

# NO TO WATER CANNON

PCG's no water cannon rule vs China is a 'wise policy' - security experts

MANILA, Philippines — The position of Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) of not using water cannons in retaliation to China is a prudent move, three maritime security experts said.  
Commodore Jay Tarriela,

PCG spokesperson for the West Philippine Sea said the humanitarian armed service wants to maintain professionalism in dealing with China Coast Guard despite China's latest use of a water cannon, which damaged a Filipino

"white ship" in Scarborough (Panatag) Shoal.

'Wise policy'  
"This seems like wise policy to me," said Ray Powell, director of SeaLight. Powell, who heads the pro-

gram of Stanford University's Gordian Knot Center for National Security Innovation that tracks Chinese maritime activities in the West Philippine Sea, also stressed that a "direct retaliation" with CCG's actions "would pro-

vide Beijing a pretext to escalate."

"The Philippines doesn't have the maritime capacity to engage in a direct contest of escalation with China," Powell also said.

**WATER CANNON P16**



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**"Don't worry about the world coming to an end today. It is already tomorrow in Australia."**  
— Charles M. Schulz

A couple has just finished dinner and are half way through a second bottle of wine. The wife lifts her glass...

Wife - "Without you I would have never made it through all these 25 years of marriage."

Husband - "Darling, is that you or the wine talking?"

Wife - "That's me talking to the wine."

**Manila is Unwalkable**  
ONLINE PAGE 27

## WE'LL KEEP INVESTING

West Philippine Sea not key concern for investors in US

CALIFORNIA — The West Philippine Sea issue is not a top-of-mind concern for investors eyeing expansion in the Philippines, according to a former US trade negotiator

and Filipino business executives here.

While the geopolitical tensions with China are among the factors being considered by investors for  
**WPS page 21**

## Like Living Inside An Oven

Sweltering heat ravages crops and takes lives in south-east Asia

Extreme heat has gripped much of south and south-east Asia over recent weeks, killing dozens of people, forcing millions of students to miss

school and destroying crops. Both the Philippines and Bangladesh shut schools due to the unbearable heat last month, while governments

across the region have issued health warnings. In Thailand, at least 30 people have died from heatstroke since the start  
**TEMPERATURE page 15**

## LOW WAGES

Philippine wages won't support family

MANILA, Phl — The daily average minimum wage gap across the country averaged P762 as of March 2024, with

the think tank Ibon as of March 2024, with the daily average minimum wage only at P440, the think tank Ibon  
**WAGES page 17**

# China's Influence is Everywhere ONLINE P25

# How Heart Evangelista's 'kaartehan' turned her into a global fashion icon

**“What will you do with all your money if you're not happy?”**

This was actress and fashion icon Heart Evangelista's reply to a question on what else she's still praying for, career-wise, these days.

“Honestly, I have nothing more to ask for in my career. I just wish for good health for myself and my loved ones, especially my dad. Everything else is a bonus,” the 39-year-old celebrity said at a recent launch of Avon's latest intimate apparels, #360ComfortBras.

**Women empowerment** Heart said. “Some people think, because you present yourself in a certain way on Instagram, you're already perfect. So when I was told that it's all about women empowerment, I felt that it was also something for myself, to encourage me to empower myself even more,” she explained.

The latest Avon campaign carries the theme, “Shape the World, Embrace Your Power,” and Heart has this to say: “It



means that, in your own little way, you can help the community around you. I don't have a perfect life. I am honest as much as I can. With that, I hope to inspire them to just keep on going with their lives,” said the wife of Sen. Francis Escudero.

In another interview, Heart said she was pleasantly surprised that a lot of people tolerate her “kaartehan” (fussiness). This time, Heart explained what she meant: “May narating ang kaartehan ko: from my

very first role as Missy in [the TV series] ‘G-Mik’ to Portia in [the movie] ‘Tanging Ina.’ Puro kakikayan ang alam ko, but because I try to be as authentic as possible, it is taking me to where I am, which is Fashion Week. I'm just very grateful for that. I don't consider what I do now as a job—it's what I love to do. The lesson here is that being authentic will take you somewhere. It's not easy, but I promise you, it will.”

**Learning from experience**

Heart said she is determined to “empower women with this body.” She explained: “I am

considered ‘very petite’ in the world of fashion. But we're really made from different cuts, so, to me, it's all about embracing your imperfections and being comfortable with them.”

Her advice to women, “This is also for those who do not feel at ease with who they are: It's alright. It's normal. But with a little more effort—koting pitik, konting suntok, konting push—you will be able to build your self-worth. You only need to love yourself and the rest will follow. And even if other people don't love you, it doesn't matter. If those around you love you, that's all you need.”

## Why Ara Mina postponed her anniversary concert

If there were a “best supporting wife” award, Ara Mina would win, hands down. She postponed her anniversary concert to give way to her hubby Dave Almarinez's new biz venture, PeekUp (PU).



It's a 100-percent Pinoy car ride-hailing app that redefines mobility and offers five-star service to clients. No booking cancellation and high-peak hour rates. The grand launch of PU in Megamall featured a miniconcert led by Ara, Cristine Reyes, Bugoy Drilon and PU's endorser, Paulo Avelino

“Dave and I are workaholics,” Ara said. “But we make sure that work does not get in the way of our marriage.”

What about working on a baby? “We have so much on our plate right now,” she pointed out. “Hopefully, after my concert on July 11, we will prioritize that.”

The birthday girl can hardly contain her excitement. “Since it will be a celebration of my 30th year in the biz, there will be special guests, such as Martin Nievera, Gary Valenciano, Bong Revilla and many more,” she beamed.

As Ara turns a year fiercer, she looks back and looks ahead with a smile in her heart.

## Joey de Leon earns ire after ‘weight-gain’ remark about Miles Ocampo

Joey de Leon caught the netizens' attention after a clip of him seemingly “body-shaming” his co-host Miles Ocampo circulated online.

In the video making the rounds online, after the “Eat Bulaga” hosts sang happy birthday to Ocampo, former senator Tito Sotto used their segment “Peraphy, pataas o pababa” (higher or lower) to refer to the actress' age, and de Leon then jokingly asserted “pataba” (fatter).

Netizens took to social media to express their reactions and defend Ocampo from the subtle remark. “Tumandang paurong ‘yung utak ni Joey. ‘Di ba niya alam dahil may sakit si Miles at ‘yung maintenance niya ‘yung nagpapataba sa kanya,” one netizen said. “Did he say ‘Pataba’????



which she cited as the reason for her weight gain. “Since late last year, I haven't felt like my normal self. Waking up in the middle of the night because I can't breathe, I get tired so easily, so frustrated with my weight gain, para akong palaging hapong-hapo and sinasakal,” she said.

“PS: With or without any health conditions, no to body shaming. Be kind. Always. Please,” the actress concluded.

Ocampo celebrated her 27th birthday with a surprise from her “Eat Bulaga” family. The actress-host was in tears as she thanked the Dabarkads for the surprise.

Meanwhile, over the years, de Leon came under fire for his jokes deemed offensive regarding “mental health, suicide and rape.”

Wf. Siya nga patanda ng patanda. Pati utak. Hay. Kala mo naman nuknukan siya ng gwapo!! Siya nga dapat pa-retire na,” remarked another netizen.

One netizen defended de Leon: “Ok lang yan close naman sila ni Miles at ganyan talaga humirit mga matatanda.”

In April 2023, Ocampo opened up about her battle with papillary thyroid cancer,

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

**F**ormer “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 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 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.

# Daniel Padilla is booked and busy

**N**ever mind the online noise. Fresh from his trending birthday party last weekend, we got a hold of Daniel Padilla at the same venue where he had his big birthday bash in Tanauan, Batangas.



his tumultuous and very public past months post-KathNiel era.

His friend and fellow actor Yub Azarcon, who also helps out in the park's operations, was telling us that Daniel was okay with it and cool about his state now. When Daniel came around lunch time, he was swarmed with theme park guests and fans, whom he accommodated and took the time to take pictures with.

He was even thoughtful enough to look after the elderly who were making their way towards him. He was constantly asking them if they were alright and reminding them to be careful.

Daniel said that he is aware of what has been said about him online. But like any strong person, since much of what's being said is taken out of proportion, just like his last viral birthday jam of the song Hinahanap-Hanap Kita, he had this to say: “Ang OA (over acting)! Masyado OA, yung mga tao nag-e-enjoy lang akong kumanta.”

Right now, besides the theme park, Daniel is also busy with his budding Dubai food business. When we asked where he got his business acumen from, he answered, “Tu-

matanda lang talaga tayo.”

For Daniel, showbiz projects are still there, but he is just looking for that

**Masyado OA, yung mga tao nag-e-enjoy lang akong kumanta.”**

one great script and a solo project. “Ayokong mataliin yung mga bagay. Ayoko yung mga hilaw na lumalabas yung mga gagawin natin. Gusto ko maigi na maigi. Lutong luto saka natin papalabas!”

Now that he's celebrating his 15 years in the industry, Daniel shared, “Madami na tayong pinagdaanan pero marami pa tayong mapupuntahan, so doon muna tayo.”

He even had this challenge to producers, “Take me anywhere.”

It turns out that the actor has been spending pretty much of his time in the town, not just for solitude but because he is hands-on with one of his latest business ventures, the immersive theme park J Castles, which he co-owns.

We got to the venue on its soft opening day. There were a few kinks to be fixed but were expected since it was not yet in full operation. Besides that, the theme park is impressive.

Let's start off with the distance going there. The ride

from Mandaluyong, where our jump-off point was, did not take two hours to get there and we did not use SLEX. But it was a holiday, so manage your expectations.

Once we arrived, the parking was massive and could fit an ample amount of guests. There were traffic guides and security ready to guide you. The theme park music greeted us and the castle was beautiful. There were lamp posts and flowers that reminded one of Disneyland, albeit a mini-version. They even had immersive areas reminiscent of the Team Labs in Japan.

Daniel says that they are planning to add a 150-plus-room hotel and rides to the theme park.

Daniel told us that it's just the beginning because they are planning to add a 150-plus-room hotel and rides such as the roller-coaster. In charge of the artistic vision for the place, the actor-businessman stressed how he wants to go all the way once he puts his heart on to something.

“Doon tayo sa creatives, mas doon ako. Gusto natin buo-in ang experience ng tao hindi naman tayo gumawa ng amusement park na wala wala lang,” he said.

When we got the invite to visit the place, we weren't even sure if Daniel was really open for an interview, given

# KC Concepcion teases new business project in May

**KC** Concepcion welcomed May with a forward-thinking mindset and a little life update, saying she has a new business project in the works.

The actress showed through her Instagram Stories May 2, a photo of herself wearing eyeglasses, with the caption: “Very studious ako this May.”

“Clean house, new business project, new teams, forward mindset,” she said, opting not to give further details on the project. “Grateful!”

Concepcion also treated fans to more snaps of herself through a series of posts also on her Instagram page, showing her all smiles despite having a “not perfect week.”

Just last March, Concepcion gave a

glimpse of what appears to be her property in Palawan which has an overlooking view of the sea, and hinted that it will be

a “place to be enjoyed by [her] loved ones one day.”

The actress has also been recently seen in several trips in the

country, which included a beach trip with her dad, actor Gabby Concepcion, and her half-sisters Samantha and Garie in Batangas.



# Deniece Cornejo posts Bible verses after court sentence

**F**ormer model Deniece Cornejo took to social media to share Bible verses in what seemed to be her initial reaction to the court ruling of the Taguig Regional Trial Court on May 2.

On Facebook, Deniece uploaded an art card bearing the Bible verse from Exodus 14:14: “The Lord will fight for you. You need only to be still.”

On Instagram story, she posted a picture that resembled a letter written to herself.

“Dear Deniece, you have fought the good fight with faith. Not everyone knows what you are going through behind closed doors, but you face it with courage

and love. You will rise like an eagle in God's perfect time,” she wrote.

Deniece also shared the Biblical passage from Matthew 10:28: “Do not be afraid of those who

kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”

businessman Cedric Lee, and two others of serious illegal detention for ransom in the case filed by actor-television host Vhong Navarro.

They can still file an appeal against the court's decision.



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### Tunay ba iyan? Two-ninety five.

#### Authentic daw ba iyong Bag?

Jessy Mendiola was asked on the internet if the bag she is showing in her instagram is authentic. Malaki mga problema ng mga taong ito. Oh, memories. We were like these in high school. We debated kung iyon bang jeans or sneaker mo authentic depende sa stitching, sa patch or kung ano-ano pang details ang binubusisi. Ang sarap ng buhay na walang problema noon.

#### Anti-US Propagandists

There are some reporters and columnists, politicians, businessmen, who are trying to convince people that we are doing we are being used by the United States by fighting against China. Some of them are quoting statements by politicians of other Asean countries that the Philippines is being used as pawn by the United States to contain China. They say that if the US and China goes to war, we will be caught in the middle. If they go to war, whose side are you going to be? The other ASEAN countries are muted in their resistance to China because they want to do business with China. We also do. But at what cost? If China gets your territory, what makes you think China will reciprocate by doing business with you? Duterte did not even get the promised investments from China. And to think he did all the bending over to

be friendly with them.

#### Neutral in War?

Let's put it this way. If we are going to be a pawn, would you rather be a pawn of China or the United States. If China wants to be a superpower, it has convince countries that it is going to be a benevolent one. By the looks of it, it is not as benevolent as the US. It is "stealing" territory from us. Other Asian countries are against China also but not as vigorous as us in fighting their aggression. Vietnam and the Philippines are the two most vocal opponents of China. But between, Vietnam and us, we are more vigorous in resisting because China is trying to surround us. I am not sure if China is really interested in the potential mineral, oil or gas in the West Philippine sea or just our location. The Philippines is militarily advantageous to whoever is located there. Maybe China wants to control access to us because of our location. We are also the launching point if China attacks Taiwan and the US gets involved. Unfortunately, one thing is clear for retired Rear Admiral Ong: the Philippines cannot avoid getting involved if the Taiwan crisis erupts into a conflict. "It's the curse of geography."

## The next big love team

Kapamilya stars Francine Diaz and Seth Fedelin are making their first appearance on the big screen with Regal Entertainment's romantic dramedy My Future You, a movie to be directed by Crisanto B. Aquino.



off-camera relationship as more of a supportive friendship.

While dodging questions about potential romance, they did acknowledge mutual respect and understanding. "There's a time for everything," Diaz said, hinting at a future possibility.

Diaz and Fedelin are eager to carve their own path. While they admire the success of es-

tablished love teams like KathNiel (Kathryn Bernardo and Daniel Padilla), they don't want to be seen as replacements.

"We can't replace KathNiel," Fedelin said. "We want to be recognized for who we are, as FranSeth. We admire them and their achievements, but we want to create our own legacy."

Diaz echoed this sentiment, highlighting their desire to forge their own unique identity.

"We want to be remembered as ourselves, a love team that brings something fresh and new to the screen."

Not the next KathNiel

While Diaz and Fedelin share undeniable on-screen chemistry that fuels fan speculation of a real-life romance, the rising stars describe their

## John, nilaban ang pagnenegosyo

Magsisiyam na taon nang kasal sina Isabelle Oli at John Prats.



Matatandaang isang beach wedding ang naganap noon sa Batangas. Ngayon ay pag-aari ng mag-asawa ang Nayomi Sanctuary Resort sa lalawigan. "Dapat rest house lang talaga 'to no'ng ikakasal na ako. Minadali ng dad ko itayo 'yung apat na villas. Kasi gusto niya dito ako ikasal. Tapos no'ng wedding, sabi ko, 'Dad, why don't we share the experience that we had?' Tapos i-open natin, gawin nating resort," kwento ni John sa YouTube channel ni Bernadette Sembrano.

Sa amang si Daniel Rafael Prats nakuha ng aktor ang hilig sa pagnenegosyo. Para kay John ay talagang lakasan lamang ng loob ang pagpasok sa isang negosyo. "Don't be scared to try kasi mas masakit 'yung 'di mo ni-try. 'Yung inisip

mo lang tapos 'di mo sinubukan. 'Yon 'yung failure. But 'yung approach na laban nang laban lang," makahulugang pahayag niya.

Hindi man abala sa pagiging isang aktor ay kabi-kabila naman ang trabahong ginagawa ni John bilang isang TV at concert director. "When I did Moira's Tagpuan (concert, 2018), I didn't know what I was doing. Everything was my instinct, my vision, what I wanted to do. It was more than directing a concert. It's like building a relationship with your artists. Being a friend to them. My advantage was I was in the industry. I was also a performer. So, I know how it feels to be a performer," pagbabahagi ng actor-director.

## Philippine Consulate General to Host Filipino International Students Confab in Toronto

By: Tony A. San Juan, OCT.

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Concerned about the challenges and issues impacting Filipino international students in Canada, especially in Ontario, the Philippine Consulate General in Toronto is sponsoring a general conference as part of its consular outreach initiatives. The convention, in partnership with the University of the Philippines Alumni Association-Toronto (UPAAT, is to be conducted on May 11, 2024 (Saturday) from 1:00 pm. to 5:00 pm. at the Gibson Ballroom, Novotel Hotel Toronto, 3 Park Home Avenue, North York.

The main purpose of the event, according to the Philippine Consulate General in Toronto, is to "provide Filipino international students in Ontario with information vital to improving their experience of studying in Canada. It also aimed at allowing the students to meet other students and representatives of service organizations who may be able to advise on a range of topics includ-

ing health and housing, legal obligations and rights, income tax filing, banking and employment opportunities."

Speakers and presenters from the province's government functionaries and community settlement agencies were invited to share information and insights hopefully focusing on the particular problems arising from the International Student Program in Canada. Many international students, in

particular, lack the knowledge to access support and assistance programs and in some instances, are vulnerable to social and economic exploitation and abuse. The event hoped that participants sharing student experiences and speaker advice would result in creating and elevating awareness and understanding of the evidenced challenges.

Further, it is expected that the community-centred convention will come up with rightful resolutions and recommendations to government agencies, educational institutions & colleges, and other service providers engaged in the education and training of international students. Interested international students and other stakeholders who wish to attend the convention on a first come, first served basis, are encouraged to register early by scanning the QR code on the flyer. ( Tony A. San Juan, OCT).

## Angeli, umay na sa indecent proposals!

Aminado ang sexy star na si Angeli Khang na marami siyang natatanggap na indecent proposals.



Pero bago iyon ay mas nakilala siya sa kanyang sexy movies sa Vivamax.

Nasasaktan nga raw siya tuwing may nakikita siyang mga ganung issue. Kinukwestyon niya na dahil ba nagsimula siya sa ganung karera kaya ganun na lamang ang ginagawa at tingin sa kanya ng ibang tao?

Sinabi nga niya na nakatatanggap siya ng mga mensahe sa kanyang social media account na kung minsan pinadadaan pa ng mga ito sa kanyang mga kaibigan.

Apektado raw siya hanggang ngayon kasi minsan naiisip niya na hangga't sinusunod niya ang payo ng ina na kung wala siyang tinatapakang tao at mahal niya ang ginagawa niya ay ipagpatuloy lamang niya ang ginagawa.

Si Angeli ang pinakabagong Black Rider star sa seryeng pinagbibidahan ni Ruru Madrid.

At totoo raw bang pinagseselasan siya ng mga asawa at jowa ng mga ito.

Noong una, tuwing makakatanggap daw siya ng mga ganung klaseng mensahe ay sinasagot niya at sinasabing hindi niya ginagawa ang mga ganun pero ngayon ay napagod na rin siya na paulit-ulit na lamang kaya dedma na siya ngayon.

## Bea, tinapos na ang ilusyon ng fans

Tinapos na ni Bea Alonzo ang ilusyon ng ibang followers nila na nagkaayos ulit sila ni Dominic Roaue.



Ang daming nag-speculate na nagkabalikan ang dalawa matapos mag-viral ang video na nasa wallpaper pa ng actor si Bea at ang Maltese dog nito.

Tuluyan nang winalis at ibinasura ng actress ang alaala ng kanyang ex. Wala na ang memories nito sa Instagram account ni Bea, kahit ang proposal posts ay tsugi na rin.

Ganundin ang joint statement sa kanilang breakup.

Pero sa social media pages ni Dominic, andun pa rin naman ang ilang photos ni Bea at video nung mag-propose ang actor sa ex.

May ilang nag-insist na nagkabalikan sila dahil sa nasabing viral video.

Iba na kasi ngayon, may ganung video lang, ginagawan na kaagad ng story without verifying the issue as if legit na ang story.

Ngayon malabo na siyempre ipilit ng iba na nagkabalikan nga sila.

# Fans call for 'Queen of Tears' remake starring KathDen

With the trend of Philippine remakes of popular K-Dramas seeing an upturn these past few years, it comes as no surprise that many fans have been posting their own fancasts for their favorite pairings in certain shows.



ABOVE, Kim Ji-won (left) and Kim Soo-hyun star as lovers with a marriage on the rocks in hit-show 'Queen of Tears'

One such K-Drama that has been gaining buzz among Filipino fans is the recently-concluded Queen of Tears headline by the charming duo of Kim Soo-hyun and Kim Ji-won.

Throughout its 16-episode run, Queen of Tears has been a trending topic on X every week as viewers found themselves enamored by the chemistry between the characters of Baek Hyun-woo (Kim Soo-hyun) and Hong Hae-in (Kim Ji-won).

The series' finale recently became the highest-rated tvN series, beating the record previously held by Crash Landing on You, which was also written by Queen of Tears writer Park Ji-eun.

With the series' success, many Filipino fans couldn't help but gush about who would perfectly capture the pair's undeniable charismatic energy if it gets its own Philippine remake. Some fans already have a pairing in mind to portray the power couple — Kathryn Bernardo and Alden Richards.

First paired in the hit film Hello, Love, Good-

bye directed by Cathy Garcia-Sampana, Bernardo and Richards showcased their acting chops through the unexpected pairing, with many applauding the two for their palpable chemistry.

With the pair receiving traction online due to their close friendship reviving calls for a new KathDen project, some fans were quick to notice how they would be perfect for the

role of the charming lawyer Baek Hyun-woo and the cold heiress Hong Hae-in. While fans continue to hope for such a project to come to life, Garcia fueled the rumors for a Hello, Love, Goodbye sequel as she shared videos of herself with Star Cinema Creative Head Carmi Raymundo at the Hong Kong International Airport last month. Hong Kong notably served as the setting of the blockbuster film.

"Nostalgic... hihi," the director teased in the post's caption.

In separate interviews, both Bernardo and Richards have previously expressed their interest in reprising their roles of Joy and Ethan should a sequel be made. However, no announcements have been made as of writing. For now, KathDen fans may just have to wait a little more to see the pair's on-screen reunion.

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# Jessy Mendiola's defends her Chanel bag as Authentic

Jessy Mendiola recently addressed a social media user who questioned the authenticity of her Chanel bag.

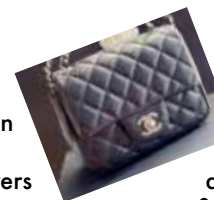
The actress shared an unboxing video on her Instagram account, showcasing a Classic Flap Mini



Square Chain Shoulder Bag in black caviar skin leather, which she purchased from Japan-based sales associate Ann Beltran-Shimomura.

"Thank you for sourcing this gorgeous classic vintage piece, Japan Luxe

Chanel bag →



Direct," Mendiola expressed in the caption.

While many of her followers praised her new luxury item, one user doubted its authenticity, suggesting it might have been bought in Hong Kong.

Mendiola swiftly responded, asserting that the bag was authenticated by a sales associate who verified its serial code in Chanel's system. "No need to hate and spread negativity," she added.



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## Chinese embassy in Manila ‘constant liars’— PCG’s Tarriela

MANILA, Philippines — According to Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) spokesperson for the West Philippine Sea Commodore Jay Tarriela, the public should just stop paying attention to claims released by the Chinese embassy.

“These are constant liars, ginugulo lang nila ‘yung public discourse kaya dapat hindi na natin pinagtutunan ng pansin itong mga ito (they are only messing up with public discourse so we should stop paying them any attention),” Tarriela said.

“Paulit-ulit ‘yung mga agreement na ‘yan pero wala naman silang mapakitang dokumento (they keep

mentioning such agreements, but they can’t show any document) that would really support whatever claim that they are doing,” he added.

Tarriela made the pronouncement after the Embassy of China claimed that a “new model” in the Ayungin Shoal was allegedly approved by officials in the Department of National Defense (DND) and the National Security Advisor.

Both Defense Sec. Gilberto Teodoro Jr. and National Security Adviser Eduardo Año denied this.

Tarriela noted that Beijing, in its latest claim, is merely trying to justify its recent water cannon attack

in Scarborough Shoal by disseminating “lies.”

“Kung makikita mo, every time nagpapalabas ng ganiyang kasinungalingan ‘yung embassy, ito lagi after i-expose ang incidents [sa West Philippine Sea],” Tarriela said in the same radio interview.

He cited previous claims including the gentleman’s agreement between Beijing and former President Rodrigo Duterte, which he noted to have surfaced right after a water cannon incident in the Ayungin Shoal.

“Ibig sabihin, ginugulo lang lagi ng embassy ‘yung public discourse and they are also wanting to influence public opinion to justify ‘yung aggressive action na kanilang ginawa sa Bajo de Masinloc,” said Tarriela.

“So nililito lang nila tayo sini-sway lang nila tayo, dini-divide nila ang Filipino people para i-justify na ‘yung ginawa nila... ‘napagkasunduan naman ‘to, so tayo ang nag violate,” he added.

## Patricia Javier still dreams of winning an acting award

**W**hile she still accepts acting projects here and there, Patricia Javier’s top priorities at the moment are raising her kids and helping her husband run their businesses.

But if there’s one that could compel her to come back and pursue acting more seriously again, she said it would be a dramatic piece worthy of recognition. “Maybe if I get an offer na pang-best dramatic [actress]. Because that’s something that I have yet to achieve—winning an award for my acting,” she told the Inquirer in a recent group interview.

Until such an offer materializes, Patricia intends to devote herself to managing the six chiropractic and wellness clinics that she and her husband, American chiropractor Robert Walcher III, owns.

“I’m needed there so I’m just trying to make the most out of it. But at the right time, and once everything’s in place, I would really want to go back to acting,” said Patricia, who was last seen in the GMA 7 anthology “Daig Kayo ng Lola Ko” in 2020.

### Done with pageants

The 44-year-old celebrity is also done with pageants. While the Miss Universe pageant is now open to moms and married women, Patricia doesn’t see her-

self joining, and is perfectly content with the Noble Queen of the Universe title that she won in 2019.

But as she lies low, people may start seeing more of Patricia’s eldest son, Robert Walcher IV, in show biz. Last year, the 17-year-old aspirant tried his luck in pageantry and was crowned Mister Teen International in Bangkok, Thailand. Her younger son, Ryan, has also been showing interest in performing.

“I’m actually trying to expose them [to the industry]. But whether they like it or not depends on them. I’m not pushing them. It’s still their decision. We’re just here to guide them,” she said of her boys, who were recently invited to take part in the Bangkok Kids International Fashion Week.

“They play musical instruments like the piano and the guitar, they sing. So, we’re just putting them out there in hopes of building their confidence. Let’s see what happens,” added Robert III, who himself has dabbled in show biz, playing minor and supporting roles in such movies like “First Love” (2018) and the TV series “That’s My Amboy” (2016).

While he enjoyed the experience, he said he can’t veer away too much from his practice. “It was fun and I’m always open to it. But it’s hard to do it now, because it can be time-consuming,” he said.

### Piece of advice

What piece of advice can she give her children should they end up following in her footsteps?

“Pakikisama ... camaraderie with coworkers. I want people to remember them not only by their name, but also for their kindness to others. It’s something that I learned from my mother when I was just starting out. She’s very kind and it’s something I have adopted and hope to pass on,” she said.

As for the secret to her 18-year marriage, Patricia stressed the importance of having a shared goal and vision in life. “You have to push each other forward. You have to have God at the center of the relationship,” she said.

And you can’t be too selosa if you marry someone good-looking, she jested. “Maghihiwalay lang kayo!” she said, laughing.



## Xian Lim confirms relationship with Viva producer

**A**ctor Xian Lim broke his silence and confirmed that he is now in a relationship with Viva producer Iris Lee.

Xian said that he wanted to clear things out that’s why he is now speaking about the issue.

“Yes, I’m seeing Iris,” he said.

“Just to clear everything, to clear all the speculations. We are seeing each other

and we are very happy,” he added.

Xian and ex-girlfriend Kim Chiu announced their breakup last December.

Xian, however, said that Iris was not the reason for their breakup. He added that he began dating Iris after breaking up with Kim.

“There’s no third party. That’s it. That’s plain and simple,” he said.

Xian also clarified speculations that he



and Iris are already married.

“Another rumor: when I see my friends — the people who are the last to even care about these things — kino-congratulate na ‘ko. They say, ‘Congratulations on the marriage in New York!’ And I’m like, no, I am not married,” he said.

“It just pains me na parang may mga taong nadamay. That just really saddens me and that’s very unfortunate. Ang busy-busy ni Iris, ang busy-busy ko. She has a lot on her plate, and I have a lot on my plate... She doesn’t deserve all that flak. We don’t deserve that because all the things na people are saying, there’s no truth to any of it,” he added.

## Beyond ‘Secretary Kim’: Kim Chiu on healthy habits and hit show

Actress Kim Chiu opens up about her healthy lifestyle and the overwhelming success of her recent series, What’s Wrong With Secretary Kim.

Chiu, who is also hailed as Metro Body 2024, emphasizes the importance of a strong mindset for achieving fitness goals. Referencing the popular Netflix show Physical: 100, she shares, “Your mind controls everything you do — what you eat, how you exercise, the choices you make.”

“I truly learned that mindset is the strongest muscle you have, not your biceps or glutes. It’s your willpower,” the actress and TV host added.

A self-proclaimed foodie, Chiu admits her love for indulging, particularly in carbs like rice, noodles, and bread.

To balance her cravings, she emphasizes the importance of cardio workouts. “I can’t really stick

to diets or calorie counting,” she confesses. “That’s why I really prioritize working out. I love meat too — beef and pork are my favorites.”

On Chiu’s latest project, What’s Wrong With Secretary Kim, starring alongside Paulo Avelino, the series has garnered a positive reception in the Philippines and other territories where it’s currently streaming.

“I’m so proud of how What’s Wrong With Secretary Kim turned out,” Chiu beams. “It’s a huge Korean series with a massive Filipino fanbase. The cinematography is stunning, and it’s definitely one of the projects I’m most proud of.”



## Coming soon: ‘In bed’ with Robin Padilla

After my dangerous liaison with Robin Padilla many controversies ago, it felt good to finally reconnect with him. Binoe hosted dinner at his place in Fairview for the staff of my mom (Inday Badiday) and stepdad’s (Gene Paloma) former production company, Loca/Lobo (LL).



The author Dolly Anne Carvajal (left) with Robin Padilla

“When I feel drained from work, it’s nice to go back to my roots,” he quipped. When Robin was new in the biz, he became an adopted member of LL. That’s because his discoverer/manager back in the day, Deo Fajardo, was close to my mom. I remember when Deo first brought Binoe to mommy’s production office. Deo

referred to him as “ang lalaking Nora Aunor” (the male version of Nora Aunor). Robin’s wife, Mariel, and their two kids were not around, though. “I’m going home to Mariel in Multinational. Boarder lang ako doon,” he said laughing.

Robin is all praises for his wife. “She disciplines our kids well,” he pointed out. “They are not allowed to use their cell phones on weekdays, only on weekends, but only for a limited time.” His Mommy Eva, daughters (with his ex, Lielz Sicangco) Queenie and Kylie and the latter’s sons stay at Robin’s Fairview mansion.

Robin’s face lit up when he talked about his grandsons, Alas and Axi. “Unlike most kids, they are not hooked on gadgets,” he revealed “Nakakatuwa na batang kalye sila (it’s amusing that they prefer to play in the streets).”

Then, Binoe turned a bit “senti” when I asked about his mom. He said, “Ma is almost 90. She’s weak and bedridden. So no matter how busy I am, I make sure to visit Mama and lie down beside her before I head home to my family.”

Robin’s devotion to his mom is evident in Museo de Padilla (that’s how he calls his Fairview home). One wall is adorned with huge portraits of Mommy Eva.

Before we called it a night, I asked Robin if he’s game to be my very first guest on my upcoming YouTube Channel. He said yes immediately. In jest, he suggested, “Para maiba, dapat nasa kama tayo sa interview. Wala namang masama doon. Nakahiga lang tayo.” (So it will be different, let’s do our interview in bed. No malice. We will just be lying down.) We both had a good laugh.

Thank you, Binoe, for not letting fame and fortune change you a bit. How wonderful it is that you honor my mom’s part in your journey by not losing sight of your LL days.

Even if Robin is way up there, he makes sure to still be within reach of the people who helped him along the way.

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## Vice Ganda says he's still hounded by rape joke on Jessica Soho

Vice Ganda said his 2013 rape joke on GMA news anchor and multi-awarded broadcast journalist Jessica Soho still hounds him, with his critics still using it to “define” him.

The actor-comedian was discussing with his ward Awra Briguela how people would always use “one definition” in voicing their dislike against someone.

Vice Ganda was telling Briguela, who uses the pronounce she/her, that his rape joke, which he uttered during his 2013 concert, “I-Vice Ganda Mo Ako sa Araneta,” was still being used by his critics to vilify him. He said, however, that he has learned to move past this, even though his

bashers have not, and they would always use this as a tool to “justify their dislike” of him.

Vice Ganda's reference of his rape joke was in hopes of helping Briguela overcome her own controversy – that of the Makati brawl incident that resulted in him getting arrested in June 2023.

At the same time, the “It's Showtime” host advised Briguela to face the



consequences of her actions to be able to move on with her life and be able to heal from her own pain due to the incident.

“Kailangan mo siyang harapin kasi kung bina-band aid mo siya, hindi siya [maghe-heal].”

“Kung ano mang gawin ko, they will not like me, they will hate me, and they only need one bad definition of me,” he continued. “And that is, Vice Ganda

siya ‘yung nag-rape joke kay Jessica Soho at babalikan nila ‘yun para hindi sila mawala sa paniniwala na ayaw nila ako.”

During his 2013 concert, Vice Ganda tagged Soho as a logical target for gang rape, if she ever became a “bold star.” Aside from his rape joke, Vice Ganda had also made fun of the Soho's weight. He eventually apologized for his insensitive remarks, at the same time claiming his joke was not meant to make a mockery of rape victims.

Soho, then GMA's vice president for news programs, “acknowledged” Vice Ganda's apology

## Bianca Umali spends birthday conducting storytelling, acting workshop

Just how do you celebrate your birthday? Breakfast in bed, a hotel staycation, lunch with your beloved in your favorite restaurant, an out-of-town trip with the family, or a candlelit dinner with live music, roses and chocolates?

**A**ctress Bianca Umali might have experienced all these in the past, but her idea of the perfect birthday celebration this year is totally different.

It is spending the day with the children and youth of World Vision Philippines, a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice.

World Vision is very close to her heart, as she has been its celebrity ambassador for over seven years now. Thus, the star of the upcoming fantasy show “Encantadia Chronicles: Sang'gre” chose to pay it forward and make a difference on her birthday last March.

### Meaningful celebration

Bianca recently joined the World Vision kids and youth from Molinete in Laurel, Batangas, for a meaningful birthday celebration. She had fun picking okra and bananas, sharing meals with the nanays of the community, trying local delicacies such as Talinum Leaves Salad and Tilapia Ice Cream in the Batangas farm. She concluded the day with an exciting and interactive storytelling session and acting workshop with the kids.

The celebration was far from over as her World Vision family sneaked in a surprise birthday cake for her and a happy birthday song from the kids.

With this experience, Bianca confessed, “Getting to spend time with them makes me happy. Wala akong nararamdamang pagod kahit pa napaka-init, kahit pa nasaan, kahit pa gaano kalayo. It doesn't matter because my only goal is for them to

know me and for me to know their stories.”

She added, “Hindi po ito ang unang beses na ako po ay naka-experience na magtanim sa isang community. But this community is different because of what they've built here. They own it! And that is such a big factor for me. Nakakagana lalo kasi nakikita ko na masaya sila. They're self-sufficient, and personally, 'yung independence na ganun is very close to my heart because I am also such an independent person.”

Bianca's unwavering commitment to the causes of the organization did not go unnoticed as its Interim National Director Jun Godornes expressed his gratitude to the actress: “Nakita namin kung paano siya lumago, paano siya



naging powerful voice para sa mga kabataan. We're so proud of her and we're so happy to have her as our ambassador.”

Bianca Umali picks up a book and leads a storytelling session with the kids in the Molinete community in Batangas during her birthday celebration last March.

### Striving for enough

While she has partaken in various its campaigns, including community visits to Marawi and Cebu, and participation in the Taal Volcano eruption relief operation, she continues to use her voice for children and women empowerment until they have enough to thrive in this world.

This time, her visit to the Molinete community helps address pressing issues of world hunger, malnutrition and food security. This puts the spotlight on World Vision's Enough Campaign,

which aims to help rehabilitate at least 7,700 undernourished children with access to life-saving nutrition and provide more than 919,700 individuals with access to clean drinking water by 2026.

Currently, malnutrition is prevalent in the Philippines, especially among children and adolescents aged 0 to 59 month-old. This poses a risk on their physical health and development as well as their cognitive ability.

The campaign strives to enlighten that every child in the world, no matter where they live or what crises they face, deserves to have the nourishing food they need in order to thrive and for families to be more resilient.

**It doesn't matter because my only goal is for them to know me and for me to know their stories.**

As she turns another year older, Bianca could not be more thankful for her beautiful journey with World Vision Philippines.

“The reason why I am such a proud ambassador of World Vision ay dahil binigyan nila ako ng pagkakataon not just to be an ‘ate’ to my little cousins at home; they also gave me an opportunity to become an ‘ate’ to as many children that I can be an ‘ate’ to. And that just makes me so happy,” said the actress.

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## Imee Marcos tells Bongbong: ‘Stand firm and put an end to PI’

MANILA, Philippines — Senator Imee Marcos asked her brother, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., to hold his ground and end the uproar surrounding the people’s initiative (PI) to amend the 1987 Constitution.



“Until now, he says that we need to study it [and] consult legal luminaries. The Commission on Elections, on its

own, has said that the signatures are still alive – there’s no deadline, there’s no expiry date, and they can be used and recycled for future effort. Let’s set that aside. It’s illegally and unconstitutionally obtained. Let us not let this happen,” said Marcos in an interview over ANC’s Headstart.

“Perhaps he can make a very firm and clear stand. Put an end to the PI, and let’s do this properly together, and there will be no controversy,” she added.

According to the senator, her brother is too kind. She, however, emphasized that kind people often get abused.

Marcos has acknowledged that the PI has been politicized.

Nevertheless, Marcos remained firm in his position that the economic provisions of the 1987 Constitution must be changed. However, he is unsure if the PI approach is still a workable option for his administration.

Kristine Hermosa on Vic Sotto:

## ‘Grabe siyang magmahal sa pamilya’

Kristine Hermosa said her husband Oyo Boy takes after his father, TV host Vic Sotto.



From right: Kristine Hermosa and Oyo Boy Sotto with their second-born, Ondrea

In many ways, father and son do not only share blood, but also possess similar traits.

The ever-beautiful actress talked to reporters last April 20 at the 70th birthday celebration of Vic held in TV5 Media Center in Mandaluyong, which was broadcast on the Saturday episode of “Eat Bulaga.”

Kristine highlighted two characteristics of Vic and Oyo among their many similarities.

“Madami din e. Eto, mapursige, very patient. Siyempre tao din tayo, may mga times na mauubusan ka rin. “Pero ‘pag may ginusto sila, talagang magpu-pursige sila. Napakaalaga sa pamilya, napaka-mapagmahal. Laging nilalagay sa unahan ‘yung family talaga,” she said.

Kristine also talked about how ideal Oyo is because her husband has been supportive of her showbiz career.

The actress has been lying low in showbiz, and only appears in select projects. This is most certainly true these days as she is expecting their sixth child. She said she is due in September.

Kristine revealed that she experiences morning sickness, but it is not as exaggerated as before.

With her hands full, she is lucky to have Oyo by her side. She described her husband as “very handsome” like her.

It is one of the reasons why she is able to manage their family.

“Sabi nga nila pero ever since parang prini-pare na ni Lord ‘yung heart ko for a big family. ‘Yun naman ‘yung desire ko ever since talaga to have a big family,” she said.

Will she and Oyo try for one more baby after she gives birth by end of September?

“Sa totoo lang po, wala pong plinano sa lahat ng ito. Ang dami ko ng anak pero wala talagang plano ito. Talagang iba lang talaga trumabaho si God,” Kristine said.

## Asian Business and Trade Expo: Fostering Innovation, Collaboration, and Economic Growth

Markham, Ontario - The Asian Business and Trade Expo, organized by the Federation of Asian Canadians Toronto (FACT) is set to take center stage in 2025 promising to be a dynamic platform for business leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators from across Asia, Canada and beyond. There are over 100 esteemed VIP guests and multicultural media representatives in attendance, including dignitaries such as Mr. Faruk Hossain, Consul General of Bangladesh, and Mr. Chhat Chhour, Honorary Consul of the Kingdom of Cambodia to Ontario, Mr. Sturmus Bate, Consul of Economic Affairs of Consulate General of Indonesia, and Ms. Weilun Ko, Assistant Director, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Toronto, among others. Their presence underscores the diverse and inclusive nature of the event, reflecting its importance in fostering global partnerships and , and opportunities in the Asian business landscape.



Ms. Mila Nabor Cuachon, CEO, executive chef and creator of Casa Manila

FACT, as a registered non-profit organization, is deeply committed to celebrating, empowering, and promoting the diverse Asian Canadian community in the Greater Toronto Area. The president of FACT Ms. Benny Cheung announced the expansion of their initiatives by adding the Asian Business and Trade Expo to their roster of flagship events such as Asialicious Carnival and AsialiciousTO, in September. “This expo serves as a catalyst for business excellence and international cooperation,” said Ms Cheung, the President of FACT. “We are thrilled to bring together businesses, investors, and thought leaders from across Asia and beyond to exchange ideas, forge partnerships, and unlock new opportunities for growth. It will also serve as a hub for multicultural networking, collaboration, and innovation, fostering economic growth and opportunity for all involved.”

FACT has received tremendous support from all levels of government such as Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development the Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business the Honourable Rechie Valdez, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade of Ontario the Honourable Vic Fedeli and Mayor of Toronto Her Worship Olivia Chow, etc. They conveyed their support and best wishes for the success of the Asian Business and Trade Expo.

During the press conference, an inclusive and diverse panel of esteemed speakers, including Ms. Hyunjoo Chae, President of the Korean Canadian Business Association of Ontario, Ms. Mila Nabor Cuachon, CEO, executive chef and creative director of Casa

Manila, representative of the Pinay Tayo and Batapreneur, and Mr. Ryan Lau, Vice President of Youth & Entertainment at the Malaysian Association of Canada, shared insights on how the Asian Business and Trade Expo would benefit the business communities of Korea, the Philippines, and Malaysia, both in Canada and their respective home countries. They emphasized the importance of collaboration and innovation in today’s global economy and encouraged multicultural business leaders and entrepreneurs to join in this exciting journey of opportunity and growth.

Business committee member of FACT, Dr. Maggie Han also shared the FACT Membership benefits that offers to businesses. “From networking opportunities and access to industry insights to advocacy support and promotional resources, FACT membership provides a comprehensive platform for businesses to excel and prosper. By joining FACT, businesses gain access to a vibrant community of like-minded professionals, enabling them to forge valuable connections, collaborate on innovative projects, and stay ahead of the curve in an ever-evolving market. I encourage all businesses to explore the benefits of FACT membership and seize the exclusive opportunities it offers for growth and success.”

Following the enlightening panel presentations, FACT board of directors and business committee members had the official launch ceremony of the Asian Business and Trade Expo, joined by the distinguished VIP guests to commence the historic moment with great enthusiasm and anticipation.

One of the highlights of the event is the lucky draw sponsored by Baiwan Winery Inc., offering attendees the chance to win exclusive prizes. Additionally, following the press conference, FACT hosted an engaging networking session to facilitate meaningful connections between attendees and potential partners, investors, and exhibitors, with generous sponsored refreshments from VAVA cake; ICHA Tea; Bai Nian Wine; Galleria Supermarket; Kim’s Winery and Toronto Vorwerk Canada.

The Asian Business and Trade Expo is expected to attract attendees from diverse industries, including finance, technology, manufacturing, and more. With its focus on fostering innovation, collaboration, and economic growth, the expo promises to be a must-attend event for businesses looking to expand their presence in the Asian market in Canada.

For more information about the Asian Business and Trade Expo, including membership sign-up, registration details and sponsorship opportunities, please visit [www.factTO.ca](http://www.factTO.ca) and [www.ABTexpo.com](http://www.ABTexpo.com).

## Paulo Avelino asks fans to stop giving him gifts

Paulo Avelino requested his fans to not give him material gifts, saying he would appreciate receiving “letters” instead.

On his Instagram broadcast channel, the Kapamilya actor remarked that, as much as he appreciates luxurious gifts, he still prefers receiving handwritten letters from fans, as he keeps all of them.

“I’m grateful for the material gifts given to me, but as much as I appreciate the gifts and the effort, please stop giving me gifts. I’ve said this before: I prefer handwritten letters to luxurious stuff,” he said.

“I hope people understand and don’t get the wrong impression here. I keep all the letters given to me,” added the actor.

Avelino recently made waves online after posing as an elevator boy at a mall in Mandaluyong, surprising the fans as he also promoted his new movie “Elevator,” opposite beauty queen turned actress Kylie Versoza.

Viva Films posted the six-minute footage of the “Fan Girl” actor serving as an elevator boy. Despite the shoppers’ confusion about whether he was indeed the actor and why he was there, most of them asked Avelino to pose for photos.



Meanwhile, the “What’s Wrong with Secretary Kim” actor previously assailed the seemingly unabated

practice of piracy in the entertainment industry, arguing that rampancy affects the livelihood of the people who work in front of and behind the camera.

“Bakit naman po imposible? Industriya po namin ang nalulugi sa pamimirata ng mga TV show o pelikula. Hindi lang po kabuhayan namin ang appektado kundi pati narin ang kabuhayan ng lahat ng taong nagta-trabaho sa likod ng camera. Hindi niyo sila nakikita o kilala, pero appektado rin sila. ‘Wag niyo pong gawing normal ang pamimirata ng mga palabas,” he wrote on X (formerly Twitter) at the time.



# Filipino Canadians To Celebrate 163rd Birth Anniversary Of Dr. Jose Rizal

By: Tony A. San Juan, OCT.

**S**ummer is the season of community celebrations and the month of June is special to the hearts and minds of Filipino-Canadians. Top most are the "June 12th Philippine Independence Day", the "Filipino Heritage Month" in Canada, and "Dr. Jose Rizal's Birth Anniversary" events. On June 19, 2024, the officers and members of the Order of Knights of Rizal Canada Region will proudly commemorate the 163rd birth anniversary of the Philippine national hero, Dr. Jose P. Rizal. As in the past, the celebration will honour and focus on his ideals, contributions and significance.



Three similar events will happen in 3 venues on the same day in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) where Dr. Jose Rizal's statues are displayed. Scheduled in the morning, the first two will be conducted in the City of Markham and the City of Brampton while the 3rd and concluding celebration at Earl Bales Park in North York, Toronto at 4:00 pm.

The ceremonies include a wreath-laying at the bust of the hero in the park, and brief addresses by the dignitaries, special guests, and senior officers of the K.O.R. Sir Frank Crawford together with KOR senior executive officers and chapter commanders are to officiate and lead the rites. After the solemn rites, a special reception will be held at the community centre.

Those invited to attend are the Philippine Consul General in Toronto, Angelica Escalona; the Member of Parliament for Mississauga, Minister Rechie Valdez; the Member of Parliament for York Centre, Minister Ya'ara Saks; the MPP for York Centre, Minister Michael Kerzner, City Councillor for York Centre James Pasternak, WFG Senior Executive Vice Chair Agnes P. Miranda and several Fil-Can community leaders.

The KOR Canada Central Region is composed of Regional Commander Sir Frank Crawford, KGOR; Deputy Commander Sir Ver Amante, KGOR; Area Commanders West GTA Sir Feberio Hangdaan, KCR; and GTA East Sir Courtney Doldron, KCR. Attending are the Past Canada Regional Commanders, Sir Poy Cana, Sir Ed Prillo, Sir Joe Damasco, and Sir Romy Sinajon, and Ladies of Rizal (LKOR) President Lady Bing Marasigan and Ladies Alliance of Rizal (ALKOR) President Lady Ining Calaguio and their auxiliary members.

This year's host is the KOR Mississauga Chapter headed by Sir Ptr Luel Declarador and co-hosted by the KOR Etobicoke Chapter led by Sir Richard Saldana, The KOR Central Region, through its Media Affairs Chair Sir Joe Damasco, KGCR has extended its invitation to the Filipino-Canadian community and the Canadian public to come, celebrate and pay homage to our beloved "Pambansang Bayani", Dr. Jose Rizal. "Non Omnis Moriar. Not everything in me will die. Hindi lahat sa akin ay mamatay." (By: Sir Joe Damasco, KGCR and Tony A. San Juan, OCT.)

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## Angeli Khang, iiwan nga ba ang pagpapa-sexy?

**K**ilala sa kaniyang intimate scenes sa mga pelikula sa Vivamax, sinagot ni Angeli Khang ang tanong kung iiwan din niya balang araw ang pagpapa-sexy.

"Kung ano man ang ibigay sa akin na project at blessings, tatanggapin ko. But as much as possible, I want to see myself and for people to see me more about my acting," sabi ni Angeli sa Updated with Nelson Canlas podcast.

"Feeling ko po marami na akong nagawang movies na fresh breath naman sa another character. Sana naman next time mabigyan ako ng blessings na comedy," pagpapatuloy niya.

Kamakailan, naging bahagi na rin si Angeli ng Kapuso full action series na "Black Rider," kasama ang bida

nitong si Ruru Madrid.

"To be honest, noong nabigay sa akin ang teleserye, ang daming nag-message sa akin, pati ang family ko, ang sabi 'Wow mainstream naman! Mapapakita mo 'yung sarili mo na hindi more on bed scenes, more on pa-sexy, 'yung tootong acting mo,'" kuwento ni Angeli.

Kissing scene agad ang unang eksena nila ni Ruru, na lalo pang nag-paintit sa kuwento ng series.

"Tapos pagkapunta ko po sa Black Rider, may sexy scenes pa rin po. Nag-message ako sa

nanay ko sabi ko 'Ma, may sexy scenes pa rin naman pero more on acting pa rin,'" sabi ni Angeli.

Ngunit ayon kay Angeli, hindi niya nakikita ang sarili bilang isang sexy actress.

"I don't see myself as a sexy actress, kahit ayun ang sinasabi nila sa akin. I think I see myself as an actress... Kahit ano mang project, kahit sexy man o hindi, artista pa rin po ako na ginagawa kung ano 'yung mga ibinibigay sa aking project."

Inilahad din ni Angeli na tutol noon sa pagpapasok niya sa showbiz ang ama, na isang military general, at kaniyang ina, na isang pastora.

"Ang tatay ko po talaga, he's a military general tapos ang gusto niyang ipagawa sa akin, more on marathon, sports, basketball, volleyball, taekwondo. Sabi niya sa akin, tomboy na tomboy," kuwento ni Angeli.

"At first, 'yung mom ko po talagang hindi siya natuwa," sabi niya.

"Nagulat siya, sabi niya 'Kailan ka pumasok diyan? Kailan ka nag-film?' 'Bakit ka nagdedesisyon sa sarili mo?' High school pa lang ako noon. 'Ano ang pangalan ng director saka ng may-ari niyang pinaggagawan mo? Ipagdadalal ko 'yan,'" pag-alala ni Angeli na sinabi sa kaniya ng ina.

Ngunit matapos ang apat na pelikula, nakita ng kaniyang ina ang passion ni Angeli sa pag-acting.

"Sabi ng mom ko, 'Basta wala kang natatapakan na tao, mahal mo 'yung ginagawa mo, at masaya ka sa ginagawa mo, pagpapatuloy mo lang 'yan,'" kuwento niya.

"And ngayon, thankful po ako na tuloy-tuloy na 'yung blessings."



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# Joey Baking The Socialist

## Bold-name Annual Ball

The Filipino Centre Toronto 17th FCT Rosalinda C. Javier Outstanding Students Awards honored 8 outstanding students last April 7. Named after the late president of the centre, who was also a teacher, the award continues to recognize excellence in Filipino students in the community.

Celebrating Filipino Restau-

rant Month organized by Salma Zahid, MP Scarborough Centre with ConGen Angelica Escalona and Consul RJ Sumague, community leaders were invited to a dinner at FV Foods, owned by Mel Galeon.

“No place can be better than FV Foods for celebrating (Filipino Cuisine). FV Foods is an icon of Scarborough Centre and also party Filipino community in



GTA” MP Salma Zahid said.

It seems to be a rite of fame in the local community of having your own concert sends a message that you’ve arrived. Mika Sy of JDL had her own concert, entitled Mika Pop Explosion. Supported by JDL students and friends, it was a

sight and sound to experience at Xinflix Auditorium.

Philippine Canadian Charitable Foundation (PCCF) had their induction at the Philippine Consulate. Consul Mary Grace officiated the induction ceremony.

Sparkle by GMA7 also had a concert stop in Toronto. Filipinos enjoyed the show of the three loveteam and comedian Boobay.

Now, the biggest, fanciest and glamorous event last month happened to be the Inaugural Filipino Film Festival launched by Sine Institute. It featured Filipino films made by Filipinos in

the Philippines and Canada. The highlight of the event was a gala held at Hotel X. It has the makings of an annual must-attend ball for every bold name in the Filipino community.

Pinoy Ontario Vendors (POV) held their first Spring Bazaar mixed with comic-con with some cosplayers at Korean Cultural Centre. The place was packed.

The Asian Business and Trade Expo, organized by the Federation of Asian Canadians Toronto (FACT), launched at Xinflix is set to take center stage in 2025 promising to be a dynamic platform for business leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators from across Asia, Canada and beyond.

It was a very busy month of April.

## Nico Bolzico on daughter Tili entering showbiz, managing kids with Solenn Heussaff



Content creator and entrepreneur Nico Bolzico is leaving his daughter Tili’s showbiz decisions to her as he is more focused right now on raising two children with wife Solenn Heussaff.

Speaking to members of the media including Philstar.com, Nico was asked his thoughts about Tili — whose legal name is Thylane Katanata — possibly entering the local entertainment business one day.

“That is not my choice, it’s her choice. There’s two things I want for her in life — to be happy and be a good person,” Nico answered. “Any-

thing else I don’t mind, she can do whatever she wants, as long as she’s happy and a good person.”

Nico then shared what it was like looking after two daughters, as he and Solenn are also parents to infant Maëlys Lionel.

He admits that having a second child is exponentially more difficult than just having Tili to tend to, quipping it was now “two versus two” at home.

Because they don’t have specific househelp, Nico and Solenn have to coordinate their schedules as to who can look after the girls.

The content creator-entrepreneur did point out that Tili being four years old is more mature and able to understand more, making her easier to take care of — the same can’t be said as much for Maëlys.

“Maëlys is a year and four months, she’s completely dependent logistically but she has no rationality which is the worst combination!” Nico quipped. “She’s everywhere doing everything, doing whatever she wants but no rationality yet.”

## FCT HONOURS FIL-CAN OUTSTANDING STUDENT GRADUATES

By Tony A. San Juan, OCT.

Eight Filipino Canadian student graduates in Ontario received awards during the “17th Annual FCT Rosalinda C. Javier Outstanding Student Awards” on April 7, 2024, at the FCT Social Hall, Scarborough, Toronto. The yearly event is an established project of the Filipino Centre Toronto (FCT), a not-for-profit, volunteer-run, and community-based organization in the province.

Among those in attendance at the recognition rites were guest of honour & speaker OCAD University President Ana Serrano, inspirational speaker York University Assistant Professor Dr. Marissa Largo, and special guests Federal Small Business Minister &

MP Rechie Valdez, MP Shaun Chen, Ontario Minister for Seniors & MPP Raymond Cho, representatives of Asst. Minister & MPP Vijay Thanigasalam, MPP Andrea Hazell, MPP Doly Begum, Philippine Deputy Consul General Kerwin Tate, and TCDSB Trustee Garry Tanuan. The event was covered by Joey Baking of LM Confidential, Carlos Unas of Filipino Bulletin, and OMNI TV Filipino Edition.

Those who were presented with plaques of recognition, congratulatory certificates, and cash awards were University graduates Roelle Ann Santa Maria, Leny Rose Lopez Simbre and Jasmine Santos Bouckley; High School graduates Jordan Santos Bouckley,

Gianne Esmino Mangalino, and Collin Cortez Rosales; and Elementary School graduates Vanezza Hechanova Bucao and Khristian Shermae Delos Santos. The elementary and high school awardees were chosen based on the criteria of Academic Grades(50%), Extracurricular Activities( 15%), Community Involvement(15%), and Interview Performance( 20%). Postsecondary school winners were named upon presentation of a diploma or transcript of records with an official citation of academic honours or distinction from the university or college.

The 8 honourees were selected by members of the FCT-Rosalinda C. Javier Outstand-

ing Student Awards(RCJOSA) Committee composed of FHHC founding chair Tony A. San Juan( Chairman), FCT president & CEO Mary Ann San Juan( Co-chair), TDSB high school vice-principal Fermer Santos, PCCT immediate past president Steve Pagao, TCDSB community relations officer Jodelyn Huang and FCT board director Nitz Redjik. WFG Senior Executive Chairman & Founder Agnes P. Miranda donated the 8 Plaques of Recognition while the FCT directors and executive officers shelled out the cash prizes. Among the cash donors were Precy & Dodong Tumalak, Alvin Flor Marasigan, Philip Beloso, Frank Cruzet, Joy D’Aoust,

Jerome Peralta, Stefie Stephens, and the FCT Seniors Arts group. Efrén De Villa, Dr. Nnette De Villa, Wendy Arena, Dylan Mendoza, and Luisito Queano participated well in the 90-min. program, hosted by Theresa Lumanlan.

Started in 2005, the recognition program is about the Filipino Centre Toronto’s aim to continually challenge and encourage students of Filipino heritage to achieve academic success and exemplary performance in their educational endeavours. For over 19 years, the Centre has recognized 154 top graduates from various educational institutions in Ontario. The award is OUTSTANDING page 11

## Rica Peralejo admits relationship with Piolo

Rica Peralejo admitted past relationship with Piolo Pascual, saying they loved each other and “functioned like a couple” despite not putting any label to their romance.

“Hindi ko nga alam, pero we existed and functioned like a couple talaga,” Peralejo

said of her relationship with Pascual.

Peralejo admitted that they “entertained” the possibilities of settling down together, but that it was a mere thought and their relationship “never got to that point.”

“There were talks of like—di naman diretso pero parang magse-settle down together, ganyan. Pero [it was] like any other couple, gano’n lang siya—na maisip mo na pwedeng mangyari ito, pero he never

naman promised,” she clarified.

“I never naman really said na I wanted this. It was just something that we entertained. It never got to that point and we never labeled our relationship, but it was very very good naman what we had together,” she added.

Peralejo Peralejo underscored that she is on good terms with Pascual and that the past is no longer an issue for them.



“I think it was very obvious that we liked each other, we loved each other, but we were like more friends really na we just like to be together a lot,” she said.

“Parang may mga hints here and there na ganito... [But] I

didn’t really ride on that whenever I would hear something and whenever I would feel something,” she told Abunda. “Parang sa akin, maybe there is a possibility but let’s see. Until it’s really there, I don’t consider it serious.”

Peralejo has been married to her pastor husband Joseph Bonifacio since 2010. They have two sons together, namely Philip and Manu.

# Claudine Barretto admits to entering rehab

**C**laudine Barretto finally confirmed a long-held rumor about her entering rehab. "It wasn't because of drugs, it's because of post-traumatic stress disorder," she said. Seemingly eager to dispel talk about her being allegedly locked in a padded room in a hospital basement, Claudine described the

rehab facility she entered into as "a beautiful place." "Every day may massage ka, may facial ka once a week, may workout ka every day, may villa na may swimming pool," she said. Claudine stayed in the same rehab center, which is in Thailand, twice. She went back there again in 2019 but

cut her stay short, fearing the worst relating her dad, who eventually passed away. This is the first time that Claudine admitted to having been in rehab. At the height of the rumors, she only went far to admit seeing a psychiatrist, telling "Startalk" that she started doing so following ex-boyfriend Rico Yan's death in 2002.

As to being in rehab, she answered then, "Hindi po ako nagpa-rehab. There's no such thing." Claudine hinted in the same interview with Ogie why she downplayed this part of her life for years re-



lating how she was called names including "bipolar," "unstable," simply admitting she is suffering from depression. "Meron pa ring stigma about depression and seeing a psychiatrist."

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OUTSTANDING from page 110  
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1.FCT Outstanding Students and guests of honour; 2. Guest of honour & speaker OCAD University President Ana Serrano and Vanezza Hechanova Bucao

# Why Kokoy de Santos is not sad about noontime show Tahanang Pinakamasaya's closure

**F**or Kokoy de Santos, adjusting to life after the closure of "Tahanang Pinakamasaya" has been tough, but he says he's happy that "It's Showtime!" has a wider audience reach now that it is airing on GMA 7. "It was hard mainly because

hosting the noontime show has become a routine for all of us. I just want to say that life goes on and that while everything always comes to an end eventually, doors will open, too," Kokoy told Inquirer Entertainment shortly after the special media screening of his

latest film, Jun Robles Lana's "Your Mother's Skin." Kokoy said he could not bring himself to feel sad that



the noontime show he hosted with Paolo Contis since June 2023 was replaced by the ABS-CBN-produced "It's Showtime" recently, "because I know that we are making history here. I don't think anyone could've predicted that 'It's Showtime' would eventually air on GMA 7, but I'm happy because more people will be able to watch it now," he pointed out.

Kokoy is still seen in the long-running Kapuso gag show "Bubble Gang," as well as the second season of "Running Man Philippines."

# Sofia Pablo is still sweet at 18

Actress Sofia Pablo was a vision of youthful glam and sweetness on her 18th birthday celebration, a Hawaiian-themed debut party held at Raffles Makati.

Instead of the traditional 18 roses, Sofia opted for a unique touch, featuring 18 TikTok dancers, including notable figures like GMA First Vice President Joey Abacan and actors such as Ruru Madrid and Wendell Ramos. Her father, Christiano Pablo, also took part in the number. Joining the lineup of dancers was her onscreen partner, Allen Ansay.

“You only get one 18th birthday, so I wanted it to be memorable in the way I want it to be. So, I was very hands-on, I chose the motif and the songs for the dance. The songs symbolize

our friendship,” the debutant shared during a press conference held a few days before her party.

Sofia met with the press to talk about this new phase of her life. She expressed her excitement for professional growth, eager to explore a broader range of projects and roles now that she’s come of age.

Venturing away from the tradition of 18 roses, Sofia shares a dance with her onscreen partner Allen Ansay as part of her 18 TikTok Dancers

As she turned 18, Sofia wanted to challenge perceptions and shed any notion of being “pabebe,” aspiring to become mature while still maintaining her natural sweetness and playfulness.

“I want to change people’s perception of me that I’m pabebe. Not ev-

eryone says it, but some bashers do. I don’t mean to look that way,” she said. “But now that I’m 18, I want to change that. I think I will miss being makulit, playful.”

Independence is a significant aspect of adulthood for Sofia, who sees it as an opportunity to rely less on her mother and take on more responsibilities.

“I’m just naturally a sweet girl, mahinhin, introverted. But of course, I also want to show that I’m 18 and more ladylike. I want to be more mature, responsible, and conscious of how I act or speak,” she stated.

Sofia looks forward to trying out

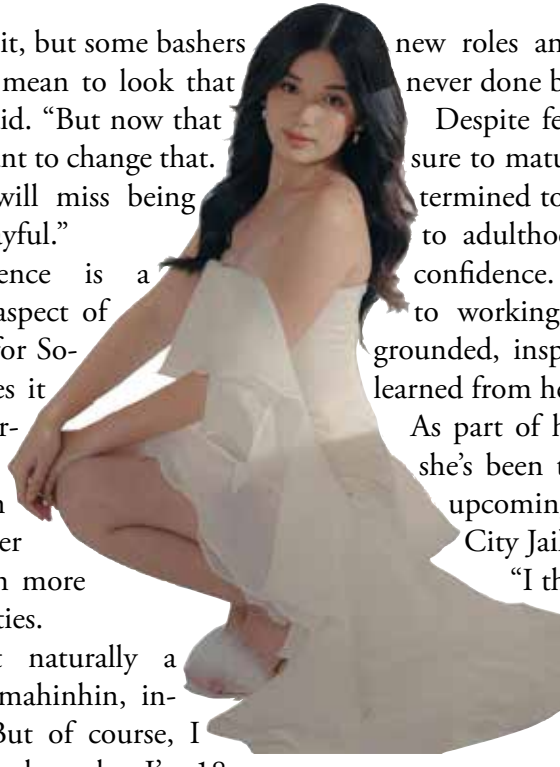
new roles and projects she has never done before

Despite feeling a bit of pressure to mature, she remains determined to start her transition to adulthood with grace and confidence. She is committed to working hard and staying grounded, inspired by the lessons learned from her co-actors.

As part of her “being mature,” she’s been the lead star of the upcoming series Prinsesa ng City Jail.

“I think I will now have a wider choice of what projects and roles I can do. ‘Di na limited. Because some would say,

“Di pa siya 18, ‘di pa pwede ‘yan.’ Now I would love to do different types of romance projects,” Sofia said.



## Federation of Asian Canadians Toronto (FACT) Expo



## Filipino Restaurant Month



## Pop Explosion with Mika Sy



## VOLLEYBALL GOLD

GOLD for Rebels Smash at 17G OCs! Smash had some epic wins over the 3-day finals boosting them into the province’s top D1 rankings finishing 9th overall. Senior athletes know it gets tougher every year to be amongst the top and this year was no different. Filipino player Lizzy Trovato (FIRST ON THE LEFT FRONT) is a member of the team.

## Philippine Canadian Charitable Foundation (PCCF) Induction



## Lions Kapuso Joins Clean Toronto Together Day



1. FreddyLita Mendigoria, Rosary Escano, Mila Nabor Cuachon, Rose Ami, Joy D’Aoust at the Federation of Asian Canadians Toronto (FACT) Expo; 2. Nicole Leung poses with two guests; 3. Filipino Centre Toronto poses with MP Salma Zahid and Congen Angela Escalona at the Filipino Restaurant Month dinner; 4. Taste of Manila founders pose with MP Salma Zahid; 5. MP Salma Zahid, outstanding student awardee, Tony San Juan; 6. Philippine Canadian Charitable Foundation officers pose with Consulate staff at their induction; 7. Ryza Quijano performs with Pop Ecllosion concert star Mika Sy; 8. Mika Sy performs with other JDL students at her concert; 9. Mika Sy performs with the boys; 10. Toronto Kapuso Lions participated in the Bruce’s Mill Conservation Park’s Earth Week ‘10,000 trees’ planting event.

# Pia Wurtzbach awarded Global Fashion Influencer of the Year



MANILA, Philippines – Pia Wurtzbach received the Global Fashion Influencer of the Year Award at the 2024 Emigala Fashion & Beauty Awards, a star-studded and luxurious ceremony honoring the brightest in the industry.

On the night of the glittering ceremony, the gorgeous Filipina-German actress-model wore a dazzling haute-couture creation by Michael Cinco, the world-class Filipino talent based in Dubai.

“It’s magic on another level!” an obsessed Pia said.

“The gown was custom-made for

Pia Wurtzbach with (from left): Fan Bingbing and Michael Cinco

Pia. It’s figure-hugging with a structured neckline and corset back details. It’s made of two-tone black crystals with shades of blue in a stretch tulle,” explained Cinco, who handed Pia her award together with TV host Nancy Yassine.

Cinco himself was honored with the Fashion Designer of the Year award in 2021, one of the top accolades from the Emigala.

## ‘Di masakit’:

## Kim Chiu when teased by ‘It’s Showtime’ co-hosts

A day after her ex-boyfriend Xian Lim’s dating confirmation, Kim Chiu once again received teasing remarks from her fellow “It’s Showtime” hosts but this time, she gamely responded: “It doesn’t hurt.”

On the noontime show episode aired on Friday, May 3, Chiu praised “Tawag ng Tanghalan Kids” season two winner Kim Hewitt who sang Mariah Carey’s “Emotions” for the opening number. “Iba talaga ang Kim, ‘no? Sobrang galing kumanta,” she quipped. (Individuals who were named Kim are indeed extraordinary. They are very gifted in singing.)

Anne Curtis then went to hug Chiu and said, “We love all the Kims, and we love you baby Kim.”

Curtis, Vhong Navarro and Jugs Jugueta also urged Chiu to treat the audience to a “sample,” with Curtis asking her what song she wanted to sing.

Before Chiu was able to say her answer, Jhong Hilario butted in and asked, “Gusto mo inter-

view-hin ka na lang namin?” (Do you want us to interview you instead?)

Some netizens assumed that Hilario’s remark may be alluding to Lim’s earlier magazine interview, in which he disclosed that he is dating producer Iris Lee.

“Hindi!” Chiu replied in a sarcastic manner. “Wag gano’n, ‘di masakit.” (No! Not that way. It doesn’t hurt.)

The show hosts just laughed it off, then proceeded with their spiels.

Chiu and Lim had been together for 11 years before confirming their breakup to the public in December 2023, a few days before Christmas Day.

At the time, dating rumors involving Lim and Lee also made rounds on social media after comedian-showbiz reporter Ogie Diaz disclosed in a vlog that the producer was being linked to the actor.

Lim then revealed their real score in an interview with lifestyle magazine Esquire Philippines earlier this month, saying they are “very happy.”



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## ABS-CBN shows return to channel 2 via Villar’s AMBS

Advanced Media Broadcasting System (AMBS) and ABS-CBN Corp. have inked an agreement that will officially bring iconic Filipino entertainment programs and relevant news to more audiences via free-to-air channel ALLTV.

Through the content agreements executed during the contract signing ceremonies held in Brittany Hotel Villar City, ALLTV will host the airing of nostalgic Kapamilya shows under the Jeepney TV brand and likewise simulcast the longest-running primetime newscast in the country, “TV Patrol.”

Beginning May 13, ALLTV viewers can catch selected

all-time favorite Kapamilya teleseryes from Jeepney TV in different parts of the day, including primetime, and get the latest important news from “TV Patrol.”

Present at the contract signing were Chairman of Villar Group Manny Villar, Sen. Mark Villar, Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc. President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Paolo Villar, and All Value Holdings Corp. President and CEO Camille Villar. Representing AMBS were its president Maribeth Tolentino and its Chief Finance Officer (CFO) Cecille Bernardo.

Representing ABS-CBN were Chairman Mark Lopez, President and CEO Carlo Katigbak, Chief Operating Of-

ficer Cory Vidanes, Group CFO Rick Tan, and Chief Partnership Officer Bobby Barreiro.

The new partnership seeks to deliver enjoyable, enriching, and informative content to audiences via ALLTV available on Channel 2 on free TV, cable and satellite TV nationwide.



ABS-CBN’s flagship newscast ‘TV Patrol’ is anchored by veteran broadcast journalists Noli de Castro, Karen Davila, Henry Omega-Diaz and Bernadette Sembrano, with Gretchen Fullido as Star Patroler.

# 'It's exciting': Gerald Anderson on JoshLia's movie reunion

**Gerald Anderson** showed his support for the upcoming film that pairs his girlfriend Julia Barretto with her former boyfriend Joshua Garcia.

In an interview clip released by Cinema One, the actor expressed that he is excited for JoshLia fans to watch such a "quality" movie from the two.

"It's exciting—it's exciting para sa mga fans," said Gerald.

The actor also shared that he had been in a situation where he was also paired with a former on-screen partner and that would make a lot of fans happy.

"I'm not sure ilang years ago sila huling nagkasama but I've been in that situation. Alam ko na marami silang mapapasaya na mga fans nila. Theyre



both great actors so alam natin na magiging quality 'yung ipapalabas nilang proyekto," he added.

Julia and Joshua last worked together for a movie in 2020 with the zombie film, "Block Z". A year later, they appeared in the music video of Moira dela Torre's "Paubaya", serving as the closure of their two-year relationship.

Almost five years after their split, former couple Julia and Joshua are back on screen together for "Un/Happy for You", which will be helmed by Petersen Vargas under Star Cinema and VIVA Films.

The reunion movie is slated to be released later this year.



## PINOY ONTARIO VENDORS

ABOVE, Pinoy Ontario Vendors (POV) officers pose with Mayor Olivia Chow at their Spring Bazaar;

RIGHT, Children pose with POV mascot Kuya Popoy at the Spring Bazaar.



# Mga sinungaling!': 'Eat Bulaga' denies shutting down due to bankruptcy

"Eat Bulaga" hosts Tito Sotto and Joey de Leon addressed naysayers spreading that the noontime show is ending soon due to bankruptcy.



Tito said: "Aba, may mga sinungaling na nagkakalat na nalulugi raw tayo! Magsasara na raw tayo!"

"Ano? Magsasara after 45 years?" co-host Allan K seconded.

"Sabi ng mga sinungaling!" Tito said. Allan K jokingly asked, "Sino ba 'yan?"

"Inggit lang mga 'yan kasi hindi sila kasama sa top five longest-running TV shows in the world!" de Leon declared.

"Para mapatunayan na tayoy hindi nagsisinungaling at silay mga sinungaling, bukas, bibigyan natin ng kopya ang media ng ating file sa BIR (Bureau of Internal Revenue) ng income tax!" Tito vowed.

"Eto hamon ko: Umabot lang kayo ng 15 years, baka lumuhod ako sa harap n'yo," Joey said, jokingly adding that he just said "15" because he might not be around anymore if more than that.

"Kaya sa mga Dabarkads at hindi Dabarkads, 'yung mga nagsasalita nang ganu'n, mga sinungaling 'yun, 'wag na

kayo maniniwala sa ganu'n!" Tito stressed.

It can be recalled that in a recent Instagram post, de Leon claimed that the Philippines' "Eat Bulaga" has been included in the top five longest-running TV shows in the world.

Joey posted a photo showing "Eat Bulaga" in the top four for being on-air for 45 years.

In the list Joey shared, a soap opera from USA is top 1 with 56 years, a game show in France with 52 years, a soap opera in the US with 51 years, then "Eat Bulaga."

Completing the top 5 is entertainment show "Access Hollywood" with 26 years.

Instagram users congratulated Joey.

"Wow Congrats Eat Bulaga and Dabarkads! So proud of u. Galing! Ibig sabihin sa category ng 'Variety Show' ay Top1 ang Eat Bulaga sa Longest Running Show at ipasok nyo na po sa Guinness World Records. Yey!!! Dala ng Eat Bulaga ang bandera ng Pilipinas!" an Instagram user commented.

"Wala parin talagang tatalo sa @eatbulaga1979 sabi nga nila hangang may bata may Eat Bulaga," another user commented.

# Rochelle Pangilinan said SexBomb Girls' hurt from their removal from 'Eat Bulaga'

Rochelle Pangilinan said that the members of the now-defunct SexBomb Girls were hurt by their abrupt removal from "Eat Bulaga," saying the misunderstanding between their manager Joy Cancio and the show's executives led to their being axed from the show.

In a "Toni Talks," Pangilinan was asked by host Toni Gonzaga about what happened to the sudden disappearance of the SexBomb Girls from "Eat Bulaga," in which she said there was no "closure" up to this time.

"Wala kaming closure. Bigla na lang kaming nawala, ang SexBomb. Pero sa 'Eat Bulaga,' may nangyari sa 'min na nagkaroon ng di-pagkakaintindihan ang mga boss natin at si Ate Joy [Cancio]. Nagte-taping kami ng 'Daisy Siete,' 'tas binabalita ang usapan. Tapos, nagkababaan daw ng telepono," she said.

It was not immediately known which "bosses" she was referring to. At the time, the noontime show was being produced by TAPE Inc., under its producer Malou Choa-Fagar.

The actress-dancer also shared that she and the members of the all-female group initially wanted to show up in "Eat Bulaga" after their guesting at the now-defunct show "Sis" at the time. But they had

to cut their appearance short when one of the SexBomb Girls was informed through a call that Cancio called her in tears.

"Meron kaming guesting pa bago mag-Eat Bulaga, so nag-guest kami sa 'Sis.' Nag-usap kami na kung sino gusto mag-attend, and majority wins. Eh, lahat kami nagtaas ng kamay. Pumunta kami. T'as sinabihan ko sila magsara ng telepono kasi sure na magtatawag si Ate Joy," recalled Pangilinan.

"T'as meron isang SexBomb member na nag-abot ng telepono. T'as nakausap ko si Ate Joy. Sabi ko, 'Bakit?' Umiiyak siya. So umalis kami ng Broadway. Pumunta kami sa kanya," she continued, referring to the noontime show's old studio at the Broadway Centrum in New Manila, Quezon City.

Pangilinan was then asked how she felt when the EB Babes were introduced to the public. She admitted that the members felt insecure at the time, although she clarified that it had something to do with the group's competitive nature.

"Noong hindi na kami pumasok sa 'Eat Bulaga,' nagpa-audition sila ng dancers. Nagpa-contest sila. T'as siyempre, magaganda at bata. Masakit 'yun sa 'min. Parang pinalitan niyo kami. Gan'un ang feeling namin n'un kasi lahat ng SexBomb, competitive," she said.





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# Andres Muhlach gets showbiz tips from twin Atasha

**A**ndres Muhlach is a proud twin brother to his sister Atasha Muhlach, who is a Dabarkad in the noontime show "E.A.T. Bulaga."

"As a brother, I'm really, really proud of her and she is doing great. She is flying high," declared Andres.

Andres furthered that Atasha gave him some pointers.

"Tasha, of course, is always there to guide me as my sister and really my bestfriend. Actually, just recently when I guested in 'E.A.T. Bulaga,' she dropped by the backstage and she caught (me in) mid-prayer because I was so nervous. And she told me, 'Hey Andres, you got this. No worry, you know.' So I really appreciate her for being who she is and being a big help to me."

Asked if he would eventually want to be known as Andres Muhlach and not necessarily as one-half of the Muhlach twins, he said, "Because me and Tasha, even if we are twins, we have our own identities, our own personalities, our own set of skills. So eventually in time, yes."

On how he is as a brother to his sibling, he shared, "I wouldn't say I'm like super protective naman. Tash is a great sister and I care for her

dearly. And I would always just wanna protect her regardless what happens or who or whatever."

Andres has always had a knack for showbiz. "I've always been interested in the industry. It's just that... Tasha is definitely more vocal about it. I was more the quiet type, you know."

"And I kept it to myself and eventually, in time, when I felt confident enough and comfortable, I had to talk with my parents and I really told them that this is really what I wanna do. And I wanna take this opportunity and not miss out."

The Muhlach family is set to star in TV5's upcoming sitcom, "Da Pers Family," which is to come out this May, along with their parents, Aga Muhlach and Charlene Gonzalez.

The No. 1 advice that the celebrity couple would remind Andres and Atasha was to "just always be nice and be humble."

"Another that they would always say is humility is deepest ability. So just trusting in the process and enjoying everything as well. And having fun in doing what you do you have to love it," added Andres.

Andres has been doing acting, dance, and singing workshops with Viva to prepare for his showbiz debut.

His dream role would that be of his grandfather (from his mother side) Bernard Bonin, who portrayed Palos in films based on the clas-



sic comic character of the same name.

Andres has been dubbed as The Prince of Hearts in showbiz. When queried about any celebrity whom he would like to be paired with, he didn't give a name.

"Honestly, anyone really because given this opportunity I wanted to take a chance to learn from other actors, actresses. So if you're gonna ask me who, I can't tell."

He also has a celebrity crush

but didn't drop a name. "I do but siguro na lang next time, I'll let you guys know next time," he simply answered.

Andres was studying Business and Communications in Spain.

"I have one year left in my studies in Spain. But I will not be going back. I will be doing my education

here eventually. Me and my parents came to the agreement that since I'm back, I should start to work already and start preparing for this."

## Humility is the biggest ability

# Pokwang asks Lee O'Brian for child support

**P**okwang directly addressed her former partner Lee O'Brian, as she demanded child support for their six-year-old daughter Malia.

The actress-TV host said this through the comments section of Atty. Bernice Piñol-Rodriguez's Instagram video, in which the latter explained the right of a single mom to ask for financial support from their estranged partners, even if their child is over 18 years old.

"Grabe, thank you [Attorney]. Napakalaking tulong. God bless you po," Pokwang wrote.



The former couple confirmed their separation in July 2022.

About a week later, Pokwang returned to the Instagram post and commented, "Hoy, [Lee O'Brian], ano na? Panay lang party at golf kasama ng mga pokpok? Mag-support ka, hoy!"

O'Brian made no immediate public response to Pokwang, just as he had done before.

Pokwang and O'Brian — who was deported on April 11 — had been in a relationship for around six years and they welcomed Malia in 2018.

# Actress Sunshine Cruz shines on her own terms

**A**ctress Sunshine Cruz addressed netizens' comments about her youthful looks after a recent runway stint at Bench Fashion Week. Cruz, who will be 47 this July, walked alongside Ina Raymundo in a black two-piece bikini.

"It's amusing," Cruz said in an interview with Manila Standard Entertainment. "Some think we've had surgery, but hard work is key. Ina works out almost twice a day, and I prioritize healthy eating and sleep."

The conversation then shifted to her private life, where Cruz prefers to maintain a low profile following a highly publicized past relationship.

Instead of talking about her romantic life, the actress talked about her children instead.

"Let's just talk about my children, shall we? I have amazing children; they're very smart and independent," she said with a smile.

Cruz, a dedicated mother of three daughters, highlighted their academic achievements and her active role in their lives.

"My daughters are thriving," she shared. "My eldest is a Dean's Lister and First Honors student, while my second is also a Dean's Lister."

"When I separated, I focused on work and sought advice from



Sunshine Cruz (second from right) with her daughters Angelina (from left), Sam and Francesca

friends who could guide me well. Before I knew it, my daughter Angelina was turning 23, so

just savor the moments," she said.

Looking forward to Mother's Day, Cruz encouraged fellow single moms to cherish the day with their families. Reflecting on her own journey as a single parent, she advised, "Focus on work, surround yourself with good friends, and savor every moment."

Cruz currently has no plans to return to acting, prioritizing her daughters' well-being.

"I do receive offers but I cannot afford to be in lock-in tapings. I'd rather spend it with my children. But of course, I'm not closing any of my doors. If the project will allow me to go home after we pack up, then I can easily say yes. Right now I am focused more on endorsements," she said.

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## David Licauco at Barbie Forteza, hindi naaasiwang ma-associate sa mga real-life couples na JulieVer at RuCa

Naging isyu habang nasa Canada ang Sparkle top lovetteams kabilang na ang BarDa tandem nina David Licauco at Barbie Forteza, na ang Sparkle Goes to Canada concert raw nila ay hindi naging matagumpay. Nandiyang may mga naglabas ng tsika na diumano'y nalugi ang producer sa Calgary show nila.

“Marami namang nanood,” sabi niya. “Siguro ang naging problem, ‘yung nag-snow. Pero despite that, hindi lang sobrang napuno, pero puno siya. Kasi nga, may ibang nakabili ng tickets, pero hindi nakapunta. S’yempre, mas iisipin nila ang safety over like watching us.”

Binigyang-diin nga ni David na hindi totoong nalugi ang kanilang producer sa Calgary habang ang Toronto show naman daw nila ay punong-puno.

Samantala, kinumusta din namin kay David kung ano ba ang pakiramdam na among sa tatlong pares silang nag-Sparkle Tour in Canada—ang JulieVer tandem nina Julie Anne San Jose at Rayver Cruz at RuCa nina Bianca Umali at Ruru Madrid—ay tanging sila lang ni Barbie Forteza ang hindi totoong magka-relasyon.

“Me and Barbie have built a good working relationship na we know our limitations and

boundaries na outside work, we’re just friends. And outside work,

meron kaming personal life,” sagot niya.

“So, we know that at hindi naman ako ‘yung type na magte-take advantage. We’re happy na even if we’re not real-life couple, we still get to do those things.”

Hindi ba sila na-out-of-place sa dalawang real-life couples?

“Hindi naman, parang



kami inaasarin amin ang mga couples na, ‘ang sweet n’yong.’ Kami, naglolo-kohan lang. So, ganon naman kami outside television.

“Friends, mga naglolo-kohan,” saad niya.

Sa isang banda, mapapanood na nga sa mga sinehan simula sa April 24 ang G! LU! na ginawa pa nila may limang taon na ang nakaraan. Kasama rin ni David dito sina Kiko Estrada, Derrick Monasterio,

**“Me and Barbie have a good working relationship, but outside work, we’re just friends.”**

Teejay Marquez, Enzo Pineda, at Ruru Madrid.

“Mga barkada kami and each one of us, meron kaming tina-tackle na problems from love to family to gender issue and mental health issue,” tsika ni Davids about their film. “So I think, the Gen Z and the millennials nowadays can relate.

“I’m super excited kasi for me, this is my second movie na ginawa and I think, ito ‘yung movie na naging close ko sina Enzo, sina Derrick. Right now, we’re super close dahil na rin sa movie na ‘to.”

Malaki ang casting ng pelikula. Pero sabi nga ni David, kung may isyu man daw sila sigurong lahat noong ginagawa nila ito, iyon ay ‘yung mga katawan nila.

“Ako naman, ang tingin ko that time, ang competition na nakikita ko ay sa katawan. ‘Parang mas batak ako sa’yo.’ Mga ganon lang naman, kasi bata pa kami no’n. Yun lang ang problema namin, ‘yung abs. ‘Pare, may abs ba ko?’ Mga ganon lang.

“When it comes to acting naman, iba-iba naman ang roles namin at balance naman.”

## ‘High Street’ reveals realities of working class, says Andrea Brillantes

**A**ndrea Brillantes believes that “High Street” offers a more mature story, wherein her character, Sky, pursues a career in media.

Brillantes says that “High Street,” the sequel to “Senior High” will give viewers glimpses of the realities experienced by the working class.

“Sa ‘Senior High,’ nasa school pa kami pero ‘High Street’ po is after college. Talagang wala na kami sa four walls ng North Ford so medyo intense po ‘yung harapin naming challenges. Pero at the same time mas mature na rin kami,” the actress said.

“Yung ‘High Street’ po kasi after college so (nagsa-start na) nag-wowork pa lang kami, sabay din sila, sina Sky, sina Roxy na natututo pa lang sa real, wala na sila sa school,” she added.

Brillantes hopes that their viewers will also learn to navigate their jobs as they watch the show.

“Makaka-relate rin sila in a way



na lahat tayo rito mayroong dreams na tina-try ma-reach pero alam mo ‘yung reality sa bansa, mahirap siya,” she said.

“Sabay-sabay din tayong natututo rito, habang natututo sila, makikita rin nila na hindi talaga lahat after college, after school ay perfect.”

“High Street” is directed by Onat Diaz and Lino Cayetano.

“Senior High” ran for 105 episodes, concluding on January 19.

The trailer of “High Street,” released saw the return of antagonist Gov. Acosta (Mon Confiado), who is now seeking revenge after his supposed death.

## No Water Cannon

**WATER CANNON** from P1

Two Filipino maritime security experts also agreed with the PCG’s position.

“We should take the moral high ground on how we fight for our sovereign rights in our EEZ (exclusive economic zone),” said Rommel Jude Ong, a retired Philippine Navy rear admiral and a professor at the Ateneo School of Government.

Chester Cabalza, president and founder of the Manila-based think tank International Development and Security Cooperation, said Manila should not succumb to Beijing’s illegal attacks.

“The Philippines should not stoop down to the continuous and damaging gray zone tactics and assault on the Philippines’ white ship,” Cabalza said.

“We observe the rules of engagement in freedom of navigation by not resorting to violence like aggressive firing of water canons,” he also said.

stemming from a case filed by Manila in 2013.

“By winning the arbitration award, Filipino coast guardians have shown the world our finest qualities



“NOT ONLY SHOCKING BUT APPALLING” A frame grab from video footage released by the Philippine Coast Guard shows its ship, the BRP Bagacay, being hit by water cannon from Chinese coast guard vessels near the Chinese-controlled Scarborough Shoal in the West Philippine Sea. Also hit on its way to the shoal was the BRP Bankaw of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. —AFP water cannon armed attack

in dealing with warfare,” Cabalza said.

“We uphold the rules-based order through ‘lawfare’ ... We firmly believe in dialogues and maritime diplomacy,” he explained.

PCG’s ‘transparency initiative’ winning

Powell, meanwhile, also noted the PCG’s gains in its “transparency initiative,” which sought to expose Beijing’s activities in the western section of Manila’s exclusive economic zone.

“Each infringement and provocation by Beijing in the West Philippine Sea will be exposed to the international community to show how they disrupt the regional stability and blatantly violate the UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea) and international law,” Tarriela said in a post on X (formerly Twitter).

‘Lawfare’ trumps ‘warfare’ Cabalza also lauded the government’s move to assert its sovereign rights.

Beijing claims sovereignty in almost the entire South China Sea — including most of the West Philippine Sea — despite being effectively invalidated by a July 2016 international tribunal ruling

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## Guardian Canada Alliance “Clean Toronto Together”



Guardians Canada Alliance (GCA), participated in the “Clean Toronto Together” as part of the group’s continuing community service. In observance of Earth Day and despite the winter like weather, GCA continue their commitment in helping the community by cleaning up Earl Bales Park today Saturday, April 20 in Bathurst St. Earl Bales Park is one of the parks where Jose Rizal bust monument is located.



## SINE INSTITUTE HOLDS INAUGURAL AND MILESTONE EVENT

By: Tony A. San Juan, OCT.

**W**ith great pride and enthusiasm, the Sine Institute, a Filipino-Canadian culture-centred initiative, held its inaugural gala on April 13, 2024, at Hotel X Toronto, a lakefront downtown hotel in Toronto, Ontario. The event was successfully conducted as a historical introduction of the pioneering Filipino Canadian creative and celluloid organization to the Canadian arts and culture environment.

Under the visionary leadership of Sine Institute Chairman Agnes P. Miranda and her Co-founder, SI President Michael Angelo Masangkay, the charming duo hosted and attended to their many guests, partners, sponsors, supporters, and friends. Ushering the inaugural reception the lively event included a red carpet walk, photo ops, and cocktails at the lobby. A 16-member orchestra provided the evening music in the spacious ballroom.

A. Miranda, the Senior Executive Vice-chair of World Financial Group, warmly

welcomed the guests and attendees and stressed the value and significance of Sine Institute's purpose, program, and projects. She graciously thanked the government agencies and private company partners for their generous support and encouragement. Also, she cited the salient hard work, assistance, and cooperation of the Sine Institute's directors, officers, staff, and volunteers. Likewise, briefly tracing their story, M. Masangkay, a film director and producer, shared the beginning and background of the trailblazing Sine Institute and expressed the hope to meet chal-



The movie "Hello Love Goodbye" starring Kathryn Bernardo and Alden Richards

lenges and opportunities toward a healthy and productive endeavour. Among the dignitaries and special guests who graced the occasion were Federal Small Business Minister & MP Rechie Valdez, MPP Vijay Thanigasalam, MPP Andrea Hazell, Philippine Consul General-Toronto Angelica Escalona, Filipino actress Sylvia Sanchez, Movie Director & Actress Beverly Vergel, Also present were also heads and officers of leading Fil-Can community associations such as the Philippine Independence Day Council, Philippine Chamber of Commerce-Toronto, Fili-

lino Centre Toronto, Philippine Cultural Community Foundation, Philippine Legacy and Cultural Alliance, Pinoy Ontario Vendors, World Financial Group, and other community leaders and notable personalities.

The participants in the 5-hour evening celebration mostly came out wearing their best Filipino regalia and evening attire. Proudly, the guests listened well to the guest speakers and enjoyed the musical performances and ballroom dancing. To while away the cosy evening atmosphere, other guests animatedly chatted about the movies they watched at the film fest. Friends and family took "selfies and groupies" poses for posterity.

The Sine Institute, organized in 2023, is a non-profit, volunteer-run and transformative outfit to develop, produce, and promote filmmaking, movie production, and creative talents in the industry. The Institute held the first Filipino Film festival in Canada that showcased Filipino

SINE page 23

## Andi Eigenmann laughs off split rumors with fiancé Philmar Alipayo

**A**ndi Eigenmann merely laughed off speculations that she and her fiancé, Philmar Alipayo, have separated just because she and their kids went to Japan without him.

The actress showed moments from their recent Japan trip which they enjoyed with her half-brother, actor Gabby Eigenmann, and his family.

"I literally went on a vacation with my brother and our kids, and [came] home to find out, through the internet, that I've just been separated," she wrote.

While Andi did not expound on such claims, it can be noted that her comments sections have been swarmed with netizens who were asking about Alipayo's absence

from the trip, and the pair's supposed breakup.

Some even pointed out that Alipayo did not hit like on Andi's recent Instagram posts. "The internet didn't seem to like that I was grieving the loss of my nanay. Apparently, according to them, I had been faking my sadness about it all along. (Not enough social media posts perhaps?)," Andi seemingly lamented, referring to the recent death of her actress mom Jaclyn Jose.

Due to this, the internet decided that sadness is not that I'm an orphan but a divorcee (even if I had never been married). Helppppp," she added, alongside two rolling on the floor laughing emoji.

Andi expressed her grief in a separate post: "My grief is a lot of me hoping that your soul, spirit [and] energy went somewhere as beautiful as you; and even more of me missing the being, body [and] person that once held it all."

Andi added as caption, "When I walk around this city and I remember that heading home to see her, to sit around, to chat and cackle for hours on end, cannot be an option anymore, I think to myself, 'So this is what it feels like to drown.'"



Meanwhile, Alipayo also dismissed the breakup rumors after he shared photos of Andi through his Instagram page. The pair, who have been engaged since December 2020, earlier disclosed that they postponed their 2024 wedding in view of Jose's recent death.

Andi and Alipayo have two children together named Lilo and Koa. Aside from her two kids, Andi has a daughter named Ellie with actor Jake Ejercito. Alipayo, meanwhile, also has a child from a previous relationship.

## WAGES WON'T HELP FAMILY

WAGES from page 1

Foundation said.

Ibon Foundation showed that wage gap was computed based on the average daily minimum wage and the average family living wage (FLW) for a family of five in all 17 regions in the country, which is at P1,207.

FLW refers to the amount of family income needed to provide for the cost of living with sufficient allowance for savings and investments for social security. Wage gap is the gap between prevailing minimum wage and FLW.

Ibon Executive Director Sonny Africa said that "family" was used as the unit for living wage due to the scarcity of formal wage work.

"Over 4 of 10 employed are non-wage (including so many self-employed) and [the] majority of wage workers are, in practice, not really even covered by labor laws," said Africa.

The Senate has previously approved a P100 wage hike to all private sector workers, and is now currently awaiting approval from the House of Representatives before it can be sent to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. for signing.

Ibon, for its part, said earlier that there is enough data to prove that employers can afford to pay the proposed additional P100 daily wage increase.

### Wage gap remains huge even with proposed hikes

Africa said that while the proposed wage increases — P100 in the Senate, and P150 in

the House — would provide some relief and advantages to workers, a significant wage gap would persist.

"The huge wage gap means that even workers in the most formal sector of the economy with presumably relatively the highest and most stable earnings are still 'working poor,'" Africa said.

"This also points to how economic growth can be made even a little bit more inclusive," he added.

Asked if a P750 across-the-board increase would be more feasible than the current proposed increases, Africa responded that this would effectively split profits between workers and business owners.

"Feasibility' is more a political rather than an economic question," said Africa.

"A P750 across-the-board (ATB) hike will, in effect, split profits more or less evenly between workers and business owners/capitalists," said Africa.

He explained that the economic basis for a P750 wage increase would be to split enough profits between workers and business owners or capitalists.

"The government can also assert, through its minimum wage laws, that such a hike is economically viable without being inflationary or causing job losses," said Africa.

"But what does 'feasible' mean? What is clear is the matter shouldn't be reduced to what's easily acceptable or simply said as acceptable by business owners or capitalists," he added.

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## No confirmation, but Marco and Heaven 'more than friends' now

Last April 1, word got around that young loveteam Marco Gallo and Heaven Peralejo, popularly called MarVen, are no longer together.

The couple, who got paired last year in the top-rating series, "The Rain in España," has yet to admit the real score between them.

The loveteam immediately reversed the announcement and said it was April Fools. Good joke.

"It was just us," shared Heaven. "We were in the middle of shooting at that time. We just realized that we might hurt some fans, so we denied it right away. There was no guilt on our part because we revealed the truth right away."

Whatever status the relationship of Marco and Heaven is in right now, the pair wants to keep it private, although everybody sees something special between the two. "Whatever we post on social media, that's for everybody," Heaven said. "But the status itself, right now, I'd rather keep it to ourselves. That's my take."

Who would have thought that the former "Pinoy Big Brother" teen housemates would end up as a breakout loveteam, which would have successful projects both on TV and also on the big screen?

After being paired in "The Rain in España," a widely-followed series on Viva One last year, a new loveteam was created

with the instant popularity of the leads.

"At first, we always start as friends," explained Marco. "But, if you work together every day, that interests the fans. Before you know it, you're falling for your loveteam partner. You can't help it and you just dive into it."

"We know each other so well. We definitely know when we need each other. When we need to do certain scenes together on the scene, she knows where and what to tap."

Heaven described Marco as her "safety blanket" after appearing together on the streaming platform Viva One for more than a year. They were also seen in the second book-turned-series, "Safe Skies Archer."

Heaven happily noted that their fans support their loveteam.

"Hopefully, fans of our loveteam will still continue to support us and our respective careers. If he will be paired with other artists, I will accept that. If I will become a solo artist again, I will not

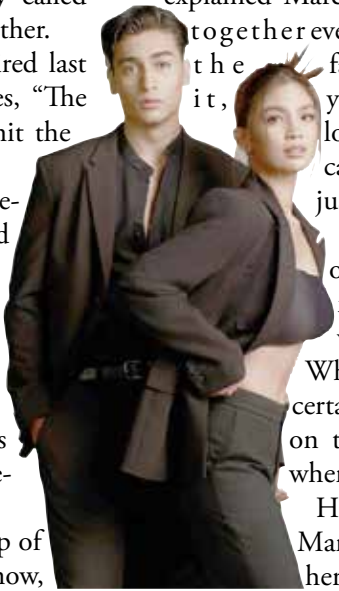
mind.

Marco and Heaven will be seen next in the "Uni Love Squad" (short for "University Love Squad") on Viva One. They will be joined by KrissRome (Krishsha Viaje and Jerome Ponce), as well as HyGab (Hycinth Callado and Gab Pangilinan).

Apparently, the fans saw the ideal screen chemistry in Marco and Heaven. "Our chemistry just comes out naturally," Heaven said. "We bring out the best in each other. We gained this trust and respect for each other. That was a good foundation for a partnership, a better friendship."

Marco and Heaven are aware there will come a time when Viva Artists Agency will tell them they need to go their separate ways for the meantime. They will also welcome it and will be ready for the re-  
alization.

"I think for the two of us, that's okay," Heaven admitted. "Before we even became a loveteam and whatever it is that we are sharing now, we really started as good friends. So the foundation of our team, whatever happens in real life, we are here for each other."



**“Before you know it, you’re falling for your loveteam partner.”**

## Ogie Diaz breaks silence over Bea Alonzo's surprise Cyber Libel raps

**Veteran** showbiz reporter Ogie Diaz reacted to actress Bea Alonzo's surprise filing of Cyberlibel charges against him and his YouTube show co-hosts.

In his Instagram story, Ogie apologized to showbiz reporters who asked for his reaction to the issue.

"Pasensya na sa lahat ng reporters na tumatawag para maging balanse lang ang kanilang report," he said.

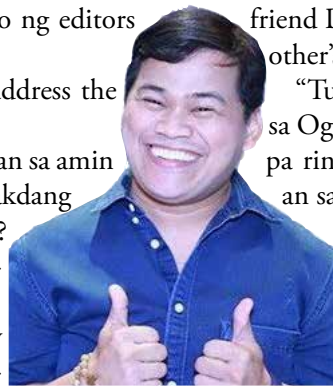
"Naiintindihan ko kayo kung nginan-

garag kayo ng news desk o ng editors niyo," he added.

Ogie said that he will address the matter in due time.

"Makakarating din naman sa amin 'yan para sagutin sa takdang panahon. Pero eto ha? Ayoko nang magpakaplastik," he said.

He ended his post by saying that he still wanted to see Bea and ex-boy-



friend Dominic Roque back to each other's arms.

"Tulad ng lagi naming hinihirit sa Ogie Diaz Showbiz Update, sila pa rin gusto naming magkatuluyan sa ending," he said.

Bea filed three separate Cyberlibel cases against showbiz columnists Ogie and Cristy Fermin along with their co-hosts in their respective online programs.

## Like Living in an Oven

**TEMPERATURE** from page 1

of the year.

KC Libre, 15, is a student at Manuel Roxas high school in Manila, but she is currently studying at home after the school suspended in-person classes last week. "This is the first time that our classes have been suspended because of the hot weather," she said. "We have 47 students in our class. Even with electric fans, it's still hot, and usually there are only two electric fans switched on because ceiling fans in some of the rooms are broken."

"I feel irritated and can't focus when it's hot. The rooms are on the fourth floor, and so especially when I go up and down [the stairs], it's really difficult ... I won't have even started writing yet but I'm already sweating."

"Even in our home it's so hot. We don't have aircon because we are not well-off. I do my school work at night because it's less hot. In the morning, it's as if extreme heat is blowing into you."

"The air coming from the electric fans



Residents queue at the mobile shower provided by the local government and the Valenzuela City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office to cool off from the scorching heat at Barangay Marulas in Valenzuela City on May 1, 2024

is so hot ... The heat inside of the oven ... that's what it feels like."

Philippine weather bureau PAGASA reported that the heat index in 30 areas across the country, including parts of Metro Manila soared to dangerous levels last month.

The heat index, also known as the apparent temperature, factors in both humidity and air temperature to show how hot it actually feels.

The peak heat index was in Dagupan City, Pangasinan, where temperatures skyrocketed to 47°C.

In Metro Manila, temperatures soared

to 42°C at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) station in Pasay City, and reached 41°C at the Science Garden in Quezon City, showing a high heat index between extreme caution and danger levels.

Temperatures from 42°C to 51°C, considered "dangerous," increase the chances of heat-related issues like cramps or exhaustion. Too much sun exposure can also lead to heat stroke.

To avoid heat-related illnesses, the weather bureau recommended to do the following:

- Reduce outdoor activities
- Stay hydrated
- Avoid specific beverages to prevent heat-related illnesses
- When outdoors, use umbrellas, hats, or wear long sleeves
- Schedule intense activities for cooler parts of the day

Unusually hot weather in the Philippines was expected to last until mid-May amid the impact of El Niño and the dry season, according to PAGASA.

## China's military aggression prompts PH, US, Japan, Australia to line up more joint maritime drills



This frame grab from a handout video footage taken and released on April 30, 2024 by the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) shows the BRP Bagacay being hit by water cannon from Chinese Coast Guard vessels near the Chinese-controlled Scarborough shoal in disputed waters of the South China Sea. The Philippines said the China Coast Guard fired water cannon on April 30 at two of its vessels, causing damage to one of them, during a patrol near a reef off the Southeast Asian country.

The Philippines, United States, Japan and Australia have cited the aggressive actions of China in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) as added motivation for them to line up more quadrilateral maritime exercises to assert a rules-based order in the international waters.

This came after Defense Secretaries Gilberto Teodoro (Philippines), Lloyd Austin (US), Ministers Kihara Minoru (Japan) and Richard Marles (Australia) gathered in Hawaii last May 2 for their second ministerial meeting, where they discussed concerns on developments in the Indo-Pacific.

Marles explained that their move to conduct more maritime exercises "is about the assertion of a global rules-based order," a way in which their countries can work together.

Austin also described as "irresponsible behavior" the actions of China, pertaining to its frequent and violent water cannon attacks, which recently injured the crew of the Philippine vessels and damaged their ships.

"They reiterated serious concern over the PRC's (People's Republic of China's) repeated obstruction of Philippine vessels' exercise of high seas freedom of navigation and the disruption of supply lines to Second Thomas Shoal, which constitute dangerous and destabilizing conduct," the readout stated.

## Most Filipinos say complicated rules hinder foreign investments: Pulse Asia

Majority of Filipinos believe complicated rules and regulations hinder foreign investments in the Philippines, but removing foreign restrictions as provided by the 1987 Constitution is not seen as a solution.

Respondents also cited corruption in the public sector (46 percent), inadequate transport infrastructure (40 percent) and high cost of electricity (37 percent) as factors that hinder foreign investments in the country.

According to Dr. Ana Marie Tabunda, these answers show that Filipinos are aware of the difficulties foreign investors are facing in the country.

"Ito sinasabi lang nila what could be hindering foreign investments in the country," she said. "Mukhang hindi ho easy for the foreign investors kasi marami hong restrictive rules tayo eh on foreign ownership na nasa Constitution," she added.

However, when asked about the possible outcomes of removing restrictions on foreign involvement in the economy, the respondents gave both positive and negative outcomes.

"The above results indicate that the public is keenly aware of the factors that deter the entry of foreign capital, including those that have nothing to do with the lifting of the restrictive provisions in the Constitution," Pulse Asia said.

## Marcos says gov't remains committed to eliminate hunger in PH

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. reiterated his administration's goal of eliminating hunger in the Philippines, according to Palace statement.

While Marcos did not refer to any event, a recent Social Weather Stations (SWS) revealed that hunger in the Philippines was at its highest since May 2021.

"When I was asked very early on after taking office, 'What is your aspiration for the Philippines?' It's very simple, no one goes hungry, no more hungry Filipinos. And that's what we are trying to do," Marcos said.

Marcos made a vow of eliminating hunger within his term back in 2023. According to the SWS, one out of 10 Filipinos have experienced involuntary hunger.

Hunger significantly increased in Metro Manila.





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### Eric Quizon says Kris Aquino was first showbiz girlfriend

**A**ctor-director Eric Quizon recently revealed that actresses Kris Aquino and Dina Bonnevie were his girlfriends in the showbiz industry.

On Dina, Eric said: "Ang sarap kausap. Sobrang sarap kausap. Never a dull moment. A very nice person."

But Eric said Dina was not his first showbiz girlfriend. "No, it's not Dina. It was K," he said.

Aster said K refers to Kris Aquino.

"We were very young then. She was 16. I was 20. Kris, get well soon. Hi, Dina," said Eric when he talked about showbiz girlfriends.

Eric added: "I'm good friends with them."

Eric lovingly described his late dad Comedy King Dolphy as one of a kind, incredibly generous, and always thinking of others. "Mahilig siyang sumulat ng mga little notes. I love you, I miss you. Mga ganun. Palaging merong mga little notes sa amin," the actor said.

Eric also said his father was the type of person who would always be there for his children when needed. "Always present

siya sa mga ganun. Wherever you are, he will find a way to greet you.

"Noong mga 90s wala pa namang mga cellphone. So mahahanap ka niya. Gaga-wa talaga siya ng paraan para mahanap ka niya to greet you. Meron siyang ganun," he said.

On his goals, Eric said: "May mga bagay na gusto ko pa ring mangyari. That's why I'm not stopping up to now. Marami na akong na-achieve pero marami pa rin akong gustong gawin."

"Gusto ko pa ring ma-achieve 'yung you don't have to worry about food on the table. Lagi kong sinasabi sa sarili ko na anything is achievable. Lahat pwedeng makuha kung magpu pur-sige ka.

"Ayoko naman na yung family ko na umaasa lang sa mana. Ayoko ng ganun. Gusto kong magtrabaho rin sila. Yun lagi ang sinasabi ko sa mga pamangkin ko na you have to work and study. Ini-impart ko pa rin yun sa lahat ng pamangkin ko," Eric said.

Asked how many nephews and nieces he had, the director said: "Marami. Sobrang dami. Siguro mga nasa 50 or 60."



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## Pepe Herrera dreams of doing biopic of OPM icon Pepe Smith

**A**ctor Pepe Herrera revealed a dream role following the success of his supporting roles in the movies "Rewind" and "I Am Not A Big Bird."

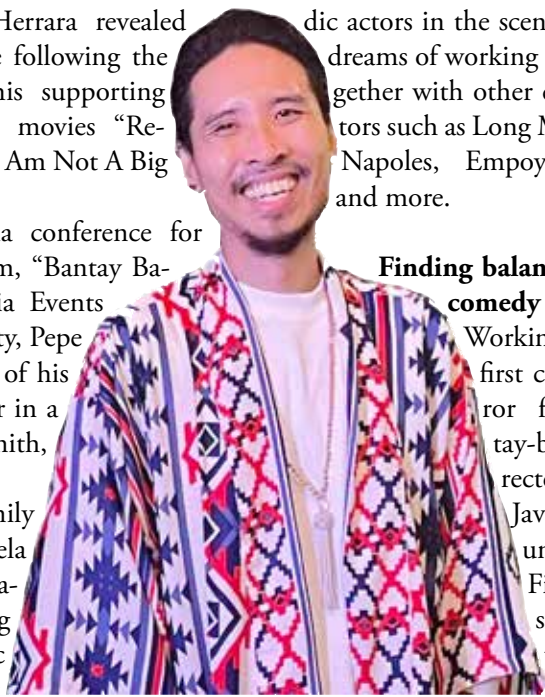
During the media conference for his first lead role film, "Bantay Bahay," at the Valencia Events venue in Quezon City, Pepe mentioned that one of his dream roles is to star in a biopic about Pepe Smith, the OPM rock icon.

"Idol kasi ng family namin yung Juan dela Cruz band, and matalagal ko na rin gustong gumawa ng biopic yung tribute sa isang music icon, or any performing artist, and may matinding curiosity lang ako sa buhay ni Pepe Smith," Pepe said.

As a funny man himself, the actor shared that one of his biggest influences on comedy was Dolphy.

"Lumaki kasi ako na nanonood ng Home along da riles, fan talaga ako ng mga sitcom niya, and dami niya ring ginawa na projects hindi niya lang pinakita na comedy king siya. He also did projects na kaya niya rin mag drama," he added.

Becoming one of the rising come-



dic actors in the scene, Pepe also dreams of working in a film together with other comedic actors such as Long Meija, Jerald Napoles, Empoy Marquez, and more.

### Finding balance between comedy and horror

Working on his first comedy-horror film, "Bantay-bahay", directed by Jose Javier Reyes under Regal Films, Pepe said he fully trusts the director in his role.

"Honestly speaking, I put my complete trust sa director kasi vision niya yun eh. Kung may gusto man ako baliin ng onte, I always consult the director, who is the captain of the ship," Pepe said.

He mentioned that he cannot handle straight horror or any genre that would negatively affect his mental health.

"Hindi ko kayang gumawa ng straight horror sa ngayon, to protect my mental state. Okay sa akin yung mga hybrid genres like horror-comedy,

basta may touch ng comedy," he added.

### Of ghosts and spirits

Pepe shares his thoughts about ghosts and spirits due to the presence of a dark entity in an abandoned house.

"I cannot say that there supernatural, but I believe in those unseen creatures na hindi lang tayo ang nakatira dito. I've experienced that kind of thing, as early as five years old," Pepe shared.

Pepe believes that the "third eye" is open at birth but closes voluntarily due to external factors.

He shared his scariest childhood memory at their ancestral house.

"Yung ancestral house namin sa Calocan, malapit sa monumento. I think 1950s pa siya. Medyo related siya sa Bantay-bahay. Maraming nakatira roon na hindi namin nakikita," Pepe shared.

"So as early as five years old, may nagpakita sa akin maliit na, hindi ko masabing bata, pero parang creature. Basically, meron kaming maliit na grotto ni Mama Mary. I thought may sakit lang ako pero it transformed into a creature, and then it went on pagtanda namin. Kahit sa mga kapatid ko, its either makakarinig or makakakita kami dun sa bahay," he added.

In the end, Pepe and his family moved to a new house and gave their house a spiritual blessing before selling it to another buyer.



Former Ilocos Sur governor Chavit Singson, sponsor of Miss Universe 2016, poses with newly crowned Miss Universe Iris Mittenaere.

## Chavit Singson not in favor of transgenders, mothers joining Miss Universe

MANILA, Philippines — Former Ilocos Sur Vice Governor Luis "Chavit" Singson gave his reaction over Miss Universe Organization's (MUO) move to allow transwomen and women with children to compete at the prestigious pageant.

Singson explained why he was not in favor of the move.

"Ahhhh 'yun nga... maraming... kagaya noon ahhh... noong ginawa ko rito, may nag-o-object, mga women's group," Singson said.

"Kaya nag-additional ako... para lang sa kapakanan ng mga babae, ganu'n... Napagastos tuloy ako. So ngayon, ahhh nagpapasok sila ng may anak. Hindi na Miss Universe iyon. Miss Universe, e, masisira na 'yun. Hindi dapat," he added.

Singson said that the MUO should stick to its old rules.

"Iyon lang dapat. At saka lahat, buong mundo, 'pag ginagawa ang Miss Universe, hotel lang sila," he said.

"Maski noong araw. Dahil takot silang may mangyari. International issue, e. Pero nu'ng nakuha ko, hindi ko sinasabi sa kanila, nilabas ko lahat.

"Binayaran ko na kayo, gawin 'ko ang gusto ko! Inilabas ko sa buong Pilipinas para mabawi natin. Ipinakita ko lahat ng magaganda sa Pilipinas.

"Then after that, sabi nila, the most successful Miss Universe... Philippines!"

## Federal Member of Parliament Hosts Filipino Restaurant Month Event

By: Tony A. San Juan, OCT.

Federal Member of Parliament for Scarborough Centre Salma Zahid generously hosted a dinner celebrating "Filipino Restaurant Month" at FV Foods in Scarborough, Toronto.

In October 2018, Zahid authored the proclamation of "June as Filipino Heritage Month" in Canada.

Philippine Consul General in Toronto Angelica Escalona and Consul Rodney Jonas Sumague happily graced the evening event. ConGen A. Escalona stressed the significance of celebrating "Filipino Restaurant Month" in Canada. She said: "patronizing Filipino restaurants is directly helping popularize Filipino cuisines" in the country. FV Foods owner Mel



Galeon introduced the Filipino dishes of caldereta, fried lumpia, pancit bihon, fried chicken, fish fillet, and kakanin desserts. The program was ably hosted by Madelline Romero, a member of MP S. Zahid's staff.

During the program, MP Salma Zahid presented "Certificates of Recognition" to 3 outstanding Fil-Can student graduates in the GTA. The awardees were Vanezza Hechanova Bucao, Roelle Ann Santa Maria, and Leny Rose Lopez Simbre.

Among the community leaders and association heads who attended the event were Monina Lim-Serrano & Michele Serrano of the Federation of Filipino

Canadians-Ontario; Mary Ann San Juan, Efren De Villa, Tess Lumanlan, Frank Cruzet, Wendy Arena, Nitz Redjik, Philip Beloso, Joy D'Aoust, and Leo Mascarinan of Taste of Manila, Inc.; Sani Baluyot & Rose Ami-Seaborn of the Society of Philippine Artists, Recreation and Community; Lorelei Redoblado & Tony A. San Juan of the Filipino Heritage Council of Canada; Chona Stinson, Pamela Mission & Pilar Bautista of the International Alliance Club of Canada, Tess De Jesus of Far West Herald; Joseph Guiyab, Randy Bucao, Ditas Bactor and other notable community members. (Tony A. San Juan, OCT).

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## Willie Revillame grateful for 'second chance' on television as Kapatid

**A**fter months of speculation, TV host Willie Revillame officially signed a contract with TV5 for a new "joint venture."

"Para lang akong OFW... kung saan ka may trabahong maayos at tanggap ka, doon mo pagbubutihan (I'm just like an OFW... wherever you have a decent job and acceptance, that's where you should excel)," Revillame said during the contract signing on Friday, April 26, 2024.

Revillame started hosting his own noontime program "Wowowee" in ABS-CBN in 2005 but moved to TV5 in 2010 where he stayed until 2015. After which, he brought his variety-game show "Wowowin" to GMA Network and occupied its early evening time slot (before primetime newscast).

In 2022, Revillame did not renew his contract in GMA and moved to the Villar-led new network, ALLTV. A little over a year later, in April 2023, Revillame terminated his contract with ALLTV and moved his show online.

"No bitterness, no hatred in my heart. Marami ng nasabi na kung anu-ano pero sa akin, natural iyon, kasama sa buhay yan (No bitterness, no hatred in my heart. Many things have been said, but for me, that's natural, it's part of life)," Revillame said, indicating acceptance into this



Mediaquest boss Jane Basas welcomes Willie Revillame's return to TV5. 'It's a full circle for him and for us because he was actually with us 11 years ago.' Willie's former shows — 'Willing Willie,' 'Wil Time Bigtime' and 'Wowowillie' — aired for three years on TV5 from 2010 to 2013.

new chapter in his career.

He also thanked his former network, GMA, for allowing him to retain the strong social media following he built while he hosted "Wowowin" even if he switched networks.

"May mga desisyon ka sa buhay na, may utang na loob ka gagawin mo. [But] hindi nila [GMA] pinagkait sa akin yung 24 millions subscribers ng Facebook at YouTube, maraming salamat sa GMA (You will make several life decisions based on debt of gratitude. I'm grateful, though, that GMA didn't deprive me of the 24 million subscribers on Face-

book and YouTube. So thank you very much to GMA)."

Moving forward, Revillame confirmed he will be hosting a new program in TV5 but revealed no further details.

In a separate social media post, TV5 said he would also serve as creative director for the undisclosed joint venture.

"Hindi lang yung bagong programa ko ang mahalaga, even TV5, kung ano yung maitutulong ko — creativity, ideas — kahit walang bayad, I'm willing

to do that for TV5 (It's not just about my new program being important, even for TV5, I'm willing to contribute what I can — creativity, ideas — even without payment)," Revillame said.

"Ang pagdating ko dito, hindi para sa akin, para sa mga kababayan nating naghanap ng saya ligaya at pag-asa at magiging parte po ako nyan dito sa TV5 (Joining TV5 is not for myself but for our fellow countrymen seeking joy, hope and I will be a part of that here at TV5)," the host finally said.

**“Alam ninyo ho, hindi nila (GMA 7) ipinagkait sa akin, hindi nila pinagdamot sa akin yung 24 million subscribers on Facebook and YouTube.”**

## Bong Revilla recovering well and raring to do action again

**A**s a seasoned actor and producer, Sen. Bong Revilla Jr. finds joy in telling stories that viewers can relate to and setting them in a genre that holds their attention. It is driven by the intention to deliver compelling and engaging storytelling.

A testament to that is the weekend action-comedy series, "Walang Matigas Na Pulis sa Matinik Na Misis," with him in the lead role of Police Major Bartolome "Tolome" Reynaldo and opposite Beauty Gonzalez as the feisty, loving wife Gloria.

A quick look back on his beginnings in the entertainment industry informs one that the then young thespian started in the action-drama genre and eventually established himself in it.

He started a movie franchise or series concept such as "Walang Matigas Na Pulis sa Matinik Na Misis" that could also success-

fully cross over to TV. The movie versions starred him and his wife, Cavite Second District Rep. Lani Mercado.

"We started that in the movie," said Bong, "and it made a lot of money."

The success of "Walang Matigas Na Pulis sa Matinik Na Misis" can be attributed to the relatable characters of Tolome and Gloria, as well as to the cultural idea and perception of a husband being under-da-"saya" of his wife. It depicts scenarios of a man living harmoniously with a strong and independent-minded woman at home.

During the interview, Bong was also inquired about the possibility of his show, given the latter's good showing in the rating's game, being aired on weeknights.

"The problem is my schedule," said he, who is a lawmaker, away from the klieg lights.

After taping all his scenes for "Walang Matigas Na Pulis sa Matinik Na Misis" season two, he was off to commence the movie, "Alyas Pogi."

As reported in the news, he suffered a partial tear of his Achilles on the first day of shooting. His doctors advised him for a surgery, and the latter was successful.

"So far, so good, I'm right on track naman according to my doctor," he said.

His Achilles' tendon is healing well. After three to six months, Sen. Bong can do action sequences like jumping and running again. Since miracles do happen each day, ev-

erybody is wishing him a faster recovery.

With that, the filming of "Alyas Pogi" will resume next year, but taping for "Walang Matigas Na Pulis sa Matinik Na Misis" season three is possible this year.

"Kung magheal ito ng maaga, September 'pag ay pinalad... baka nga akong mak-

ng season three isang buwan lang o dalawang buwan. Let's cross our fingers, I f

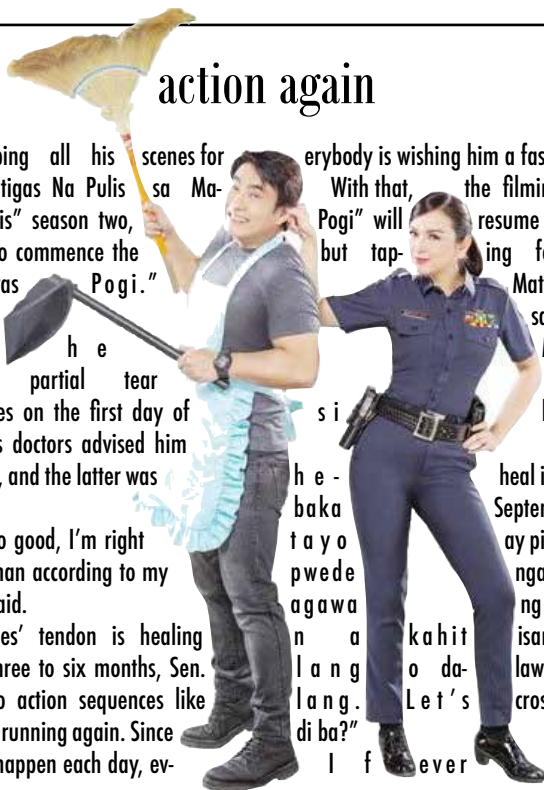
season three

is in the offing, what can viewers expect from it, knowing that seasons one and two of "Walang Matigas Na Pulis sa Matinik Na Misis" focus on Tolome and Gloria?

Bong said that they have already something in mind, adding, "papainit na nang papainit ang storya, di ba?"

He shared that he works with brainstormers, but he has the final say on how the story goes. He is also supported by competent and reliable directors and creatives and he salutes them for the show's "accomplishments and good results."

"What's important and No. 1 is we don't shortchange our viewers," said he. "Parang sinehan lang yan. 'pag nagbayad sila, kailangan sulit, ito ang oras na binigay nila, kailangan sulit (It's like going to the cinema and watching a film, their money and the time they spent on it should be valued)."



## Vhong Navarro happy; Deniece Cornejo, Cedrick Lee, sentenced to life

**K**apamilya host Vhong Navarro turned emotional after the court sentenced Cedrick Lee, Deniece Cornejo and two others "guilty beyond reasonable doubt" for the serious illegal detention for ransom case that Vhong filed. In 94-page ruling, Taguig Regional Trial Court Branch 153 Judge Mariam Biem sentenced Cornejo, Lee, Ferdinand Guerrero and Simeon Palma Raz to life in prison after convicting them for the assault and extortion of Navarro in 2014.

In "It's Showtime" earlier, Vhong thanked the Lord and the court for his win.

"Maraming salamat, Lord, dahil lagi kang nakagabay sa akin," he said. "And of course maraming salamat sa RTC Taguig Branch 153, kay judge at staff ng court sa justice na matagal ko na pong ipinagdarasal."

"Salamat din sa aking legal team sa hindi niyo pagbitaw at pagsama sa akin hanggang sa huli. At maraming salamat po sa ABS-CBN dahil since day one nandiyan

kayo lagi po kayong nakasuporta sa akin at naniniwala kayo sa akin."

He also thanked his fans and "It's Showtime" family for believing and guiding him. "And of course sa mga naniniwala sa akin, sa aking mga fans na kung ano 'yung mga naririnig niyo tungkol sa akin ay patuloy kayong nandiyan, sumusuporta at naniniwala," he said.

"Showtime family, maraming salamat kasi hina-



habaan niyo pasensya niyo kasi minsan lutang ako. Roller coaster 'yung pinagdaanan ko, ang hirap i-explain," he added.

Vhong then turned emotional when he thanked his wife Tanya.

"Sa family ko, salamat dahil naging matatag kayo kasama ko. And of course Tanya, marami akong pagkukulang sa'yo pero hindi mo 'ko iniwan. Marami akong kasalanan pero nandiyan ka pa rin. Hayaan mo akong bumawi sa'yo sa abot ng aking makakaya hanggang sa huling sandali ng buhay ko. Mahal na mahal kita. Salamat," he said.

## KEEP INVESTING

WPS from page 1

potential expansion, the issue is not something that is high up on the list, Manny Maceda, CEO and chairman of the board of global management consulting firm Bain & Co., said.

"I would consider it sort of a second order, one of the factors to consider but it's not a top-of-mind," Maceda told visiting Filipino journalists at a recent meeting organized by Global Ties San Francisco as part of the United States' Friends, Partners, Allies program.

The more pressing issues investors look at are ease of doing business, the presence of an

investment ecosystem, the strength of the market, the quality of the supply chain and the available talent, said Maceda, son of the late Senate president Ernesto Maceda.

In the case of the Philippines, he said the country remains attractive to US companies because it is one of the fastest growing economies in the region in terms of real economic growth and private consumption.

Maceda said the US is already the number one export destination of Philippine products and among the Philippines' top three sources of foreign direct investments. There is also a historical



cultural affinity with the Philippines given Filipinos' English proficiency which helps attract US investors to the country. Frank Levin, former undersecretary for International Trade at the US Department of Commerce and former US ambassador to Singapore, also said the West Philippine Sea issue is not something that would lead to an economic shock for the Philippines. "It's not a convulsion for the nation, or it doesn't collapse

the stock market, or (it's not like) people are fleeing. It's bullying so it is a test. But I don't think there's a direct economic cost to the test," Levin told Filipino journalists at a separate meeting.

At the same time, he said, it's not healthy to have such tension persist especially as it might escalate.

Jose Avelino Flores, co-founder of Silicon Valley-based Plug and Play Tech Center, for his part, said the Philippines needs to market itself versus other countries if it wants to attract more investors.

"I think for the last 10 years what was missing in the Philippines was a unique selling prop-

osition," Flores said.

Having a "unique story," Flores said, would encourage investors, particularly venture capitalists to look at Philippine startups.

JR Calanoc, CEO of Dynamico Space and who helps connect Filipino entrepreneurs with Silicon Valley's resources, meanwhile said it's good that the Philippines-US relations are now on hyperdrive so that investors would realize the potential of Philippine startups. That is amazing," he said, citing its likely effect of bringing global attention to Philippine startups and other companies including graphic and web design platforms being developed in the Philippines.

# Paulo, Kylie & the highs and lows of love and life

**P**aulo Avelino and Kylie Verzosa may have starred in the 2018 movie “Kasal,” but working together on the upcoming film “Elevator” felt like a first-time experience for them all over again.

“During ‘Kasal,’ Paulo was like my acting coach because I was a newcomer then. So this time — [when I’m armed with more experience] — felt like the first because I got to really ‘act’ alongside him,” explained the beauty queen-turned-actress at the movie’s media conference.

“I’ve waited so long for a reunion project, and I’m glad we get to do it with great material in ‘Elevator,” Verzosa added.

Avelino agreed, “It felt like the first time because in ‘Kasal,’ she would always share scenes with Derek [Ramsay], but here in ‘Elevator,’ we did almost all the scenes together.”

Since their 2018 starrer, Verzosa and Avelino have carved deeper names in the industry and even reaped prominent acting awards along the way.

Despite the five-year gap between their two projects, Avelino and Verzosa said it didn’t take much time for them to get back in the zone, embody their characters and develop the chemistry the ‘Elevator’ demanded.



Paulo Avelino and Kylie Verzosa play characters who must choose whether to be together or keep working toward the better future they seek as OFWs in Singapore.

“It didn’t feel awkward [to be back on the set with Kylie] because before shooting the film, we had several script readings and workshops,” Avelino volunteered.

“I’d like to add that we felt comfortable because we became friends [after we did ‘Kasal,’ which] makes our job easier,” Verzosa echoed.

“Elevator” follows the story of Jared [Avelino], an elevator attendant at a hotel in Singapore.

Jared develops an innovative app for Filipino migrant workers.

He pitches to businessmen he encounters in the elevator, hoping to entice them into investment.

All rejected it until he meets businessman Byron (veteran Singaporean actor Adrian Pang), who takes an interest in his app.

But before sealing the deal, Byron instructs Jared to ask his secretary, Bettina (Verzosa), who is also Filipino, to help him refine his business proposal.

As they share their hopes and dreams with one another, Jared finds himself smitten by Bettina, who warned from the start never to fall in love with her.

Eventually, the two characters must choose whether to be together or keep working toward the better future they seek in Singapore.

Asked why the film is titled “Elevator,” King explained, “We use it as a metaphor. If you want to punch ‘up’ in your life [as you would in an elevator], it means

you’re not satisfied or in an abyss. For me an elevator is like that — it’s not part of a building’s floor, you go up and you go down. But as long as you punch that floor number it means you are fighting, it means you want to be somewhere and Paulo’s character is like that.”

In support, Avelino said that while their film is marketed as a romantic-comedy with all the elements of both genres, he finds it more inspirational.

“It’s more of a feel-good movie and it gives a better glimpse of the lives of our kababayans working abroad. I think at its core, the movie is about hope, not just for migrant workers, not just OFWs, but for everyone.”

“We all get confused in our lives — what to choose, what to prioritize — and I hope this film will help viewers decide on what they want not just for the betterment of their careers but for their lives as well,” Avelino concluded.

*I think at its core, the movie is about hope.*

## Is Alden Richards courting Kathryn Bernardo? Cathy Garcia-Sampana reacts

**B**lockbuster director Cathy Garcia-Sampana reacted on the rumors that Alden Richards is now courting Kathryn Bernardo.

Cathy said she has no knowledge about it. “Hindi ibig sabihin na madalas magsama ay nagliligawan na. Pwede namang pure friendship,” she said.

“Pwede ring simula ng something, but wala po tayong alam do’n,” she clarified.

Cathy directed the blockbuster film “Hello Love Goodbye” starring Kathryn and Alden.

Alden was recently asked by “24 Oras” what’s the real score between him and Kathryn.

“What you see is what you get,” he said.

“Hindi lang din talaga kailangan lagi ip-amalita sa social media ‘yung mga ganiyan. You know, sometimes ‘yung mga personal



things that’s happening, better be personal na lang.”

According to Alden, since he and Kathryn starred in the box office movie “Hello Love Goodbye,” they have remained good friends.

Since Kathryn and Daniel Padilla announced their breakup last November, fans of Kathryn and Alden are clamoring for a reunion project for the two.

## Daniel Padilla didn’t stop Kathryn Bernardo from doing ‘Hello Love Goodbye’

**B**lockbuster director Cathy Garcia-Sampana came to Daniel Padilla’s defense, saying the actor didn’t prohibit ex-girlfriend Kathryn Bernardo to do the sequel of “Hello Love Goodbye” with Alden Richards.

Cathy said Kathryn has her own mind and decision.

“Hindi naman si Daniel. Hindi naman kayang hadlangan ni Daniel ang ganong kalaking proyekto,” she said.

“At saka si Kathryn ay may sariling isip. ‘Pag gusto niya, gusto niya,” she added.

The blockbuster director also said that there’s still no confirmation on the sequel of “Hello Love Goodbye,” but they are willing to work for it again.



“Wala pang confirmation. Lahat kami ay umaasa pa lang na sana nga, ‘no? Kung ang ibang tao ay gusto, kami din gusto namin,” she said.

Bandera reported that a source told them that the blockbuster movie’s sequel was in the works right after it became successful when it was released in 2019, but Daniel allegedly prohibited his then girlfriend Kathryn to do it.

“Nu’ng kumita ang HLG, may follow-up agad sana at naka-set na kaso nagkaroon ng pandemya kaya 2021 dapat sinimulan. Eh, umarya ang lolo Daniel mo at binawalan si Kathryn na ‘wag gawin kaya hindi natuloy,” Bandera’s source allegedly said.

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Paul Arena, Gary Tanuan, Wendy Arena have a chat after the Outstanding Student Award ceremony at the Filipino Centre Toronto.

# 'The world is healing': Julia Barretto says on 'hugging photo' with Bea Alonzo

**J**ulia Barretto agreed that "the world is healing" when she was asked about the viral hugging video that features her and fellow actress Bea Alonzo that surfaced last month.

Julia was the latest guest of Toni Gonzaga on the latter's online talk show, which uploaded its episode last Friday, April 26.

Gonzaga asked towards the end of their interview: "The world is healing dahil may mga hugging photos. Is the world really healing when that happened?"

"The world is healing. For me, yes," replied the actress.

She quickly added: "Siyempre, I'm gonna personally speak for myself because I never wanna speak for anybody else.

"It's a moment that, of course, bina-value ko. That's why as much as possible, siyempre ang daming nag-a-ask sa akin, and I don't want to go into details so much kasi ayoko naman that other people would feel like it was some genuine moment," Julia explained.

She did not mention the name of Bea in her answer, but it can be recalled that in March this year, the two actresses went viral after they were captured hugging and talking to each other at the intimate birthday party for star builder and former Star Magic head Johnny Manahan.

Both of them were once under Star Magic when the latter headed ABS-CBN's talent arm. They are now with new agencies or managers: Julia is signed with Viva Artists Agency, while Bea is handled by Shirley Kuan and is identified



Actress Julia Barretto at the 2019 Star Magic Ball (right). Left photo is a screengrab from the viral video featuring Julia and Bea taken last March during Johnny Manahan's 77th birthday party.

with GMA-7.

"Siyempre, it's a really real moment, 'di ba?" Julia asked back. "Kasi siyempre, it was messy. 'Pag na-iron out 'yun, kahit konti, it helps."

Julia said it may have helped, "Yeah, maybe. To fully close it para, alam mo na, the people in the past, you were able to close that with them."

"Hoping that it also gives them peace," she said.

### On Joshua and taking accountability

The two also talked about her past relationship with former love team and ex-boyfriend Joshua Garcia, with whom she will be reuniting in a movie to be produced by Star Cinema and Viva Films.

Julia said that theirs was a public relationship and she learned a lot from it. After that highly-publicized relationship and its subsequent breakup, Julia said that she has learned not to overshare, and to not be possessive over a person or partner.

Gonzaga described 2019 as a noisy year for Julia, who was then only 22.

It was in 2019 when she was dragged

into the much-talked about breakup between Bea and Gerald. She was alleged as the third party.

Bea said in an interview that she and Gerald did not break up, and that the actor just started not talking to her, thus, the term "ghosting" became a popular at the height of their breakup. In 2021, Julia and Gerald confirmed their relationship. They were co-stars in the 2019 movie "Between Maybes."

In retrospect, Julia admitted she did not know how she was able to handle the issues that were thrown at her.

Julia said that she was "palaban" in 2019 because she took into consideration her family and friends who were hurting for her.

She expounded on taking accountability as a result of the 2019 issues.

"Personally, I'm sure na may naging role ako in somebody else's pain and other people's pains in the same way that they also contributed to my pain."

"But I think you know na okay ka na when you already acknowledge na 'I have a role in this. Baka may shortcoming din naman talaga ako. Baka I really did something that hurt somebody.'"

"It's sad to think na baka nakasakit talaga ako ng tao," she said.

She said that part of her healing was taking accountability.

"I took accountability. Hindi naman pwedeng, everybody just hurt me. I'm sure there's some people I hurt along the way," she said.

She confirmed that she was also hurt, "super, sobra," when Gonzaga asked her how she felt at that time.



### SPARKLE IN TORONTO

TOP, FV Foods owner Mel Galeon and Gemma Pascual pose with Kapuso stars Rayver Cruz and Julie Ann San Jose.

ABOVE, GMA7 Pinoy TV Consultant Rosemer Enverga, poses with Kapuso stars Barbie Forteza, David Licauco, Ruru Madrid and Bianca Umali

It tells the story of a naive lass who lives with her grandparents but gets entangled in the schemes of a rich family when she

falls in love with its handsome heir, who hides secrets of his own.

Marian has gained more popularity on TikTok with her dance covers of some of today's hits.



# 'Challenge accepted': Marian Rivera teases Marimar dance in new post

**F**ans have been clamoring for Marian Rivera to channel anew her famous TV role, Marimar, in a dance challenge, and it seems like the actress is going to give in to their request.

Marian uploaded a short clip on TikTok where her silhouette is seen dancing the hip-swinging steps of Marimar

against a red backdrop.

"Challenge accepted!" Marian wrote on TikTok. She added the time that she will be dropping the



much-awaited video.

"Marimar" is a famous 1994 Mexican series starring singer-actress Thalia, who also sang its eponymous theme song.

Marian starred in the Philippines' popular adaptation in 2007, opposite Dingdong Dantes, in the role originally played by Eduardo Capetillo.

# SINE INSTITUTE HOLDS A MILESTONE EVENT

SINE from page 17

talents in films. During the 2-day film fest, ten feature films and 7 short films were exhibited celebrating the essence of Filipino storytelling. Industry-related conferences and workshops were also conducted. Moreover, the occasion was also in commemoration of the 75 years of the Philippines and Canada Bilateral Relations. SINE Vice President Rosary Escano summarized the memorable event "From a dream nurtured for 6 years to a reality born in less than 3 months, the inaugural Siné Film Fest is a testament to perseverance, passion, a genuine desire



to give back and the power of making dreams come true. Let the screens light up with stories that inspire, provoke, and move us all. Here's to the beginning of a cinematic journey like no other." (Tony A. San Juan, OCT.)

1. Marites Beloso, guest, Nitz Rejdik, Gizelle Mirasol and guest  
2. Sine Institute Executives, L-R: Rosary Escano, Agnes Miranda, B. K. Jimenez & Michael Masangkay.  
3. PCCF President Rosemer Enverga and Congen Angelica Escalona poses with the Filipino Centre Toronto officers and guests at the Sine festival gala.  
4. Sine Festival guests Sani Baluyot, Joy D'aoust, Gemma Pascual and Mel Galeon





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# China's Influence is Everywhere

China's invasion has began

"Fr. Aquino also raised concerns after the students offered to rent homes or hotels for as long as five years, but were turned down.

China's invasion of the Philippines was planned years ago, even before they seduced Duterte to be the royal pawn. Our Lady Mediatrix of All Grace prophesied the invasion by China, as pointed out by Ricardo Cardinal Vidal when he was Archbishop of Lipa: "Pray hard, for China's dream is to invade the whole world. The Philippines is one of its favorites." (Inquirer, 13 July 2014)

So, it is not a future invasion. It has been ongoing for years now, but we refuse to see it. We linger in our indifference until it will suddenly hit us in the face one day. The more PBBM delays to quell it, the harder it will be to deal with. We may need the help of the US when we have become helpless.

The invasion is an utter success and is growing rapidly for a simple reason. In our poverty or greed or both, we cannot stop taking bribes. And the Chinese know it. In all the arrests made in the past years, they have been bribing us to the bone. And they are oozing with money.

A bribe of a million pesos is peanuts to them.

They have bribed: 1) the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) into accepting Chinese intel agents; 2) the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) into turning a blind eye and approving applications of Chinese "students" using questionable documents; 3) the many universities into accepting thousands of Chinese "students" taking English courses when they do not speak English, quintupling tuition income, 4) LGUs into allowing the swarming of Chinese in their territories; 5) law enforcers (with exceptions) into releasing arrested Chinese nationals.

The recent capture by the NCRPO of a Chinese national found with high-powered weapons in a Taguig townhouse is disturbing news. Another Chinese national was arrested for a bribery attempt. Confiscated were weapons of war, such as Chinese ballistic helmets, bullet-proof vests, and a red Chinese flag. There were also a luxury sports car with improvised plates and an electric car, both with no supporting documents. (GMA News, 16 April)

The Armed Forces of the Philippines reports the "swarming" by college students in the province of

Cagayan, with 4,600 Chinese "students" enrolled in a private university in Tuguegarao. The anti-Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement pro-China Cagayan Governor Manuel Mamba denies the massive influx of Chinese students in Tuguegarao is a security threat. Yet, these "students" will play a role when the invasion ripens.

Rep. Robert Barbers declared that the "creeping invasion has begun," the foreigners having obtained anomalous "Filipino birth certificates, driver's licenses, UMID cards, passports, and even accreditation and auxiliary memberships in the armed services, particularly the Philippine Coast Guard."

Chinese infiltration of the PCG has vast intelligence implications in the conflict with Chinese warships in the West Philippine Sea (WPS).

"The only sure thing right now is that corruption at its worst has eaten us up," Barbers said. "If these Chinese nationals could buy agricultural lands, enroll in our universities on the pretext of exchange student programs (ominously sanctioned by the CHED), work here without permits, obtain loans from our banks, then leave the country, then we are drafting our epitaph as a nation."

"We have only ourselves to blame. The greed for money and power is killing this country. Unless we move now, we will see ourselves controlled by invaders tomorrow," Barbers added. (Philippine Star, 17 April 2024).

Fr. Ranhilio Aquino, dean of the San Beda University Graduate School, said that Chinese "students" were asked how they could take English courses when they did not speak English, their ridiculous answer was that they hired translators. You cannot get a degree by just listening to translators.

Fr. Aquino also raised concerns after the students offered to rent homes or hotels for as long as five years, but were turned down. They are also swarming parishes adjacent to the West Philippine Sea when there are no schools there. Rep. Joseph Lara has vowed to investigate this, Fr. Aquino added.

The greatest weakness in any resolve to contain the ongoing Chinese invasion is the bribery of poor and/or greedy Filipinos. This is now our national security dilemma.

## Vilma Santos advocates for film preservation and restoration

Award-winning actress Vilma Santos has taken on a passionate advocacy, urging both government and private sectors to support initiatives aimed at preserving and restoring classic films produced from the '70s to the 2000s, which were recorded in film format.

After a special screening of the restored version of Anak at the Frassati Auditorium of the University of Santo Tomas, the senior actress spoke to reporters about the critical importance of safeguarding these cinematic treasures for future generations.

"This effort is really for the Z generation," Santos emphasized, highlighting the educational and inspirational value of these films. "It's vital for them to learn and be inspired by the experiences of their mothers, grandmothers, and our society during those times."

Santos, along with National Artist for Film Ricky Lee, was a guest of honor at the latest event hosted by the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Cine Icons program, which brought special screenings of Bagong Buwan and Anak to the University of Santo Tomas last April 15.



Actress Vilma Santos (left) stars alongside Claudine Barretto in director Rory Quintos' 2000 film 'Anak'

Starring Santos and Claudine Barretto, Anak is about a Filipina overseas contract worker whose social circumstances compel her to leave her family and accept a higher-paying job in a more prosperous Asian country. Unaware of her husband's death, she is greeted with resentment and hatred from her children when she finally returns to the

Philippines.

"Because of ABS-CBN's Sagip Pelikula digital restoration program, we can share these stories with the new generation so they can appreciate works from the '80s, '90s, and early 2000s," shared National Artist Lee, who wrote the script for this drama film centered on overseas Filipino workers (OFWs).

The film received awards for Best Screenplay and Best Supporting Actress (Amy Austria) at the 2001 Film Academy of the Philippines. Vilma Santos also won Best Actress of the Year at the 2001 Star Awards for Movies.



A special screening for 'Anak' was held at the Frassati Auditorium in UST

"This cause has become my personal advocacy," Santos shared, reflecting on her interaction with students during a talkback after Anak screening. "I feel immense joy when connecting with the Gen Z crowd and millennials. Today, I witnessed the students' enthusiasm in hearing about our experiences."

The event marked the CCP's debut at UST with the Cine Icons program, showcasing Santos' commitment to promoting Filipino filmmaking and nurturing film appreciation among younger generations.

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## Jake Vargas and Angel Satsumi enjoy the family atmosphere in 'Pepito Manaloto'

Jake Vargas and Angel Satsumi have been playing siblings Chito and Clarissa in the situational comedy series, "Pepito Manaloto," for more than a decade now.

Jake was in his late teens, while Angel was four when the opportunity of becoming part of the iconic show presented itself to them.

It's safe to say that they're loving every bit of being the son and daughter of Pepito Manaloto (portrayed by Michael V. or Bitoy), who now enjoys a very comfortable life as compared to his down-on-one's luck situation before. Manilyn Reynes is Pepito's wife named Elsa.

If my memory serves me right, Jake's Chito and Angel's Clarissa entered the "Pepito Manaloto" picture five years after Pepito's winning in the lottery. At this point, the family was managing a book store.

"Ang dami na pong nangyari sa character ko na si Chito (a lot has happened in my character's life)," said Jake during the recent press conference for GMA Entertainment Group's "Basta't Sama-Sama... Best Time Ever" campaign launch. Also joining him in the event were Angel, Chariz Solomon, and Arthur Solinap, who all represented "Pepito Manaloto."

"I think a lot (of young people) can relate to him, given his age and being the oldest child of Pepito, ang daming pag-subok na kung ano ang dapat gawin ni Chito sa buhay niya, ano ba ang dapat maging trabaho niya kasi ang tatay niya ay very successful (he's been encountering lots of problems like what Chito should do with his life and what work he should have, knowing that his father is very successful)," added he. "Chito also has a love life, and he's managing his personal and work lives well."

Regarding the latest developments in Clarissa's life, Angel shared, "For me, my character has Jacob in her life, but a lot of things will be tackled." One of them is Jacob's health condition which presents life struggles that teenagers may be facing these days. They will go through them with, as Angel said, "the help of tatay at nanay (their dads and moms), paano kami a-advisan at tutulungan (like how they will advise and guide us in these life realities)."

As artists, Jake and Angel have the privilege to be part of a resilient and successful entertainment program.

"When I started in 'Pepito (Manaloto),' naiisip ko po na parang bagong adventure (ito), hindi ko po i-ni-expect na magkakaroon ako ng second family sa show na ito (I thought it was going to be like a new adventure to me, and I didn't expect that I would find a second family while doing the show)," said Angel, who was referring to her Tito Bitoy, Tita Manilyn, and the rest of the cast and crew.

Since the sense of family on the set of "Pepito Manaloto"



For more than a decade, Jake Vargas and Angel Satsumi have been part of the successful Kapuso situational comedy series, "Pepito Manaloto." They play Chito and Clarissa, the children of fun and loving parents, Pepito and Elsa, portrayed by Michael V. and Manilyn Reynes. Both GMA artists have been given the platform to work with veteran actors and learn about comedy from them. They have also found their second family in their co-stars, who offer them pieces of advice and are supportive of their career.

is strong, stars could talk about some aspects of their personal lives and gain insights from each other's experiences. Jake's Kuya Bitoy-Michael V. is ready to offer the Sparkle GMA artist pieces of advice.

"That's how supportive he is to us," said Jake.

Aside from Jake and Angel, Arthur and Chariz are two of the other "Pepito Manaloto" regular artists that bring joy to the viewers through their funny, inspired portrayals of Robert and Janice, respectively.

"Of course, we first have the script read with the guidance of Kuya Bitoy," Arthur gave everyone a sneak peek at their work process. "Everybody gives their input. We are given the freedom to approach our own characters."

Chariz recalled that "maraming lapis sa gitna, so isusulat mo talaga (there are pencils and papers on the table. So, you can write down your thoughts)."

"Sineseryoso namin kahit na comedy kami, sineseryoso namin ang trabaho namin (we take our job seriously even if we do comedy)," shared Arthur. So, they work and find enjoyment in it.

The stars would also bring food and share it with everyone. Arthur and Chariz could attest to the fun atmosphere on the "Pepito Manaloto" set.

From having such titles as "Pepito Manaloto: Ang Tunay na Kuwento" and "Pepito Manaloto: Ang Unang Kuwento" to "Pe-

pito Manaloto: Tuloy Ang Kuwento," the sitcom will continue to bring fun and inspiration to Kapuso viewers with, as the information from the show's website puts it, "the merry mix of characters" of Pepito, Elsa, Chito, Clarissa and their house helpers and neighbors.

## Claudine Barretto vows not to entertain suitors until marriage is annulled

Optimum Star Claudine Barretto has made a firm commitment not to consider suitors until her marriage to Raymart Santiago is officially annulled.

During a press conference on Monday for her upcoming movie "Sinag" held in Morato, Quezon City, Claudine mentioned that she doesn't have a special someone other than her children.

"Wala pa ring laman ang puso ko kundi mga anak ko. Sa ilang years kong hiwalay, kasal pa rin ako. Ayokong makita ng mga anak ko na may ibang lalaki na umaligid or magkaroon ako ng ibang relasyon until matapos ang annulment namin ni Raymart.

"Hindi ako nag-a-accept ng suitors ngayon although may mga tsismis pero wala namang proof na meron. Sarado ang puso ko ngayon hanggang ma-annulled," she said.

Claudine married Raymart on March 27, 2006. But they separated in 2015. They have a son named Santino, 16. She adopted three children: Sabina, Quiah, and Noah. Claudine and Raymart are currently in a legal battle.

Despite the separation, Claudine said her children love Raymart.

"Kung ano man ang problem namin ni Raymart, sa amin na lang yun. As they grow old, alam na nila kung ano ang nangyayari. I explain them that there are things I have to fight for and this is para sa inyo. Hanggang doon lang ang explanation ko. Yung mga details wala na," she said.

Claudine, 44, said she is excited about the project because her son Santino will help director Elaine Crisostomo in co-directing the movie.

"It's a fantasy film. Tungkol ito sa diwata. Pero yung pagka diwata ng movie is very classical. Talagang super research kami sa project na ito. May mga bidang artista pa ang inaayos namin. Hopefully maayos na namin. Hopefully Claudine, Gretchen and Marjorie. For sure blockbuster yun," said Elaine.

She also said: "Noong nabasa ko ang synopsis, masasabi ko na ibang-iba ito. Isang karangalan na mai-direct si Claudine. Alam kong magiging blockbuster rin ito."

Claudine also said she has no restrictions or limitations when shooting for a movie or series except for the time.

"When I shoot a movie, siguro pinaka late na hanggang 12 midnight or 2 a.m. Hindi na tayo bumabata. Dati kasi ang taping start ng 7 p.m. at matatapos kami ng 4 p.m. the next day. Ganyan ang mga shoot before.



"So ngayon may cut-off na. In terms of limitations, wala talaga ever since. Nung teenager ako kahit kissing scenes ginawa ko na.

"I grew up with ABS-CBN and Star Cinema

and they gave me the best directors for my projects. Thank God at walang nag-flop kahit isa roon. I always put my trust in the director. Sa ibang bansa, ang artista yata ang nasusunod. Pero sa atin, ang director ang captain of the ship. Para sa akin ang artista wala dapat limitations (when it comes to doing scenes)," she said.

Claudine also praised Aida Patana, one of the producers of the movie, who she considers a sister. "Mataagal na ang pinagsamahan namin ni Aida. At my lowest point, she was there. She believed in me. That time halos lahat ng tao tumalikod na sa akin but Ms Aida was there for me."

Also joining in the press conference were Daiana Menezes and Bea Glorioso, producer of the movie. Daiana said she would play a fairy in the film.

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## Unwalkable Metro Manila

It should be a matter of national shame that Metro Manila was ranked "least walkable" in a recent survey of 53 cities worldwide. In a walkability study by Australian insurance firm, Compare-The-Market, 53 global locations were compared. Metro Manila was in last place. This should be an important "wake-up" call, because all of us are pedestrians and every journey starts and ends with walking.

In the Philippines, millions of trips every day are entirely by walking. If walking is difficult, uncomfortable or unsafe, it means that a person may not be able to exercise his or her basic rights or meet basic needs, such as finding employment and obtaining food, health care or education. People prefer to live in places where it is easy to walk to jobs, services and markets. A country that has poor walkability will be unattractive for tourism or investment.

How did we get to this dismal situation? Unfortunately, the Philippines has not complied with its own regulations on sidewalks and has not invested much in quality pedestrian infrastructure. The general absence of proper sidewalks prevents many of us from walking to our destinations, even to places nearby. On most city streets, sidewalks, where they exist, are not safe for walking, filled with holes and obstructions and impossible for a person using a wheelchair, stroller or on crutches to use. A common obstacle is the electricity or telephone pole sticking out of the middle of the sidewalk. Many sidewalks have been illegally converted into car parking spaces.

Our cities and towns have become unbearably hot because trees and greenery were replaced by concrete and asphalt, enhancing what we call the "urban heat

island effect." But this harmful trend can be reversed. With trees providing a canopy over a road, ambient temperatures can be lower by 5 to 10 degrees Celsius. A sidewalk shaded by trees can be walkable even at midday. We can shape our urban environments so that they remain walkable amid climate change.

Oftentimes, poor walkability is the result of prioritizing the movement of cars over the movement of people. A common example is the removal of ground-level pedestrian crossings so that there is no need for vehicles to stop for people. When pedestrian crossings are removed, pedestrians have to walk longer distances in order to safely cross the road. If a footbridge replaces a ground-level pedestrian crossing, the impact is also negative for people on foot — they have to climb stairs and walk much further. Those unable to climb stairs then face an insurmountable barrier. Footbridges are often dark and unprotected at night, exposing pedestrians to greater risk of getting mugged or assaulted.

And then, there is the bad behavior of most drivers who fail to stop for pedestrians, even at "zebra-striped" crosswalks. When walking is unsafe or unattractive, it also discourages use of public transport, because walking to a jeepney or bus stop or train station is often needed. Accordingly, poor quality or missing sidewalks compel many to rely on private motor vehicles which, in turn, exacerbates traffic and pollution and contributes to poor public health outcomes.

If the government is serious about according highest priority to pedestrians and cyclists in the hierarchy of road users, as it has declared in the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, here are specific recommendations for making the Philippines a more walkable place within the next three years:

- Spend more for active transport and accessibility. An executive order should be issued requiring national and local agencies to allocate at least 10 percent of their annual road/bridge infrastructure spending for the rectification and expansion of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and to ensure compliance with all accessibility laws.
- Restore the No Contact Apprehension Policy (NCAP) and focus on violations that endanger pedestrians. Pedestrians felt much safer when NCAP was operational. Positioning cameras at pedestrian crossings will change driver behavior at pedestrian crosswalks. Speeding and "red-light beating" at intersections will also be reduced once NCAP is working.
- Install raised crossings in front of every school. A raised crossing will make a street so much safer for all kinds of road users. There should be no road where students on foot are endangered by fast-moving motor vehicles. A raised crossing installed on all roads fronting schools will ensure that vehicles slow down for pedestrians.
- Implement the mandatory 20 kilometers per hour (kph) speed limit for crowded streets required by Republic Act (RA) 4136. RA 4136 (The Land

Transportation and Traffic Code) requires that the maximum speed limit should be 20 kph "through crowded streets, approaching intersections at 'blind corners,' passing school zones, passing other vehicles which are stationary, or for similar dangerous circumstances" [Section 35(b), Article



1, Chapter IV of RA 4136]. "Crowded streets" are any busy road with many popular destinations frequented by large numbers of people. Enforcing this law will save thousands of lives annually.

- Restore sidewalks illegally converted into parking spaces. An executive order should instruct every national agency and local government to restore sidewalks illegally converted into parking spaces and to penalize parties responsible for such violations.
- Encourage every barangay to have at least one car-free "people's street." If every barangay could have a car-free "people's street," it would not only offer a safe, pollution-free active transport corridor, it would also provide much needed public space in every community that could serve as a public park for exercise, play and community gatherings. Shade trees

could be planted to make the entire neighborhood cooler.

- Enable citizens to report anti-pedestrian violations to authorities using mobile phones. The government should create a mobile phone app whereby violations of any law related to pedestrian welfare can be reported by any citizen to relevant authorities with pictures and location information attached.

- Plant more trees and greenery along every sidewalk. Every LGU should launch a sidewalk tree-planting program to provide ample shade and water retention on every street. Of course, the tree species should be carefully selected, favoring Indigenous species, trees with good shade, and those that will not damage sidewalk surfaces over time.

- Remove footbridges and restore at-grade pedestrian crossings. Replacing footbridges with ground-level pedestrian crossings will make our streets safer, more inclusive and people-friendly. The demolition of footbridges (what many progressive cities worldwide have done in recent times) would be a clear signal that the government prioritizes pedestrians and persons with disability over cars. Enrique Penalosa once said "High quality public pedestrian space is evidence of a true democracy at work." By any reasonable standard of walkability, the Philippines is failing — and it is affecting every aspect of our lives. In the list of infrastructure priorities, walkability needs to be at the very top.

## Alden Richards wants to keep it

Alden Richards remained tightlipped on the real score with "Hello, Love, Goodbye" co-star Kathryn Bernardo, as he pointed out that he wants to keep the details of their friendship "personal."

In his cover story with fashion magazine Preview, Richards spoke about the reported budding romance between him and Bernardo. "Whatever is happening between Kath (Bernardo) and I, I really want it to be personal," he said.

The actor also touched on his onscreen partnership with Bernardo in the hit 2019 film, in which he admitted that he was surprised they earned support the support of viewers as it was their first time working together.

"I was actually surprised [with] how people reacted

to [us]... I don't want to be the first person to say a lot of things about it, but I'm glad that it's being received well," he said of the KathDen craze.

Richards shared that he, Bernardo, and the "Hello, Love, Goodbye" cast built a "solid" friendship, which lasted until today. He also said its success, which is currently the second highest-grossing movie in the Philippines, still overwhelms him up to now.

"The friendship never ended. Naging solid din talaga yung samahan naming lahat [during filming]. And right



## 'personal' with Kathryn Bernardo

now, I'm just quite overwhelmed," he said.

In a recent interview with GMA's 24 Oras, the actor also chose to keep mum on the status of his relationship with Bernardo, saying "what you see is what you get." Richards said he would rather keep it "personal."

Richards and Bernardo's friendship remained a topic of interest after the actor was first seen at the Kapamilya actress' birthday party in Palawan, before surprising her with a bouquet of flowers and a Bacarrat box at another surprise celebration for Bernardo. He also made an appearance at the actress' housewarming party last month.

In a report from entertainment insider Ogie Diaz, Richards is said to have been courting Bernardo, but the actor has not addressed this directly, as of writing.

Mavy Legaspi tells mom Carmina Villarroel there's no need to fight bashers

Mavy Legaspi made his mother, Carmina Villarroel, tear up as he gave a heartwarming Mother's Day message, opening up the criticism his mom became a recipient to at the hands of her bashers.

On the Saturday episode of "Sarap, 'Di Ba?" the Sparkle actor remarked that his mother is strong enough to handle all criticism, saying she and their family need not fight back at their critics because even the haters have mothers that they love.

"Kayang-kaya mo (You can handle it). 'Di na kailangan magsalita (We don't need to talk), 'di na kailangan i-justify (we don't need to justify it) or fight the criticism. Lahat ng criticisms or hate kasi wala 'yun, bored lang sila sa buhay nila (All the criticisms or hate is nothing; they're all just bored with their lives)," he said.

"At the end of the day, I know in their



Mavy Legaspi, Carmina Villarroel, Casy Legaspi, and Zoren Legaspi

hearts, kahit may criticism (even there's criticism) whatsoever, they all have their own mothers that they love. We don't need to fight back," he continued.

Legaspi underscored that the bashers only rely on the posts or interviews, and they don't get to see what lies inside his mother's heart.

"It looks like na hindi tayo lumalaban (we are not fighting back), we don't need to. Kasi yung biggest strength that you have is deep inside there na. Hindi nakikita ng mga tao (people don't get to see)," he explained.

"Yung mga nakikita ng [mga] tao (the only thing the people see) is mga posts, mga comments, interviews, and all that. Pero hindi nila nakikita ang anong laman ng puso ni Mama (but they don't get to see what is inside Mama's heart), and that's my biggest blessing," explained Legaspi.

Maricel Soriano on Senate's PDEA leaks probe: 'Nakakakaba, nakakatakot'

The former "Tahanang Pinakamasaya" host asserted that he and his mother "are back on track," saying that there were events that made him realize some things.

"We're back on track and sana tuluy-tuloy lang 'to (I hope this will continue). Feeling ko ito, 'yung blessing na ibinigay ni Lord para sa atin (I feel like this is the blessing that Lord gave to us), personally, as mother and son na duo," stated the Kapuso artist.

"I guess itong turn of events naging malaking blessing para sa akin (the turn of events became a big blessing to me) to realize a lot of things," he added.

It can be recalled that Legaspi is being labeled by the netizens as Mama's boy after rumors that Villarroel was controlling her twins' lives, especially Mavy's, who at the time was reportedly dating his rumored girlfriend and former love team, Kylene Alcantara.

While they have not confirmed their relationship, Legaspi and Alcantara reportedly parted ways on a sour note.

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