

HONG KONG NEWS

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47 OFWs pass CSC exams



IN full bloom. Consul-General Bernardita Catalla (left) and other PCG officials pose at the Philippine Booth at the Hong Kong Flower Show in Victoria Park. The booth, which features an Everlasting flower-covered colorful jeepney as the centerpiece, won a special design award.

By Albert Hernandez

NEARLY 50 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) from Hong Kong and Macau successfully passed the Civil Service Commission (CSC) exam last year, Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III said.

Bello said 47 OFWs will get a Certification of Eligibility to work in government after passing the Career Service Examination-Pen and Paper Test (CSE-PPT) that was held in Hong Kong.

The number of passers comprised 4.93 percent of the 953 OFWs who took the

CSE-PPT in Kowloon in November.

Labor Attaché Jalilo dela Torre said they are planning to hold another CSC exam in Hong Kong in October.

Out of 676 who took the Professional Level exam, there were 17, or 2.51 percent, who passed.

Out of the 277 who took the Sub-Professional Level test, there were 30 or 10.83 percent, who succeeded.

The low passing rate, however, is prompting the Philippine Overseas Labor

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RUN. HK-based domestic worker Theresa Calo will join the London Marathon in a bid to raise funds for Oxfam.



TASTE. Besides sights and sounds, Manila's restaurant scene offers visitors and residents a variety of global cuisines.



TRUST. Ryan Agoncillo has been named as a trusted presenter.

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Pinays mark Int'l Women's Day

By Ally Constantino

FILIPINO women here in the city marked the International Women's Day by raising various social issues in the Philippines.

Hundreds of members of Gabriela, United Filipinos in Hong Kong, Bayan Hong-kong & Macau, and the Asian Migrants' Coordinating Body on March 5 held a program in Chater Garden and then marched to the Philippine Consulate and proceeded to the Central Government Offices. Many of these Filipino women are employed as household service workers in the city.

During the program, the OFWs called

for the resumption of peace talks between the Duterte administration and communist rebels, and condemned the war on drugs and the proposed revival of the death penalty in the Philippines as anti-poor.

Dolores Balladares-Pelaez, chairperson of Unifil, also said that while Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III has ordered airlines to stop collecting terminal fees from OFWs, they would wait and see if this would be implemented.

"Noong isang taon narinig na natin iyan pero tuloy pa din ang paniningil ng terminal fee," she said during the program in front of the consulate's building in Admi-



OFWs march to the Consulate

rally.

The groups also called for the scrapping

of the OECs.

Meanwhile, the AMCB urged the Hong Kong government to increase the wages of domestic workers, protect the health and safety, and improve the working condition of domestic helpers in the city particularly the regulation of working hours.

AMCB members said the Hong Kong government and society should do more to protect their rights as they have been contributing to the city's prosperity and economy and allowed employers to earn more by freeing them of household responsibilities.

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Four weeks in jail for Pinay in Wellcome theft

By Cheryl M. Arcibal

A former domestic worker who has been overstaying in Hong Kong for over a decade now has pleaded guilty to taking bottles of lotion and cans of luncheon meat from a Wellcome Supermarket in Quarry Bay.

E. Arista, 56, was sentenced to six weeks in prison by Eastern Courts Principal Magistrate Bina Chainrai. Owing to her guilty plea, Judge Chainrai reduced the sentence to four weeks in prison.

Prosecutors said Arista was caught on Feb. 19 taking three bottles of lotion, and three cans of luncheon meat. A sales staff saw the defendant acting suspiciously at the supermarket, and then saw her putting the items inside her bag and then left the

supermarket without paying for them.

The sales staff then informed the supermarket supervisor, who then chased and intercepted Arista.

In mitigation, Arista's lawyer argued the defendant took the items out of greed and only for her own consumption.

"The amount of the stolen items was only \$265 and the goods were recovered," the lawyer said.

Meanwhile, Judge Chainrai told prosecutors to review their responses when a defendant files a refolement claim.

The magistrate made the remark after the defense sought a four-week adjournment on the second charge - breach of condition of stay - against Arista, noting the defendant suddenly became an asylum-seeker "after some 13 years later".

Judge orders drug treatment for business owner

By Cheryl M. Arcibal

A 30-year-old former hotel worker has been ordered confined at a treatment center after pleading guilty to possessing dangerous drugs.

Eastern Magistracy Judge Jason Wan Siu-ming on Mar. 8 said he saw no reason to depart from a Drug Addiction Treatment Centre report that recommended drug addiction treatment for CM.V. Reynoso.

"This is the defendant's third drug-related conviction. It is time for the court to adopt a more drastic way to deal with the defendant's drug problem," Judge Wan said.

Besides the previous two drug offenses, Reynoso, a single mother, had five other previous convictions.

The defendant's duty lawyer said Reynoso disagreed with the report that she was a "habitual drug user", but only used drugs occasionally.

It was revealed the defendant was never married to the father of her son and she started using drugs in 2008 when she separated from her child's father.

The defendant submitted a mitigation letter to Judge Wan and said she hoped to be given a suspended sentence as she did not want her family to worry about her.

"Her father started a trading company here in Hong Kong, and she was the one who established it because she could speak Chinese.

"Definitely she started the business together with her father, but her father is moving back to the Philippines for good," the lawyer added.

The defendant's mother is in the Philippines and has diabetes. Reynoso's eldest sister is taking care of their mom, the lawyer said.

"She hopes to take care of the family business," the lawyer added.

The defendant was found with one plastic bag containing 4.51 grams of cannabis in herbal form, and one plastic bag containing 31 tablets and 0.25 grams of tablet fragments containing 0.12 grams of methamphetamine and 0.91 grams of ketamine.

The drugs were found when two police officers came by Reynoso's flat on Mar. 12, 2015 while chasing a male suspect who took flight. The man was Reynoso's ex-boyfriend who dashed to her flat and escaped through the window. When Reynoso opened the door to the police officers, and the latter made inquiries, they found the plastic bags on the table in the living room.

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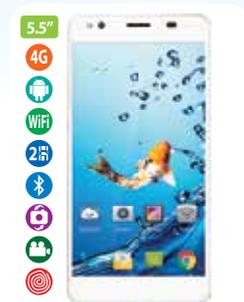
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Helper charged with stealing chocolates

By Cheryl M. Arcibal

A 31-year-old domestic helper was charged with theft at the Eastern Magistracy on March 7 after she was found to have taken boxes of chocolate, coffee, and coffee creamer from a supermarket.

Prosecutors alleged that Arish H.U. on Feb. 20 took one box of macadamia choc-

olate, one can of coffee creamer, one bottle of coffee powder, and one box of milk chocolate from ParknShop.

No plea was taken as prosecutors told Eastern Courts Principal Magistrate Bina Chainrai that they will seek legal advice.

The case was adjourned for mention again on March 21. Arish was allowed to post a \$500-bond as bail.



DH to run in London Marathon for NGO Oxfam

PHERFORM member and Pherform Philippines ambassador Theresa Calo will take some time off from her work as a domestic helper to run in the world-famous London Marathon in April.

Calo is running in the marathon to raise awareness in Hong Kong for global charity Oxfam.

This is the first marathon for Calo, who has only been running seriously for 15 months, but she is no stranger to running long distances. She has joined several trail running race events. She has completed the HK168, a 63-km race held on Nov. 6, 2016, and the Vibram HK100, a 100-km race held on Jan. 14, 2017.

In the Vibram race, Calo, who has been working as a domestic helper for 14 years now, received a bronze award for a sub-21-hour time.

Calo said she originally took up running to lose weight, but soon started enjoying it and taking the hobby seriously and joining organized races.

"As a helper, I work long hours, but it's always possible to find time to train if you are serious about getting fit. Where there is a will, there is a way," Calo said.

It is this tenacity in pursuing her goals that had enabled Calo to be sponsored by Pherform. Pherform is a specialist facility offering a host of services designed especially for females. Pherform exists to build community, to build confidence, to build mutual respect among a community of women united in becoming their best selves. "It's a huge honor to run the

London Marathon, and I'm lucky to get a space," Calo said.

"The London Marathon is one of the most famous races in the world, so it will be a great experience and I want this run to be meaningful by helping a charity raise money. It may sound unrealistic for someone who works as a domestic helper like me but I want to show everyone that we can do more," she added.

Calo will line up alongside over 30,000 other runners from around the world and some famous celebrities, selected from nearly 400,000 applicants. It is not known how many runners from the Philippines will join the race, but it is highly likely Calo will be the only domestic helper from Hong Kong carrying the flag for the Philippines.

As for a prediction on her race time, Calo declined to comment.

"I have no specific target. The main thing is to run, have fun, enjoy the scenery, mag selfie sa mga celebrity, finish the race, and hopefully raise some money for Oxfam," she said.

Calo said that she, her family, and loved ones and her team BANDILANG PINAS are paying for all the costs for taking part in the race, so every penny raised goes directly to Oxfam.

To support Calo in her efforts to raise money for Oxfam, please feel free to donate what you can at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/TheresaCalo2017>. You may also contact 93113167 for more details.

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5. Una, ang nililinis na bintana ay nalagyan ng rehas na nakakandado o nakapirme sa paraang hindi mabubuksan ang rehas;

6. Mariing hinihikayat ang mga taga-empleyo na may mga dayuhang kasambahay sa ilalim ng mga kontratang pinirmahan noon o bago 2016 na sundin ang mga hinihinging nabanggit sa itaas upang matiyak ang kaligtasan ng mga dayuhang kasambahay sa trabaho.

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DH jailed for helping out in flower shop

By Ally Constantino

A single mother was sentenced to two months and 12 days in prison after she pleaded guilty to breach of condition of stay at the Shatin Court on March 9.

J. Barcela, 24, was charged with helping out at the flower stall of her employer at the Yuen Long Lunar New Year.

Barcela had only begun working in Hong Kong eight months ago and this was her first employment.

Meanwhile, another Filipina, who is married to a Hong Kong resident, pleaded guilty to overstaying here in the city.

Acting Principal Magistrate Joseph To Ho-shing sentenced I. Delfin to six days in prison, but suspended it for 12 months. The defendant was originally sentenced to nine days of imprisonment, but the magistrate reduced it by a third following her guilty plea.

Delfin's duty lawyer told the court that the 37-year-old Filipina overstayed in Hong Kong for 11 days. The lawyer added that Delfin married a Hong Kong resident in June 2016.

"Her husband was admitted to the hospital for six days because of myocardial infarction and she has been taking care of

him," he said.

The husband, said the duty lawyer, was only recently discharged from the hospital and was still recovering.

"She surrendered to the Immigration Department and she promises not to re-offend again," he added.

When Magistrate To was told that the defendant has three children in the Philippines, aged between one-and-a half and five years old, he said "but she was only married in 2016."

Meanwhile, Judge To denied the application for bail of Felicitas F.I., who was charged with breach of condition of stay.

The defendant's lawyer said Felicitas has local ties as some of her family members are Hong Kong residents.

The defendant also complained she was suffering from hypertension and diabetes, but was not given proper medical attention while in custody.

"She showed me her both legs and they were red and swollen," the lawyer said.

"If anything happens to the defendant while in custody, the Correctional Services Department would be responsible for her. They would gain nothing if they deprive her of the medical attention that she needs," Judge To said.

The lawyer argued that Felicitas would be given better medical treatment if her bail application would be approved.

Judge To however dismissed the claims of "strong local ties" of the defendant, noting that they pertain to persons who have "business investments" in the city.

He added that while the defendant might have no intention to flee Hong Kong, she could still go hiding in the city "for a long time".

Judge To denied Felicitas' bail application, but recommended to the CSD to extend medical treatment to the defendant while in custody.

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LD reminds industrial workers to prioritize safety

By Ally Constantino

IN the wake of a spate of recent fatal occupational accidents, the Labour Department has issued an advisory letter to all relevant duty holders, urging them to step up measures to ensure the occupational safety and health of workers.

The LD made the statement following an industrial accident at the MTR Siu Ho wan Depot on March 11 involving a worker of a contractor falling from height from a metal platform under construction and sustained fatal injury.

The LD will also remind the employer of the liability for employees' compensation under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance; assist the family members of the deceased to claim employees' com-

pensation and closely follow up the case. Subject to the needs and wishes of the family members of the deceased, the LD will also refer them to the Social Welfare Department for assistance.

Since 2015 there were four Filipino workers in Hong Kong who died while at work, data from the Philippine Consulate General show.

Vice Consul Alex Vallespin told Hong Kong News that in 2015, two died – one owing to a car accident, and the other fell from a height; in 2016, one also fell from height while cleaning the window of a the flat of her employer in a high-rise building; and as of Feb. 27, one Filipino worker fell to his death while dismantling one of the carnival rides at the Central Harbour-front.

Ashes of Pinoy in Wan Chai suicide to be flown to PH

By Ally Constantino

THE family of a Filipino man who was found dead hanging in his house in Wan Chai on Feb. 2 sought the assistance of the Philippine Consul General.

Attaché Hermogenes Cayabyab Jr. of the PCG's assistance to nationals section told Hong Kong News that M.S.' family came on March 12 to seek travel documents.

The remains of the Filipino, who was a Hong Kong permanent resident, were scheduled to be cremated on Mar. 15.

"Iuuwi daw ng pamilya ang ashes. Inisyuhan namin sila ng travel documents. Tapos sa Manila, nagpadala na kami ng sulat para mai-rush yung passport para pagbalik dito sa Hong Kong.

"Mayroon ding certification, para maiuwi 'yung ashes," Cayabyab said.

He added the family has sought the assistance of the Social Welfare Department here in Hong Kong for financial aid.

Information from the mortuary said the death of M.S. was caused by hanging, said Vice Consul Alex Vallespin.

"The Wan Chai Police and his wife identified the body today (March 2) at the Mortuary," Vallespin quoted a report that reached him on March 3.

A report from Chinese newspaper Apple Daily said the 38-year-old Filipino was found hanging in the bedroom.

The victim, who was working as a bouncer in Wan Chai, was taken to the hospital but was declared dead.

The report added that a suicide note was found, telling his daughter to take care of her mother.

The victim was allegedly depressed about his work.

In 2016, six Filipinos committed suicide. Five out of the six suicide cases were allegedly because of debt-related problems.

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Policies keep lid on helpers' plight in HK

By Cheryl M. Arcibal

ON Sundays, they're everywhere, but most of the time they remain invisible to the rest of the Hong Kong society.

This was the observation made by Ju-Chen Chen, anthropology lecturer at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, in the panel discussion during the launch of the exhibit "Visualizing the Voices of Migrant Women Workers" at the University of Hong Kong on Feb. 10.

Chen told Hong Kong News policies would be needed to remedy the marginalization of foreign domestic workers in the city.

"I started to feel like (policies) have to be the destination and also the starting point [to address this]," Chen said on the sidelines of the discussion.

She cited the separate immigration lines for foreign domestic helpers at the Hong Kong International Airport as one example of these policies.

"Everyone can use their ID cards so you can go through the immigration clearance faster, but there's a sign that says except domestic workers, and then you can see they are [deemed] different," said Chen.

She added that many of her Hong Kong friends had never paid attention to beauty pageants held by Filipino domestic workers on Sundays on Chater Road in Central.

"These pageants are often held on Chater Road and it's public and everybody can see it. But when I talk to my Hong Kong friends, often they don't know about it and I just say 'how can you not see that?'"

"But they are just overlooking and that overlooking is almost like an invisible



Chen

wall and I think that invisible wall is built by policies," Chen said.

By keeping these foreign domestic helpers in the home of their employers and giving them only two weeks to find new employers if they break contract or terminated from their job, as stated by Hong Kong Labour and Immigration rules, Chen said domestic workers become invisible.

"The whole policy encourages the whole society to see each domestic worker as domestic worker only without seeing them as a person," Chen said, noting that as a Taiwanese she considers herself a migrant worker too, but she does not feel "excluded" in Hong Kong.

She said these differences in the policies applied to foreign domestic workers and other foreigners in Hong Kong should also be addressed by the city's government and of migrant-sending states, including the Philippines.

There are an estimated 200,000 Filipinos living and working in Hong Kong and more than 180,000 of them are domestic workers.

Jail for 'overstaying' domestic worker

By Cheryl M. Arcibal

A domestic helper who said she was a victim of human trafficking was sentenced to five months and two weeks in prison after she was found guilty of breaching her condition of stay by a Shatin Courts magistrate.

Magistrate Ivy Chui Yee-mei on March 6 said there was no evidence defendant A.P. Dumayag was deprived of liberty. Judge Chui said Dumayag was able to meet her sister and friends, and was also given a rest day.

"The defendant did not impress me as a honest and reliable witness," she said.

Dumayag, 36, married, sobbed while Judge Chui was reading the verdict.

The magistrate originally gave a six-month sentence to the defendant, but discounted two weeks because Dumayag voluntarily surrendered to the Immigration Department.

Philip Ross, Dumayag's lawyer, told the magistrate that he would be seeking a review of the verdict and applied for bail for the defendant. Judge Chui granted the bail.

The domestic worker's troubles began right after she arrived in Hong Kong back in 2008.

She came here in March of that year but, instead of working from her employer, she worked for her employer's daughter in Rhythm Garden, San Po Kong in Wong Tai Sin.

Her employer's daughter—surnamed Leung—has a son who is mentally disabled.

"Kahit 19 years old na siya ngayon, pang bata pa rin. Ina-assist ko pa kahit sa paliligo," Dumayag told the court when she gave evidence.

She continued working for Leung even after Leung's mother died in 2010. When Dumayag's contract expired in 2011, Leung promised to renew her contract and get her a new visa.

"Bago matapos ang kontrata, nagtanong ako kung sino na ang pipirma. Ang sabi

po niya, siya na ang pipirma kaya hindi na ako naghanap ng iba," Dumayag said.

Leung allegedly told the Filipina that she had contacts in the Immigration Department but, despite repeated promises, she failed to produce a working visa for Dumayag.

"Every month, she said, 'Don't worry. It's being taken care of'. I didn't have a visa. Paano kung mahuli ako ng mga pulis? She kept assuring me," Dumayag said.

She added that Leung also kept her passport.

The Filipina also claimed that Leung owed her \$150,000 because she was not paid her proper salary from 2009 to 2015.

She said there were months that she was given only \$100, \$150, or \$200.

"How did you survive?" Judge Chui asked the Filipina.

"Hindi naman ako maluhò. Basta may pamasaha ako papuntang church, OK na. Maghapon naman ako sa church," Dumayag said.

She said that she had also grown close to her mentally-disabled ward. "Napamahal na po kami pareho," she said.

Dumayag decided to surrender to Immigration authorities only last year after she saw her contract and passport inside Leung's bag while cleaning it.

"Nakita ko yung papeles ko na wala pa ring visa. Sinabi ng kapatid at mga kaibigan ko na overstaying na pala ako," she said.

Dumayag said she sought the help of the

Philippine Consulate General (PCG) and was told to surrender to Immigration. But she could not surrender immediately because she did not have her passport.

After the PCG issued a temporary travel document to Dumayag, her sister, who is also working in Hong Kong, went to see Leung on Aug. 2, 2015.

"My sister spoke to my boss. My sister asked how come I overstayed. Nakalimutan daw po niyang i-process," Dumayag said.

"Nagbigay siya ng assurance na ayusin niya. Marami raw siyang kakilala," she added.

Dumayag said Leung then talked to her and asked if she wanted to continue to work for her.

"Ang sabi ko, gusto ko ng visa," she said.

Dumayag said she gave Leung two more weeks but she again failed to come up with a working visa for the Filipina.

And so, she decided to surrender to Immigration on Oct. 22, 2015.

Dumayag also filed a case against Leung at the Labour Tribunal for her \$150,000-claim in back wages but the court dismissed it. The worker has filed an appeal.

Judge Chui, in her verdict, said it was "incredible" that the defendant continued to believe Leung would be able to get an employment visa without any evidence of doing so.



Shatin Law Courts

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47 OFWs...

From page 1

Office to evaluate the level of preparation needed to improve the number of passers.

Those who passed the Professional Level exam were Mary Joy G. Alfonga, Ma. Tricia Nhela S. Balagso, Joceline A. Dam-Ag, Cynthia T. Dingil, Zosima L. Dul-Og, Lorena B. Galvez, Joanna Marie P. Gutierrez, Yunika V. Moraleja, Maria Venus G. Pacapac, Carla Teresa P. Ramos, Laarni C. Sacramento, Ellen E. Sajulla, Sally B. Solis, Kristine A. Sumawang, Gregoria B. Tolentino, Patricia Clara R. Tubaña, and Filipina O. Villacampa.

Those who obtain a Career Service Professional Eligibility can secure a first level (clerical) or second level (technical

hanggang division chief) position in government that does not require the "practice of profession" and are not covered by other laws.

Those who passed the sub-professional exam, and are eligible for first level (clerical) positions in government, are Christina A. Agus, Gemma B. Arnaiz, Mary Faith G. Galve, Salome S. Jimenez, Catherine T. Ronquillo, Maricris C. Tumbaga, Ginalyn T. Agacia, Vernisa A. Alingbas, Annalou B. Bodoña, Retchell L. De Lemos, Ana Rose R. Gapusan, Jocelyn U. Ventura, Azenith G. Antonio, Jomaica Marie F. Cuenco, and Malou L. Dela Cruz.

The other successful passers for the sub-professional level included Janet D. Flores, Marina E. Petallano, Ana Marie

G. Bayot, Cristy Anne A. Leal, Babylyn A. Abasa, Mary Ann G. Alegarme, June Andrea D. Ramos, Loniza G. Navaja, Silvestra B. Balatico, Argelisa M. Baleros, Mary Ann B. Liegen, Merania T. Ngupos, Princess Joy E. Peralta, Mary C. Ekwasen, and Gladde Mae D. Balucan.

Bello said those who passed should personally get their Certification of Eligibility at the CSC office listed in their online registration form when they return to the Philippines. Representatives will not be allowed to get the certification.

To get the certification, those who passed should bring along their Philippine passport, Hong Kong Identity Card, Macau Identification Card, and their application receipt or CSC official receipt.

Bello also said that there were other requirements for government work.

"To get a permanent job in government, they also require education, work experience and relevant trainings," he said.

Bello said the CSC exam was part of government efforts to reintegrate OFWs who go home to the Philippines.

"This initiative is in support of the reverse migration advocacy of our government," Bello said.

The CSC administered the examination to a total of 953 overseas Filipino workers at Delia Memorial School in Kwun Tong, Hong Kong on Nov. 27, 2016.

The CSC said that the conduct of the CSE is in support of the Department of Labor and Employment's reintegration

campaign which, the latter says, aims to "encourage the vulnerable OFWs to return to the country and be with their families again."

It is the first time after nearly two decades for the CSC to hold the exam for Filipinos abroad.

The POLO, headed by Dela Torre, enabled a sign-up campaign among OFWs in Hong Kong and the acceptance of exam applications.

The CSC also said a Professional or Subprofessional eligibility is just one of the requirements to join the government. Education, experience, and training requirements must also be met for permanent appointment to a government career service position.

Bill vs EAs a 'welcome development' – ConGen

By Cheryl M. Arcibal

THE Filipino community has welcomed the Hong Kong government's bid to provide a legal basis for the Code of Practice for Employment Agencies that would impose imprisonment of up to three years and fine of \$350,000 on erring employment agencies.

"This will penalize violators of the regulation. It will discourage and deter employers from exploiting and even the agents from exploiting the workers that they are hiring.

"Kasi dati walang ngipin, now it gives teeth to the regulations. Now, it's not just a practice, it becomes part of the law," Consul General Bernardita Catalla said.

She called the Labour Department's pronouncement about the filing of a bill in the second quarter to provide a legal basis for the CoP as a "welcome development".

Catalla's statement was echoed by Labor Attaché Jalilo dela Torre.

"We look forward to the filing of the bill. We are happy with that development," he said.



Catalla and Dela Torre with OFWs

Cynthia Abdon-Tellez, general manager at the NGO Mission for Migrant Workers, said they would "wait and see" for the filing of the bill and its actual contents.

"Kailangan kasing makita muna kung ano iyong proposals. Depende iyan kung maisa-batas. Kung maisabatas, mabuti iyan. It's a welcome development," said Tellez in an interview.

She added that they also expect the bill to be opposed by business interests.

On Jan. 13, 2017, the LD promulgated the CoP, which highlights the salient legislative requirements and sets out minimum standards for employment agencies.

These standards include maintaining transparency in business operations.

No more terminal fees for OFWs

By Bing Jabadan

STARTING April, overseas Filipino workers will be exempted again from paying the P550 airport terminal fee.

Manila International Airport Authority General Manager Ed Monreal will meet on Mar. 15 with all airline officials or representatives for the signing of Memorandum of Agreement for the abolition of "the terminal fee" at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

The MOA signing will take place after the MIAA threshed out technical details and coordinated with the international airlines to reverse an order issued by the previous management of NAIA headed by former MIAA general manager Jose Angel Honrado.

The reinstatement of OFWs exemption

from terminal fees was made following an order of President Rodrigo Duterte to implement the law that exempts all OFWs from paying terminal fee.

"Our OFWs are our modern-day heroes [and they] help our country's economy to grow through their remittances," Monreal said.

The MOA signing will take place at 11 a.m. on Mar. 15 and will be attended by airlines executives, MIAA, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, the Susan Ople Foundation, and OFW advocates, among others.

In February 2015, Honrado imposed the inclusion of the P550 terminal fee in the airline tickets purchased online and outside the country. Instead of being exempted from paying the terminal fee,

OFWs were told to refund the amount at the Land Bank of the Philippines counter located at the departure area before boarding the aircraft. Since the implementation of the collections of the airport's terminal fee from OFWs, more than P1.5 billion have been unclaimed by OFWs and remained in the general fund of the NAIA.

Following the MOA signing, airlines are expected to stop collecting terminal fee from all legitimate OFWs regardless where their ticket was purchased.

On Mar. 3, Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III ordered airlines to stop including the travel tax and airport terminal fees in the cost of their tickets for OFWs.

He also requested the CAAP to remit the travel tax and terminal fees that were not refunded to the OFWs to the OWWA.

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Cuisines of the world in Manila

By Maia Lopez

THE gastronomic scene in Metro Manila is booming at an overwhelmingly fast rate. It seems there is a new must-try restaurant opening every month in every city, giving residents in the capital a wide array of choices to explore. You can try dishes from neighboring Asian countries to far away Europe without having to leave the urban jungle you call home.



Annam (P300 to P500 per person)

Sate your Vietnamese fix at Annam (Eastwood and Resorts World Manila) with their piping hot pho (Saigon's famous noodle soup), French-inspired banh mi sandwiches, and Asian rice dishes.

Chef Nam Quoc Nguyen, who had to flee Saigon in 1979 as a seven-year-old boy, opened his first noodle bar in Singapore in 2012 where at least 700 bowls are served every day. Aside from the traditional chicken or beef pho, Annam offers noodle soup with wagyu beef slices or oxtail and beef balls, all garnished with fresh herbs and spring onions and topped with chili slices for an added kick.



Arroz Ecija (P500 to P700 per person)

Arroz Ecija (Arya Residences, Taguig) offers a taste of the hacienda life in Nueva Ecija where the grandfather of restaurateur Andrew Masigan set up the Albufera de Veléz in the early 1900s. For starters, there's the chorizo sampler – a combination of Vigan, Tuguegarao, batutay, and betamax (blood) longganisa; chicharon Mexico with guacamole dip; Huevos Rotos made of crisped potato strips topped with ground chorizo and fried egg; and hinornong Mejillones or baked mussels.



Mighty Quinn (P500 to P1,000 per person)

Pit master Hugh Mangum brings his famous New York-based barbecue to Manila with Mighty Quinn (SM Megamall), inviting Filipinos to enjoy smoked meat served assembly style, lining up as you would do in a cafeteria. The meat can be ordered in single serving or by the pound, and comes with sandwich or with dirty rice (Mangum's dirty rice uses a secret ingredient: calamansi, which he tasted only when he came to Manila), with an option to order side dishes. The menu is uncomplicated: brisket, burnt ends, pulled pork, sausage, spare ribs, Brontosaurus rib (a truly enormous slab that fetches for P1,450), and spicy chicken wings.



Naxional (P500 to P700 per person)

Fancy some South American dishes? Then head to Bonifacio Global City for Naxional. "We want the menu to be South American home-cooked dishes, which we think Filipino diners would love to try. Family cooking takes time, so you have to put effort to these dishes," says Chef Cynthia Patos, the Venezuelan host and winner of Lifestyle Network's "The Clash." Some dishes, such as the pão de queijo or freshly baked mozzarella cheese bread from Brazil, are made from scratch and take at least two days to prepare. Naxional offers a respectable array of South and Central American dishes.



Flame (P1,000 to P1,500 per person)

At the 16th floor of luxury hotel Discovery Primea Makati, Executive Chef Luis Chikiamco prepares a continental fusion of Asian and Western cuisine for Flame. For starters, the restaurant offers, among others, quezo de bola with glazed ham and asparagus; soft-shelled crab tempura with Saigon herb salad and spicy Remoulade – a French invention that is usually made with aioli or mayonnaise; and the house-smoked duck breast, which is served with pickled Portobello mushrooms, petite greens and Madeira wine balsamic vinaigrette.



Oldani (P800 to P1,200 per person)

Famous Michelin-starred chef Davide Oldani brings his philosophy of making luxury gastronomy affordable with his FOO'D restaurant at the five-star Shangri-La at The Fort. His D'O restaurant in his hometown of Cornaredo, near Milan, has been described by the Wall Street Journal as "Italy's most elusive reservation," with bookings of up to eight months in advance. His Manila restaurant offers three-course and four-course menus.



Grind (P1,000 to P1,500 per person)

If you are looking for something out of the ordinary, try Grind Bistro's Nutty Black Chicken covered in squid ink batter, an original concept of Steven Carl, who has served as executive chef and food and beverage director of an international hotel for more than two decades before settling down in the Philippines six years ago. As Grind is an American diner on the upscale side, its 300-gram USDA prime New York steak costs P2,050, while its 400-gram house-aged rib eye will set a guest off at P2,400.



Tapenade (P700 to P1,500 per person)

Tapenade (Ayala Avenue, Makati) offers Mediterranean cuisine that reflects carefully curated dishes of Spain, France, and Italy. Highlights of the menu include Mediterranean staples such as Fettucine Al Nero, which uses homemade squid ink pasta with garlic baby shrimp, Chilean mussels, snapper, cherry tomatoes and basil; Braised Lamb Shank Al Chilindrón, which is a Spanish dish that has a thick sauce made of red bell pepper, tomatoes and pimento; and the crispy roasted Italian duck (P1,800) for two, served with roasted peaches, marble potatoes, baby greens and drizzled with honey garlic. The restaurant also offers guests two Spanish dishes that have to be ordered 24 hours ahead.



Yayoi (P500 to P700 per person)

The widely-famous Japanese restaurant Yayoi has reached the Philippines with its branch at SM Megamall, making it part of a 450-plus-strong franchise worldwide. It offers teishoku dining which is based on the ichijū-sansai (or 'one soup, three sides') traditional meals offered at Zen temples, which include a main dish, soup, rice, and pickles. Among Yayoi's bestsellers are the namban teishoku (fried chicken steak in sweet and sour sauce topped with the restaurant's own tartar sauce); mix toji teishoku (breaded pork loin, friend shrimp, and sukiyaki beef simmered in special sauce and egg); saba shio teishoku (salt-grilled mackerel); sukiyaki teishoku (beef hot-pot with assorted vegetables served with udon noodles); and hitsumabushi (grilled eel over rice served with a side of dashi broth, Nagoya-style).



Crystal Dragon (P700 to P1,500 per person)

Aside from traditional Chinese dim sum, Crystal Dragon (Crown Towers, City of Dreams Manila) offers a wide range of sumptuous dishes. These include the roasted chicken roll filled with foie gras and wild mushrooms; seafood clay pot consisting of braised sea cucumber and baby abalone with bean curd; roasted Peking duck, which can be ordered whole and done two ways – the slices of crispy skin with just the right amount of fat and a thin layer of meat are wrapped in rice paper and lathered with hoisin sauce while the remaining meat is shredded and cooked with rice vermicelli; and wok-fried Boston lobster tails with salt and pepper and stewed chicken with wine sauce.

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House OKs revival of death penalty

By Maia Lopez

THE House of Representatives approved on third and final reading a measure seeking to reinstate capital punishment for specific drug cases.

Voting 216-54 with one abstention, lawmakers passed House Bill No. 4727 even as President Rodrigo Duterte expressed his desire for plunder and rape to be included in the list of crimes punishable with either life imprisonment or death.

"The President is thankful that it was passed even if it only included illegal drugs. But he also said he wished plunder and rape were included. This holds espe-

cially true for rape with homicide and the abuse of children," House Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez said.

HB 4727 gives judges the option to punish the perpetrators of the following drug-related offenses with life imprisonment or death: importation of dangerous drugs; sale, trading, administration, dispensation, delivery, distribution, and transportation of dangerous drugs; maintenance of a den, dive, or resort where any dangerous drug is used or sold; manufacture of dangerous drugs; and possession of 10 grams or more of dangerous drugs.

The bill's original versions contained 21 crimes, but Alvarez said they removed

the other offenses such as plunder, rape, and treason. He said it is possible for these other crimes to be included once the bill reaches the Senate as well as the bicameral conference committee.

As an off-shoot of the voting, Alvarez said he will make good of his threat to strip of their committee chairmanships the lawmakers who voted against the death penalty.

Among those who voted against the measure are deputy speaker and Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Vilma Santos-Recto of Batangas (chair of the House committee on civil service), Carlos Isagani Zarate of Bayan Muna



House of Representatives

(chair, House committee on environment and natural resources), Antonio Tinio of ACT Teachers (chair, House committee on public information), Arlene Bag-ao of Dinagat Island (chair, House committee on people participation), Sitti Djalila Tu-

rabin-Hataman of Anak Mindanao (chair, House committee on Muslim Affairs), Josephine Ramirez-Sato of Occidental Mindoro, member of the Commission on Appointments, Mariano Michael Velarde Jr. of Buhay (chair, House committee on overseas workers affairs), and Henedina Abad of Batanes (chair of the House committee on government reorganization).

Alvarez said the House leaders who voted against the administration measure will definitely be replaced, but they may opt to stay with the majority.

The Commission on Human Rights, however, stood pat on its ground to reject the restoration of death penalty.

Yasay replaced as Foreign Affairs chief

By Maia Lopez

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte has replaced Perfecto Yasay Jr. as Foreign Affairs secretary after the latter was rejected by the Commission on Appointments for lying about his American citizenship.

"Undersecretary Enrique Manalo has been designated and appointed as Acting Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs. He will hold the position until the President appoints a new Secretary. Usec. Manalo is an excellent transition man, and has been on top of many crucial issues together with Atty. Perfecto Yasay," presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said.

Yasay maintained that he did not lie about his citizenship, saying that he merely failed to disclose some information because he was nervous.

"I did not lie. I may not have fully disclosed...but this is normal...you get nervous, you come up with answers you did not fully intend. For that I apologize," Yasay said.

Yasay claimed that while he was granted US citizenship in 1986, he was later disqualified because he had the "preconceived intent of abandoning his US residency." He took an oath of allegiance to the United States on Nov. 24, 1986 but returned to the Philippines three months after, in January 1987.

Senator Panfilo Lacson, chairman of the CA's committee on foreign affairs, said Yasay violated Sec. 45 of Executive Order No. 292, otherwise known as the Administrative Code of 1987, which requires



Yasay

that all Cabinet secretaries be citizens of the Philippines.

DFA spokesman Charles Jose clarified that any documents signed by Yasay would remain valid because he was effectively the secretary of Foreign Affairs at the time as a result of his ad interim appointment from the President.

Meanwhile, the President named his first two appointees, both fellow Bedans, to the Supreme Court, namely Sandiganbayan Associate Justice Samuel Martires and Court of Appeals Associate Justice Noel Tijam.

Tijam graduated magna cum laude from San Beda College in 1967, with a bachelor of arts degree in Philosophy and Political Science. In 1971, he graduated salutatorian from the San Beda College of Law.

Questioned about the President's move to appoint more graduates of the San Beda College of Law at the high court, Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo said there was nothing wrong with it "as long as they're qualified."

Tijam and Martires join two other San Beda law graduates in the High Court, Associate Justices Jose Mendoza and Bi-

envenido Reyes, who are both fraternity brothers of Duterte.

The two new appointments came as the SC is set to hear in oral arguments the petition of detained Senator Leila de Lima, political nemesis of the President, in connection to the drug cases filed against her.

Duterte also appointed retired Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Ricardo Visaya as the new head of the National Irrigation Administration. Visaya replaced Peter Laviña, who resigned as NIA chief amid allegations of corruption.

Visaya, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1983, retired as the 48th AFP chief last December. He was succeeded by Gen. Eduardo Año.

In a post on social media, Laviña said there were "false rumors" that he had accepted money from contractors for government projects.

He denied these allegations, noting that he is quitting so as not to add to the attacks against officials of the Duterte administration.

"To spare the President from these embarrassing stories, particularly in these times of intensified attacks on him, I have quietly left government. I have neither personal vested interest in it nor ill intent towards NIA and the whole government, which we are trying to reform," Laviña said.

But even before Laviña resigned, the President said he had to fire somebody from Davao but did not mention the name. Duterte later confirmed he had asked Laviña to resign as NIA chief.

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ASG beheads German hostage

A German hostage has been beheaded by the Abu Sayyaf Group in Mindanao after a deadline to pay his ransom lapsed.

Philippine and German officials confirmed 70-year-old Jurgen Kantner had been killed after being held for three months by the Islamist militant group.

The Abu Sayyaf posted a gruesome video, distributed by the SITE Intelligence Group, of its militants killing the man with a curved knife.

"The Federal Chancellor condemns the abominable act, which once again shows how unscrupulous and inhumane these terrorists are. We all must stand together and fight against them," German Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said.

President Rodrigo Duterte has apologized to Germany for his troops' "failure" to prevent the

killing.

"I am very sorry that the hostage, a national of your country, has been beheaded. There's a massive operation going on. We really tried our best. We have failed. That has to be admitted," Duterte said.

The ASG demanded P30 million in exchange for Kantner's release, setting a deadline of Feb. 26. Kantner and his partner, Sabine Merz, were abducted in the waters off Malaysia's Sabah state. Merz was shot and killed by the militants soon after.

In September, Abu Sayyaf freed a Norwegian man it had held captive for almost a year.

In August last year, the ASG also beheaded an 18-year-old Filipino male captive in Indanan, Sulu province after failing to get ransom from the boy's family.

The head of kidnap victim Patrick James Almoodovar was found inside a plastic bag that was dumped by three motorcycle-riding men at Kilometer 2 in Barangay Kajatian.

Duterte described the Abu Sayyaf as "out of control," adding that the only way to deal with them is to destroy them.

"So my orders to the Armed Forces and to the police: Destroy them. Destroy them because they are criminals," the President said.

"We'll never have peace in that area there. Even if you grant them autonomy, they remain to be bandits. We will never have peace in that land," Duterte added.

At least 32 members of the Abu Sayyaf have been killed since January when the military leadership set a six-month deadline to defeat the group.

Helper flees employer's home in Kuwait

By Maia Lopez

A FILIPINA domestic helper jumped out of her employer's flat on the sixth floor of their building after she was allegedly caught stealing 110 Kuwaiti Dinar.

The Filipina told Kuwait Times that she jumped to escape after her employers threatened to report her to the police.

She said she had accidentally burned her male employer's pants while ironing it and kept the clothing in her cabinet where she had also hid the stolen money.

Her employer found both the burned clothing and the money in the cabinet when he was looking for his missing pair

of pants.

The Kuwait Times reported that the victim also admitted to using a fake passport to gain employment in Kuwait as a domestic helper.

The report said the Filipina was a minor who came to Kuwait from Datu Odin Sinsuat in Maguindanao.

An official from the Philippine Embassy confirmed that the Filipina, who is facing charges of attempted suicide, was only 17 years old.

Kuwait-based migrant workers' group AKO-OFW, through its chairperson Celirino Umandap, appealed to the government to help the Filipina.

Umandap blamed the recruitment agency that deployed the teenager and called for its suspension.

"How do you expect a young girl of her age to handle such a stressful situation?"

"I blamed the local recruitment agency that hired such a teenage girl. It is illegal," Umandap told Kuwait Times.

"The agency should be suspended or banned – or be subjected to investigation. How many more of such cases are here in Kuwait?"

"Remember, even in Kuwait, the allowable age for domestic workers should be at least 24," he added.

Filipino man nabbed in Sandakan

By Maia Lopez

MALAYSIAN police have arrested a Filipino accused of killing his neighbor who allegedly tried to kill his dog at an informal settlement in Sandakan.

Sandakan police chief Assistant Commissioner Mohd Azhar Hamid said the victim entered the suspect's house to kill his barking dog.

But instead of hitting the dog, the victim hit the Filipino's son, who is a minor, prompting the suspect to retaliate by hitting the victim repeatedly with an iron pipe.

"The owner went to confront him (the

victim), and a fight ensued with the owner allegedly beating him with an iron pipe," Mohd Azhar said.

The Filipino took his two children after the attack and fled the scene to a nearby restaurant where he was arrested.

The case was classified as murder but police have yet to formally charge the Filipino.

Meanwhile, Malaysian authorities arrested a Filipino woman and nine others who were allegedly involved in an online dating scam.

The Filipina was reportedly part of a group that used fake pictures of

good-looking Europeans on social media to lure their victims.

Once the victims are hooked, the suspects would claim to send them gifts such as jewelry and cash before posing as Customs officers and courier companies on the phone to ask for payments to release the gifts.

The Filipina, who was not named, was arrested along with seven Nigerian men and two Malaysian women in separate raids in Malacca and Selangor.

Police recovered mobile phones, bank-in slips, SIM cards, modems, and laptops from the suspects.

Dubai Consulate holds mission in Ras Al Khaimah

THE Philippine Consulate General in Dubai and the Northern Emirates processed around 488 consular processes and provided Assistance-to-Nationals (ATN) services to the Filipinos in Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates (UAE) during a consular mission on Mar. 3.

The team processed 234 passport applications; rendered 51 notarial services; three files of Report of Births; 160 registered new voters and 40 reactivations.

Representatives from the Labor and Social Welfare's Office, Pag-IBIG and SSS assisted the team during the mobile consular mission.

The Consulate General also partnered with the Medical City in Dubai to provide Filipinos in Ras Al Khaimah free medical services.

3 more Pinoy nurses missing in Libya

"Three or more" Filipino nurses who have been held hostage by the ISIS terrorist group in Libya remain unaccounted for and are feared dead, the Department of Foreign Affairs said.

Eight of their Filipino colleagues, along with a 10-month-old child, were rescued by Libyan soldiers and repatriated to the Philippines.

The nurses were at the Ibn Sinai hospital in Sirte when the Libyan city was overrun by ISIS members in June 2015. The Filipino nurses had

to treat wounded ISIS members during their captivity. The nurses were also forced to teach the jihadists first-aid care and medical training.

ISIS took full control of Sirte in early 2015, turning it into their North African stronghold.

"When they found out we were Muslim they released us but under a strict condition that we will have to work as nurses in their hospital and we had to train ISIS on emergency care and nursing course," a Filipino nurse said. **Maia Lopez**

PH's 'Bamboo Flowers' in filmfest in Jeddah

FILIPINO film "Bamboo Flowers" was screened recently at the 10th Asian Film Festival's Philippine Movie Night in Jeddah to an audience of 250 guests including diplomats, film aficionados, members of the Filipino community, members of the press, representatives from the Philippine Curriculum Schools based in Jeddah, and the Consulate General's personnel and their spouses.

Philippine Consul General Imelda M. Panolong gave a brief insight about the film Bamboo Flowers, explaining that it has won many awards given by several awards giving bodies in the Philippines.

She said the story highlights the classic values of love of family, resiliency in the midst of adversity, and belief in the gentle and yet indomitable human spirit when faced with a dilemma that challenges one's principles of what is right and what is wrong. She underscored that these are values that are inherent not only in the

Filipino but in many of the peoples and societies in Asia.

For this year, 10 movies from Malaysia, China, Thailand, Korea, Japan, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Philippines and Indonesia, were screened during the nights of the Festival, majority of which were shown at the auditorium of the residence of the Consul General of Indonesia.

The annual film festival provides the Philippines an opportunity to promote Philippine culture through the power of film.



Filipinos perform in Jeddah



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Pacific Ace is inspired by nature

By Cheryl M. Arcibal

PACIFIC Ace Managing Director Virginia Dio believes that nature and a relaxing atmosphere have a way to transform people. And this has been the guiding principle in the company's vision for the refurbishment of its office in Central.

"We brought the park inside and they

can rest here. It's like a center. And what we notice from them is that every time they visit our office and they say it's nice and it changes their behavior," Dio said.

Previously, Pacific Ace customers would bring food to the office, but now, they avoid doing so because they "do not want to dirty the new place".

"Now they say, 'don't give us food because we don't want to dirty the office.'

So now we just give them money, so they have lai see," Dio said with a laugh.

Pacific Ace clients also get to enjoy the garden or the rice terraces section of the new office, a place where they can lie down, rest and bond with their friends.

"When they came here, they started taking off their shoes and it has now become a norm. They're happy and they say 'thank you. This is like my home.' I think

the feeling of being homey, we attained that. Our team is very happy," Dio added.

More features of nature will be added to the office, she said.

"We will also have a program for them and we're going to run a lot of educational training. While they are sitting there, we make good education sound like fun, we're very good at that," Dio said.



The blessing of Pacific Ace's new office in Central



OFWs rest in the 'rice terraces' section of the Pacific Ace office

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2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

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Groups join International Women's Day celebration

By Vicks Reyes Munar

FILIPINO community organizations and officials of the Philippine Consulate General joined the celebration of International Women's Day 2017 organized by the International Organization for Migration Hong Kong and Christian Action's Centre for Migrant Workers on March 12.

Consul-General Bernardita Catala led the PCG officials in joining the event, which was hosted at the New Horizons Building, Christian Action's Headquarters and service centre in Kowloon Bay.

The event sought to recognize the vital role of women migrant domestic workers and their contributions to the Hong Kong society, as well as to

promote their rights and protection of those in the community who are vulnerable and at risk of exploitation.

The celebration provided an opportunity for migrant domestic workers to showcase their artistic skills through a photography exhibition and talent competition in the presence of representatives of governments of Hong Kong, Philippines and Indonesia.

Participants of the activity enjoyed the program with messages from Catala, Tri Tharyat, Consul-General of the Republic of Indonesia; Emily Lau, former chair of the Democratic Party of Hong Kong; Lee Cheuk-yan, General Secretary of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions; and Shiella Grace Estrada, chairperson of the Progressive Labor Union of Domestic Workers.

Philippine booth wins award at HK flower show

By Ally Constantino

SIXTY kilos of Everlasting flowers (Xerochrysum bracteatum) were flown in from Baguio to serve as the centerpiece of the Philippine Consulate General's booth at the 2017 Hong Kong Flower Show.

Consul-General Bernardita Catala said PCG officials worked for four days to sort the flowers, put up the jeepney, and paint the booth.

"The centerpiece is the jeep and we covered it with Everlasting flowers. We thought of using Everlasting kasi hindi nabublok," Catala said.

It was worth it as the PCG booth re-

ceived a "Special Award in Design Excellence".

This was the first time the PCG has joined the flower show.

In previous years, the Knights of Rizal had put up a booth at the flower show, and became the unofficial representative of the Philippines.



Philippine booth

LD tours Chinese University HK studees

By Vicks Reyes Munar

CONTINUING its objectives - Lakbay Dangkal - a historico-cultural group known for conducting walking tours around the Central area, highlighting the alleys and spots where Philippines national hero Jose Rizal and other famous Filipino personalities once walked - the group's mentor Sonia Soosot Nisa Zerrudo with other officers held the tour for students of the Chinese University of Hong Kong on Mar. 5.

Aiming to provide the students with an opportunity to understand their city's history and its connection to modern Philippine history, Professor Ian Morley requested Lakbay Dangkal to hold the tour.

LD held its first tour for CUHK students in 2016. CUHK students, along with Morley and his Filipina Research Assistant,



Lakbay Dangkal tour with CUHK students and professor

Claudia Isabelle Montero, thanked the group for holding the tour.

One student said: "We learned a lot from the short tour, and the historical facts shared by the Lakbay Dangkal ladies...as we headed to the place where their national hero once lived in Rednaxela Terrace. We will recommend this to our friends."

The group's interaction with foreigners started a few years ago and was expanded following recommendations from people who joined the tours. Lakbay Dangkal offers the tour to interested persons or groups and also welcomes new members. Those who are interested, please message or call 94167012/96066810.

Observe your partners, Pinoys told

By Ally Constantino

GET to know your partner and be observant!

This was the advice given by Officials of an NGO to Hong Kong-based Filipino workers before committing in a serious relationship.

In the workshop "Love and Relationships" held at the Philippine Consulate General on Feb. 5, PathFinders officials said Filipinos should be prudent before getting into a relationship.

"Get to know the other person very well. Don't take everything they say as truth," said Carmen Lam, Senior Community Development Manager at PathFinders.

The NGO also advised the workshop participants to practice safe sex not only to avoid unwanted pregnancy but also to protect themselves from sexually-transmitted diseases.

Should a domestic herself find herself pregnant, the NGO said they could seek help instead of resorting to illegal means to terminate the pregnancy.

For those needing help and assistance, PathFinders may be contacted through 5190-4886 and info@pathfinders.org.hk.

Those who wish to volunteer, meanwhile, are advised to email their inquiries to volunteers@pathfinders.org.hk.



PathFinders forum at the PCG

Enrich grads complete course for financial lit

By Ally Constantino

CONSUL-General Bernardita Catalla commended Filipino workers who invested their time and exerted effort to complete the financial literacy courses and training of NGO Enrich.

A total of 160 Filipinos and Indonesians employed in Hong Kong as domestic workers received their diploma for completing the courses on Mar. 12. The number was nearly triple of the 59 graduates Enrich had in 2016.

"Hong Kong is not our home. Our work here is temporary. We should remember to take care of ourselves," Catalla said.

She added that Filipino workers in Hong Kong should stay healthy, increase their knowledge and maximize their potential while in the city.

"Don't send everything to your family. You have to help yourself so you can help



A batch of Enrich graduates

your family, your community and your country," Catalla said.

Isabelle Ensarguet, chairperson of the Enrich board, said the NGO is targeting more domestic workers to join their program.

"We need to be ready for more," she said.

Enrich's graduation program was held at the Hong Kong University main campus.



PAHK officers with Kata winners Cynthia Cole (2nd from left) and Lourdes Lowings (2nd from right).



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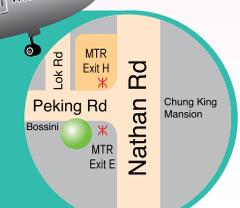
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As We See it

Let them bargain

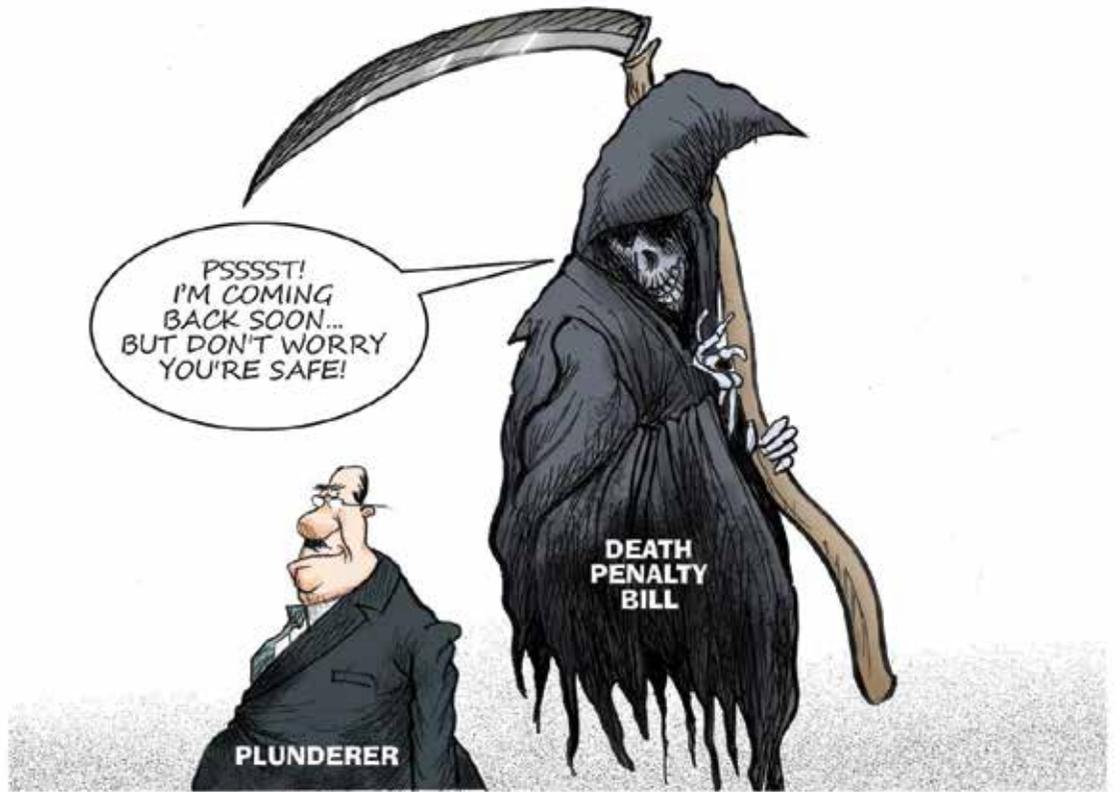
WITH the country's jails bursting at the seams with the growing prison population, the call of Public Attorney's Office chief Persida Rueda Acosta for 80,000 "small-time" drug suspects to be allowed to plea bargain is a welcome development. Acosta convincingly argues that allowing the suspects to make a plea bargain—allowing them to plead guilty to a lesser offense—would help decongest the country's jails. Those still addicted to drugs could be sent to rehab. Acosta said it would save the government P1.4 billion in food allowances for the inmates.

She said many of the inmates were

caught with .01 grams or .02 grams of illegal drugs but many of them have been in jail for 10 years because their cases had dragged on.

But before they can make a plea bargain, the Supreme Court would have to scrap first Section 23 of the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act, which prohibits plea bargaining for drug suspects.

Acosta noted that those facing murder or kidnapping cases could plea bargain but not drug suspects. We hope the Supreme Court would listen to Acosta's plea and grant her petition to allow drug suspects to make a plea bargain.



PALPAK na POEA/OEC at Annulment Dream

Libo-libong OFWs na umuwi ng Pinas ngayong Marso ay naperwisyo na naman dahil sa pilahan sa pagkuha ng OEC mula sa POLO. Sa biglang tingin ay mahusay dahil computerized na.

Pero hindi pala 100% computerized – dahil pila ka rin kung first time ka! At kahit computerized na, andon pa rin ang ugat ng problema! Anong kabalalan ito? Bakit 60 days lang ang validity ng OEC? Bakit hindi gawing 6 months o 1 year ang validity ng OEC para hindi libo-libong OFWs ang pila tuwing December at March pagkuha ng OEC? Bakit ayaw kausapin ng POEA officials ang mga lider ng OFWs para maging mas mahusay ang sistema ukol sa OEC?

Kahit bago na ang mga officials ng POEA ay luma pa rin at katawa-tawa ang mga kilos nito laban sa mga tulisanang recruiters! Bakit ko nasabi ito? Dahil ang mga bagong saltang OFWs dito ay bayad pa rin ng P50,000 o mahigit pa. Hindi ba't libre na sa placement fees ang mga domestics? Yes! Pero hindi sa mga eye at iba pang check-ups at ibang singil. Maraming palusot ang mga tulisanang recruiters para lang makasingil ng malaki sa mga OFWs. Ano-anong mga pagbabago ang dapat

gawin ng POEA?

Panoorin sa www.ofws4change.com at www.facebook.com/allianceofoverseasfilipinos sa April 30, Sunday, ang isang mataas na opisyal ng POEA na magsasalita sa "Global Forum of Overseas Filipinos & Livelihood/Investments Exhibition" na idadaos sa Manila pero ipapalabas ng live sa HK at iba ibang bansa via YouTube at Facebook Live. Magsasalita rin ang officials ng iba-ibang agencies at private institutions sa Apr. 29, Saturday at Apr. 30.

Dreaming of having your marriage annulled in the Philippines? And marrying again? Before making any move and paying anyone, THINK HARD FIRST. So you don't waste precious money. Divorce is a BIG WASTE OF MONEY! Hard-earned money should first be spent for the children and parents – not on a greedy lawyer or a wild dream of annulment. Annulment should be pursued in Philippines – NEVER IN HK! How much does an annulment or legal separation often cost over 2 or more years? P200,000 or P300,000 or more in total. OFWs who believe it will only cost about 20k to 50k are naive or suckers. This subject will be discussed at length in the next issue.

Dear Editor

Dear Hong Kong News,

Maliayang Buwan ng mga Kababaihan!

Sa loob ng aking 10-taong pagtrabaho dito sa Hong Kong, sinisigurado ko na lagi kong nababasa ang inyong pahayagan. Paborito ko ang kolum na ito at naisip ko nga na sumulat din sa inyo.

Minabuti kong sumulat ngayong Marso, buwan ng mga kababaihan upang maiparating ko ang pagbati at pagsaludo sa lahat ng mga kababaihan lahing-lalo na sa mga katulad kong Household Service Worker na todo-todo ang sakripisyo para lang maitaguyod ang pamilya sa Pilipinas.

Napakaraming anak na ang nakapagtapos ng pag-

aaral dahil lang sa pagtiyaga ng ina na magtrabaho sa malayo. Hindi birong hirap ang tinitis ng isang ina na malayo sa kanyang anak lalo na kung napakahirap din ng sitwasyon sa amo. Mga kababaihan na gagawin ang lahat makapag-aral lang ang mga anak.

Ngayong buwan ng Marso, siguradong maraming uwi upang dumalo sa mga graduation ceremonies. Sobrang saya ko dahil isa ako sa mga uwi upang saksihan ang pagtatapos ng aking panganay bilang inhinyero. Maraming kwentong tagumpay ng mga anak ang maririnig at sa likod nito ang di-masukat na sakripisyo ng ina na nagsisilbing "good provider" sa lahat ng pangangailang-pinansyal. Bukod dito nagagawa pang pumuan ang

pagkalingang emosyonal upang mas maipadama pa ang kanilang pagmamahal.

Dahil dito, sa pamamagitan ng inyong kolum nais kong iparating ang aking paghanga at pagsaludo sa mga kababaihang tulad ko.

Bilang pangwakas, sa aking liham, nais ko lang paalalahanan ang lahat ng mga kapwa ko babae na mahal din natin ang ating mga sarili. Pagtuunan din natin ng pansin ang ating kalusugan.

Maraming salamat. Mabuhay ang mga kababaihan at Mabuhay po ang patnugutan ng Hong Kong News!

Gumagalang,
Lani M.

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Currents

Norman Uy
Carnay

#OccupyBulacan Suportahan

NOONG Marso 8, International Women's Day, ay nagsimulang mag-martsa ang mahigit 5,000 mahirap na nagmula sa urban poor group na Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap o KADAMAY patungong Villa Luis, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology Village, sa Pandi, Bulacan. Nang sila ay makarating ay sapilitang inokupa ang mga pabahay ng National Housing Authority doon.

Sama-sama nilang nilinis ang mga tiwangwang na bahay. Tinabas ang mga nagtataasang damuhan at hinanda para sa "pa-affle" ng organisasyon sa kung sinong miyembro ang makakakuha ng housing unit. Nanguna ang mga mahihirap na nanay, ang iba'y kasama pa ang kanilang mga anak, sa pag-okupa upang makakuha ng tirahan. Binansagan ang panibago, mapangahas at kolektibong aksyon na ito na #OccupyBulacan.

Kulminasyon na ito ng maraming buwan nang kampanya at protesta ng mga maralita sa kabiguan ng administrasyon,

partikular na ng Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) na mabigyan ng maayos at disentang pabahay ang mga urban poor.

Masisisi mo ba sila? Simula pa noong Agosto 2016 ay nakikipag-diyalogo na ang mga maralita kaugnay ng kanilang mga pangangailangan sa pabahay. Nagsumite pa nga sila ng priority list ng mga pamilyang kagyat na nangangailangan ng matitirhan dahil sa ngayon ay mga nakatira lang sa tagpi-tagpi ng mga tarpaulin sa kalsada.

Pero ayon sa grupo, walong buwan na ang nagdaan pero tila bingi at bulag pa rin sa kanilang mga karaingan. Tulak ng kahirapan, kawalan ng trabaho at kabagalan ng aksyon ng gobyerno, ay napwersa na silang gumawa ng sariling hakbang.

Anila'y mayroon namang nakatiwangwang na 53,000 housing units para sa mga pamilya ng mga pulis at militar na taon na ang binilang at hindi naman inookupahan samantalang libu-libo ang

walang tirahan subalit di makatira sa mga katulad na unit dahil hindi kaya ng mga mahihirap ang bayad.

Masisisi mo ba sila? Sa mahabang panahon kasi ay trinatang negosyo ang pabahay ng gobyerno. Pribado ang nagtatayo tapos kapag pinasa na sa gobyerno, ipapasa sa mga maralita na mataas ang amortization. Kaya maraming government housing ay tiwangwang at walang nakatira o kaya ay iniinwanan ng mga na-relocate doon kasi hindi kayang tustusan. Karamihan din sa mga relocation sites ay malalayo sa hanapbuhay at walang maayos na serbisyong tubig at kuryente.

Hindi makatarungan na gawing negosyo ang housing sector o kaya'y singilin ang mahihirap para sa public housing. Hindi ba dapat nga ay libreng pabahay sa mahihirap ang programa ng anumang matinong pamahalaan? Kaya unawain ang malalim na dahilan at kung kaya ay maki-simpatiya sa #OccupyBulacan.

HONG KONG NEWS

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Kawawang mga kamay

By Imelda Mae Bustinera

PATAPOS pa lang ng isang taon na naninilbihan bilang kasambahay si Liza, 26, dalaga at tubong Pangasinan, ay nangangalay na ang kanyang mga kamay at masakit paggising niya sa umaga. Idinaing ni Liza sa nanay niya na nauna at matagal ng namamasukan din bilang kasambahay. Sinabi ni Liza sa ina na napakaarte at demanding daw kasi ng amo niyang lalaki kahit raw namamalantsa si Liza ay may pahuhugasan sa kanya.

Minsan daw nakabantay ang among babae sa pagluluto at pinapahugasan ang mga ginagamit at mga iluluto bago ilahok ang bawat sangkap sa oras na kasalukuyang nakasalang kaya hindi maiwasan ang mabasa ang kamay na humahawak din ng mainit.

Naaawa man ang ina ay sinabihan na lang si Liza na tiisin at mag-isip ng paraan kung paano maiwasan kahit papaano at tapusin na lang ang kontrata at kung gusto pa rin magtrabaho at kaya pa ay maghanap ng malilipatan.

Kung talagang hindi na kaya ay umuwi na lang pakatapos. Naisip tuloy ni Liza kung gaanong hirap at pagtitis ang pinagdaanan ng ina maitaguyod at mabigyan

Napahaba ang bakasyon

By Imelda Mae Bustinera

ANG bawat yugto ng kaganapan at okasyon ng anak ay napakahalaga para sa mga magulang lalo na sa ina.

Malayo pa ang pagtatapos sa elementarya ng unico hijo ni Divina, 36, may asawa at isang anak, taga Pasay, inisip na niya kung paano magpapaalam makauwi.

Balak niya na magpaalam kahit isang araw lang balikan dahil malapit lang naman sila sa paliparan. Pero hindi pa man nakakapagpaalam si Divina sa mga amo ay nagpakamatay ang alaga niyang pangany.

Parang gumuho ang lahat para sa mga amo ni Divina at siya mismo ay dama niya ang lungkot ng pagkawala ng inalagaan niya sa loob ng limang taon. Mabait at malambing ang bata kaya napalapit at napamahal na rin sa kanya.

Dahil sa sobrang lungkot at hirap tanggapan ang nangyari ay nagpasya ang buong pamilya na magbakasyon ng medyo matagal sa sariling bansa at isasama rin si Divina para raw makalimot.

Nakasilip ng pagkakataon si Divina kaya hiniling niya na sa halip na sumama sa mga amo ay uuwi para magbakasyon rin at makapiling ang sariling pamilya. Laking tuwa at pasalamat ni Divina nang pumayag ang mga amo at binigyan siya ng dalawang buwang bakasyon na may sahod.



Tiis sa paghuhugas si Liza

lang silang magkapatid ng magandang buhay. Nasabi na lang niya sa ina na "opo at I love you."

Sa katatalak, muntik napahamak!

By Vicks Reyes Munar

SI Julie, 35, dalaga, tubong Cagayan, ay apat na taon na sa kanyang amo.

Bagamat mabait ang kanyang among matandang dalaga na nag-oopisina o nag-trabaho lang sa kanilang bahay ay hindi siya pwedeng magtelepono ng malakas at maiistorbo ito lalo na at hindi naman kalakihan ang kanilang bahay.

Kaya naman kapag may pagkakataon, lalo na sa oras ng kanyang pamamalengke ay inihahanda na niya ang kanyang headset at telepono upang makipag-usap ng walang puknat. Kahit na hindi gaanong mahalaga ang usapan sige lang si Julie



Muntik mapahamak si Julie

sa katetelepono habang nasa labas dahil katwiran nga niya na napapanis ang kanyang laway sa loob ng bahay at para sa kanya nalilibang siya sa pakikipag-usap lalo na kung balitang showbiz at pulitika ang usapan. Nung araw na pumutok ang balita tungkol sa isang Senador na

nakulong sa Pilipinas, tinawagan ni Julie ang kanyang kapatid sa Pilipinas. Inalam niya ang bawat detalye sa kanyang kapatid. Walang tigil siyang salita ng salita sa telepono simula pagbaba ng kanilang gusali. Andyan kang humagalpak siya ng malakas na tawa at mistulang nakakalimot na na siya ay nasa pampublikong lugar.

Dahil sa nawiwili sa pakikipag-usap, mistulang wala sa sariling tumawid si Julie kahit na naka "red light". Muntiksiyang nasagasaan buti na lang at nahila siya at nailigtas sa kapahamakan ng isang kababayan. Minamasdan pala siya at napansin ang kanyang napakalakas na pagtatalak sa telepono at pagtawid ng wala sa sarili.

Damay lahat sa kahihyan

HIYANG hiya si Clara, 30, may asawa at anak, tubong Baguio, sa ginawa ng kasambahay ng kaibigan ng amo niya.

Magkklase ang mga alaga nila kaya sa tuwing magkukuwento ang dating alaga ng kasambahay sa mga kklase at kaibigan ay nahihiya si Clara.

Ninakaw daw ng kasambahay ang pera nilang magkapatid na nagkakahalagang anim na libo,

wala na raw ang mga damit at nag-iwan daw ng sulat na humihingi ng sorry sa mommy nila.

Napakabait ng amo na ito at ang sabi kay Clara sana raw nagsabi lang ang kasambahay na kailangan niya ng pera. Bakit daw ginawa at sinira pa ang trabaho niya? May naikuwento raw ba itong problema? Napakalaking problema daw ba para sirain ang pangalan sa ganun kalit

na halaga?

Sumagot ni Clara na wala naman nabanggit at siya man ay hindi makapaniwala na ginawa iyon ng kasambahay. Sinabi pa ni Clara na para sa kanya, siya ay nagtungo sa Hong Kong upang magtrabaho at kumita at hindi para magnakaw.

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GMA Network wins top honor

GMA Network received the highest recognition among the most trusted brands in the Philippines during the 2017 Readers' Digest Trusted Brands Awards held on March 7 in Pasig City.

The Kapuso Network was bestowed the Platinum Award in the TV Network category, further validating its commitment to enriching the lives of Filipinos with quality entertainment and responsible delivery of news and information.

GMA personalities were also recognized for their continued excellence in their respective platforms. For the seventh consecutive year, GMA News pillar Jessica Soho has been awarded as the Most Trusted News Presenter.

"Kapag naririnig ko yung salitang trust, 'yung tiwala, napakalaking bagay nun

kasi it's something that you earn. Hindi mo 'yan hinihingi, kailangang ibigay sa 'yo yan," said Soho. "Maraming maraming salamat muli sa Readers' Digest at sa lahat ng sumusuporta sa akin," she added.

Fellow GMA News pillar Mike Enriquez, who is also regarded as one of the most credible radio personalities in the country today, received anew the Most Trusted Radio Presenter award for his news programs in DZBB, the flagship AM radio station of RGMA.

"Kapag ikaw ay pinagkatiwalaan ng mga nagtitiwala sa isa sa mga pinaka-pinagkakatiwalaang organisasyon tulad ng Readers' Digest, mas lalong nabubuo ang loob mo sa propesyon mo," said Enriquez.

Kapuso TV host Ryan Agoncillo, in

turn, was recognized as the Most Trusted Entertainment/Variety Presenter.

"To everyone responsible for naming me the Most Trusted Entertainment Presenter, thank you very much for the trust.



JESSICA

It's something else to be recognized for your efforts and to be true to your work and to yourself," said the Eat Buluga host.

The Readers' Digest Trusted Brands Survey is conducted among approximate-

ly 8,000 consumers across key markets in Asia and has been celebrated in the industry for 19 years in "recognizing the brands and services Filipinos trust, above all others."



MIKE



RYAN

Baby boy para kina Kylie at Aljur?

By Cristy Kasilag

MAY kumakalat na balita na tila lalaki daw ang magiging unang apo ng Action King Robin Padilla mula sa anak niyang aktres na si Kylie Nicole Sicangco Padilla.

Napabalita na lalaki ang kasarian ng bata na nasa sinapupunan pa ng 24-anyos na si Kylie na gumaganap na Reyna Amihan sa telefantasya na "Encantadia".

Engaged na si Kylie sa boyfriend niyang actor Aljur Abrenica. Nakatakdang isilang ni Kylie ang una nilang sanggol sa buwan ng Hulyo. Parehong nasa bakod ng GMA Network sina Kylie at Aljur.

Ang kwento pa ay nadagdagan na ang timbang ni Kylie dahil ang isang pag-

kain na kinagigiliwan daw niya habang nagbubuntis ay Bolognese pasta na talaga namang nakakataba kung madaming kakainin.

Ang bata ay malamang magkakaroon ng dalawang pangalan at kung magiging lalaki ito ay maaring ang isa dito ay "Joaquin".

Hindi lamang ito magiging unang apo sa panig nila Robin at dati nitong asawa na si Liezl Sycangco, na nanay ni Kylie, pero ang bata ay magiging unang apo din sa pamilya nila Aljur.

Sa ngayon ay abala ang mag sweethearts na sina Kylie at Aljur sa pagdating ng kanilang unang anak, kaya kaiht na sila ay engaged na hindi nila minamadali ang pag papakasal. Maaring ang isang bagay

na kanilang paguusapan ay ang relihiyon dahil Muslim si Kylie samantalang Katoliko naman si Aljur.

Pero kahit na hindi kaagad papakasalan ng 26-anyos na si Aljur si Kylie tila maayos naman ang pagtingin ng kanyang magiging father-in-law na si Robin at tanggap na siyang makabilang sa kanilang malaking pamilya dahil nakikita nito na mahal na mahal ni Kylie si Aljur at mahal din ni Aljur ang anak niya. Si Kylie ang pangalawa sa apat na anak na babae nina Robin at Liezl.

Sa loob ng limang taon ng kanilang relasyon madami silang pinagdaanan na mga pagsubok. Humantong ito sa kanilang hiwalayan at nuon lamang Nobyembre sa Japan ay nagkabalikan sila.

Sila na pero ayaw pang umamin

By Cristy Kasilag

ACTIONS speak louder than words talaga ang drama ng ibang showbiz couple. Hindi man sila umaamin na sila na, makikita naman sa mga galaw nila, litrato nila at madalas nilang pagiging magkasama kung ano ang totoo.

Tila hindi hadlang ang 13-taong agwat sa edad ni "Papa P" Piolo Pascual, na 40 taong gulang, at actress Shaina Magdayao, 27 taong gulang, para magkarroon ng espesyal na relasyon.

May limang taon nang exclusively dating ang dalawa pero hindi pa din sila umaamin kung mag-boyfriend na sila.

Sinasabi naman ni Piolo na espesyal si Shaina hindi lamang sa kanya kungdi pati sa pamilya niya. Boto daw ang nanay niyang si Amelia Pascual sa actress.

Sa isang online magazine ay sinabi diumano ni Piolo na, "Whatever Shai and I have, it's really something that we value. Something that we treasure, and we appreciate what we have."

Liban kina Piolo at Shaina ay mayroon ding showbiz couples na ayaw lagyan ng label ang kanilang relasyon.

Ang actress na si Jessy Mendiola, 24, ay tinatawag pa din na "rumored girlfriend" ng television host na si Luis Manzano, 35.

Hindi pa din sila umaamin pero nung nagkasakit si Luis nung panahon ng Valentine's Day ay si Jessy ang nag-alaga sa kanya.

"What you see, is what you get" ang sabi niya at kailangan lang daw niya ay "common sense" para makita kung ano ang totoong namamagitan sa kanila ni Jessy.

Anim na taon na din palang magkasintahan ang actor/model na si Mikael Daez at ang actress na si Megan Young.

Bago pa naging Miss World 2013 si Megan ay naging sila na ni Mikael.

Hindi nila kaagad inihayag ang kanilang relasyon dahil nung naging sila ay nasa magkaibang television stations sila. Nasa ABS-CBN nuon si Megan, at samantalang si Mikael ay nanatili sa bakod ng GMA7. Naging busy din si Megan nung panahong siya ang Miss World.

Pero madami silang mga na-post na litrato magkasama namamasyal sa iba't-ibang lugar sa loob at labas ng bansa.

Baste pinagbintangang 'sabog'

NASA balita na naman si Sebastian "Baste" Duterte, ang bunsong anak na lalaki ni Presidente Rodrigo Roa Duterte, nang mayroong kumalat na video na nagpapakita na tila naninigarilyo siya. May ibang tao na nakakita ng video ang nagtatanong kung marijuana ba ang ginawang sigarilyo ng 29-anyos na si Baste.

Sa viral video makikita ang sexy actress na si Ellen Adarna, kaibigan ni Baste at naging girlfriend niya ng maikling panahon lamang, na nagsasalita na tila parang lasing.

Ang 28-taong gulang na si Ellen ang nag-upload ng video.

May mga nag-repost pa ng video sa YouTube na nilagyan ng pamagat na "Ellen Adarna and Baste Duterte: Sabog na sabog".

Sa pamamagitan ng isang litrato na post sa Instagram naisip ni Baste sagutin ang mga haka-haka. Sa litrato makikita na naninigarilyo siya.

Sinamahan niya ito ng caption na ang ibig sabihin ay "Sabi nila marijuana din daw ito".

Pero bago pa nagpost ng larawan si Baste ay nauna nang nagsabi si Ellen na isang electronic na sigarilyo na nagmula sa Japan ang gamit ni Baste sa litrato. Hindi daw iyon marijuana. Ang tawag daw sa ganitong klaseng sigarilyo ay IQOS. Dinagdag pa niya na kung pinagbabawal na marijuana ang gamit ni Baste hindi niya iyon i-upload sa Instagram account niya.

Matagal nang magkaibigan sina Ellen at Baste kaya kahit na natapos na ang kanilang relasyon bilang mag-boyfriend-girlfriend ay patuloy pa din silang nagkikita.

At habang girlfriend niya si Ellen ay patuloy, diumano ang relasyon ni Baste sa girlfriend niyangi Kate Necesario kung saan mayroon siyang dalawang taong gulang na anak na si Yair. Liban kay Yair ay mayroon pang limang-taong gulang na anak si Baste.

Cristy Kasilag

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Si Sinon ang bagong 'King of Catwalk'

By Cristy Kasilag

NABANSAGANG "King of the Catwalk" si Sinon Loresca o mas kilala sa tawag na "Rogelia" dahil sa mga nakakaaliw niyang mga videos na pumatok hindi lamang sa Pilipinas kundi napansin din ito sa ibang bansa.

Kris Bernal still a 'Kapuso'

MULTI-TALENTED actress Kris Bernal remains a loyal Kapuso as she renewed last March 7 her exclusive contract with GMA Network, Inc.

Kris, one of the Network's top leading ladies, was discovered in the fourth season of the reality-based artista search Starstruck. After almost 10 years of being a Kapuso, Kris has been blessed with numerous projects that showcased her versatility and talent and the Network is proud to have her as one of its home-grown artists.

She feels grateful for her strong relationship with GMA through the years, "Eto yung gusto ng puso ko, kung saan ako kumportable, where I feel complete, where I'm satisfied and contented. I'm very thankful na nandito pa rin ako at binigyan ulit ako ng chance."

Present in the contract-signing were GMA Films President Annette M. Gozon, GMA Senior Vice President for Entertainment Lilybeth G. Rasonable, GMA Artist Center Assistant Vice President and Head for Talent Imaging and Marketing Unit Simoun Ferrer, and GMAAC Talent Manager Tracy Garcia.

After her commendable portrayal of a woman with learning disability in Little Nanay, GMA once again entrusted Kris with another challenging project as she topbills the remake of the successful TV series Impostora where she will play a dual character.

"Masaya ako dahil ang ganda-ganda ng project na binigay nila sa akin, yung Impostora. Dito talaga ako mahahasa, at mag-go-grow. Ito na siguro yung pinaka-challenging character para sa akin. Sobrang hirap din nung sa Little Nanay pero at least dun, isa lang ang role ko. Eto kasi sa Impostora, pagago-bago ako, hindi lang sa acting, sa pananamit din, may prosthetics pa ako and iba't-ibang makeup at look."



KRIS

Unang nakilala si Sinon sa Kalye Serye ng "Eat Bulaga!" kung saan pansamatala siyang gumagapang na nakakatuwang bodyguard ni Lola Nidora na ginagampanan ni Wally Bayola.

Kamakailan ay namayagpag na naman ang beauty niya nang mag-post siya ng mga videos kung saan rumarampa-rampa

siya kung saan-saan at kung ano-ano nakakaaliw na kasuotan.

Sa mga nauna niyang napost na video ay makikita siyang nakasuot lamang ng trunks habang nasa beach.

Sa isang eksena ay kunwari ay nalunod siya at dinala siya sa pampang ng dalawa niyang kaibigan. At nang may babae

na lumapit para bigyan siya ng mouth to mouth resuscitation ay bigla na siyang bumangon at sinabing nakakadiri kung babae ang hahalik sa kanya.

Ang isa sa mga pumatok niyang video ay ang pagrampa niya habang naka-Speedo at suot suot ang six-inch heeled na sapatos.

At noong kasagsagan ng Miss Universe 2016 na ginanap sa bansa ay naglabas siya ng video na naglalakad sa sidewalk na ginawa niyang catwalk habang nakasuot ng blue long gown na may deep v-cut na neckline, at may matching pang korona sa ulo. Pakaway-kaway na natatawa si Sinon habang naglalakad.



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Horoscope



Capricorn December 22 to January 19

May masisira sa mga gamit ninyo sa bahay at makakaapekto iyon sa budget ng pamilya. Huwag mong sisihin ang mga kasama sa bahay, normal lang na masira ang mga lumang gamit.



Aquarius January 20 to February 18

Mag-ingat ka sa paglabas-labas. Iwasan mong magmadali, di bale nang ma-late ka kaysa maaksidente.



Pisces February 19 to March 20

Bantayan mo kung saan mo ginagasta ang pera. Magaan ang dating ng pera sa iyo pero huwag maging gastador.



Aries March 21 to April 19

Halo- halo ang mga karanasan na darating sa iyo. Nasa iyo na kung paano mo dadalhin ito.



Taurus April 20 to May 20

May mga araw na hindi mo tiyak kung ano ang mangyayari kahit na matagal mo nang napagplanuhan ang mga iyon. Ihanda ang kalooban sa mga pangyayari.



Gemini May 21 to June 20

May mga magpapakita ng hindi magandang ugali sa iyo. Hayaan mo lang sila at isipin na wala ka namang ginagawang 'di maganda sa kanila.



Cancer June 21 to July 22

Pag-aralan mong kontrolin ang taas-baba ng emosyon dahil nahihirapang makisama sa iyo ang iyong mga mahal sa buhay. Maging mas mapasensya.



Leo July 23 to August 22

Kahit matagal nang nakaplano ang biyahe mo sa unang kalahatian ng taon, posibleng magkakaroon ng pangyayaring makakapigil sa biyahe. Huwag mong piliting makaalis dahil baka pagsisihan ito.



Virgo August 23 to September 22

Mukhang may linaw na ang inaasahan mong pera mula sa trabaho o sa pamilya mo. Alagaan mo kung paano mo ito ilalaan para sa mas mahahalagang gastusin at para sa mga oras na mahina ang kita mo.



Libra September 23 to October 22

Hangga't maari ay umiwas ka sa mga gulo o intrigang sangkot ang mga kaibigan mo. Pag-aralan mo muna bago ka magbitiw ng salita.



Scorpio October 23 to November 21

Pilitin mong isara ang bibig mo kahit gustong- gusto mo nang makialam. May mga bagay- bagay na hindi mo pa alam at malalagay ka lang sa di- maayos na sitwasyon kung sasali ka ngayon.



Sagittarius November 22 to December 21

Isakripisyo mo muna ang party at mga paglabas-labas. Pag-ipunan mo ang pangangailangan ng pamilya mo.

What's Cooking?



For those wanting to cook some juicy meat with vegetable on the side, the Glazed Pork Chops with Asparagus could just be the perfect dish you're looking for.

Ingredients:

- 2 Thick boneless pork chop
- 1/8 bar butter
- 1 Tbsp. Oyster Sauce
- 2 Tbsp. Brown sugar
- 1 Tsp. Cayenne Powder
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 4 spears of asparagus, blanched

1. In a bowl, marinate pork chop with oyster sauce, brown sugar and cayenne powder.
2. Meanwhile, pre-heat wok or skillet, stir fry in butter and mix the marinated pork chop, season with salt and pepper.
3. Serve with blanched asparagus spears
4. Happy cooking

For more recipes enroll at Culinary Arts Centre
M/F Cockloft Wing Tat Commercial Building, #97 Bonham Strand East Sheung Wan Hong Kong.
For more recipes, you can call us at 28507724, 28507714, 28507408, or 28507438.



By Chef Jay Dator



Sa harap ng Statue of Liberty....
Italian: Magnifico!
British: Brilliant!
American: Amazing
Pinoy: Picture! Picture! Pang- Facebook!

Nasalubong ng lasing ang isang fat girl na may dalang aso....
Lasing: Hoy, saan mo nakuha ang baboy?
Babae: Aso to, di baboy!
Lasing: Wag kang sumabat yung aso kausap ko!

Juan: Dok, sobra lungkot ko dito sa mental kaya sinulatan ko sarili ko!
Doktor: Eh, ano naman sinabi mo?
Juan: Ewan ko, next week ko pa matatanggap eh!

Juan: Heto na po ang mga libro niyo puro lang sulat walang istorya!
Librarian: Aha! Kayo pala ang kumukuha ng mga

telephone directory namin

Tatay: Bakit bagsak ka sa exam?

Juan: Dahil po sa pag-absent tay!

Juan: Absent ka nung itinuro?

Juan: Hindi po! Absent po yung katabi ko nung exam!

Lorna: Alam mo dineyt ako ng BF ko kagabi sa isang malaking restoran, daming choices!

Maria: Wow, anong name ng restoran?

Lorna: FOOD COURT daw!

Doktor: Kambal anak mo, sister mo nagpangalan!
Maria: Naku, weirdo un, ano po ipinangalan?

Doktor: Sa girl DENICE!

Maria: Ok yun, eh sa boy?

Doc: DENEPHEW!

Teacher: Pedro 1+ 3?

Maria: Ma'am 4 po.

Teacher: Oh ikaw Juan 3 + 1 ?

Juan: Ayan na! Ayan na! Pag mahirap sa akin, favoritism!

Guro: Ganyan talaga iha, pag maganda karaniwan di matalino pag matalino madalas PANGIT!

Maria: Salamat po ma'am. Ang TALI-TALINO nyo talaga

Holdaper: Yey: mayaman na tayo!

Holdaper 2: Bilangin mo na!

Holdaper 1: Alam mo naman mahina ako sa Math. Abangan nalang natin sa news mamaya!

Mister: Laki problem ko!

Misis: Wag mo sabihin problem MO kundi NATIN, mag-asawa tayo! O ano problem natin?

Mister: Nabuntis NATIN si Inday at TAYO ang ama!

Juan: Last month, ipinakilala ko ang GF ko sa lolo kong milyonaryo!

Pedro: Anong nangyari? Boto ba lolo mo?

Juan: Oo, LOLA ko na siya ngayon!

Guro: Why are you absent?

Juan: May CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE po ako!

Guro: Sige i-spell mo ang sakit mo!

Juan: Joke-lang po, UBO-lang po talaga!

Guro: Nangopya ka na naman sa katabi mo no? Parehong pareho ang sagot nyo!

Anna: Ma'am siguro po dahil PAREHONG- PAREHO din ang tanong nyo!

Guro: Grrrr!

Guro: Kids, gayahin nyo ang mga ANTS, puro sila trabaho at DI NAGLALAKWATSA

Maria: Ma'am , e bakit po nung magpunta kami sa LUNETTA, andun din sila?

Crossword Puzzle

PAHALANG

- 1 Daw
- 6 Makulit na pagtatanong
- 11 Uri ng eclipse
- 12 Ban
- 13 Pagbati sa Hawaii
- 14 Animo
- 15 Bulungan
- 17 Yugto ng karera
- 19 Bawas
- 20 Diwata
- 21 Republic Act
- 23 ___ Linda
- 26 Pangatnig
- 27 Mall sa Cubao
- 29 Gamit panlasa
- 31 ___ King Cole
- 32 Komposisyong musikal
- 34 Moog sa Texas
- 36 Gumapas
- 38 Lemon; Tagalog

39 Hindi pantay ang mata

40 Lugar sa Makati .

41 Sabi niya

PABABA

- 1 United States of America
- 2 Totoy ___
- 3 Pangalan ng babae
- 4 Nadamay sa sakit
- 5 Relo
- 6 Putting buhok
- 7 Taguri sa santo
- 8 Iwaglit
- 9 Manggagawa sa tubuhan
- 10 Lumilipad na maliliit na baga
- 16 Matapang na kemikal
- 18 Uri ng pasabog
- 22 Bodyguard

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11						12			
13						14			
	15				16			17	
18		19					20		
21	22		23			24	25		26
27		28			29			30	
31				32					33
34			34				36		37
38							39		
40							41		

Answer to last puzzle

B	U	L	O	S		K	I	K	I	L	
U	M	I	K	A		I	K	A	S	A	
K	A	T	O	L		T	A	W	A	S	
A	B	A	Y	A	N		L	A	Y	A	
N	O	W		M	I	S	A	Y			
A	T		B	A	L	U	T		G	A	
			K	A	T	A	M		K	A	L
A	S	A	R		Y	A	M	A	H	A	
H	U	W	E	S		K	A	L	A	G	
I	R	T	T	A		I	T	A	S	A	
T	I	A	A	D		T	A	W	A	D	

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