray Celis  
Actress

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## 'Naniligaw ba si Jericho Rosales kay Kathryn Bernardo?'

Sa kaniyang latest showbiz chika, nagbahagi si Ogie Diaz ng kaniyang nalalaman patungkol sa mga haka haka ng netizens kaugnay sa pagiging madalas na pagsasama nina Kathryn Bernardo at Jericho Rosales sa ilang mga events, last nga ang pagiging bahagi ni Echo sa birthday celebration ni Kathryn.

"Merong nagsabi sa akin, ewan ko kung paniniwalaan ko, na dumiskarte na o naniligaw na si Jericho kay Kathryn. Ako naman feeling ko lang baka may proyekto sila na gagawin... Yung iba sinasabi na para na lang tito ni Kathryn si Jericho.. Wala pong edad sa dalawang taong nagmamahalan... Ngayong 2024 marami tayong hindi akalain na mangyayari, abangan nyo yan! Maraming mga hindi natin aakalain pero nangyayari!"



The Blond Gambler A beautiful Swedish blonde walks into a Vegas casino and goes straight to the roulette table. She smiles at the two dealers and bets \$20,000 on one spin. "I hope you don't mind," she says in a dreamy voice, "but I feel much luckier naked..." and she peeled off all her clothes, staying completely naked. "Come on baby, mommy needs a new set of clothes!" The roulette wheel stops on 13. "I won I WON!!!" Shouts the blonde and jumps in the air in excitement. She collects the winnings and her clothes, hugs the dealers and disappears. The two dealers looked at each other in shock, until one of them pulled himself together and ask: "Did she bet on 13?" "I don't know," said the other dealer. "I thought you were looking..."

## 'KimPau' on workplace romance, being 'right' for each other

Is falling in love with a workmate a good idea?

With the Philippine adaptation of the 2018 South Korean hit television series titled "What's Wrong With Secretary Kim?", set to present the idea of an office romance as part of its theme, lead stars Paulo Avelino and Kim Chiu have revealed their thoughts on the subject.

In the series, viewers will see Kim as her eponymous character with Paulo portraying her narcissistic boss Brandon Manansala Castillo. Secretary Kim becomes the subject of Brandon's curiosity after filing her resignation which the latter refuses to accept. The two will later fall in love with each other.

Paulo knows there's a great chance for romance to bloom in a workplace yet he believes it is best to always stay professional.

"It is always (important) to be professional. I know (that) in some cases, you can't help but fall in love with someone in your workplace. But maybe, choose an appropriate setting," said Paulo at the me-



dia gathering held recently to drumbeat the Pinoy version of "What's Wrong With Secretary Kim?" "But for me, I always want to be professional," added the actor.

Kim couldn't agree more by saying that she would never let her love life distract her from performing well at work.

"It cannot be helped, especially when you know each other well because you spend more waking time with that person you work with. Pero mas importante siguro mas maayos (yung) trabaho kaysa personal na buhay mo. Your work might suffer when you fail to concentrate at work. Mas priority 'yung trabaho," explained Kim.

Paulo and Kim initially worked together in the hit Kapamilya series "Linlang" which received rave reviews for its intense scenes and interesting plot twists.

The actress shared that Paulo is set to display a character far different from his "Linlang" role.

"He is very professional and funny now. What's right about Paulo? (It's) his being himself and that's what makes him right for the role," stated Kim.

Paulo affirmed that it would be his first time essaying a funny character and starring in a local adaptation of a K-drama series.

"If it wasn't for Kim, I would probably have second thoughts," he revealed. "Siguro ano, itong 'Secretary Kim,' dahil sa pagmamahal ko bilang ka-trabaho ka, at sa trabahong binigay mo sa 'Linlang' so, pambawi sa 'yo. So, I'm here in 'Secretary Kim' to give back."

**"If it wasn't for Kim, I would probably have second thoughts."**

Kim. "I think everything is going well with her. It is just one aspect but everything is going well for her. I think she knows."

"She just has to be more positive. I don't see anything wrong with Kim. She is beautiful. She has a beautiful career as well," added she.

The actor also sees "nothing wrong" with

## Heaven Peralejo impressed with Alden Richards' directing, acting

Actress Heaven Peralejo praised fellow actor and the director of her upcoming movie, Alden Richards.

In an interview, Heaven gave an update on their film "Out of Order," the directorial debut of Alden.

"Oo tapos na 'yung shoot. Ang ganda ng film na 'yun. Hopefully this year ilalabas," Heaven said.

Heaven said she is impressed with Alden's skills as a talent, an actor and now a director.

"Alam niyo sobrang bait. Sobrang bait ni Alden, wala akong masabing iba. And then, ang galing niya



kasi he switches from being an actor to director. So, like kahit on take 5-4-3-2-1, siya ang nagsabi no'n tapos siya rin ang mag-act kasi kausap ko siya kunwari. So, ang galing, ang galing niyang artista and sweet," she said.

"May one time sabi ko, 'Direk, pa-prutas ka naman.' Joke-joke lang naman. Parang 20 minutes after, boom, may mga basket of fruits na sa set na binigay rin namin sa mga kasamahan namin," she added.

## 'I'm healed': Kathryn Bernardo talks forgiveness following Daniel Padilla split

After the much talked about breakup with Daniel Padilla last November, Kathryn Bernardo reveal that she's now healed.

In her interview with Mega Magazine, Kathryn said she's now in a better position in life.

"Now, where I am is exactly where I'm supposed to be. February for me is the new January. Parang 'yon 'yong tapos na. I



know that I'm okay. I can say I'm healed," she said.

"You have to experience all the process, all the pain, lahat. But I always make sure that when it comes to my work, nothing is affected," she added.

Kathryn also talked about forgiveness in her interview.

"Ang lalim kasi ng word na forgiveness. For me, you can forgive people who deserve

it. But when I forgive you, it doesn't mean that I have to keep you in my life. I forgive you for my peace of mind, for clarity, and for everything. But it doesn't mean na puwede kang bumalik. It depends," she said.

"I'll just keep my distance; you keep your distance. We're okay like that. I mean, kunwari, I got hurt, why would I allow you to come back? It depends. It's a case-to-case basis," she added.

Kathryn and Daniel announced their breakup last November 30.

## MISS WORLD ELUDE PHL

MISS WORLD from page 1

victories in Miss International. In the 23-year-old Miss Earth pageant based in Manila, four Filipino queens have been proclaimed.

The country has also produced dozens of runners-up and semifinalists in those three major international pageants, far more than in the Miss World pageant.

The Philippines first sent its representative to the Miss World pageant only in 1966, 15 years since the founding of the London-based tilt in 1951.

Cecilia Amabuyok, who has had a controversial participation in the Miss World pageant when many misunderstood her status for being a nun, record-

ed the country's first placement in 1968 when she managed a fourth runner-up finish.

After her, only three more Filipino woman posted podium finishes—first runner-up Evangeline Pascual in 1973, second runner-up Ruffa Gutierrez in 1993, and first runner-up Gwendoline Ruais in 2011.

In the Miss World pageant's 71 editions, the Philippines has only had 20 placements and one win. This is a relatively dismal record compared to the country's performances in the Miss



Megan Young and Gwendolyne Fourniol.

Universe, Miss International, and Miss Earth competitions.

Throughout the years, several national organizations have been responsible for sending the Philippines' delegates to the Miss World pageant.

The Miss World Philippines Organization (MWP) was established in 2011 to handle the national search, under the watch of Cory Quirino. Talent manager and entrepreneur Arnold L. Vegafria took on the reins in 2017, and has been the country's national director ever since.

No details about the 2024 national search have been announced as of this writing. But MWP posted on social media an advice saying, "stay tuned for updates on Miss World Philippines 2024!"

## Claudine Barretto remembers ex-boyfriend Rico Yan on 22nd death anniversary

Actress Claudine Barretto honored her late ex-boyfriend Rico Yan on his 22nd death anniversary.



In her Instagram account, Claudine posted an IG reel with the caption "Claudine's one and only forever."

"March 29 My heart stopped. always and forever," she captioned the post.

In the video, Claudine told Karen Davila that Rico was a big part of her life.

"He is a big part of my life," Claudine said.

"In your life sabi nila you just have one great love, right? So parang ako 'yung wansapanataym, wansapanataym," she added.

The IG reel also featured photos and videos of Claudine and Rico.

Rico passed away on March 29, 2002, succumbing to hemorrhagic pancreatitis during his vacation in Palawan.

## Teen singer to represent PH in China's 'Rising Voice'

Filipino singer Giuliana Chiong is set to represent the Philippines in the Chinese singing competition Rising Voice.

The show, particularly its audition process, focuses on discovering talented young singers.

It aims to nurture their skills and potential with the help of music tutors, while also encouraging a love and interest in music.

Additionally, it provides a platform for them to further explore the musical world.

Unlike typical singing competitions, Rising Voice prioritizes both vocal talent and artistic development. Launched in 2023, the show has already aired 26 episodes, attracting singers not just from the Philippines, but also from Malaysia and Singapore.

"It's a huge honor," 13-year-old Giuliana said. "There's nothing more rewarding than representing your country and showcasing your talent as a Filipino."

In the Voice Kids Philippines Season 5, she joined Team Martin Nievera ("Mar-Team"), and reached the semifinals in her very first singing competition.

"Singing is my passion, and I think I inherited that love of music from my mom. I'm actually writing my own songs now, but I'm not quite confident enough to share them publicly yet. Maybe someday soon."

Giuliana cites Billie Eilish and Zack Tabudlo as her musical inspirations.

Priscila Teo of the Singapore-based Academy of Rock, impressed by Giuliana's performance in The Voice, encouraged her to audition for Rising Voice.

Just this March, Giuliana joined Cornerstone Entertainment, a leading Filipino multimedia entertainment agency. Cornerstone is known for its talent management arm, which represents world-class singers like Erik Santos, Moira Dela Torre, Yeng Constantino, and more.



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## Kathryn, Alden magtatambal ulit, gagawan ng sequel ang 'Hello, Love Goodbye'?

**A**ng aga ng promo ng pelikulang pagsasamahan nina Alden Richards at Kathryn Bernardo!

Ang hindi kasi alam ng marami, ang pagdalo ni Alden sa nakaraang birthday party ni Kathryn kasama ang cast ng 2019 hit movie na "Hello, Love, Goodbye" ay nagsilbi ring testing ground kung positibo pa rin ang pagtanggap ng publiko sa tambalan ng dalawa.

Tagumpay naman ito kaya ang ending, napagdesisyon ng Star Cinema bosses na gawan ng sequel ang nasabing pelikula na kumita ng P880 million worldwide.

Ang upcoming movie nina Alden at Kathryn ay ang magiging entry ng Star Cinema para sa 50th Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF) ngayong taon na ang magdidirek ay si Cathy Garcia-Sampana with her same production staff.

Base rin sa bulong ng aming source, sa ibang bansa ang shoot ng sequel film at sa pagkakatanda namin ay Canada ang nabanggit na

next na pagtatrabahuan either ni Alden o Kathryn.



Baka Bet Mo: Kathryn, Alden kaikaibang kilig ang hatid sa fans nang magsama uli sa yacht party

At speaking of box-office, na-curious tuloy kami kung bakit hindi sequel o prequel o kaya naman another Dingdong Dantes at Marian Rivera movie ang gawin ng nasabing production company for MMFF 2024?

Alam naman natin na ang pelikulang "Rewind" noong MMFF 2023 ang may hawak ng "highest-grossing film of all time" na base sa Wikipedia ay kumita ng P902 million.

Hindi kaya dahil gusto na ng ABS-CBN at Star Cinema na solo na nilang i-produce ang entry nila sa MMFF this year?

Nasulat namin na silent producer ng GMA 7 ang "Rewind" at hindi lang daw ito inilalabas.

Anyway, humingi naman kami ng feedback sa ABS-CBN executive tungkol dito, pero hindi na kami binalikan.

Going back sa Alden and Kathryn movie, walang nabanggit ang aming source kung sososyo ang dalawang bida sa sequel ng pelikula nila.

Pero sa pagkakaalam namin ay sumososyo talaga si Alden sa movie projects niya sa pamamagitan ng MYRIAD Productions, tulad sa pelikula nila ni Julia Montes na "Five Break-Ups and A Romance" na co-produced ng Cornerstone Studios at GMA Pictures.

Hintayin nalang natin ang update, bilang nagsabi na rin kami sa aming source na bigyan kami ng update kung co-prod si Alden sa sequel movie nila ni Kathryn for MMFF 2024.

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### Did Ashley Diaz get outcast sa former school for kontrabida roles of dad Joko Diaz sa mga pelikula?

Pakiwari ni Ashley Diaz, kaya umano s'ya ina-outcast sa school noon ay dahil kilalang kontrabida sa mga teleserye't pelikula ang daddy n'yang si Joko Diaz, at dahil na rin daw sa matapang n'yang facial feature.

May healing na hatid daw para sa aktres na si Ashley Diaz ang pagkakasali n'ya sa Philippine adaptation ng Korean hit movie na Sunny.

likot kasi sa pitong magkakabarkadang babae ang kuwento ng pelikula kaya naman nakaramdam daw si Ashley na belong s'ya sa grupo habang ginagawa nila ito. Hindi raw kasi n'ya 'yon naranasan noon sa school.

Kuwento n'ya, pakiramdam n'ya ay outcast s'ya mula pa noong s'ya ay nasa grade school.

"I used to be bullied before... Sinasadya nilang i-left out ako, i-OP [out-of-place] ako. That happened since I was Grade 5 hanggang nag-pandemic na, until I transferred school," pagre-recall ni Ashley.

Kaya naman dahil sa pelikula ay na-fulfill umano ang sense of belongingness na hinahanap-hanap n'ya na hindi n'ya na-experience before habang nag-aaral.

"So, filming Sunny, I feel like it healed the inner child in me na I got to experience having a barkada and really experience ng ginagawa ng barkada," lahad ng daughter ni Joko Diaz.

At nang makausap namin s'ya more intimately, natanong namin kung ano ang nakikita n'yang dahilan kung bakit s'ya nile-left out ng kanyang mga dating kaklase.

"Kasi po the school I was in before, it is a very conservative Catholic school. I guess the idea of having my dad as an actor and siguro 'yong image n'ya rin as an actor kasi, 'di ba, if you think of my dad, 'Ay kontrabida. Matapang.' Ganyan," paliwang ni Ashley.

And because of that, baka kontrabida rin daw kasi ang tingin sa kanya ng schoolmates n'ya noon.

"Maybe they think of me that way. And also kasi, tanggap ko naman na meron akong face [angle] na medyo matapang 'yong feature. So, I guess I don't look as approachable as people would like me to appear," she shared.

Pero naka-move on na raw s'ya mula sa sitwasyong iyon dahil may friends na s'ya ngayon.

"But I got over it. Ngayon I have friends na. I think it matters talaga kung sino 'yong people around you," aniya.

Tingin pa nga raw n'ya, mas naging bukas sa kan-



ya ang mga taga-showbiz kung ikukumpara sa mga tao mula sa dati n'yang school.

"I find the people in showbiz more welcoming than the people in my past school before. And because of those people, no matter how hard it was for me before, it really made me grow," saad ni Ashley.

"Sobrang natuto akong makisama, makihalubilo sa mga tao around you compared sa akin before," dagdag pa n'ya.

Kaya naman ganu'n na lang kung ipagmalaki n'ya ang kanilang pelikula dahil na na-gain at naituro nito sa kanya.

"This film really made me realize a lot of things simula sa production mismo and after the production, when we were watching the trailer, and 'yong dina-dub na namin [ang ilang parts]," sabi ng aktres.

"I got to watch the snippet of the film, tapos especially nu'ng nag-record na kami ng OST, sabi ko, 'Ang ganda ng pelikulang ito.' Kasi ang tagal namin itong ginawa, almost a year," pagtatapos ni Ashley.



### 'It's Showtime' is GMA's new noontime show

ABS-CBN noontime show "It's Showtime" will transfer to the GMA-7 main channel. ABS-CBN and GMA are just finalizing details.

"It's Showtime" moved to GTV last July after it declined TV5's offer to move the show to a delayed telecast at 4:30 p.m. to give way to the new show "Eat Bulaga!"

Currently, GMA-7 airs noontime Filipino movies.

Television and Production Exponents (TAPE) Inc. officially announced recently that "Tahanang Pinakamasaya" will go off-air.

"It is with heavy heart that we inform our viewers that our noontime show 'Tahanang Pinakamasaya' on Kapuso network, GMA 7, will no longer be on air effective March 8, 2024," TAPE Inc. said in a statement.

"Despite our best efforts to save the show, both parties have reached a mutual agreement to finally call off the show."

### STEALING A SCENE

SOCIALIST from page 10

"She's Chloe's sister?"

The audience laughed at that scene too, thinking it was part of the show.

I think Catherine did it on purpose to steal a scene from her sister Chloe. 😊😊😊

Congratulations to JDL. 🐼

In celebration of the 75th year of Philippine and Canadian bilateral relations, Sine Institute launched the inaugural SINÉ FILM FEST to be held at Hotel X in Toronto from April 12 - 14! This will be a gathering of industry leaders, stakeholders, and enthusiasts to honor Filipinos in film.



Josie de Leon (SEATED FRONT) poses with her JDL Students after the Moana show.

Members of the press, including myself were treated to a delicious brunch at Hotel X. Afterwards, we were shown around the different areas of the hotel where the different functions will be held. Hotel X will be the official venue of the festival for 3 years.

GMA Pictures' award-winning film 'Firefly' will also be screened here.

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## Vilma Santos declines to head Film Academy of the Philippines

**V**ilma Santos revealed that she received an offer to head the Film Academy of the Philippines.

In an interview with the media during the opening of BarakoFest 2024 in Lipa City, Batangas, Vilma said she declined the offer but will support the movie industry.

“Modesty aside, they were asking me to lead the Film Academy of the Philippines, ‘yung FDCP hindi. Wala na rin si Pipo (Tirso Cruz III). Pero kasi ngayon sa showbiz, since ako ay isang pribado ng citizen, parang ang naging adbokasiya ko ngayon after ‘When I Met You in Tokyo,’ in fact even ‘When I Met You in Tokyo,’ ang adbokasiya ko ay maibalik lang ang mga tao sa sinehan,” she said.

“And then ngayon, siguro sa tinagal-tagal ko na rin sa



industriya, for 24 years naging nanay din ako ng Lipa, ng Batangas, parang ang adbokasiya ko ngayon payback time. Even in show business

### Kasi 35 years old na ako, gusto ko naman kahit paano ay makapag-enjoy sa sarili

nandito ko palagi. Kaya sabi ko hindi ko man tinanggap ang pagiging director-general ng Film Academy, nandito ‘ko para sumuporta sa kanila. Tawagan lang ako, nakasuporta ‘ko,” she added.

Vilma also said that there’s

a lot of movie offers for her, but she will just pick a challenging one for her as she wanted to enjoy her life.

“Ang dami kong script sa bahay ngayon. May mga offers pero hindi ko naman kayang gawin lahat. I’m taking my time. Gagawa na lang ako ng pelikula na gusto ko. A movie that will challenge me. Pero kung katulad lang ng dati, ‘wag na muna kasi 35 years old na ko. Gusto ko

rin mag-enjoy,” she quipped.

Vilma led the opening of BarakoFest 2024 in Lipa, Batangas.

From March 14 to 16, the three-day festival pays homage to the rich culture of the region, highlighting the

“Barako” characteristic of Batangueños.

“BarakoFest is not just a celebration of our Barako spirit but also a showcase of hard work, ingenuity, entrepreneurship, and passion of our people in Batangas. We are excited to share our culture, our traditions, and our indomitable Barako spirit with the world,” Vilma said.

BarakoFest 2024 promises an immersive experience into the world of music, art, food, adrenaline rush, and non-stop partying with a special focus on the Batangueño fellowship, known for its strong bond and valiant spirit. The festival invites a smorgasbord of enthusiasts, local communities, and tourists to partake in a variety of activities designed to entertain, educate, and invigorate the senses.

## Sharon Cuneta breaks silence over tiff with ex Gabby Concepcion after ‘Dear Heart’ concert

“Megastar” Sharon Cuneta aired her side over her controversial recent misunderstanding with her ex-husband Gabby Concepcion following their collaboration concert “Dear Heart” in Mall of Asia Arena last October to November.



At a round table interview last night following her performances

to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the “Sheroes” campaign of Filipino insurance company InLife (Insular Life) for which she is the endorser, the award-winning actress-singer disclosed that “Dear Heart” was supposed to be followed up with another concert, “P.S. I love you,” also taking its title from Sharon

and Gabby’s movie.

“The next show was supposed to be called ‘P.S. I love you.’ Sorry, let’s be honest,” Sharon began.

According to her, “P.S. I love you” was supposed to be a “better” concert than its predecessor.

“The repertoire was supposed to be much better than ‘Dear Heart.’ It was a beautiful show, kasado na! Everyone was ready,” she shared.

But the follow-up concert did not push through, she said, because negotiations failed between her and Gabby.

“Apparently, negotiations did not go through, okay, I will not say. But let’s just say hindi s’ya natuloy not because of us.”

The actress said she was actually “excited” to perform again with her ex.

“I was so excited and ready to go. So sayang, nanghihinayang ako, because I made so many of our fans happy, I wanted to make many more of them happy.”

Cuneta thinks the concert will no longer push through.

“I guess that’s it. Not my fault.”

## Actress-vlogger Sachzna Laparan bares sexual abuse at age five

**Warning: The following story contains conversations about sexual abuse, depression, trauma**

Actress-vlogger Sachzna Laparan recalled her traumatic experience of being molested by a distant relative when she was five years old.

In a recent guest appearance on Toni Talks, the “Katips” actress bravely detailed the sexual abuse she endured when she was living with her grandparents.

Laparan recalled that a relative would go into her room in the middle of the night to sexually assault her while her grandparents were sleeping.

“Maraming beses kasing

nagagawa [yung pagmumolestiya]. Nandoon ‘yung hawak, paghipo sa private parts ko, tapos ‘yung ari niya pina-pasok niya sa bibig ko,” she said.

(There were many times that [molestation] would

### She will try to hide inside a cabinet, but eventually she will be found and molested.

happen. There he was holding, touching my private parts, then he inserted his private part into my mouth.)

The YouTuber shared that every time the culprit goes into her room, she will try to hide inside a cabinet, but eventually she will be found

and molested.

Laparan further said her sexual abuser would threaten her and that he would kill her grandparents and mother if she spoke about the abuse.

“Tapos [sinasabi niya] na, ‘Kapag sinasabi mo ito papatayin ko ‘yung lolo at lola mo’ na may ipinapakita siyang kutsilyo. ‘Yung mama mo hindi mo na makikita,’ ganyan. Sila lang ‘yung meron ako noon kaya lalo akong natatakot,” she tearfully shared.

(Then [he says] that, ‘When you say this I will kill your grandfather and grandmother’ showing a knife. ‘You will never see your mother,’ like that. They were

the only ones I had before, so I was even more afraid.)

The content creator said that it took a while before she revealed the abuse to her family, and because of the trauma, she was diagnosed with borderline personality disorder and continues to seek treatment to this day.

Despite the devastating experience, Laparan shared that she lifted it up to God and that she has “forgiven” her abuser, even though she didn’t receive a n y apology



from him.

“Hindi pa nag-sorry ‘yung tao na yun sa akin, pero napatawad ko na siya. Panalo na ako doon. Napatawad ko na siya. Kasi feeling ko, kapag hindi ko siya napatawad, parang hindi ko rin napatawad ‘yung sarili ko,” she stated.

(That person has not apologized to me yet, but I have forgiven him. I won there. I have forgiven him. Because I feel that if I haven’t forgiven him, it’s like I haven’t forgiven myself.)

Aside from being a vlogger-actress, Laparan is also known as the ex-girlfriend of actor Jerome Ponce.

## THIS STINKS

**STINKS from page 1**

conscious consumers are on the hunt for greater variety and better bargains.

The Philippines and Malaysia are getting ready to take on Thailand, the dominant exporter at present, over the next five years as all attempt to take the top spot as sellers of the pungent, spiky fruits in China.

The global durian market is set to expand by 7.51 per cent from 2023 to 2030, USD Analytics forecast in October, and fellow forecaster Research and Markets predicted a 9.77 per cent compound annual growth rate by 2030 in a report last month.

China makes up 95 per cent of global durian consumption, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

The Chinese market has ample

space to grow and supply would help lower prices, which consumers would welcome, said Zhao Xijun, a finance professor at Renmin University in Beijing.

“As far as the present goes, the price is pretty expensive, so the market is not saturated,” Zhao said. If China received more imports, he said, “the price would definitely come down”.

China can handily accommodate more shipments from Vietnam, Malaysia and the Philippines, Zhao Xijun said. All three countries aim to siphon Thailand’s 68 per cent share of the Chinese market.

Durian has become a favourite tropical fruit for the middle class in China. However, domestic capacity is small and underdeveloped compared to Southeast



Durians sell for staggering price of US\$345 per kilogram at a market stall in Thailand

Asia. Supply, demand and transport costs determine the final price for fruits on store shelves.

Malaysia, which is presently only allowed to sell frozen durian to China, is angling for a deal this year to start shipping fresh fruits. Growers there pride themselves on the bittersweet flavour of the beloved Musang King variety.

Vietnam’s clearance in 2021 to sell fresh durian won it a 31.82 per cent share of the Chinese market last year. China import-

ed a total of 1.4 million tonnes in 2023.

In the Philippines, national and local government departments are working to expand production from about 1,200 hectares to 3,000 hectares on the southern island Mindanao, said Faye Oguio, a durian specialist in the Philippine city of Davao. Philippine durians made up less than 1 per cent of China’s total imports in 2023.

The national government is offering seedlings, equipment and technology to growers, Oguio said.

“The government is working across the value chain to take advantage of a very big market,” Oguio said. “Our constraint now is low productivity. We are very young when it comes to technology, and hectareage is small compared to Malaysia or Thailand.”

Cities in the north of China can absorb more durian imports,

Zhao Xijun said, and the nation as a whole has yet to branch out into durian-based snacks and drinks.

Differing consumer tastes open the market to new types of durian, he added, meaning plenty of room for imports from other parts of Southeast Asia.

The prevalence of e-commerce and home deliveries in China should increase durian consumption nationwide and lower prices, said Victor Gao, vice-president of the Centre for China and Globalisation in Beijing.

But additional imports from the Philippines may get mired in politics, Gao said. Tensions over disputed areas of the South China Sea have worsened in recent months, caused by perceived violations on both sides. “Because of the increased friction between the two countries, it’s difficult,” Gao said.

# Liza Soberano inspired by Dolly de Leon to pursue Hollywood dream



**L**iza Soberano had an acting “showdown” with Dolly de Leon in a project nobody probably imagined would happen when they first worked together years ago.

According to the “Lisa Frankenstein” star, she previously acted with the first Filipino Golden Globe and BAFTA nominee in the 2019 film “Alone/Together,” where the latter played Liza’s terror boss.

The two actresses finally got to work together again in a short film for the digital bank app and all-in-one money platform Maya.

In real life, one could say that they’re also on the same side in terms of “pushing boundaries” in their careers. Hollywood dreams Liza just spoke about last year are now coming to life with “Lisa Frankenstein” as opening salvo

Dolly said that Liza deserved “all the praise” she’s been getting for her Hollywood debut.

“I’m so proud of you for taking control of your career with such boldness and grace. We’re the same in so many ways, because you know, I look for partnerships that al-

low me to push myself and get crazy.”

Liza also shared her on-set experience with Dolly. “Behind the scenes, we were just talking about ‘Call of Duty’ all the time.

“But in terms of acting, being someone who is incredibly talented and yet hungry to learn and experience things, is what I picked up from her the most. She’s so fearless, and so unapologetic about dreaming big and reaching for the stars.”

The 26-year-old revealed how the 54-year-old veteran actress was instrumental in the pursuit of her Hollywood dream.

When she shifted her sights abroad, she said (in a previous interview) that her career move faced “some backlash” and made her pass up some great opportunities here. But she decided to stick to her plan, drawing inspiration from Dolly.

After decades of playing support, including no-name, no-credit or no-dialogue roles, Dolly had a windfall of lead



roles and international projects following her acclaimed performance in the 2022 Cannes Palme d’Or-winning Swedish film “Triangle of Sadness.”

“I would say she has one of the most inspiring stories of all time,” Liza said of Dolly’s acting journey.

“But being an actor, she didn’t listen to anyone who would say anything negative about her, she didn’t care about what people thought. That’s how she inspires me.”

“When I learned that she won her Best Supporting Actress award, I kind of honestly teared up. It just meant that it’s possible for everyone,” Liza further said of Dolly’s recognition from the Los Angeles Film Critics Association.

“When she won that award, that’s when I realized it’s even possible for me and for that moment that she had, I will be forever grateful because that’s kind of what opened up my eyes to even thinking that it’s a possibility.”

When asked for Dolly’s reaction to Liza’s statement, she shared, “Honestly, I got a bit emotional reading this. It’s always refreshing to know that people are inspired by what happened to me, especially for people like Liza since she’s already achieved so much. It’s humbling.

“It actually was a pleasant surprise to know her better during

**I would say she’s one of the most inspiring stories of all time**

our shoot because she was just so authentic. I discovered that we share the same ideologies, the same passion for our job, love of country and upholding basic rights of workers in the industry. We also share the same passion for gaming!” said Dolly.

“I’m glad we did Maya together because it gave me a chance to see another side of her — her human, non-celebrity side which is just beautiful. I’m so happy for her success and can’t wait to see more of her work on that side of the world.”

## Are Maris Racal and Anthony Jennings getting their own movie?



Maris Racal, director Jason Paul Laxamana and Anthony Jennings

Speculation is swirling that a new movie for Maris Racal and Anthony Jennings might be in the works after film director Jason Paul Laxamana shared a photo on Instagram of himself seemingly in a meeting with the two Kapamilya stars.

Maris and Anthony also posted photos from the “meeting” on their respective Instagram accounts. While details remain undisclosed, the presence of ABS-CBN executives hints at a possible film collaboration between the two.

Laxamana further added fuel to the flames by suggesting love team names for Maris and Anthony. He proposed “SnoRene,” the combination of their characters’ names from the

series, and “MaTon,” short for Maris and Anthony. Fans eagerly chimed in with their own suggestions like “MariThony” and “ThoMa,” further hyping up the excitement.

Maris and Anthony gained widespread attention for their undeniable chemistry in the primetime series “Can’t Buy Me Love,” which stars Donny Pangilinan and Belle Mariano.

## Gary Valenciano says he has no plans to retire from music

Gary Valenciano clarified that he won’t be retiring from music amid rumors that he will be conducting his last concert in April.

Given that his next concert is titled “Pure Energy, One Last Time,” it fueled speculations that he would be stepping back from performing. But the award-winning singer affirmed that there’s no truth to this.

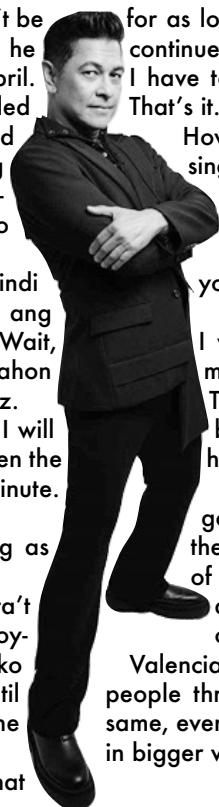
“I did not say I was going to retire. Hindi ako mag-eretire. I think kung ‘yan ang ginawa ko pati si Lord magsasabi, ‘Wait, anak, teka sandali. Hindi mo pa panahon para mag-erire,’” he said to Ogie Diaz.

(I did not say I was going to retire. I will not retire. I think if that’s what I did, even the Lord would say, “Wait, son, wait a minute. It’s not time for you to retire.”)

Valenciano stressed that for as long as he’s living, he intends to create music.

“Binanggit ko rin sa tao, basta’t tumitibok pa rin ang pusong ‘to. Tuloy-tuloy pa rin. Gagawin at gagawin ko ang lahat ng kailangan kong gawin until this heart no longer beats. That’s it,” he remarked.

(I also mention this to people, that



for as long as this heart keeps beating, I’ll continue creating music. I will do all that I have to until this heart no longer beats. That’s it.)

However, the “Sana Maulit Muli” singer underscored that performing in bigger venues and giving his all-out energy are about to end, as he stressed that he is not getting any younger.

“But at this age, I think it’s time that I will move on to continue with my music but maybe in smaller venues.. There’s a big difference kasi with a big venue and an intimate venue,” he said.

“For me, it’s the right time. Is it gonna be the end? No. But it will be the end of something. I will be the end of a chapter. It won’t be the end of a book. Then you’ll open up new chapters,” added the singer.

Valenciano remarked that his aim to inspire people through his music has remained the same, even if he intends to no longer perform in bigger venues.

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## Candid SPOOF



Catherine Tionson is ok after falling backwards while her sister Chloe, who plays the lead Moana tries to stifle her laughter. The audience thought it was part of the show.

# Kuya Wally & Elsie Yerro's 40th Anniversary



Kuya Wally & Elsie Yerro celebrated their 40th Year Anniversary at Asian Legend with an intimate dinner with family and friends.



## Why Jake Cuenca pursued anew 'TOTGA' Chie Filomeno

Jake Cuenca previously described Chie Filomeno in interviews as The One That Got Away (TOTGA), but now it seems she's the one that got back. While he said he's not putting any label yet on his relationship with the actress-dancer, the two have happily rekindled their aborted romance.

"She is my TOTGA. We dated already before — she was with 'It's Showtime' at that time — so this is the second time around. But she's one person that I've kept tabs on, I've always wished her well," the "What's Wrong With Secretary Kim?" actor recently said during an intimate roundtable chat.

Asked what went wrong when they first dated, Jake shared, "Back then it was more of timing and so many things were happening in my life. We've talked about it. We've threshed it out.

"But to be honest, there were so many things going on in my life at that time. I was 29. I was living out the last few months of my 20s. I was wilder. But I think at this point in my life, I'm more well-balanced... I think the timing this time is perfect.

"I think at that time, if something happened, I wouldn't be able to take care of her, the way that I can do now."

Nevertheless, when the opportunity to reconnect with the 27-year-old former GirlTrends member came up, obviously Jake seized it.

"Without saying too much, I think the universe took care of that for the both of us, parang it was the Christmas ball of Star

Magic (ABS-CBN's talent management). Everything happened from there. And also, timing. We're both single. The universe figured that out. Ang dali nga," he said.

Describing the qualities that made him admire Chie, he said, "She's a very amazing person. Sobrang bait. One thing that I really really really like and admire about her is her journey, sobrang pasensya niya... she definitely teaches me patience and for me, that's the hardest lesson to learn in this life."

"Aside from her being very beautiful, (it's) her personality, her family, and also her belief. Like I said, her journey is just as beautiful as she is, for me.

"Parang when you look at her, she's a really beautiful woman 'di ba? But when you get to talk to her, it's even better. So, for me, and actually she knows this, I do prefer 'pag 'di siya ayas because it best explains her inner beauty, and her inner beauty is even more beautiful than she is in person, for me."

Now that he's dating again, Jake believes he's better at handling a relationship now.

"Honestly, now, I think I'm a bit better at it now and only because it's a bit more private. I realized it's a lot easier if it's private. There's no pressure to post anything... Plus, it feels

more personal because the things I share with Chie, I don't share with the whole world anymore," he said.

Jake also shared that he's currently at his happiest in a long time.



"I'm not putting a label on ours yet but parang I would say this is the happiest I've been in a very long time. Like I said, before parang siguro sanay ako na akong yung inaalaagan in a lot of those relationships," he explained.

"But for the first time in my life, I don't really need someone to take care of me. Let me be the one to take care

of you. Does that make sense?

"I would say I'm doing my best to do it, but at the same time, I'm just doing my best to be a man because for me I don't want to shy away with my age and responsibilities. I take full accountability for my life and my mistakes.

"And at the same time, whatever me and Chie have (I feel that) this is the most rational and most logical that I've been. So even if there are problems or drama, I know I can overcome it. And I know maayos namin. Nandun na ako sa position na, OK na ako that I'm happy taking care of the people that I love."

Does Jake see himself in the "position" of marriage, someone playfully asked.

"I see myself (getting married) but I'm not rushing into it. I have a number (age) in my head, but I want to keep that private," he said.

**Pika's Pick:** Rica Peralejo shares she has overcome hating her "fat legs"; "Now all I pray for are strong legs."

Rica Peralejo: "I used to hate my "fat" legs and wished they were thin legs. Now all I pray for are strong legs. I don't care how they look for as long as they take me to places where I want to go. The shift in your forties can both be sobering and stress-free at the same time and I love it. I love how freeing it is to age and think of what others think less than what we actually want and need."



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### Jose and Wally on the serious business of making people laugh

Jose Manalo and Wally Bayola, hosts of TV5's "Wow Mali Doble Tama" – the latest edition of the longest-running reality-based comedy show on Philippine TV – have spilled some secrets.

They said that No. 1 is the artist and talent doing the prank or joke. Second is that the material should be good, smooth and effortless. Third one is the treatment of the prank. They said the "Wow Mali" production – from the head, direk Mike Tuviera, down to the writers – is meticulous and thorough about how a joke or trick is set up and done.

"Hindi kasi pwede tira lang ng tira," said Jose during an exclusive interview.

"Talagang binubusisi nila (writers) paano namin gagawin at the same time, yun nga, kailangan natin magandang materyales. Kahit hindi masyadong slapstick, hindi nananakit, pero swabe yung pagkagawa."

And no, they don't rehearse or practice the pranks before doing them for television.

"It's like a joke na you can't rehearse," said Wally. "It will take out the element of surprise if you test the prank."

So, what if the joke or prank doesn't hit the mark? They drop it right away if it doesn't land, they said. "Iwan kaagad namin yun," said Jose. "Pag nakikita namin hindi nag-ki-click, iwanan mo na!"

"Parang, 'Sunog! Sunog!' quipped Wally, adding that there are subjects who are also quick to suspect and spot hidden cameras.

Jose and Wally are happy to have original 'Wow Mali' host Joey de Leon's blessing to take over hosting the longest-running reality-based comedy TV show.

"So, we are careful about that. As long as they don't feel it's a prank, (we're good). It's hard to be honest," explained Jose.

Both Jose and Wally, who have been a comedic tandem for 24 years now, agreed that it's no joke to pull off pranks on live TV or even in taped shows nowadays.

Wally said, "Yes, especially now and we

really appreciate our production, especially our writers because nowadays, it's also very difficult to prank because many people are sensitive."

Jose quick to add, "Siguro hindi sensitive ta wag doon – marami nang ma-talino ngayon."



**Wally**

continued, "Aside from matalino (being sharp), as Jose mentioned, and sensitive, many others are also doing this on different platforms. There's a lot of competition. So, we have to do our best and do it nicely."

"At walang sabit (And no slip-ups)," Jose added.

They also noted that a lot of funny material gets discarded, so to speak, due to more "no-go zones" or off-limits subjects.

"Minsan nahihirapan din kami as a comedian or artist and even with other artists also. Anong gagawin namin? Ano bang pwedeng gawin kung lahat ibabawal? 'Di ba parang hayaan niyo kami kasi siguro sa tagal na rin, parang alam na rin naman namin yung ginagawa namin. At ayaw din naman naming mawalan ng hanapbuhay, nagpapasaya lang naman kami," admitted Jose.

There's also that matter of technology wherein their jokes are filmed on mobile video and shared as social media content.

"There are advantages and disadvantages of people using their cellphones during our shows. 'Pag maganda pagkagawa (joke) and effective, they film it and post it on social media. Then people react (during our other

shows), 'Ay napanood na namin yan sa TikTok.' Minsan yun ang disadvantage," said Wally.

He, nevertheless, stressed that jokes and laughter have to keep coming with mental health being such an important issue in the times we're in.

"Pero laban pa rin kami kasi sa dami ng nade-depress din ngayon, sa dami ng mga nalalungkot, marami ang gustong matawa and mag-enjoy," said Wally.

Meanwhile, Jose and Wally have just entered the third season of "Wow Mali Doble Tama." Born almost 30 years ago on ABC (now TV5), in 1996, the gag show is considered the precursor or original producer of prank content now all over YouTube and other online platforms.

Being chosen as the face of the iconic comedy show last year, the first thing they did was to seek the blessing of original "Wow Mali" host and their "Eat Bulaga" mentor Joey de Leon.

Sharing their reactions when they were first offered the hosting job, Wally told The STAR, "We felt overwhelmed yet nervous because of course, Boss Joey yan."

Jose said that the first question he asked production was if they had Joey's go-signal.

"Yan ang unang tanong namin, alam ba ni Boss Joey 'to? Nagpasintabi ba tayo? Sabi namin kailangan malaman muna ni Boss Joey kung okay sa kanya. Sa amin okay, syempre kay Boss Joey (we had to know) kung ipapamana ba samin ito."

They were told that Joey immediately gave his approval when he learned it was Jose and Wally taking over.

For Jose and Wally, the final segment of "Wow Mali Doble Tama" goes to show that they're not all about joke time.

"Hindi puro kalokohan yung ginagawa namin," Jose said. "May kabutihang pa rin kami dito sa show namin... Kailangan may puso rin."

### Fil-Canadian pop-punk artist Mico to drop latest song 'Deserve This'

The song will be released on April 5

Filipino Canadian artist Mico continues to steadily rake a devoted following for his music, spearheading the resurgence of pop-punk among today's generation.

Following his successful "Fantasy" North American tour last year and gearing up to support the acclaimed JUNO Award-winning group "Walk off the Earth," the pop-punk singer-songwriter is set to release his latest single next month.

Titled "Deserve This," the upcoming song will be available for streaming starting April 5, marking the conclusion of the "Tears" era and signaling the dawn of a new musical chapter. This current era notably features



the EP "The Tears We Fight," featuring fan favorites like "Another Soul," "Peaked" and "Maybe I'm The Problem Now," alongside three additional tracks "Better," "Treat Your Friends" and "Twenty-something" from the "Afterparty EP" released on Dec. 6.

Taking to Instagram to announce the release, the Toronto-based artist shared what appears to be the cover photo for the song, crediting collaborators 254body, 254Eljay, Liam Clarke and Nico Tripodi for their contributions to the writing and production process.

Excitement rippled through Mico's fanbase, known as Amicos, with comments flooding in expressing anticipation for the release. One user commented, "I love your music, please don't die," while another said, "Oh, we're back like never before."

While specific details about the song remain under wraps, Liam Clarke, one of the song's writers and producers, teased fans by jokingly threatening to leak it, prompting a playful response from Mico himself, "I'll beat you to it."

In addition to his upcoming single release, Mico is slated to open for "Walk off the Earth" at Southam Hall, Ottawa on May 4, and at Budweiser Stage, Toronto on June 1.

The Fil-Canadian performer currently holds almost 400K monthly listeners on Spotify. Meanwhile, "Deserve This" is now available for pre-saving.

## After 10 years in showbiz, Janella Salvador toughens up and asserts herself

Kapamilya actress-singer Janella Salvador will have a belated celebration of her 10th anniversary in show business via a concert happening on April 19 at the New Frontier Theater.

Entitled "Janella Reimagined: The 10th Anniversary Concert," the forthcoming music gig will feature the different stages of Janella's life and career.

"Many people know me more as an actress and I feel like there are so many sides to me that people haven't seen. And so this is why we named it 'Reimagined' 'cause we wanna challenge people's imaginations that I'm more than what you imagined. And I don't like to be put in a box."

Janella explained that the concert came late because she didn't have the time to plan one in the past because of her hectic schedule. "But this concert, we've been planning for two years. It was supposed to happen on my 10th anniversary but things happened. Nagkaroon ako ng mga schedule so we didn't push through."

The 25-year-old debuted in the ABS-CBN morning drama "Be Careful with My Heart," which aired in 2012. Describing her journey in the industry, Janella said it "hasn't been a smooth" one.

"I've been through a lot and I'm sure, you guys, were with me in everything that I went through. You've witnessed it.

"But I feel like all of my hard work, everything that I've gone through, made me into this person, the person I am today. I feel like I'm a lot stronger. I'm a lot more sure of what I want, what I don't want. (I'm) a lot sure of myself and I am discovering so many more things about myself. So I'm just grateful."

Admittedly, Janella is more popular as an actress having appeared in numerous onscreen projects. But not-so-known to many, she is very much into music. She released her self-titled debut album in 2015, which was certified platinum by the Philippine Association of the Record Industry. She performed Hong Kong Disneyland's theme song Happily Ever After on its 10th anniversary and was selected to cover Disney's "Moana," "How Far I'll Go," along with other Southeast Asian singers in 2016.

She mounted her first solo concert dubbed "Super Janella" in 2017.

"My music has evolved a lot," said Janella. "My first album, if you guys were able to listen to it, it's mostly girly pop like very teenager teeny bop stuff. I feel like along with myself, I've matured so much. My music should mature, too. So these are the songs that I've released (nowadays)."

"With my music, I've always been into jazz, R&B and songs that are chill talaga yung gusto ko. So I'm happy that finally, I'm able to release this kind of music."



## Kakai Bautista thankful for 'low-maintenance' friendship with Kathryn Bernardo

Kakai Bautista is one of the many celebrities who expressed their love for Kathryn Bernardo on her 28th birthday, with Bautista thanking her "Hello, Love, Goodbye" co-star for their longstanding "low-maintenance" friendship.

Bautista is among the stars invited to Bernardo's birthday party in El Nido, Palawan, which also included Jericho Rosales, Alden Richards, Alora Sasam, Maymay Entrata, and Dominic Roque.

The actress-comedienne took to her Instagram page on Sunday, March 31 to share how her friendship with Bernardo has been a "blessing from God," while sharing glimpses of the latter's party.

In one part of the video, the "A Very Good Girl" star was seen jumping in delight after blowing the candles on her cake.

"A low maintenance friendship is a blessing from God. Maraming salamat, Lord, at andito pa din kame. Parang walang panahon na lumipas kapag nagsasama-sama. Ganito pa din kami," she wrote, as she hoped their co-stars Joross Gamboa and a certain "Kuya Jeff" would've made it.

(A low-maintenance friendship is a blessing from God. Thank you, Lord, and we're still here. It's like no time has passed when we're together. We're still the same.)



Kakai Bautista (leftmost) with Kathryn Bernardo and Alden Richards during Bernardo's 28th birthday party.

Bautista also expressed hope God would bless Bernardo with guidance and love, saying it helps her to "go and grow."

"Ang prayer namin sa aming Katreng, bai, my Ga (friend), at Chandria (Bernardo's second name) naway lagi mo siyang gabayan at yakapin dahil kahit maraming nagmamahal sa kanya, mas mananaig ang pag-ibig Mo. It will keep her going and growing," she said.

"We love you, Katreng, to the moon and back. Your existence is a gift," she further said.

(Our prayer for our Katreng, Bai, my Ga, and Chandria is for God to bless and embrace her because while a lot of people love her, God's love will still prevail. It will keep her going and growing. We love you, Katreng, to the moon and back. Your existence is a gift.)

Bautista's post caught the attention of Bernardo's mother Min in the comments, who referred to the former as one of the actress' "forever friends."

Bernardo recently made headlines after showing off her slim physique in a summer-themed cover shoot for a local fashion magazine. In the cover story, she opened up about forgiveness and healing, months after confirming her split with longtime beau Daniel Padilla.

## Marcos, Duterte split concern China, US

MARCOS DUTERTE from page 26

nal Court (ICC) into his deadly "war on drugs," which rights groups say has killed up to 30,000 people since 2016. In recent months, Marcos has wavered on whether Manila will cooperate with investigators or protect Duterte, should the ICC issue an arrest warrant.

"It is [in] Duterte's personal interest to evade any form of accountability that is driving the feud," Ordaniel said. "The policy disagreements he has with the current government are secondary consider-

ations."

The Philippines is not a member of the ICC since Duterte withdrew the country in 2019. But while Marcos recently said his government would not "lift a finger" to help the ICC, he also said its investigators are welcome to enter the Philippines "as ordinary people," and a former senator claimed that the ICC has already visited and conducted an "initial investigation."

The feud has kept the looming ICC probe in the public consciousness, and Marcos and his allies "have not done

much to de-emphasize" it, said Herman Kraft, an assistant professor of political science at the University of the Philippines Diliman.

"It's a very passive-aggressive approach to dealing with Duterte," Kraft added.

This has been largely effective in keeping the former leader on the back foot. His allies have seized on simmering rumors—spread mostly by retired military generals as well as Duterte himself—of dissent among Duterte loyalists within the military.

But it's unclear how much support Duterte really has within the military, which remained loyal to the United States even during his presidency and frequently expressed ire at his Beijing-friendly policies. Marcos's pivot toward Washington "is clearly a positive point with the military," Kraft said, while Duterte's "more outlandish proclamations"—floating coup attempts and the secession of Mindanao—"have struck a wrong chord."

As president, Duterte pulled the Philippines out of a long-standing defense pact with the United States in 2020, only to reverse his decision a year later. He also pursued trade and investment deals with China, but these policies landed with a thud among a public angry with Beijing's repeated incursions into Philippine waters in the disputed South China Sea.

The Duterte administration was "really giving China the benefit of the doubt" on the South China Sea dispute, giving officials "opportunities to compromise and adhere to international law without losing face," Ordaniel said, adding, "Unfortunately, China never really showed any willingness to compromise." Many investment pledges, such as a China-funded railway in Mindanao, also stalled.

Washington, meanwhile, has expanded joint training exercises and weapons transfers to the Philippine military, and it has repeatedly stated its support for Philippine claims in maritime disputes with China.

"Ultimately, I think the Americans are presenting a more attractive proposition," Ordaniel said.

China could still use a Duterte-Marcos feud for its own purposes. In the northern Philippine province of Cagayan—where the United States has an agreement to use two military bases, both in close proximity to the Taiwan Strait—it has sent delegations to meet the governor, a Duterte ally, and has hosted him in China twice in the past nine months.

"The U.S. has more of an advantage with government institutions that deal with security and foreign policy," Kraft said. "But China's economic reach gives it influence over institutions in economic areas and, more strategically, in local government units."

Domestically, the feud has eroded the already limited presence of the political opposition, such as the Liberal Party of former Vice President Leni Robredo and former Sen. Leila de Lima, a Duterte critic who was jailed for six years on drug charges widely seen as frivolous. Marcos has abandoned Duterte's relentless attacks on opposition figures such as de Lima and Rappler CEO Maria Ressa, but he hasn't made strident efforts to undo the popular aspects of Duterte's legacy—for instance, by prosecuting perpetrators of Duterte's drug war.

Instead, the country has calcified into two camps—Duterte and Marcos—leaving progressive and liberal Filipinos struggling to know where to turn. Some have become disengaged. Others, however, would like to see a final blow dealt to the Dutertes, eliminating their violent illiberalism and their friendliness to China from the political stage.

"It's a no-brainer" to support Marcos, said Tony La Viña, the associate director of climate policy and international relations for Manila Observatory. A Duterte takeover would alienate the country and its military from the United States, he said, while also empowering the Dutertes to enact revenge.

"We can't afford to let Duterte win, because he doesn't care about human rights," he said. "If he wins against Marcos, he will then go after the opposition."

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## Chito Miranda praises Parokya Ni Edgar musical team

Singer and Parokya ni Edgar frontman Chito Miranda was all praises for the cast and crew of “Buruguduystunstugudunstuy,” the upcoming musical composed of songs by the iconic Filipino rock band.



“Buruguduystunstugudunstuy: Ang Parokya Ni Edgar Musical” is Full House Theater Company’s follow-up to “Ang Huling El Bimbo,” which was inspired by the songs of another iconic band, the Eraserheads.

Miranda was present at the press conference last March 15 held outside the Newport Performing Arts Theater — where the musical will run beginning April 26 — to witness the production’s cast and crew give a preview of what to expect from the show.

After the preview, Miranda expressed his commendation and approval for “Buruguduystunstugudunstuy.”

The artist admitted he and his bandmates were initially hesitant for anyone to adapt material about their songs because they did not trust themselves.

Despite his reluctance, Miranda became a fan of “Ang Huling El Bimbo” and built his trust in Full House Theater Company. His excitement for the pro-

duction grew.

“Nahiya na nga ako kasi presscon pa lang, naiiyak na ako,” Miranda said, which elicited laughter from the crowd and the “Buruguduystunstugudunstuy” team. “Minsan ‘di ko naisip na ganyan pala kaganda ‘yung songs namin when treated professionally.”

Miranda continued by saying the band never viewed their songs as anything outstanding or professional, but the musical’s treatment gave him goosebumps.

He also extended credit for Parokya ni Edgar’s songs not just to himself but also to his bandmates, Gab Chee Kee, Darius Semaña, Buwi Meneses, Dindin Moreno and Vinci Montaner.

The Parokya frontman said he found it normal for the band to be continuously compared to the Eraserheads, as it was the latter that inspired the creation of their band.

“I’m sure this is also parang an offspring of ‘Ang Huling El Bimbo,’ pero just like Parokya music... it’s like EHeads music on acid — an extreme version,” Miranda described “Buruguduystunstugudunstuy.”

The musician assured there was nothing to worry about the musical’s new arrangements for Parokya ni Edgar’s songs because he and his bandmates were so easily pleased and would be proud of the production.

Leading the cast of “Buruguduystunstugudunstuy: Ang Parokya Ni Edgar Musical” are Felicity Kyle Napuli, Tex de Leon, Marynor Madamesila and Natasha Cabrera with Noel Comia, Pepe Herrera, Jasper Jimenez and Nicco Manalo in supporting roles.

## Jennylyn Mercado thankful she’s safe after big-bike accident

Jennylyn Mercado figured in a minor accident after she fell while riding a big bike, but she assured fans that she had



sustained no severe injuries as she was wearing protective gear at the time.

The actress detailed the incident, which was apparently caused by slippery road, during her interview on “24 Oras” on Monday, March 25.

“Yung ulo ko tumama sa floor pero safe pa rin ako dahil naka-helmet ako, naka-gears ako—complete ‘yung gear ko at protected ‘yung buong katawan ko,” she said.

(My head hit the floor but I was safe because I was wearing a helmet and gears; I had complete gears and my whole body was protected.)

“I’m very thankful na walang major na nangyari sa akin,” she told the news program. (I’m very thankful that nothing serious happened to me.)

Dennis Trillo, Mercado’s husband, who was with her when the accident happened, admitted that he was startled after witnessing such.

“Kitang-kita ko e. Nasa harapan ko kasi siya. Tinitingnan ko siya habang nangyari ‘yon,” he recalled during the interview. “Nakakabigla dahil first time namin maaksidente sa kalsada talaga.”

(I saw it [because] she was in front of

me. I was looking at her when it happened. I was startled because it was the first time we got in an accident on the road.)

Meanwhile, Mercado and Trillo are set to work together in the upcoming romance-comedy film “Everything about My Wife,” where they will star alongside Sam Milby.

## Barbie Forteza, Kim Chiu agree with each other that they don’t refuse a project, role

For Barbie Forteza and Kim Chiu, there is no room for being nonchalant, as they both have overflowing OA energies!

In Kim Chiu’s latest vlog featuring the Kapuso actress, the “It’s Showtime” mainstay asked Barbie if she has ever refused a project or a role.

To this, the 26-year-old actress responded, “Tayo mag re-refuse?” Then they said in unison, “No!”

“Kaya lagi niyo po kami nakikita! We are the yes girls,” Kim said.

Barbie also added that she isn’t a morning person but can do early work call time.

“Siguro ‘pag di lang appropriate ‘yung material, ‘yung parang, ‘hindi ko pa to gagawin at this moment,’” she said.

Last month, “It’s Showtime” signed a momentous contract with GMA Network. The noontime show is set to air on the main Kapuso channel starting on April 6.

Meanwhile, Barbie is set to star in “Pulang Araw” alongside David Licauco, Alden Richards, and Sanya Lopez.



# Some Filipinos will invoke ‘Filipino pride’ even when it is misplaced

Agree to disagree, but Filipinos are easily one of the most toxic groups of people to ever be on the internet, and that’s saying a lot.

Filipinos have such an immense sense of pride in themselves that oftentimes, they don’t even see it becoming borderline conceited. Social media has fueled that even more in the past few years—especially when it comes to seeing our culture in headlines and such.

Take seeing actors or personalities abroad apparently having some part Filipino in them, for example. Filipinos online immediately take that fact, make it their personality for a few days, and will not hesitate to shove that fact down

your throat.

And with that immense “Filipino pride” or hubris, comes the highly toxic behavior that gets people on the internet to cringe at us. What that is, you may ask. Well, it’s quite literally how Filipinos will utilize mental gymnastics to get their points across and rationalize their cringe-y and downright wrong Internet behavior.

And honestly? We deserve to be ridiculed for it.

For the past few weeks, Filipinos have been given quite the spotlight in some news headlines. And no, it wasn’t all entirely good.

First up, we had that Benny Blanco and Jollibee fiasco



that got Filipinos around the world angry. Well, sure, we’re going to have to say that maybe Benny Blanco did deserve all those reactions from Filipinos after disrespecting what is

considered to be one of the foundations of Filipino culture.

But did Filipinos have to end up cyberbullying him for it? \*shrugs\*

Next, we have Filipino internet finding out about the Captain’s Peak Garden and Resort smacked right in the center of Chocolate Hills in Bohol, which by the way, is a protected landscape and UNESCO geopark. We wouldn’t have found out about it (nor it wouldn’t have made noise) if it weren’t for the vlogger that posted a promotional video for it.

Many were upset at the fact that there was a resort in the middle of a beloved tourist spot in the country and a (supposedly) protected geological monument, and were rightfully so. However, there were also others that were defending the business in question.

Their reasoning? Since Bohol attracts tourists, the Chocolate Hills are a profitable source of income as well. Also, because the resort was technically far from the Hills themselves. Some were even saying that the reactions that most people had were purely based on their emotions.

Oh, and others even started bringing up the ethnicity conversation, which by the way, is far from relevant in this.

Last but not least, this one is still a hot topic for many netizens.

The “feud” between Australian singer-songwriter Lenka and our homegrown “Queen of Bangsamoro Pop” Shaira.

We all know how that’s been going on, right? But, in case you don’t:

Shaira Moro, most popularly known nowadays as the “Queen of Bangsamoro Pop”, had released a song titled “Selos” on streaming platforms. On March 19, 2024, the viral song was taken down everywhere after a copyright issue was raised by Australian singer Lenka.

The melody of Shaira Moro’s “Selos” was pointed out to be the same as Lenka’s 2008 song, “Trouble is a Friend” by a netizen on Instagram.

After taking down the track, AHS Productions released a statement saying that they had removed the song from streaming platforms as they were in the process of securing a cover license for Moro’s song.

The move was taken in negatively by some Filipinos, who immediately went on Lenka’s social media and barraged her with hateful comments. Some even alleged that the Australian singer herself was “jealous” of the clout Shaira was getting over “her” song.

Unsurprisingly, others also wrongfully called the action ‘Islamophobia,’ which to be honest, was quite a farfetched take.

A few days after “Selos” was taken down, another song from Shaira Moro was removed from all streaming platforms. The track “Forever Single (Walang Jowa)” was recently seen to have charted in the Top 10 of Spotify PH’s viral songs but was found to have been removed on March 24, 2024.

The track was pointed out by some social media users to be similar to Indonesian band Papinka’s song “Masih Mencintainya.”

From these 3 instances alone, we can see how Filipinos will do their best to bend logic and rationality just to “protect” their Filipino identity even if they’re the ones in the wrong.

Which, honestly, isn’t as surprising, seeing the state of our political and societal climate at the moment. We get that we’re all for supporting our countrymen and nation, but do we have the self-awareness to see when we can overstep that and see how conceited we can be?

Tbh, no. We don’t. That’s just how we are, apparently. Once we’re backed up in a corner, we’ll just do whatever we can to wear the other ones down just to make ourselves feel right.

Talk about the amount of mental gymnastics chronically online Filipinos do, right?



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