

HONG KONG NEWS

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Law vs erring EAs passed



SOLIDARITY. Migrant workers dance, rise, and unite in solidarity with other women in the global One Billion Rising Revolution 2018 movement. The activity, held on Feb. 11 at Edinburgh Place in Central, calls for the protection of women's dignity and rights against modern-day slavery.

By Lena Largoza

FINALLY!

The Hong Kong government has enacted into law a measure that imposed stiff

finances and jail terms against employment agencies and their officials who charge excessive fees on hapless migrants looking for domestic worker jobs in the city.

The law amended Part XII of the Em-

ployment Ordinance (EO) (Cap 57) and raised the maximum penalty for the offenses of overcharging job-seekers and unlicensed operation of EAs.

Hong Kong labor rules allow agencies

to collect fees equivalent to 10 percent of the worker's first monthly wage. The current minimum wage for foreign domestic helpers is \$4,410.

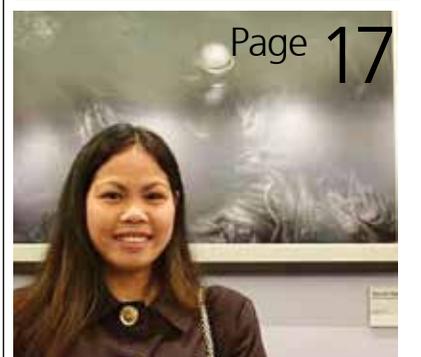
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VOUCHER. Owtel's latest offering will allow hard-working FDHs to buy plane tickets via easy terms.



VIENNA. In this winter wonderland, one can't help but feel like walking and living in a real-life fairy tale.



SACRIFICE. A winning photo of a Filipina shows the hardship of workers in HK.

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'Better ties between Macau locals, OFWs'

By Lena Largoza

WHILE cultural differences between Macau residents and Filipinos working in the city exist, the recent calamity of typhoon Hato brought about better understanding between them.

Paul Pun Chi Meng, secretary general of Catholic group Caritas de Macau, told Hong Kong News recently that with Filipino migrant workers in the territory volunteering in relief activities after the destructive typhoon struck Macau in late August, Macau residents gained a better

understanding and appreciation of them.

"Actually after Typhoon Hato, more people, local people [began to] understand the migrant workers more because Caritas Macau organized relief activities and many Macau citizens saw many migrant workers helping the locals," Pun said.

Macau was battered by Typhoon Hato on Aug. 23, leaving 12 people dead and flooded parts of the gaming hub.

Caritas, he said, receives formal complaints every year from 30 to 50 migrant domestic workers.

Without Caritas' intervention in numerous cases, complaints could number between 300 and 400 annually.

"Filipino migrant workers they help us a lot, but sometimes they face some problem because of communication problem and cultural differences and these could create conflicts between the employer and the employee," he said.

As of end-November 2016, there were 26,565 Filipino non-resident workers in Macau.

Pun added that unlike in Hong Kong,

migrant domestic workers in the former Portuguese colony were allowed to live out of their employer's home so they could have enough time for rest and recreation.

He also said the organization usually holds activities for migrant workers in the city.

Caritas de Macau is a social service organization which aims to provide social welfare to the community and the society, especially to the most needy and the abandoned.

SSS seeks contribution increase

By Maia Lopez

THE Social Security System wants to increase the monthly contributions of its members by 3-percentage points starting April, a move that would raise P45 billion in additional collections and extend the fund's life by 12 years.

SSS chairman Amado Valdez said the state pension fund for private sector employees has already sent a letter of request to President Rodrigo Duterte for his approval of the premium hike from 11 to 14 percent.

"We don't want to impose a deadline because the President is balancing a lot of

things, so we're just hoping that this can be implemented in April. Our target is to implement this within the year," he said.

The request for higher contributions was in response to a P1,000 increase in the monthly pension of retired members last year, with another P1,000 to be disbursed in 2022. The SSS was supposed to implement the higher contribution rate in May last year, but the plan was postponed.

Valdez said the higher contribution rate must cover the "backlog" last year during which the SSS was supposed to implement a premium increase.

SSS is also proposing to adjust the maximum salary credit for a P20,000 cap, up

from the P16,000 limit at present.

Lawmakers, however, slammed the proposal, calling out the fund for its supposed failure to collect from employers who did not send their employees' contributions to the agency. Valdez, however, said delinquent employers have been slapped with cases and some were even sent to jail. The SSS collected about P18 billion from these delinquents last year.

But ACT Teachers party-list representatives Antonio Tinio and France Castro said the planned increase, along with the recently enacted Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion law, would be a double whammy to SSS members.

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Cayetano open to printing passports in posts

By Lena Largoza

PHILIPPINE Foreign Affairs Sec. Alan Peter Cayetano said he was open to the proposal to print Philippine passports in Hong Kong instead of having them printed in Manila and sent to post via courier.

"We have a technical working group now in Congress and they have visited other countries that have done so. Ayaw lang namin ma-interrupt iyong 15,000 to 20,000 passport applications every day," Cayetano told Hong Kong News recently.

He added that they were looking for ways to retain the security features of Philippine passports if they would be printed in overseas posts.

"We are also looking for alternative or supplements of how to do it. So if we can figure out how to do it without sacrificing the security functions, we're open to it.

"Right now ang mangyayari is to continue muna and then the same passport pero 10 years ang validity. The changes that are being proposed are being studied at basta hindi maantala ang present [system], we're not afraid to make those reforms," Cayetano said.

During Cayetano's first meeting as DFA chief with the Filipino community in Hong Kong in July, migrant domestic workers pressed the Philippine government to send a printing machine here in

the city to cut the expenses incurred by Filipinos who renew their passports.

Dolores Balladares-Pelaez, chairperson of the United Filipinos in Hong Kong, told Hong Kong News there was a plan that besides data capturing here, printing should also be done in the post to reduce costs.

Presently, data capturing is held at the post and will then be sent to the National Printing Office in Manila.

Once printing is completed, the passport is sent to the overseas post via a courier service.

Besides being expensive, it takes

months before the new passport is delivered to the applicant.

"That's the plan," Balladares-Pelaez said.

Eman Villanueva, chairperson of Bayan Hong Kong and Macau, said the Philippine post should follow the practice of

other consulates in Hong Kong which print their passports here.

Cayetano said, yearly, passport applications in the Philippines increase between four and seven percent, translating to 400,000 to 700,000 new applicants.



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Medium 24x14x24	HK\$ 440	HK\$ 450	HK\$ 470	HK\$ 500	HK\$ 520
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Bulilit	HK\$ 25	HK\$ 50	HK\$ 10
Nino	NIL	NIL	NIL

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Pinoys join record-breaking CPR marathon

By Vicks Reyes Munar

SIX hundred members of the Domestic Workers Empowerment Project (DWEP) headed by its founder and program coordinator, Miguel Manio, participated in Hong Kong's "Cardio Pulmonary Resus-

citation (CPR) Marathon 2018" held at the Fire and Ambulance Services Academy in Tseung Kwan O on Feb. 3-4.

The activity sought to enhance the awareness of Hongkongers and teach them CPR skills to save lives at critical scenes, organizers, headed by the Chair-

man of the Preparatory Committee of the event, Shi Jieling -director of the Emergency Department of the Shenzhen Hospital of the University of Hong Kong, led and held the two-day event.

Besides teaching the critical skill, the event also marked the new record in the

Guinness Book for collective relay CPR with 3,027 participants, breaking the previous collective relay set on Apr. 7, 2016 at the University of Kinnaisavi, India with 2,619 people.

Prior to the CPR Marathon, nearly 70 percent of Hong Kong people were

trained in chest compression first aid organized by the Emergency Medicine Unit, Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine of the University of Hong Kong.

DWEP members and other members of the Filipino community participated in the training held at Pauline Chan Building in Pokfulam, on Jan. 7, 14, and 28. Attendees learned principles of Compression- Only Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (COCPR) and also received scenario-based training.

Helen Guinez Elefante, a DWEP student, said: "I am so thankful for the learning opportunity, this skill is very useful especially in times of emergencies."

Meanwhile, Emma Bautista said she was looking forward to more health training in the future.



Filipino workers at the event

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Mga Katungkulan ng mga Dayuhang Kasambahay



Umiwas sa labis na pangungutang. Huwag bayaran ang iyong ahensiya sa pamamagitan ng pag-utang sa kahit na anong kumpanya na nagpapautang kahit na hilingin ito ng ahensiya.

Gawin lamang ang mga pambahay na tungkulin para sa pamamahay ng amo sa tirahan na nakasaad sa kontrata. Huwag manilbihan para sa ibang tao bukod sa iyong amo.



Umiwas sa "job-hopping". Kadalasan hindi pinapayagan ang pagpalit ng amo habang wasto pa ang iyong kasalukuyang kontrata maliban sa pambihirang pangyayari. Maaring hindi na payagan ang iyong pag-apply ng visa sa hinaharap kung aabusuhin ang pagputol sa kontrata nang wala sa panahon.



Mayroon kang libreng tutuluyan sa pamamahay ng iyong amo sa tirahan na nakasaad sa kontrata, at ditto ka lang puwedeng tumira. Maaring hindi na payagan ang iyong pag-apply ng visa sa hinaharap kung titira ka sa labas kahit na pinayagan o binayaran ito ng iyong amo.



Huwag tumanggap ng illegal na trabaho o pansamantalang trabaho kahit na pinayagan o pinakiusapan ka ng iyong amo o ahensiya na gawin iyon.

Maari kang isakdal at paalisin sa Hong Kong kapag napatunayan kang lumabag sa kundisyon ng pananatili.



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“Through the OWTEL Voucher, our customers could buy plane tickets exclusively from Destine Joy Travel & Tours and they can pay for the tickets by instalment,” said OWTEL founder and CEO David Chen.

And with OWTEL’s backing, customers could be certain that they get a top-notch service.

“OWTEL will also closely monitor Destine Joy’s service to ensure that they continue to provide only the best service to our customers,” said Chen.

“What we’re trying to avoid here is a repeat of the unfortunate incident when many Filipino workers found themselves in a bind after they learned that the tickets they bought from their hard-earned money would turn out to be unconfirmed,” he said.

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Dayuhang Kasambahay

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- Ang kabuuang pagbawas, hindi kasali yung mga hindi pagharap sa trabaho, ay dapat hindi hihigit sa kalahating suweldong mababayaran sa panahon ng suweldong iyon.



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Young Pinoy jailed for email, cash fraud

By Lena Largoza

HE was crying in the dock, while his pregnant girlfriend was crying in the gallery of the court where he was sentenced for receiving money in his account from fraudulent transactions.

Twenty-two-year-old FD on Jan. 9 was

sentenced to 12 months in prison after pleading guilty to dealing with property known or believed to represent proceeds of indictable offense.

Eastern Court Magistrate Cheng Lim-chi, however, reduced FD's sentence to eight months in prison owing to his guilty plea, and then further reduced it to six

months, noting the extended period of investigation prosecutors took before finalizing the case against the defendant.

"You are obviously remorseful and previously had a clear record. You were relatively young at the time of the offense in 2013...In any event, your girlfriend is pregnant and don't commit any offense in

the future so you could support your girlfriend or wife and baby in the future," said Judge Cheng.

The charge sheet against FD, who previously worked as a deliveryman, stated that he had allowed the use of his bank account and ATM to an "unknown man" who withdrew a total of HK\$587,289 from the HK\$587,289.55 deposited to the account. The money was deposited in September 2013 by two companies - one based in Turkey, and the other based in Peru - which buy electronic products and other products from mainland China.

It was learned that email messages were sent to these two companies, giving them instruction to deposit the amount to the account. The payment was made for the purchase of hair clippers and shavers, and mosquito nets.

Upon discovering the fraud, the two companies reported the transactions to the Hong Kong Police.

FD's account was opened on Aug. 23, 1987 under a trading company whose sole

proprietor was FD, who at the time was earning \$9,555 monthly.

The account only remained active for a week, and no other notable deposit was made except for the deposits made by the two companies.

In March 2014, FD was arrested for money laundering, and admitted opening the company and the account and withdrawing the amounts.

He said he had done so "at the instructions of an unknown male".

The defendant was released on police bail, but after the arrest he failed to report for bail. In October 2015, he was located and re-arrested. He was then again released temporarily owing to the extended period of investigation.

Following investigation, the defendant was charged at the Eastern Magistracy in November.

While the judge was giving the sentence, the defendant was seen crying in the dock and nodding his head.

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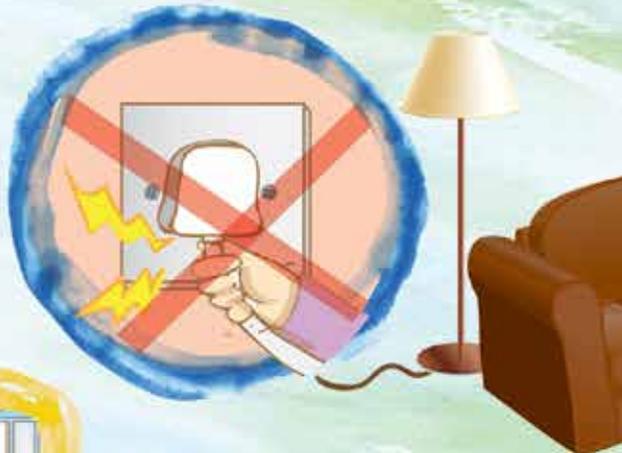
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2018 Year of



By Maia Lopez

THE Chinese, the Filipino-Chinese, and all Filipinos in general who are more superstitious than the Chinese eagerly await February 16th ring in the Year of the Earth Dog. The new lunar year is touted to bring about a return to one's roots and a reflection on one's health and overall well-being.

Three Feng Shui experts – Princess Lim Fernandez, Joey Yap, and Marites Allen – give us a peek of what to expect in the introspective, if not emotional, year ahead based on our Chinese Zodiac signs.



Dog

1922, 1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006, 2018

Fernandez: Ironically, it's not going to be the best year for Dogs. To counter your bad luck this year, be creative, think out of the box, and approach your problems differently. Try to keep your emotions and temper in check.

Yap: Those born in the year of the dog will experience their fair share of personal and professional problems in 2018, with matters from one aspect of your life having the tendency to spill into another. You might experience financial losses so be sure to focus on saving your money. It's also unwise to move jobs despite escalating work-related pressures.

Allen: New beginnings are in the horizon and income growing in 2018 is very possible.



Pig

1923, 1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007

Fernandez: Pigs will have great luck this year. Do the things you've always wanted to do or achieve goals that have been on your resolutions' list for ages.

Yap: It's time for you to shine and seize that well-deserved career advancement or business development. Be sure to schedule some time for yourself to avoid feeling burned out. Financial obstacles might occur early in the year, after which bonuses and a surge of wealth could take place.

Allen: You will have a great start for a new year; however, betrayal may be on the horizon.

Snake



1929, 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013

Fernandez: Snakes who were frustrated last year will reap the rewards of their hard work this Year of the Dog. Make the most of it, though, because you won't have the best 2019. Take advantage of your matchmaker and phoenix stars to find your perfect match or even to woo business partners or potential employers.

Yap: Avoid offending people too much for fear of legal troubles from unexpected hiccups in your plans and arguments. Your financial health is uncertain but there will be several individuals who can help you recuperate your losses. When it comes to your career, it's time for a reshuffle by changing positions or even companies.

Allen: There will be more chances for your upward achievements this year.

Rat



1912, 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008

Fernandez: Rats have a promotion star in their charts, which is a good sign for their careers and business. But be careful whenever you're near water, because you may end up hurting yourself.

Yap: It's a great year to develop your skills further as your ability to learn new skills enhances; academicians, scholars or students will especially benefit from this boost. Be prepared to experience monetary losses due to unlucky financial investments or delayed reimbursements.

Allen: Long-term benefits expected, but you need to be wary of the misfortune star.

Horse



1930, 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, 2014

Fernandez: Horses have a "golden treasure box" this year, which they must open by learning new things. Get out of your comfort zone and push yourself this Year of the Dog and you'll reap all the rewards of your hard work soon.

Yap: While you might feel dragged down by the rapid changes around you, there will be ample support from people, who will give you strength and assistance. It's time to learn new problem-solving skills to help you navigate through conflicts as accidents and communication difficulties may arise. Look after your health by being extra vigilant on the road.

Allen: This will be a very rewarding year, especially in the love department.

Ox



1913, 1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009

Fernandez: The Ox will have a great year, especially if he or she has a business related to women – cosmetics, fashion, and the like – because they have a "female benefactor" in their charts.

Yap: Female-dominated industries will see great prosperity in 2018 so if you're working in one, consider yourself lucky. It will also be a great year to improve on your finances (with a possible surprise pay rise). When it comes to health, you might need to take up a new sport to avoid serious health issues.

Allen: Pleasant news related to promotion or further career development are to be expected.

Goat



1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003, 2015

Fernandez: The benevolent star in your chart will give you the opportunity to turn things around when a situation seems hopeless, even when it's at the last minute. As the blessings in disguise come in this year, be on your guard against gossip.

Yap: It's going to be a good year for you. You will have ample opportunities to showcase your talents in the lead up to a potential bonus or positive pay-off.

Allen: You may have to redouble your efforts to achieve whatever goals you wanted.

Tiger



1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010

Fernandez: Tigers' luck won't be bad, but it won't be particularly great either. To avoid your bad luck, keep moving – travel whenever you can, whether it's for business or pleasure, and whether it's internationally or locally. Keep an eye out for new discoveries in your travels too, as a learning star is in your charts this year.

Yap: Malicious lies and rumors about you might spread and cause misunderstandings with the people who are important to you. Avoid getting entangled in a financial chaos by staying clear of large investments and loans. While financial losses might occur due to poorly managed budgets and investment returns, you might receive help from someone. Consider donating to a charity to pay it forward.

Allen: A reasonably good year, you but must control your temper and avoid confrontations.

Monkey



1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016

Fernandez: Monkeys won't have the greatest luck this year, but it won't be bad either. Try to travel as much as you can to keep the bad vibes at bay. Your judgement will also be clouded this year, so don't make any rash decisions.

Yap: The Year of the Dog is set to be a rocky one for you. Maintain a right mindset through these difficult times. There might be big financial losses due to unrestricted spending, so start practicing some self-control. Always plan your budget and avoid risky financial activities such as gambling.

Allen: There are many positive events to look forward to this year.



the Earth Dog



Rabbit



1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011

Fernandez: Rabbits didn't have such a great 2017, but 2018 is making up for it. Not only do they have a career star, but also a star of kindness. To make the most of your luck, be magnanimous and generous.

Yap: You will come across several opportunities for growth this year and will be surrounded by an abundance of love and support from kind and generous people. You'll find yourself forging new friendships, some of which might lead to lucrative business deals. Amid a busy career life, don't forget to watch your diet and continue to exercise to avoid illnesses and injuries, which is highly possible this year.

Allen: Your monetary gains from last year may be extended to this year.

Rooster



1921, 1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005, 2017

Fernandez: This year, take it easy and prioritize your health. Take the time to invest in yourself and your personal growth. Your career and money luck may slow down in 2018, but that's okay – you're preparing yourself for good things to come in 2019.

Yap: Since 2017 has been such an eventful year for you, it's time to take a breather and focus on improving your lifestyle and well-being in 2018. You might feel lonely or abandoned this year, but don't let that pull you down. Instead, go out and mingle with people close to you to get a positive reality check.

Allen: Do not be too busy that you neglect your personal health.

Dragon



1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012

Fernandez: Dragons are in direct conflict with the Dog, so they're under a lot of pressure this year. Be cautious – be more conservative with your investments and always have a Plan B.

Yap: You will find yourself transforming challenges into opportunities this year. And while setbacks are inevitable, the outcome depends on how well you play your cards. If you're planning on expanding your business or considering large-scale projects, make sure you think about it thoroughly to avoid stress later.

Allen: Take it easy, and make sure to implement a calculated risk for anything that you do in 2018.

Happy Lunar New Year!

'Law...'

From page 1

Previously, violation of the rule could incur a maximum fine of \$50,000.

Under the new law, however, those charging job-seekers excessive fees could face a maximum fine of \$350,000 and imprisonment of three years.

The law also expanded the scope of application of overcharging offense, and provide for new grounds for the Commissioner of Labour to consider refusing to issue or renew or revoking a license to operate an EA. Likewise, the law provided a legal basis for the Code of Practice for EAs. In January 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, drawing up service agreements with job-seekers and with employers, providing payment receipts,

promoting job-seekers' and employers' awareness of their rights and obligations (including provision of sample wage receipt to facilitate FDHs and their employers for record-keeping or perusal as when necessary) and avoiding involvement in financial affairs of job-seekers.

The law against erring EAs and their agents became effective on Feb. 9.

While groups of migrant domestic workers considered the measure a victory, the next step for them is the monitoring and to ensure its enforcement.

"What we will do now is to monitor the enforcement and the implementation of the law," said Shiella Grace Estrada, secretary of the Hong Kong Federation of Asian Domestic Workers Union and chairperson of the Progressive Labor Union. The organizations were among those who pushed and lobbied for the measure at the Legislative Council.

She also noted that the approved bill gave

migrant domestic workers a longer time to pursue cases against EAs. Previously, the measure proposed six months as the period when migrant domestic workers could file a case against an EA and its officers who charge excessive fees, but the approved measure extended the period to 12 months.

"This is still a win, although we were pushing for a 24-month period to file our cases," Estrada added.

Eman Villanueva, spokesperson of the Asian Migrants Coordinating Body, also said the law has finally reflected the "criminal nature" of the practice of unscrupulous EAs to impose excessive fees on migrant domestic workers.

"Wine-welcome namin iyang amendment kasi una, nire-reflect niyan ang sentiment namin na dapat mas mabigat ang penalty. Also, ang isang malaking difference niyan I think, is the criminalization ng offense, na dati-rati pera lang na ibabayad nila as fine," he said.

"Ngayon kasi mayroon nang imprisonment so iyong offense, naging criminal in nature kaya malaking bagay iyon," Villanueva added.

He also said they want to see the seriousness of the Hong Kong government in the enforcement of the law.

"On the other hand, ang isang question diyan ay kung magiging effective ba ang enforcement. How serious is the government of Hong Kong in tracking down the illegal activities of the employment agencies.

"In any law, gaano man kaganda iyan pero kung may problema sa enforcement, passive lang at hindi pro-active ang approach, then magiging maganda lang iyan sa papel. Mawawalan siya ng kwenta dahil hindi siya nae-execute well at nae-enforce ang batas," he said.

Meanwhile, on Feb. 11, women migrant workers from the AMCB launched an intensified campaign for wage increase, better working condition, and protection of

their rights as workers.

These women danced and united in solidarity with women in the global One Billion Rising Revolution 2018 movement.

In a statement, the AMCB slammed the "measly" \$100-increase in the minimum allowable wage of migrant domestic workers in the city.

"Considering the annual inflation rate and the increasing cost of living in Hong Kong that also impacts MDWs who spend for basic needs as food, transportation, communication and personal effects, the negligible wage hikes – as compared to drastic cuts in the past – do not even approximate what the lowest paid workers in Hong Kong should get as living wage.

"The Hong Kong government has not only remained deaf to our wage problem. It has also refused to review and take effective actions to address the grave accommodation situation for MDWs," the group said.

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'Pursue teaching in PH', Labatt urges LET passers

By Lena Largoza



LET passers take their oath during a ceremony at the PCG on Feb. 11.

LABOR Attache Jalilo del Torre urged Hong Kong-based Filipino workers who recently passed the licensure examination for teachers to go back home and pursue their teaching career.

In his message during the oath-taking ceremony of the 63 LET passers held on Feb. 11 at the Philippine Consulate General, Dela Torre said the only way they could start on their journey as professional teachers would be to go home immediately.

Over 450 Filipinos in Hong Kong took the exams here in September.

"Bumalik kayo sa Pilipinas, and make that major, major decision to go home and resume your teaching profession because that is the only way to do that. Hindi pwedeng nakapasa nga kayo, tapos 10 years later pa kayo uuwi," Dela Torre said.

The government, under the "Sa Pinas, Ikaw ang Ma'am/Sir" program, has been encouraging teachers who are working as overseas Filipino workers to return to the Philippines to teach.

Dela Torre's message was echoed by Rolando Cruz, one of the advisers of the National Organization of Professional Teachers Hong Kong.

He said that while a foreign domestic worker in Hong Kong earns a minimum wage of \$4,410 or some P28,000, the joy and fulfillment of becoming a teacher and spending time with their family in the Philippines would be incomparable.

Cruz also noted that there are some 59,000 public school teaching jobs available in the Philippines.

The salary of a public school teacher in the Philippines under the 2016 Salary Standardization Law (Teacher 1, entry level, Salary Grade 11, Step 1) is P19,077 per month, including a personal emergency relief allowance of P2,000.

A teacher also receives a yearly benefit of clothing/uniform allowance of P5,000; a year-end bonus equivalent to one-month basic pay; a cash gift of P5,000* performance bonus based on school performance; a productivity incentive of P5,000; proportional vacation pay up to 70 days; 14 days Christmas vacation with pay; and a chalk allowance of P1,000.

She also receives other benefits and incentives, such as one-step increment pay for every three years of satisfactory performance; hardship allowance equivalent to 15 to 25 percent of basic pay if he/she is assigned in hardship posts and if he/she is a mobile teacher or multi-grade teacher.

Dela Torre and Cruz's message came as data showed that the number of Filipinos working as domestic helpers in Hong Kong as of the end of 2017 was 201,990, lower than the end-November number of 201,191.

Data from the Immigration Department that Hong Kong employed a total of 369,951 foreign domestic helpers as of end 2017.

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- 6GB RAM
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- Fingerprint
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- 32GB Storage
- 2.3GHz Octa Core
- 3GB RAM
- Android 6.0 Marshmallow
- 4G

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Samsung Galaxy Tab 3 T113 *Low Down Payment Hot Items*



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- Quad-core 1.3 GHz
- 1GB RAM
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Sony Xperia XA1 Plus *NEW*



- 5.5 Inch
- 23MP Rear + 8MP Front
- 32GB Storage
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- 4GB RAM
- Android 7.0 Nougat
- 4G
- Dual Sim
- Fingerprint

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- 3GB RAM
- Android 6.0 Marshmallow
- 4G
- Fingerprint

Price **\$1,249**

Samsung Galaxy J5 (2016) *Low Down Payment*



- 5.2 Inch
- 13MP Rear + 5MP Front
- 16GB Storage
- Quad-core 1.2 GHz
- 2GB RAM
- Android 5.1.1 Lollipop
- 4G
- Dual Sim

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LG Stylus 2 DAB *No Down Payment Hot Items*



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- Quad-core 1.2 GHz
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Price **\$1,149**

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Price **\$749**

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Low Down Payment



Price **\$959**

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Low Down Payment



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- 3 GB RAM
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Viennese Winter Wonderland

Text by Benjamin Lelis

Photos by David Folley (IG: @drfolley)

HAVE you ever been to a place where it felt as if you were in a fairytale? Vienna, Austria's capital and largest city, is just like that.

Known for its Baroque-style townhouses, sprawling gardens, and elegant cafés, Vienna's reputation as a charming city was established centuries ago in which the legacy of the Habsburg monarchy blends with the lasting influence of some of the world's greatest classical composers.

My first visit to Vienna was during its busiest holiday of the year: Christmas. Foreigners and locals alike flock to the city for the outdoor Christmas markets that can be found on almost every block in the city.

The Christmas markets are a centuries-old tradition that dates back to the Middle Ages. In 1298, Albert I allowed Vienna's citizens to hold their first Christmas market or "Krippenmarkt." Now, more than 20 official Advent Markets exist in the city selling a wide range of gifts and holiday treats.

My friend and I went to several Christmas markets during our visit but the most pleasant one, in my opinion, was the one at Schönbrunn Palace. Different stalls selling different items are set against a backdrop of an impressive Baroque-style palace, with the smell of roasted chestnuts and mulled wine filling the air. Enchanting.

Speaking of Schönbrunn Palace, Austria's most visited tourist attraction served as the imperial summer residence of the



The Vienna State Opera, built in 1869 following the Neo-Renaissance style.



St. Stephen's Cathedral, the mother church of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vienna and the seat of the Archbishop of Vienna.



Hofburg Palace

Habsburg monarchy since 1569.

With a total of 1,441 rooms and modelled after the Palace of Versailles in France, Schönbrunn, which means beautiful spring in German, is considered as one of Europe's most beautiful palace complexes and the country's most significant cultural monument. Marie Antoinette, the French queen who was executed by guillotine during the French Revolution in 1789, grew up here. I could not help but feel like a royalty while walking inside the palace halls and gardens.

While Schönbrunn Palace was the summer residence, the Hofburg was the principal imperial winter residence. Built in the 13th century, the palace was the seat of power of the Habsburg dynasty and now serves as the official residence of the President of Austria. It is also home to many museums and art collections, one of which is the Imperial Furniture Collection. It is



A stall in one of Vienna's famous Christmas markets.



The Viennese Christmas market tradition dates back to the Middle Ages when in 1298 Albrecht I granted Vienna's citizens the privilege of holding a December Market or "Krippenmarkt".

the largest collection in the world with around 160,000 items.

The Hofburg also houses the world's only institution that continues to cultivate the art of classical equestrianism since the 1500s: the Spanish Riding School.

Visitors can witness the spectacular maneuvers of Lipizzaners – a horse breed which mixes Spanish, Arabian, and Berber ancestry – and their riders. Unfortunately, tickets were sold out on the day that we visited but I hope to return and see and experience this age-old tradition in the future.

While walking the streets of Vienna, it is hard to miss the imposing, Gothic-inspired Saint Stephen Cathedral. Its multi-colored tile roof and striking interior have



Museum of Natural History

become a landmark in the city.

Another church that we went to was the Karlskirche, or Saint Charles Church in English. This Baroque-inspired church has an elevator that takes visitors to a platform of 32.5 meters, giving them a panoramic view of the city.

Our trip to the City of Music would be incomplete without visiting the Vienna State Opera, known especially for performances of works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Richard Wagner, and Richard Strauss, among others. Other places that we visited were the Imperial Butterfly House and the Museum of Natural History.

There are different things for everyone in Vienna. And as a visitor, I was fortunate to have witnessed its story.



Detail of the Karlskirche cupola which visitors can see up close using the indoor elevator



The Christmas market in front of the Rathaus (City Hall) is one of the busiest during the season as it sits right beside a makeshift ice skating rink.

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Anti-graft exec suspended over Duterte bank leak

By Maia Lopez

MALACAÑANG has filed administrative charges against Overall Deputy Ombudsman Melchor Arthur Carandang and suspended him for 90 days for allegedly spreading false information about President Rodrigo Duterte's bank accounts.

Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales, however, defied the Palace order, saying that doing so would be unconstitutional and risk the independence of her office.

This prompted the government's top lawyer, Solicitor General Jose Calida, to warn that the Ombudsman could start a “constitutional crisis” if she continues to refuse to implement the Malacañang's suspension of her deputy.

“She is moving towards a constitutional crisis if that is her position. We are ready to defend the actions of the office of the president. We can even file a case against the Ombudsman for coddling this Carandang,” Calida said.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said the Office of Executive Secretary formally charged Carandang with grave misconduct and grave dishonesty for misuse of confidential information and disclosing false information. The case stemmed from a complaint filed by Manuelito Luna and Eligio Mallari against Carandang, an appointee of former President Benigno Aquino III, in October 2017.

Carandang last year claimed that documents allegedly provided to him by the Anti-Money Laundering Council showed that Duterte had more than P1 billion in

his bank account.

Roque said the AMLC has denied providing any report to the Office of the Ombudsman on Duterte's bank transactions. While it did receive Carandang's request to look into Duterte's bank records, AMLC said it had yet to evaluate that request.

Roque said that although the Office of the Ombudsman is an independent body, only the Ombudsman is an impeachable official with immunity from suit while in office. This meant deputy ombudsmen were subject to disciplinary powers of the Chief Executive.

But Carpio-Morales, citing a 2014 Supreme Court ruling, said previous suspensions issued by the Office of the President against deputy ombudsmen were declared unconstitutional.

“The Supreme Court categorically declared unconstitutional the administrative disciplinary jurisdiction of the President over deputy ombudsmen,” Morales said in a statement.

“The Ombudsman cannot, therefore, seriously place at risk the independence of the very office which she has pledged to protect on the strength of the constitutional guarantees which the High Court has upheld,” she added.

Chief presidential legal counsel Salvador Panelo, however, warned Morales that she is opening herself to administrative and criminal sanctions in defying the suspension order.

“Every official act is accorded the presumption of regularity. Until a competent court declares that such official act is in

violation of the law and the Constitution, President Duterte's order of preventive suspension from office of Deputy Ombudsman Carandang is presumed to be valid and legal. It behooves therefore the public official authorized to implement the order to enforce the same against respondent Carandang. Any willful refusal to do so or any deliberate act impeding such enforcement may open the said official to administrative and criminal sanctions,” Panelo said.

But when asked if Morales' decision constitutes an impeachable offense, Panelo said: “It depends. If it is malicious and deliberate, it can be considered a betrayal of the public trust. Otherwise, it may not be.”

Morales also accused the Office of the President of “arbitrary disregard of (the Supreme Court's) clearly worded jurisprudence.”

In a 2014 ruling, the Supreme Court voted 8-7 to disallow the Palace from disciplining a deputy ombudsman, saying this would violate the constitutionally protected independence of the Office of the Ombudsman. But of the eight who voted against the Palace in 2014, only four—Associate Justices Presbitero Velasco, Teresita Leonardo-de Castro, Lucas Bersamin and Marvic Leonen—are sitting judges.

The Palace said it is confident the Supreme Court would reverse its earlier decision. Roque said Carandang is free to seek legal remedies before a competent court, but insisted that the President had broad powers to discipline all non-impeachable presidential appointees.

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Joan's 'Sacrifice' wins big at photo tilt

By Rita **Sutomo** and Vicky Reyes **Munar**

ANOTHER Hong Kong-based Filipina has been recognized for her photography skills.

Joan Pabona's "Sacrifice" recently won second place in the National Geographic Wheelock Youth Photo Competition 2017, adding another to her numerous awards for photography.

The tilt, which accepted entries from Oct. 3 - Dec. 3, 2017, had the theme "Hong Kong Reminiscence: Place, People and Happenings", and Joan submitted an entry in the category "People and Happenings in Hong Kong".

Joan had previously won accolades for her photos, but this win was particularly special as the subject of her photo was something she could relate to.

The black and white photo captured a scene that she would often witness from her employer's apartment at the 8th floor of a building on Hong Kong island- a construction worker arranging a safety net.

"As I observe workers daily, I can say that they are the city machines. I chose 'Sacrifice' because it emphasizes the hard work of a Hong Kong resident, and as a domestic worker it is connected to me in my daily life," said Joan, who has been spending her days off to take photos.

"[I feel] proud because I am the only female and non-Chinese among the winners," she added, referring to the 3,518 entries submitted by participants from China, Taiwan, Macau, and Hong Kong.

Besides a cash award, Joan was also given 12 issues of National Geographic Magazine.

Joan had previously won awards and recognitions from Lensational/Parasite Pop-Up Exhibition 2016, International Photography Awards (IPA) Pandaigdigang Parangal 2016 and 2017, Women's Celebration Photo Exhibit, International Pinhole Camera, Prestigious World Street Photography, among others.

She has also ventured in video-editing after attending a workshop at the University of Hong Kong organized by the "Voice of Women". Her short film was one of the videos chosen for the "Beyond Myself" exhibition to be held on Feb. 15 at the University of the Philippines-Diliman.



Joan Pabona poses with her photo



One of Joan's photos

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Total Ban

THE Philippine government on Feb. 12 finally decided to impose a total ban on the deployment of OFWs to Kuwait.

“The ban is for all deployment of workers to Kuwait. As to the need for justice, we will hold Kuwait responsible under the concept of state responsibility” said Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque.

He said that, under international law, Kuwait has a legal obligation to provide legal redress for the Filipino victims of “horrendous crimes” in the oil-rich kingdom.

Imposing the ban is the right decision to take given the numerous cases of abuse suffered by OFWs deployed in Kuwait.

These well-documented cases were reported as early as years ago and it is a good that government has finally gathered enough political will to do something about. However, Manila should be prepared to provide other opportunities for OFWs that would be displaced by the total ban.

The government should also be ready for any backlash from the Kuwaitis. There are already reports that one Kuwaiti group was calling on their government to send Filipino workers back to the Philippines.

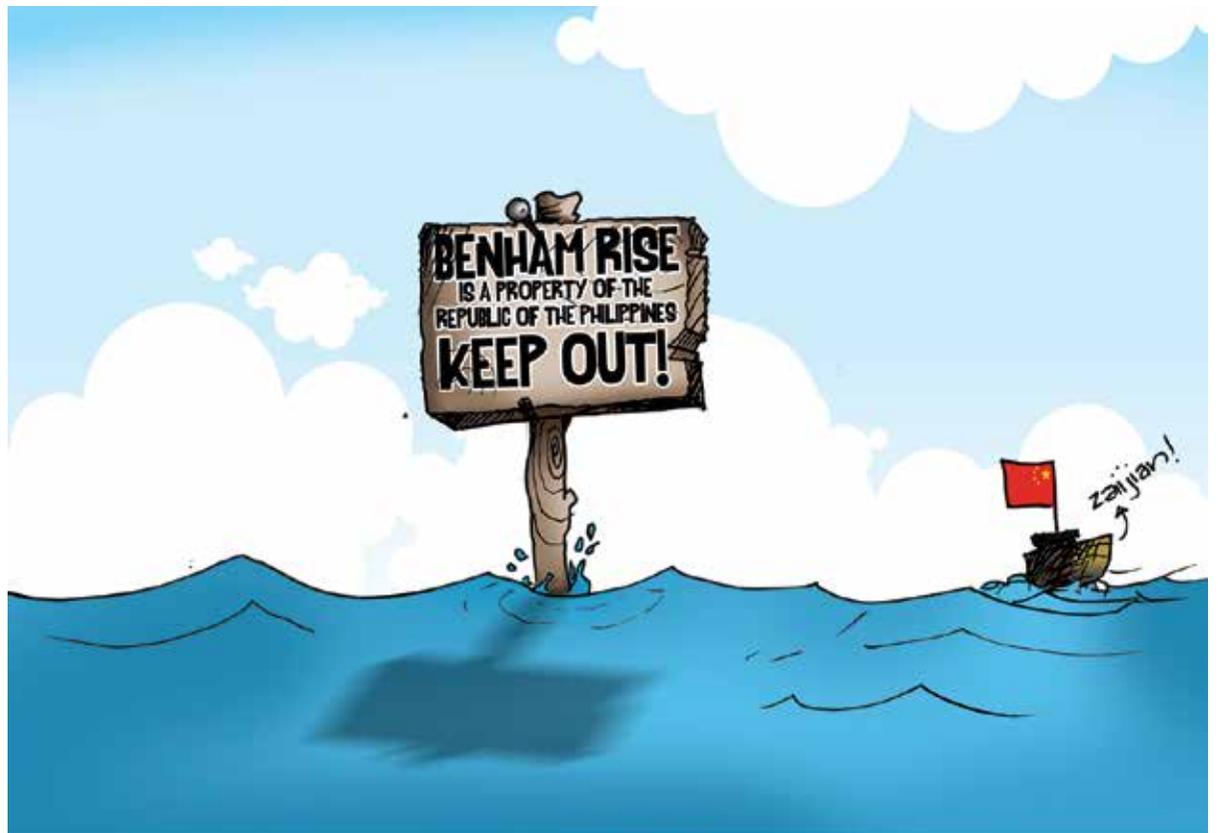
Roque said Manila was eyeing Oman and Bahrain as alternatives destinations for OFWs who would leave Kuwait.

“The missions all over the Middle East in particular have been instructed to find alternative employment for our kababaihan who have opted for voluntary repatriation from Kuwait,” he said.

“We are particularly keen on finding alternative employment in countries such as Oman and Bahrain, both of which are signatories to the relevant (International Labor Organization) Convention that protects migrant workers,” he added.

We pray for our fellow OFWs in Kuwait who will have to make difficult choices in the coming days or weeks.

As We See it



Haplos at Bigwas

Jun
Concepcion

Bakit wala pang Department of OFWs?

Patuloy ang maltrato at brutal na pagkamatay ng mga Pinay na domestic helpers sa Kuwait, gaya ni Joanna Demafiles na ang bangkay ay mahigit palang isang taon na nakalagak sa isang freezer sa loob ng apartment ng dati niyang amo at aksidente lang na natagpuan.

Patuloy ang mga abuso ng mga OFWs sa Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia at iba pang bansa sa Middle East. Dumarami rin ang mga nawawalan ng trabaho sa mga bansang iyon. Dahil sa mga namatay sa Kuwait na mga OFWs, iniutos ni Presidente Duterte na tungang makaalis sa madaling panahon ang mga OFWs na gusto ng umalis ng Kuwait. Iniutos din niya ang pansamantalang pagtigil sa pagpunta ng mga OFWs sa Kuwait. Ayon pa rin sa gubyrno, maghahanda sila para matulongang makahanap ng bagong trabaho sa China at Russia ang mga ex-OFWs galing ng Middle East.

Pero bakit ngayon pa lang maghahanda e namumuo na ang krisis ng mga OFWs sa Middle East? At ngayong hindi pa handa ang China at Russia na tumanggap ng mga Pinay na helpers, saan pupulutin ang mga umuwi ng Pinas na ex-helpers sa Middle East? Paano sasapat ang paunang livelihood financial assistance na P20,000 mula sa OWWA lalo na kung baguhan sa negosyo ang mga returning OFWs?

Malinaw na kalat kalat ang mga serbisyo para sa mga OFWs. Mas mahusay na ilagay ang mga ito sa isang Department of OFWs para mas mabisa ang serbisyo. Ang tanong – bakit wala pa ang isang Department of OFWs o Migration? Ang isyung ito ay tatalakayin sa Feb. 24 & 25 “2018 Global Conference of Overseas Filipinos & Livelihood/Investments Exhibition” na mapapanood sa FB page ng Alliance of Overseas Filipinos at YouTube.



Currents

Norman Uy
Carnay

Women Werpa!

PARATING na ang Marso 8. Muli, ipagdiriwang ang International Women’s Day, kung saan binibigyang-pansin ang kalagayan ng mga babae saanman. Araw na ginugunita ang makasaysayang kontribusyon ng mga kababaihan sa pagbubuo ng kasaysayan ng alinmang bansa. Araw kung saan binubuo ang lakas ng kababaihan para sa pagbabagong panlipunan. Dahil may WERPA ang kababaihan.

Saan nga ba nagmula ang kapangyarihan nito? Siguradong hindi sa mga tradisyunal na lipunan kung saan ikinulong na ang babae sa kabahayan o ginawang pang-display at instrumento ng aliw o parausan. Siguradong hindi ibinigay ang lakas na ito ng sistema ng edukasyon na hanggang sa ngayon ay ipinipinta ang babae bilang ilaw ng tahanan, mahina at mahinhin.

Ang WERPA ng kababaihan ay nagmula sa kanilang sariling pagkilos. Sa kanilang sariling pagmumulat at sa pagmumulat ng iba. Sa pag-oorganisa ng ka-

nilang sarili. Lumakas sila dahil ang kanilang kilusan ay isinanib nila sa kilusan na nais palayain di lamang ang mga babae kundi ang lahat ng inaapi. Sabi nga, “A woman’s place is in the struggle”. Dahil matutuklasan at mabubuo ang kapangyarihan (WERPA!) ng mga kababaihan sa kanila lamang paglaban.

Iyan ang ipinakita ng kasaysayan. 1909 nang ikasa ang unang National Women’s Day bilang pagkilala ng Socialist Party of America sa mga garment workers sa New York na nagwelga laban sa mapang-aping kondisyon sa trabaho. 1911 naman ay mahigit isang milyong ang nag-rally sa Europe para ipanawagan ang karapatang bumoto at maiboto ng kababaihan, karapatan sa trabaho at pagwakas sa diskriminasyon sa kanila.

Ang pinaka-rurok na ay ang pagkilos ng manggagawa at magsasakang kababaihan sa Russia na nagwelga noong Marso 1917 sa panawagang “Tinapay at Kapayapaan”

bilang protesta sa World War I at ang papel ng abusadong Tsar nila. Bumagsak ang Tsarismo ilang buwan matapos – Oktubre 1917 – at nagwagi ang kauna-unahang sosyalistang rebolusyon sa daigdig kasama ang kababaihan lumaban. Noong 1975, dineklara ng UN ang Marso 8 bilang International Women’s Day.

Hndi na mapigilan ang boses at papel ng kababaihan sa lipunan at sa mundo. Dahil “Women hold half the sky”, kailangan lumahok ang kababaihan sa anumang usapin sa lipunan – pang-ekonomiya, pulitika, kultura. Hindi magtatagumpay ang anumang kilusan kung hindi lalahok rito ang kababaihan.

Palibhasa’y mahigit 90 porsyento ng domestic workers ay babae dito sa HK, naging patunay rin ang kilusang migrante rito ng WERPA ng kababaihan. Kaya naman saludo ako sa inyo! At nakikiisa sa inyong hangad na lumaya. Happy International Women’s Day!

Dear Editor

Dear Hong Kong News,
Magandang araw sa inyong lahat!

Isa ako sa masugid na mambabasa ng inyong pahayagan. Magmula noong dumating na ako sa Hong Kong ay nakasanayan ko na ang magbasa ng inyong pahayagan.

Sumulat ako upang ihayag ang aking lubos na pasasalamat sa mga magagandang nangyayari ngayong 2018 lalo na sa aming mga OFWs. Isa

ako sa mga nag-renew recently ng passport at natuwa ako na 10 taon na ang validity pero ganun pa rin ang presyo. Bawas hassle at matipid pa dahil nga sa mas mahaba na ang validity.

Karagdagan pa nito ang inilunsad na bangko para sa aming mga OFWs. Malaking tulong sa amin ang mga bagong programang ito. Saludo ako sa mga taong nasa likuran ng lahat ng magagandang nangyayaring ito.

Umaasa ako na sa pamamagitan ng aking liham ay makarating sa kinauukulan ang aking lubos na pasasalamat.

Maraming salamat sa inyong lahat. More power sa Hong Kong News at muli, maraming salamat sa inyong lahat.

Lubos na gumagalang,
Anna.

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HONG KONG NEWS

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Belinda Bacani-Canezo Sales & Marketing Mgr

Alexander Brilianto Sales Executive

Nin Tang Senior Designer

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Kuwait denies abuse of Pinoy workers

By Maia Lopez

THE Kuwaiti government has lamented the decision of the Philippine government to suspend the deployment of overseas Filipino workers to the Middle Eastern country, calling concerns over the deaths of seven OFWs an “unjustifiable fuss.”

“The Filipino workers enjoy comfortable conditions that guarantee their rights regardless of the recent unjustifiable fuss,” Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah said.

Al-Jarallah said individual cases cannot be used to make a general assessment on the overall state of OFWs in Kuwait.

He noted that Philippine authorities have been unable to furnish evidence to the Foreign Ministry of Kuwait on the alleged abuses, adding that migrant issues have been addressed in “a candid and transparent way that preserves their rights,” noting that the country’s human rights record was praised in the past.

Kuwait has faced criticism in the past over its “kafala” system for foreign workers which prevents them from moving to a



Kuwait City

new job before their contracts end without their employer’s consent. This has been likened to a form of bonded labor or slavery.

“I do not want a quarrel with Kuwait. I respect their leaders, but they have to do something about this,” President Rodrigo Duterte said in ordering the deployment ban.

The seven Filipino workers who died in Kuwait were Liezl Truz Hukdong, Vanessa Karissha L. Esguerra, Marie Fe Saliling Librada, Arlene Castillo Manzano, Devine Riche Encarnacion, Patrick Sunga, and Mira Luna Juntilla.

Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III has

directed the Philippine Overseas Overseas Employment Administration to stop the processing of overseas employment certificates or OECs of all Kuwait-bound workers.

“We would like to seek justice for our OFWs, and while the investigation is undergoing, we are suspending the processing and issuance of OECs. We are doing this for utmost protection and welfare of our kababayan,” Bello said.

Data from the Department of Foreign Affairs showed there are more than 250,000 Filipinos in Kuwait, most of them working as domestic helpers.

Migration expert Emmanuel Geslani earlier warned the ban will only increase the number of Filipino victims who will enter Kuwait illegally.

“The illegal recruitment syndicates continue to operate in the country due to the very high price they receive from foreign recruitment agencies in Dubai and Lebanon. Anywhere from \$5,000 to 7,500, which the household worker will pay to her employer eventually,” Geslani said.

Ex-FDH nabbed in India over drugs

By Maia Lopez

A former Filipina domestic helper was arrested in India for allegedly smuggling cocaine for a Brazilian drug cartel.

Jonna de Torres was arrested by the Narcotic Control Bureau for smuggling 4.7 kilograms of cocaine from Sao Paulo, Brazil, to the Nedumbassery airport at Kochi in January.

She was hired by a Brazilian drug cartel for \$4,000, the NCB said.

Based on her passport details, Torres, who previously worked as a domestic helper in Hong Kong, stayed in Brazil for five days before making her way to India.

The Filipina said her flight and accommodations in a hotel at Ernakulam North were arranged by someone in Sao Paulo, who also instructed her to wait at the hotel room until further contact.

“Torres has admitted to smuggling drugs on several occasions. It was her first attempt to transport drugs to India.

“She said a Brazilian who she did not know visited her at Sao Paulo and handed over two baggages, one a trolley bag and another a handbag. The cocaine was concealed in the trolley bag,” the NCB added.

“Identifying the kingpins behind the racket is a daunting task. Though several calls were made to Torres’ mobile, they were all done from Brazil mobile phone numbers. She also received several internet calls.”

The NCB said the drug cartel chose Nedumbassery airport to carry out the smuggling believing the checking there will be minimal.

“In two previous incidents, we arrest-

ed a Paraguay national and a Venezuelan with cocaine. The cocaine was to be transported to Goa and New Delhi.

“Since checking has been intensified at airports like Mumbai, New Delhi and Goa, the racket is attempting to smuggle cocaine via airports in tier-2 cities,” NCB

said.

Likewise, the NCB added that it was surprised to see how the baggage containing the cocaine went undetected at two international airports from where Torres passed through before reaching Kochi.

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Hindi mauubos ang aasa

By ImeldaMae Bustinera

HABANG naghihintay ng tram pauwi ni Joyce, 46, biyuda may isang anak, at tubong Pangasinan, ay may lumapit sa kanyang maganda at mukhang batang-bata pa na kahit nakangiti ay bakas ang kalungkutan.

Akala ni Joyce magtatanong kung anong tram ang papunta kung saan. Pero ang tanong ng babae ay kung matagal na raw ba si Joyce sa pagtatrabaho bilang kasambahay at sinabi ni Joyce matagal

na. At dinugtungan na siguro raw hindi na nagpapadala si Joyce sa Pinas. Ibalik ni Joyce ang tanong sa babae.

Bago pa lang kasi pala ang babae. Magtatatlong buwan at nagbabayad pa sa ahensiya at sa mga iba pang nautang sa patubuan. Nakadama ng pagkaawa si Joyce sa babae.

Sa malumanay at pasimpleng paliwanag ay sinikap ni Joyce na medyo maibsan ang kalungkutan at pagkahapo ng babae.

Ipinaliwanag ni Joyce na halos lahat naman na namamasukan bilang kasambahay

ay dumaan sa pagbabayad na halos ang unang kontrata ay doon lang napupunta at walang naiipon.

Kaya pinayuhan ni Joyce ang babae na pagbutihin ang trabaho at magpakabit para magtagal siya at matupad ang pangarap na mabigyan ng magandang buhay ang pamilya na lahat naman yata ay iyan ang dahilan ng pangingibang bansa.

At hindi naman raw matitigil ang pagpapadala kahit gaano na katagal dahil hanggang nasa abroad ay patuloy na aasa ang mga naiwang pamilya.

Kahit malamig maligo pa rin

By Imelda Mae Bustinera

TUWING umaga ay bumababa si Daria, 38, may asawa at dalawang anak, taga-Sampaloc para kumuha ng libreng diyaryo sa gusali nila.

Nang paakyat na siya ay napansin niya ang isang babae na ilang beses pa lang niya nakikita na nangingilid ang luha. Kinumusta ni Daria ang babae at nakipagkwentuhan pansamantala at kaya pala parang naiyak dahil unang pagkakataon pa lang na nakakaranas ng panahon ng taglamig.

Sanay tayo na tatlong uri lang ng panahon mayroon ang ating bansa - tag-init, tag-ulan, at tag-tuyot.

Kaya hirap na hirap daw tuwing maliligo itong nakasalubong na babae.

Halos ayaw niya raw maligo dahil sa sobrang lamig kaya minsan lang daw kung maligo sa loob ng isang linggo.

Kung maari lang daw umuwi muna sa Pilipinas at bumalik na lang kung hindi na malamig ang panahon.

Ipinaliwanag ni Daria na lalong maginaw ang pakiramdam kung hindi naliligo. Sinabi ni Daria na noong unang dating niya sa Hong Kong at makaranas ng taglamig sa unang pagkakataon ay ganoon din ang kanyang naging pakiramdam.

Dagdag pa niya, umiiyak daw siya at tinatawagan ang ina para ikwento ang hirap na dinaranas.

Hanggang may nakilala raw si Daria na tinuruan siya kung paano maging madali ang pagligo.

Kaya binigyan din ni Daria ng paraan para hindi mahirapan maligo any babae. Subukan daw na panatilihin lang nakabukas ang shower para patuloy na magbigay ng mainit na usok at maging mainit ang paligid.

Iihis na lang at patamain sa dingding ang tubig kung magsasabon.

Natuwa ang babae susubukan niya raw kung may silbi ang itinuro ni Daria. Sana raw masunod niya ang ipinayo sa kanya at hindi na siya tamarin maligo.

May hangganan ang pagtitiis

SI Lennie, 40 taong gulang, tubong Laguna, ay mag-iisang taon pa lang sa kanyang kasalukuyang amo. Nagpalit siya ng amo sa pagnanais na mas maganda ang kanyang maging kalagayan sa kanyang trabaho.

Taliwas sa kanyang inaasahan ang kanyang naging kalagayan. Nagsisisi man siya ay huli na. Hindi naman siya pwedeng umayaw o mag-break na sa kontrata kahit anong hirap dahil may mga umaasa sa kanya at may mga utang pa siyang dapat bayaran. Kahit anong pagod at hirap ay tinitiiis ni Lennie. Puyat at pagod ang madalas niyang danas sa araw-araw subalit buo ang loob niya na magtitiis muna habang 'di pa siya handa financially.

Nagplano siya na putulin ang kontrata pagkalipas ng isang taon dahil na rin sa magandang mungkahi ng kanyang kaibigan na siya ang papalit sa lugar nito sa napakabit na amo.

Tamang-tama din ang tyempo dahil kahit papaano ay tapos na ni Lennie ang kanyang dapat bayaran at kahit papaano ay may naitabi na rin siyang perang magagamit sa Pilipinas habang siya ay naghihintay ng panibagong visa.

Kaya habang naghihintay siya ng pagbaba sa among todo hirap ang kanyang dinaranas ay nasasambit na lamang niya sa kanyang sarili na may hangganan din ang pagtitiis. *V.R.Munar*



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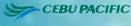
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'The Stepdaughters' fight over love



MEGAN, MIKAEL, and KATRINA

STEP into a world filled with beauty, jealousy, and love as GMA Network proudly unveils its newest drama series, *The Stepdaughters*, beginning February 13 on GMA Pinoy TV.

The *Stepdaughters* is a story of two women who are both beautiful and intelligent but with personalities that couldn't be any more different. They have always been destined to be rivals and both of them aren't ones to back away from a fight.

Headlining this drama are Miss World 2013 Megan Young and versatile Kapuso actress Katrina Halili, together with GMA's prime leading man Mikael Daez.

Megan Young is Mayumi Dela Rosa. Beautiful and intelligent, she graduated with a degree in Chemistry with flying colors. She also dreams of creating her own makeup product line someday.

Katrina Halili is Isabelle Salvador. She is an only child who grew up spoiled and self-centered. She also manages her family's makeup line, *Coco Bella*.

Mikael Daez is Francis Almeda. He is handsome, smart, and works as a head product engineer. He meets Mayumi and falls in love with her, despite Isabelle's incessant prodding for him to love her back.

In the series, Mayumi and Isabelle never really liked each other, even more so when Mayumi's mother, Luisa, and Isabelle's

father, Hernan, fall for one another and get married, making them stepsisters.

But no secret ever stays a secret, especially ones that are rooted within families. When Isabelle finds out what Hernan has done, she will do all that it takes to keep everything they have, even if it means taking down Mayumi. But Mayumi will never

let anyone hurt her or her loved ones. Now both Mayumi and Isabelle will fight for what is rightfully theirs—family, honor, and love.

Completing the cast are Gary Estrada as Hernan Salvador, Isabelle's doting and hardworking father who remained down-to-earth even after becoming rich; Glydel

Mercado as Luisa dela Rosa, Mayumi's beautiful and loving mother who will do everything for her daughter especially after her husband's death; Allan Paule as Mario Dela Rosa, Mayumi's father who perseveres for his family's future; Angelu De Leon as Brenda Salvador, Hernan's wife who loves and spoils their daughter.

Award para kay Mocha, binatikos

By Cristy Kasilag



MOCHA

ANG isa sanang pangalang ay nauwi sa pangungutya at galit ng mga netizens, lalo na ng ilang nagmula sa University of Santo Tomas, nang bigyang parangal ng isang organisasyon ang sexy

singer na si Mocha Uson.

Nawakwak na naman sa social media si Esther Margaux "Mocha" Uson, kasalukuyan assistant secretary ng Presidential Communications Operations Office ng kasalukuyang administrasyon ni Presidente Rodrigo Roa Duterte.

Pinarangalan ng UST Alumni Association kamakailan si Mocha bilang isa sa 27 na Thomasian Alumni in Government Service na ang tanging katangian ay kailangan nag apos sa UST at kasalukuyan mayroon mataas na katungkulan sa gobyerno, parehas na ito ay mayroon si Mocha, nagtapos ng kursong Physical Therapy sa UST. Matinding pagtutol ang kinaharap ng USTAAI at ni Mocha dahil sa parangal na ito. Halos araw-araw ay binabatikos sila sa social media lalo na sa Twitter at Facebook.

Kinalaunan ay nagbitiw sa pwesto ang USTAAI president Henry Tenedero. Kusa namang isinoli ni Mocha ang award.

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 Labor 6080 8323
 OWWA 6345 9324
 SSS 2823 8552
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 Consulate Trunkline 2823 8500
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 Facebook: Philippine Consulate General in Hong Kong

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 Independent Commission Against Corruption 2526 6366
 Central Government 2835 2500
 Complaint Against Police 2866 7700
 2200 4460 to 62
 Consumer Rights Hotline 2929 2222
 Department of Health 2961 8989
 Equal Opportunities Commission 2511 8211
 Immigration 2824 6111
 Labour Department 2717 1771
 Legal Aid 2537 7677
 Race Relations Unit 2810 3203
 Social Welfare 2343 2255
 Transport 2804 2600
 Postal Hotline 2921 2222

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS
 Asia-Pacific Mission for Migrants 2723 7536
 Asian Migrant Center 2312 0031
 Christian Action - Shine Center 3188 4555
 Diocesan Pastoral Center for Filipinos (and other Asian Migrants and Ethnic Minorities) 2526 4249
 Alliance of Progressive Labor 2770 0411
 Bayanihan Trust Centre 2817 8928
 Filipino Migrant Workers Union 9104-1411; 9758-5935
 Hong Kong Christian Service - CHEER Center 3755 6811
 International Social Services 2836 3598
 Mission for Migrant Workers 2522 8264
 The Bethune House 2721 3119
 Enrich Hong Kong 2386 5811
 Helpers for Domestic Helpers 2523 4020
 United Filipinos in Hong Kong 3156 2447

AIRPORT AND AIRLINES
 Airport Inquiry 2181 8888
 Cathay Pacific Airways 2747 5000
 Cebu Pacific Air 2722 0609
 Philippine Airlines 2301 9300

Horoscope

Capricorn
 December 22 to January 19
 May pagsubok na darating sa larangan ng pag-ibig. Kung may partner ka makakaramdam ka ng matinding pagseselos dahil nagiging malapit siya sa isang tao.

Aquarius
 January 20 to February 18
 Nayayanig ang daigdig ng mga nagmamahal sa iyo dahil nakikita nilang parang lumulusong ka sa kamunoy. Makinig sa payo upang di maligaw ng landas.

Pisces
 February 19 to March 20
 Kung sino pa ang akala mo na matibay ang paninindigan ay nakikita mo ngayong nanghihina. Natural lang na malungkot ka dahil mali pala ang paghanga mo sa kanya.

Aries
 March 21 to April 19
 Huminga ka ng malalim at pigilin ang bugso ng damdamin. Mapipikon ka sa isang tao na malapit sa iyo, makakarating sa iyo ang mga sinasabi niya sa iba tungkol sa iyo.

Taurus
 April 20 to May 20
 Pag-aralan mo kung tama ba ang tinatahak mong landas sa iyong pagpapalano para sa kinabukasan. Magaan ang pasok ng pera sa ngayon pero hanggang kailan yan?

Gemini
 May 21 to June 20
 May tensyon na nabubuo sa pagitan ninyong dalawa. Mahal ka niya, huwag kang magduda.

Cancer
 June 21 to July 22
 Kung pwede kang magpunta sa isang retreat, gawin mo. Kailangan mong ipahinga ang iyong katawan at lalo na ang iyong isip.

Leo
 July 23 to August 22
 Hindi ka robot, hindi ka makina. May hangganan ang iyong lakas at malapit nang sumuko ang iyong katawan.

Virgo
 August 23 to September 22
 Mag-ingat ka sa pagmamaneho. Kung may balak kang maglakbay mag-ingat ka sa pagpili ng sasakyan. Mas maige kung iwasan mo muna ang byahe sa buwan ng Pebrero.

Libra
 September 23 to October 22
 Ngayong buwan ng pag-ibig, kung single ka at naghihintay ng pana ni kupido hindi mo na kailangang lumayo pa. Nandyang lang sa tabi-tabi ang taong magpapaligaya sa iyo.

Scorpio
 October 23 to November 21
 Kung may pagkakataon, subukan mo ang mag-meditate. Kailangan mong patahimikin ang iyong damdamin dahil masyadong magulo ang iyong isip.

Sagittarius
 November 22 to December 21
 Sa buwan na ito, iwasan mo ang bumiyaha sa malalayong lugar. Kung pupunta sa restaurant o shopping mall, piliin mo ang malapit sa iyo.

What's Cooking?

You'll never go wrong with a delicious combination of chicken and basil! So in this day and age of sweets and artificial food, we bring you **Chicken Chunks with Crispy Basil in dark sauce** to satisfy your tastebuds and cravings. Happy cooking!

Ingredients:
 1 lb chicken breast cut into big chunks
 2 Tbsp. olive oil
 1 pack sweet basil
 2 Tbsp. dark sauce
 1 Tbsp. fish sauce
 1/4 cup minced garlic
 2-3 pcs. red chili pepper
 Salt & pepper to taste

Procedure:
 1. In a bowl cut chicken breasts into big chunks.

2. Marinate chicken with dark soy sauce, fish sauce with season to taste.
 3. In a shallow pan, pan fry and saute garlic with marinated chicken until smooth and tender.
 4. Garnish with crispy sweet basil.

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 enquiries please call us at 2850 7724 / 2850 7408 / 2850 7438



By Chef Jay Dator



How can you "SM_LE without I"?
 How can you be "F_NE without I"?
 How can you "W_SH without I"?
 How can you be "FR_END without I"?

"I am very important!
 But this "I can never achieve "SUCCESS without "U"

Suicide
 Homicide
 Insecticide
 Lahat na lang pamatay
 Pero kung gusto mo ng pampabuhay
 Try mo...
 "BY MY SIDE".

Girl: ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 UUUU UUVWXYZ

Boy: Bakit andaming U?
 Girl: Kase " I LOVE U"

Girl: Hoy, STALKER ka ba?
 Boy: Hindi ah!
 Girl: Eh bakit mo ko sinusundan?
 Boy:Wala lang, kasi sabi ng nanay ko "FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS"

Boy: Ui! Lumindol ah? Ramdam mo?
 Girl: Ha! Bakit?
 Boy: Nakita ko kasi ang mahal ko...lumindol tuloy ang puso ko. Intensity you. Magnitude Me. Epicenter Love.

Boy: May butas ba puso mo?
 Girl: Ha! Bakit?
 Boy: Kasi na-trap na ako sa loob, can't find my way.

Girl: Ayoko na! ayoko na talaga! Dadalhin ko na lahat nang akin, hindi na ako babalik pa!
 Boy: Hoy babae! May nakalimutan ka!
 Girl: Ano?
 Boy: Ako!

Boy: He must be so happy!
 Girl: Who?
 Boy: Your father
 Girl: Why?

Boy: Because he gets to see an angel everyday.

Boy: Mabilis ka siguro sa mga puzzle noh?
 Girl: Ha! Bakit?
 Boy: Kasi kakasimula pa lang ng araw ko, pero nabuo mo na agad.

Boy: Hindi tayo tao. Hindi tayo hayop.
 Girl: Bakit?
 Boy: BAGAY tayo. BAGAY talaga tayo.

Boy: You seem like a sweet person...
 Girl: Why?
 Boy: Will you mind if I taste you to find out?

Boy: May kilala ka bang gumagawa ng relo?
 Girl: Wala eh, bakit?
 Boy: May sira ata relo ko...pag ikaw kasi kasama ko, humihinto ang oras ko.

Boy: Maghanda ka ng salbabida....
 Girl: Bakit naman?
 Boy: Kasi lulunurin kita sa pagmamahal ko.

Boy: Grabe nakakatawa yung mga pick up lines noh? Hahaha!
 Girl: Hihahi, bakit naman?
 Boy: May alam ka pa bang iba? Wala na akong maisip eh. Coz all I ever think is you.

Crossword Puzzle

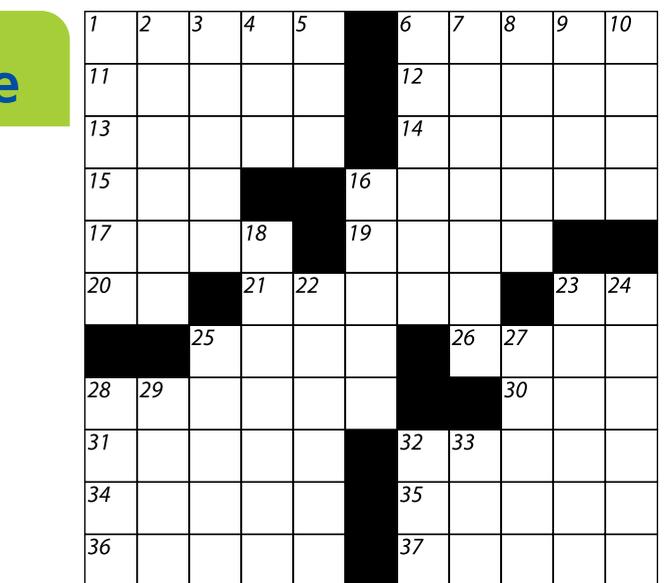
PAHALANG

- 1 Lugar ni Nora Aunor
- 6 Ihanda ang baril
- 11 Pwersa
- 12 Ina
- 13 Dating artistang Tessie
- 14 Kaibigang lalaki
- 15 Gallob; daglat
- 16 Lagyan ng asin
- 17 Asa
- 19 Lalagyan ng tubig
- 20 Not Applicable
- 21 Layning
- 23 Official Receipt
- 25 Tanong ng nagtitinda
- 26 Ate Guy
- 28 Katulad nito
- 30 Random Access Memory

- 31 Inamin ang sala
- 32 Ibulhol
- 34 Tinamaan
- 35 Takas
- 36 Ms. Linda
- 37 Pagsasatono

PABABA

- 1 Iwasan
- 2 Biglang dating
- 3 Iharang
- 4 Apelyidong Intsik
- 5 Asam
- 6 Ininis
- 7 Damit panloob
- 8 Lilim
- 9 Baging
- 10 Payag
- 16 Pataba
- 18 Magaslaw
- 22 Uri ng gulay



Answer to last puzzle

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

- 23 Bantayan sa oras
- 24 Babaeng Ramon
- 25 Kinawawa
- 27 Bayan sa Bataan
- 28 Luto sa mantika
- 29 Sakit sa balat
- 32 Baluga
- 33 Termino sa karera

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REGULAR 24x24x20	580	600	640	670
MEDIUM 24x14x20	420	440	470	490
SMALL 24x14x15	300	320	360	380
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