

HONG KONG NEWS

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New ConGen appeals to Filipino business community:

'Police your own ranks'

By Cheryl M. Arcibal

AMBASSADOR Antonio Morales has formally and officially assumed his post as the Philippine Consul-General in Hong Kong on Jan. 7.

And the first order of the day for Morales was to ensure the welfare and well-being of the over 200,000 Filipinos in Hong Kong, majority of whom were household service workers, including issuing an appeal to the Filipino business community in the city to take care of their countrymen.

"Kakausapin natin ang mga Filipino business associations at sasabihin natin na magpo-police sila ng ranks nila," he said.

Morales' comment came in the wake of the flight booking mess involving Peya Travel, whose co-owner Rhea Donna Boyce is a Filipina, that left hundreds of Filipino domestic helpers stranded in Hong Kong instead of flying home to the Philippines to spend the Christmas and New Year holidays with their families.

"Nakikinabang ang ating mga companies sa ating mga kababayan. Tama din na ang concern nila negosyo pero hindi lang dapat negosyo, dapat may serbisyo din

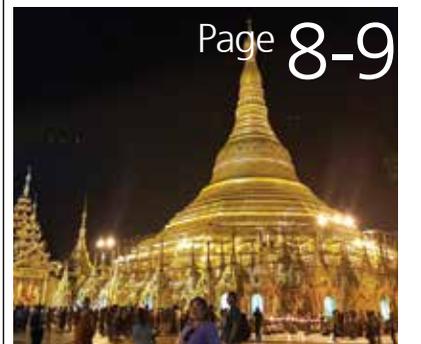


NEW. Ambassador Antonio Morales has officially assumed his post as Philippine Consul-General in Hong Kong as he issues an appeal to the Filipino business community to take care of their kababayans in the city.

Turn to page 10



MISSING? An official of Peya Travel could not be located by HK Police in his listed addresses.



Page 8-9

MAJESTIC. In Yangon, strands of Buddha's hair and other holy relics are enshrined in the Shwedagon Pagoda.



Page 21

MILLENIALS. New online shows help young ones navigate life's challenges.

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Pinoys in Japan back divorce bills

By Cheryl M. Arcibal

LIKE their peers in Hong Kong, Filipinos in Tokyo have also expressed overwhelming support to the proposed measures to allow divorce in the Philippines, Deputy Speaker Pia Cayetano said.

On the sidelines of the opening ceremony for the exhibit of Ifugao art pieces at the Hong Kong University, Cayetano said that during the recent consultation of members of the House of Representatives in Tokyo, Filipinos there expressed their overwhelming support to the measures.

"It is interesting that their issues are sim-

ilar but very different because most OFWs in Japan are married to Japanese nationals so their concern are articles 26 and 13 of the Family Code, which are called relative divorce that allows every Filipino who is married to a foreigner to be free to marry if a foreign spouse divorces her," she said.

Cayetano said the bill that she filed in Congress was still unable to address the concern and it would have to be amended.

"They are overwhelmingly supportive of the divorce bills, if not more so, because some 27,000 or 80 percent of 35,000 registered marriages between Filipinas and Japanese ended up in divorce and yet

a very low number of those Filipinas were able to avail of that because of the requirements in our law that prevent them.

"Just like in Hong Kong, it's the cost and the difficulty of filing it in the Philippines because Article 26 allows them to remarry but they have to prove so many things and that's the hindrance," she said.

Despite strong opposition from the religious sectors in the Philippines, Cayetano said she has noticed a changing of attitudes among Filipinos.

"Even among my colleagues when I was telling them to look into this, and I think that only some of them are not really



Cayetano (middle) with two other Filipino lawmakers (file photo)

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convinced especially when they hear what happens to our OFWs who would candidly and without reservations share their personal stories, I think a lot of them are convinced," Cayetano said.

She added that women, in general, were more supportive of the divorce bills.

"One of the main reasons why a divorce would happen in the family is because a woman is abused, whether it's physically or emotionally, so I note that a lot of women lawmakers can understand and relate to that," she said.

In October, eight members of the House of Representatives came to Hong Kong and met with Filipinos in the city for a consultation on seven pending bills that seek to amend EO No. 29 or the Family Code of the Philippines introducing measures on the dissolution of marriage and absolute divorce.

The consultation, held on Oct. 1 at the Philippine Consulate General, saw hundreds of Filipinos, majority of them women, expressing their support for divorce in the Philippines.

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Active coordination with Russia, Turkey eyed to stop illegal recruitment

By Ally Constantino

PHILIPPINE officials will continue to pursue active diplomatic representations with their Russian and Turkish counterparts as part of the measures to stop the illegal deployment of Hong Kong-based Filipinos to these two countries.

Labor Attache Jalilo dela Torre said the effort to stop the trafficking of Filipino domestic workers to Russia and Turkey

should be a joint effort.

“One of the recommendations which I have made arising from the exposure of international human trafficking cases in Russia, Turkey and other countries is that there should be active diplomatic representation between our government and the governments of Russia and Turkey kasi nga kinukuha ang visas sa consulates nila and they know for a fact that those seeking visas were domestic workers na

makikita sa HK ID and dapat alam nila iyon,” Dela Torre said during a recent forum on migration held in Admiralty.

He said Filipinos who left Hong Kong for Russia and Turkey sought work there as household service workers were prone to abuse and exploitation as they had to find work there themselves.

“Walang trabahong naghihintay doon dahil walang visa category for domestic helpers. Sa Turkey kapag naterminate ka walang klarong labor dispute mechanism,” he said.

Dela Torre also appealed to Filipinos who have gone to Russia and Turkey to stop recruiting and persuading other Filipinos to go there and find work.

“Ang hirap dito, iyong mga ibang naging biktima ng trafficking sa Russia and Turkey, sila na din ang nagiging recruiters at nagi-invite sila kaya dumarami ng dumarami ang mga biktima.

“Iyong mga nagrecruit kasi kailangan nilang bawiin ang mga nutang nila para makapunta doon kaya dumarami ng dumarami ang mga nabibiktima at iniimbatahan nila ang mga kamag-anak at mga kaibigan nila,” he said.

In November, Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III signed Department Order no. 185, suspending the processing of all new application for overseas employment certificates (OECs) effective for 15 working days from Nov. 13 to Dec. 1 “subject to extension as circumstances may require”.

The issuance of the order came amid cases of illegal recruitment and deployment of Filipino workers to other coun-



Dela Torre

tries. Manila is requiring all Filipinos leaving the Philippines to work overseas to secure an OEC before being allowed to board the plane.

Bello said the suspension of the issuance of OECs was intended to “protect the public from the pernicious activities of certain unscrupulous individuals preying on Filipinos desiring to work overseas.”

Dela Torre said that in Hong Kong’s case, a number of Filipino domestic workers had left the city to seek employment in countries such as Russia, and Turkey, among others.

Dela Torre said Philippine Consulate and Labor officials raised the concern to the Hong Kong Labour Department officials during a Oct. 25 Technical Working Group meeting.

He said at least four Filipinos, who came from Hong Kong and moved to Russia to work there, have signed their complaint

affidavits against those who recruited them to work in Russia.

Dela Torre said the POLO was aware of at least three Hong Kong employment agencies that were recruiting Filipinos in the city to work in Russia.

“We have suspended the accreditation of these two agencies, and we will soon refer them to the LD for further action,” he added.

These agencies, Dela Torre said, are owned by “Hong Kong people and operated by Hong Kong people”. Although there is no law in Hong Kong restricting employment agencies to deploy workers to other countries, he said the matter should still be considered a concern.

“It should be a concern to us all because there are contracts that are being broken, contracts with employers, and these employers would have to look for new employees,” he said.

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HK Police looking for 'missing' Peya exec

By Cheryl M. Arcibal

HONG KONG Police were looking for an official of the beleaguered Peya Travel, the travel agency in the center of a ticketing mess that left scores of Filipino domestic helpers stranded in the city in-

stead of flying home to the Philippines for Christmas and New Year holidays.

Vice Consul Robert Quintin on Jan. 9 told Hong Kong News that police have informed the consulate that Peya marketing manager Arnold Grospe was nowhere to be found in any of the latter's listed ad-

resses in Hong Kong.

"A day after Rhea Donna Boyce (Peya co-owner) was taken into police custody on Dec. 25, police also looked for Arnold Grospe but he was not in his listed addresses," Quintin said.

It was not known whether Grospe was in Hong Kong or has left the city and gone to the Philippines, he said.

Boyce and her husband Peter, the other owner of Peya, were taken into custody by the police for questioning on Dec. 25 and 27, respectively, following the complaints filed by Filipino domestic helpers who found out that despite paying for their tickets, these were unconfirmed and they were unable to board their flight.

As of Jan. 9, the consulate has received over 800 complaints against Peya.

At least two Filipino workers in Hong Kong who were about to go home for good in the Philippines were among those who sought the help of the Philippine Consulate after they found out that the plane tickets they booked through Peya were unconfirmed.

Besides them, it was also learned that a staff at the Philippine Overseas Labor Office was among those who had to shell out hefty cash so she could still spend the holidays with her family in the Philippines after finding out that her Peya-issued ticket was unconfirmed.



The shuttered Peya Travel office in Central

The two Filipino domestic helpers, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told Hong Kong News that they were worried that they could not get a refund of their tickets.

"For good na kami sa January. Sabi ng Peya baka daw sa January pa ang refund pero wala na kami dito noon. Naghahanap na kami ng ibang ticket para sa pag-uwi namin for good," one of them said as she showed the ticket she bought from Peya.

She and her friend went to the consulate on Dec. 20 to file their complaint.

Assistance to Nationals officer Hermogenes Cayabyab Jr. told the two women to pursue their complaint and assured them

that should any refunds would be made by Peya, they would be informed about it.

"Ipapatawag naman kayo at kokontakin kapag naayos na ito, basta i-file ninyo lang at iiwan ang contact details sa amin," he told the two women.

Meanwhile, Labor Attache Jalilo dela Torre also told Hong Kong News that a POLO staff had to fork out \$8,000 so she could get a flight to the Philippines.

"She booked with Peya, and now she had to pay more so she could go home. I think it was the only available flight she could find. It's expensive, but you'd do anything to be with your family," he said.



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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.



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Jail for agent in FDH's China work case

By Cheryl M. Arcibal

A Kowloon City judge sent an employment agent to prison after finding him and an employer guilty of a criminal charge involving a Filipino domestic helper who was taken to the mainland to work there.

It was the first conviction of such a case in Hong Kong where it is believed that many foreign domestic workers were being taken to the mainland for work despite a requirement by the Immigration Department that a foreign domestic helper would only be made to work at the address stated in the employment contract.

Kowloon City Court Deputy Magistrate Andrew Ma on Dec. 28 sentenced employment agent Chan Chun-kwai to six months in prison, while employer Wong San-wing was also given the same jail term but suspended it for two years.

The suspended sentence meant that if Wong commits no other offense during the period she would not have to serve the jail term.

Judge Ma on Dec. 14 found Wong and Chan guilty of conspiracy to defraud an officer of the Immigration Department for making it appear that Wong would be the employer of Filipino domestic helper R. Ubaldo, when in fact it was her cousin from mainland China who would be employing the helper.

Hong Kong only allows residents to hire foreign domestic helpers, and by submitting papers to the ImmD that Wong would be Ubaldo's employer, her cousin Z. Huang was able to hire a helper who took care of her two children, who were born in Hong Kong and were also studying in the city.

Huang was also a defendant in the case but Judge Ma acquitted her, noting that the prosecution failed to prove beyond reasonable doubt that she knew about Wong and Chan's arrangement in signing the documents submitted to the ImmD.

In convicting Wong and Chan, Judge Ma noted that as an insurance agent, and an employment agent, respectively, they would have known that only Hong Kong residents were allowed to hire a foreign domestic helper.

He also noted that when Ubaldo's contract was about to be signed, the helper asked why Wong was signing it, instead of Huang, when it was the latter who interviewed her, Chan said Wong would imitate Huang's signature.

"D1 (Wong) and D2 (Chan) knew full well that had the application contained the correct information, the application would not be granted," said Judge Ma.

He added that it was not "without reluctance" that he was acquitting Huang of the charge as she was highly suspicious and

she benefited from the arrangement.

Judge Ma called for background reports before sentencing Wong and Chan.

During the trial Wong and Chan had blamed each other for the offense.

Wong on Sept. 14 told the court that the documents submitted to the ImmD for her application to hire Ubaldo were given to her by Chan and these were blank and that she only signed them.

"I did not know that he filled in the form that way," Wong said in the witness box.

She also denied that she deliberately concealed the information that the two children that Ubaldo would be taking care of were not her children but her niece and nephew.

Wong, who came to Hong Kong from the mainland some 20 years ago and is now working as an insurance agent, also said the Hung Hom address, which was stated in Ubaldo's employment contract, was her maternal address.

In her evidence given on July 18-20, the court heard that Ubaldo signed a contract on Apr. 15, 2015 to work as the domestic helper of Wong.

The contract stated that the helper would, among others, take care of the employer's daughter and son, and they would reside in an address in Hung Hom.

Ubaldo said it was Huang who interviewed her, and she was informed by

Chan that the employer liked her.

After signing the contract, and staying in Macau while waiting for the ImmD to approve her new visa, Ubaldo said that on June 11, 2015, she started working in the address stated in her contract.

She said Wong did not reside at the ad-

dress and it was Huang who would give her instructions and pay her salary. The witness added that Huang would pay her in cash and did not issue any receipts.

The two children that she took care of, she added, were also children of Huang instead of Wong's.

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 - 7 araw sa baw't pang-una at pangalawang taon nang serbisyo; at
 - umpisa sa pangatlong taon, ang bilang ay nadadagdagan ng 1 araw sa baw't taon hanggang sa pinakamataas ay 14 na araw.



Chasing history in

By Babe Pañares

MYANMAR is on every globetrotter's list, with its old-world charm, its thousands of pagodas and stupas, its long-necked women, and its leg-rowing fishermen. The list can go on and on – there is no dearth of the historical and the exotic in this Southeast Asian country which has been isolated for almost 50 years owing to a repressive military rule.

When I first went to Yangon almost five years ago, the most iconic reminder for me of Myanmar's junta government was the \$200 a piece sim card. And even if you had the money to buy the ridiculously overpriced card, there was no guarantee they would sell you one because these sales were done via a lottery draw. (Yes, you read that right – via a lottery draw.)

But fast forward to 2017, and the first

things to greet you upon arriving Yangon's international airport are billboards upon billboards of Samsung mobile phones. And if there are Samsung billboards, there must be – sim cards! These can now be had for only \$1.

Indeed, modernization is now at Myanmar's door, with 400 new airconditioned buses imported from China, with at least two KFC branches (still no McDonald's), with paved roads where deep pockmarks used to be.

But the old ways remain – Burmese people proudly wearing their longyi, a sarong-like wrap-around cloth, their faces beaming with thanakha, a natural sunblock made from ground tree bark.

If there is one thing that is characteristic of all pagodas and temples in Myanmar, it is that you are required to walk barefoot.

Whether you are a local devotee or simply

a curious tourist, regardless of whether you are rich or poor, whatever your stature in life may be – the simple act of leaving your shoes behind and feeling the concrete beneath your feet is a gentle reminder that before Buddha and the universe, we are all equal.

And in Yangon, no visit is complete without paying homage to the 2,500-year old Shwedagon Pagoda, the most sacred and impressive of all, where strands of Buddha's hair and other holy relics are enshrined. The pagoda started at a humble 8.2 meters, but now it stands at a towering 110 meters, covered with gold plates and encrusted with diamonds and other gems. Close by is the Chaukhtatgyi Temple which houses the colossal 215 foot-long reclining Buddha. The statue's face is placid but colorful, and has a diamond-encrusted crown. If you feel like splurging some kyats (one dollar is about 1,350 kyat), head for Bogyoke Market where vendors peddling jade and turquoise products abound.

There are great hotel options in Yangon, too. There is the iconic Strand Hotel, where the likes of British novelists Rudyard Kipling and George Orwell, Prince Edward VIII, and Rolling Stones' frontman Mick Jagger have checked in. Built in 1901, the hotel has retained its Victorian influences – high ceilings, teak wood floorings, and a 24-hour butler service.

From Yangon, about an hour and a half away by plane, is the ancient city of Bagan in Myanmar's Mandalay region. It was the capital of the Pagan Kingdom from the 9th to 13th centuries. At the peak of the kingdom's power, there were more than 10,000 temples and pagodas in Bagan, which are now down to about 3,000.

The Ananda Temple, one of four surviving Buddhist temples built during the reign of King Kyazitha, is dubbed the "Westminster Abbey of Burma." It has a cruciform layout and houses four standing Buddhas, each one facing the cardinal directions north, south, east and west. The south-facing Buddha, in particular, has a unique architectural display. Viewed from close quarters, the Buddha has a stern look. But, take a few steps back and the same statue exhibits a happy expression.

And since the explorer in you also gets tired, why not head to Sanon for a filling



Shwedagon Pagoda is even more majestic at night, beckoning locals and tourists alike to raise their burdens to Buddha.

and fulfilling treat? Sanon is a social enterprise established in early 2016 by the Myanmar Youth Development Institute in partnership with Friends International. It seeks to give vocational training and employment opportunities to underprivileged Burmese kids while promoting local food.

"We want to give our guests a relaxed dining experience where they can enjoy traditional food and have the option as well to order more familiar fusion dishes," said sous chef Shein. There is Burmese lentil curry made with wing beans and aromatic acacia leaves and jasmine rice; khauk swe or chicken noodles from the Shan state that is bordering China, Thailand and Laos; giant Irrawaddy prawn and catfish curry; and Andaman soft-shelled crab tempura with spicy papaya salad. But there is also penne pasta served with cherry tomatoes; beef burger with white radish pickle and sweet potato; and beer battered fish and chips.

From Bagan, make a side trip to Inle Lake, Myanmar's second largest freshwater lake that is surrounded by hills that are home to the Shan, Pa-O, Taung Yo, Danu, Kayah, and Danaw minorities. It is a vast body of water dotted by marshes, floating gardens, stilt-house villages and floating Buddhist temples.

Perhaps the first person to welcome you to the Inle Lake region will be an Intha

fisherman. He will row his boat with his legs – one leg locked around a long oar and another gripping the stern of his teak boat. With his free hands, he uses a big traditional conical fishing net to haul in his catch. And for about 2,000 kyats, he will perform different poses to satisfy your need for IG-worthy photos.

Tourists will also find in the Inle region the Kayan women from the Kayah state. Dubbed as the giraffe women or long-necked women of Burma, they wear brass coils around their necks, giving the impression that these are stretched. A full set of the neck rings can weigh as much as 10 kilos, and these push down the muscles



Ananda Temple's south-facing Buddha has a unique face -- viewed from close quarters, you'd see a stern look, but from afar, the expression becomes a happy one.



Bagan is dotted by close to 3,000 ancient pagodas.

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Myanmar



The colossal reclining Buddha at Chaukhtatgyi Temple in Yangon.

around the collarbone, thus making their necks appear longer.

For the adventurous foodies, a trip to the bustling once-every-five-days market behind the Hpaung Daw U Pagoda is a must. Locals come here to buy everything they need, from safety pins to traditional medicines to sarongs and longyis. Here, local mountain dwellers also peddle a favorite snack of theirs – crunchy ants that are mildly sour to the taste.

Just like in Yangon and Bagan, Inle Lake also now boasts of four-star hotels that, well, rise above the water, too. There are no air-conditioners yet, but there is wi-

fi connection, a reminder of Myanmar’s quickening march toward modernization.

In a sense, visiting Myanmar is like chasing history on the run. Blink, and you’d miss something new – be that paved roads where none used to be. And when you open the menu in restaurants and at hotels, you’d find a list of fusion and international dishes that is getting more and more extensive.

But what Kipling said in 1898 during his brief three-day stop in Myanmar still holds true a thousand years later: “This is Burma, and it is quite unlike any land you know about.”



Intha fishermen display their impressive leg-rowing skills along one of Inle Lake’s channels.



Shop like a local at the once-every-five-day market behind the Hpaung Daw U Pagoda where you can buy bracelets, traditional medicine, and even crunchy ants eaten as a snack.



Dubbed as “giraffe women,” members of the Kayan tribe wear brass coils around their necks. Shown here is a traditional lotus weaver.

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'Police...'

From page 1

sila," he said.

As of Jan. 9, consulate officials said over 800 domestic workers filed their complaint against Peya, and the number of complainants was expected to rise further as some victims had yet to return to Hong Kong from their holidays in the Philippines.

Morales slammed the people behind the ticketing mess, noting the stress it caused to Filipino domestic helpers and their families who were expecting a reunion during the holidays.

"Siyempre ang mga kababayan natin hindi naman taon-taon umuwi tuwing Pasko. Pinagplanuhan nila iyan at pinaghandaan tapos biglang nangyari ang ganyan, siyempre mas lalong malaking perwisyo ang nangyari sa kanila at sa kanilang mga mahal sa buhay na pinagplanuhan ang Pasko," he said.

Before the Peya ticketing fiasco came to light, a year earlier, another Filipino-owned business, Emry's Employment Agency, was sued by some 200 Filipino domestic helpers who paid anywhere between \$2,000 and \$5,000 each for jobs in Canada, and the UK, which turned out to be non-existent.

Emry's owner Ester Ylagan had left Hong Kong in 2016 and did not appear in various court proceedings against her. She has recently returned to Hong Kong and claimed that she was willing to face all these cases.

Morales added that the consulate would not tolerate any fraudulent activities, and urged Filipinos in Hong Kong to be prudent and wise in choosing who to do business with.

"At the same time dapat may public information campaign tayo na huwag basta magtitiwala at mag-check muna. I will also call on the Hong Kong Police com-

missioner para masigurado na nakikiisila sila sa atin kasi hindi natin basta-basta papayagan ang mga ganyang pagsasamtala at panglolokong ganyan sa mga kababayan natin," he said.

Morales said he was seeking a meeting with Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam and other Hong Kong officials before the end of the month.

"I will immediately meet with Hong Kong officials, and hopefully also with Chief Executive Carrie Lam before the end of January," he said.

A meeting with Filipino community leaders was also being scheduled so Morales could consult with them and find out their concerns.

Part of the plans, he said, was to look for a building which could be used for multiple activities during Sundays so Filipino helpers have an option whether to stay in Central or go to this venue to join financial literacy sessions or even hold film screen-



Morales

ings.

"Kung kaya ng budget at kung gustong may mag-sponsor, bakit hindi? Pero siyempre nasa kanila na iyon kung gusto lang nila talagang sa Central lang mag-tambay hindi natin sila pipigilan pero baka iyong iba ayaw naman doon pero

wala lang mapuntahan," he said.

Meanwhile, Morales said they would add three more personnel at the PCG, who would be assigned to the Passports Processing section and the Assistance to Nationals section.

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Deaths among Hong Kong Pinoys rise in 2017

By Cheryl M. Arcibal

MORE Filipinos died in Hong Kong in 2017 compared to the previous year, data from the Philippine Consulate General showed.

Attache Joel Oronan on Jan. 9 told Hong Kong News that as of the January to September 2017 period, 62 cases of deaths of Filipino nationals were reported to the PCG, about the same number of deaths - 64 - reported in the whole of 2016.

"For the fourth quarter of the year, I think there would be at least 17 cases of deaths so there would be more cases of death of Filipino nationals in Hong Kong in 2017," Oronan said.

The leading cause of death was stroke, he added.

"Especially during winter, we notice a spike in the number of deaths among Filipinos and I think it must be because of what they eat during the season," Oronan said.

This was the reason, he added, why the consulate has been seeking a mandatory annual check up for Filipino household service workers.

In a meeting with then Consul-General Bernardita Catalla and Hong Kong Labour officials led by Secretary Dr. Law Chi-kwong on Aug. 30, the mandatory annual check up was among the requests made by Philippine officials to Hong Kong officials.

"There was an agreement that domestic helpers should be protected and welfare should be further improved," Catalla had said.

She added that she asked that an initiative be taken so Filipino domestic workers could have an annual medical checkup.

"I noticed that in recent months, there was a higher number of deaths among Filipino domestic workers. They sleep at night, the following day, they don't wake up and the employer opens the bedroom and sees the worker lying dead and not breathing.

"I asked them to consider a [system] so that workers could go through annual medical check up. The long working hours could lead to some natural causes of death," she said.

Catalla added that if the employer and the helper were aware of the health condition of the helper, the illness could be treated.

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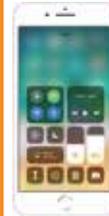
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- 4G

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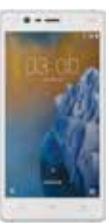
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Samsung Galaxy J5 Prime *Hot Items*



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- 3GB RAM
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- 4G

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



- 7.0 Inch
- 2MP Rear
- 8GB Storage
- Quad-core 1.3 GHz
- 1GB RAM
- Android 5.1 Lolly

Price **\$699**

Sony Xperia XA1 Plus *NEW*



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

Price **\$2,249**

Sugar Y9 *NEW*



- 5.5 Inch
- 13MP Rear + 8MP Front
- 32GB Storage
- Quad-Core 1.4GHz
- 3GB RAM
- Android 6.0 Marshmallow
- 4G
- Fingerprint

Price **\$1,099**

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 Lollipop
- 4G
- Dual Sim

Price **\$1,399**

LG Stylus 2 DAB *No Down Payment Hot Items*



- 5.7 Inch
- 13MP Rear + 8MP Front
- 8GB Storage
- Quad-core 1.2 GHz
- 1.5GB RAM
- Android 5.1.1 Lollipop
- 4G
- Dual Sim

Price **\$1,199**

Huawei T2 7 LTE **Hot Items**



- 7 Inch
- 2MP Rear + 2MP Front
- 16GB Storage
- 1.5GHz Quad Core
- 1GB RAM
- Android 6.0 Marshmallow
- 4G

Price **\$1,049**

HP Stream 11



Price **\$2,349**

Nikon D3400 with 18-55MM **NEW**



Price **\$3,799**

Casio G-Shock GD-X6900HT-8DR



Price **\$899**

Casio G-Shock GA-110GD-9ADR



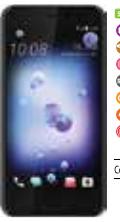
Price **\$899**

Casio G-Shock GA-100CG-1ADR



Price **\$899**

HTC U 11 **NEW**



- 5.5 Inch
- 16MP Rear + 12MP Front
- 128GB Storage
- Octa-core 2.45 GHz
- 6GB RAM
- Android 7.1 Nougat
- 4G
- Fingerprint

Price **\$4,749**

Acer Aspire 3 A314-31 **NEW**



Price **\$3,699**

Canon EOS 80D 18-135MM Kit DSLR **NEW**



Price **\$9,299**

Casio Baby G 110PP **NEW**
Low Down Payment



Price **\$799**

Casio G-Shock GA-100L-8ADR



Price **\$849**

Naviforce 9074 **NEW**
Low Down Payment



Price **\$249**

LG K4 2017 **NEW**
Low Down Payment



- 5.0 Inch
- 5MP Rear + 5MP Front
- 8GB Storage
- Quad-core 1.4 GHz
- 1GB RAM
- Android 6.0 Marshmallow
- 4G
- Dual Sim

Price **\$799**

Lenovo Ideapad 110-14 **NEW**



Price **\$4,399**

Canon Power Shot G9X **NEW**



Price **\$3,399**

Casio Baby G 110TX **NEW**
Low Down Payment



Price **\$899**

Casio G-Shock GA-110 **NEW**
Low Down Payment



Price **\$749**

Naviforce 9049 **NEW**
Low Down Payment



Price **\$249**

Nokia 3310 **NEW**
Low Down Payment



- 2.4 Inch
- 2MP Front
- 16GB Storage
- 2G

Price **\$549**

Fuji Instax Share Sp-2 Printer **NEW**



Price **\$1,399**

LG Pocket Photo Printer **NEW**
Hot Items



Price **\$949**

Alba Fashion AC3U81X1 **NEW**
Low Down Payment



Price **\$749**

Alba Active 3111 **NEW**
Low Down Payment



Price **\$699**

Alba Fashion AG8494X1 **NEW**
Low Down Payment



Price **\$959**

Samsung Galaxy J7 Prime **Low Down Payment**
Hot Items



- 5.5"
- 13 MP Rear + 8MP Front
- 32 GB Storage
- 1.36GHz Octa Core
- 3 GB RAM
- Android 6.0.1 Marshmallow
- 4G
- Dual SIM

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- Android 5.1 Lollipop
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- Dual SIM

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- 1GB RAM
- 1GB RAM
- 6.0 Marshmallow
- 4G
- Dual SIM

Price **\$899**

Huawei Y7 Prime



- 5.5 Inch
- 18MP Rear + 8MP Front
- 32 GB Storage
- Octa Core 1.5 GHz
- 32 GB RAM
- Android 7.0 Nougat
- 4G
- Fingerprint

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Price **\$399**

Panasonic Wrist Blood Pressure Meter 10 *Hot Items*
Low Down Payment



Price **\$549**

Rasonic Mini Rice Cooker - Y5H *Hot Items*
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Price **\$649**

Philips Electric Shaver 560 *Low Down Payment*



Price **\$499**

Kenwood Blender Xtract Sport 060 *Hot Items*
Low Down Payment



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Low Down Payment



Price **\$699**

Panasonic Facial Ionic Steamer EHSA31 *NEW*



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Price **\$999**

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Price **\$249**

Panasonic Bread Maker SD-104 *NEW*



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Price **\$1,299**

Hitachi Vacuum Cleaner CVSH18-BL *NEW*



Price **\$899**

Philips Easy Natural Curler 10 *Hot Items*
Low Down Payment



Price **\$349**

Panasonic Hair Curler A11 *NEW*
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Panasonic Garment Steamer



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Philips Induction Cooker *Low Down Payment*



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Panasonic Blender 1011 *Low Down Payment*



Price **299**

Panasonic Microwave 332 *Low Down Payment*



Price **\$799**

Panasonic Water Purifier 225 *Low Down Payment*



Price **\$349**

After row with daughter, Duterte's son quits Davao post

By Maia Lopez

PRESIDENTIAL son Paolo Duterte has resigned as vice mayor of Davao City on Christmas Day following a series of scandals involving him and members of his family that threatened to cast a shadow over his father's administration.

"When I was growing up, my parents never failed to remind me of the value of the time-honored principles of delicadeza and this is one of those instances in my life that I need to protect my honor and that of my children," he said.

The younger Duterte cited his very public row with his teenage daughter Isabelle on social media as well as his being dragged into the P6.4-billion shabu shipment from China.

Isabelle accused her father of beating up her childhood friend. The resigned vice mayor said he takes responsibility for all that has happened as a result of a wrong decision to marry at a very young age — referring to his earlier marriage to Lovely Sangkola, the mother of Isabelle.

Isabelle, on her private Twitter account, said: "My dad f*cked up my Christmas every year. What a time to be alive."

She also accused her father of beating up a child. "Just because you have power doesn't mean you can hurt people!! Not because you're a Duterte, you can!!"

Paolo retaliated through a post on his official and public Facebook account, admonishing his daughter for allowing herself to be "pimped."

"Change your family name if you want! You don't have respect! You just embarrassed yourself! Get an education so your brain isn't empty.

"You don't know how to listen anymore because you're famous??? Famous, for what, Belle? Famous for disparaging a father? Just wait for my death so you will be free from me! Pray for it, woman!" he said.

"FIX YOUR F*cking LIFE FIRST before I will stop f*cking up your Christmas every year," he added.

For his part, President Rodrigo Duterte has formally accepted his son's resignation.

"He asked me (of my opinion), and I told him, 'You are in a position to do what is right. Do what you feel is right for you,'" the President said.

Under Section 82 of the Local Government Code of 1991, resignations by elective local officials shall be deemed effective only upon acceptance by the President, in the case of governors, vice-governors, and mayors and vice mayors of highly-urbanized cities and independent component cities such as Davao City.

Davao City 3rd District Councilor Bernard Al-ag, the current majority floor leader of the 18th City Council, is poised to

replace Paolo as vice mayor.

Opposition lawmakers said the vice mayor's resignation will not erase his alleged link to the shipment of shabu that was smuggled into the country.

"Removing himself from public office will not make questions on his alleged links to the Davao group and the smuggled P6.4-billion shabu shipment go away," ACT partylist Rep. Antonio Tino said.

Magdalo party-list Rep. Gary Alejano shared a similar view. "It is his right to take certain action when he sees fit especially concerning a personal issue with his daughter. However, it will not erase the fact that the 604 kgs shabu shipment issue has not been addressed yet and the brains behind have not been identified and arrested."

Meanwhile, Isabela Rep. Rodolfo Albano III said the President's decision to accept Paolo's resignation "only proved that he trusted the judgment and respected the decision of his son, especially if it is

for the good of his people."

Days after resigning from his post, Paolo and his brother-in-law, lawyer Manases Carpio, filed a civil case against Senator Antonio Trillanes IV for linking them to the shabu smuggling issue.

Both attended the hearing of the Senate Blue Ribbon committee on Sept. 7 to air their side, although during the hearing, they invoked their right against self-incrimination.

The P6.4-billion shabu shipment from China, which slipped through the Bureau of Customs, was later seized in Valenzuela City.

In his earlier statement, Carpio admitted having visited the Bureau of Customs because he represents many clients who have transactions with the agency.

"Senator Trillanes is imputing malice in saying that my appearance before the BOC is because of smuggling. He is just a desperate rumor-monger who happens to be a senator," Carpio said.



Paolo

Isabelle



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'No-El' scenario floated in Congress

By Maia Lopez

KEY Congress allies of President Rodrigo Duterte have floated the possibility of no elections in 2019 if a federal system of government is installed as well as extending the President's term beyond 2022.

This despite assurances from Malacañang that the President does not wish to stay in power a minute longer than his term.

"I can categorically state that President Duterte does not want that. He wants to cut short his term rather than lengthen it," presidential spokesman Harry Roque said.

House Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez said a proposed amendment to the Constitution by way of a constituent assembly could be submitted to a plebiscite simultaneously with the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections on May 14.

The House is hoping to approve a resolution calling for a constituent assembly this month.

"If we can convene by January, we can submit that to a referendum during the barangay elections by May. If we work on it, nothing is impossible," Alvarez said.

"Let us be practical. If we shift to a different form of government, unitary to federal, you need a transition government," Alvarez said.

Alvarez acknowledged that while some senators' terms will expire in 2019, others would do so in 2022.

"In fairness, maybe it would be better if they all expire in 2022," Alvarez said.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III said Duterte's six-year term may be extended "if really necessary" during the



Duterte

transition period for the shift to a federal form of government.

Pimentel, national president of Duterte's ruling PDP-Laban, said a term extension will "depend on the transitory provisions."

The President has already formed a 25-member constitutional commission that would propose amendments to the 1987 Constitution.

The committee on constitutional amendments of House of Representatives has also recently created four technical working groups that would draft a proposed Philippine Federal Constitution.

Liberal Party president Senator Francis Pangilinan, for his part, cautioned that Duterte's allies may be planning to extend the President's term by 10 more years.

"Aside from Duterte, all congressmen and senators will be given term extensions. Since there are no elections, this means no expenses for politicians because no one will step down from his position," Pangilinan said.

Roque, however, insisted that a term extension is out of the question for the President, who turns 73 on March 28.

"The President has spoken on these issues. Number one, the President is the chief implementor of the Constitution and the laws of the land unless and until the Constitution is amended and ratified by the people, elections will push through in 2019 and what the President promises is if elections push through, we will have a credible and honest elections," he said.

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Friendship hike for kids, environment



By Vicks Reyes Munar

WITH their innate love for nature and belief that spending time with it gives healing and uplifting energy, a group of 29 friends led by Madelia Galve headed to the Dragons' Back Trail on Jan. 1, an activity which they called "Friendship Hike for A Cause".

The group of friends agreed to do it for a cause rather than just climbing the trail for leisure and exercise. With the island kids of Guiwanon, Nueva Valencia, Guimaras in mind through the Guiwanon Fundamental Church Children's Ministry, they agreed to share any voluntary amount in

preparation for the opening of classes in June. The group is planning to purchase school supplies for the island kids.

Madelia Galve, an OFW who hails from the Guiwanon Island, was moved by the plight of needy children in her place. She shared the situation to some of her friends and together they came up with the idea to help the kids in their own small ways.

Love for nature, healthy ways and the common desire to help in their own small ways, the group agreed to have at least four "friendship hikes" or trips for a cause in time for June when the school year commences in the Philippines.

Their Dragon's Back adventure was

also made more challenging and meaningful as they filled their rubbish bags with their own trash and some rubbish that they saw as they traversed the path of the mountains they passed from To Tei Wan to Big Wave Bay.

"It was so fulfilling that aside from enjoying nature and taking photos I can do something for the island kids in Guiwanon and for mother nature," Emma Gamido, one of the participants of the hike said. Marites Toralba with her three friends expressed their joy and gratefulness for being part of the activity and said they were looking forward to more friendship hikes for a cause in the coming months of 2018.



A group of friends hikes the Dragon's Back Trail to help needy kids in Guimaras as well as to enjoy nature.

GALLERY



Caroline Sollestre with an Ocean Park ticket she won at the OWTEL raffle draw in December. Ticket is courtesy of Destine Joy Travel.

Mga parol na wagi sa PASTARAN 2017

By Vicks Reyes Munar

GINANAP ang pagpili at pag-anunsyo sa mga nanalo sa paligsahan sa pag-gawa ng parol -PASTARAN 2017 sa pagtatanghal ng Christmas Eve Program bago ang Misa De Aguinaldo na dinaluhan ng napakaraming OFWs maging ang mga residente sa Hong Kong noong ika-24 ng Disyembre, 2017 sa Chater Garden.

Sa temang "Pasko Para sa Kapayapaan at Pagkakaisa", siyam na kalahok na pawang mga Filipino community organizations ang nagpakita ng kanila-kanilang obra na gawa sa mga recycled na kagami-



The PASTARAN winner

tan o materyales.

Paglahad ng mensahe kaugnay sa tema, pagka-orihinal at pagkamalikhain,

kabuung dating ng parol at pagka-pulido ng pagkagawa ang naging batayan ng mga hurado upang mapili ang apat na pinakamataas na premyo sa nasabing paligsahan.

Sa batayang ito, nanguna ang parol ng Abante Cagayanos na gumamit ng lata ng soda. Ayon sa kanilang pagsalarawan, makinang ang kanilang parol dahil sa matinkad na kulay pilak na parte ng lata ng soda na kanilang ginamit. Dagdag din ng kanilang Presidente na si Alan Mas, "Mas lalong tumingkad ang kanilang parol dahil sa mga ilaw na kanilang ikinabit na sumisimbolo ng pag-asa tungo sa kapayapaan at ang mga pinagdikit-dikit na maliliit na parte ng lata ng soda ay patungkol sa matibay na pagkakaisa ng mga Pilipino".

Ang grupong Diwa't Kabayan Ben-life Society Club sa pamumuno ni Naty Manalo ang pumangalawa. Ang kanilang obra ay gawa sa sari-saring recycled materials tulad ng toilet tissue rolls, lumang compact discs, mga plastic sachets at iba pa na matiyagang pinagsama-sama upang makabuo ng malikhaing parol alinsunod sa panuntunan ng paligsahan.

Ang Filipino Nurses Association (FNA) ang nag-uwi ng pangatlong premyo sa pangunguna ni Lorna Pagaduan. Ayon sa kanya "Nagsilbing bonding nila ng kanyang mga kagrupong paggawa ng parol kung saan tulong-tulong nilang ginawa ang parol mula sa lata ng softdrinks, mga botelya at iba pang recycled materials".

Nanguna naman ang Suyo Ilocos Sur Association (SISA) sa katagoryang "People's Choice Award". Sa larangang ito, ang mga kalahok sa paligsahan ay nagpasa ng "close-up" na larawan ng parol na naiupload sa FB Page ng Pastaran 2017.

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Regular 24x24x20	HK\$ 580	HK\$ 590	HK\$ 600	HK\$ 640	HK\$ 660
Medium 24x14x24	HK\$ 440	HK\$ 450	HK\$ 470	HK\$ 500	HK\$ 520
Bulilit 24x14x14	HK\$ 300	HK\$ 310	HK\$ 320	HK\$ 370	HK\$ 390
Nino 14x14x12	HK\$ 210	HK\$ 220	HK\$ 240	HK\$ 270	HK\$ 300

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Bulilit	HK\$ 25	HK\$ 50	HK\$ 10
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For Our Teachers

WE welcome the announcement of Malacanang that the salary of teachers will soon be increased after those of soldiers and policemen were doubled.

Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said the increases could be implemented once Congress passes the second tranche of the administration's tax reform package.

Roque said the President did not mention how much the increase would be but he noted that the salaries of soldiers and policemen were doubled.

This is a very good development not just for teachers but also for the country's education system.

Hopefully, it would help stop the nation's so-called brain drain as teachers would now have another reason to stay in the Philippines and not go abroad to find

work.

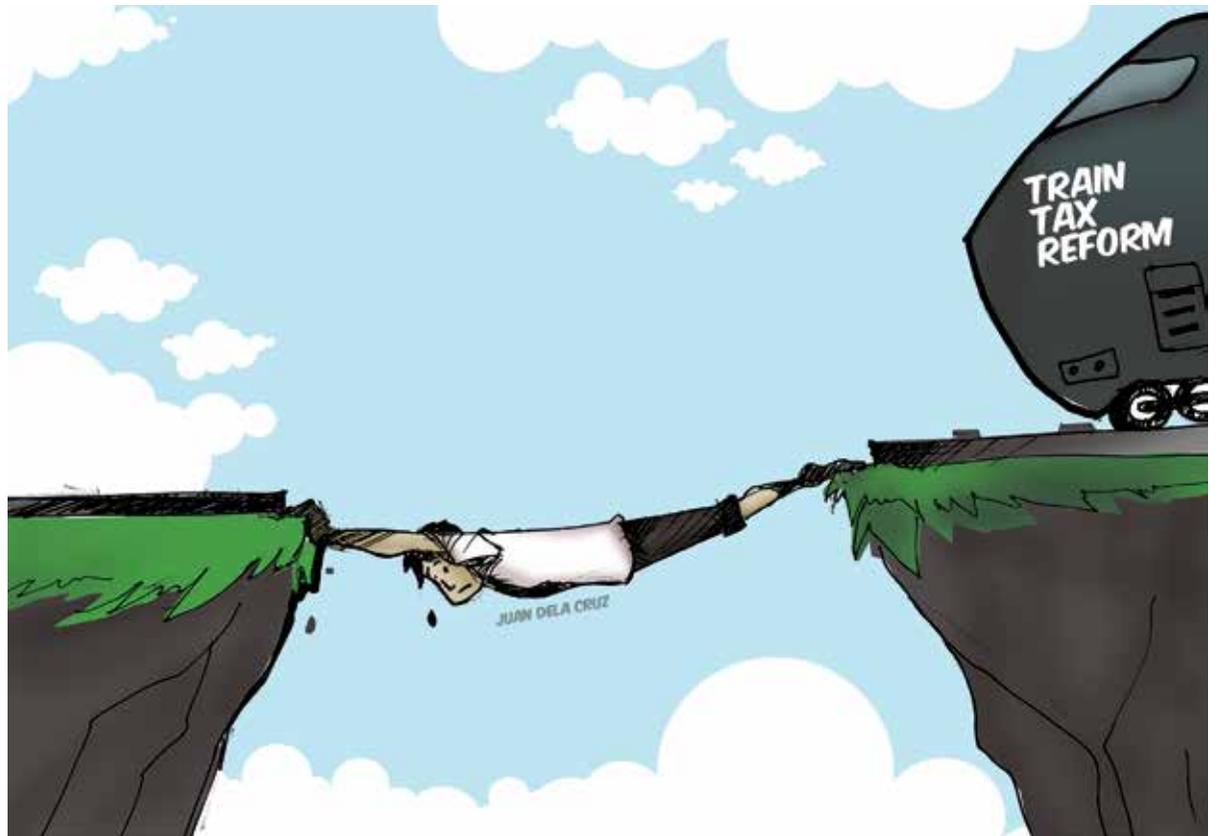
In fact, many teachers groups were gladdened by this announcement from the Palace.

"We welcome this statement from Malacanang and we hope that the president will use his influence and power to make this statement a reality," said Benjo Basas, National Chairperson of the Teachers' Dignity Coalition (TDC).

"Recognizing the intricacies of governance, our teachers patiently waited for the promised enhancement of our salaries and benefits, while obviously, our brothers and sisters in the uniformed service were given priority," Basas said.

Hopefully, this would also help convince many of our fellow overseas Filipino workers to return home and resume their vocation in the teaching profession.

As We See it



Haplos at Bigwas

Jun
Concepcion

More hardships in 2018?

NO thanks to our government and lawmakers, OFWs and their loved ones back home – Filipinos in general -- are likely to find 2018 more challenging and a lot more difficult than 2017 and in previous years. Why so?

Because transport fares, electricity, LPG and prices of beverages, canned food products and other basic necessities are going up due mainly to the newly-enacted Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion or TRAIN law.

Because of the increase in taxes on oil products, notably gasoline, diesel and LPG, sweeteners on beverage products and other items, prices of nearly everything across the country have started rising starting early January. Softdrinks, fish, vegetables, pandesal, etc etc – their prices have started rising, according to spot field reports and feedback from listeners across the country as of January 8 of DZRH radio station.

As prices of nearly everything increase in the Philippines, children, parents and other dependents of OFWs back home will naturally ask for more money to cope

with the rising cost of living.

Can OFWs readily cope with increased demands for money by their dependents back home? No!

While the minimum salary of foreign maids in Hong Kong increases nearly every year, it is only by increments of HK\$50 to HK\$100 each time. It is also illegal for foreign domestics to take up non-domestic work.

Thus, the 180,000+ OFWs in Hong Kong will certainly feel more pressures – even problems -- this year meeting rising demands from their dependents back home.

What can OFWs do to cope as TRAIN strikes them hard starting this month? First, stop unimportant expenditures. This will mean more money in their pockets to be sent to their loved ones back home. Second, put up livelihood projects -- whether they like it or not. Where and how to start? Watch on YouTube on February 24 & 25 the "2018 Global Online Conference & Livelihood/Investments Exhibition for Overseas Filipinos" to find livelihood ideas and contacts.



Currents

Norman Uy
Carnay

Bagong Pasabog

USAP-USAPAN agad sa social media at balita ang TRAIN law (Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion) ni Pangulong Duterte sa pagpasok ng bagong taon. Nagkaroon na kasi ng bisa ang batas sa mismong January 1.

Dinaig pa nito ang malalakas na paputok sa New Year. Malakas na pasabog ang hatid ng bagong pahirap na buwis na ito.

Nito lamang January 5, nakatanggap ako ng FB message bilang reaksyon sa pinost ko na balita kaugnay ng TRAIN law. Galing ito sa isang kaibigan ko sa eskwela. Isa siyang pana-panahong driver.

Narito ang post nya: "Nagparamdam agad kahapon (ang TRAIN). Two pesos taas ng gas. 30 pesos taas ng LPG. Ang bigas kung dati ay 39, ngayon ay 42 pesos na. Exempted pa ako sa income tax. "Di naman tumaas ang sahod."

"Ang lugaw na 15 pesos dati, bente na

ngayon," reklamo niya.

Ito na nga ang sinasabi na magiging epekto ng bagong buwis na ito. Kongkretong-kongkreto. Walang halong propaganda. Tunay na buhay lang.

Pahirap ang TRAIN. Hindi para sa mahirap ang TRAIN. Kung hindi ka rin lang kasama sa pinakamayamang 20 porsyento ng populasyon ng Pilipinas, aba'y tiyak tatamaan ka ng TRAIN.

Kahit OFW ka na kumikita ng dolyar, aba'y tatamaan ka ng TRAIN. Supporter ka man ni Pangulong Duterte, aba ay hindi ka exempted at tiyak masasagasaan din ang bulsa mo ng TRAIN.

Maging mapanuri lang. Paano paninuwalaan ang sinasabi ng gobyerno na walang epekto sa pang-matagalan ang TRAIN law sa presyo ng bilihan? Eh ngayon pa nga lang nagtataasan na, first round pa lang ng implementasyon?

Tusong ginagamit ang pagbaba diuma- no ng income tax sa ilan para pagtakpan

ang matindi at mas malawak na negatibong epekto ng TRAIN law sa mas nakararami.

Mas marami iyong walang benepisyo sa income tax reform ng TRAIN pero papasanin ang dagdag na buwis dahil sa excise taxes na dala nito.

Tulad nga nitong aking kaibigan. Dati na siyang exempted sa pagbayad ng income tax. Hindi siya kasama sa nabiyayaan ng income tax exemption sa TRAIN. Pero dumadaing siya ngayon dahil tumaas pa ang kanyang gastusin sa pagpasok ng taon. Ang dahilan? Dahil ang dala ng TRAIN ni Duterte ay buwis sa mga consumer goods na binibili ng maraming Pilipino, lalo na yung dati nang hindi exempted at hindi naman tumaas ang take-home pay.

Bugad na lang ng bagong taon, ramdam na ang pahirap ng bagong buwis ng gobyernong Duterte. Hintayin mo pa bang masagasaan ka bago ka umalma?

Dear Editor

Dear Hong Kong News,
Magandang buhay sa inyong lahat lalo na ngayong 2018!

Isa akong masugid na mambabasa ng inyong pahayagan. Nagpasya akong sumulat upang ihayag ang aking saloobin tungkol sa isang balita na nabasa ko sa inyong pahayagan na ang isang NGO dito sa Hong Kong ay magsasagawa ng isang health awareness program para sa aming mga domestic workers.

Sobrang pasasalamat ko at tuwa na may isang grupo na tututok sa mga health-related programs na

talagang kailangang kailangan naming mga FDWs. Isang mapait na realidad na dahil sa demands ng aming trabaho kadalasan ay naisasantabi na ang usaping kalusugan.

Sa ating Konsulado at sa POLO, nawa'y mas pagtuunan din nila ng pansin ang usaping ito. Puhunan namin ang maayos naming kalusugan kaya aming pasasalamatang kung ang mga programang pangkalusugan ay mas pagtutuunan ng pansin katulad ng mga health awareness programs at iba pa ng ating Konsulado at iba pang mga ahensya.

Maraming salamat sa paglathala ng aking liham at nagpapasalamat ako ng lubos sa bumubuo ng inyong pahayagan dahil sa inyo marami kaming nauupdate sa mga mahahalagang isyu, balita at nadadagdagang din ang aming kaalaman sa iba't-ibang larangan ng buhay.

More power Hong Kong News at sa ating lahat nawa'y mas pagpalain pa tayo ngayong 2018!

Sumasainyo,
Anita L.

HONG KONG NEWS

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Pinay dead in Cali murder-suicide case

By Maia Lopez

A 25-year-old Filipina in California was killed by her husband in what is believed by authorities to be a murder-suicide case.

The victim, identified as Blessel Ong, was stabbed by her husband, Albert, 49, who killed himself later. The bodies were



Ong

found two days after Christmas at their home in Center Street, Baldwin Park.

Authorities from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department was supposed to do a

welfare check but found the couple's bodies instead.

"Detectives learned the couple shared a history of domestic violence and there was a call for service the day prior to (the) discovery of the bodies," said Sara Rodriguez, deputy spokesperson of the Sheriff's Department.

The Filipina's family and friends are now trying to raise funds to repatriate her body to the Philippines.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Embassy in Kuwait is looking into the death of the sister of comedian Romeo Librada, also known as Super Tekla.

Vice Consul Charleson Hermosura said

the embassy is monitoring investigation on the death of Marife Librada, who allegedly committed suicide. The victim, a domestic helper in Kuwait, was found hanging in her room on December 29.

The comedian said days before his sister was found dead, she told her family that she was being abused by her employer.

Filipino doctor in US to be sent home to PH

A Filipino physician who was accused of sexually assaulting a male patient at a hospital in Bridgeport, Connecticut in 2016 is being sent home to the Philippines after entering a one-year special probation program under a United States court.

Louie Mar Ganguanco, 31, was accused of groping his 53-year-old patient during a physical examination.

"He is going back to the Philippines where he is not likely to offend again," lawyer Sean Barrett, Ganguanco's legal counsel, told Connecticut Superior Court Judge Maureen Dennis.

Dennis granted Ganguanco's request for accelerated rehabilitation, a pre-trial program for people accused of nonviolent crimes.

Ganguanco has denied the claims made against him, which he said were made "maliciously."

"I am not guilty and I have been maliciously accused by a patient with an extensive criminal

history who, according to my lawyer, wanted \$500,000 to drop the case," he said in a statement.

Ganguanco said he gave the patient a full physical exam, and was given consent to perform a groin examination that was needed after the latter's laboratory results came out as abnormal.

"He even scheduled a follow-up appointment with me after three months. One week later, the patient started harassing me on the phone. I repeatedly denied his allegations. A few weeks later, I was shocked to see that I had a warrant of arrest," he said.

Ganguanco did not plead guilty to fourth-degree sexual assault charges against him.

With the one-year probation, Ganguanco's original charge could be dismissed if he does not get rearrested during the probationary period.

Maia Lopez



Bridgeport, Connecticut

Assaulted Filipina maid rescued in Iraq

By Maia Lopez

A Filipina domestic helper who was able to broadcast via Facebook Live while she was being assaulted by a relative of her employer has been rescued by Philippine embassy officials in Iraq.

The victim, 39-year-old Alice Aguilan, has returned to the Philippines days after her Facebook post went viral.

"I am very happy. I am excited to see my kids whom I have not seen in the six years that I stayed in Iraq," she said in a

television interview upon arriving in the Philippines.

The assault, which happened on Dec. 22, caught the victim by surprise as she had no quarrel with the suspect, a relative of her employer who also serves as a houseboy.

During the live-stream, Aguilan asked her viewers to take a screenshot of the suspect, who was then performing a ritual prayer.

"This bastard - my employer is not here that is why he assaulted me. He squeezed my neck, trying to choke me, punched me, and whacked me with his slippers," she said in the video.

The suspect was then seen pulling her hair, and only stopped when another housekeeper intervened.

Aguilan said she used to work in Amman, Jordan before another Filipina sold her for \$4,500, leading to her stay in Iraq as an undocumented worker for six years.

Data from the Philippine embassy showed there are at least 4,000 registered OFWs currently in Iraq.





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Pati ba pagkakamali ng amo isisisi kay Inday?

By Imelda Mae Bustinera

MABABA ang pagtingin at malimit sabihan na tatanga-tanga at mahina ang utak ang mga kasambahay ng kanilang pinag-sisilbihan.

Kadalasan nakakaranas ng pang-iinsulto at minimaltrato dahil sa pagkakaalam na kesyo galing sa mahirap na kalagayan at hindi nakapagtapos ng pag aaral. Ngunit karamihan sa mga kasambahay na nang-ingibang-bansa kung hindi man lahat ay mga nakapagtapos at titulado.

Napipilitan lang silang lumabas ng bansa at mamasukan dahil maliit ang sahod sa trabaho na angkop ng tinapusan. Idagdag pa ang presyo ng mga bilihin at napakataas na matrikula sa pagpapaaral na kulang na kulang sa pang araw araw na

gastusin.

Masakit at labag man sa kanyang kaloo-ban nilunok ni Inday, 38, may asawa at dalawang anak, tubong Albay ang kanyang pride at nangibang bansa para mamasukan bilang kasambahay.

Tinitiiis ni Inday ang hirap sa trabaho at lungkot na mawalay sa mga mahal niya mabigyan lang ng magandang buhay at mapagtapos ang mga anak. Mahirap daw pala ang buhay OFW. Malayo na raw sa pamilya mababa pa ang tingin ng mga tao.

Nabubuhayan lang si Inday ng lakas ng loob sa tuwing mararamdaman niya na nakakalamang siya ng kaalaman pagdating sa pag-aalaga ng mga alaga at mga bagay bagay lalo na sa among babae na nakadepende sa kaniya. Kaya naman minsan na maraming ginagawa si Inday ay hindi

niya napansin na naglagay pala ng inumin na nakabote ang amo sa loob ng freezer. Nang matapos kumain ng hapunan ay naalala ng amo ang inumin at nadismaya nang kinuha ito dahil basag at nagkalat ang laman ng bote at ipinakita kay Inday.

Sinabi naman ni Inday na dapat binuksan at binawasan ng kaunti ang laman dahil kapag nabuo at naging yelo ay nage-expand kaya pumutok ang bote.

Narinig ng among lalaki ang paghiyaw at nagtanong kung anong nangayari. Ikinuwento naman ng babae at asan daw kasi ang kasambahay bakit daw hindi siya sinabihan kung ano ang dapat gawin. Sana raw hindi nasayang ang lalagyan at pabayaran daw ito sa kasambahay. Napakamot na lang ng ulo si Inday saka nasabing pati ba katangahan kasalanan niya?



Nabasag ang glass container dahil sa pagkakamali ng amo

Sa sobrang excitement

By Imelda Mae Bustinera

ISA sa kaugalian nating mga Pilipino ang magaling makisama kaya hindi tayo makatanggi sa mga paki at maki ng ating mga pinsan, kaibigan, kapitbahay, o kababayan.

Unang beses pa lang uuwi para magbakasyon si Natividad, 25, may asawa, at anak, at tubong Palawan, at pinili niya ngayong Pasko para makapiling ang pamilya. Tuwang-tuwa si Natividad na pinayagan siya ng amo na itaon ng Disyembre ang paguwi dahil makakapag-Pasko at Bagong Taon siya sa Pilipinas na bukod sa mahabang magdaos ng Pasko ay makakapiling niya pa ang mga mahal niya sa buhay.

Pagpasok pa lang ng buwan ng September ay bukang-bibig na niya na malapit na siyang umuwi at binibilang na niya ang araw. Kapag nagkikita-kita sila ng mga kaibigan at kababayan tuwing Linggo ay ikinukuwento ni Natividad ang mga balak niyang gawin at lutuwin na pang Noche Buena at Media Noche.

Unti-unti na rin siyang namimili ng mga sangkap sa lutuwin pampasalubong

at Pamasko. Nang huling Linggo na bago ng pag-uwi ni Natividad ay may mga nadatan siyang mga tsokolate sa pwesto nila kung saan nagkikita-kita.

Inakala niya na ibibigay sa kaniya bilang pamasko dahil hindi siya makakasama sa Christmas party ng grupo. Nang uwian na ay isa-isa nang iinabot kay Natividad at makisuyo raw na ibigay sa kanilang mga pamilya.

Dahil nga sa pakikisama ay walang nagawa si Natividad para hindian. Hirap siyang bitbitin sa dami at bigat. Nagtataka man tiningnan lang siya ng amo pagdating ng bahay.

Dumating rin ang araw na pinakahihintay ni Natividad. Mabuti na lang malaki ang luggage niya kaya nagkasya naman lahat na dapat niyang dalhin.

Nang mag check-in na siya ay sobra ng mahigit 10 kilo ang bagahe niya kaya nagbayad siya ng kulang-kulang walong daang dolyar.

Maiyak-iyak sa panghihinayang at inisi si Natividad dahil hindi niya alam na may bayad pala kapag sumobra ay wala man lang nagbigay sa mga kaibigan na nakipadala sa kaniya.



Sumobra ng 10 kilo sa baggage allowance ang iniuwi ni Natividad

Maswerte pala siya

By Vicks Reyes Munar

SI Marie, 24, tubong Pangasinan, ay limang buwan pa lang na nagtratrabaho sa kanyang mga amo.

First time niyang mag-abroad at sinubu-

kan lang niya sa kagustuhang makapag-ipon ng mas malaki.

Halos apat na taon siyang nagtrabaho sa Pilipinas at halos wala siyang maipon dahil sa hindi naman kalakihang sweldo.

Sa kanyang unang tatlong buwan, gusto

nang sumuko ni Marie at umuwi na lang ng Pilipinas dahil siya ay nanibago ng husto sa kanyang trabaho.

Pinayuhan siya ng mga kamag-anak na magtiis dahil ayon sa kanila kung ikumpara sa iba ang kalagayan niya sa amo

ay maituturing na maswerte na siya.

Sa hapon ay binibigyan pa siya ng oras ng pahinga ng kanyang amo. Mga alas-dos lang ng hapon ay tapos na siya at maghanda na lang ng dinner ng alas-sais at kadalasan ay alas-nuwebe ng gabi ay ta-

pos na siya sa trabaho.

Madalas pang hindi kumakain ang kanyang mga amo sa bahay kaya nagtataka din ang kanyang mga kamag-anak kung bakit ganun na lang ang reklamo niya at naiisipan pa nyang umuwi na lang ng Pilipinas.

Kalaunan nagkaroon ng mga kaibigan si Marie, mga kaibigang nakakasalamuhan niya sa araw ng kanyang pahinga.

Sa kanilang pagkewwentuhan, nalaman niya ang mas malala pang kalagayan ng kanyang mga kaibigan.

Karamihan sa kanila ay maagang nagsisimula sa umaga kumpara sa kanya at inaabot pa ng hanggang hating-gabi sa pagtratrabaho.

Dahil sa mga narinig, natuto si Marie na magpasalamat sa kanyang kasalukuyang kalagayan. Napagtanto niya na maswerte pala siya sa kanyang mga amo.

Dahil dito, naging inspirado siya sa pagtratrabaho at hindi na rin niya inisip ang umuwi ng Pilipinas.

Naging mas inspirado pa siya ng makuha na ang kanyang passbook sa isang banko kung saan siya ay nagsimula ng mag-ipon. Appreciated na niya ang kanyang kasalukuyang trabaho na magsisilbing paraan upang mas mapabilis ang kanyang pag-iipon para sa kanyang mga mithiin sa buhay.

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Kick off 2018 with GMA Online Exclusives

MILLENNIALS are in for a wonderful surprise this 2018 as GMA Network unveils three online exclusive shows bannered by Atom Araullo, Gabbi Garcia, and Joseph Morong.

Beginning January 1, netizens will be able to watch GMA ONE Online Exclusives on GMA's Youtube channel (www.youtube.com/gmanetwork) featuring not just one, but three shows: "Adulthood with Atom Araullo", "#Goals with Gabbi Garcia", and "Fact or Fake with Joseph Morong".

In "Adulthood with Atom Araullo", the new GMA Public Affairs host joins millennials in their journey towards adulthood. Atom gives netizens a peek at his everyday struggles as he faces the responsibilities of being on his own, and living on a budget. And yes, Atom also shares

tips on love: how does one go through courtship and online dating?

"We hope to talk about the different challenges we face as we enter the adult world," says Atom in an interview. "Nobody teaches us these kinds of things. Sometimes we're lucky to have friends or family to help us get into it painless-

ly but for the most part, nangangapa tayong sa ganiyan. Everything from finding your own place, budgeting your money, making career decisions, personal relationships, or taxes, things like these. I feel like a lot of people can relate to these challenges," he added.

Meanwhile, get inspired by Millennial It

Girl Gabbi Garcia's videos as she shares her personal objectives in "#Goals with Gabbi Garcia". A show that will definitely tickle the fancy of the kikays out there, "#Goals with Gabbi Garcia" sees Gabbi exploring her goals in beauty, style, makeup, travel, and music.

Kapuso reporter Joseph Morong, on the

other hand, debunks false news items in "Fact or Fake with Joseph Morong". As more news sources are available online, Joseph will try to help millennials spot fake news.

"Fact or Fake" goes back to one of the tenets of journalism which is fact-checking," Joseph explains.



ATOM, GABBI, at JOHN

Mark Anthony, layana

By Cristy Kasilag



MARAHIL ang pinakamagandang regalo na natanggap ng aktor na si Mark Anthony Fernandez ngayong Pasko ay ang kanyang kalayaan.

MARK Nuong ika-22 ng Disyembre, o tatlong araw bago sumapit ang araw ng Pasko ay ibinasura ni Judge Ireneo Pangilinan ng Angeles City Regional Trial Court, Pampanga ang kasong possession ng marijuana ang na isinampa ng Philippine National Police (PNP) laban sa 38-taong gulang na aktor.

Ayon sa korte ay may maling nagawa ang police ng Angeles City, Pampanga sa pagkuha ng ebidensya laban kay Mark.

Ikinagulat naman ito ni Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) Director General Aaron Aquino, na nuon ay ang PNP regional director sa Central Luzon.

Pero sinabi niya na kahit na nabigla siya sa desisyon ng korte ay respetuhin niya ito.

Halos tahimik ang pamilya ni Mark sa kanyang paglaya. Unting tao lamang ang nag komento ukol dito tulad ng dati niyang nobya na si Claudine Barretto na nag post na "I'm so so happy Mark Anthony Fernandez is finally home!!"

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Horoscope



Capricorn

December 22 to January 19

Mabuti ang iyong kalusugan at magpapatuloy ito basta alagaan ang sarili. Iwasang magpagod nang walang katuturan dahil dapat mag-pokus sa mga bagay na may katuturan.



Aquarius

January 20 to February 18

Ang mahalaga ay wala kang tinatapkan sa paghahanap ng paraan kung paano mapabuti ang iyong buhay. Kung anumang magyari, wala kang ibang sisihin kundi ikaw lang.



Pisces

February 19 to March 20

Makakaasa ka na ang mga kabutihan mong ginagawa ay nakikita ng marami. Sila ang magbibigay sa iyo ng mas magandang pagkakataon upang umasenso ka sa buhay.



Aries

March 21 to April 19

Maayos ang pasok ng 2018 sa iyo. Magfocus ka sa iyong plano, isa o dalawa lang ang piliin mo sa mga nakalinyang proyekto.



Taurus

April 20 to May 20

Matagal mo na rin pinalampas ang pagkakataon na sabihin ang totoo mong nararamdaman sa espesyal na tao sa iyong buhay. Maaring ngayon na ang tamang panahon.



Gemini

May 21 to June 20

Hindi ka dapat magtaka kung bakit may mga gumagawa ng pabor sa iyo. Marami ka na kasing nagawa na nakatulong sa iba.



Cancer

June 21 to July 22

Panahon na upang bayaran ang mga obligasyon. Maaring pera o pabor ang kailangan mong ibayad.



Leo

July 23 to August 22

Ihanda mo ang iyong sarili sa mga madamdaming natitirang araw ng Enero. May mga tao na magiging pabigat sa iyo dahil puno sila ng hinanakit.



Virgo

August 23 to September 22

Ang pagkakaroon ng maraming pera ay isa lamang paraan upang maging maligaya ang isang tao. Minsan naman ang pera pa ang nagiging dahilan ng kalungkutan at pagkabigo.



Libra

September 23 to October 22

Bwenas ang pasok ng 2018 para sa iyo. Magaan ang pasok ng pera at maayos ang hanapbuhay.



Scorpio

October 23 to November 21

May mga pintuan na magbubukas para sa iyo. Ikaw na ang bahalang pumili kung alin ang mas magbibigay sa iyo ng kasiyahan.



Sagittarius

November 22 to December 21

Balikan ang mga plano at kumpletuhin mo na ang mga kulang. Tapusin mo na ngayon.

What's Cooking?

Broccoli is always partnered with chicken or beef, but there is another way to enjoy its goodness and pair with it other ingredients. **Not convinced? Well, try this Broccoli with Fish Fillet & Quail Eggs dish!**

Ingredients:

250 g. broccoli cut into florets
220 g. white sole fish fillet, cut into chunks
2 cloves garlic minced
2 tsp. chicken powder
1 tsp. white wine
salt and pepper to taste
12 pcs. boiled quail eggs
A dash of sesame oil
2 tsp. thinly slice ginger
¼ cup corn starch and 1/8 cup of water for thickening

Procedure:

1. Blanch broccoli for about 2-3 minutes with oil and salt. Set aside.

2. Meanwhile, sauté ginger, garlic and add in marinated sole fish fillet with sesame oil, chicken powder, white wine and seasonings.
3. Mix with quail eggs and broccoli until it thickens.
4. Serve hot!

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



Alaga: Yaya look boats!
Yaya: Dows are not boats, dey're yatchts.
Alaga: Yaya, spell yacht
Yaya: Yor rayt, they are boats.

Barbero: Sir, anong klaseng gupit po?
Lalaki: Yung uka-uka, masagwa at hindi pantay.
Barbero: Sir anu po yun? Hindi ko po alam yun?
Lalaki: Anung hindi, ganun ang gupit mo sa akin last time!

Mister: Honey, pwede ka ba ngayon?
Misis: Hindi, pagod ako!
Mister: Is that your final answer?
Misis: Final answer!
Mister: Can I call a friend?

Teacher: Juan, give a sentence
Juan: My teacher is beautiful, isn't she?
Teacher: Very good!! Please translate in Tagalog
Juan: Ang aking guro ay maganda, hindi naman ba?

Teacher: Ang score ni Juan sa exam ay 99%
Juan: Ohh anu! Kaya niyo yan? Hindi pa ako nag-rereview nyan. Huwag na mag-aral kung ako sa inyo umuwi na lang kayo. Low IQ! Mga utak manok kayo!
Nangingitlog na naman kayo, sinasayang niyo lang tuition niyo.(mayabang na sabi ni Juan sa kanyang mga kaklase).
Teacher: The rest 100%

Pedro: Pare anong gagawin mo kapag nalaman mong may anak ka sa labas?
Juan: Huh?? Anong klaseng tanung yan pare? Syempre papasukin ko sa loob ng bahay.

Nanay: Oh! Anak kahit ano mangyari huwag kang bumitaw sa pagkakapit sa palda ko.
Mahigit ng isang oras ng mapansin ng nanay na wala na ang kanyang anak.
Nanay: Manong may nakita po ba kayong bata?
Sekyu: Ano po ang itsura?
Nanay: May dalang palda po.

Yaya: Ma'am magpapaalam po sana akong magbakasyon sa aming probinsya.
Amo: Oh sige, nakapagpapaalam kana ba sa sir mo?
Yaya: Nauna na po siya, doon na lang daw po kami magkikita.

Lalaki: Miss globe ka ba?
Babae: Ay alam ko na 'yan, kasi ako lang ang mundo mo?
Lalaki: Makikitext lang ako! Ang landi mo!

Pedro: Tara pare, harlem shake tay.

Juan: Ay, ayoko!
Pedro: Bakit naman?
Juan: Baka mahal eh, coke float na lang.

Si Juan umorder ng pizza
Clerk: Sir, ilang slice po ang gagawin naming sa pizza mo, 6 or 8?
Juan: 6 slice na lang, baka hindi ko maubos pag 8 kasi.

Pedro: Alam mo pare sobrang sikat na talaga si Manny Pacquiao noh?
Juan: Bakit naman pare?
Pedro: Bumili kasi ako ng brand new cellphone, may option na send to many.
Juan: Ang bobo mo talaga, matagal na iyan ngayon mo lang napanasin? Hindi naman nagreprely iyan eh.

Bf: Kainis si Juan, mukha daw akong magsasaka kapag katabi kita.
Gf: Hahaha, huwag muna pansinin, nagbibiro lang yun. Bakit niya naman nasabi?
Bf: Kasi mukha ka daw kalabaw.

Teacher: Class imagine niyo na kayo ay MILYONARYO, isulat niyo sa papel ang inyong mga activities.
Students: Yes Ma'am...
Teacher: Juan bakit hindi ka pa nagsusulat?
Juan: Ma'am, inaantay ko pa po ang secretary ko.

Juan: Nay alam niyo pinatayo ako ni itay sa bus kanina may pinaupo siyang babae.
Nanay: Anak magandang asal 'yun.
Juan: Kahit nakakandong po ako kay itay?

Crossword Puzzle

PAHALANG

- 1 Ikopya
- 6 Ilahok
- 11 Sagrado
- 12 Kipot
- 13 Ipasak
- 14 Inukit
- 15 Bayan sa Bataan
- 16 Raisins; Tagalog
- 17 Dike
- 19 Nipa
- 20 Umandar
- 24 Nanay
- 25 Ikakatay
- 29 Nilalagay sa sasabuning manok
- 31 Matamis na panimpla
- 32 Blue; Tagalog
- 33 Tatak ng bola
- 34 Guhit ng liwanag

- 35 Isangga
- 36 Tagulamin
- 37 Tinularan

PABABA

- 1 Pagbaba
- 2 Uri ng saging
- 3 Buti
- 4 Prusisyon
- 5 Itatagal
- 6 Utak
- 7 Iniigiban
- 8 Bintang
- 9 Taal
- 10 Ibigay sa kasama
- 18 Maginaw
- 20 Instrumento
- 21 Umasa
- 22 Pagkaing gawa sa saging
- 23 Nasumbatan

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							
32										
34										
36										

Answer to last puzzle

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

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