



Philippines, Rice Importer For Life

Is it of corruption, incompetence, bad politicians, or laziness? According to IRRI, the answer is quite simple.

In 2023, the Philippines was named the world's top rice importer, overtaking global behemoth China. According to Statista, which based its information on reports by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Philippines imported 3.8 million metric tons (MMT) of rice in the 2022-2023 marketing year, compared to China's 2.8 MMT. The USDA further said that the country is expected to

TARIFF page 16

WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER

Canada's Filipino communities hold prayer vigils, masses for victims of Vancouver festival attack

Filipinos all over Canada held prayer vigils in memory of the 11 people who died and others injured during the Lapu-Lapu festival attack in Vancouver.

In Toronto, the Filipino community is feeling heavy-hearted after a man drove an SUV into a crowd of people on April 27 evening at a cultural festival in Vancouver, B.C., killing 11 and injuring dozens of others.

"I can't believe it, because it should be a fun day," Ricky Tabanao, who owns Melrick's, a well-known Pinoy bakery in North York.

"We're really sad about what happened."

Over in Scarborough, Mary Ann San Juan, the president and CEO of the LAPU-LAPU page 3



MP Salma Zahid, MP Rechie Valdez, former Mayor John Tory, PIDC President Tom Pan, POV President Paulo Bucud, Honeylen Tan, and other members of the community releases balloons during the vigil at Earl Bales Park.

Canada's new immigration policy favours construction workers but leaves the rest behind

by Shiva S. Mohan

Migrant workers have long been recognized as essential to Canada's economy. But that recognition rarely translates into meaningful inclusion. As Canada embarks on new immigration reforms,

persistent inequalities continue to define who truly belongs, and who remains excluded.

In March, the federal government announced a new national pathway to

permanent residence for up to 6,000 out-of-status construction workers.

Although framed as a recognition of essential labour, the new program highlights

IMMIGRATION page 21



POSTCARD

Makati Cinema Square, circa.1980s

The focus on manufacturing in the federal election misses what could truly help Canadian workers

by Gerard Di Trolio

Canada's major political parties have been pledging support for the manufacturing sector ahead of next

week's election, but Canada's working class is much broader than just manufacturing. Canadians are on edge be-

cause as many as 600,000 jobs are at stake due to tariffs levied by United States Presi-

MANUFACTURING page 18

Skilled migrants are leaving the U.S. for Canada – how can the north gain from the brain drain?

by Ashika Niraula, Iori Hamada

Skilled migrants and international students are leaving the United States for Canada in growing

numbers. A March 2025 report by Statistics Canada reveals a sharp rise in the

MIGRANTS page 6

Gemma Pascual at Sine Film Festival



1. Gemma Pascual with Philippine star Christine Reyes
2. Gemma Pasucal and Mitch Fernandez
3. Mitch Fernandez, Gemma Pascual, Eva Agpaoa and Agnes Miranda (SEATED)
4. Melissa Ventocilla with her parents Ricky and Flora
5. Melissa Ventocilla with her leadership awards



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Melissa Saldua Ventocilla is feeling happy with Flora S. Ventocilla and Ricky Panganiban Ventocilla.

As my undergraduate journey comes to an end, I'm incredibly proud to share that I've been awarded the TMU Psychology and Faculty of Arts Dennis Mock Student Leadership Award!

This award is given to one graduating student per program/category at my university who has

demonstrated leadership and made meaningful contributions to student life through extracurricular involvement.

This past year has been the most chaotic I've ever experienced, but moments like this make it all feel so worth it. I'm beyond grateful to have shared this journey with the most hardworking peers and friends.

Thank you to Mama and Papa for always being so supportive – this one's for you. ♡



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Honey Shot

Isabella, 13 years old plays volleyball and badminton. She goes to school at Father Daniel Catholic school. Someday, she wants have a career that is business-related. She can sing and dance. She is a student of JDL School of Performing Arts. She is the daughter of Cynthia and Jojo.

Isabella Puri

A Community United in Grief and Strengthened by Hope



In the wake of the tragic events at the Lapu-Lapu Festival in Vancouver on April 26, 2025, the Filipino community in Toronto came together in solemn remembrance of the victims and in heartfelt prayer for all those affected.

A special mass was celebrated by Fr. Ben Ebcas, drawing members of the community and dignitaries alike. Among those in attendance were Consul General Angelica Escalona, Consul Rodney Jonas Sumague, and Rosemer Enverga, President of the Philippine Canadian Charitable

Foundation (PCCF), accompanied by PCCF members Jose Banduyang Jr., Lilac Cana, and Loida Cox.

The gathering became a powerful reflection of the Filipino community's deep solidarity and compassion—a reminder that in times of tragedy, we find strength not only in faith, but in each other, and that together, we can begin to heal and rise with hope.



The International Children's Day Festival was held last May 3, 2025 at Nathan Philips Square, Toronto. PCCF Starlets Brianna, Natalie and Eliyanna did an amazing job performing at the event and representing the Filipino community... Great job everyone!



Congen Angelica Escalona, PIDC's Suzy Llanera, Agnes Miranda, and Jean Pardo attend the PIDC Vigil at Earl Bales Park.

As one of the active members of the Philippine Independence Day Council (PIDC), co-organizer of the Candlelight Vigil held at Earl Bales Park, and in partnership with Pai of SukhoThai, I was deeply moved by the Filipino community's resilience and unity as we came together to honor the victims of the recent tragedy at the Lapu-Lapu Festival in Vancouver, BC.

Moments like this remind us of the strength of our shared spirit – that in times of sorrow, we find solace in each other. By Jean Pardo

Queens in one frame: Kathryn Bernardo, Nadine Lustre grace magazine cover

Actresses Kathryn Bernardo (left) and Nadine Lustre (right) on the cover of Cosmopolitan PH

Kathryn Bernardo and Nadine Lustre showed their mutual admiration for each other as they share the spotlight for a cover shoot by a popular magazine.

Cosmopolitan Philippines shot the two teen queens, who were arguably the biggest names in pop culture in their teen years, and even until today. Both women shared what they think of each other in excerpts shared by the magazine on its Instagram post. "I really admire how [Kath] stepped into her own power. She's always been graceful and grounded, but there's this quiet strength she carries now—like she's fully owning her space. She's inspiring a lot of women to do the same," Nadine said. Her contemporary, Kathryn, has similar words for her: "[Nadine] is just very inspiring. I think there's something powerful about a woman when she's unapologetically being herself. I think she's very authentic." The shoot was



in collaboration with a popular haircare brand.



Rovina Lazaro, Rose Seaborn, Mitzi Faigal and Joy D'aoust enjoy the Filipino Centre, Toronto 25th Anniversary dinner gala.

Filipinos hold vigils for Vancouver Lapu-Lapu festival attack

LAPU-LAPU from page 1

Filipino Centre of Toronto, says members of her community are pained and grief-stricken following the tragedy, but also concerned for their loved ones.

"People are connected. [Everyone] in the Filipino community has someone [in Vancouver], a friend or a relative, whatever, there is a connection," she said.

The various Filipino associations of Toronto, led by the Philippine Independence Day Council (PIDC), The Knights of Rizal, and others held a Candle Vigil at Earl Bales Park, Toronto in solidarity and sympathy with our Filipino community in Vancouver, who are now in mourning, for the loss of lives, with some still recovering in hospitals due to serious injuries.

In attendance are some of the city's luminaries, notably former mayor John Tory, City Medical Officer of Toronto, Dr. Eileen De Villa, Phil. Consul General Angelica Escalona and newly reelected MP Rechie Aileen Valdez, among others.

"We have this spirit called Bayanihan, of helping one another," says Dr. Eileen de Villa.

"We know that part of healing is coming together."

Let's continue praying for the victims of this horrible tragedy.

At the end of the vigil, white balloons were released. Releasing white balloons as a memorial gesture is a common practice at funerals and memorial services, often symbolizing the release of a loved one's spirit into the sky. The white color is often associated with peace, purity, and new beginnings. Balloon releases can provide a sense of



"We know that part of healing is coming together," says Dr. Eileen de Villa.

closure and allow mourners to reflect on their loss. The balloons were donated by Honeylen Tan.

On April 28, the Society of Philippine Artists, Recreation and Community (SPARC), which organizes the annual Taste of Manila festival every August near Bathurst Street and Wilson Avenue, said it is "deeply saddened and shaken" by the attack.

"We extend our heartfelt sympathies to the families and kababayans affected," SPARC wrote in a statement.

The organization went on to say that it is taking "extra steps to strengthen security measures" for this year's festival.

"Your safety is our top priority."

Taste of Manila organizer Rose Seaborn, said they were "really shocked," adding that tragedy has also raised a number of questions.

"As an organizers, what came to my mind is where did they lack in planning, most especially in terms of safety and security?" she said.

Those questions are also on the minds of city officials, as Toronto gets set for another busy summer of street festivals and community events.

"I will do everything I can as the mayor of Toronto to help keep people safe,"

Mayor Olivia Chow vowed.

Philippine Independence Day Council (PIDC) and Thai Restaurateur Pai jointly organized a vigil at Earl Bales Park last April 30.

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto is heartbroken by the tragic events in Vancouver, where a vehicle struck a crowd celebrating the Lapu Lapu Day Festival.

We extend our deepest condolences to the victims, their families, and the Filipino-Canadian community.

An attack on any community is an attack on all of us. We stand in solidarity with the Filipino community during this difficult time.

PEI Islanders come together to mourn lives lost

More than 100 Islanders including members of the P.E.I. Filipino community attended a Mass at St. Dunstan's Basilica in downtown Charlottetown April 30 evening to pray.

"I really feel sorry about the people — those who died, that got injured, and most of all for those who survived, because they're the ones that will be keeping this in their heart and their mind," says Raymundo Yu.

He's been a member of the Filipino community on P.E.I. for over three decades and helped organize the event.

The community has a lot of support in P.E.I., Yu said.

"It's really important because people who experience this, people whose families were killed, they need someone to hold them strong by doing this, by praying for them, to remind them there is still a God that will help us," Yu said.

Billy Bautista is the president of the Filipino Association of Prince Edward Island. He learned of Saturday night's attack over social media.

"It really feels bad and really devastating. Our heart is broke. We don't have any rela-

tives there but they are our countrymen, fellow Filipinos. We care for them, they care for us," Bautista said.

The greater Filipino community on P.E.I. is feeling the same way, he said.

Bautista says if an SUV can ram into a street festival in Vancouver, it could happen elsewhere in the country too.

"People, we don't know what's on their mind now," he said.

Montreal Filipino community holds vigil

Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal secretary Jeannette Perignon speaks about the local reaction to the tragedy in Vancouver.

Montreal's Filipino community held a prayer vigil and townhall April 29 evening to mourn the victims of the Lapu Lapu festival attack in Vancouver.

"It was terrible. I was shocked because our Filipino community is quite peaceful," said Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal Secretary Jeannette Perignon.

She says she can't recall another time in Canada's history when the Filipino community was targeted on such a large scale.

PINAY, the Filipino Women's Organization of Quebec, says it hopes April 28 vigil will bring people together so they can heal collectively.

"We denounce this violence act and call for swift justice for the victims and their families."

'We are resilient': Nova Scotia Filipinos mourns

In Nova Scotia, members of the Filipino-Canadian community are speaking out in support of the victims and their families.

"We are resilient. And during this moment of difficulty and challenges that

Rufa Mae Quinto 'free as a kite' after dismissed securities violation case

Rufa Mae Quinto could not seem to contain her elation as she announced that the complaint for alleged violation of the Securities Regulation Code against her was dismissed.

The said complaint stemmed from her prior endorsement of skincare company Dermacare, which has been linked to an alleged investment scam.

Mary Louise Reyes, one of Quinto's legal team, confirmed the dismissal of the case through her Instagram Stories on Saturday, May 3.

"On behalf of Ms. Rufa Mae Quinto, gusto po naming magpasalamat nang taos-puso sa lahat ng nag-HELP HELP HOORAY! lahat ng sumuporta, nagdasal, naniwala, at hindi agad nanghusga. You stood by her, and that kind of loyalty and faith meant everything to her," Reyes said.

"We confirm that on April 24, 2025, the Regional Trial Court of Pasay officially DISMISSED the complaint filed against Ms. Quinto involving alleged violations of the Securities Regulation Code (SRC)," she added.

Reyes further explained, "The dismissal was made 'without prejudice'—ibig sabihin, hindi ito tungkol sa kung guilty o innocent si Ms. Quinto, but because of a legal principle called primary jurisdiction. Simply put, ang mga ganitong klase ng reklamo ay dapat muna isinasampa sa Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) at hindi agad sa korte. The SEC is the proper agency na may authority para i-review at i-determine kung may violation talaga."

Reyes then underscored that Quinto respects that legal process and that she will cooperate should there be a proper filing before the SEC. "Ipaglalaban at papatunayan [po namin] ang kanyang innocence."

Quinto, for her part, showed herself all smiles amid the court's decision.

"FFF hooray! Na-quash na case! I'm free as a kite! Ma-layang-malaya!" she said via her Instagram page. "To GOD be the GO GO GLORY!"

Quinto further shared that she pampered herself by visiting an aesthetic clinic, teasing as well that she was "preparing for something new and big."

"Iba din nagagawa kapag malaya sa kaso!" she exclaimed. "Salamat sa inyong lahat na naniwala at nagtiwala sa akin!"

Quinto turned herself in to the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) last January following an arrest warrant in relation to the alleged Dermacare investment scam. The actress was released from custody after posting bail amounting to P1.7 million.

Aside from Quinto, Neri Naig also faced syndicated estafa and securities violation cases as a celebrity endorser of Dermacare. These complaints were dismissed in March for lack of probable cause.

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🙄🙄 In elections, be careful what you wish for 😊🙄



Vote for Change

This was the keyword for Pierre Poilievre and the Conservatives. Change is coming, they say. It's time for a change. Of course, they were referring for the voters to change the sitting Liberals who has been in power for three terms already. And under the Liberals, cost of living has gone up from groceries to clothes to rent to housing, which, citizens all over the world has experienced and put the blame on whoever is the sitting leader and /or party. Ironically, some of the voters who listened where the majority in the riding of Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre where they voted him out and elected Liberal Party candidate Bruce Fanjoy with 50.8 per cent of the vote, receiving 43,900 votes, compared to 38,675 votes for Poilievre.

In fact, if voters really wanted change, they could have voted for the NDP, who has never been in power federally in Canada, and thus never formed a government. As NDP leader Jagmeet Singh said, nothing changed for the better for the people when the Liberals or Conservatives were in power.

NDP's founding leader, Tommy Douglas (1961–71) was voted the "Greatest Canadian" in a public poll by the CBC in 2004 and is best known as the father of universal health care in Canada, having introduced the country's first government-funded health insurance in Saskatchewan in 1947.

Under a minority Liberal government, the NDP was able to introduce pharmacare, a universal public drug plan and also dental care.

They were also able to force the Liberals to introduce \$10 a day child care.

But despite those achievements, Canadians are not willing to vote for them to be in power federally.

No to becoming 51st state

Stephen Harper told a crowd in Ottawa February 11 that if he were still prime minister, he would accept "any level of damage" to Canada, rather than see it join the United States as the 51st state.

And we Canadians were focused on that issue, the threat of Trump taking over in Canada. We forgot about the high cost of living.

Ironically, Pierre kept the high cost of living as the focus of his campaign. He never mentioned the threat of Trump often. He tried to show that the problems we were having now were the result of 3 terms of Liberal rule.

Sadly, it did not work.

What happened to the world order?

Before President Donald Trump came into power in 2017, the Republican party stood for law and order and the Democratic party was the party known for chaos. The Democratic convention in Chicago of 1968 was marked by violent protests. The current Chicago Mayor Richard Joseph Daley made a statement about the police handling of the protests. Daley, who never lost his blue-collar Chicago accent, was known for often mangling his syntax and other verbal gaffes. Daley made one of his most memorable verbal missteps in 1968, while defending what the news media reported as police misconduct during that year's violent Democratic convention, stating, "Gentlemen, get the thing straight once and for all – the policeman isn't there to create disorder, the policeman is there to preserve disorder." Daley's reputation for misspeaking was such that his press secretary Earl Bush would tell reporters,

"Write what he means, not what he says." The Republican followers were known for their adherence to law and order. They are not known for attending rallies.

In Canada, the equivalent of the Democratic party could be the Liberal and the NDP. The Conservatives would be the equivalent of the Republican party. The Liberal/NDP voters are fond of holding rallies after losing an election. I remember one election where they held a rally at Toronto's Nathan Phillips Square shouting "democracy now." It is ironic, considering, we just held an election.

With the era of President Trump, the Republican and the Conservative followers have become the chaotic ones, specially after the pandemic, resisting vaccination drives, spreading news that vaccines cause death and other diseases. Now, it's the Liberals and Democrats who are trying to restore law and order. In fact, in the USA, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who is the current Secretary of Health and Human Services in the United State is known for spreading statements like "vaccines causes autism." In his post on X, Kennedy said fluoride was "associated with arthritis, bone fractures, bone cancer, IQ loss, neurodevelopmental disorders, and thyroid disease" and has ordered the removal of it from all US water systems from public water.

Oh well. As Bob Dylan song title says, "The Times They Are a-Changin'."

Success may breed enmity but...

It's not just Filipinos who are

divided, who fight during good times. Ironically, it's not modesty or an act of self-critique when we say we Filipinos fight among ourselves or that we bring down others when they succeed. It's more an act of asking for attention like shouting "look at us Filipinos, we are fighting among ourselves. Pay attention to us" We want to believe that we are the only "talangka" in the world. It's actually, human nature, not exclusive to us Filipinos. There's quotations on success like "friends want you to do well, but not too well" 😊 or "people Want You to Do Well, but Not Better Than Them." 😊 And the winner is Gore Vidal's "It is not enough to succeed. Others must fail" and "Whenever a friend succeeds, a little something in me dies." 😊

Which brings us to the next human nature, compassion.

...tragedy brings empathy

It was evident in September 11, 2001 when Canadians living beside a small airport in a town in Newfoundland opened their doors to 7000 strangers when their planes were diverted there.

And it is evident now when the Filipino Lapu-Lapu festival in Vancouver became a site of tragedy as one mentally ill driver mowed down people and killed 11 and injured 32 more. Filipinos and non-Filipinos all over Canada, the Philippines and the world held vigils, prayers and masses and offered words of consolation, sympathy to the families of the victims. Words help, heals, or at least lessen the pain of what they are feeling.

Success may breed enmity but tragedy brings empathy. 🙄

Kiko Estrada follows in grandfather's footsteps in 'Totoy Bato' adaptation

Following his success in Lumuhod Ka sa Lupa on TV5, Kiko Estrada is diving into a new challenge, headlining the highly anticipated remake of the classic action film Totoy Bato, also on TV5.

The 32-year-old Kiko shares his excitement for the project, which honors his grandfather's legacy while allowing him to step into the shoes of a beloved character.

"It's my next project after Lumuhod Ka sa Lupa, and I've

started preparations for the character I'll play, especially on the physical aspect, like hitting the gym to get fit," he said.

The actor shared that he has a special connection to the project, revealing that Totoy Bato is one of his grandfather, the late Paquito Diaz's, most notable movies from 1977. It was top-billed by the late Fernando Poe Jr.



Kiko explained that his grandfather means everything to him, as he raised him and was the main reason he entered acting. Thus, he promised to give his best for the role.

Apart from the original film, Totoy Bato was first made into a television series by GMA-7, starring Robin Padilla in the title role in 2009. Kiko revealed that he is already practicing boxing and that he had long wanted to star in the remake of Totoy Bato.

"Actually, what we did with Lumuhod Ka sa Lupa was trial and error. But with Totoy Bato, it's going to be all the good ones. It's our goal that its quality is like that of a movie."

It would be interesting if his father, Gary Estrada, were also part of the project.

"Actually, it's my wish. I thought it would materialize.

I wanted him. But I guess he wasn't given permission. I don't know about his contractual obligations," he revealed.

"I'm certain that if he could do it, then he will. But it's sad. We have contract rules to follow, and I understand being an actor myself. Perhaps it's not meant to happen at this point. Anyway, there's still next time, right?" Kiko ended.

While known publicly as the son of actors Gary Estrada and Cheska Diaz, Kiko shared that it was his grandparents, particularly Josefa and the late Paquito Diaz, who raised him and shaped his values.

"I grew up with my lolo and lola. They were everything to me. It was with them that I learned the true meaning of family and hard work," Kiko said, reminiscing about his time with his grandmother.

"She was always there, watching every show I did,

cheering me on. Even though she's no longer with us, everything I do, every step I take, I do it for her," he continued.

The bond with his grandparents was especially significant to him, as he spent much of his childhood with them. Kiko recalled how his grandmother would still watch his shows and offer critiques.

"He was my biggest fan, and I will always carry that with me," shared Kiko.

Kiko has always had a special relationship with his grandparents, which shaped the actor he is today. His grandmother was the foundation of his emotional resilience, and her passing left a void in his heart that he continues to feel.

"I miss her so much. I wish she could see me now. This is for her. Everything I achieve, it's all because of her love and support," he added.

"I'm fully invested in this. I want to do this right for my family, for the audience, and for my lola," he stated.

PERSPECTIVE AND PERCEPTION

Glimpses On Significant Developments In The Philippines



Tony A. San Juan, OCT.

FILIPINO VOTERS ELECTION PRIORITIES

The January 17 to 20, 2025, survey by Social Weather Stations (SWS) indicates that “economic concerns and basic social services” are the leading factors that will influence Filipino voters’ choices in the May 12, 2025, national mid-term elections. The survey shows that 1) 94% of Filipinos would support candidates prioritizing “increasing employment opportunities and developing agriculture to ensure food security” 2) 93% say they would back candidates advocating for a “stronger health system or healthcare”, 3) “Equal access to education and workers’ rights, including overseas Filipino workers’ welfare”, with 92% support, 4) 87% highlighted growing concern about climate change, climate action and disaster preparedness, 5) 87% would back those “focusing on poverty and hunger reduction” 6) 85% would vote for candidates who promise “to control prices of basic goods and services.” 7) 83% who would defend Philippine sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea. Other top considerations include issues of illegal drugs, energy security and the



use of renewable energy, fighting common crimes and the promise to eradicate graft and corruption. “Maging totoo o hindi man ang mga prayoridad na pinili ng mga kababayan natin sa ganitong pag-aaral at pag-susuri, ay lumalabas pa rin ang katothanan na ang ay nais nilang piliin at ihalal ay ang mga kandidato na mag-bibigay prayoridad sa pag-gawa ng batas para makatulong sa sambayang Filipino. Ngunit, sa kabila ng ating karanasan ay hindi kaya mauwi na naman sa pangako lamang at makakalimutan ito pagkatapos ng halalan o manalo o maluklok sila sa puwesto? Ay naku, ating bayang sinilangan, laging kawa-wa parati si Juan de la Cruz!”

FILIPINO SHIFTING MINDSET?

According to a 2024 study by global research firm Ipsos, it was found that the “The unpredict-

able nature of life has sparked a cultural shift among Filipinos, with most adopting the mindset of “You Only Live Once” (YOLO). The study showed that “8 in 10 Filipinos prioritize living in the moment due to uncertainties about the future.” This figure, the report stated, shows that it “surpasses the global average of 64% who share the YOLO mindset, with the Philippines ranking third, following Hong Kong and Thailand.” This aligns with another finding that people worldwide highly value personal control over their lives, seeing it as the “ultimate sign of success.” The survey suggests that “as the future feels increasingly uncertain, more people are choosing to focus on the present, seeing it as more rewarding than long-term planning.” There is now “a generational disconnect when it comes to milestones like buying homes, getting married

and starting families,” the study said, attributing this shift to financial hardships. Main factors shaping this cultural shift and affecting this trend include climate change, escalating geopolitical conflicts, persistent inequality and fears of another pandemic. “Paano na kaya haharapin at tatanggapin ng mga karamihan ang isyung ito para magkaroon at mai-tuloy ang kasabihang habang may buhay ay may pag-asa? Hindi yong kantang “que sera, sera, whatever will be will be” ang susundin. Marami pang paraan para maibalik o mabawi ang karapat-dapat na alintuntunin at mabigyang halaga ang mabuting aspirasyon at magandang katotohanan sa buhay ng tao.”

MICHELIN GUIDE COMING TO TOWN

For the first time, the Michelin Guide, a popular and prestigious international culinary guide book series, is reported to “officially debut “ in the Philippines. According to Wikipedia, the Michelin Guides are a series of guidebooks created and published by the French tire company Michelin since 1900 to support the growth of automobile mobility and have since helped individuals highlight global culinary scenes. The Guide “awards up to three Michelin stars for excellence to a select few restaurants in certain geographic ar-

reas” worldwide. Restaurants in Greater Manila and Cebu are said to be vying to become the first local establishments to be included in the Guide’s inaugural selection. At the end of 2025, the selected restaurants covering areas near Metro Manila including Pampanga, Tagaytay, Cavite, and Cebu, will be revealed. The coveted Michelin Stars from the Michelin Guide are given to restaurants that offer the best culinary experiences. The distinctions are the One Star is for “high-quality cooking that is worth a stop,” Two Stars are for “excellent cooking that is worth a detour,” and Three Stars are for “exceptional cuisine that is worth a special journey.” The Michelin guide uses for each selection to ensure consistency is based on five universal criteria: 1) Quality of ingredients, 2) Mastery of cooking techniques, 3) Harmony of flavors, 4) Personality of the cuisine, and 5) Consistency, both over time and through the menu as a whole. Independent, anonymous inspectors have already been deployed to identify which establishments will be recognized. “Palagay ko ay ang mga de-kalidad na restoran lamang ang makaka-sali sa ganitong pilian ano! Paano na kaya yong mga paborito ng masa, kagaya ng mga kainan na tinaguriang turo-turo o sa tabi- tabi lamang? May pag-asa pa kayang lumaban at oportunidad ang mga ito? (Tony A. San Juan, OCT.)

‘Pambansang Manika’ Ahtisa Manalo says Miss Universe Philippines comeback not planned

Known for her doll-like features, Quezon Province’s Ahtisa Manalo shares that her third attempt to win the Miss Universe Philippines crown was a last-minute decision

she got tapped to once again strap on her heels for her beloved province, and had to immediately book a flight back to Manila to make it to the contract signing for delegates. “It felt like I was getting led on that way, so I followed it. Because that rarely

uate, Manalo was instead sent to the Miss International pageant in Japan, where she finished first runner-up. When the Bb. Pilipinas Charities Inc. lost

the Miss Universe franchise to a new team in 2020, there came another opportunity for her to earn the chance to compete in the prestigious international pageant.

Many clamored for her to throw her hat in the game once again. She showed up for the enlistment of aspirants, which elicited excitement. MISS UNIVERSE page 11

MANILA, Philippines - Ahtisa Manalo has been hailed as the fairest maiden in the land, but the new queen fondly called “Pambansang Manika” (National Doll) revealed she was not even supposed to stage a comeback in the Miss Universe Philippines 2025 pageant.

The stunner from Quezon Province admitted her plan to return to the national pageant was a last-minute decision. And if it were not for a fateful turn of events, people would not have seen her win the crown.

“I had so many signs before I could join Miss Universe Philippines,” Manalo told members of the media after her coronation at the SM Mall of Asia Arena in Pasay City on May 2.

“I wasn’t even supposed to be Miss Universe Philippines Quezon Province, there was someone already. And then she backed out,” the 27-year-old entrepreneur shared.

Manalo said she was in Laoag when



happens,” she shared.

Manalo’s first attempt at the Miss Universe Philippines crown was in the 2018 Binibining Pilipinas pageant. But she was edged out of the title by Catriona Gray, who eventually won Miss Universe at the contest held in Thailand.

Then a 20-year-old fresh college grad-

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Filipinos hold vigils for Vancouver Lapu-Lapu festival attack

LAPU-LAPU from page 3

we face, not only with the Filipino Canadians in Vancouver, but this is felt all over the world where Filipinos are," said Elizabeth Estaquio-Domondon, a board member with VISMIN Association of Nova Scotia.

The tragedy also shines light on an apparent gap in mental health supports. "In some ways, there are crises going on. It's a question of reaching out to these people, having the resources to reach out to them," said Mike Asuncion, a spokesperson with the Filipino Association of Nova Scotia. "He could be opening an eye for us to. Be more vigilant, to be more active, and proactive in looking into the mental health of people that are afflicted by it," said Estaquio-Domondon.

She and others in the Maritimes want the victims, their families and all those affected by the attack to know their east coast community is thinking about them.

"You're in our prayers. We want to focus not just (on) the tragedy, but the people themselves — the good people. Especially the people that were lost," said Asuncion.

Manitoba Filipinos 'unite as 1'

More than 300 people packed into a Winnipeg auditorium on evening of April 29.

Radisson MLA Jelynn Dela Cruz, whose office organized the event, said the tragedy is a

"shared hurt" for members of the Filipino community across Canada.

"We're all in this together."

Winnipeg is home to the largest per capita Filipino population in Canada, Dela Cruz said, adding that some people consider the city a "year-long Filipino festival" because of the many cultural events hosted here.

Vancouver attack 'heartbreaking for all of us,' says Winnipeg Filipino pastor mourning street festival deaths "The entire community feels that harm because we are so integrated in the framework and the fabric of this province," Dela Cruz said.

Winnipeggers worried for loved ones in Vancouver

At the vigil, community members spoke to the deep connections within the Filipino diaspora across Canada.

Bayani Marcelino told CBC News he has family living in Vancouver, calling them to check in as soon as he heard about the attack. He said his relatives planned to attend the festival, but thankfully didn't go on Saturday.

Still, he said he couldn't sleep



My heart goes out to everyone affected by the tragic attack at Vancouver's Lapu Lapu Day Festival.

In the wake of this tragedy, let us find strength in the spirit of community. The Tagalog phrase "Isang Bagsak"—which means "one falls"—reflects how deeply connected we are. When one of us hurts, we all hurt. But just as we fall together, we also rise and heal together. It's more than a phrase—it's a powerful reminder that in unity, there is healing.

You are in my thoughts and prayers.
MP RECHIE VALDEZ

days after the attack because the people impacted "are all family."

"They are all Filipino and we are Filipino, so we have to give our support and our condolences to those families," Marcelino said.

As of April 29 morning, more than \$1.5 million had been raised for the victims and their families across multiple online fundraising platforms.

At the Keewatin Street centre, hundreds of people from across Winnipeg's diverse communities showed up to pay their respects. After Muslim, Sikh, Jewish and Christian religious leaders offered prayers and words of support, mourners were invited to approach a table at the front of the room, lined with candles and framed pictures of those who died in Vancouver.

As the procession progressed

forward, violinist Paolo Camus repeatedly played Hindi Kita Malilimutan — which means "I will never forget you" in Tagalog.

Evo Paguio was standing along the side of the auditorium — every seat in the room was full — singing along to the song, which he said reminds him of his late mother.

"I want to give my support to them, the families that lost their mother, father, kids ... I wish I could hug them and give my regards to them," he said.

"Every time that tragedy happens, we unite as one," Paguio said

Saskatchewan's Filipinos are heartbroken

Members of Saskatchewan's Filipino community are expressing shock, sadness and solidarity.

Jenelyn Santos Ong, co-president of the Filipino Canadian Association of Saskatchewan (FILCAS), said the news was devastating to hear.

"It's definitely one of shock and sadness, something unimaginable and unexpected, especially at an event that's supposed to be celebrating our culture and heritage," Ong said.

Ong says FILCAS has already contacted Filipino organizations in British Columbia to offer support, and will continue coordinating efforts to help the affected families. She encouraged people to focus on community healing rather than sharing graphic images or videos circulating online.

"We really want to focus on

the people and do what we can to support them," Ong said.

"As a Filipino-Canadian, it hits closer to home," Alvin Pulga, public relations officer for the Philippine Association of Saskatchewan said. "Our community here in Regina is heartbroken and saddened."

Pulga said the tragedy sparked difficult conversations within his own family, particularly with younger relatives now fearful about attending cultural festivals.

Pulga and the Philippine Association of Saskatchewan have been preparing for its Filipino pavilion at Mosaic festival — an annual multicultural event scheduled for the first weekend of June.

He said that while security had not been a focus in past meetings, that will likely change.

"I'm sure at our next meeting something's gonna be brought up with this idea in mind of security," he said.

Both Ong and Pulga emphasized that while the tragedy has cast a shadow over celebrations, it has also revealed the strength and unity of the Filipino community.

"One thing about Filipinos is that we really do come together when there's tragedy or crisis," Ong said. "The community is still feeling that sadness, but also the gratitude for having a community that comes together."

Skilled migrants are leaving the U.S. for Canada — how can the north gain from the brain drain?

MIGRANTS from page 1

numbers of American non-citizen residents moving to Canada. Reasons given are largely restrictive U.S. immigration policies, visa caps and long wait times for green cards.

This is a shift from earlier decades when American-born citizens dominated the trend. By 2019, nearly half of those making the move were U.S. non-citizen residents.

Since U.S. President Donald Trump's election win and early days in office, Google searches by American residents on how to move to Canada, New Zealand and Australia have surged.

Several high-profile academics have relocated to Canadian universities amid growing concerns over threats to academic freedom.

British Columbia recently announced plans to launch landmark policies to streamline the credential recognition process for internationally trained health-care professionals, particularly American doctors and nurses.

Skilled talent like health-care professionals, researchers and engineers are essential to building innovative, future-ready economies. But attracting them requires staying competitive in

an increasingly global bid for talent.

Global competition for talent

In this global race for talent, Canada and Australia need to offer not only efficient immigration pathways but also faster credential recognition and better integration support.

Yet both nations find themselves walking a tightrope. Once both celebrated as welcoming destinations for global talent, each country has experienced recent immigration restrictions and growing anti-immigration sentiments, undermining those reputations.

What can these countries learn from each other to stay competitive and benefit from this talent flow?

Research from Toronto Metropolitan University's Migration and Integration Program shows Canada's appeal for skilled migrants is rooted in a mix of practical and aspirational factors. This includes a combination of high living standards, the promise of better career prospects, more accessible permanent res-

idency pathways and a broadly welcoming society.

But for migrants in Canada, these goals are becoming harder to attain.

A more cautious approach

Since the pandemic, Canada's immigration approach has shifted. During the early COVID-19 years, Canada was praised for its inclusive response, including recognizing immigrants as essential to economic recovery. Temporary workers, including essential workers, international student graduates and French-speaking immigrants, were offered new routes to permanent residency through a federal program.

However, since 2024, Canada has taken a more cautious approach.

New policy changes that target international students and cut temporary and permanent migration numbers have tarnished Canada's global reputation as a welcoming place.

While permanent residency is still more accessible than in the U.S., skilled migrants are increasingly questioning whether the wait for permanent residency

is worth it.

Australia visa rules slow things down

Australia faces similar dilemmas. In late 2023, the government launched a new migration strategy to address critical workforce shortages in construction, tech and health care. The Skills in Demand visa promised faster processing and clearer pathways to permanent residency for workers in priority sectors.

Yet a recent report by the Grattan institute warns that tighter eligibility rules risk excluding much-needed talent, potentially weakening Australia's competitiveness.

Growing visa delays are also noted to be an additional barrier that may deter both prospective migrants and employers.

Working in jobs far below qualifications

Migration data often tells a story of numbers, categories and eligibility thresholds. However, the human stories behind the numbers reveal deep systemic issues and missed opportunities. One recurring issue is the widespread phenomenon of deskilling.

In both Canada and Australia

MIGRANTS page 7

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Why Dominic Roque has not accepted showbiz projects since 2018

Dominic Roque has chosen to step back from the limelight since 2018. He might have taken time to pursue interests beyond acting and explore new areas that connect better with who he is becoming. “Since 2018, hindi na po ako tumatanggap ng trabaho sa showbiz kasi nagta transition na po ako to being a social media influencer. So ang trabaho ko na po ngayon is being mainly on social media,” said Dominic during an interview. Dominic added that he also owns a company that is more focused on digital creatives. “I have my own company also na social media management and mainly digital rin talaga.” Despite not having had any showbiz projects for almost eight years, Dominic mentioned that he is still open to doing them, but not right now. “Sa showbiz po tinabi ko po muna

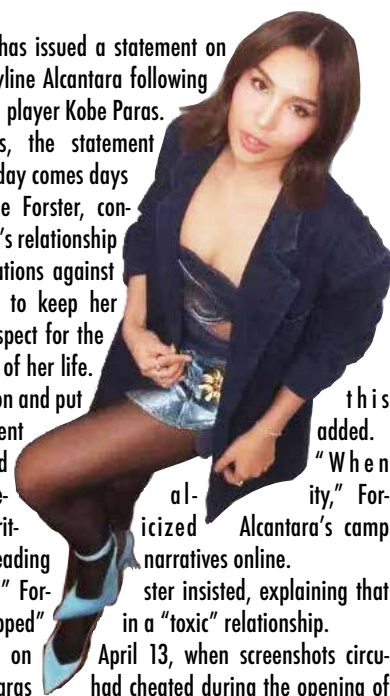


siya on the side and hindi ko po siya kinakalimutan dahil dyan rin po ako nagsimula and gusto ko pa rin naman siya gawin, pero for now focused po muna ako sa company ko,” Dominic shared. After his successful career as a celebrity influencer and business owner, Dominic was asked if he would collaborate with his girlfriend, Sue Ramirez. “Yes, actually pwede and mainly dun sa pag-gawa ng mga content na kung papaano ko rin ginagawa. For example kapag nag abroad, nag car camping kami, or kapag magmotor kami kasi minsan na-angkas din siya [Sue] sa akin sa motor and ayun talaga yung ginagawa ko at hilig ko gawin,” Dominic said. After publicly acknowledging their relationship at the recent Star Magic Ball, Dom and Sue appear to be having fun together. In addition to traveling and trying different foods, Dom mentioned

that they also enjoyed binge-watching series and movies. “Mahilig rin talaga kami manood, actually kasama ko siya nung pina-nood namin yung when life gives you tangerine, pero most of time kapag nasa bahay lang kami Netflix talaga yung bonding time namin,” Dominic shared. When asked about his current status with Sue, Dominic is all smiles and radiates good vibes. He even shares that introducing Sue to his family was a joyful experience. “Masaya. We enjoy each other’s company, ang daming namin pina-plano to do together abroad and also here, lalo na kapag beach kasi dun talaga kami nagbond ng sobra sa siargao,” Dominic shared. He continued: “Yes, napakilala ko siya sa parents ko, sa brothers and sister ko and halos lahat sa mga kaibigan ko pinakilala ko na rin siya. Sobrang masaya naman sila kung papaano ako maging masaya kasi masarap kasama si Sue and madali siya makabond ng ibang kong kaibigan and family ko”

Kyline Alcantara seeks ‘peace’ following breakup with Kobe Paras

Sparkle GMA Artist Center has issued a statement on behalf of Kapuso actress Kyline Alcantara following her breakup with basketball player Kobe Paras. Without naming names, the statement which was released on Tuesday comes days after Paras’ mother, Jackie Forster, confirmed the end of the couple’s relationship and denied cheating allegations against her son. “She has chosen to keep her peace and maintain the respect for the people who have been part of her life. She hopes we can all move on and put issue to rest,” the statement said. In a 15-minute video titled “It’s Important to Live in Reality,” Forster defended Paras and criticized Alcantara’s camp for allegedly fueling misleading narratives online. “There was no cheating,” Forster insisted, explaining that Paras had been feeling “trapped” in a “toxic” relationship. The controversy erupted on April 13, when screenshots circulated online suggesting Paras had cheated during the opening of a Makati bar. Observant fans also noticed Paras deleting photos on Instagram. By April 22, the former couple had unfollowed each other, and cryptic posts from Alcantara – and even Forster herself – fueled further speculation. Despite this, Paras’ father, former basketball star turned comedian Benjie, initially denied the breakup rumors. Forster explained that she decided to speak up because staying silent only worsened the situation for her and her family. “We wanted to keep quiet. But it’s evident that in keeping details quiet, it is instead allowing for more accusations,



Skilled migrants are leaving the U.S. for Canada — how can the north gain from the brain drain?

MIGRANTS from page 6

lia, many skilled migrants often find themselves working in jobs far below their qualifications. These experiences are part of a pattern that affects not only individuals but also national economies, which lose out on the full potential of their skilled workforce. Credential recognition systems are opaque, inconsistent and frequently biased. Another overlooked issue is that many skilled migrants do not move alone. People arrive with spouses, children and sometimes elderly parents. Yet immigration and settlement systems in both countries are largely structured around individual economic migrants rather than families. In Canada, for instance, federally funded settlement services are mainly geared toward supporting only permanent residents. Many spouses, particularly women, face even greater barriers to employment. Issues also include things like high fees for visa processing for parents. Other considerations include children who may struggle with schooling and identity in unfamiliar environments. Housing shortages and high costs in major urban centres compound these challenges, pushing newcomers into unaffordable living conditions. All this contributes to growing disillusionment. Migrants initially drawn to Canada or Australia as alternatives to unwelcoming environments elsewhere may choose to still come, but it doesn’t mean they will stay.



Many countries like Germany, Japan, South Korea and some Gulf states have begun offering more competitive pathways to immigration along with promises of a work-life balance, streamlined visa programs and competitive salaries. This means skilled migrants are increasingly mobile. Australia has made strides in streamlining visa categories and targeting sectoral needs, while Canada has built a strong narrative around inclusion and multiculturalism. However, there is a need to combine Australia’s responsiveness and Canada’s inclusive ethos to build resilient migration systems.

Build future-ready migration systems
In an era defined by geopolitical uncertainties, countries can no longer afford to treat skilled migrants as temporary fixes or just economic inputs. They are people with aspirations, with families and with dreams. They must be seen and supported as future citizens. To build future-ready migration systems Canada must: Ensure transparency and consistency in immigration pathways to reduce uncertainties caused by policy reversals and lengthy processing times. Improve credential recognition

and career support to help skilled migrants, including temporary residents, transition into roles that match their qualifications. Develop regional settlement strategies to address where migrants settle and ensure equitable access to services, job markets and housing, especially outside major cities. Adopt inclusive, intersectional policies that consider gender, race and class in shaping the migrant experience, including support for spouses, children and aging parents. Foster collaborative and responsive policy-making. This involves connecting researchers, employers, community organizations and migrants to inform policy making. For Canada, the challenge ahead is clear. It’s not just about opening the door. It’s about making sure that once here, migrants have the support, rights and opportunities to walk through that door — and thrive.

Learning from others: Canada and Australia
The experiences of skilled migrants in Canada and Australia show that attracting talent is only half the battle. The real challenge is in retention and integration.

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The 3 new queens of Miss Universe Philippines 2025

Chelsea Fernandez, Katrina Llegado, Gabriella Carballo get own titles

The 2025 queens for Miss Supranational Philippines, Miss Eco International Philippines, and Miss Cosmo Philippines are also crowned

MANILA, Philippines – Following Ahtisa Manalo’s crowning as Miss Universe Philippines 2025, the Miss Universe Philippines (MUPH) Organization also named three other Filipina beauty queens who will represent the country in various international pageants.

Taguig’s Katrina Llegado was proclaimed Miss Supranational Philippines 2025, Cebu City’s Gabriella Carballo was crowned Miss Eco International Philippines 2025, and Sultan Kudarat’s Chelsea Fernandez was named Miss Cosmo Philippines 2025.

Muntinlupa’s Teresita Sen Marquez and Siniloan, Laguna’s Yllana Marie Aduana placed first and second runners-up, respectively, in this year’s competition.

This marks the third time that the MUPH Organization has awarded additional titles after the main coronation night. In 2024, Baguio’s Tarah Valencia was Miss Supranational Philippines, while Pampanga’s Cyrille Payumo was named Miss Charm Philippines.

Iloilo’s Alexie Mae Brooks was hailed Miss Eco International Philippines 2024, and Quezon Province’s Ma. Ahtisa Manalo was crowned Miss Cosmo Philippines 2024.

In 2023, Bohol’s Pauline Amelinckx and Baguio’s Krishnah Marie Gravidez were named Miss Supranational Philippines 2023 and Miss Charm Philippines 2023, respectively, after both finished in the Top 5 of that year’s competition.

For its first three years as a standalone pageant, the MUPH Organization had only



Katrina Llegado at PIDC in Toronto in 2024

focused on choosing a representative for the Miss Universe competition.

Filipinos mourn Francis – and wonder if one of their own could succeed him

Church bells rang out across the Philippines April 21 Monday evening in honor of Pope Francis. Almost 80% of Filipinos identify as Roman Catholic and the late pontiff visited the country in 2015, meeting with victims of Typhoon Haiyan and the Bohol earthquake.

Filipinos often refer to Francis as “Lolo Kiko,” a local nickname which means “Grandpa Francis.” Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. called Francis “the best pope in my lifetime.” He wrote in a

Facebook post: “A man of profound faith and humility, Pope Francis led not only with wisdom but with a heart open to all, especially the poor and the forgotten.”

There is already talk about the possibility of a Filipino succeeding him. Cardinal Luis Antonio Gokim Tagle, who prefers to be called by his nickname “Chito,” is considered by church experts as a possible contender to be the next pope. If elected he would be the first pontiff to come from Asia.



Joel Torre hopes to star in a film that embraces Philippines many languages

The seasoned actor Joel Torre, who stars in the Benedict Mique-directed and Viva Films-produced psychological horror ‘Isolated,’ shares that he’s happy to see more regional representation in cinema in recent years.

“Isolated” star Joel Torre dreams of a film where characters speak in different Filipino dialects and languages as an authentic reflection of the country’s cultural diversity.

“I hope we come up with a movie later on na iba’t-ibang dialects, they’re all in one... like a fraternity, na iba’t-ibang klase so that we’re able to embrace each other’s cultures, we embrace each other’s language, and nagpapakita yun na yan talaga ang Filipino,” Joel said.

The seasoned actor, who stars in the Benedict Mique-directed and Viva Films-produced psychological horror “Isolated,” shared that he’s happy to see more regional

representation in cinema, including through language, in recent years.

For one, he plays the Ilonggo father of Maris Racal’s character in “Incognito.” Their scenes are always trending on social media.

Praising Maris, he said: “She’s not an Ilonggo but she’s able to deliver (her lines) as a real Ilonggo. Because she’s from Davao, that’s why.”

What Joel appreciates most is how Ilonggo or any regional language is no longer used as a punchline. “Ay sus, nagpasalamat gyud ako sa mga Ilonggo (for making our scenes trend),” he said, stressing how it’s “using the Ilonggo accent not as a means of comedy.”

“Hindi siya (ginagamit) sa pagpapatawa. We’re doing drama. So I think people should stop looking at Bisayan accent or Ilocano accent or Kapampangan as a means of comedic effect,” he further stressed.

Joel shared that early in his career, he struggled with using his own voice on screen due to his strong Ilonggo accent. “‘Oro Plata Mata,’ I didn’t use my voice because I was very, very Ilonggo,” he recalled.

“So it took me three years or three movies before I started using my own voice.” That moment finally came in the film “Bituing Walang Ningning,” where he was able to use his voice and didn’t have anyone else dubbed it.

Joel believes that filmmakers should take pride in their roots: “Kelangan magamit mo yung kung saan ka nanggaling.”

He pointed out that audiences – both local and international – are now more accepting of diverse languages in film, especially with subtitles bridging the gap. “It’s

accepted. Meron naman tayo subtitling. Kung lalabas tayo ng pelikula sa ibang bansa, may subtitling na naman, tinatanggap naman ng mga tao.”

He cited the success of his Netflix film “Lolo and the Kid,” also directed by Benedict Mique, as an example of how language need not be a barrier.

“It’s Tagalog, but there are subtitles. Nag-No. 1 sa ibang bansa, nag-No. 1 sa Netflix UAE. That’s understandable kasi maraming Pinoy.”

The film, retitled “Abuela and the Kid” in some Latin markets, showed that emotional and family-driven narratives can transcend



In ‘Isolated,’ Yassi Pressman plays a nurse to wheel-chair-bound man with dementia, portrayed by Joel.

language. “It just shows that film – especially films that involve family – is very universal,” he said.

Meanwhile, in “Isolated,” which sees him portraying a former US military man, Joel navigates accents with care.

“I play an ex-US military guy. English naman yung (accent). That was a challenge so sabi ko kay Direk, kelangan ko ba ng... ‘if you can put in a little accent,’ he said, pwede. Pero hindi ko na pinilit na kailangang may twang or whatever because it won’t come out natural.”

He added that while he enjoys playing around with languages, the lack of time in local productions can limit that exploration.

“It’s nice to play languages, it’s just that, we don’t have the luxury of time,” he admitted.

Janno Gibbs, naging close kay Nadine dahil sa Masked Singer

Isa si Janno Gibbs sa mga judge detective sa Season 3 ng Masked Singer Pilipinas.

Sa ginanap na media conference ng nagbabalik-telebisyon na programa, inulit niyang “professional” na siya at hindi na nahuhuli sa pagdating sa mga taping at shooting.

“Matagal na akong professional. Hindi na ako nale-late ngayon, matagal na, hindi lang alam.

“Ever since pumasok ako ng Viva, shooting, kapag kailangan maaga, hindi na ako nale-late,” paliwanag ni Janno.

Hindi ipinagkakaila ng comedian-singer

na naging problema niya noon ang pagiging “late-comer” dahil sa insomnia.

Pero biro niya, “Nag-level up na ako, absent na ako. Nag-a-absent na lang ako.

“Kapag hindi ko kayang pumasok nang maaga, absent!”

COMIC RELIEF IN MASKED SINGER PILIPINAS Si Janno ang comic-relief provider sa Masked Singer Pilipinas dahil sa kanyang witty at mga nakakatawang opinyon bilang judge detective.

Ikinuwento ni Janno na ang programa ang dahilan kaya naging malapit sila ni

Nadine Lustre sa isa’t isa.

Kasama rin nila bilang judge detective sina Pops Fernandez at Arthur Nery.

“Sa panghuhula po, pinair kami. Kaming dalawa ni Nadine, magkakampi kami as JaDine, Janno and Nadine.

“Tapos si Arthur Nery at si Pops, PopsThur.

“Since kami nga yung tandem na kalaban nina Pops at Arthur sa hulaan, medyo nag-bond kaming dalawa.

“First time kong nakatrabaho si Nadine. Medyo naging close kami dito dahil kami ang magkakampi.



“It was a joy coming to work every time kasi, una, yung samahan namin, naging family kami for the duration of the tapings.

“Ang saya naming lahat, si Pops nagdadala ng pagkain.”

Dagdag pa ni Janno: “Aside from that,

excited kami sa performances kasi ang gagaling talaga ng bawat isa. Nagpapasikat talaga sila.

“Yung artistry, hindi lang sa pagkanta, ha? Pati yung pag-areglo at pag-atake ng kanta, nagpasikat talaga lahat kaya nahirapan kami at nahirapan kaming manghula.”

Puring-puri ni Janno ang labing-anim na contestants ng Masked Singer Pilipinas dahil magagaling at palaban umano ang mga ito sa bardagulan.

Kapuso Lions Bal Yujuico continues his charity work while on vacation

by Bal Yujuico

Providing nourishment to underprivileged children in a coastal village in Bacolod City, Philippines, was a profoundly fulfilling experience. Barangay 35, also known as Tambakan Alley, presents a complex challenge, as thousands of families reside in this landfill site along the Guimaras Strait seabed, where garbage from neighboring barangays washes up. Later, I engaged with government officials to discuss potential solutions for revitalizing the area, and I am optimistic



that collective efforts can drive meaningful change and improve living conditions. Representing the Toronto Kapuso Lions, I joined the Bacolod City Unity Lions our twin chapter in this feeding project and was touched by the efforts of the associations to make a difference in the lives of the citizens. Hats off to staff of Unity Lions headed by Violeta Pradilla Arana , Chrismoon Bañas for organizing this magnificent gesture of love and kindness. Job well done ! The children joy reflected on their

TORONTO CATHOLIC TEACHERS TO HOST PROUDLY PINOY EDUCATION CONFAB

By: Tony A. San Juan, OCT.

Filipino- Canadian catholic educators, parents and teachers in Toronto, Ontario will host the “First Proudly Pinoy Education Conference” on May 27, 2025(Tuesday) , from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm., at Brebeuf College, 211 Steeles Avenue East, Toronto. Under the auspices of the Indigenous, Equity, and Community Relations Department of the Toronto Catholic District School Board(TCDSB), the gathering is organised for Filipino parents, educators, students and community members engaged in public education who are interested to learn or to lead in catholic schooling and training .



Moreover, the significant event is celebrating “Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope”. In the words of Pope Francis: “We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us, and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted

vision.” The maiden conference aims “to discuss barriers affecting Filipino-Canadian participation, engagement, and achievement in education, understand critical issues, and learn and appreciate what it means to be a Filipino.” Further, the meeting expects to “identify actions for the participants and the community to take action and follow through.” TCDSB trustees, senior officers & staff, faith-focused leaders, community association representatives, and members of the Filipino Advisory Committee(FAC), Filipino Catholic Educators Network(FCEN), Catholic Parent

Involvement Committee(CPIC), Philippine Teachers Association of Canada(PTAC), Filipino Canadian Parents Association for Catholic Education(FCPACE), Filipino Centre Toronto(FCT), and other community stakeholders are invited and expected to attend the conference. According to the conference organisers, the late afternoon program will include opening remarks, special greetings, community blessing, keynote addresses, breakout sessions and dialogues for Parent & Community, Educators, and Students groups. A plenary session for reporting back of conference summary and ac-



tions/ next steps is also scheduled, after which socials, refreshments, entertainment, and networking activities will follow. Interested individuals are requested to Register at: <https://forms.gle/1kJjicHjuX-MTD1Uw7> (Tony A. San Juan, OCT.)

Claim Your Right to News and Entertainment This May on GMA Pinoy TV



GMA Pinoy TV, the home of Global Pinoys, rolls out a vibrant line-up of programs this May, offering news and information, entertainment, and even classic Pinoy movies. GMA Integrated News is all set to deliver the most comprehensive coverage of the upcoming 2025 Midterm Elections via “Eleksyon 2025.” The in-depth special coverage features report-

age from GMA’s top journalists covering various areas throughout the country as Filipinos cast their vote. Tune in to the special elections coverage this May. As part of its Eleksyon 2025 specials, GMA Integrated News provides a platform for Filipinos to express their hopes, dreams, and concerns for the country’s future through “Biyaheng Totoo: Sana sa Eleksyon 2025.” Vicky Morales hosts the two-part documentary special airing on May 3 and 10. Meanwhile, “GMA Pinoy TV Podcast Special” unveils fresh



episodes in May. Host Tonie Pua sits down with GMA Network journalist Kara David, Kapuso Drama King Dennis Trillo, Ultimate Star Jennylyn Mercado, Primetime Action Hero Ruru Madrid, and many more popular personalities, plus influential

Global Pinoys. Get to know them even more on May 4, 11, and 18. Coming also in May is “Philippine Defenders,” a documentary produced by GMA Public Affairs. Host Matteo Guidicelli, himself a Philippine Army reservist, pays tribute to the brave men and women who protect the Philippines’ sovereignty through land, sea, and air. Watch these unsung heroes on GMA Pinoy TV. “FPJ sa GMA” continues as

GMA Pinoy Blockbuster unveils more of Fernando Poe Jr.’s iconic and memorable movies: “Batas ng .45,” “No Retreat, No Surrender si Kumander,” “Ang Padrino,” and “May Isang Tsuper ng Taksi.” Keep tuning in to GMA Pinoy TV to enjoy the latest programs featuring the biggest Kapuso stars and beloved personalities, plus special features that keep Global Pinoys informed of goings-on back home through the latest updates and compelling stories. To subscribe, simply visit www.gmanetwork.com/international/subscribe.



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Joey Baking The Socialist

Jimmy Stewart lived for movies, fought for his country, and died for love. Now isn't that a wonderful life?

RICHARD CORLISS

Almost a perfect April

That's a wrap on the 2nd edition of Siné Film Fest!

What a journey—3 days of unforgettable screenings, packed panels, artist talks, and electric energy from our community of filmmakers, cinephiles, and culture shapers.

From world premieres to standing ovations, from heartfelt reunions to brand new connections—this edition was a love letter to global Filipino storytelling, and you made it happen.

Huge thanks to our audiences, partners, volunteers, and every single artist who trusted us with their work. We're just getting started.

The second Sine film festival held at Hotel X ended with a resounding success. Philippine actress Christine Reyes added an extra glamour to the 3-day festival which was capped by a gala, attended by the film enthusiasts from the Filipino and Canadian community.

Congratulations to Sine Institute for another year of celebrating and showcasing Filipino talent.

The Filipino Centre, Toronto celebrated their 25th anniversary with a fundraising gala at the Scarborough Convention Centre. This gala raises funds to support the activities of

the centre in supporting Filipinos in the community, like the seniors painting class every Wednesday. They also hold dental cleaning sessions at the centre with the help of Filipino hygienists in Toronto. The capacity crowd of 350 partied until closing time. I was pleasantly surprised at the endurance of the well-heeled and elegantly-dressed guests for staying up to closing time. The guests, smartly dressed in Filipino-themed outfits or suit jackets enjoyed the delicious dinner of prime rib or salmon steak, and mingled throughout the night with friends and colleagues and danced the night away to the music of DJ Paul Arena and his son.

Everyone had a fun evening. Congratulations to the Filipino Centre Toronto.

Kim Mahistrado held his latest fashion show called Revolution 2.0, Season V, Series XX last April 19 at Toronto Don Valley Hotel. Featuring beautiful models and also equally beautiful and talented singers and dancers from the Filipino community, the show was a showcase of creativity, glamour and elegance that you can expect from Kim Mahistrado, fashion designer to the beautiful and



the good-looking. The intermission between clothing type was filled by a dance number and singers Jenifer Camacho, JDL students Joanne Rojas and Aky Orteza.

Congratulations to Kim for another smashing, fantastic and successful fashion show.

GAFAA (Global Advocacy for Autism Awareness) had their fashion show at Rembrandt where models, from kids to adults donated their time and effort to raise funds for autism awareness. According to their facebook page, "GAFAA is a Charitable Organization that helps advocate family, friends, neighbors and Caregivers and all other individuals that are touched by autism. Additionally, we are promoting awareness that anybody who are in the spectrum are welcome and accepted. We promote equality and diversity...that you are not alone and we are all in this together one step at a time."

Congratulations to GAFAA and may you have continued success



TOP, Sine Film Festival ABOVE, Maria Ma Sherry Lacson Tan walks the runway in her Philippine Traditional Dress of the Indigenous people in Mindanao, the Malong in support of the GAFAA Spring Runway Fashion Show 2024.

in your advocacy.

Then, tragedy strikes in Vancouver when a

mentally unstable driver slammed into a crowd on April 26, Saturday evening at Lapu-Lapu street festival celebrating the contributions of the Filipino Canadian community and killed 11 people and injured 32 more.

Filipinos all over Canada showed unity in showing sympathy to the victims and offered any assistance they can.

GOD'S LITTLE PARADISE

Another gem of the Visayas, Bohol's Historical significance extends way back to the blood compact between boholano chieftain sikatuna and the Spanish Conquistador, Miguel Lopez de Legaspi, in 1565.

Scenic Bohol Casts an enigmatic charm drawn from the many archaic mementos spread throughout the oval-shaped island: from the chocolate hills and the tarsier to the 16th century watchtowers and Jesuit baroque mission churches. The Chocolate Hills that abound in Central Bohol, two have been developed into top class resorts.

Sunset @ Sta. Fe Beach

Chocolate Hills

One of the Rare Faunas found in the Philippine archipelago, the Tarsier is the smallest primate in the world. It is a nocturnal primate measuring from four to five inches, with a tail that is longer than body.

Those Interested in tarsier watching are always welcomed by the Boholanos to see the famous primate in its natural adobe up the hills in the town of Corella

Balicasag Resort & Diving Spot

A tropical havel of beauty, the coastline of province is skimmed by gentle coves and white sand beaches. You can fins some of the country's great dive sights here. Balicasag in Bohol is one of the most popular dives in visayas.

A black coral forest is among its main attractions but virtually anywhere you drop in is sure to be rewarding. another major attraction, Cabilao is renowned for the hammerhead sharks that shoal around the clear waters. Large pelagics are very common here. And if you are really luck, you can find yourself swimming with a passing school of dolphins.

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Ahtisa Manalo says Miss Universe Philippines comeback not planned

MISS UNIVERSE from p 5
ment among pageant fans, but she did not push through with her application.

Every year since 2020, fans eagerly awaited for Manalo to sign up, but she never did. Until 2024 came, and the well-loved pageant queen announced that she was finally joining the Miss Universe Philippines pageant. She was the overwhelming choice for the crown last year, based on the predictions from different pageant portals. And during the final competition, she drew the loudest cheers from the crowd.

But Manalo fell short, and finished third in the competition, with the Miss Universe Philippines title going to Chelsea Manalo of Bulacan. She later received a national title of her own, The Miss Philippines-Cosmo.

As the Philippines' entry to the first edition of the Vietnam-based Miss Cosmo pageant, expectations were high for Manalo. She eventually finished in the Top 10.

Fans still wanted her to give the Miss Universe Philippines pageant another shot. She instead filed her

intention to seek public office in Quezon, crushing the hearts of her many followers.

But Manalo made a U-turn, withdrew her candidacy as councilor, and gave in to the lure of pageantry once again. She returned to an even more competitive contest with more international beauties like her among the roster of candidates for the 2025 national contest.

"You've seen the Top 6. Any of us could be crowned, and will still have a good fight in Thailand. And I'm just very happy that the judges chose me," she said.

Among those in the final round with Manalo were Reina Hispanoamericana 2017 Teresita Ssen Marquez, Reina Hispanoamericana 2019 runner-up Katrina Llegado, The Miss Globe 2022 semifinalist Chelsea Fernandez, and Miss Earth-Air 2023 Yllana Marie Aduana.

And as destiny dictated, Manalo triumphed over a formidable batch of contenders, and she is now set to compete in the 74th edition of the Miss Universe pageant scheduled to take place in Thailand in November.

There, she will try to become the fifth winner from the Philippines, and hopefully continue the legacy set by Gloria Diaz (1969), Margie Moran (1973), Pia Wurtzbach (2015), and Gray.



SCENES AT SINE FILIPINO FILM FESTIVAL: 1. Sine's Rosary Escaño, MP Rechie Valdez, Jean Pardo; 2. Chelsea Cortez, Karen Binaday; 3. Jean Pardo, Arielle Fina Abrazaldo, Eva Agpaoa, Rory Elefano, Sine's Rosary Escaño, Rose Seaborn; 4. Jean Pardo, Corie Coufts



SCENES AT FILIPINO CENTRE TORONTO 25TH ANNIVERSARY GALA: 5. Theresa Lumanalan, Frank Cruzet; 6. Kuya Wally And Elsie Yerro; 7. Manny Yanga, Congen Angelica Escalona; 8. Nitz Rejidik, Rizzaand Gerald; 9. Gemma Pascual, Mitch Fernandez, lanezza Muñoz Greeley; 10. Joy D'aoust, Dr. Gamo, Mitzi Faigal; 11. Mel Galeon lanezza Muñoz Greeley and husband Richard Greeley; 12. Carlos Unas, Theresa Lumanalan, Nimfa Lim; 13. Gil & Elena Dicion; 14. Gloria Mandigma, Lou Rivera, Jackie Cristini; 15. Gloria, Annie, Lou, Elena, Bernadette, Gloria, Lou and husband, Jackie and son

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Scene at the Filipino Centre, Toronto 25th Anniversary Gala



Filipino Centre Toronto Seniors Painting Class



Mel galeon and Theresa Redulla



Philippine Independence Day Council



Joe Banduyang and Mel Galeon



Filipino Centre Toronto Seniors Painting Class



Mel galeon, Joy D'aoust, Oceana D'aoust



Paulo Bucud and the Pinoy Ontario Vendors



Judith Gonzales (2nd from left) and family

Happy 11th Anniversary to Maharlika Lions Club



Oceanica D'aoust

Sophia Sambrana

Sophia Daclan



KIM MAHISTRADO FASHION SHOW



Wintererra D'aoust



Joanne Rojas



Aky Orteza



Marianne, daughter Sophia



Marianne, daughter Sophia, grandparents



Sophia Daclan, Aunt Noemi Milanes



Sophia Daclan, photographer Willy Santiago

Kylie Verzosa opens up about cosmetic procedure regret

Former Miss International Kylie Verzosa has revealed that she regrets undergoing eyebrow microblading, a semi-permanent cosmetic procedure.

In a recent TikTok video, Verzosa shared that she is currently in the process of having the eyebrow tattoos removed after nine years.

She mentioned that while microblading was helpful during her pageant days by streamlining her makeup routine, she now prefers to return to her natural brows.

"So, I'm currently in the process of removing it. It's been two months, and I can't wait for the next session. And it's not pain-free," she said.

Microblading has been a popular cosmetic procedure in recent years, offering semi-permanent eyebrow enhancements that typically last between one to three years, with periodic touch-ups required to maintain the desired look.

Verzosa, who won the Miss International title in 2016, has since ventured into acting and entrepreneurship. Earlier this year, she launched her own shapewear brand, SOLA.





Kira Balinger reacts to “binastos” issue involving Faith Da Silva



Kapamilya actress and PBB Celebrity Collab ex-housemate Kira Balinger (left) reacts to online discussion that Kapuso actress Faith Da Silva allegedly treated her poorly in the Kapuso show TiktokClock.

Nagbigay ng reaksiyon ang Kapamilya actress na si Kira Balinger kaugnay ng isyung “binastos” uma-no siya ng Kapuso actress na si Faith Da Silva. Kaugnay ito ng guest appearance ni Kira at ng kapwa niya Pinoy Big Brother Celebrity Collab edition evictee na si Charlie Fleming sa GMA-7 morning variety show na TiktokClock. Si Faith ay co-host sa Kapuso program.

THE TIKTLOCK INCIDENT
Sa April 24, 2025 episode ng TiktokClock, sumabak sina Kira at Charlie sa “Sang Tanong ‘Sang Sabog” segment ng show. Ang game mechanics: pasasabugan ng pulbos sa mukha ang player sa bawat maling sagot nito sa tanong. Sumalang si Kira sa game kung saan dalawang beses siyang nasabugan ng pulbos sa mukha dahil sa maling sagot. Nang matapos na ang laro, inanyayahan ni Faith sina Kira at Charlie na i-promote ang ongoing PBB edition. Si Charlie ang unang nag-promote ng reality-based show. Nang iabot kay Kira ang mikropono, hindi siya agad nakapagsalita dahil tila nagre-recover pa ito mula sa laro. Nang magsimula nang magsalita si Kira, naputol ito dahil nagsalita si Faith para sa commercial cue. Isang netizen ang nag-repost ng video clip ng insidnete sa social media. Malinaw na ginawan ito ng intriga dahil sa caption nitong “Kira Balinger binastos ni Faith da Silva



1. Imelda Concepcion, in her flapper cocktail dress walks the runway in support of the GAFAA Spring Runway Fashion Show 2024.

sa TiktokClock?” Umani ito ng maraming komento mula sa ibang netizens. Daan-daang netizens ang nag-comment sa video post, pero mas nangibabaw ang batikos kay Faith. Marami ang hindi nagustuhan ang biglang pagsabat ng Kapuso actress kay Kira.

Pinaratangan din ng ilang netizens si Faith tulad ng “bastos,” “hindi professional,” at “starlet.” May isang netizen naman ang nangatuwirang hindi isyu sa mga artista involved ang insidente, at fans lang umano ang gumagawa ng isyu. Bahagi ng komento ng netizen (published as is): “Ung mga artista ok naman sila. Pero yung mga fans lang talaga nagaaway. Lahat nalang issue sa inyo. Mahirap talaga kau pasiyahin.”

KIRA BALINGER REACTS
Noong Biyernes, May 2, humarap sa media si Kira at kapwa Star Magic artists na sina Emilio Daez, na PBB evictee rin, at Inigo Pascual. Tinanong si Kira ukol sa umano’y pambabatas sa kanya ni Faith. Tugon ni Kira: “Actually, when I was there, hindi ko naman po feel na may kabastusan na nangyari. “And alam ko naman din yung sa mga live show po na ganyan, talagang may oras iyan. “So, if they needed to cut the show, wala po talagang problema iyan sa akin.” Paliwanag pa ni Kira, sa mga oras na iyon ay hindi pa siya nakaka-recover mula sa impact ng laro. “Nasabugan na ako, so alam mo yung I’m still reeling from the moment na, ‘Oh my god, what do I look like? Dyusko, paano ito?’ “Tapos hindi ko pa makita yung prompter sa harapan ko. I think a little bit of the powder went in my eye, nalasahan ko din yung powder. “So, talagang hindi ko... I wasn’t really prepared in that moment kaya okay lang po sa akin.”



Preston’s first OBA finals with HOF Hustle U10 and they won bronze






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Philippine Chamber of Commerce-Toronto Elects New Officers, Von Canton is Reelected President

By Tony A. San Juan, OCT.



The Philippine Chamber of Commerce-Toronto(PCCT) elected its new officers and directors for the 2025-2026 term. The election event was held at the Suave Korner Kafe X Bistro, Eglinton Avenue East, Scarborough, Toronto. The process was conducted under the electoral supervision of Comelec officials, Tony A. San Juan and Lapu-Lapu Cana.

Nestor Von Canton was unanimously reelected Presi-



dent to a 2-year term. Von Canton, a pharmacist by training, is the President of Philippine Entertainment, Arts, Culture and Heritage (PEACH) and Proprietor of MCBN -Pinoy Radio.

The 2025-2026 PCCT Officers and Directors with Rafael Nebres (SEATED 4TH FROM RIGHT), Past PCCT Prexy.

Executive Officers and Members of the Board of Directors are President-Von Canton, Philip Beloso- Vice President for Government and Trade Relations, Lilac Cana-Vice President for Membership, Gisele Mirasol-Vice President for Public Relations, Mark Gabriel- Secretary, Nikko Aguilar-Treasurer, Rainier Macandog San Pascual-Auditor,

Rommel Lumbao and JB Ramos-Chairman for Special Projects, and Luis Brosas, Prescilla Quiogue- Cantos, Beethoven Crasco, Valentina Salas, Lloyd Serrano and Erlene Sylvester-Board Members.

After the official proclamation, in his brief speech, Von Canton pledged to serve with meaningful determination

and purposeful leadership toward achieving the PCCT's established mission and mandate of enhancing better business relations between Canada and the Philippines and promoting business growth & investment in the Filipino-Canadian community and other stakeholders.

The 34-year-old association plans to hold its formal induction of officers & directors, escalate the membership drive, and develop & execute sustainable programs and viable projects. Former PCCT president Rafael "Paeng" Nebres attended the proceedings and encouraged the newly elected officers to meet the challenges before them with foresight, courage and dedication. (Tony A. San Juan, OCT)

Ashley Ortega says Mavy Legaspi's parents are "very welcoming"

Masuwerte raw si Ashley Ortega dahil hindi lang supportive boyfriend si Mavy Legaspi kundi "very welcoming" din sa kanya ang pamilya nito.

Dati na niyang nakatrabaho ang mga magulang ni Mavy na sina Carmina Villarroel at Zoren Legaspi.

Nakasama niya si Carmina sa lock-in taping para sa primetime series na Widows' Web, habang si Zoren ay naging ama niya sa primetime series na Sahaya.

Lahad ni Ashley: "Before maging kami ni Mavy, I already worked with Tita Carmina and Tito Zoren.

"Pero siyempre, as the girlfriend of Mavy now, Mavy introduced me as his girlfriend. Ang bait nila.

"Nung kakalabas ko sa outside world, Tita Mina messaged me personally. 'Hi, Ash, welcome to the outside world. I'm so proud of you for being a strong woman. Visit ka



naman soon."

Ang tinutukoy ni Ashley na "outside world" ay ang paglabas niya bilang housemate sa Pinoy Big Brother Celebrity Collab, ang ongoing reality franchise show ng ABS-CBN katuwang ang GMA-7.

Nang sumalang si Ashley sa PEP Spotlight guest appearance, dalawang linggo na ang nakararaan mula nang siya ay ma-evict sa Bahay Ni Kuya.

Kuwento niya, nakabisita na siya sa bahay ng pamilya ni Mavy.

Kumain daw sila ng dinner at nanood ng second nomination night ng PBB.

"And they're just very welcoming. Sinabi rin sa akin ni Mavy na they would always watch PBB to support me.

"Sabi rin ni Mavy na they got to appreciate me more, mas nakilala nila ako while watching PBB."

Naramdaman daw niya ang pagmamahal ni Carmina nang yakapin siya nito nang magkita sila.

Maging ang kakambal ni Mavy na si Cassidy Legaspi ay nag-message sa kanya.

ASHLEY ORTEGA ON MAVY LEGASPI AS A SUPPORTIVE BOYFRIEND

Ramdam din ni Ashley, 26, ang pagmamahal ni Mavy, 24, paglabas niya ng PBB.

Sobrang shocked at lungkot ni Ashley

nang ma-evict kasabay ng ka-duo niyang si AC Bonifacio.

Pero pagkatapos ng episode na iyon ay nagkaroon daw siya ng pagkakataong makausap si Mavy, na isa sa hosts ng programa.

Kay Mavy raw ibinuho noon ni Ashley ang pagkabigong naramdaman niya.

"So I just really appreciate him for being so supportive."

ASHLEY ORTEGA AND MAVY LEGASPI'S RELATIONSHIP

Pagpasok pa lang ng taong 2025 ay umugong ang balitang magkasintahan sina Ashley at Mavy nang mamataan silang magkasamang nagdiwang ng Sinulog sa Cebu.

Nang sumunod na buwan, ilang araw bago siya pumasok sa PBB, umamin si Ashley sa isang TV show na nobyo niya si Mavy.

Ayon kay Ashley, perfect timing ang pagkakakilala nila ni Mavy.

Saad ng aktres: "Before Mavy, matagal din akong naging single. I really wanted to take time to reflect, to love myself again.

"Kasi ang dami kong pinagdaanan—umalis ako sa bahay. I have to figure things out on my own.

"Pinanindigan ko talaga yung pagiging strong, independent woman."

Masaya raw siya sa estado ng relasyon nila ngayon.

"And then when Mavy came into my life, I feel like I was ready to love again and to be in a relationship.

"I'm grateful for Mavy. He came to my life at the right time.

"So now I'm just happy. No regrets din sa lahat ng lessons na natutunan ko sa past relationship ko. "If it weren't for those mistakes and lessons, I wouldn't be the person that I am now."

Ang huling nakarelasyon ni Ashley ay si Lucena City Mayor Mark Alcala. Naghiwalay sila noon pang 2022.

Naging nobya naman ni Mavy ang kapwa Kapuso star na si Kylene Alcantara, pero naghiwalay sila noong huling bahagi ng 2023.

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Cardinal Tagle, a leading Pope candidate get smear attack from conservative Catholics



Even in death, Pope Francis couldn't escape the storm of hate. For over a decade, conservative voices online accused him of betraying the Church — calling him an antipope and heretic. Now, as the world prepares to choose the next pope, that same outrage is being redirected.

Cardinal Tagle — a humble, karaoke-singing Filipino — is being attacked for performing John Lennon's Imagine, even though he sang a modified version without anti-religious lyrics. That didn't stop the smear campaign: slander, mockery, and even cruel speculation about his sexuality.

All because he dares to represent a Church that's more inclusive... more human.

While millions quietly hope for a leader who brings people closer to faith, a loud minority is turning this sacred moment into a digital war.

The conclave begins May 7. Whoever walks out on that balcony will not just face the world. They'll face a firestorm of online fury.

Is this what we've become — a Church divided by clout and algorithms?

The next pope hasn't been chosen yet — but the attacks have already begun.

Mommy Min defends daughter Kathryn Bernardo

"THANKS for the piece of advice, but no thanks!" This is likely the reaction of Mommy Min, mother of Kathryn Bernardo, to Xian Giza's open letter on his Facebook page.

As for the celebrity mom, what gives the self-proclaimed "Pambansang Marites" the right to meddle in their family affairs particularly in the way she's raising her daughter?

Xian's open letter — meant to jolt Mommy Min not to be too hard on Kathryn — must be his counter-reaction to the former's post never to be swayed by fake news all over social media.

Earlier, Xian — for all his sleuth-ish skills — shared the latest scoop he got wind of.

Albeit raised the interrogative way, Xian implied that all's well between erstwhile couple Kathryn and Daniel Padilla.

In fact, in Xian's exact words: "Nag-uusap na sila (They're talking to each other now)!"

In fairness to Xian, he has yet



to verify that itsy-bitsy of news himself.

If proven true, that's more than welcome news as far as the still-humongous KathNiel fan base is concerned. Mommy Min, however, doesn't look at it that way.

Apparently in retaliation, Xian ran an open letter to Mrs. Bernardo. He pointed out that already 28 years old, Kathryn can very well tell what's right from wrong. Ergo, the allegedly controlling, if not manipulative, celebrity mom should loosen her grip on her daughter.

Xian then went on to cite possible scenarios should Mommy Min continue with her intrusive ways toward her daughter.

If ever, he won't be surprised if Mommy Min produces a "renegade" in Kathryn — comparing the latter's case to Jake Zyrus (formerly Charice Pempengco).

Xian further wrote: "Jake stood up against his mom who had

nothing else in mind but money she could get!"

Xian's basis stemmed from Jake's book "I Am Jake," a tell-all account of her life then as Charice and her familial relationship.

Back to Mommy Min, she has not issued any statement nor made any post on social media to address Xian's open letter.

In the meantime, Xian's "billet-doux" got Kathryn's concerned friends and fans alike thinking.

Why is the Philippines always importing Rice?

TARIFF from page 1

keep its title as the world's leading rice importer in 2024, with shipments expected to increase to 4.1 MMT.

This information has led many to ask the obvious questions: why is this so? The Philippines has traditionally been known as an agriculture-based economy, not to mention the fact that Filipinos, like many Asians, are known to be voracious consumers of rice; why can't we then produce enough for our own needs without having to import from elsewhere?

Why Does the Philippines Import Rice?

The answer to this question was the subject of a book published by the International Rice Research Institute called, *Why Does the Philippines Import Rice?* Edited by David Dawe, Piedad F. Moya, and Cheryll B. Casiwan and first published in 2004, the book delves deep into the country's rice economy, with the analysis and conclusions informed by quantitative data instead of mere conjecture.

"Many answers have been given to this question, many of which injure national pride by alluding to bad politicians, corruption, incompetence, or laziness," the book says. "But the real answer is not so bad: in a word, it is geography."

"The Philippines imports rice because it is a nation of islands without any major river deltas like those in Thailand and Vietnam.

The major traditional exporters are all on the Southeast Asian mainland (Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Myanmar), while the countries that have been consistently importing rice for more than a hundred years (Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Japan, Korea, and Malaysia) are all islands or narrow peninsulas."



Before delving deeper into the geography issue, the book makes it a point to debunk commonly held (but often mistaken) beliefs about why the country imports rice. Loss of land to urbanization, for one, might be an easy scapegoat, but according to the book, "the effects are small and are more than offset by cropland expansion elsewhere."

"Some may think the Filipino farmer is simply backward and cannot produce rice efficiently," Dawe writes. "But a detailed survey of farmers in the various rice bowls of Asia found that Filipino farmers were among the leaders in reducing insecticide use, and have progressed farther in mechanizing land preparation and postharvest operations than their counterparts in any other developing

Asian country except Thailand."

According to Dawe, research shows that most countries in Asia where rice is a staple food are long-term members of one of two groups: importers or exporters.

"The fact that countries remain in one club or the other for long periods of time suggests that some deep force is at work," Dawe says. "That deep force is endowments of land and water."

In general, rice-exporting countries have lots of land and river deltas suitable for farming, and these countries are all located in mainland Southeast Asia: Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Myanmar. Thailand, the book says, has four times the arable land per person versus the Philippines.

In contrast, "Consistent importers have less arable land per person and more varied landscapes favoring such alternatives as corn, oil palm, or coconut. These countries are all islands (Indonesia, the Philippines, Japan, Sri Lanka) or, in the case of Malaysia, part island and part narrow peninsula."

And, in case people think that rice importation is a relatively recent phenomenon, research done by IRRI says that the Philippines has been importing rice almost every year since 1869. Similarly, the Indonesian island of Java, where most of that country's rice exports end up, has been a rice importer since the 16th century.

"The fact that all of these countries are islands and have imported rice so consistently for so long, despite some being rich and some being poor, strongly suggests that

government policies are not the explanation," Dawe writes.

But it's not just the absence of mighty river deltas that explains why the Philippines is a net importer of rice. As one of the most disaster-stricken countries in the world, the Philippines is hit with numerous typhoons every year, which, according to IRRI, makes rice production that much riskier and more difficult. It's another geography-related issue that countries like Thailand don't have to deal with as much.

"In addition, the Philippines'

"The Philippines imports rice because it is a nation of islands without any major river deltas like those in Thailand and Vietnam.

rice sector has high labor costs that must be reduced (without reducing wages) in order to increase productivity," Dawe adds.

Since the book was published in 2004, the country has achieved significant strides in rice self-sufficiency. According to Statista, since 2016, about five million hectares of land nationwide have been dedicated to cultivating paddy, which have resulted in a yield of 20 million metric tons of unmilled rice in 2022. In 2018, Congress passed RA 11203, or the Rice Trade Liberalization Law, which effectively removed trade restrictions and brought rice prices down (although many would argue that it's still not low enough, which is still a sore point for many

of our kababayans today). Modern agricultural practices have also increased production from the estimated 2.4 million rice farmers in the country as of 2020.

Still, despite these efforts, the Philippines continues to be net rice importer, and, as IRRI explained, might remain so for the foreseeable future. The country's rice self-sufficiency ratio, or the percentage to which the country's domestic production can meet its domestic requirement, was at 85 percent in 2020. It was down to 81.5 percent in 2021 and fell further to 77 percent in 2022, the lowest in nearly a quarter of a century.

"Is there any way to lessen dependence on imports without further raising prices

and harming poor consumers?" the book asks. "One possibility is reduced population growth, but this debate centers on issues larger than rice self-sufficiency. The best way to sustainably increase production is to invest in agricultural research and transportation infrastructure, thereby providing farmers with more and better options in both production and marketing."

"However, the fundamental factors behind Philippine rice imports—relatively small amounts of land and a lack of large river deltas—can't be changed. In trying to achieve self-sufficiency, the Philippines is fighting a battle against nature that its exporting neighbors are spared."

Nothing wrong with Mark Herras earning honest money

THAT GMA’s “Starstruck” alumnus Mark Herras danced his night away at a gay bar seems to have unleashed a storm in a teacup. Plain and simple – big deal. To borrow from Shakespeare’s comedy: much ado about nothing.

Mark has earned the moniker of ‘Kilabot (Terror) ng Dance Floor.’ Not all actors are good dancers – proudly, this is Mark’s edge over the ones who came after his batch.

Of late, showbiz assignments come few and far between for Mark. This should not be the case for Mark who’s already raising a family – in weeks to come, he’ll be a father of two.

This is where Mark had to find means to augment his financial condition, most especially when he no longer has a manager whose job is to look for jobs for him.

The answer to Mark’s search to eke out a living came via an offer to perform at a gay bar.

The familiar habitues know exactly what to expect at the night spot: good-looking men who gyrate in their skimpy wear called macho dancers. They do modeling and stripteasing to the delight of the patrons.

In most times, customers request that they be joined by the macho dancer at their reserved table who catches



their fancy. The more drinks consumed, the more moolah the lucky macho dancer brings home for a night’s work. The “extra” stuff that he does all the more translates to dough.

Still, it’s nowhere beyond the bounds of decency or else the establishment gets raided, worse, padlocked.

To set the record straight, Mark isn’t guilty of any of these. His forte was – and still is – modern dance, not macho dancing. There was no stripping either.

Mark even confessed to knowing a few faces among the macho dancers – as they were products of then-popular dance groups.

So, what exactly did Mark do on stage? “Hip-hop! It’s the usual dance number that I do when I get invited to town fiestas,” he shared.

How about joining the customer’s table? “Nothing like that happened,” Mark pointed out.

Given the harsh comments about dancing at a gay bar, does Mark regret having grabbed the offer?

“Honestly, I don’t! For one, I don’t see anything wrong with it! As I’ve said, it wasn’t macho dancing that I did. I didn’t strip my clothes off either, so what’s the

big deal?” Mark explained. In fact, what he considers as of little, if no significance at all is other people’s misjudgment of him. Mark insists: “Why do some people look down on me just because I danced at a gay bar? It’s an honest to goodness job. Now if they keep saying it’s not, I couldn’t care less.”

Footnote: Mark performed at the Apollo bar on Roxas Blvd. on January 10 and 31. His second gig coincided with a male search interspersed with numbers by drag queens.

The actor was said to have been paid a hefty P300,000 the first time – a sum he couldn’t possibly be richer by from his showbiz work.

Amid the furor, Mark has gained an ally in former Comelec chief Rowena Gananza who said: “So what if Mark danced at a gay bar? It’s honest money! Thieves in government, they’re who you’re supposed to pounce on!”

Jessica Sanchez returns to ‘America’s Got Talent’ after 20 years

Jessica Sanchez is set to return to the “America’s Got Talent” stage nearly two decades after first competing

as a 10-year-old contestant. The Filipino-Mexican singer, who joined the talent show’s inaugural season in 2006, will appear in the upcoming 19th season of AGT, which premieres May 27 on NBC.

Sanchez was eliminated in the semifinals of her original run but later found mainstream success as the runner-up in the 11th season of “American Idol.”

In a recent social media post, Sanchez reflected on how her first AGT experience helped shape her path.

“Being 10 years old on AGT played such a massive role in me believing in something bigger than myself,” she wrote. “What a huge blessing it is to be able to come back and chase after my dreams again after 20 years. Can’t wait to see what God has in store for me ”

Details about her upcoming performance remain under wraps, but her return has already stirred excitement among fans and fellow artists online.

Sanchez, now 28, has since released original music and performed internationally.



FILIPINO-CANADIAN COMMUNITY CALENDAR: UPCOMING EVENTS

Compiled by Tony A. San Juan, OCT.

MAY 10(SATURDAY) - THANKSGIVING MASS AND GOLDEN SACERDOTAL ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY, 5:00 TO 8:00 PM, ST. ROSE OF LIMA PARISH, LAWRENCE AVE. EAST, BY BICOL CANADA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION(BCCA).

MAY 16,17,18(FRI/SAT/SUN)- 19TH VICTORIA INVITATIONAL BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT, 8:00 AM 8:00 PM, PAN-AM SPORTS CENTRE, SCARBOROUGH, BY FILIPINO CENTRE TORONTO(FCT)

MAY 24(SUNDAY) -ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH GALA AND AWARDS DAY, 6:00 TO 12:00 PM,648 SILVER STAR BLVD. , SCARBOROUGH, BY CANADIAN MULTICULTURAL COUNCIL-ASIANS IN ONTARIO (CMA-AO) AND PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE DAY COUNCIL(HOST)

MAY 27(TUESDAY)-PROUDLY PINOY EDUCATION CONFERENCE, 4:00 TO 7:00 PM., BREBEUF COLLEGE, BY TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD(TCDSB)

JUNE 1(SUNDAY)- PISTAHAN SA TORONTO, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. FCT GROUNDS,4395 SHEPPARD AVE. EAST, SCARBOROUGH, FILIPINO CENTRE TORONTO(FCT),

JUNE 7(SATURDAY)- PIDC SALO-SALO PICNIC AND FILIPINO HERITAGE MONTH, 10:00 AM TO 5:00 PM., EARL BALES PARK, BATHURST ST., NORTH YORK, BY PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE DAY COUNCIL(PIDC)

JUNE 7(SATURDAY)- PINOY FIESTA AND TRADE SHOW, 9:00 AM TO 9:00 PM, ALBERT CAMPBELL SQUARE, 150 BOROUGH DRIVE, SCARBOROUGH, BY PHILIPPINE CANADIAN CHARITABLE FOUNDATION(PCCF)

JUNE 12 (THURSDAY) FLAG-RAISING CEREMONY, 8:00 TO 9:30 AM, TORONTO CITY HALL BY PHILIPPINE CONSULATE IN TORONTO AND FIL-CANADIAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS

JUNE 12(THURSDAY) FLAG-RAISING AND PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE DAY RITES, 11:00 AM TO 2:00 PM, QUEEN’S PARK. TORONTO, BY FEDERATION OF FILIPINO CANADIANS IN ONTARIO(FFCO).

JUNE 19(THURSDAY) WREATH-LAYING AT RIZAL BUST, 9:00 AM TO 12:00 PM., EARL BALES PARK, BATHURST ST., NORTH YORK, BY KNIGHTS OF RIZAL(KOR)-CANADA REGION

JUNE 28 & 29(SAT.& SUN) TORONTO FIESTA EXTRAVAGANZA, 11:00 AM TO 10:00 PM, 314 WILSON AVENUE, NORTH YORK, PHILIPPINE EXTRAVAGANZA, ARTS, CULTURE & HERITAGE (PEACH)

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The focus on manufacturing in the federal election misses what could truly help Canadian workers

MANUFACTURING from page 1

dent Donald Trump. But the focus on manufacturing obscures what truly ails the working class in an advanced economy like Canada's. Manufacturing's share of employment hovers at around 8.9 per cent, while nearly 80 per cent of Canadians work in the service sector. A recent report from the non-partisan Cardus think tank notes that Canada's working class today is "likely to be a female, recently immigrated worker in the services-producing sector. The new working class, in other words, is now more personified by a Walmart cashier or an Amazon delivery driver than a General Motors factory worker or a Domtar mill hand."

Manufacturing gives way to services
So why is there such emphasis on manufacturing?

It's easy to understand. Manufacturing has been essential to industrialization, from the British Empire to China's unprecedented growth in recent years. The late British-Hungarian economist Nicholas Kaldor argued that manufacturing is the engine of growth due to increasing returns to scale, strong links to other sectors and its role in technological development. But as countries become wealthier, an increased demand for services follows, creating jobs in that sector. Manufacturing sectors in wealthier countries tend to invest in labour-saving technologies. The U.S., for ex-

ample, has seen manufacturing employment fall while output has increased. Labour-intensive sectors like clothing cannot compete with Bangladeshi wages, but discussions about manufacturing jobs in Canada and other advanced economies too often focus on wage competition instead of job losses through automation and increasing productivity. There were losers when the globalization era began, but countries like Canada and the U.S. are wealthier today than they were in 1994, when the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was signed. As American economist Jeffrey Sachs has pointed out, governments have failed to redistribute the wealth created by gains from trade to those at the bottom of the income scale.

Four policies of real working-class agenda
There are several key policies that politicians should be proposing that would really help the working class.

First is one that all politicians are talking about: building more housing. Second is related to key elements of social reproduction — that is, care work. There must be strong funding commitments to ensure a national childcare system functions properly. With Canada on track to experience a surge of its elderly population, long-term care also needs to be a focus. Personal support workers must earn a living wage

and must have better working conditions. Canada's aging population is also why decreased immigration is a bad idea. The third policy requires the



federal and provincial governments to get serious about active labour market policies. This means building a labour market training system that actually works, something Canada has lacked. These policies are generally not implemented in liberal market economies like Canada and the U.S. But in countries like Sweden with active labour market policies in place, 80 per cent of the population has a favourable opinion of robots and AI compared to two-thirds of Americans who are concerned about technological job loss. The state's ability — or lack of it — to provide social protections and job re-training has real impacts on how people perceive technological change. Canada also needs to recognize foreign credentials. Its reluctance to do so has had a negative impact on the economic prospects

of immigrants. Canada should also consider making higher education free. The fourth policy involves better worker protections that include a strengthened Employment Insurance that is easier to qualify for, improved protections for gig workers and increasing union membership. Apart from the public sector, Canadian unions have not fared well organizing in service industries. Unions need to make a serious effort to organize in retail, food service, the gig economy and logistics, despite the challenges. Canadian unions may find that they have little choice but to do so, as their presence in the private sector continues to decline. **Inequality, wealth redistribution** The most significant barrier of these four policy proposals is that most require an increased redistribution of wealth. Canada over the past several decades has retreated from wealth redistribution and as a result, economic inequality has surged. White blue-collar workers in the U.S. in areas hit by factory job losses swung to Trump. A Canadian version of this is happening with some blue-collar unions endorsing the Conservatives under Pierre Poilievre. Fixating on manufacturing is not a solution. After 2012, China began shedding manu-

facturing employment. Job demand in Chinese manufacturing today is in sectors that require skilled workers for software and AI systems. Services like retail, technology and transportation are also drawing in workers from manufacturing. **Building infrastructure, green energy** Not all blue-collar work will disappear. Canada needs labour to build not just homes, but high-speed rail. Active labour market policies will be key to ensuring manufacturing workers transition into building infrastructure and green energy. Canada can also remain competitive in areas like aluminum production. Policymakers need to understand our post-industrial moment, and focus on a just transition for manufacturing workers. Labour and progressive movements have long championed a just transition for fossil fuel workers. Like factory workers, fossil fuel workers have been courted by right-wing politicians who tell them environmental policies will destroy their jobs. At the same time, oil companies automate their jobs anyway. These policies are not easy to achieve, but there are few other options for Canada if it wants to be carbon-free, open to the world and more equal. Canada's economic nostalgia for manufacturing is ultimately strange given it's also a common talking point of Trump, a politician who's wildly unpopular in Canada.



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FILIPINO CENTRE TORONTO MARKS SILVER ANNIVERSARY By Tony A. San Juan, OCT.

FILIPINO CENTRE from page 12

Among the dignitaries, politicians and guests who graced the occasion were the Philippine Consul General in Toronto Angelica Escalona, Member of Parliament for Scarborough Centre Salma Zahid, Member of Parliament for Scarborough North Shaun Chen, Ontario Minister of Seniors and MPP for Scarborough North, Hon. Raymond Cho, MPP for Agincourt Aris Babikian, and Past Toronto Medical Officer of Health, Dr.



Eileen Patricia De Villa. Other happy attendees were Filipino-Canadian community leaders, business executives, entrepreneurs, heads of various commu-

nity organizations, gala sponsors, media representatives, and FCT supporters & volunteers. The main highlights of the celebration were the honours pre-

sented to the lates Dr. Guillermo De Villa, First Chairman of the FCT Board and Rosalinda C. Javier, First FCT President as well as Service Awards given to certain FCT officers and members. Filipino Consul General A. Escalona delivered her special message while Dr. E. De Villa served as the event's guest speaker. Ably emceed by Theresa Redula of Rogers Media OMNI TV, the lively program includes congratulatory messages & greetings, dining & dancing, entertainment numbers, group

& individual performances, and social networking & pleasantries. Led by Mary Ann S. San Juan, FCT President; Efren De Villa, FCT Board Chair; and Philip Beloso, Gala Organizing Committee Chair, with remarkable support and enthusiastic assistance by the FCT board directors and executive officers, the successful affair was an evening of great gathering, notable nostalgia, rightful reflection, and memorable moments. (Tony A. San Juan, OCT).



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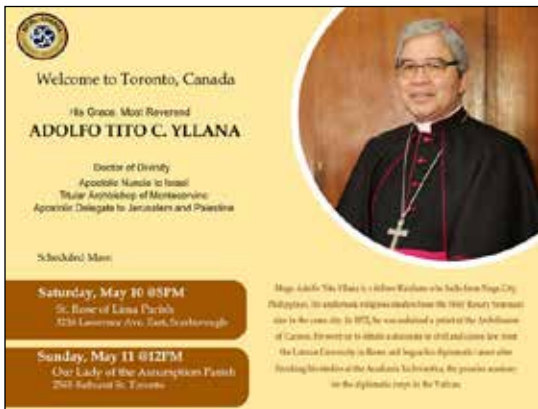
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BICOLANO-CANADIANS TO WELCOME A FILIPINO CATHOLIC LEADER

By Tony A. San Juan, OCT.

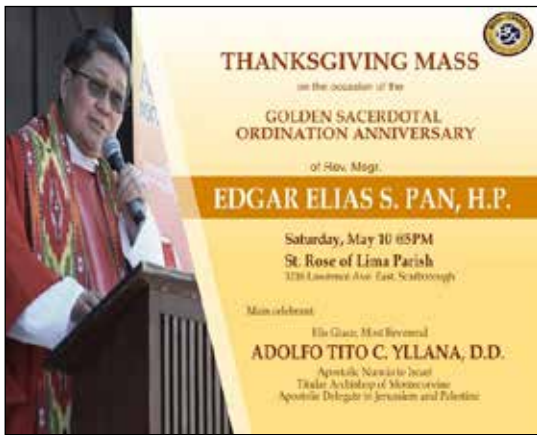
The Bicol Canada Community Association (BCCA) has recently announced an invitation for a 2-day Holy Mass celebration on May 10, 2025 (Saturday) and May 11, 2025 (Sunday). The scheduled church services will be conducted respectively at St. Rose of Lima Parish, 3216 Lawrence Avenue East, Scarborough, at 5:00 pm and at Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, 2565 Bathurst Street, Toronto, at noon.

BCCA, with its members, families, friends and the Devotees of Our Lady of Penafancia, will “welcome to Canada” their fellow Bicolano, His Grace Most Reverend Monsignor Adolfo Tito C. Yllana. A Doctor of Divinity, Monsignor Yllana is the Apostolic Nuncio to Israel, Titular Archbishop of Montecorvino and Apostolic Delegate to Jerusalem and Pal-



estine. He hails from Naga City, Camarines Sur and was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Nueva Caceres in 1972.

The “mga Oragons” from Bicolandia’s 6 provinces will join Rev. Msgr. Yllana, the main celebrant, officiates a Thanksgiving Mass on Saturday, May 10th at St. Rose of Lima Parish and at the Our



Lady of the Assumption Parish on May 11th. At the same time, parishioners and participants will commemorate the Golden Sacerdotal Ordination Anniversary of Reverend Monsignor Edgar Elias S. Pan, H.P., also a Bicolano “kabayan”. Rev. Msgr E. Pan is the pastor of St. Rose of

Lima Parish.

Under the leadership of Earl Francis O. Dacara, BCCA President, and with “dakulang tabang” from several officers, members and “Manoys and Manays” among others, the church celebration and gathering are expected to be a blessed and memorable affair.

After the mass, a “laing-laced karakanan” (food potluck) and “kumustahan” will ensue. As the long-serving

Past BCCA President, Rafael “Paeng” Nebres would always say: “Tara na, para mag-iribahan at mag-karaksnan, ta-nganing mag-kasararo kita gabos!” Definitely, it’s a free event. Everyone is welcome! (Tony A. San Juan, OCT)

Iniigo Pascual stays grounded

“This is home to me,” the 27-year-old actor and musician said at a Star Magic Spotlight media conference before the weekend. “No matter what projects I get to do in another place, in another country, this will still be my home.”

That homecoming feeling is especially strong nowadays, with Iniigo’s latest Filipino film, “Fatherland,” earning him praise for stepping out of the heartthrob box and into a meatier dramatic role in April.

“It was my first time doing a heavy drama,” Iniigo said. “Usually, it’s ‘pakilig’ (fan thrills) movies, so I was really happy I was able to do something different.”

Directed by multi-awarded filmmaker Joel Lamangan, “Fatherland” casts him as a Filipino-American reconnecting with his roots — art imitating life, in a way.

Iniigo admitted to turning to his famous father, Piolo Pascual, for advice. “I always ask Papa, especially when I have to give everything in heavy drama scenes. I ask him what I should be thinking — should I use my personal pain or should I be the character? And my dad says, ‘Whatever works for you and whatever works in that situation.’”

“For me, being the child of a celebrity is something that will always be there. What people don’t understand is that being the child of a star doesn’t guarantee an



easy or quick path to success. [In fact], when you enter the industry, the expectations are already high. People expect you to be great at what you do right away and you don’t have the space or time to be a beginner,” he explained.

“But I never saw it as a burden or a challenge. It’s true that my dad gave me a path, but it’s up to me how I interpret that. And for me, I see it as a blessing. It’s an honor, of course, to be compared to my dad, who’s an amazing actor and a good person.”

Blessings are something Iniigo has been counting more consciously in recent years — especially as his schedule takes him back and forth across the Pacific. “It’s not really planned,” he admitted. “It’s whenever it’s possible. But as much as I can, I try to be here more.”

The plan is to stay in the Philippines longer.” Still, Hollywood isn’t off the table. Iniigo is currently preparing for another film project in the US.

“I’m really excited for it,” he said. “I can’t say much about it yet, but I’m happy I get to come back here and at the same time do auditions in the States.”

“Whenever I say auditions, it doesn’t mean I always get in,” he shared candidly. “And it’s hard. If it’s already difficult to be an artist in the Philippines, imagine how much harder it is in America. You face so many more competitors, and they have so many more options.”

He takes the same balanced, patient approach to his music. After releasing “The Heartbreak Trilogy” last year, Iniigo is aiming to switch things up with “more happy songs” this 2025. “I think I’m going to go back to my roots, kind of go back to the sound of ‘Dahil Sayo,’” he said.

Beyond the spotlight, he’s also venturing into business. “More on hygiene, more like hair products and self-care type of products — which I’ve been wanting to do for a while now,” he said. “It’s my first business venture, so that’s also in the process of being finished this year.”

Whether it’s acting, music, or building a brand, Iniigo seems to be growing into his own pace, his own style — and his own name.

“After so many years, it’s like, ‘Hey, I’m still here,’” he said. “With every project and every time I come home to the Philippines, I’m just happy people are still there for me. And I’m grateful, of course.”

Enchong Dee puts hosting job on hold for new movie role

Enchong Dee has confirmed that he had to step back from hosting Pinoy Big Brother Celebrity Collab to focus on his role in the movie The Sacrifice with Lovi Poe.

Speaking about the decision, Dee mentioned that filming for the movie, which is under Poe’s C’est Lovi Production, requires a trip to Quezon, leading him to sacrifice

other commitments, including his hosting role on the popular reality show.

“I just finished It’s Okay Not to Be Okay and now I’ll concentrate on my movie with Lovi,” Dee explained. Although he misses PBB Celebrity Collab, he continues to support the show, attending live telecasts when possible. “There are lots of hosts, so when one is absent, there is an alternate,” he noted, adding that the show has received positive feedback and strong ratings from viewers.

Dee also expressed his excitement about the collaboration between GMA and ABS-CBN on this PBB season.

“It shows we are one in the entertainment industry. After all, the real star of the show are the viewers,” he said.

Apart from his current film projects, including The Sacrifice, Dee has wrapped up an international project and The Fisher, directed by Paul Soriano.

“I’ve shot a Canadian film and am hopeful that everything will be released this year,” he said.

For now, Dee is focusing on The Sacrifice, which he described as one of his dream projects.

“This is my first movie for the year, and I just want to focus on it, especially since it’s my first screen collaboration with Lovi,” he shared.

Dee expressed his hope that the film will showcase Filipino culture to a global audience.



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Alyssa Muhlach says cheaters in show biz should be ‘publicly shamed’

Alyssa Muhlach noted that there are a lot of cheaters in show biz, and admitting that this annoys her, she said they deserve to be “publicly shamed.”

Muhlach gave her two cents on how cheaters “are excused” in show biz, during a recent episode of her “He Said, She Said” podcast while discussing people who are unfaithful to their partners.

The actress-singer, however, did not disclose whom she was referring to in her remarks.

“Yan ang kinainisanan ko sa (That is what annoys me in) show biz. There are so much cheaters in show biz and it’s excused. They should be publicly shamed. They should be so publicly shamed that no one will ever cheat, like that is my stand. That is my stand talaga (really),” she said.

The “2 Good 2 Be True” star then explained the reason behind her remark, saying cheaters who are excused for being such will feel free to cheat again.

“Dapat meron talaga ‘yung ibabandera ka sa buong mundo because ganito ‘yan (It should be made public for the whole world to know. Let’s put it this way), because it’s a secret, and because you are not shamed, you will do it again because what’s stopping you? Girls

still date you,” she said.

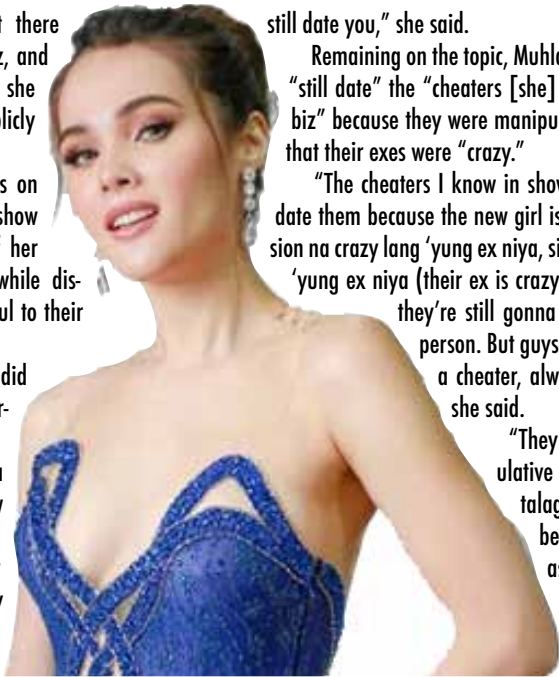
Remaining on the topic, Muhlach said women “still date” the “cheaters [she] knows in show biz” because they were manipulated to believe that their exes were “crazy.”

“The cheaters I know in show biz, girls still date them because the new girl is under the illusion na crazy lang ‘yung ex niya, sinungaling lang ‘yung ex niya (their ex is crazy and a liar), so they’re still gonna date the same person. But guys, talagang once a cheater, always a cheater,” she said.

“They are so manipulative talaga. Dapat talaga (It should be) they’ll feel ashamed because it’s not something that you should be proud of,” she continued.

The “He Said, She Said” podcast is a joint effort between Muhlach and her partner, Chris Young. It premiered in April, in which they first opened up about their love story.

Muhlach was crowned Reina Hispanoamericana Filipinas 2018, however, but ended up unplaced in the global tilt. She is best known for her appearances in “2 Good 2 Be True” and “Clarita.”



FCAV Receives \$16,134 Grant to Promote Senior Wellness!

The Filipino Canadian Association of Vaughan (FCAV) is proud to be awarded funding from the New Horizons for Seniors Program in support of our initiative, “Promoting Senior Wellness through Gardening and Exercising.”

This program supports seniors in Vaughan by encouraging social engagement, mental wellness, and physical activity through leisurely activities and vegetable gardening near the Philippine Canadian Friendship Parkette:

- Zumba Classes – Weekly Tuesdays, 7:30–8:30 PM
- Line Dancing – Weekly Fridays, 6:30–7:30 PM



PM

- Arnis (Filipino Martial Arts) – Bi-weekly Sundays, 6:30–7:30 PM
- Cultural Dancing – Bi-weekly Saturdays, 2:00–3:00 PM

By promoting healthy habits and meaningful engagement, FCAV is helping build a thriving and active senior community here in Vaughan



Kapuso Lions gets recognized for their charity work

We’re proud to share some amazing news!

The Toronto Kapuso Lions Club has been honored with the Kindness Matters Award- Runners up by Lions Clubs International (MDA-level) a global recognition for our commitment to making a difference through service and

compassion.

This award is very specific to the service of TKLC donating a chemotherapy medicines to children with cancer at Corazon Montelibano Memorial Hospital Bacolod City Philippines .

We are sharing the recognition to our sister club in Bacolod City @Bacolod City Unity Lions Club for the great support they did for us during our visit.

We also received the Passion for Service recognition

KAPUSO page 23

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Rita Daniela finds strength in being a mom for ‘Liwanag sa Dilim’ role

One of the reasons why Rita Daniela took the opportunity to be part of the jukebox musical “Liwanag sa Dilim” is to spend more time with her two-year-old son, Uno.

In the musical, Rita portrays the role of Sisa (also lovingly referred to as Nanay), a mother living in the 1880s who is determined to make ends meet for her sons, Crispin and Basilio. Alternating the character with the Kapuso star is seasoned theater actress Neomi Gonzales.

The musical, combining elements of the past and present, is based on the music of singer-songwriter Rico Blanco, including “Elesi,” “Kisapmata,” “Himala,” “Hinahanap-hanap Kita” and “Umaaraw, Umuulan,” to name a few.

“Noong nalaman na siya ‘yung alternate ko, wait lang ha (When I found out that she was my alternate, wait)! But I never felt that there was a competition. That was one thing that I really like about what’s happening with us,” she said of alternating Sisa with Gonzales during a brief chat with INQUIRER.net on the sidelines of the musical’s rehearsal.

Contrary to the heavy emotion Rita infused into Sisa, the actress — who was calmly munching potato chips — had a chill demeanor as she spoke about taking on her character. For her, being a mother was a huge help in portraying Sisa’s desperation onstage.



“I play the role of Nanay, just Nanay... ang character ko is a very challenging role. Sobrang laking bagay na Nanay ako sa totoong bagay kasi kung hindi ako nanay, feel ko hindi ko siya mabibigyan ng justice. I’m just going to sing the song and that’s it,” she said.

(I play the role of Nanay, just Nanay. My character is very challenging. Being a mother in real life is a big thing because if I were not a mom, I don’t think I could give it justice. I’m just going to sing the song and that’s it.)

When asked if she is open to continuing her career in theater, Rita said her doors are open depending on the offer. She also explained that being able to spend time with Uno is one of the reasons why she wanted to be part of “Liwanag sa Dilim.”

“Tinanggap ko itong project na ito kasi I really want to have more time with my son. While doing a series, it will take up so much of your time. Nangyayari ang lock-in ulit even if it will take two or three days. Still, that’s two nights without my son,” she said.

“My son is just two years old, and I don’t want to miss a lot of things. I don’t want to miss his milestones. Kaya tinanggap ko ito because at least, I’m still doing what I love but at the same time, I have more time with him,” she continued.

(I accepted this project because I real-

ly want to have more time with my son. While doing a series, it will take up so much of your time. Lock-in tapings happen, and even if it takes two or three days, it is still two or three nights without my son. My son is just two years old, and I don’t want to miss a lot of things. I don’t want to miss his milestones. This is why I accepted it because at least, I’m still doing what I love, but at the same time, I have more time with him.”

Years before “Liwanag sa Dilim” went into production, Rita shared that she might have manifested (or expressed her intention to a higher being) after having the chance to meet Blanco on the sidelines of the musical “Eto Na! Musikal nAPO” in 2018.

“That was the first time I met Sir Rico, he watched our show, and when he watched me, na-starstruck ako sa kanya (I was starstruck). Hindi ko inexpect na siya rin. Sabi niya (He said), ‘How can you do that?’ I guess I just love what I do,” she said.

Also part of the musical are Khalil Ramos, Anthony Rosaldo, Alexa Ilacad, Nicole Omillo, Vien King and CJ Navato, among many others. It ended its staging on May 4 after being extended due to audience demand.

Jomari Yllana explains why he did not run for higher office

Tatlong terminong nanilbihan si Jomari Yllana bilang konsehal ng first district ng Parañaque City, mula 2016 hanggang 2025.

Magtatapos na ang kanyang termino sa darating na June 2025, at pagkatapos nito ay magpapahinga muna sa pulitika ang actor-politician.

Ano ang mga natutunan ni Jomari sa loob ng siyam na taon sa public service?

Saad niya: “Power, influence, and position is temporary... is temporary.

“So, after all, bibitawan mo na yung influence, yung position.

“Ang tanong sa sarili ko, ‘Did you grow?’

“And I can honestly say that, proud to say that, ang laki ng growth ko as a person, as a public servant, as a family member, as a kabarangay, as a neighbor, yung ganyan.

“I learned a lot from it.

“And made me closer to my community in ways I never knew possible.”

Ngayong magtatapos na ang kanyang termino, bakit hindi siya tumakbo sa mas mataas na posisyon? Puwede naman siyang tumakbong vice-mayor o mas mataas pang posisyon?

Paliwanag niya: “It’s temporary. All good things must come to an end.

“So, walang magtatagal forever. If position is elected, it has a beginning, it has an end.

“So, yung sa akin, I’m very fortunate to be one of the elected councilors in the city of Parañaque.

“Ako, from the beginning, alam ko that it has an end.

“So, sa akin, public service doesn’t end there.

“And service sa tao will always remain.”



Canada’s new immigration policy favours construction workers but leaves the rest behind

IMMIGRATION from page 1

a deeper reality: Canada’s immigration reforms continue to prioritize business and industry needs. In this instance, those needs are in housing and construction.

This selective approach reveals deeper patterns in Canada’s immigration system, often described as a hierarchy of deservingness. This framework assigns greater value to certain types of labour, while sidelining others. This sidelining is often based on race, gender and class and limits access to recognition and rights for all essential workers.

Former Immigration Minister Marc Miller estimated that between 300,000 and 600,000 out-of-status people were living in Canada as of 2024. The new construction worker pathway, while important for some, will address only a tiny fraction of this population.



Political and industry priorities

With a federal election on the horizon, the construction worker pathway is as much a political move as a policy reform.

The program expands on a pilot that granted permanent residence to approximately 1,365 people and their families in the Greater Toronto Area before closing in December 2024.

The current national rollout of the program reflects public and industry pressure to address Canada’s housing crisis. Housing has become a top priority for governments across the country.

Developers and industry groups, such as the Canadian Home Builders’ Association, have long lobbied for faster housing construction and more skilled trades workers. Their advocacy, combined with widespread concern over affordability, made it politically attractive to prioritize construction labour rather than implement broader regularization efforts.

But this approach exposes who is left out. Sectors like caregiving, domestic work and agriculture, largely dominated by racialized and feminized labour continue to be excluded from clear and inclusive pathways to status.

Canada’s low-wage economy has historically depended on the labour of racialized and immigrant women. Migrants in these sectors, often work in private or hidden spaces, making their labour less visible and politically legible.

Caregiving and domestic work in Canada have historically been undervalued. It is often framed as natural extensions of women’s roles and systematically marginalized in immigration policy through pro-

grams like the Live-in Caregiver Program.

Fragmented, insufficient system

Research confirms that Canada’s approach remains fragmented and insufficient. As part of my work with MlrreM, an international project studying irregular migration and regularization policies, we found that Canadian programs are often small, sector-specific and constrained by narrow eligibility criteria.

New federal government Home Care Worker Immigration pilots offer another highly competitive pathway to residency.

But these programs remain narrowly targeted, restricted and quickly capped, with application limits often reached on the same day they open.

They also provide little relief for the many out-of-status caregivers already living and working in Canada.

Other countries have demonstrated that large-scale, inclusive reforms are possible, offering Canada a model to follow.

Spain’s 2005 regularization program successfully granted legal status to 700,000 people. The Spanish assessment recognized employment records, community ties and long-term residence. This model shows that broad, fair regularization strategies can balance administrative efficiency with political feasibility.

Meanwhile, Canada’s fragmented re-

forms exclude most out-of-status critical workers. And it leaves them without any sustainable pathway to status, prolonging their vulnerability and insecurity.

A comprehensive immigration strategy needed

Canada urgently needs a transparent, fair and scaleable immigration strategy. It must be one that values people’s contributions, not just the immediate needs of businesses.

Cleaners, caregivers, farm labourers, food service workers and others deserve the same recognition and opportunity as those in construction.

A comprehensive regularization strategy would not only uphold dignity and fairness. It would also strengthen Canada’s economy, improve labour protections and promote social inclusion.

As Canadians prepare to head to the polls, the incoming government faces a critical choice.

It can continue with piecemeal, politically convenient reforms that leave most out-of-status workers behind. Or it can commit to a broad, rights-based regularization strategy that recognizes the full social fabric of those who sustain this country.

“Caregiving and domestic work in Canada have historically been undervalued.”

Richard Yap and Allen Dizon on politics, marriage and staying fit

It's only a few days until the country's midterm elections, and it is common knowledge that showbiz personalities are among those running for public office. Once again, some oppose the idea of actors entering politics, believing their involvement leads to political bankruptcy.

Richard Yap, who ran for a congressional seat but didn't make it, believes this ugly claim is unfair to actors aspiring to enter politics.

"I think that's unfair because there are a lot of artists who have the brains to be in politics, to be in public service," said Richard, who recently guested on "Fast Talk with Boy Abunda" with Allen Dizon. Both actors are part of the Joel Lamangan-directed film "Fatherland."

"That statement is based on a certain percentage of people who are in power and sinasabini, ganun na lahat. So, it's a generalization. It's unfair for a lot of us," he added.

Allen, on the other hand, was invited to join the political bandwagon but declined. He feels he's not yet ready to enter politics. "I need to study if I want to enter politics. I also must set aside (career) plans and my family. For me, if you've decided and you have the passion to serve, you must study. Hindi basta-basta lang at baka



hindi ko magawa 'yung role as public servant, baka mapahiya lang ako."

The actor echoed the point of view of the late Comedy King Dolphy about joining politics. In one of his interviews with my late dear friend Ricky Lo, who was also the former Entertainment editor of this paper, Dolphy said, "Madaling tumakbo, e paano kung manalo?"

These days, Richard and Allen are focused on their respective acting careers. Did you know that both were into modelling first before they started acting in films and on television?

Richard caught public attention through his TV commercial for a fastfood chain, which opened for him doors of opportunities in showbiz, while Allen was a familiar face in print ads and male beauty pageants such

as Ginoong Pilipinas, which I hosted many times.

"Those days were fun," ruminated Allen. "I was enjoying 'yung ganda ng katawan, 'yung pagiging gwapo at kung paano i-handle (my) being sexy," he added with a laugh. He also once again did his signature pose.

Richard revealed he also participated in a male beauty pageant in his younger days, and he equally found it enjoyable, but he never dared to join again "because I felt it wasn't for me." Aside from their good looks, Richard and Allen also possess well-built physiques. The former maintains his weight by working out in the gym at his house. He also does treadmill, yoga and stretching. He plays golf in his free time. Allen keeps a healthy lifestyle by dieting and playing tennis to maintain his ideal weight.

Inarguably, Richard and Allen have many female followers. I asked them how they would react if there were female fans who become so touchy, even if they know both men are married.

"I'm very thankful that I have fans and followers. Melody (his wife) goes to the side and allows them to have the moment. Sabi niya it's not all the time that they see you so binibigyan niya ng panahon lumapit sa akin

ang mga tao," enthused Richard. "She's not jealous at all. There's even a time when she offered to take pictures of me and the fans. She would offer to do that."

Allen said his wife Crystal does the same. "She would either go to the side or keep her distance from where I am whenever someone wants to have a picture with me."

The actor never denied that he once fell into temptation, which caused much distress to his wife. But that's a thing of the past. Allen has already learned his lesson.

Richard said that there are ups and downs in every marriage.

"There's never a perfect marriage. I think, when I was younger, I was always out of the house kasi nalulong naman ako sa billiards (laughs), na hindi mo naiisip na may asawa ka, but no third party."

How do they handle flirtation?

"Takbo palayo na, Tito Boy. Iwas na," Allen amusingly replied. "Ako, as much as possible, I won't let it progress," answered Richard.

Ferdinand Vincent Co of Puregold and Bea Alonzo spark dating rumors

Ferdinand Vincent Co of Puregold and Bea Alonzo have sparked dating rumors during a vacation in Spain.

Vincent, president of Puregold Price Club Inc., is the son

of retail magnates Lucio and Susan Co.

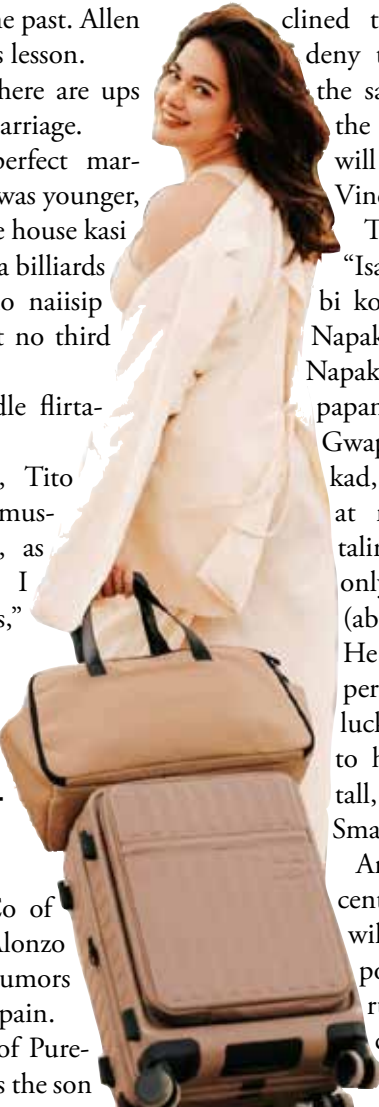
Earlier, a report by a news organization stated that Vincent shared photos from a vacation in Andalusia, Spain, alongside an unidentified woman on his private Instagram account.

Netizens noticed that Bea also shared photos from the exact Spanish location, wearing the same outfits featured in Vincent's posts.

A source close to the family declined to confirm nor deny the rumor. But the same source said the woman who will be married to Vincent is lucky.

The source said: "Isa lang masasabi ko (kay Vincent). Napakabait na tao. Napakaswerte ng mapapangasawa n'ya. Gwapo, matangkad, napakabait, at mayaman. Matatino pa. (I can only say one thing (about Vincent). He is a very kind person. She is very lucky to be married to him: handsome, tall, kind, and rich. Smart, too.)"

Are Bea and Vincent an item? We will keep you posted on the rumored power couple.





Farewell Gathering in honor of Consul General Angelica Escalona

Date: Saturday, May 31, 2025
Time: 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Venue: Islas Filipino BBQ & Bar, 890 Wilson Avenue, Toronto
Admission: \$30.00 (pls e-transfer to: info@pidccanada.com)

Let's come together to celebrate and express our warmest gratitude to Consul Gen. Escalona for her dedicated service to the Filipino community.

We hope to see you there as we bid her a fond farewell and wish her continued success on her next journey!

Candid CAMERA



Rory Elefano of Philippine Independence Day Council (PIDC) tries to recruit Philippine Canadian Charitable Foundation (PCCF) Little Miss Philippines 2019 Sophia Daclan for their pageant.



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Why birthday girl Maymay Entrata is choosing peace

Maymay Entrata’s upcoming album ‘Reborn’ tells the story of her journey through love, healing, and growth

Maymay Entrata recently opened up about why she had been going in and out of the limelight in the past years. She vulnerably shared the personal challenges she faced, particularly the emotional weight of having her mom and grandmother (who both raised her) dealing with medical conditions.

As Maymay turns 28 today, May 6, she offers something more than a typical birthday wish.

“No matter what trials I face in life, I will always choose to be happy, to stay hopeful, and to never give up,” she told Manila Standard Entertainment in an exclusive interview during last month’s Star Magic Spotlight event. “Life won’t always be joyful or perfect, but I hope I remain grounded through it all.”

It’s a sentiment that echoes where she is today—not just as an artist, but as a person learning to prioritize what matters. For the first time in a long while, Maymay bared a side of herself that fans rarely see.

“Andito ako sa point na hangga’t may oras ako na makapiling ko yung dalawang nanay ko, gagawin ko—palipad-lipad man ako sa Cagayan de Oro o Japan, paulit-ulit gagawin ko po. Sobrang mahal na mahal ko po sila.”

She added, “Yun yung dahilan kung bakit on and off ako sa showbiz nitong mga nakaraang taon po sa buhay ko.”

Maymay’s honesty shows the kind of growth that often goes unseen. While she remains in the public eye, her new album, Reborn shows a deeper side of her journey.

“Yung Reborn hindi lang siya title—parang ‘remember me’ ba doon sa darkest moments na pinagdaanan ko, na kaya ko pa rin pala bumangon despite all of that, kaya ko pa rin pala mabuo ulit yung sarili ko.”

The album was born from a collaborative process that started in a music camp with U.S. composers and producers. It speaks of pain, healing, and love—told through different genres and stages of emotion, including her newest single, “Paradise,” which leans into darker themes.

Known as the “Amakabogera” hitmaker, Maymay has built a music career that spans beyond viral moments. She was also chosen to record the Filipino version of the iconic Snow White theme song, “Nasaan ang Hiling?” for Disney. It’s a project that pushed her musically and emotionally.

“Una, nung sinabi sa’kin, talagang hindi ako makapaniwala... ‘Magiging princess ako?!’ And knowing Disney... for me to be a part of it... talagang dream come true talaga sa’kin,” she enthused.

Now starring in an upcoming Netflix mini-series titled Happy Crush, directed by Carlo Catu, Maymay prioritizes creative fulfillment over constant visibility.

In matters of the heart, she says she already feels complete. “As long as



I’m full of love from God and my family, I already feel complete. If someone romantic comes into my life, that’s just a bonus.”

Speaking on the latest PBB season, she also offered words that reflect her current mindset: “Sino ba naman po tayo para hindi bigyan ng chance yung mga taong nagkakasala, eh tayo, hindi rin tayo perpekto. Sa madaling salita, sana instead of pulling people down, why not just help each other up to be better?”

Sine Gang Team 2025. Thank you to each member of the team who generously contributed their time and effort to create another unforgettable moment for the community. Your passion and dedication truly made it special.



Kapuso Lions gets recognized for their charity work

KAPUSO from page 20

for completing all 8 Signature Service Projects of Lions Clubs International – a huge milestone that reflects our

dedication to impactful and meaningful outreach.

As part of our ongoing efforts to fight hunger in our community, we recently donated 400+ kilos of non-per-

ishable food items to support local food banks in Ajax during the annual convention of District A711 held at Ajax Convention Center on April 11-13, 2025.

We are grateful, humbled, and inspired to keep serving with kindness and heart. Because kindness matters. Always.



Kapuso Lions Bal Yujuico continues his charity work while on vacation

LIONS from page 8

shrieks, jumps and unison greet-

ing ‘Salamat Gid’ after a solemn Thanksgiving prayer. Ahh, my heart bleeds !!

“Doble ang saya kapag nakapagbigay tayo ng saya sa mga kabataang nanga-ngailangan,” says

Emmanuel Yanga “Sulit na sulit pagod at puyat sa mga naliligayahan sa pagtu-

long,” replies Yujuico Bal Cricket Long live Kapuso Lions.



Bacolod City Unity Lions President Violeta Pradilla Arana leads feeding project



Bacolod City Unity Leo President Chrismoon Bañas distributes drinks



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The advertisement features three devices displaying the November 2020 issue of LM Confidential. The laptop screen shows the main headline "L is for Rabbit" by DepEd Online, a feature titled "HEAVEN Peralejo Happy to be the lead in...", and a section on "Philippines starts national ID cards". The smartphone and tablet also show the same content, demonstrating the magazine's mobile accessibility. The background consists of blurred newspaper clippings.

Little Manila Lm confidential



Ruffa Gutierrez and the currency of hard work

Ruffa Gutierrez has worn many crowns — beauty queen, actress, model, host — but these days, the title she carries with the most pride is being a single mom.

She's been one for nearly two decades, raising daughters Lorin and Venice largely on her own after her separation and annulment from Turkish businessman Yilmaz Bektas in 2007 and 2012, respectively. She doesn't shy away from this part of her story. In fact, it's become the foundation of how she lives, works and parents — with grit, humor and a steady hand on the finances.

"I'm really grateful to all the brands that still believe in me — even at this age," the now 50-year-old yet ever young and gorgeous looking Ruffa said in her latest endorsement launch on April 10 in Quezon City.

"Every year, blessings come in, and because of these opportunities, I've been able to raise my daughters by myself. It's not easy, but it's fulfilling because I know that everything I'm doing is for them."

That particular launch wasn't just another campaign for Ruffa. She was formally introduced as the first-ever brand ambassador of Kabayan Remittance — a financial service dedicated to overseas Filipino workers. And this role, for her, means more than a title.

"I know what it feels like to be far from your family," Ruffa shared. "When we lived in the States during my teenage years, my parents were working hard abroad to raise us. We weren't rich, but we were raised with

values — resilience, hard work and love."

It's those same values she now passes on to Lorin and Venice, both currently pursuing their studies in the United States.

Ruffa lights up when she talks about them.

"They're not just beautiful girls — they're smart, grounded and independent," she said. "I always remind them: don't be lazy. Work hard. Don't rely

on others for your success."

A big part of that is managing their own money. Ruffa makes sure they understand the value of saving early. "Every time they earn from en-

dorsements, we put it straight into savings," she explained. "They also have their allowances, of course. But I tell them — save for the rainy days."

She's not overly strict, though. "I also want them to enjoy what they work for," she said. "It's okay to splurge once in a while — it encourages them to stay motivated."

Lorin put that lesson into action when she decided to buy her first car in the US using money she earned from her own first endorsement.

"She said, 'Mom, I want a nice car,' and I told her, 'I don't care what it looks like as long as it runs and has wheels,'" Ruffa laughed. "But I get it. Kids today want something stylish. So I advised her to just get something practical but still decent. She ended up buying a second-hand Mercedes-Benz. She listened. And I was proud."

Ruffa's money lessons come from experience. At 13, she earned her first

paycheck worth P3,000 for a Christmas TV special. "I didn't save it. I went shopping right away!" she said, grinning. "But with my first big contract at Regal Films, I saved. That's when I started learning the value of money."

That full-circle perspective is why she feels at home working with Kabayan Remit. Last year, they flew her to Canada to connect with overseas Filipinos, many of whom have followed her career for decades.

"They've seen me grow up, and I've

her own life stories, too. Because let's face it: no article about this beautiful celebrity is ever complete without a touch of intrigue, right?

Lately, that intrigue surrounds her ex-husband, Yilmaz, who's reportedly planning a visit to the Philippines — his first since 2008. There's even talk that he wants to woo her back, but Ruffa isn't fazed in the least.

"It's not about me anymore," she said simply. "It's about Yilmaz's relationship with the girls. I've always told them the truth [about what happened between us]. But I've also always told them to respect their father. At the end of the day, he's still their dad, and whatever happened between us shouldn't get in the way of [the girls getting to know him]. I want them to have a bond with their dad on their own terms."

True to her famously witty and straightforward style, though, Ruffa couldn't resist adding with a laugh, "Pero ibang usapan na pag sinabi niyang gusto niyang magpadalang support (But it will be a different story if he says he wants to send support) via Kabayan Remit. As the mom, we'll gladly accept."

It was classic Ruffa— humorous, unbothered and unafraid to speak her truth. But beneath the quip lies the real story: of a woman who's done the work, who continues to show up, and who, no matter the twists and turns of life, stays centered on what matters most — her daughters, her values and the kind of life she's built all on her own.



Gutierrez (center) with Princes Manalo (left) and Karina Salve Untalan of Kabayan Remittance during her launch as brand ambassador. The two executives, along with members of their staff, flew in especially for the event from the company's offices in the US, Canada and the UK, where the service is currently available.

enjoyed meeting so many of them," gushed the former teen star. "Their stories are very inspiring. They remind me so much of my own parents and all the sacrifices people make for family."

For Ruffa, what OFWs give her isn't just admiration — it's affection that feels personal. "When I run into Filipinos abroad, it's never just small talk," she said. "They'll say things like, 'You make us feel closer to home,' or 'We're proud of you.' It's not the usual fan moment— it's family energy. And that kind of connection? It means everything to me."

It's this very openness — the willingness to connect beyond the surface — that Ruffa has always brought to

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ABS-CBN Film Restoration Takes Final Bow
Some good things never last.



Nora Aunor in Himala, the poster of the restored Oro, Plata, Mata, and Johnny Delgado in Kakabakaba Ka Ba?

The shutting down of ABS-CBN in 2020 didn't just change the Philippine media landscape drastically overnight, it put an end to livelihoods and dreams of thousands. And now here's another casualty of that unfortunate event: the ABS-CBN Film Restoration will no longer be able to continue rescuing important and beloved Filipino films, and preserving them for the present and future generations.

Its head Leo Katigbak announced on May 1 via a Facebook post that ABS-CBN Film Restoration has actually ended its 14-year run last March 31, 2025. The office was responsible

for the cleaning up of old Filipino film prints in the care of ABS-CBN, making sure the movies are in good, watchable condition. It was in charge of their digitization and preservation, as well as making these titles accessible again to the public.

240+ movies scanned, enhanced, restored and remastered

Among the movies the initiative has rescued from being lost and forgotten are film classics such as Himala, Kakabakaba Ka Ba?, Moral, Tatlong Taong Walang Diyos and Oro, Plata, Mata, all directed by some of Philippine cinema's best, all of which anyone can now view on YouTube.

"There are still some 300-500 films we would have wanted to



Christopher de Leon and Hilda Koronel in iconic scene from 'Kung Mangarap Ka't Magising,' one of three Mike de Leon films restored by ABS-CBN.

at the very least re-scan," Katigbak told SPOT.ph. He said there were initiatives he was working on that may allow the restoration work to continue "but I don't know na what will happen."

What's already been accomplished is nothing short of groundbreaking, however. The Sagip Pelikula initiative was the first real, sustained effort at rescuing our lost films from decay. "ABS-CBN Film Restoration had an amazing journey, some 240+ movies scanned, enhanced, restored and remastered, reintroduced to new audiences," Katigbak said in his message. Some of these films were from as early as 1939.

What happens now?

While the restoration facet of the business is gone, some of the aspects his office was responsible for, Katigbak told Spot, would continue under different groups within the company. The Sagip Pelikula advocacy—which continues to educate audiences about Filipino film classics and

gives access to these movies—will now be championed by film production arm Star Cinema and pay TV and movie channel Cinemo. As for the film archives—film prints, video tapes, and other important ephemera, Katigbak told Spot "there will be departments taking over the assets."

Katigbak thanked former ABS-CBN Chair Gabby Lopez and former President Charo Santos "who had the vision to future proof the filmed assets of the



Himala and Ikaw ay Akin Just two of Nora Aunor's movies restored and remastered by ABS-CBN Film Restoration.

company and allowed the initiative that became Sagip Pelikula to flourish and save many movies beyond it's initial scope." He also expressed gratitude toward current President Carlo Katigbak "who afforded us another 5 years, delaying the department's closure in 2020 with a scaled-down group, during which time Sagip accomplished many more noteworthy restorations."

The first movie the outfit ever restored was Ishmael Bernal's Himala, the biggest and most



Aga Muhlach and Aiko Melendez in 'May Minamahal' which was digitally restored in 2018, 25 years after its release.

important film of the late Nora Aunor. The last batch of completed restored films included Mga Anak ni Facifica Falayfay, Buddy en Sol, Kailan Ka Magiging Akin, and another Nora Aunor starrer, Tatlong Ina, Isang Anak which is now showing in select local theaters.

Perhaps just to remind us on just what we gained when ABS-CBN created its film restoration arm, here's critic Noel Vera talking about it's real contribution: "Because if we forget the masterpieces of the past-- and trust me they are disintegrating as we speak-- we will lose a huge part of our identity, a huge part of our selves. We were a great filmmaking nation near the start of the last century up to now, and if we don't know that how can we even begin to start? If Santayana said 'those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it,' I propose a corollary: those who can't remember their past are condemned to never exceed it."

Jomari Yllana explains delay of church wedding to Abby Viduya

Hindi natuloy ang church wedding nina Jomari Yllana at Abby Viduya sa Pilipinas na nakatakda sana noong 2024.

Ito ay kasunod sana ng civil wedding nila sa A Little White Chapel sa Las Vegas, Nevada, noong November 5, 2023.

Paliwanag ni Jomari, namatay ang ina ni Abby noong nakaraang taon kaya ipinagpaliban muna nila ang kanilang kasal.

Naniniwala raw kasi sila sa konsepto ng “sukob.”

Aniya, “Kasi nagsukob, yung mommy niya passed away.”

Sundot na tanong ng Philippine Entertainment Portal (PEP.ph), “Sukob bang matatawag yun?”

Tugon ni Jomari: “Sukob daw, e.

“According to them, to her family, sukob daw, e.

“The mom passed away in the same... Oo, sukob.

“Paano kang magwe-wedding kung namatay haligi ng pamilya?

“So, namatay. Urong. And then pag-urong, ito na, election na.”

Patapos na ang termino ni Jomari bilang konsehal sa Parañaque, habang

si Abby ang tumatakbo ngayon sa parehong posisyon.

Kailan nila balak ituloy ang pagpapakasal sa Pilipinas?

Sabi ni Jomari, “Kasi may babang-luksa na, babang-luksa after a year.

“I think it’s nice to have an election, a wedding, sometime after.”

Nakausap si Jomari sa presscon ng Motorsport Carnivale 2025 sa Okada Manila, Parañaque City, noong Martes, April 29, 2025.

Ang racing event na ito, na sanib-puwersang ihahatid ng Okada Manila at Yllana Racing ni Jomari, ay nagsimula kahapon, Linggo, May 4, 2025.

May mga kasunod pa itong activity gaya ng tarmac challenge sa Lubang, Mindoro sa June.

Sa May 31, ilulunsad ang Jom’s Cup, isang 1/8-mile drag racing event na gaganapin sa Okada Manila’s Boardwalk and Gardens.

Sa June 21 at 22, magkakaroon naman sila ng motorsport race sa gabi.

JOMARI YLLANA: THE WEDDING PROPOSAL AND THEIR LOVE STORY

Noong August 20, 2023, masayang ibinalita ni Abby na nag-propose sa



kanya si Jomari sa The Peak sa Hong Kong.

Read: Why did Jomari Yllana propose to Abby Viduya in Hong Kong even after wedding plans, pamamanhikan?

Bago iyon, noong February 26, 2023, namanhikan si Jomari sa bahay nina Abby sa Parañaque.

Ilang beses na ring naikuwento pareho nina Abby at Jomari ang kanilang

love story—kung paano naudlot ito at pareho silang nagkaroon ng iba’t ibang karelasyon hanggang sa magkatagpong muli.

Kaya masaya raw sila na mapatunayang “wagas” ang kanilang pagmamahal sa isa’t isa.

Ani Abby, “Ano naman, the feeling that we know that it’s forever. It’s the best.

“Like, alam mo yung feeling na you’re home? You’re with the one that you’re meant to be with? Ganun, e.”

Teejay Marquez reacts to “Dukot King” tag

Isa sa pinag-usapan sa nakaraang Bench Body of Work fashion show ang pagdukot ni Teejay Marquez sa kanyang private part



habang rumarampa na naka-underwear.

Plinano ba niya o spontaneous ang pasabog niya sa stage noon?

Lahad ni Teejay: “Kasi sa backstage nagbibiruan na kaming lahat, ‘Anong gagawin niyong pasabog?’

“So, hindi nila pinapakita sa praktis, sa rehearsal, kung anong gagawin nila. Pero sabi ko, ‘Ano bang puwedeng gawin?’

“So, nung nakita ko na yung underwear ko, sabi ko, paglalaruan ko na lang yung underwear ko.”

Biglaan lang daw niyang naisip ang ginawang pagdukot sa kanyang hinaharap.

Patuloy ni Teejay: “And surprise ko kasi sa dulo yung tatalikod ako, e.

“Lace lang kasi yung likod ng ano [underwear], e. So, sabi ko, ‘Anong gagawin ko pagharap?’

“E, di dinukot ko na lang yung harapan ko.”

Natatawa na lang si Teejay sa sorpresang paandar niya.

Aniya, “Alam kong may gagawin ako, pero sabi ko nga, yung una kong naisip mas ano pa, e, mas todo pa, e.”

Ano ang naging resulta ng ginawa niya?

“Ang tawag na sa akin Dukot King!” tumatawang bulalas ni Teejay.

“Sabi nila, style ko na raw iyon, e. Baka ito na raw yung signature move ko.”

May mga nag-message ba kay Teejay na pinuri ang ginawa niya? O may mga nag-alok ba ng indecent proposal dahil sa ginawa niya?

Sagot ni Teejay: “Halo, e! Pero marami namang natuwa, maraming nagulat, kasi nga parang, ‘Uy, dumukot ka sa harapan ng maraming tao!’”

Nakatanggap ba siya ng indecent proposal matapos ang gabing iyon?

“Halu-halo, e. Siguro hindi ko na napan-sin!” natatawang sabi uli ni Teejay.

Dagdag niya, “Pero okay naman, masaya naman.”



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