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characters

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**220,000**  
Kapampangans put  
on grand show for  
Leni-Kiko

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# 220,000 Kapampangans put on grand show for Leni-Kiko



**P**AMPANGA, Philippines – Pampanga's dominant political dynasty and its most famous and powerful politician have endorsed the Uniteam tandem of Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. and Sara Duterte.

But on the Day of Valor, 220,000 Kapampangans stood tall for opposition candidate Vice President Leni Robredo and Senator Kiko Pangilinan.

The Manalakaran Pampanga grand rally – which drew a crowd of 220,000 according to local organizers – lit up the night around the Robinsons Starmills ground in San Fernando, Pampanga, for Robredo and Pangilinan just four days after former president Gloria Arroyo forecast “a landslide” for Marcos-Duterte.

From morning till late afternoon, the grand rally venue looked like a grand art and food festival as volunteers in the province outdid each other in offering free food and crafts and setting up impromptu swap meets for campaign paraphernalia.

Robredo, who lost to Marcos here in the 2016 vice-presidential race, spoke in conciliatory words, and not just for the province that rejected her.

While she acknowledged the huge crowd awash in her trademark pink, the Vice President stressed that as a president, she would represent all political colors.

Our obligation is to serve our people regardless of color. To be president not just of those who wear pink, but of all colors. Our belief is that after the elections, partisan politics should end.

Coming from her April 8 rally in Dagupan that drew a crowd of 78,000, Robredo's Pampanga event bolsters her claim of a surge in momentum that the latest surveys have barely captured.

## Loyal Kiko

But the night's biggest drama was reserved for Pangilinan, who has been shoved aside by newcomers to Robredo's side.

These politicians, mostly Duterte allies and incumbents who command votes in their provinces and localities, have been pushing for a voting tandem with Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte, the daughter of President Rodrigo Duterte.

Farmers from San Nicolas in San Simon, Pampanga, surprised Pangilinan onstage.

Their message was simple: If politicians won't raise your hands, we will.

In a hectic day that also included a rally in Baler, Aurora, Robredo showed her mettle as a leader.

She reminded supporters to shower Pangilinan with as much

care and attention as they give her.

## Food for soul and belly

The grand rally put together three local festivals: the Sisig Festival, the Sinukwan Festival, and the Giant Lantern Festival.

Kapampangan volunteers showed why their province is known as the country's culinary capital, serving 1,000 kilos of sisig along with community pantries of various food served for free all day during the event.



Holding the biggest stage yet for the Leni-Kiko tandem, the event gathered Filipino artists, including Nadine Lustre, Itchyworms, Sam Concepcion, Mayonnaise, Jolina Magdangal, Rivermaya, Alex Calleja, The Company, Miles Ocampo, Bukas Palad, Jonalyn Viray, Pepe Herrera, K Brosas, Nikki Valdez, Kokoy de Santos, Elijah Canlas, Ogie Diaz, Mama Loi, Gab Valenciano, and Mela Habijan, together with Neri Colmenares, Juana Change, and Sharon Cuneta in one holiday celebration.

The lighting of three giant lanterns made especially for Robredo and Pangilinan ended the rally beaming with hope for the country in the upcoming 2022 elections.

Robredo and Pangilinan also met with Governor Dennis Pineda, Vice Governor Lilia Pineda, and other Pampanga officials at the Provincial Capitol earlier Saturday.

– with reports from [Mara Cepeda/Rappler.com](https://www.marapineda.com)



# PRRD, Xi seek 'peaceful' resolution to Russia-Ukraine conflict

**P**RESIDENT Rodrigo R. Duterte (PRRD) and Chinese President Xi Jinping have expressed hope for a peaceful settlement of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, Malacañang said.

This was after Duterte and Xi, in a tele summit, admitted that they were "deeply concerned" about the conflict, the Office of the President (OP) said in a press statement issued late Friday night.

"President Duterte and President Xi expressed deep concern over developments in other parts of the world, including in Ukraine. The two Presidents renewed the call for a peaceful resolution of the situation through dialogue in accordance with international law," the Palace said.

Duterte and Xi held a virtual meeting in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and amid their worry over a potential spillover of the war into Asia, including the Philippines and China.

On March 31, Duterte maintained his neutral stance on the Russia-Ukraine crisis but warned that China "would not sit idly" in the event Moscow resorts to nuclear war.

The Philippines is one of the countries that voted in favor of a resolution removing Russia from the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council.

It has also expressed readiness to accept Ukrainian refugees amid the ongoing war and humanitarian crisis in the European state.

The Russian offensive, launched on February 24, has displaced more than 10 million people, based on data from the UN.

About 4.2 million of the displaced individuals have fled Ukraine's borders.

The UN also reported that at least 1,417 individuals were killed, while 2,038 have been injured in Ukraine as of April 3.

Maintaining peace in South China Sea

Meanwhile, Duterte and Xi also discussed the long-standing territorial dispute between the Philippines and China in the South China Sea (SCS).

Duterte and Xi, Malacañang said, agreed to settle disputes diplomatically and maintain peace and order in the strategic waters.

"The leaders stressed the need to exert all efforts to maintain peace, security, and stability in the South China Sea by exercising restraint, dissipating tensions, and working on a mutually agreeable framework for functional cooperation," the Palace

and concluding the "Code of Conduct" on the South China Sea.

"Both leaders reaffirmed the centrality of Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and renewed the commitment to bring peace, progress, and prosperity in the region," the Palace said.

'Greater space for partnership, cooperation'

Duterte and Xi also acknowledged the improvement in Manila and Beijing's relations under the Philippine president's watch.

"The leaders took stock of and

The OP said Duterte and Xi acknowledged the importance of mutual support to defeat the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19).

The two underscored the need to make vaccines available to nations with low supply to ensure global and regional economic recovery.

"The leaders committed to work even more closely to defeat the COVID-19 pandemic and agreed to explore constructive ways to jumpstart interaction and exchanges through, among others, mutual recognition of vaccine certificates, streamlining health protocols, and resumption of commercial flights," it said.

Other global, regional developments

Duterte and Xi discussed other global and regional issues, including the need to address climate change, the Palace said.

"President Duterte and President Xi also agreed on the need for both the Philippines and China to work closely together to address the impacts of climate change and to ensure that the voice of the developing world will be heard in all relevant climate change fora," it said.

The two leaders, the OP said, also considered the elevation of Philippines-China bilateral relations into a "Comprehensive Strategic Cooperation" as a "milestone achievement

that demonstrated the commitment of the Philippines and China to continue building on the gains of the previous years towards the future."

Malacañang described the hour-long telesummit as "open, warm, and positive."

Joining Duterte at the virtual summit were Climate Change Commission Vice Chairperson Secretary Robert Borje, acting Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro, and Deputy Assistant Secretary Myca Magnolia Fischer of the Department of Foreign Affairs' (DFA) Office of Asian and Pacific Affairs. Philippine News Agency



said.

On Tuesday, Duterte reassured China of its good ties with the Philippines, saying the two countries need not quarrel because of their overlapping claims in the SCS.

The OP echoed Duterte's recent statement, noting the two leaders' commitment to seek "positive engagements" to settle the maritime disputes.

"Both leaders acknowledged that even while disputes existed, both sides remained committed to [broadening] the space for positive engagements, which reflected the dynamic and multidimensional relations of the Philippines and China," Malacañang said.

Duterte and Xi both emphasized the importance of continuing discussions

reviewed Philippines and China ties over the last six years and described the trajectory of relations as 'positive' and created greater space for partnership and cooperation," the OP said.

Malacañang said the two leaders, recognizing the gains of the Philippines and China's economic and infrastructure cooperation, agreed to further enhance two-way trade and investments and continue partnership for the Duterte government's "Build, Build, Build" (BBB) infrastructure program.

"The leaders also stressed the need to open up access to goods and services and work for a balance of trade that would reflect a healthy state of economic partnership," it added.

Fighting COVID-19 together



# NATION NEWS

BY: **JournalnewsOnline**  
www.journalnews.com.ph

## Sara warns vs cheating, poll fraud

**L**ate Monday night, LAKAS-Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD) vice presidential candidate Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte said she will not condone any form of “cheating” on May 9 presidential elections.

Duterte made her statement following reports of pre-shaded ballots that included her name in the absentee voting in Singapore and in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

“I never have and will never condone cheating. I won my past elections because the people voted for me,” Duterte said.

“Reports about pre-shaded ballots discovered during the absentee voting in Singapore and Dubai are not to be taken lightly. That my name was allegedly pre-shaded, along with some senatorial candidates, is grossly disconcerting,” Duterte said.

As a politician, Duterte said, “my experience has taught me that Filipinos do not respect those who cheat and engage in election fraud.”

“And I take with great pride in the fact that my history in politics has never been tainted by cheating, fraud, and other election irregularities that could question my integrity and leadership,” she said.

Duterte said the “legal team of Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats will officially request the Commission on Elections (Comelec) to conduct an investigation into the allegation of electoral irregularities in Dubai and Singapore. The same action is also to be requested from the Comelec for future similar reports and allegations – if any.”

“Let me also take this opportunity to call on all Filipinos both in the Philippines and overseas to be vigilant against electoral fraud and ensure that your votes are protected. It is our collective responsibility to make sure that the 2022 elections is safe, free, fair, and credible. Daghang salamat,” Duterte pointed out.

“Mahalin natin ang Pilipinas!” Duterte said.

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## BARMM govs wont allow cheating against Marcos

**F**ULLY aware of the massive cheating that happened in 2016 elections that robbed presidential frontrunner Ferdinand ‘Bongbong’ Marcos of the vice presidency, Mindanao governors on Sunday have vowed that they will not allow that he be deceived again in the coming May 9 elections.

This, as Sultan Kudarat Gov. Suharto Mangudadatu has called on all local officials who support Marcos not be complacent and protect the votes cast by their constituents and make sure that they were counted on May 9.

There are 2.1 million registered voters in BARMM and Mangudadatu predicted that Marcos can get 70% of the votes in the coming elections. “lyong ARMM region, now as known as ‘BARMM,’ ginagamit sa mga pandadaya sa mga lugar eh. Wala pang eleksyon doon na hindi nagkaroon ng dayaan,” said Mangudadatu.

He said that in the coming days, many more local officials from Mindanao will also express support for Marcos’ candidacy.

Mangudadatu added that Sulu Gov. Abdusakur M. Tan will also announce his full and solid support to BBM in the coming days.

“This is the right time na lumabas sa siya at magbigay ng suporta dahil magkaibigan naman talaga sila ni BBM,” said Mangudadatu.

Gov. Tan has 15 unopposed mayors running under him from the 19 municipalities in Sulu.

Lanao del Sur Gov. Mamintal Adiong had earlier expressed support for BBM along with Tawi-Tawi Gov. Ysmael Sali.

According to Mangudadatu, the coming presidential election is different from 2016 because President Duterte does not endorse any candidate, “so all local officials in Mindanao are free to give support to the candidates they want to help”.

“Noong 2016 talagang may pressure from (president) Noyon Aquino at kahit mga PNP noon. Pero ngayon, hindi na sila makakaporma,” he added.

When asked about the issue of harassment by Muslim terrorists, Mangudadatu hoped that their intimidation would be reduced because even datus in Mindanao now support Marcos’ candidacy.

“Nakikingig at nirespeto nila (Muslim extremists) ang mga datu natin,” he said. He also said that they are gradually introducing the correct message regarding the wrong view of some of their Muslim brothers against Martial Law declared by former President Ferdinand E. Marcos.

“Kasi ang messaging nga namin ngayon, kayo ngang taga-Manila meron kayong sariling Martial Law. Kami mayroon din, ngunit we opened our hearts and accepted BBM and we believe na siya lang ang pag-asa natin na mabago ang bansang Pilipinas,” he added.

Gov. Mangudadatu, along with his wife Bai Mariam who is now running as governor of Maguindanao were among 15 governors who met with Marcos last Sunday night at BBM Headquarters in Mandaluyong City.

Those who also met with BBM were Quirino Governor Dax Cua, Tarlac Gov. Susan Yap, Isabela Gov. Rodito Albano, Romblon Gov. Jose Riano, and Rizal Gov. Casimiro ‘Jun’ Ynares III.

Also with them were Misamis Occidental Gov. Philip Tan, Mindoro Occidental Gov. Eduardo Gadiano, Surigao del Sur Gov. Alexander Pimentel, Quezon Gov. Danilo Suarez, Batangas Gov. Hermilando Mandanas, Mountain Province Gov. Bonifacio Lacwasan and Bohol Gov. Art Yap.

Previously, Marcos also met with 10 governors last April 2 at BBM Headquarters who also expressed support for his candidacy.

Narvacan, Ilocos Sur Mayor Chavit Singson, who was at BBM HQ this Sunday said that 90% or 73 of the 81 governors in the country have already pledged to solidly support Marcos.

According to Singson, the support of the governors and mayors is a big thing because they have their own leaders in their respective provinces who will also serve as watchers during the counting of ballots.

“Kaya double time tayo. Double time sa kampanya at double time rin sa pagbabantay para hindi tayo madaya,” said Singson

[-journalnews.com/ph](http://journalnews.com/ph)



## Salceda pushes for opening of tourism, promoting FDI

**H**OUSE Committee on Ways and Means and Albay 2nd District Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda has urged the government to direct the full resumption of all restricted tourism activities and promote more foreign direct investments (FDI).

Salceda made his statement in response to the February jobs report, which indicates that the number of jobless Filipinos reached 3.13 million from 2.93 million in January.

Salceda adds that inflation remains a threat to jobs in FDI-driven industries such as the BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) sector and electronics.

“We really have to open up because the fundamentals will tend to be a little less rosy due to inflation,” Salceda said.

“That means growth will come not because prospects are better, but because we opened up priorly existing legal impediments, such as restrictions on tourism due to COVID-19, or because of our FDI rules,” Salceda added.

Salceda cautioned that “with elevated inflation, firms will be less certain investment will be profitable. So, fundamentally, the incentive to invest gets a little dampened.”

“Of course, we have not maximized our investment horizons due to FDI restrictions and due to COVID-19 rules. So, let’s open up, so we can create jobs,” Salceda added.

“That will include a rollback of tourism restriction. Tourism accounts for anywhere between 12 to 14% of GDP.”

Salceda says that the issuance of the “Strategic Investment Priorities Plan”, set to be by May 2022, as well as the issuance of the implementing rules and regulations of the amendments to the Public Service Act, Retail Trade Liberalization Act, and the Foreign Investment Act, which Salceda also principally authored, will unleash “previously untapped, restricted, or hesitant foreign investment.”

“That will create jobs, too,” Salceda remarked.

Salceda also outlined some remaining “risk factors” that the government will have to “counteract” to protect jobs.

“One, the US is raising interest rates. That tends to dampen inbound investments to the Philippines, so we have to watch out for that.”

“Two, we need to make sure we don’t experience the kind of COVID surges that other countries are experiencing now. Our hospitals are okay, but we need to keep building more immunity. Doctors and experts suggest that variety in vaccines is causing us to be more immune to new variants than our neighbors,” Salceda added.

“Finally, we need to make sure we don’t blow our recovery with a sudden withdrawal of [the] expansionary monetary policy. The BSP [Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas] has to be careful with adjustments in our own interest rates so that we don’t unnecessarily tamp down on the momentum of our recovery,” Salceda said.

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## Two Filipinos injured in separate attacks in New York

**T**wo Filipinos were recently assaulted and robbed in two different locations in New York City just a day apart.

On Monday, at a Midtown Manhattan McDonald's, no one bothered to help 53-year-old Melvin Dizon, as he was being beaten unconscious and robbed while he was getting breakfast.

Customers and employees inside the fast-food chain just stood there and watched as Dizon called out for help and for somebody to call the police, but no one did.

A security video provided by the New York Police Department to ABS-CBN News showed Dizon's attacker coming up from behind and hitting him twice, before flinging him against a wall and knocking him down with a hard punch.

The attacker kicked Dizon, before taking his wallet and cellphone, then fled the scene. The victim sustained a severe head injury and is currently admitted at the Bellevue Hospital in critical but stable condition.

Philippine Consul General Elmer Cato said he is perturbed by the incident.

"This is the first time we have heard Filipinos expressing fears of being attacked in New York... We believe cases of hate crimes are underreported. They're



afraid of retaliations and a number of incidents involve undocumented Filipinos. They might be deported. Filipinos also play down racial insults. They'd rather not report the incidents to the police," Cato told ANC.

Cato noted that Monday's incident brings to 33 the number of anti-Asian hate and criminal incidents involving Filipinos, that have been reported to or monitored by the Philippine Consulate General since last

year. Cato added that it's also the seventh incident targeting a member of the Filipino community this year alone.

On Sunday, a 73-year-old Filipino man was just buying lottery tickets at a Midtown Manhattan store near Times Square when a man tried to grab his wallet. He resisted and kept his wallet, but after crossing the street to get away from the scene, the attacker followed him and pushed the unnamed elderly Pinoy to the ground on

8th Avenue & 40th.

While it is not being investigated as a hate crime, reports say the victim believes he heard some racial slurs. The Filipino suffered pain, swelling and abrasion around his left eye. He was transported to the Bellevue Hospital and was in stable condition.

The victim retained his wallet but the attacker, identified as Dominic Staton, fled on foot to a nearby subway station.

Staton, a homeless man, has been arrested and charged with attempted robbery, attempted grand larceny and assault. He was ordered held on \$40,000 cash and \$120,000 bond at his arraignment in Manhattan Criminal Court on Tuesday. He is scheduled to be in court on Friday.

On Wednesday, dozens of Filipinos are expected to attend a 'Rise Up' solidarity rally in New York City's Foley Square to call for an end to anti-Asian hate.

Two weeks ago, a 67-year-old Filipina was brutally assaulted at her doorstep in Yonkers, New York. Cato said they have reached out to New York authorities since the string of hate crimes began last year, and that they have been teaching Filipinos self-defense lessons.

**-Don Tagala | TFC News New York**

## Over 1,400 people stranded in various ports due to 'Agaton' — PCG

**M**ANILA, Philippines — More than 1,400 people were stranded in various ports in the country due to the effect of 'Agaton', the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) reported.

In its bulletin, the PCG said that as of Sunday, April 10, it monitored a total of 1,419 stranded passengers, drivers, and cargo helpers and 951 rolling cargoes in various ports in the Visayas and Mindanao areas.

At least 71 vessels and six motorbancas, meanwhile, are taking shelter in Eastern Visayas, Bicol, and North Eastern Mindanao regions.

Of the total number, PCG said around 502 individuals, 310 rolling cargoes, and 10 vessels were stranded in the following areas:

- Liloan Port Ferry Terminal
- Port of San Ricardo
- Port of Ormoc
- Port of Isabel
- Port of Bato



- Port of Balwarteco
- Port of Sta. Clara
- Port of Dapdap
- Port of San Isidro
- Port of Tacloban

Around 503 passengers, drivers, and helpers, and 473 rolling cargoes were also stranded in the ports of

Matnog and Bulan.

Meanwhile, in Northeastern Mindanao, the coast guard said around 414 individuals and 168 rolling cargoes were stranded in the following ports:

- Surigao Base Port
- Lipata Port
- Feeder Port

- Port of Placer
- Nasipit Port
- Beaching Area

The state weather bureau PAGASA said Agaton has maintained its strength as it moves slowly westward.

Agaton is likely to remain a tropical storm during the forecast period. It is seen to "move erratically or remain almost stationary" over east Leyte and southern part and coastal waters of Samar Island "due to weak steering environment."

"By Tuesday afternoon or evening, gradually accelerating turn east southeastward or eastward is expected as Agaton undergoes a binary interaction with the incoming tropical cyclone with international name 'Malakas,'" PAGASA said in

its bulletin.

The storm will then weaken into a "remnant low" around Wednesday night or Thursday morning as it "assimilates circulation."

**-Robie de Guzman**

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# Everything you need to know before watching "He's Into Her Season 2"

**H**ey Bearkadas, season 2 is within reach! "He's Into Her," the hit series from iWantTFC, ABS-CBN Entertainment, and Star Cinema, returns after a year, bringing more 'kilig' and intrigue to viewers worldwide. The adaptation of the 2013 novel of the same name by Maxinejiji immediately gained attention in 2021, being the most watched series on iWantTFC and was recognized by several award-giving bodies like the 2021 Asian Academy Creative Awards wherein it won the Best Original Program by Streamer/OTT.

In this latest season, viewers will continue to follow the love story of Maxpein (Belle Mariano) and Deib (Donny Panglinan) and their friends in Benison High. But before we feel the 'kilig' once more, here are some of the things that we can all get excited about as the new season quickly approaches.

## 1. New faces



A new season calls for new characters! Watch out for more South Bay cuties - Jaybee (River Joseph), Kurt (Zach Castañeda), and Digz (CJ Salonga). Randall's (Jeremiah Lisbo) sister Rhumzell (Reich Alim) will also be introduced in the upcoming season. Meanwhile, find out how M (JC Alcantara), Dom (Shanaia Gomez), and Karlle (Rajo Serrano) will play vital roles in the lives of Max, Deib, Dale (Turs Daza), Michiko (Kaori Oinuma), and the rest of the Bearkada. BINI member Mikha Lim will also have her acting debut as she plays Elle, Max's stepsister.

## 2. Love triangles

Trouble may be on the horizon for Max and Deib when trust issues cause a rift in their relationship. The plot gets more interesting as Max will find solace in her ex-boyfriend Randall, which will result in Deib getting extremely jealous.



But Max and Deib aren't the only ones who could potentially face a threat to their romance as lovers Lee (Joao Constancia) and Naii (Criza Taa) might encounter problems as well. In one of the teasers of the series, a love triangle seems to be brewing within the Bearkada between Lee, Naii, and Ysay (Vivoree Esclito) - which will probably stem from Lee and Ysay's deep connection.



## 3. Next level drama

While people are still clueless about what the new season brings, based on the teasers and trailers, "HIH" season 2 is looking to have more drama involved. In particular, fans saw that Max and Deib's relationship will encounter bumps and cracks as it seems that Benison's team captain has some issues with his girlfriend.

As to the reasons for these issues, we still have no leads but it is important to remember that season one left us with a cliffhanger about the shooting incident involving Dale, Deib's brother, and Max's uncle, Tito Boyet (Janus del Prado). Aside from that, we also see Deib facing expulsion as his past actions begin to haunt him.

## 4. Fresh new soundtrack



If fans fell in love with Max and Deib's dreamy duet of "Sigurado" in season one, they can expect a new soundtrack for season two that echoes the journey of their relationship called "Kahit Na, Kahit Pa." In a recent virtual media conference, head writer Vanessa Valdez got fans excited when she called the track the new "love theme" for Max and Deib.

Although the complete official soundtrack has yet to be released, these songs will surely tug at the heartstrings of viewers with tracks "Best Time" by BGYO, "Did I Let You Go" by Jon Guelas, and more songs by The Nameless Kids and Trisha Denise.

Fans will surely have the 'best time' in the new season, but before that they can first enjoy a special primer of the series, which will be available for free worldwide on April 13 and they can binge-watch all of the episodes of the first season on iWantTFC. Also be the first ones to watch how Deib and Max's love story progresses by watching advanced episodes on the iWantTFC app (iOS and Android) and website (iwanttfc.com).

The series will premiere first on iWantTFC on April 20 for iWantTFC premium users outside of the Philippines and all iWantTFC users in the Philippines and Indonesia can watch it for free on April 22, with a new episode dropping every Wednesday for iWantTFC premium users outside the Philippines and every Friday for iWantTFC users in the Philippines and Indonesia. The series will make its broadcast premiere on April 24 on Kapamilya Channel, Kapamilya Online Live, and A2Z, with a new episode dropping every Sunday.

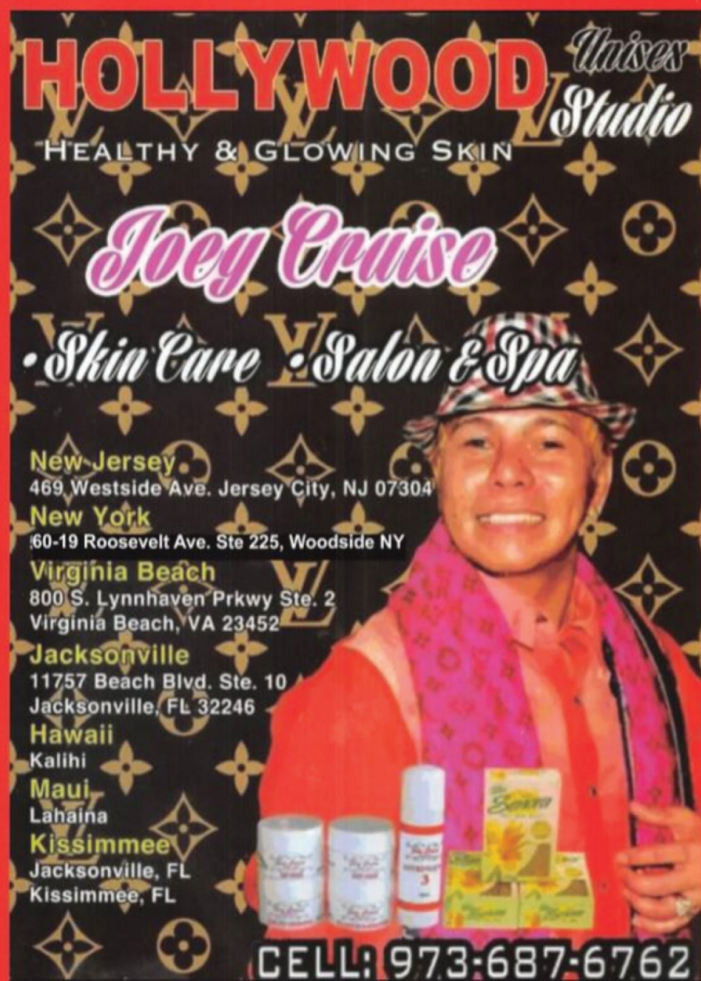


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# HEALTH & WELLNESS

## How Covid-19 Is Affecting Your Sleep and How You Can Fix It, According to a Sleep Scientist



**H**ere's how you can take back control of your sleep schedule and daily routines despite the chaos of the pandemic.

It's no secret that Covid-19 has overturned all our lives and that the toll of that on our physical and mental health has been significant.

As a matter of fact, in a scientific brief released by the World Health Organization (WHO) this month, it found that in 2020, the global prevalence of anxiety and depression increased by a whopping 25 per cent with unprecedented stress cited as the biggest cause.

Of course, with an increase in stress comes many issues, the most significant being a disruption to our sleep. In a global sleep survey conducted by health technology company Philips in 2021, it found that 40 per cent of Singaporeans said that Covid-19 is negatively impacting their ability to sleep well, while only 21 per cent feel well-rested most mornings.

True enough, with ever-changing restrictions and having to pivot between working from home and the office frequently with split teams, it's no wonder why more of us are struggling to form a consistent routine and to ensure that we're rested.

"A lack of a consistent daily routine can eventually lead to sleeping problems," explained Dr Conor Heneghan, the Lead Sleep Research Scientist at Fitbit. "Setting a consistent routine, which includes a regular sleep schedule, is one of the most important things to ensure quality sleep so you can enjoy the subsequent benefits," he continued.

So the question now is, what can we do about it? After all, it's one thing to admit that the pandemic is causing major sleep problems in our population and another to actually do something to solve the issue.

If you are struggling, keep reading to find out Dr Heneghan's Covid-19 specific tips to managing your sleep routine amid the stress.

### Your activity and diet play a significant role



When the pandemic first began, many people were excited by the novelty of working from home, particularly because it allowed us to cook meals, work out and get our personal tasks done while also working.

Three years later though and many of us are burnt out and overworked to the point where we struggle to factor regular exercise and healthy meals into our routines simply because we are too busy working or just too tired.

However, regular exercise is one of the best things you can do to improve your sleep.

"Studies have shown that moving during the day can support better sleep quality and minimise anxiety too," Dr Heneghan shared.

This can then lead to better sleep and more energy throughout the day which is why it is well worth your time to analyse your schedule and to factor exercise into it. If you are struggling to find the time or energy after work, try waking up earlier to work out or slotting a quick sweat session in during your lunch break.

"Avoid vigorous activity too close to bedtime though, especially less than one hour before trying to sleep," cautioned Dr Heneghan. Exercising too late at night can give you too much energy and adrenaline which can work against you and make it even harder to sleep.

While tiring your body out during a workout to improve your sleep may seem obvious, you also need to factor your diet into your sleep plan.

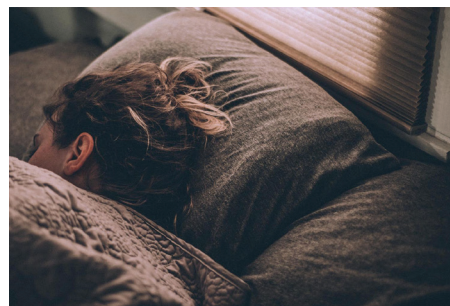
"A balanced diet is another factor in overall wellness, including sleep, but by the same token, poor sleep can also impact your appetite and body weight because it affects your appetite-regulating hormones, leading to more cravings, often for higher-calorie foods," explained Dr Heneghan.

While it may not be feasible for you to cook a full meal every day, you can try simple solutions like ordering healthier food or making healthy sandwiches and wraps which can be prepped in advance and typically require minimal effort.

You should also watch your alcohol intake because having alcohol too close to bedtime tends to have a negative effect on your sleep.

"Alcohol might make you fall asleep a little faster, but you're more likely to get restless throughout the night because it can disrupt your REM sleep, a restorative stage when you're deep in your dreams. If REM is interrupted, it's common to feel drowsy the next day," said Dr Heneghan.

### Go to bed when it's time to go to bed



Being consistent and intentional is really the first step to getting control of your sleep because when you don't have a plan, you are more likely to find yourself struggling to sleep at an appropriate time daily.

One tip from Dr Heneghan that he applies in his own life is to have a consistent 30-minute bedtime wind-down routine that can include activities like light reading, meditation, listening to music or journaling.

This will help get your mind in the right headspace to be relaxed and sleep.

"When work overlaps with home, subtle habits that people may not realise can impact sleep including staying exposed to bright lights until very close to bedtime or engaging in over-stimulating mental content such as difficult work emails," Dr Heneghan said. This is why it is so important to create a ritual and habit to set aside time for winding down, particularly during the pandemic.

Another important aspect is the ambience of your bedroom. Dr Heneghan recommends keeping the room as dark as possible and to ensure that your room

is neither too cold nor hot. You can also invest in a sleep spray to make your room even cosier and to help you relax.

"The best thing you can do for your body, regardless of your stress levels or to-do list that evening, is to go to bed when it's time for bed so you maintain your established sleep schedule and feel ready to take on the day the next morning," said Dr Heneghan pointedly.

Saying that, sleeping early is only one part of creating a healthy sleeping routine. You also need to ensure that you are waking up at a consistent time every day (yes, even at the weekends).

"While you may be tempted to sleep in on the weekends, in general, your body responds best to a consistent bedtime and wake-up time. Therefore, if manageable, try not to make too large of a difference between your weekday and weekend schedules," Dr Heneghan said.

### Stop snoozing



This is going to be a radical suggestion, but if you want to feel more rested when you wake up, you're going to have to stop hitting the snooze button.

According to Dr Heneghan, it's common to assume that pressing the snooze button multiple times will give you more sleep. However, it could be doing even more damage.

"Many people set multiple alarms in the morning because they still feel tired when they wake up and think that snoozing their alarm will give them extra minutes of sleep back," he explained. "While this is fairly common, this inconsistency of sleeping and waking can be disruptive to your sleep cycle. It's important to remember that you won't gain much back when snoozing for a few minutes."

If you struggle with this, try leaving your alarm or phone on a table further away from your bed so that you are forced to get up when it goes off.

Sleep, especially when we are dealing with a global pandemic, can be really stressful. However, acknowledging the collective struggle and then taking steps to address it can be really helpful and can propel us in the right direction to solving our increasing mental health and burnout related issues.

By: CAMILLIA DASS

Tatler



# #AgatonPH lashes Leyte, other parts of Visayas



**T**ropical Depression Agaton (Megi) triggered massive flooding and landslides in Leyte and other parts of Visayas on Monday, April 11.

Agaton first made landfall in Calicoan Island in Guiuan, Eastern Samar, at 7:30 am on Sunday, April 10, when it was still a tropical storm. It weakened into a tropical depression on Monday morning and made its second landfall in Basey, Samar, at 4 pm.

The country's first tropical cyclone for 2022 continued to bring heavy rain in some provinces and left a trail of destruction in the Leyte towns of Abuyog, Baybay, Mahaplag, and Merida. A number of houses and infrastructure, including bridges and roads, in affected provinces were either damaged or inundated.

Even before Agaton made landfall, thousands of families evacuated their homes as a safety precaution.

On social media, netizens also tweeted #LeyteNeedsHelp and #BaybayNeedsHelp as distressed residents appealed for rescue and help amid the massive flooding and landslide in Leyte.

## Leyte

Abuyog town in Leyte, one of the hardest hit by Agaton, experienced massive flooding. Landslides in the villages of Balinsasayao and Paguite made roads impassable.

Abuyog residents appealed for rescue as many barangays in the municipality were submerged in roof-level floods.

In Baybay City, rescuers transported evacuees who were trapped and affected by the landslide in Barangay Cantagnos.

Houses in Barangay Bunga in Baybay City were buried by a landslide. According to Sangguniang Kabataan Federation President Mark Unlu-cay, six families were reported missing on Monday.

In Merida town, the Siapno River overflowed due to the heavy downpour.

Meanwhile, local disaster management officers in Barangay Liberacion, Mahaplag town, conducted clearing operations on Monday morning as strong winds uprooted several trees along the main roads.

Some road sections in the towns of Mahaplag, Baybay, and Abuyog were not passable due to landslides, according to a Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH)-Leyte report as of 8 am on Monday.

As of 2 pm on Monday, the San Isidro, Tomas Oppus-Libertad, Maasin City road in Southern Leyte was not passable. The paved road in Barangay Santa Cruz in Maasin City was damaged following a landslide.

## Iloilo

In Barangay San Jose, Lemery town in Iloilo, a raging flood caused by Agaton

severely damaged a bridge.

Residents in NHA Tipacla, Ajuy town, experienced knee-deep flood.

Light vehicles struggled to pass through the road as flood water rose in Barangay Balanti-an, Balasan town.

## Eastern Samar

Government-owned buildings were affected by knee-deep floods caused by the tropical depression's heavy downpour in Jipapad town, Eastern Samar.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said that Agaton may weaken on Wednesday, April 13, after passing the northeastern part of Leyte and the southern parts of Samar and Eastern Samar.

— Jose Orlando Polon/Rappler.com

# Overseas voting delayed in at least 6 posts – Comelec

**M**ANILA, Philippines – Filipino voters under the jurisdiction of at least six embassies and consulates will have to wait past the first day of overseas voting, Sunday, April 10, before they can exercise their right to vote in the 2022 elections due to logistical challenges, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) announced on Sunday.

Voters under the jurisdiction of the following posts will start voting at a later date "due to logistical difficulties encountered in the shipment of election materials":  
 Philippine embassy in Wellington, New Zealand  
 Philippine embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan  
 Philippine embassy in Dili, Timor Leste  
 Philippine consulate in Milan, Italy  
 Philippine consulate in New York, USA

The Comelec also postponed voting in Shanghai, China, due to a COVID-19 surge.

The overseas voting period for the Philippine elections will run from April 10 to May 9, either through personal or postal modes of voting.

The Philippine consulate in New York announced on Saturday, April 9 (Manila time), that it had received the first of several boxes of election paraphernalia, which included vote-counting machines (VCMs). It then announced on Sunday that more boxes arrived in neighboring New Jersey.

The consulate in New York rescheduled the final testing and sealing of VCMs on Wednesday, April 13, at 9 am Eastern Time.

Boxes of election materials began arriving in New Zealand on Monday, April 11.

"We are hoping the other boxes come soonest, as there have been delays in



the mailing system. The embassy will be hard at work mailing out the ballots over the coming days," said Philippine Ambassador to New Zealand Gary Domingo in a Facebook post.

## Dismay over delays

Members of the Filipino community in New York earlier expressed outrage over the delays in the conduct of overseas voting there. In an open letter, a group of at least 64 overseas voters told Consul General Elmer Cato, Philippine Ambassador to the US Jose Manuel Romualdez, and the Comelec's Office for Overseas Voting that they considered these delays "unacceptable."

Meanwhile, Rhodney Pasion, secretary general of Migrante Europe, said that overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in Italy were also dismayed at the delayed delivery of ballots.

OFWs here in Bologna, Italy, were expecting to receive their ballots today [April 10] as many had sent letters signifying their intent to personally retrieve their ballots [at the embassy].

The Philippine embassy in Rome, however, was able to begin voting on time on Sunday. Voters were able to pick up their election packets at the embassy.

Over disenfranchisement fears, the Comelec announced on Wednesday, April 6, that it passed a resolution formalizing the "vote anywhere" scheme for overseas Filipinos.

Here, Filipino voters registered in a certain area may vote in a different post if they happen to be there, as long as they file a manifest to intent to vote. For example, if a Filipino registered in Singapore happens to be in Hong Kong during the month-long voting period, they may vote in Hong Kong if they signify intent.

There are more than 1.6 million overseas Filipinos set to vote in the 2022 elections.

— Rappler.com



# “A Family Affair” lead stars share taping experiences, introduce respective characters



A few days after Star Creatives TV confirmed that Ivana Alawi, Sam Milby, Gerald Anderson, Jake Ejercito, and Jameson Blake will be the headliners of the upcoming teleserye “A Family Affair” by posting their pictures on Instagram, the production unit released on Friday, April 8, a short video wherein the cast talked about their initial experiences in their lock-in tapings and their respective characters.

While it is expected to be intense and laden with drama, as the title is stylized to include what appears to be a drop of blood and the image of the logo posted on IG was captioned, “In all your affairs, one that you should protect, is that of the family’s, even if it costs your love and your life,” the vibe behind the scenes appears to be completely chill and fun.

Being the only rose among the thorns, Ivana, who will play CherryRed, seems to be not only the object of affection of the four lads, but of their mischievousness as well, as seen in the video.

The four talented and dashing heartthrobs will be the Estrella Brothers, with Sam as the eldest named Dave, succeeded by Gerald and Jake as the middle children Paco and Seb, respectively, and Jameson as the youngest named Drew.



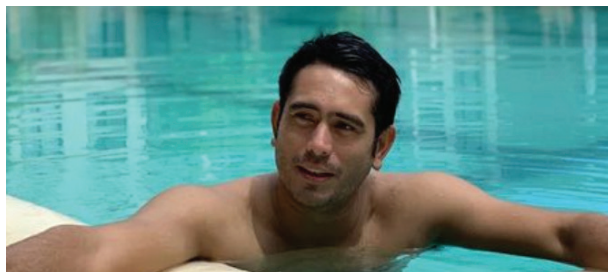
As they began filming in Masbate last March, Jameson revealed that they’re already in their second cycle of lock-in taping and “everybody is getting along with each other.” Gerald imparted how they’ve been enjoying each other’s company since their first lock-in taping, not to mention the beauty of their location, in which they’re the first ones to shoot there.

Sam went on to share their new experiences, such as horseback riding, rodeo, and wrestling with cows, and how they’re able to still enjoy their bonding moments despite the heavy scenes. Jake, on the other hand, disclosed how he used to struggle a bit in their first cycle, but he has gotten more comfortable with his co-stars.

Ivana echoed their statements by expressing how much she enjoyed their first cycle since it was her first time to go to Masbate and their experiences there made her feel as if they’re just in a vacation. She has also seemingly found a huge barkada in the amiable company of her co-actors

and the whole production team.

With regards to their characters, Gerald revealed that the Estrella family owns a ranch. Paco may have someone he holds dear to his heart, but his love for his brothers is greater, which would later on spark a conflict.



Sam divulged that Dave has to sacrifice one important thing in his life for the sake of his family.



Seb may be fun-loving and playful according to Jake, but he never fails to prioritize their family always.



Meanwhile, it’s going to be a wild rollercoaster ride for Jameson to play Drew as he tagged him as the “black sheep” and “left out” in the family.

On the other hand, Ivana shared how she’s able to relate to CherryRed since both of them has their family as top priority. She described it as “a nice story” and “exciting” as there’s “much more to it” than being a family drama.

When asked what excites them the most about the



series, Gerald uttered that it’s definitely the narrative, first and foremost.

“Yong kwento, ‘yong dynamics namin na mag-pamilya kasama si Cherry, ‘yong mga sikreto na mare-reveal, ‘yong



mga mangyayari, kung sino ‘yong kakampihan mo, kung kanino kayo nakaka-relate. And more than anything, excited ako for Ivana. It’s a beautiful project,” he stated.

Sam seconded it by saying how “good” and “solid” the story is, as well as the viewers should anticipate the reasons behind the characters’ actions and secrets that are going to be unraveled. Jake imparted how fast-paced the narrative is, while Jameson teased that viewers are going to get a glimpse of their bond in the series.

“I’m so excited kasi as soon as I read the script, it was sobrang ganda na parang gusto ko nang mag-taping the next day. Gano’n siya kaganda,” Ivana enthused. “I was very excited, especially with the whole cast kasi parang pagpasok ko, natatakot ako, kinakabahan ako, kasi siyempre, [sina] Gerald [at] Sam mga pinapanood ko lang dati.”

Then she added, “Tapos siyempre, I’m excited to work with Jake and Jameson. While I was working with them, it was really fun kasi they are all so supportive. And then parang walang ilangan kasi they are all very welcoming and they are all very friendly.”

Watch this video to get a glimpse of the cheery bond of the five lead stars! “A Family Affair” is slated to premiere soon. [-Mary Ann Bardinas](#)



# KATHNIEL'S 2 GOOD 2 BE TRUE WILL BE THE FIRST FILIPINO SERIES TO PREMIERE BOTH ON TV AND NETFLIX

**T**his summer season, it's not just the heat of the sun that has gotten us parched, but also the lack of a KathNiel project in a long while.

For those who follow both icons on social media, the two have given us content to tide us over with their heartwarming posts about each other. But few things beat the joy of watching a KathNiel project. Well, that proverbial drought is about to end as their new show, *2 Good 2 Be True*, is set to air very soon. And while a TV comeback for KathNiel has already gotten us hyped, things got even more exciting as the show is set to make Philippine TV history.

After some teasers and a few rumors, ABS CBN announced on March 12, 2022, that *2 Good 2 Be True* was going to premiere both on Philippine TV and Netflix at the same time. While the library of Filipino content on Netflix is fairly vast, this will be the first time that a local series has aired both on TV and Netflix at the same time. As arguably the premier love team of Philippine entertainment, Kathryn Bernardo and Daniel Padilla were always one to make history, lead the way, and show others how it's done. The fact that they have been together as a love team for more than 10 years and are still making history should tell you how much power they have.

This historic milestone is another impressive notch on their already heavy belt. While this will be the first time this has happened for a Filipino series, the move reminds us of K-dramas like *Business Proposal* and *Our Beloved Summer* that aired both on Netflix and Korean TV at the same time. Considering how both shows became hits, fingers crossed that it happens to this show,

too.

KATHNIEL IN A ROM COM

*2 Good 2 Be True* serves as KathNiel's first project together since *The House Arrest of Us* and first TV

project in years. Produced by RGE Unit, the series is a rom-com and follows Alisson (Bernardo) and Elorde (Padilla). In the teasers shared, we see that Elorde is a suave thief who steals something from Alisson at a hotel party. Alisson proceeds to track him down and confront him about the theft. But it seems that love is in the air as the two may be falling for one another. The series also features a cast that includes Kristel Fulgar, Pamu Pamorada, Yves Flores, Gelli de Belen, Ronaldo Valdez, Matt Evans, and Bianca De Vera.

The show will be directed by veteran Mae Cruz-Alviar who for many KathNiel fans will know from her previous projects working with the power couple. Her previous works includes directing the love team in *Crazy Beautiful You* and *Can't Help Falling in Love*. Moira Dela Torre, meanwhile, is set to lend her voice for the OST and she sang the show's official theme song *Kumpas*, a track she wrote with her husband Jason Fernandez.

Aside from the fact that the show is set to premier on Netflix, what is interesting about *2 Good 2 Be True* is that Kathryn and Daniel did this project because it was their personal choice to do so. They explained in a past interview that they wanted to do a rom-com and gravitated towards this project. They also had a hand behind the scenes as they helped work on the show's script. The official premiere date has yet to be revealed, but the full official trailer is set to drop this April 18, so we may get a date then. In the meantime, you can catch these KathNiel projects on Netflix before their new show lands on the streaming service: *Can't Help Falling in Love*, *The How of Us*, *Crazy Beautiful You*, *Barcelona: A Love Story*, *She's Dating the Gangster*.

**-BY RAFAEL BAUTISTA**



## WATCH: Piolo Pascual endorses Leni Robredo for president

**M**ANILA, Philippines – Actor Piolo Pascual has announced his support for Vice President Leni Robredo's bid for the presidency in the May 2022 elections.

In a short video uploaded on his official social media accounts on Monday, April 11, Pascual talked about the importance of unity, and how it allows Filipinos to help each other out in difficult times, most especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The video then segues to footage of the packed, pink rallies in support of Robredo across the Philippines.

"Ganito ang itsura ng totoong unity (This is what real unity looks like)," he says, a soft jab at Robredo's main rival, dictator's son Bongbong Marcos Jr., whose campaign message centers

around the term "unity."

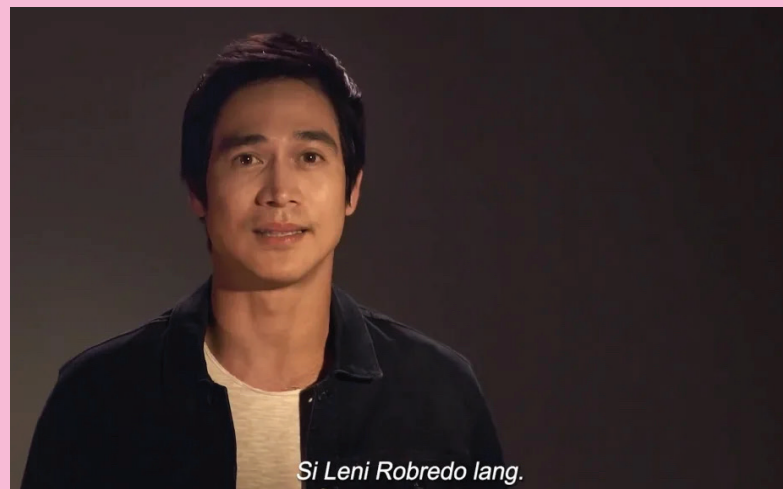
True unity is the promise that no one gets left behind, that everyone moves together to fulfill society's hopes.... This is not the unity forged among political dynasties for their own interests.

Only one person has shown this and made this felt all these years: only Leni Robredo. And it is only Leni Robredo whom I'll be voting for president this coming elections.

Pascual has been supportive of Robredo from the beginning of her vice presidency:

While he did not officially endorse anyone for president in 2016, Pascual admitted in an interview with *Pep.ph* that he was in support of then-Davao mayor and current President Rodrigo Duterte, though he had not been allowed to make any official statements at the time.

— Rappler.com





# GMA Network set to air Star Cinema movies in a historic deal with ABS-CBN Corp.



**G**MA Network once again charts new grounds for Philippine entertainment, solidifying its place as a one-stop shop for major film studios including Regal Entertainment, Inc., Viva Films, OctoArts Films, and now, Star Cinema.

Earlier today, April 5, the Network hosted a historic contract signing with ABS-CBN to license some of Star Cinema's most popular and well-loved movies.

Present during the virtual event were GMA Network President and Chief Operating Officer Gilberto R. Duavit, Jr.; Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Felipe S. Yalong; GMA Network Films, Inc. President and Programming Consultant to the Chairman and CEO Atty. Annette Gozon-Valdes; First Vice President for Program Management Department Jose Mari R. Abacan; Vice President for Corporate Affairs and Communications Angel Javier-Cruz; Assistant Vice President For Program Management Department

Mitzi Garcia; and Assistant Vice President for Corporate Communications Jojo Aquio.

In attendance from ABS-CBN were Chairman Mark Lopez; President and Chief Executive Officer Carlo L. Katigbak; Chief Operating Officer for Broadcast Cory V. Vidanes; Group Chief Financial Officer Ricardo B. Tan, Jr.; Managing Director of ABS-CBN Films Productions Olivia Lamasan; Head of International Sales and Distribution Pia B. Laurel; Vice President of Corporate Communications Kane Errol C. Choa; PR Director Christelle Belmonte; and PR Manager Tonichi Tataro.

Duavit believes that the partnership is mutually beneficial for both companies, "To us, we are very pleased because the significance of our partnership today ushers in possibility of a far broader set of conversations, potential partnerships and cooperation that will have the benefit not only mutually to GMA and ABS-CBN but as importantly,

if not perhaps more importantly, to the benefit of the public we both serve – the Filipino viewer. Looking forward, since we have as they say, broken the ice, there is great optimism that these conversations will start and continue, and we look forward to the possibility of this type of an opportunity again moving forward."

Abacan, meanwhile, shares his excitement for this collaboration, "Sa tagal ko pong nagpo-programming ng network at sa pagbili ng pelikula, tuwang-tuwa po ako na after having a lot of relationships with other majors ay madadagdagan na naman po tayo ng isang grupo na tinitingala ko magmula pa nung una. Maraming salamat, Star Cinema at ABS-CBN. And I am inviting everyone to witness this momentous affair."

Katigbak, on the other hand, says that he is hoping to bring Star Cinema movies to more viewers through this partnership, "Every storyteller's dream is to have as many people as possible experience their creations. Now,

because of the kindness of our friends at GMA, we have the special opportunity to bring our Kapamilya stories to a new audience. We hope the Kapusos find joy and inspiration in viewing our Star Cinema movies and we also look forward to a new era of friendship and cooperation within our small industry."

Some of the notable movies that will air on GMA-7 include 'Alone/Together,' 'How to Be Yours,' 'Till My Heartaches End,' 'Ang Babae sa Septic Tank,' 'Ang Cute ng Ina Mo!,' 'It Takes a Man and a Woman,' 'Just The Way You Are,' 'Fantastica,' 'Can We Still Be Friends?,' 'Finally Found Someone,' 'No Other Woman,' 'Won't Last A Day Without You,' 'Must Be...Love,' 'The Panti Sisters,' 'Isa Pa With Feelings,' 'James & Pat & Dave,' 'Kay Tagal Kang Hinintay,' 'Feng Shui,' 'Suddenly It's Magic,' and 'I Love You, Hater.'





# SPORTS NEWS

## Alex Eala reaches semis of Thailand ITF event

**M**ANILA, Philippines – Alex Eala's return to the Asian tennis scene has so far gone well as she defeated Momoko Kobori of Japan in the

quarterfinals of the ITF W25 Chiang Rai on Friday, April 8 at the Chiang Rai Sports Center in Thailand.

The 16-year-old Eala, ranked 533rd in the world singles rankings, prevailed in straight sets over the 23-year-old Japanese, 6-3, 6-3.

Seeing action again in Asia after four years and in her first pro event in the continent, Eala has been in sharp form in her three singles matches thus far in this \$25,000 event in Chiang Rai, a city in the northern part of Thailand.

Against Kobori, Eala broke serve twice in the opening set and displayed dominance against her older rival.

Eala sustained her momentum in the second

set as she immediately broke Kobori's serve in the opening game.

Although Kobori had her moments in the second set as she too broke serve twice, Eala would

not allow her to get back in the match as the Filipina prodigy broke serve three more times to close out their quarters encounter.

Eala got off to a slow start in the tournament as she labored to get past Katarina Kozarov of Serbia in the opening round, 4-6, 6-4, 6-1. In the second round, Eala made short work of local bet Patcharin Cheapchandej of

Thailand, 6-3, 6-4.

The victory over Kobori, who upset fellow Japanese and fourth seed Chihiro Maramatsu in the second round, propelled Eala to her first semifinal appearance this year in the pro circuit. She will be facing Yexin Ma of China on Saturday for a chance to book a berth in Sunday's finals.

Eala has already committed to joining the Philippine tennis team that will see action in the Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam this May. Her campaign in the ITF events in Thailand forms part of her preparation for the SEA Games.

Meanwhile, Philippine team mainstay Francis Casey Alcantara and Japanese partner Shuichi Sekiguchi fell to second seeds Francesco Villardo and Samuel Vincent Ruggeri of Italy, 6-2, 6-3, on Wednesday in the quarterfinals of the ITF M15 Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt.

Alcantara, who is also gearing up for the SEA Games, has been in Egypt since early March where he has already seen action in two ITF doubles events.

—ARIEL IAN CLARITO  
 Rappler.com

## Alyssa Valdez completes redemption arc as PVL Finals MVP

**A**NTIPOLO, Philippines – Alyssa Valdez saved her best for last in the 2022 Premier Volleyball League (PVL) Open Conference as she led the Creamline Cool Smashers over their rival Petro Gazz Angels in a 2-0 finals sweep ending at the Ynares Sports Arena in Antipolo City.

Thanks to her 26-point Game 1 eruption followed by a 20-marker Game 2 outing, the 28-year-old multi-time champ, believe it or not, won her first career PVL Finals MVP award ahead of teammates like newly crowned conference MVP Tots Carlos and three-time Finals MVP Jia de Guzman.

Valdez hardly had time to catch her breath when asked about her thoughts about winning it all for herself and her team after suffering a heartbreaking finals defeat in last year's bubble conference.

"It's a learning experience and a wake-up call for us last conference. I think it's a wake-up call for us to learn more, and take it in as a team, because of course, you need to grow. That's where we will get our experiences. That's where we won," she said.

"It's so much different this season. It's probably

the quickest, fastest season I've played here in the PVL," she continued. We really needed to be mentally and physically prepared, and in proper condition."

When asked about her first career Finals MVP, the seasoned veteran chalked it up as a cherry on top of a perfect season, and put

With the PVL Finals MVP award now in the bag, Valdez has won just about everything there is to win in local

competitions, but she said that at the end of



her team

above herself first and foremost.

"Our goal really as a team is to perform in the finals, and get a championship. We just keep saying that all other awards we get are all just bonuses for us," she said.

"But I'm grateful. It's a responsibility for me to keep going and stay focused in the coming seasons and tournaments because the responsibility just comes along with this title and award."

always dedicated to her fans who help her keep moving forward.

"I'm just speechless, and it's overwhelming. It's just so nice to have another memory here with that championship, and with all the people for the first time [in the pandemic]," she said.

"It's always a great feeling to create new memories, and we will surely treasure this one."

—JR ISAGA | Rappler.com

## Team Lakay reacts to potential Folleyang vs Northcutt showdown

**F**ormer ONE lightweight champion Eduard Folleyang isn't the type of fighter who calls out or selects his next opponent. His legend grew because he faces anyone presented to him inside the ONE Championship Circle.

But after Folleyang's victory over John Wayne "The Gunslinger" Parr in ONE X, the Filipino MMA icon revealed who he would like to tackle next.

If given an opportunity, the 38-year-old competitor wants to keep his momentum in ONE Super Series going by challenging karate world champion "Super" Sage Northcutt.

ONE chairman and CEO Chatri Sityodtong revealed that the fight could have happened before ONE X, but that talks fell through.

Folleyang says it is a privilege to be fighting Muay Thai legend Parr. The 26-year-old American was also scheduled to fight Shinya "Tobikan Judan" Aoki at ONE on TNT 4 last year but withdrew due to COVID-19, prompting Folleyang to take his spot.

The crossing of paths by Folleyang and Northcutt is inevitable because of the massive success they've had in their respective striking disciplines. The Texas native was inducted into the Black Belt Magazine Hall of Fame in 2012 and is also a third dan black belt in taekwondo.

Meanwhile, Folleyang won a bronze medal in the 2005 Wushu World Championships in Hanoi, Vietnam, and a silver medal in the 2006 Asian Games in Doha, Qatar. He also won three gold medals in the Southeast Asian Games.



Team Lakay athletes Jhanlo Sangiao and ONE strawweight world champion Joshua "The Passion" Pacio reflected on Folleyang's reasons for wanting Northcutt.

MMA: Folleyang open to fighting in ONE Super Series

"For me, manong Eduard wants to test his skills in striking or, in general, he wants to venture into other disciplines. And why not Northcutt, right?" Sangiao said.

"Many people think that it's time for him to leave the fighting scene, but you know kuya Eduard, he will be there to prove that he is far from the finish line," Pacio added.

If this fight pushes through, Sangiao expects nothing but an exciting showdown.

"If he faces Northcutt," he said, "then that would be a nice matchup. I'm sure this will be pure entertainment for fans, a match between a karate specialist and a wushu legend."

Fighters from rival MMA outfits looking to jump ship, ONE boss teases But while Pacio agreed with Sangiao, he also pointed out another exciting factor.

"That would be a cutthroat match," he added. "Both want to trade shots. But let me also add that one of the fights that excites me is kuya Eduard versus [Yoshihiro] Akiyama."

—ABS-CBN News



# TRENDING & FEATURES

## This Modern Filipino Restaurant Becomes the First to Earn a Michelin Star

**F**eaturing Filipino dishes like longganisa, lumpiang shanghai, and chicken adobo, this Filipino restaurant in Chicago just became the very first to earn a Michelin Star! It is an award for outstanding cooking by the Michelin Guide based on the following:

- quality of the ingredients
- harmony of flavors
- mastery of techniques
- the personality of the chef as expressed in their cuisine
- consistency both over time and across the entire menu

The Michelin Guide just announced that “Kasama” is now a one-Michelin star establishment. Born during the pandemic, Kasama is a bakery and modern Filipino restaurant by husband-and-wife chefs.



The guide described their food as “an ambitious, clever and distinct meal, where traditional Filipino food is given a creative spin in such items as maitake mushroom

adobo with mussel emulsion; “pancit” reflecting Spanish influence with Serrano ham; and an elegant take on “halo-halo” combining Asian pear granita, pandan ice cream and freeze-dried mandarin.” Read the full review <https://guide.michelin.com/us/en/illinois/chicago/restaurant/kasama>

Kasama thanked their patrons for the amazing achievement. They wrote on Instagram: “It is still hard to believe what this industry has been through since the beginning of 2020. To make it here and to be recognized by the @michelinguide is truly beyond anything we could have ever imagined. Thank you to our team, past and present. Thank you to our wonderful patrons. Cheers to you all!”

Located in the East Ukrainian Village neighborhood of Chicago, Kasama is owned by Filipino-Korean American couple, Tim Flores and Genie Kwon. Know more about them on their website (<https://www.kasamachicago.com/>)

BY: GIZELLE CAOILE

## Meet Bianca Bustamante: The First Filipina Driver to Race in the W Series



**M**otorsports has never been as big as it ought to be in the Philippines but young Filipina driver, Bianca Bustamante, is set to turn Filipinos worldwide into racing fans as she becomes the very first to represent the country in the prestigious W Series championship this year!

Bianca, who is only 17 years old, dominated local headlines ever since she was announced to be among the roster of drivers to compete in the 2022 W Series—an exclusive all-girls Formula 3-level racing series.

“W Series has always been a goal of mine. It’s my life, it’s my dream,” Bianca shared with When In Manila. “And ever since I was a little girl, I’ve always said to myself that I want to make it in the top pinnacle of motorsport. And W Series is a great step moving forward.”

Having first been selected to participate in a pre-season five-day test in Arizona, USA, Bianca regarded it as her “make it or break it” moment knowing that she was the least experienced female driver of them all, having just known karting all her life and now driving a Formula 4 car for the first time in a completely unfamiliar track. “I knew that I was going to be the dark horse,” she admitted. “Compared to the other female drivers out there [who have] done a season in [Formula 3 and Formula 4] and they definitely had a lot of track time and seen the car. So when I went to the Arizona shootout, I try to keep it positive and just said to myself, just being invited itself is already such a big honor.”

But her determination and hard work to prove herself worthy resulted in an impressive performance wherein she bested the rest as the fastest driver on track! She was then invited for a second pre-season testing at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya in Spain where she stood out for being the most-improved racer of the lot.

It goes without saying that if you want something, you’ll do everything within your power to get it—and Bianca definitely got her reward: a seat with the W Series Academy team for the next two years.

Falling in love with racing

Bianca, who hails from Laguna, owes a lot to her father for igniting that spark to pursue a career in racing. At a tender age of one, she was already accompanying her father to his karting races and was eventually given her first kart at age three. By the time she was six, she knew that she wanted to do this sport professionally and started competing in her own races.

“[Passion for] motorsport has run a lot in my family. [My dad] was a fanatic of racing, he loved the sport so much, and he was also a karter. So everything I learned just came from him—the passion, the drive, the love, and the emotion for it,” Bianca shared. “He taught me everything I knew about karting. And he’s one of the reasons why I continue to push, because I feel like when I’m representing Philippines out there racing, it’s just it’s not just my dream. It’s my whole family’s dream. It’s my dad’s dream that I’m carrying there.”

The hustle and grind to get to where she is now was no joke for Bianca, who comes from a middle-class family and had to work hard just to get sponsorships and raise funds to sustain her career. She owes a lot to all the karting teams who have helped her along the way, particularly her management Craft-Bamboo Racing and her coach,

British motor racing driver Richard Lyons.

“I can never take things for granted. That’s something that was kind of mentally engraved in my head, that I don’t have the luxury [that] other people [have] where they get to have another chance. This is my only chance and I need to work hard for it,” Bianca said.

Girl on track becomes rising star

Growing up, Bianca has already been making a name for herself for winning multiple karting championships across Asia, such as the Macau International Kart GP (3-time champion), Junior Asian Karting Open Championship (2-time overall champion), and the China Grand Prix Kart Scholarship (4-time winner). She was also named the Philippines National Junior Karter of the Year in 2018 and the Philippines Driver of the Year – Karting from 2018 to 2020.

But what really got the attention and interest of fellow Filipino racing fans was when she received the stellar opportunity to race in the world-famous Circuit Paul Ricard in Marseilles, France as part of the Girls on Track Rising Stars program last October 2021 where the champion was promised a highly-coveted Ferrari Driver Academy scholarship. For the self-confessed Ferrari fan, this was a dream come true!

Unfortunately, her “lack of experience” and not being physically prepared enough for it prevented her from advancing in the program. “[But] I do believe in saying that you’re never rejected, only redirected,” she said about it. “So from then on, I said to myself, I’m going to do this, I’m going to come back stronger and, the next opportunity I’m given, I’m going to ace it and I’m going to give it my best. And I’m willing to do anything above and beyond.”

With a huge smile on her face, she gushed: “And that’s what happened. I got the W Series seat.”

Chasing the checkered flag

When asked about her strategy to win in this year’s championship, Bianca understands that it’s going to be a tough journey and that she’ll stay focused on learning and improving as she goes in every race.

“For sure, I’m going to take this time to learn from the other drivers as well like Jamie Chadwick, [who is] one of the most decorated female formula car drivers,” she said, referring to the reigning W Series champion. “She’s got a lot of years under her belt. And I’m going to do my best to try to keep up with her and learn from the drivers, learn from the series, and keep on progressing all the way.”

Bianca will be competing for the W Series Academy team with Japanese teammate Juju Noda. The 2022 W Series will have 10 events which will all be part of Formula 1 Grand Prix weekends, kicking off at the Miami International Autodrome this May 6 to 8.

—BY THERESE ASEOCHE



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# HOW TO COOK THIS SPICY EGGPLANT

## HOW TO COOK THIS SPICY EGGPLANT STIR FRY:

There's no time to waste; let's make this spicy eggplant stir fry together!

The first step to making your stir fry is to prep your eggplants. Brush your eggplant pieces with oil, then pan fry until they soften. Remove from the pan, then set aside.

Next, make your sauce. Combine brown sugar, soy sauce, white vinegar, oyster sauce, sesame oil, water, and cornstarch in one bowl. The cornstarch is your thickening agent. It will help your reach the viscosity you're after to give your eggplant stir fry that unforgettable texture. When you've mixed all your ingredients for your sauce thoroughly, set it aside and prepare to cook the rest!

Heat more oil in the pan, then sauté your onion, garlic, and chili peppers. When your onions soften, add in your string beans and stir fry for about 1 minute. Your sauce goes back in the pan next to thicken some more—so don't forget to stir!

After adding in your fried eggplant and ensuring you've cooked your string beans all the way through, guess what? You're done! This easy, breezy eggplant stir fry recipe is finally ready to be devoured. Transfer this saucy dish to a serving plate and serve it with your carb of choice.

Healthy, hearty, and satisfying, you can't go wrong with this spicy eggplant stir fry! Let us know what you and your family think of this recipe. Share and enjoy!

### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 eggplants sliced into serving



- pieces
- 8 string beans
- 1 head garlic minced
- 1 onion minced
- 12 Thai chili peppers
- 3 tablespoons cooking oil

### Sauce ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar
- 2 tablespoons oyster sauce
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil

- 1/4 cup water
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Brush the eggplants with oil. Pan fry until it softens. Remove from the pan and set aside.
2. Combine all the sauce ingredients in a bowl. Mix well. Set aside.
3. Heat the remaining oil in a pan. Sauté the garlic, onion, and chili pepper.

4. Add the string beans once the onion softens. Stir fry for 1 minute.
5. Pour the sauce into the pan. Cook while stirring until it thickens.
6. Add the fried eggplant. Continue stir-frying until the string beans get cooked completely.
7. Transfer to a serving plate. Serve with rice. Share and enjoy!

Panlasang  Pinoy

### Pick-up Lines

girl: rico j kaba?  
boy: bKIT?  
girl: kasi muka kang puno  
boy: nge!!!! wahahaha  
christmas ka ba? bakit? kais i will merry you eh  
panyo ka ba? bakit? kasi pinapawi mo luha ko pag malungkot ako eh  
bangin ka ba? bakit? kasi nahuhulog luha ko sayo eh  
bola ka ba? bakit? kasi tumatalbog ka sa puso ko eh  
lumiliit ka ba? bakit? kasi dati nasa isip kita ng\*yon nasa puso nakita

### RaBIs Mo!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Isang araw nagkausap ang tatlong askal.  
Dog1:narinig nakakamamatay ang laway natin kasi may rabis daw....  
Dog2:mabuti nga para makaganti tayo sa

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mga nanakit sa atin  
Maya-maya,nanginig sa sobrang kaba ang ikatlong aso...  
Dog1:Ohhh,bakit kinakabahan ka para kang mamamatay.....  
Dog3:eh pano hindi kakabahan nalulon ko ang laway ko baka mamatay ako...

### MAESTRO

Sa isang kalye sa GenSan:  
Mommy D.: Neng, maestro ka ba?  
Tindera: Hindi po... hindi nga po ako nakapagtapos ng pag-aaral e... Highschool lang po, hindi na ko nakapag-college.  
Mommy D.: Ou nga neng, piro

maestro ka ba talaga?  
Tindera: Hindi nga ho Mommy D., di ka din makulit e nu?  
Mommy D.: Aynaku, kagulu mu kausap neng, i tuld yo, maestro ka ba, naku, di ku tuloy mainum tong cokes ku kasi wala akung estro. ay jusko.

### Ang Matipid Na Mrs

Mrs. Tanoy is very kuripot. When her husband died, she inquired with the newspaper, asking the price for the obituary.  
The ad taker said: "300 pesos for 5 words."  
She said: "Pwede ba 2 words lang?"

"Tanoy dead"  
Ad taker: "No mam. 5 words is the minimum."  
After thinking for a while, Mrs. Tanoy said: "Ok, para sulit, ilag\*y mo,"TANOY DEAD, TOYOTA FOR SALE "  
Tags: matipid, mrs

### Sa Prosisyon

pari:ang mga boys, sunod sa kin sa karo ni san jose mga girls sunod kay mama mary mga bakla:kami father sa kami susunod pari:mga bruha ? follow me?

### A Priest At A Church

LADY: Father, ang gwapo at cute mo naman! Bakit ka pa kasi nagpari?  
PRIEST: Dahil ayaw pumayag ng magulang ko na magmadre ako! Bruha!





## Aries

Mar 21 - Apr 19

Your artistic abilities could seem a bit blocked today, Aries. You could be anxious to complete a half-finished project, but at this point you may have no idea where to go with it. Don't panic! Do something else for a day or two and ideas will probably flow as if by magic. If you don't have a tight deadline, there's no rush to complete the work now. Give it some time!



## Taurus

Apr 20 - May 20

Today you could have a strong desire to get out and socialize, Taurus. You could well spend a lot of time on the phone trying to reach some friends, but not have much luck with it. If they're busy, a frustrating game of phone tag could result. You might try just dropping by. Even if he or she can't see you right then, you can make arrangements for later.



## Gemini

May 21 - Jun 20

Today you could receive an invitation to a social event that you'll really want to attend, Gemini. People could be there who might turn out to be important contacts. Nonetheless, you might find that other responsibilities interfere with your plans, and experience a wave of disappointment. If you're creative, you will find a way to fulfill your obligations and attend the event, too. Think about it!



## Cancer

Jun 21 - Jul 22

An opportunity to travel to a place you've always wanted to visit, perhaps for business reasons, could come your way today, Cancer. This could be very exciting, but you might have some difficulty making the arrangements. Flights could be full, hotels too costly, and responsibilities at home might need attention. But you can find a way to deal with any obstacle. Think creatively and get busy!



## Leo

Jul 23 - Aug 22

Daydreams full of adventure, perhaps involving travel, could take up a lot of your time today, Leo. You're probably bored with your situation and longing to do something to break your routine. You might have no idea how you can escape from everything right now. Don't force it. Spend the afternoon in a place you don't usually visit. You'll come up with a workable idea in due time. Go for it!



## Virgo

Aug 23 - Sep 22

Your desire to see a romantic partner could be very strong today, Virgo. However, if you ask, you might be turned down. Don't jump to the conclusion that your friend doesn't want to see you. If he or she says there are responsibilities to attend to, believe it! You might have to wait until another day, but that's probably the worst that will happen. Have a little faith and hang in there!



## Libra

Sep 23 - Oct 22

Overindulgence in food and drink over the past few days could be causing you to feel a little out of sorts today, Libra. You might even wonder if the fun was worth it! A little careful attention to yourself will have you back to normal in no time. Don't be surprised, however, if another opportunity to live it up presents itself! Take care. You don't want to feel this way again.

# HOROSCOPE

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## Scorpio

Oct 23 - Nov 21

A strong desire to meet with a romantic partner could come over you today, Scorpio. However, you might not be able to reach your friend. He or she could be busy and unable to respond to phone messages or emails. Nonetheless, don't get too frustrated. If you persist, the two of you will eventually touch base. If you can't see each other today, make arrangements for tomorrow. Better late than never!



## Sagittarius

Nov 22 - Dec 21

A moody family member could have you confused, Sagittarius, and you might not be able to discern the best way to find out what's bothering him or her. Don't overanalyze the situation. The best way is probably just to come right out and tactfully speak your mind. You'll probably find that this person simply has some minor problems to work through - nothing serious enough to worry about.



## Capricorn

Dec 22 - Jan 19

You might want to spend most of today outside, Capricorn, perhaps taking a walk through a park. You could have some serious thinking to do and feel the best recourse is to be by yourself for a while. Decisions won't come easily today, so don't try to force them. Just enjoy being out in the fresh air. Sometimes things come together more quickly if you forget about them for a while.



## Aquarius

Jan 20 - Feb 18

Money problems could be on your mind, Aquarius, perhaps more so than necessary. You might have a tendency to blow them out of proportion and think they're worse than they are. Try to make a special effort to be objective. You might need to cut a few corners and devise a few temporary economy measures, but your situation should be back to normal within a week or two. Relax!



## Pisces

Feb 19 - Mar 20

Today you could look in the mirror and panic about your appearance, Pisces. You might be feeling a little under the weather and look a little tired. Nonetheless, you probably look a lot better than you think you do. Don't fall into the trap of blowing every little flaw out of proportion. A little rest is probably all you need in order to look like yourself again.

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www.abs-cbn.com/newsroom

## Returning Filipinos no longer required to submit arrival cards to Immigration bureau



**M**ANILA, Philippines — Filipinos returning from abroad will no longer be required to fill out and submit arrival cards to officers manning the counters of the Bureau of Immigration (BI) at airports, the agency said Tuesday.

In a statement, BI Port Operations Division chief Carlos Capulong said a memorandum has been issued directing the stoppage of the submission of arrival or disembarkation cards by Filipino passengers following the sharp decline in the number of COVID-19 cases in the country.

"This move is part of BI's efforts to ease its travel requirements for arriving

Filipinos and facilitate their fast and hassle-free entry into their own country," Capulong said.

The bureau said the adjustment will significantly lessen the requirements and processing time of arriving Filipinos.

"We required the submission of these disembarkation cards by arriving Filipinos to help the government in its contact tracing efforts at height of the pandemic. Now that COVID cases are on the decline these cards can now be dispensed with," Capulong said.

The BI earlier reported that they are projecting around 14,000 total arrivals or more for the month of April.

**-Robie de Guzman**

**UNTV**  
NEWS & RESCUE



# TRAVEL + LEISURE

## PHL says "All systems go for full reopening on April 1"; Removes EED as entry requirement

**M**ANILA, Philippines – The Philippines Department of Tourism (DOT) announced today (March 25) that it's all systems go for the country's much awaited reopening to fully-vaccinated tourists from all countries starting April 1, 2022.

Tourism Secretary Berna Romulo-Puyat says the Department is optimistic on more inbound arrivals with the further simplification of entry requirements to the Philippines as the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID), under Resolution No. 165, has approved the entry of foreign nationals starting April 1, without the need of an Entry Exemption Document (EED)—provided they comply with applicable visa and immigration laws, rules, and regulations.

Imposed during the pandemic, the EED thus far had been the first requirement for foreigners from visa-required countries to enter the Philippines; with this document, foreigners could then acquire a short-term 9(a) visa to enter the country. But beginning April 1, there is no longer any

need for an EED before foreigners apply for visas.

Puyat expressed support to the IATF-EID's decision, saying it will encourage more foreign nationals to visit the country and, in turn, help bring back revenues to tourism businesses and boost the economy.

"We thank our colleagues in the IATF-EID and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), as well as our public and private sector partners who have been working with the DOT since the onset of the pandemic to ensure that the country's reopening is carefully planned and carried out with health and safety in mind," Puyat said.

The DOT chief pointed out that the new IATF-EID guidelines will restore in particular the country's English as a Second Language (ESL) sector, as it will enable foreign nationals to travel to the country visa-free or using their 9A visas and apply for their special

study permit upon entering the country.

"Visitors who come for our education tourism—ESL in particular—stand to benefit from this development as this will grant foreign nationals who wish to study in the country an interim process to remotely secure their visas," added Puyat.

According to Puyat, local ESL schools, mainly in the country's leading destinations for ESL such as Baguio and Cebu, have already expressed their readiness to accept foreign students, and commitment to follow IATF-EID guidelines, as well as introduce additional measures that will ensure the safety of educators and students. During the pandemic, the DOT has continually promoted

the country.

Data from the Bureau of Immigration (BI) showed that Special Study Permits (SSP) applications have continuously increased prior to the pandemic. From 22,561 in 2013, SSP applications in 2018 have reached 59,428. SSP is issued by the BI for foreigners who wish to engage in short-term study in the Philippines.

Nevertheless, the DOT clarified that under the latest resolution, foreign travelers will still be required to be fully vaccinated, and to undergo pre-departure RT-PCR or antigen testing prior to their entry. On the other hand, those who are unvaccinated and who are not compliant with

the country as a hub for ESL and piloted initiatives such as the Master Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language (TESOL) to upskill and certify teachers from all over

applicable visa and immigration laws, rules, and regulations shall be subject to exclusion proceedings.

Meanwhile, Puyat hailed President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's Executive Order (EO) 166 which states that "The National Government shall endeavor to further relax requirements relating to international travel and provide quarantine exemptions for vaccinated individuals coming into the country, in order to boost international tourism, increase foreign investments, and restore jobs in the tourism sector". The said EO also orders the reduction of restrictions on domestic travel, and the streamlining and standardization of requirements for domestic travel and local tourism."

Puyat noted that with these developments, the Department is optimistic that better tourism numbers could be seen in the coming months.

"As we move towards a more relaxed entry regulation for foreign tourists, the DOT sees a brighter perspective for the country's tourism industry in the near future. We will ensure that this transition will be done in careful accordance to the prescribed health and safety measures," Puyat said.



*Strolling down Chrysologo Street in Bagan, you can feel like a time slip. This ancient city, built during the 16th-century Spanish regime, is registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is a popular tourist spot in the Philippines. This is the main attraction of Bagan because it's plenty of sights. Ilocos, State Capital of Sur*



Photo's by: Joseph Christopher Oropel



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