

Joint Filipino-Jewish delegation marches in Israel Day Rally

Communiqué, May 14, 2024

Marching under the flags of the Philippines, Israel and Canada, a joint Filipino - Jewish delegation celebrated Israel's 76th anniversary at Montreal's Place du Canada on May 14.

About 100 strong, the delegation was organized by Reverend Orlan Racacho, Alberto Abiera, Al Abdon, Gerry Danzil, and Rey Balansi, all well known in Montreal's Filipino community, and by Marvin Rotrand, former City Councillor and now Director General of United Against Hate Canada.

"This year's anniversary is particularly special given the terrorist attack on Israel and the ensuing war. Many remain hostages and the war continues. It is more vital than ever to highlight the special relationship that has existed for decades between the Philippines and Israel," said Reverend Racacho.

"At this difficult time it is indeed



Photo shows members of the Filipino-Canadian community in Montreal with Marvin Rotrand during the rally for Israel.

important to show solidarity and to celebrate Israel's amazing accomplishments;" indicated Marvin Rotrand. "It is also a time to rejoice in the support of Israel's friends which includes the Republic of the Philippines."

Mr. Rotrand states that there is a historic friendship between Filipinos and Jews that dates from the time of President Quezon when the then Commonwealth of the Philippines opened its doors to Jewish refugees fleeing the Holocaust with both

partners building on that shared history.

Since then the bonds have only grown stronger. In 1947 the Philippines voted at the United Nations for the rebirth of the State of Israel.

"That began the fostering of



diplomatic and economic ties that have today created a special relationship. There is growing cooperation between the two countries that spans the fields of science, technology, agriculture, education and

See Page 4 Joint Filipino-Jewish

Filipino identity enhanced by the Phil. Madrigal singers



The Madrigal singers led by Mark Anthony Carpio, choir master

By: Alvin D. Veloso

What an evening of extravaganza and a spectacle of pride for Filipinos and guests who watched the live performance of the Madrigal Singers on May 17, 2024 at Notre Dame des Philippines Catholic Mission church, FCMM, on Saint Laurent Boulevard.

The Madrigal Singers Live Show was organized and hosted by the MVL Service, owned by Michelle Vargas-Lao, an artist herself; founder of the Filipino Canadian Artists Association of Quebec (FCAAQ) and former administrative assistant at

Concordia University for Advancement and Alumni Relations. She holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Manila, Philippines; studied Immigration Consultant Program at LaSalle College in Montreal.

Meanwhile, special guest Mishael Eusebio, a Filipino Canadian Tenor singer based in Montreal and Toronto set the tone for the evening event with his emotional rendition of "Dahil sa Iyo" (Because of You) and "Sa Ugoy ng Duyan" translated literally as the "Rocking of the Cradle" or "The

See Page 2 Madrigal singers

ICC prosecutor seeking Israel, Hamas leaders arrest warrants



Karim Khan, the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (center), announces he is seeking arrest warrants from the court's judges for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, along with Hamas leaders Yahya Sinwar, Mohammed Deif and Ismail Haniyeh, May 20, 2024. (ICC)

Karim Khan accuses both Israeli and Hamas leaders of 'extermination,' says Israeli crimes 'continuing to this day'; Israel, Hamas both decry being equated with one another
By JEREMY SHARON, SAM SOKOL
20 May 2024, 4:24 pm

Karim Khan, the chief prosecutor of the

International Criminal Court (center), announces he is seeking arrest warrants from the court's judges for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, along with Hamas leaders Yahya

See Page 4 ICC Prosecutor seeks



ALVIN D. VELOSO, M. Ed.
FAMAS President, 1971-72
Federation President (FCAQ)
1981-1984
2018 Retired Teacher, U.S.A.,
Canada, Manila, Phil.

Just as Our Lord Jesus spoke in parables to help His audience understand profound truths through illustrations, similarly at Notre Dame des Philippines Catholic Mission of Montreal, the catechetical instructions use modelling and activity-oriented tasks to reach out to the children.

The Notre Dame des Philippines CLEC - Christian Life Education for Children - effectively engage the young kids to read the mass gospels, collect stipends and join the priest at the altar to recite the Lord's Prayer, the Our Father. In joint activities with the Family Life Ministry, they learn to make cards for different occasions like Christmas, Mothers Day, Get-Well, and many others which are distributed in hospitals and homes during family visits of Father Rommel Cruz, M.S.P.

The objectives of the catechetical program is to provide the children foundational beliefs, moral values and practices of Christianity. Classes focus on age-appropriate content in preparing them, ranging in ages from 4-16 to receive the Sacraments of Initiation like baptism, confirmation and the eucharist for First Communion.

The Catechetical Ministry is

Learning by Examples, the Way to Go in the Spiritual Formation of Children



The Notre Dame des Philippines-CLEC - Christian Life Education for Children - Ministry members pose with the Parish Priest, Fr. Rommel Cruz, M.S.P.

coordinated by Helen Aguila and co-chaired by Ramona Lucido, and along with the core membership implement the catechetical program. The members include Aurora Aquino, Claire-An Cagoco, Almarisa Calanda, Vilma Calooy, Leonila Ervas, April Lou

Grace Mascarinas, Dindo Miras, Fredina Silva, Marites Sunio and volunteer Kim Suarez,

Every Sunday morning, before the liturgical mass, the children, catechists and parents spend 15 minutes to pray the Morning

Dotollo, M.I.C., and Sister Hilaria Suzette Bautista, S.P., give catechism classes to parents who stay behind to provide them the tools to help their children at home.

Children have the options after two years to join the Young Aspiring Catechist Program and expose past CLEC students to different roles and task of catechism. They also can join the Shrine Program of the Youth Ministry or join other ministries as lectors, commentators, Knights of the Altar Servers and youth choir.

Needless to say, the drastic transformation of Quebec society had changed the dynamics of religious education which previously was the prerogative of the Catholic Church but now, it has been relegated to their respective communities. The Roman Catholic Church was once a powerhouse in the Province of Quebec, stretching its influence in schools, health care and social welfare. The Quiet Revolution in the 1960's, however, changed the stature of the Catholic province to secularism. Thankfully, religion has survived and at Notre Dame des Philippines Catholic Mission, the flame of the Catholic faith continues to be alive.#



Thank you to members of Family Life Ministry for sharing your time with the children and their parents.

CLEC LEVEL 1 AND FAMILY LIFE MINISTRY



Espeno, Cleo Fedarizo, Merly Gumal, Kris Angela Ibarra, Kristina Joelle Lalic,

Community Prayer to seek Divine guidance., after which, Sister Leticia

From Page 1 The Madrigal singers "Sway of the Baby Hammock" by Lucio San Pedro and Levi Celerio, both of which resonated well with the audience.

As expected, the MADZ performed their uniquely choreographed repertoire, showcasing a harmonious blend of Filipino choral works with renaissance music, international folksongs, opera and popular music to the delight of the visitors who reciprocated with a standing ovation. Notably the U.P. choral group is widely known for their unique unconventional style performance, sitting in a semi-circle without a conductor. which established them as a pioneering force in choral music personifying excellence.

MADZ was founded in 1953 by National Artist Professor Andrea O. Veneracion, who upon retirement, was

replaced by Mark Anthony Carpio as choirmaster to lead the 21-member recruits from the different academic disciplines at the University of the Philippines. The UNESCO recognized the Madrigal Singers as Artists for Peace for their promotion of cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace..

They were twice recipient of the prestigious European Grand Prix in 1997 and 2007 for choral singing and the first Asian choir to be accorded the Brand Laureate Premier Award by the Asia Pacific Brands Foundation in 2012. They are in Canada to foster goodwill through music and to share their success with the Filipino communities. So far, they have already visited Vancouver, Montreal and are on their way to perform in other Canadian cities.#



Michelle Vargas-Lao
Proprietor




MVL
Philippine Madrigal Singers
MAY 17, 2024
7:00 PM
DORIS APRES 6:00PM
SPECIAL GUEST
MISHAEL EUSEBIO
WITH BETHLEHEM MATHIAS
FCAAO



FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

Reactions to the ICC prosecutor's request for arrest warrants

Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi

The unprecedented move by the ICC prosecutor to request for the arrest warrants of the leaders of Israel and Hamas has been received with strong rejections from western allies of Israel while legal experts offer a variety of complicated analyses of the law that applies to the prosecution of crimes against humanity. There are many more questions than answers as the subject is too complicated to be summarized into a comprehensible piece of analysis that is compatible with the various interpretations of international law. Among many legal experts' observations, the following quote from the article written by Chimène Keitner for the Lawfare Institute seems to present a clearer overview of the relationship of law and politics:

International law (like all law) exists because countries act as if it does. They justify their actions in legal terms. Yet because the international

legal system is decentralized, and because the U.N. Charter gives five countries a veto over any collective enforcement action, the system's success relies heavily on reciprocity and self-restraint.

The role of criminal prosecutions both during and after armed conflicts has long been debated. The existence of the ICC is intended to encourage compliance with international criminal law, to support countries to conduct their own investigations and prosecutions, and to fill gaps left by domestic processes. Yet the prosecutor is also a political actor with an interest in promoting the ICC's institutional legitimacy and clout. The prosecutor's May 20 statement emphasized the importance of judicial and prosecutorial independence—a clear reference to threats and political pressure targeting the ICC. In addition, he emphasized the importance of public perceptions that the court is not



The International Criminal Court building at the Hague, Netherlands (Brittanica)

applying the law "selectively," which recalls long-standing criticisms that the court has focused disproportionately on defendants from the Global South, and especially Africa.

Although the exercise of prosecutorial discretion and the allocation of scarce institutional resources is necessarily informed by a range of factors, the prosecutor explained his decision to seek warrants for both Israeli and Hamas leaders as motivated by the need to "prove, tangibly, that the lives of all human beings have equal value." Sadly, this seemingly straightforward proposition is not being reflected either in the eliminationist rhetoric of some anti-Israel protests, which echo Hamas doctrine, or in some Israelis' extremist language such as that cited by South Africa in its application to the International Court of Justice under the Genocide Convention. Whether the ICC's prosecution—or even an attempt at prosecution—of the top political leaders of Hamas and Israel will hasten the release of hostages and stop the further destruction of civilian life in Gaza remains to be seen.

There are 124 member countries, but dozens of governments are not ICC parties, including China, India, Israel, Russia, and the United States. The ICC's ongoing investigations of alleged crimes including controversial arrest warrants in the Ukraine and Israel-Hamas wars represent a critical test for the court's power.

The ICC has been criticized for

absence of jury trials; allegations of retrials allowed for errors of fact; allegations that hearsay evidence is allowed; and allegations of no right to a speedy trial, a public trial, or reasonable bail. Supporters of the ICC say that the ICC Statute contains the due process rights found in the U.S. Constitution and now well recognized in international standards of due process in Article 67 Rome Statute, with the exception of the right to jury trial.

Although not a member, Biden has welcomed the ICC's decision for the arrest warrant of the President of Russia Vladimir Putin and the Russian Commissioner for Children's Rights Maria Lvova-Belova on March 18, 2023 during the Russian invasion of Ukraine after it was discovered that Russia had deported children from Ukraine.

The Biden administration opposed an arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over Israeli war crimes committed during the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. Biden denounced Netanyahu's arrest warrant as "outrageous."

In view of these opposing views about the role of the ICC, it remains to be seen how we can find a speedy end to the senseless destruction of life and property in the raging wars between Israel and Hamas and Ukraine and Russia as well as other conflictst in many other parts of the world. Somehow, everyone agrees there should be an end but no one seems to agree on how to do so.#

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The opinions expressed by the writers and columnists do not necessarily reflect that of the management of the North American Filipino Star nor its editors.



Yahya Sinwar (head of Hamas in Gaza), Mohammed Diab Ibrahim Al-Masri (also known as Mohammed Deif, the commander of the military wing of Hamas) and Ismail Haniyeh (head of Hamas' political bureau, based in Qatar) Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant. Karim Khan, ICC Prosecutor believes they are responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Gaza Strip and Israel. The prosecutor must request the warrants from a pre-trial panel of three judges. A decision could take weeks.

From Page 1 Joint Filipino-Jewish

tourism," notes Mr. Balansi.

The delegation held up banners and signs that won a great deal of applause and public interest. It also made public a link to a video that highlights the warm friendship of the two peoples.

That video can be consulted here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pnd4-2bZ0yc>

Paul Hirschson, Israel Consul General in Montreal, noted the

From Page 1 ICC prosecutor seeks

Sinwar, Mohammed Deif and Ismail Haniyeh, May 20, 2024. (ICC)

In an unprecedented and hugely controversial development, the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Karim Khan, said Monday that he had requested arrest warrants from the court's judges for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, along with top Hamas leaders.

Khan said that the charges against Israel's premier and defense chief are for the crimes of "causing extermination, causing starvation as a method of war including the denial of humanitarian relief supplies, deliberately targeting civilians in conflict."

"We submit that the crimes against humanity charged were committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack against the Palestinian civilian population pursuant to State policy. These crimes, in our assessment, continue to this day," said Khan in reference to Netanyahu and Gallant.

Khan said he was also applying for arrest warrants against Yahya Sinwar, Hamas's ruler in Gaza; the terror group's military chief, Mohammed Deif; and the leader of the organization, Ismail Haniyeh.

"Today we have applied for warrants to the pretrial chamber of the International Criminal Court in relation to three individuals who are Hamas members," Khan said, listing Sinwar, Deif, and Haniyeh.

He said they would be charged with extermination, murder, hostage-taking, rape, and sexual assault.

"We submit that the crimes against humanity charged were part of a widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population of Israel by Hamas and other armed groups pursuant to organizational policies," said the statement.

It will be up to the court's pre-trial judges to determine whether there is sufficient evidence to issue warrants.

Israel is not a member of the court, and even if the arrest warrants are issued, Netanyahu and Gallant do not face any immediate risk of prosecution. But the government was said to have anticipated the ICC prosecutor's move last month and to have held emergency meetings to decide how to fend off the potential warrants.

Both Sinwar and Deif are believed to be hiding in Gaza as Israel

delegation's presence in his speech thanking the organizers and participants for their friendship and solidarity.

"We will continue to highlight this important friendship," says Al Abdon. "There will also be a global ZOOM call on June 2 hosted by the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal and United Against Hate Canada. Everyone is invited, details soon to be made public."#

tries to hunt them down. But Haniyeh is based in Qatar and frequently travels across the region.

The ICC's decision "equates the victim with the executioner," senior Hamas official Sami Abu Zuhri told Reuters, alleging that it encourages Israel to continue its "war of extermination" in Gaza.

War cabinet minister Benny Gantz slammed the decision, saying that Israel's military is complying with international law in its fighting in Gaza and terming the decision "a crime of historic proportions."

"The State of Israel is waging one of the just wars fought in modern history following a reprehensible massacre perpetrated by terrorist Hamas on the 7th of October," he said in a statement.

"While Israel fights with one of the strictest moral codes in history, while complying with international law and boasting a robust independent judiciary – drawing parallels between the leaders of a democratic country determined to defend itself from despicable terror to leaders of a bloodthirsty terror organization is a deep distortion of justice and blatant moral bankruptcy," Gantz said.

"The prosecutor's position to apply for arrest warrants is in itself a crime of historic proportions to be remembered for generations," he added.

Khan's announcement deepens Israel's isolation as it presses ahead with its war, and the threat of arrest could make it difficult for the Israeli leaders to travel abroad.

Israel says its offensive in Gaza is aimed at eliminating Hamas and the high civilian toll is due to the terror group's use of civilians as human shields. Israel has highlighted its efforts to expand humanitarian aid to Gaza and blames the humanitarian crisis on aid agencies failing to properly distribute supplies and on looting of aid trucks by terror groups and gangs.

Opposition Leader Yair Lapid blasted the move. "It is not possible to issue arrest warrants against Netanyahu, Sinwar and Deif. There is no such comparison, we cannot accept it and it is unforgivable," he said, calling the decision "a terrible political failure."

"I expect the American administration to condemn the arrest warrants. I believe they will stand behind us," Lapid added.

Khan visited Israel in December on an official trip. After touring some of the towns attacked by Hamas on October 7, 2023, and



UNITED AGAINST HATE CANADA

May 13, 2024

**HISTORIC FRIENDSHIP OF THE PHILIPPINES AND ISRAEL
A MESSAGE FROM MARVIN ROTRAND, DIRECTOR GENERAL
UNITED AGAINST HATE CANADA**

Dear FriendS

Tomorrow, Tuesday, May 14, is the 76th anniversary of Israel's independence.

In many Canadian cities there will be Israel Day rallies and everyone is invited to celebrate the rebirth of the Jewish state in its historic homeland.

This year's anniversary is particularly special. On October 7 Palestinian terrorists crossed the border and brutally massacred 1200 Israelis.

Hundreds more were taken hostage with most remaining in captivity. War rages as Israel attempts to free the hostages and end the terrorist threat.

At this difficult time it is important to show solidarity and to celebrate Israel's amazing accomplishments.

It is also a time to rejoice in the support of Israel's friends which includes the Republic of the Philippines.

There is a historic friendship between Filipinos and Jews that dates from the time of President Quezon when the then Commonwealth of the Philippines opened its doors to Jewish refugees fleeing the Holocaust.

Since then the bonds have only grown stronger. In 1947 the Philippines voted at the United Nations for the birth of the State of Israel. That began the fostering of diplomatic and economic ties that have today created a special relationship.

A friend shared a video with me as to the warmth of that relationship and I invite you to view it and to forward it to your list. The video attests to the cooperation between the

This heartwarming story can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pnd4-2bZ0yc>

Let's congratulate Israel on its anniversary and let us recognize the friendship of the Philippines for the Jewish state. Let us hope the mutually beneficial relationship continues to grow.

Yours truly,

Marvin Rotrand
Interim Director General
United Against Hate Canada

hearing testimonies from survivors, he said he had witnessed "scenes of calculated cruelty" and that it was clear to him the victims had been targeted because of their identities.

He also said he felt duty-bound to work with the court's prosecutors to open investigations into Hamas's actions on October 7.

In 2019, the ICC announced that it would be launching a probe into alleged war crimes committed by both sides during the 2014 Israel-Hamas conflict, Israeli settlement policy and the Israeli response to protests at the Gaza border. The probe was formally opened on March 3, 2021, and was met with strong criticism from Israel.

During Hamas's October 7 onslaught on southern Israel, terrorists killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and kidnapped 252 men, women, and children of all ages.

The Hamas-run Gaza health ministry says more than 35,000 people in the Strip have been killed or are

presumed dead in the fighting so far, though only some 24,000 fatalities have been identified at hospitals.

The tolls, which cannot be verified, include some 15,000 terror operatives Israel says it has killed in battle. Israel also says it killed some 1,000 terrorists inside Israel on October 7.

Two hundred and eighty-three Israeli soldiers have been killed during the ground offensive against Hamas and amid operations along the Gaza border. A civilian Defense Ministry contractor has also been killed in the Strip.#

"Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase." — Martin Luther King Jr. "To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing." — Martin Luther King Jr.

A new report on poverty challenges both Liberals and Conservatives

The Conservatives are using the report to rake the Trudeau government — but would they follow its advice? Aaron Wherry - CBC News
May 26, 2024

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre understandably seized on a new report card released last week by Food Banks Canada that highlighted the number of Canadians who are living in poverty, struggling to pay their bills and turning to food banks for help.

"Mr. Speaker, after nine years of the NDP-Liberal prime minister's taxes, debt, inflation and promises, Canadians are literally hungry," Poilievre said in the House of Commons on Wednesday.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau predictably responded by pointing to the support programs his government is rolling out — including funding for child care, dental care and a new school food program — and warned that a Conservative government would only cut such initiatives.

"These are investments that they are opposed to and that we are there to help Canadians with," Trudeau said.

In fact, the findings and recommendations laid out in last week's report present a challenge for both Liberals and Conservatives.

As the report notes, poverty in Canada declined markedly between 2015 and 2020 — the share of Canadians living below the poverty line fell from 14.5 per cent to 6.4 per cent. A report released by UNICEF last December found that Canada experienced one of the largest proportional drops in child poverty among developed countries between 2012 and 2021.

Some of that reduction in poverty can be attributed to policies like the Canada Child Benefit, introduced by the Trudeau government in 2016. The income support programs launched at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic actually helped to drive poverty in Canada even lower.

But that progress has eroded over the last few years; in 2022, the poverty rate was back up to 9.9 per cent. The report also points out that 23 per cent of Canadians are experiencing "food insecurity" and 44 per cent say they feel worse off than they were last year.

Some of that erosion, the Food Banks report notes, can be traced to the withdrawal of pandemic-era income supports. But the authors also point to four larger factors: rapid population growth without the social infrastructure to support it, a succession of interest rate hikes alongside high inflation, a lack of housing and a slowdown in economic activity accompanied by a slightly higher unemployment rate.

The Trudeau Liberals would say they're taking action in response to those challenges. And the authors of the Food Banks Canada report would not disagree entirely, particularly when

it comes to the moves the government has made on housing over the last year. But they also argue there's



Street navigators help relocate residents from the homeless encampment in Victoria Park in Halifax's downtown on Monday, March 4, 2024. (Darren Calabrese/The Canadian Press)

more the government could be doing — or should have done already.

Calls for EI reform and an enhanced disability benefit

Seven of the 27 federal policy recommendations reviewed in the report relate to employment insurance reform. All are listed as showing "no progress." In the throne speech delivered in September 2020, the Liberals said it was clear Canada needed an "EI system for the 21st century"; so far they've failed to follow through. At this point, it seems unlikely EI will see comprehensive reform before the next election.

The Food Banks Canada report commends the creation of the new Canada Disability Benefit but laments, as others have, that it has not received more funding. Advocates had hoped it would provide about \$1,000 per month to recipients, but the benefit is currently set to provide just \$200 per month.

The report suggests all federal benefits should be indexed to inflation and that efforts should be made to prevent provinces from clawing back their own programs in response to new federal programs (a potentially relevant issue for the Canada Disability Benefit). It also proposes the creation of a permanent "groceries and essentials benefit" — effectively an enhanced GST tax rebate, which was first proposed last year by a panel of experts convened by the Institute for Research on Public Policy.

(While the Food Banks Canada report generated considerable heat in Ottawa this week, most of the report actually deals with policies and challenges at the provincial level — and while they are often excused from the national discourse, provincial governments continue to exist and possess responsibilities.)

The Conservatives are eager to wave the Food Banks Canada report in the government's face. Would they be willing to implement any of its recommendations?

What would a Conservative government do?

The Liberals can point to recent

goal of reducing chronic homelessness by 50 per cent, it also has provided stable or temporary housing to 23,000 people annually.

The foundation of Poilievre's argument against the Trudeau government is that it has increased federal spending too much — and that by doing so, it has driven up inflation, the price of housing and the cost of living. That argument might now be running up against the fact that inflation continues to decline.

But in the context of this week's debate about poverty, Poilievre's view of federal spending raises at least two questions. Would his spending cuts touch any of the social supports that lower the cost of living for some Canadians? If so, would any benefits derived from lower levels of federal spending — and perhaps lower taxes — somehow offset the loss of those supports?

Conservatives might be comforted by the fact that a strong plurality of Canadians seems inclined to think it's time for a Conservative government. But while Abacus Data recently found a 16-point lead for the Conservatives, it also didn't find a great desire to see social programs rolled back — just 28 per cent of respondents said a Poilievre government definitely or probably should end funding for child care or dental care.

If the Conservatives have a plan to sharply reduce federal spending without touching such programs, they aren't explaining it yet.

For now, the Food Banks Canada report focuses useful political attention on people who badly need it — those facing poverty and income insecurity. That challenges the Liberal government's current response, but it also challenges the Conservatives to explain exactly what they would do differently.

Contact me at
marvinrotrand2@hotmail.com

WISHING YOU THE BEST FOR
FILIPINO HERITAGE
MONTH

Marvin Rotrand
Interim Director General
United Against Hate Canada



ONTARIO Community News

By Tony A. San Juan
OCT-Retired

Ontario Fil-Cans to celebrate 163rd birth anniversary of Dr. Jose Rizal

Summer is the season of community celebrations and the month of June is special to the hearts and minds of Filipino-Canadians. Top most are the "June 12th Philippine Independence Day", the "Filipino Heritage Month" in Canada, and "Dr. Jose Rizal's Birth Anniversary" events. On June 19, 2024, officers and members of the Order of Knights of Rizal Canada Region will proudly commemorate the 163rd birth anniversary of the Philippine national hero, Dr. Jose P. Rizal. As in the past, the celebration will honour and focus on his ideals, contributions and significance.

Three similar events will happen in 3 venues on the same day in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) where Dr. Jose Rizal's statues are displayed. Scheduled in the morning, the first two will be conducted in the City of Markham and the City of Brampton while the 3rd and concluding celebration at Earl Bales Park in North York, Toronto at 4:00 pm.

The ceremonies include a wreath-laying at the bust of the hero in the park, and brief addresses by the dignitaries, special guests, and senior officers of the K.O.R. Sir Frank Crawford together with KOR senior executive officers and chapter commanders are to officiate and lead the rites. After the solemn rites, a special reception will be held at the community centre.

Those invited to attend are the Philippine Consul General in Toronto, Angelica Escalona; the Member of Parliament for Mississauga, Minister

Rechie Valdez; the Member of Parliament for York Centre, Minister Ya'ara Saks; the MPP for York Centre, Minister Michael Kerzner, City Councillor for York Centre James Pasternak, WFG Senior Executive Vice Chair Agnes P. Miranda, Lady Rosemere Enverga, Lady Rose Cruz, Lady Rose Tijam, and other community leaders.

The KOR Canada Central Region is composed of Regional Commander Sir Frank Crawford, KGOR; Deputy Commander Sir Ver Amante, KGOR; Area Commanders West GTA Sir Feberio Hangdaan, KCR; and GTA East Sir Courtney Doldron, KCR. Attending are the Past Canada Regional Commanders, Sir Poy Cana, Sir Jimmy Marasigan, Sir Ed Prillo, Sir Joe Damasco, and Sir Romy Sinajon, and Ladies of Rizal (LKOR) President Lady Bing Marasigan, Ladies Alliance of Rizal (ALKOR) President Lady Ining Calaguio, KOR Youth Council President Clarisse Crawford, and their auxiliary members.

This year's host is the KOR Mississauga Chapter headed by Sir Ptr Luel Declarador and co-hosted by the KOR Etobicoke Chapter led by Sir Richard Saldana, The KOR Central Region, through its Media Affairs Chair Sir Joe Damasco, KGCR has extended its invitation to the Filipino-Canadian community and the Canadian public to come, celebrate and pay homage to our beloved "Pambansang Bayani", Dr. Jose Rizal. "Non Omnis Moriar. Not everything in me will die. Hindi lahat sa akin ay mamatay."

Phil. Consulate General-Toronto Hosts Filipino International Students Convention

Concerned about the challenges and issues impacting Filipino international students in Canada, especially in Ontario, the Philippine Consulate General in Toronto hosted a convention as one of its several consular outreach initiatives. In partnership with the University of the Philippines Alumni Association-Toronto (UPAAT), the conference was held on May 11, 2024 (Saturday) from 1:00 pm. to 5:00 pm. at the Gibson Ballroom, Novotel Hotel Toronto, 3 Park Home Avenue, North York.

According to the Philippine Consulate General in Toronto, the event was to "provide Filipino international students in Ontario with information vital to improving their experience of studying in Canada." It also aimed at "allowing the students to meet other students and representatives of service organizations who may be able to advise on a range of topics including health & wellness, settlement services,

immigration policy update, income tax filing, financial literacy, employment opportunities, community safety, and consular services."

Philippine Consul General Angelica C. Escalona warmly welcomed the guests and conference attendees, followed by the keynote address by Hon. Jill Dunlop, Ontario Minister of Colleges and Universities. The Philippine Ambassador to Canada, Her Excellency Maria Andrelita S. Austria stressed the significance of the gathering and thanked the delegates and other guests. Agnes Manasan, President of UPAAT, ably served as the convention master of ceremonies.

The resource speakers and presenters were from the province's specialized settlement centres, professional organizations, and community service providers. Among the presenters were Earl Dacara of Northern Quest Immigration Services; Ella Tan of the North York Community

House; Constable Don Laurel of the Toronto Police Services; Dr. Liberty Catbagan of Strides Toronto; Christine Garcia of Kababayan Multicultural Centre; Joel Licuanan of Royal Bank of

education and training of international students were Niagara College, Compass Career College, Seneca College, Toronto Police Service, Revenue Canada, Seneca College



Participants and resource speakers with Ontario Minister of Colleges and Universities Jill Dunlop (third from right, front row), Consul General Angelica Escalona (fourth from right) and UPAAT President Agnes Manasan (2nd from right) (photo courtesy of Seneca FILCOM/Vivid Curiosity Productions)

Canada; Sonny Martinez of Association of Filipino Canadian Accountants; Khloe Mattiozzi of CRA; and Consul Rodney Jonas Sumague of the Philippine Consulate.

Filipino Community, CCSYR, FCT, KMC, UPAAT, AFCE, PIDC, PTAC, IFCNA, and OWWA.

Attendance to the 4-hour convention was free on a first-come,



Ambassador Austria, Consul General Escalona, Consul Rodney Jonas Sumague and UPAAT President Manasan (seated) with volunteers from Seneca FILCOM and Niagara College Toronto Filipino Club

During the Q&A sessions, the participants shared student experiences and received advice from the various speakers on the concerns and challenges they faced as international students. Among the educational institutions, support agencies and other community entities represented and directly engaged in the

first-served registration basis. The event, covered by the media, was well-received by over 150 conferees, newcomers and guests.

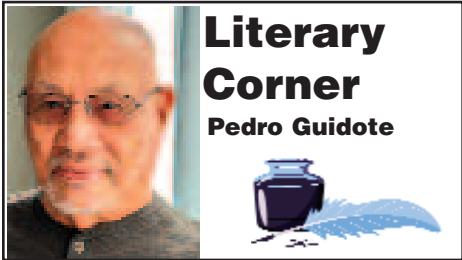
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Literary Corner
Pedro Guidote

Our Humble Opinion

There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is.

Albert Einstein

For good or ill this is the age of the migrant, the time in human history in which more people than ever before have ended up in places in which they did not begin, driven by economic necessity, political turmoil, or simply the lure of the big city's bright lights.

Salman Rushdie

There are two kinds of travelers. There is the kind who goes to see what there is to see and sees it, and the kind who has an image in his head and goes to accomplish it. The first visitor has an easier time, but I think the second visitor sees more. He is constantly comparing what he sees to what he wants, so he sees with his mind, and maybe even with his heart, or tries to.

Adam Gopnik

It is a sign of madness to claim to know what is in another man's heart.

Hisham Matar

What is so detestable about war is that it reduces the individual to complete insignificance.

David Gascoyne

(Surrealist poet) (1916 – 2001)

Rachel Lau CTVNews May 27, 2024

A judge has approved, in part, Université du Québec à Montréal's (UQAM) request for a provisional injunction against the pro-Palestinian encampment on its grounds.

"It is essential that appropriate security measures be put in place immediately to prevent an unfortunate event from occurring and causing UQAM serious or irreparable harm," the judge stated in his ruling Monday.

This comes after Superior Court Judge Louis-Joseph Gouin heard arguments from both parties at a hearing at the Montreal courthouse last Friday.

In its request, UQAM did not ask for the complete dismantling of the encampment; rather, it says it wants to ensure free circulation near the science complex.

In a press release, management noted that "access and emergency exits to university buildings are obstructed, several exterior surveillance cameras are obstructed, and the situation on and near the encampment has deteriorated overall."

"It is increasingly barricaded, certain materials that have been accumulated there present risks, surfaces of certain pavilions have been vandalized, and hooded groups circulate there night and day," the school stated.

The ruling orders demonstrators to create a two-metre

Legault dismisses idea of imposing law restricting social media for youth under 15

Premier François Legault has dismissed the idea of imposing a law restricting social media use for people under 15 as France has done.

During Thursday's question period, Legault ridiculed Parti Québécois (PQ) leader Paul St-Pierre Plamondon for proposing it. St-Pierre Plamondon pointed out that the state of Florida had recently decided to impose the restriction (opens in a new tab), in addition to France.

The Florida law, which comes into force in January, prohibits anyone under the age of 14 from opening an account on a social media website. Meanwhile, teens aged 14 and 15 will have to obtain parental authorization to register on the platforms.

"Are these solutions being considered by the Coalition Avenir Québec and are we going to see them in place next fall, not three years from now?" asked St-Pierre Plamondon on Thursday.

"Did I just hear the leader of the Parti Québécois say, 'We should ban social media for children under 14...' Is that what he just said? Did I hear him right? Is that his suggestion?" replied a bewildered Legault.

Last month, his minister responsible for social services, Lionel



File - The Instagram logo is seen on a cell phone in Boston, Oct. 14, 2022. (AP Photo/Michael Dwyer, File)

Carmant, told a parliamentary scrum that he had "identified social networks as problematic."

"There have been other things done on social networks, either age or edited content. So we're asking the experts what can be done. It's going to be a decision based on science," he added.

Minister Carmant had previously raised the possibility of legislation to regulate young people's use of screens. Without echoing his minister's words, Legault instead called on parents to work together to limit

screen time. During his speech in the Salon bleu on Thursday, St-Pierre Plamondon reiterated the harmful consequences of overuse of screens on young people's brains and their social and language skills.

The PQ leader recalled the words of French Prime Minister Gabriel Attal, who said during a recent visit to Quebec City that he feared a "health and educational disaster." This report by The Canadian Press was first published in French on May 2, 2024.

Judge approves UQAM's injunction against pro-Palestinian encampment



A member of the pro-Palestinian encampment at UQAM walks around (La Presse Canadienne/Christine Muschi)

space between the camp and the buildings in the courtyard, including around the Pavillon Cœur des sciences, "to not hinder the circulation of people using the space."

They must make sure all doors and windows remain unobstructed "of any objects and materials" and "refrain in the future from placing any object" that blocks the area.

The demonstrators must remove any cardboard blocking surveillance cameras in the courtyard and "never obstruct them again in any way whatsoever."

The group must also allow representatives of UQAM and the Montreal fire department to visit the encampment to verify that the area is safe.

"These security measures will

not interfere with the exercise of the right to freedom of expression, including the right to demonstrate," Gouin notes in his judgement.

He adds the measures will "reduce the size of the encampment" without affecting the people's right to demonstrate.

"These safety measures are to everyone's advantage in the present circumstances," he states. "Not implementing these measures would continue to create serious safety issues for UQAM."

See Page 8 Judge approves

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PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH

By Fely Rosales-Cariño



Julius Espanto Abad

I am proud to present to you this month's superstar - Julius Espanto Abad, born on July 3, 1954 in San Esteban, Ilocos Sur to a large family of nine! Parents Quirico Abad Sr. and Juanita Espanto must have had a fun, busy, and rambunctious household. It's easy to speculate that Julius' upbringing holds him in good stead as he thrives in various settings in the community.

Julius spent high school in Interior Ilocos Academy, then went on to Trinity College of Quezon City (Political Science Major, Psychology Minor) in 1994. For Graduate Studies, he earned a Masters in Management in 1996. To his credit, he was a student and an employee at the same time. Obtaining his college diploma is one of the happiest moments of his life. Such determination and strength of character was clearly evident early on. His work history shows a man in action. He was a part-time lecturer in Sociology and Anthropology in Trinity College and worked as a clerk at the Chaplain's office. He compiled religious songs and put guitar chords (which, by the way, is still selling at the College's book store). He was lead facilitator of Leadership Education and Development. He scouted out-of-school youths in 8 barangays of Quezon City and formed 8 basketball teams competing every weekend at the College's gymnasium. From the 8 barangays, he helped form and train a team of 15 youths to face the invited team of Rikyo University of Japan to play in best of 5 games. In 1992, he was Assistant Circle Manager of Rover Circle IX in Quezon City, Boy Scouts of the Philippines. Perhaps most telling and most interesting was that Julius was a perennial awardee of Most Outstanding Rover Scout of Trinity College!

Changing venues now to Pinatubo, Zambales and San Marcelino. He personally oversaw 82 young Aetas, helped in sending them to school, and provided them with clothing and school supplies. This produced excellent results: Aeta Michelle (Elementary teacher), Eric Abad Rodolfo Castillo Jr. (High School teacher), Delia Daluyen (Secretary to Physical Education Department).

In Canada, in 2002, he was Chairman of the Board of Directors of Candon City and Suburbs Association of Montreal (CCSAM) founded by Mr. Eloy Galdones. And in 2022-2024, he

From Page 7 Judge approves

Since May 12, pro-Palestinian demonstrators have been camping out near UQAM's Complexe des sciences Pierre-Dansereau, following in the footsteps of similar rallies elsewhere in Canada and the United States.

Participants are demanding that UQAM break its ties with Israeli institutions and reveal the extent of these relationships.

They are also calling on the Quebec government to reverse its decision to open the Quebec office in Tel Aviv.

For its part, UQAM asserts that

proudly serves as its President.

Julius has a vast connection with the Filipino community. He holds memberships in the United Pilipino Seniors of Quebec (UPSQ), the Association of Filipino Seniors of Montreal (AFSM), and the Pilipino Basketball Association of Montreal (PBAM) where he served as Executive Secretary in 2003 with Pepe Carbon as President. Currently he is the Area 2 Commander of the Knights of Rizal (KOR), Eastern Canada Region.

Who has inspired him in life, you ask? Julius lists his father as his role model. It's no wonder, as Father was a barangay captain for 16 successful years (1965-1982) in San Nicholas, San Esteban, Ilocos Sur. That's an astounding number of years; strong leadership comes naturally to the son!

And who has captured the heart of Julius? It is none other than Luzviminda Sarmiento, his high school sweetheart. They attended the same church and things eventually culminated in marriage, held at the Philippine Independent Church at San Esteban Ilocos Sur on May 28, 1973. He is blessed with children Mayvelyn (May 2, 1975) and Chester Nicola (November 18, 1989).

And did you know that Julius possesses a wonderful talent? You should hear him sing; he is an incomparably gifted singer. He sings effortlessly and stunningly! If he were to perform in any singing competition, he would take the prize hands down. Might even win the Golden Buzzer if Simon Cowell were to judge!

There is probably more we don't know about Julius (he's a good cook . . . etc.) . He is too humble to elaborate on his other strengths. Once a self-supporting student who got himself educated, he retains a common touch that people gravitate to. He can be everybody's manong, kuya, tito ...etc. Julius, I hereby pray scripture over you in your leadership tasks, "to be above reproach, faithful to your wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, and able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2). And "Do not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a reward if we do not give up" (Galatians 6:9). Thank you, my dear Julius for serving the Filipino community with all your heart and with all your strength. And a Happy 51st Wedding Anniversary to you and your lovely wife Luzviminda!!!

its foundation has "no investment in armaments," nor does it have "mobility or framework agreements with Israeli universities."

Two requests for injunctions concerning the pro-Palestinian camp set up on the McGill University campus were rejected in recent weeks.

McGill's request for an interlocutory injunction is expected back in court on July 25.

A request for a permanent injunction is expected to be heard at a later date.

-- with files from The Canadian Press.

SA WIKANG TAGALOG

ni Zenaída F. Kharroubi

Ano ang kahulugan ng ICC sa mundo?

Ang pagkatatag ng International Criminal Court noong 2002 ay dahil sa hangaring mahatulan at mabigyan ng babala ang mga kriminal na huag lumabag sa batas. Ang mga taga-pagtaggol ng korte ay naniniwalang ito ay magiging mabisang panlaban sa mga lumalabag ng batas at magbibigay ng katarungan sa mga biktima ng mga krimen. Ngunit mula sa pagkatatag nito, ang ICC ay tumatanggap palagi ng kapulaan at hindi naakit ang mga malalaking bansang sumapi dito kagaya ng U.S.A., China at Russia. Dalawang bansa ang bumitaw ng kanilang pagsapi.

Ang oposisyon ng U.S.A ay lalong naging malakas sa administrasyon ni Donald Trump. Bagama't si Joe Biden na kasalukuyong presidente ay higit na nakikisama sa layunin ng ICC, mayroon pa ring mga bagay na hindi niya ina-ayunan. Ayon sa mga ibang eksperto, ang pangkasalakuyang inbestigasyon ng ICC sa Ukraine at Palestine ay nagbibigay pa rin ng mahalagang relasyon nito sa kapakanan ng katauhan bagama't malaking pagsubok (challenges) ang hinaharap nito.

Bakit itinatag ang ICC?

Nang matapos ang ikalawang giyerang pandaigdig (WWII), ang mga bansa na magkakampi na tinatawag na Allied Powers ay naglunsad ng isang tribunal upang ma-akusahan ang mga kriminal na mga opisyal ng Alemanyang Nazi sa Nuremberg. Ngunit hindi agad nagkaisa ang mga gobyerno hanggang sumapit sa taong 1990. Naglagay ang United Nations ng isang ad hoc international criminal tribunal upang maasikaso ang mga krimen sa dating Yugoslavia at Rwanda, ngunit maraming mga eksperto ng international law ang nagsasabing hindi mabiso at hindi sapat na makakapagbigay ng panglaban ito sa mga matitigas na kriminal.

Ang Trinidad at Tobago ang nag-amuki sa UN na magtatag ng isang korteng permanente noong 1989. Sa mga sumusunod na mga taon, ang proyektong ito ay nagkaroon ng mga tagatangkilik lalo na sa Europa at Afrika. Ang pinakamalaking taga-suporta ay ang African bloc kahit na may 33 pinuno ng mga bansang ito ay may mga reklamo pa rin laban sa ICC. Ang European Union ang nagbigay ng mahalagang suporta sa paggawa ng polisya ng pagkatha ng ICC noong 2011.

Noong Hulyo 1998, ang United Nations General Assembly ang nagdesisyon sa pagtayo ng ICC sa conferencia sa Rome, Italy. Pagkatapos nito, ang kasunduan ay na-konpirma

ng 60 bansa na tinatawag na Rome Statue noong Hulyo 1, 2002.

Ilang miembro ang kasapi sa ICC?

May 124 bansa ang kasapi at may 40 bansa ang hindi pumirma sa kasunduan, kasama na rito ang China, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iraq, North Korea, Saudi Arabia at Turkey. Noong 2015., tinanggap ng ICC ang Palestine na kasapi kahit tutol ang U.S.A at mga partner nito. May ilang dosenang bansa ang lumagda sa kasunduang nagpatibay ng ICC ngunit hindi dumaan sa pagpapatibay ng kanilang mga lehistratura (legislatures) kagaya ng Egypt, Iran, Israel, Russia, Sudan, Syria at U.S.A. Noong Pebrero 2024, ang Armenia ang pinakahuling kadagdagan sa ICC, pagkatapos ng pagsapi nito sa ICC, may isang taong nakalipas pagkatapos ng Rome statute.

Dalawang bansa ang bumitaw sa ICC - Burundi noong 2017 pagkatapos mag-imbetiga ang ICC sa mga oposisyon ng gobyerno. Si Presidente Rodrigo Duterte ay bumitaw noong 2019 pagkatapos mag-imbetiga ang ICC sa pagpatay sa mga Pilipinong na-akusahang mga nagdrodroga dahil sa ang korte ng bansa aniya ay sapat na mag-husga sa mga napatay sa kampanya ng gobyernong Pilipino laban sa mga napagbintangang drogista. Ang Gambia at South Africa naman ang nagbigay ng kanilang pag-papaalam sa United Nations noong 2016 ngunit nagbago ng kanilang desisyon nang magkaroon ng mga kaguluhan sa politika at mga paghamon sa gobyerno. Ang South Africa ay nagpahiwatig ng kanilang pagkontra sa nangingibabaw na inpluensiya ng mga bansang taga kanluran (Western countries) na higit na makapang-yarihan sa ICC sa paggamit ng batas sa mga hinuhusgahan.

Paano nagdedesisyon ang ICC?

Ang ICC ay nasa Hague, isang siyudad sa Netherlands na may maraming mga institusyong internasyonal at maraming opisina sa ibang bansa. Ang korteng ito ay nag-iinbestiga sa pamamagitan ng opisina ng prosecutor, sa pamumuno ng isang abogado na taga Anglaterra na si Karim A.A. Khan, mula noong 2021 na dating assistant secretary-general sa United Nations.

Ang ICC ay may 18 husgado, na galing sa mga bansang kasapi nito na bumoto sa kanila. Kailangang gawing patas sa pagpili ng mga kasapi ayon sa prinsipyong tinatawag na "gender-balanced bench," at kasama dito ay mga representanteng kasama na galing sa limang rehiyon ng United Nations. Ang mga husgado at

prosecutor ay ibinoboto para sa siyam na taong panunungkulan na hindi mauulit (not-renewable). Ang presidente at dalawang vise-presidente ng korte ay pinipili mula sa mga husgadong kasapi na nagpapalakad ng administrasyon kasama ng registry ng korte.

Ang ICC ay may kapangyarihan sa kategoria ng krimen ng batas na internasyonal, kagaya ng mga sumusunod:

- genocide, ang pagpatay sa mga tao ng isang lahi o relihiyon;

- krimen sa giyera kasama ng mga aksyon laban sa mga batas ng Geneva convention at iba pang paglabag ng international law, kagaya ng mga parusang labis, pagkidnap ng hostages, mga aksyong sobrang pagpapahirap sa mga mamamayan at mga pag-giba ng mga ari-arian, mga paaralan, mga monumento, ospital, paggamit ng taktikang gutumin ang mga tao na paraan ng giyera, paggamit ng mga batang sundalo, mga krimen laban sa katauhan kasama ng mga pagpatay, pang-gagahasa, pag-bilanggo na walang katuturan, pang-aalila, mga krimen laban sa katauhan na bahagi ng isang malaking kampanyang giyera, laban sa isang bansa at pag-okupa ng ibang teritoryong may sariling soberanidad o independienteng grupong may sariling buhay politika, at iba pang mga hakbang na laban sa prinsipyo ng UN Charter.

Ang korte ay maaring mag-umpisa ng inbestigasyon, isang paraan sa mga tatlong posibilidad: isang bansang kasapi ay magsusumbong sa prosecutor ng tungkol sa situasyon sa kanyang lugar, hanggang ito ay sakop ng jurisdiksyon ng korte; ang UN Security Council ang mag-uudyok na imbestigahan ang tungkol sa nangyayari sa isang panig ng mundo, o kaya sa pag-udyok ng pre-trial judge ng ICC, ang prosecutor ay maaring mag-umpisa ng imbestigasyon ayon sa tinatawag ng sariling palo o ang tinatawag na *proprio motu*, or "on one's own initiative." Ang korte ay maaring mag-imbetiga rin sa mga bansang hindi kasapi sa ICC kung ang mga krimen na nangyayari ay sa isang kasapi ng ICC, kung ang bansang hindi kasapi ay kumikilala sa kanyang jurisdiksyon, o kaya ito ay binigyan ng otorisasyon ng Security Council.

Ang pagbukas ng isang imbestigasyon ay ginagawa pagkatapos ng preliminary examination ng mga krimen na masyadong mabigat at grabe. Pagkatapos ng imbestigasyon, ang opisina ng prosecutor ay magpapadala ng mga imbestigador at mga iba pang empleadong magkokolekta ng mga ebidensiya. Ang dokumentong kailangan ay dapat aprobahan na batay sa mga informasyon. Isang grupo ng pretrial judges ang magdedesisyon kung dapat ituloy ang kaso. Ang mga na-akusahan ay maaring kumuha ng kanilang sariling abogado magtatangol sa kanila o mga counselor na taga-labas. at maari din na ang korte, kung kailangan, ang

magbabayad ng taga-pagtaggol nila. Ang paghatol (conviction) ay kailangang aprobado ng dalawang husgado sa tatlo, at ang mga na-akusahan ay maaring maghabol ng kanilang parusa sa korte.

Ang ICC ay isang komplemento lamang at ito ay hindi kapalit ng korte ng isang bansa. Ito ay gumagawa ng hakbang sa pag-eksamen ng mga krimen kapag ang korte ng bansa ay hindi gumagawa ng kanilang pag-imbetiga sa mga gumawa ng mga krimeng labag sa katauhan. Bukod dito, ang ICC ay may jurisdiksyon lamang sa mga krimeng nangyari mula ng 2002 nang ito ay naitayo. Ito ay umaasa rin sa kooperasyon ng mga kasaping bansa upang madakip ang mga natuturing na kriminal laban sa katauhan dahil wala itong sariling polisya na maaring gamitin sa paghuli ng mga kriminal. Hindi rin ito puedeng mag-husga sa isang kriminal kung hindi ito nasa korte dahil hindi maaring magimbestiga sa isang kriminal "in absentia."

Ang ICC ay may kaibahan sa International Court of Justice — na nag-husga ng mga kaso ng mga bansa. na nasa Hague din — dahil sa ito ay naghusga sa isang tao (individual). Napakalawak ang abot nito sa mundo at ang pagpapatuloy ng operasyon nito sa mga temporary international tribunals, kagaya ng tribunal na naghusga sa genocide sa Rwanda noong 1994.

Paano ginagastusan ang ICC?

Ang budget ng ICC sa isang taon ay umaabot ng \$187 milyon para sa taong 2024, na nagmula sa mga kasaping bansa. Ang kontribusyon ay batay sa isang paraang kaparis ng ginagamit sa United Nations. na katumbas ng laki ng ekonomiya ng isang bansa, Noong 2022, ang pinakamalaking kontribusyon ay galing sa Hapon, Alemanya, Fransiya, at Anglaterra. May mga bansang kagaya ng Argentina, Brazil at Venezuela na hanggang ngayon ay may mga utang na umaabot sa maraming milyon na hindi pa nababayaran hanggang ngayon.

Ang UN General Assembly ay maaring mag-rekomenda ng pandagdag na kontribusyon para sa mga kasong iniharap sa ICC ng Security Council ngunit hinda pa ito nagagawa hanggang sa ngayon. May mga ibang organisasyong transnasyonal ang maaring magbigay ng kusang kontribusyon sa ICC.

May mga kritiko ang nagsasabing napakamahal ang ICC at ito raw ay hindi nakakapagbigay ng hustisya laban sa mga tinatawag na gender-based violence. Sa isang banda, may mga nagsasabi na ang ICC ay may limitadong kapasidad at ang pag-uri ng tagumpay nito ay hindi lamang dapat ibatay sa bilang ng mga kaso at paghusga sa mga krimen na naiharap dito.

Sa kasalukuyan, may 31 kaso ang nasa korte, May 12 kasong "acquittal," at anim na kasong nahatulan ng pagkabilanggo at reparasyon. #



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Recipes selected from various sources

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Crispy Chili Beef

Ingredients

400g thinly sliced beef steaks
1 chilli chopped finely
2 cloves garlic finely chopped
2 tablespoons cornflour
1 head of broccoli chopped up
5 spring onions sliced lengthways
1 teaspoon ground ginger
5 tablespoons soy sauce mixed

Method

Toss the meat in the cornflour until it's evenly coated and then fry off and seal in a very hot wok sprayed with frylite

Set the meat aside and then put the garlic and chilli in the wok making sure to scrape all the meat bits and mix well

Add the spring onions and broccoli and then the soya sauce until it starts to bubble

Stir in the beef and cook for a further ten minutes.



Easy Sesame Chicken

Ingredients

1 lb Chicken thighs, boneless skinless
Produce
1 tsp Garlic
1/4 tsp Ginger, ground
1 Vegetables
Refrigerated
1 Egg, large
Canned Goods

1/2 cup Water or chicken stock
Condiments

1/2 cup Soy sauce, low-sodium

Pasta & Grains

1 Rice

Baking & Spices

1/4 tsp Black pepper

3 tbsp Brown sugar, packed

4 tbsp Cornstarch

1/2 tsp Salt

2 tsp Sesame seeds

Oils & Vinegars

2 tbsp Olive oil

2 tbsp Rice or apple cider vinegar

3/4 tsp Sesame oil

nstructions

In a small bowl, whisk together all ingredients for the sauce. Set aside. Cook rice and steam vegetables. Set aside.

In a small bowl, whisk egg with cornstarch, salt and pepper. Add chicken pieces to the batter and stir well.

In a large skillet, heat up 1 tablespoons of olive oil. Place chicken, piece by piece, in pan and cook on all sides until the batter is golden and slightly brown. It's easier to cook the chicken in two batches, using 1 tablespoon of oil each time.

Once the chicken is done, pour sauce mixture over it and simmer on medium low heat until the sauce thickens.

Remove from heat.

Serve chicken over rice with a side of steamed vegetables



Pinakbet

Ingredients:

1 bitter melon, halved lengthways, seeded and sliced
salt
50 ml vegetable oil
3 cm piece ginger, cut into julienne
1 red onion, thinly sliced
4-6 garlic cloves, crushed
3 tomatoes, cut into wedges
4 small slender eggplant, sliced into 3 cm pieces
10 okra
5 snake beans, cut into 5 cm pieces
1/4 Japanese pumpkin (kabocha), peeled, seeded and cut into chunks

50-75 g bagoong (Filipino shrimp paste)

100 ml water

steamed rice, to serve

Bagnet

500 g pork belly, sliced

1 onion, coarsely chopped

2 bay leaves

3 garlic cloves, peeled

30 g salt

vegetable oil, for deep-frying (optional)

Cook's notes

Oven temperatures are for conventional;

if using fan-forced (convection), reduce

the temperature by 20°C. | We use

Australian tablespoons and cups: 1

teaspoon equals 5 ml; 1 tablespoon

equals 20 ml; 1 cup equals 250 ml. | All

herbs are fresh (unless specified) and

cups are lightly packed. | All vegetables

are medium size and peeled, unless

specified. | All eggs are 55-60 g, unless

specified.

Instructions

Standing time 30 minutes

To make the bagnet, place all ingredients except the oil in a saucepan and add enough water to cover. Simmer over low heat for 1 hour, or until pork is tender.

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Drain the pork, place in a small roasting pan and bake for 30 minutes, or until pork has dried. If you like the pork extra crispy, you can now deep-fry it. Alternatively, chop into pieces and set aside.

Meanwhile, place the bitter melon in a bowl. Sprinkle generously with salt and stand for 30 minutes to help draw out some of the bitterness. Rinse and set aside.

Heat the oil in a pan over medium heat.

Sauté the ginger, onion and garlic for 5-6 minutes, or until tender.

Working in layers, add the tomato, eggplant, okra, bitter melon, snake beans and pumpkin to the pan. Spoon over the bagoong, scatter with the chopped bagnet, then pour in the water. Cover and cook over low heat, shaking pan once or twice to ensure bagoong is distributed evenly, for 12-15 minutes, or until vegetables are cooked through but retaining their shape and not mushy.

Serve with steamed rice.



Pork Binagoongan

Ingredients

600 g (1 lb 5 oz) boneless pork belly, skin on

1 onion, quartered

6 cloves garlic, smashed

3 bay leaves

2 tbsp fine salt

1 tsp whole black peppercorns

vegetable oil, for deep-frying

1 handful chilli leaves (optional)

steamed rice, to serve

Guisado bagoong

250 g (9 oz) cherry tomatoes

60 ml (2 fl oz/1/4 cup) vegetable oil

6 cloves garlic, crushed

1 onion, finely chopped

2 tbsp sautéed shrimp paste (bagoong alamang)

1 long green chilli

2 red bird's-eye chillies, thinly sliced on the diagonal

Cook's notes

Oven temperatures are for conventional;

if using fan-forced (convection), reduce

the temperature by 20°C. | We use

Australian tablespoons and cups: 1

teaspoon equals 5 ml; 1 tablespoon

equals 20 ml; 1 cup equals 250 ml. | All

herbs are fresh (unless specified) and

cups are lightly packed. | All vegetables

are medium size and peeled, unless

specified. | All eggs are 55-60 g, unless

specified.

Instructions

To par-cook the pork, place it in a large, deep saucepan and pour in enough cold water to cover. Bring to the boil over high heat, skimming any scum from the surface. Add the onion, garlic, bay leaves, salt and peppercorns.

Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook for 1 hour, or until fork-tender. Transfer the pork to a shallow dish and allow to cool.

Strain the cooking liquid, discarding the solids, and reserve 250 ml (8 1/2 fl oz/1 cup) to make the sauce.

Discard the remaining cooking liquid.

To deep-fry the pork, fill a large, deep

saucepan or wok one-third full of

vegetable oil and place over

medium-high heat until the oil reaches

180°C (350°F). Pat the pork dry using

paper towel and cut into 2 cm (3/4 inch)

wide lengths, then into 1.5 cm (1/2 inch)

pieces. Working in batches, gently lower

the pork into the hot oil and deep-fry for

3 minutes, or until the meat is golden

and the skin is crisp (ensure the oil

returns to 180°C between each batch).

Remove with a slotted spoon and drain

on paper towel. Break pieces in half and

set aside.

To deep-fry the chilli leaves, if using,

return the oil to 180°C. Deep-fry the

leaves for 20 seconds or until crisp.

Remove with a slotted spoon and drain

on paper towel.

To make guisado bagoong, halve five of

the tomatoes and reserve. Cut the

remaining tomatoes into quarters. Heat

the vegetable oil in a large saucepan

over medium heat. Add the garlic and

cook for 30 seconds, or until fragrant,

then add the onion and cook for 4

minutes, stirring until soft. Increase the

heat to medium-high, add the quartered

tomatoes and cook, stirring and

mashing them for 10 minutes, or until

completely broken down and starting to

caramelize. Add the sautéed shrimp

paste and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes.

Stir in 190 ml (6 1/2 fl oz/3/4 cup) of the

reserved pork cooking liquid, bring to

the boil, then add the deep-fried pork

belly, green and red chillies, and the

reserved tomato halves. Cook for 3-4

minutes, or until the pork is warmed

through. Add the remaining pork

cooking liquid according to your

preferred finish of wet or dry.

Transfer the binagoongan to a serving

bowl, garnish with fried chilli leaves, if

desired, and serve with steamed rice.

boiled soft pork and use fresh shrimp

paste in place of guisado bagoong

(sautéed shrimp paste, onion, garlic and

tomato).

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Social Tidbits

Montreal Community News

Fely Rosales Cariño

Hello hello, my social tidbits readers! It's feeling a lot like summer, which can't come soon enough! To many, this means vacation. Those eyeing to visit the Philippines are Lolit & Andy Odulio, Nick & Minda Mazzone, and Maming Transfiguration. Lita & Benny Bote and Nora Arcalas just came back from California. Roger & Neri Ajero are fresh from a cruise while Ciony Nueva and Cely Sacdalan are contemplating a getaway. Some will indulge in their favorite sports, homeowners are preparing their renovations, and many of us are already planning our summer visiting friends and looking forward to all the parties that the Filipino community loves.

And first on our social calendar is the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal (FHSM). On April 22, 2024 FHSM Chairman Al Abdon gathered various heads of organizations and other community leaders at the FAMAS Center for a greet-and-meet session with the Honorable Richie Valdez. Who is she, you ask? She is our very own kababayan - the first Filipino-Canadian woman MP elected and appointed to Cabinet in 2021. She represents the riding of Mississauga-Streetsville in Ontario. Valdez is Minister of Small

Business, a Canadian entrepreneur and an engaging television personality. She was already featured in a previous issue of the North American Filipino Star. Also in attendance were many of the who's who in local politics such as MP Anthony Housefather and Julian, his assistant, Councilors Sonny Moroz and Stephanie Valenzuela. Other attendees and the associations they represent were: Julie Parado & Angie Ojerio (FAMAS), Bert Abiera (FAMAS), Paul Imperial (Panday Tinig), Rey Balansi (Knights of Rizal), Julie & Dante Tabamo (FAMAS), Nico & Minda Mazzone (FFCAQ), Lolit & Andy Odulio (SWIS), Raquel & Romy Trinidad (Aklan Association), Al Abdon (FHSM), Cora Abdon (FNAQ), Jeannette Perignon (Kahirup Association of Quebec), Dick Ribaya (Tennis), Gery Danzil (UPSQA), Ed Tupaz & wife (Tennis), Epang Nicolas (PBSSQ), Remy Montealegre (Philippines and Canada Business & Trade), Jonathan del Pilar (Photographer), Dario Boco (CCFAQ), Fely Rosales-Carino (North American Filipino Star), and Manny Lagasca (Chess Club).

The United Pilipino Seniors of Quebec Association (UPSQA) had a non-stop Spring Disco celebration on April 20, 2024 at 6767 Côte-des-

Neiges. This was to honor members with birthdays from January to April 2024. UPSQA President Gerry Danzil diligently went to the podium to relay several announcements. Jonathan del Pilar had the music blaring with dancing music from the 70s. Always on the floor were Esphie Manaog, Remy Lopez, Dolly Arjona and many others. Elie Israel of the English Montreal School Board (ESMB) was on hand to distribute forms for her re-election to the EMSB. (Elie is commonly seen at many Filipino gatherings). This was an all-night dancing as the entrance ticket indicated. Congratulations Gerry and your crew for keeping this event energized till the end!

The Knights of Rizal (KOR) held their solemn Knighting, Elevation, and Induction last April 13, 2024. This event was held at Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish on 75 Roosevelt Avenue, Mount Royal, Quebec. Part 1 of the event was the Knighting and Elevation Ceremonies. Knighting Officer was Sir Reynaldo, KGOR, LM, Eastern Canada Regional Commander. Aspiring candidate was Postulant Rodel Pangilinan. The Elevation Officer was Sir Dario Boco, KGCR, LM, Eastern Canada Regional Adviser, Past Eastern Canada Regional Commander 2022-2024. The two candidates for Elevation were Sir Dennis Tomas (KR), and Sir David Beasse (KR).

Part 2 of the evening was the Induction of new chapter officers. It started with the Entrance of Colors processional march with Sir Rodel Pangilinan, KR (Philippine flag), Sir Reynaldo Abaya, KCR, LM (Canada flag), and Sir Nestor Deladia, KCR, LM (Quebec flag). KOR flag bearers/yellow banners were Sir Reuben Mendoza, KCR and Sir Alfredo

Erquiza, KCR, LM. The Invocation, Rizalian Prayer was led by Sir Emmanuel Cea, KCR, LM. The Philippine and Canadian national anthems were played with audience participation. And the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was conducted by Sir Benjamin Belaus, KCR, LM. The KOR performed a group singing of their KOR Hymn. And Area 2 Commander Sir Julius Abad, KCR, LM, welcomed the guests.

An inspirational message was delivered by Sir Dario Boco, who was also the Inducting Officer of the evening. He inducted two sets of officers: the Mackenzie Central Chapter and the Magtanggol Chapter. Benjamin Balaus (KCR, LM, Mackenzie Commander) and Sir Emmanuel Cea (KCR, LM, Magtanggol Commander) each gave their acceptance message. The audience also heard special messages from Sir Felix de Luna, KGOR, LM, Sir Reynaldo Balansi, KGOR, LM, Councilor Stephanie Valenzuela, Darlington District, and Sir Councilor Sonny Moroz, KCR, Snowdon District. Eventually, Sir Rowel Pangilinan, KCR, LM, Area 2 Deputy Commander gave the closing remarks to end the formal part of the evening. The final closing song was Pilipinas Kong Mahal by Francisco Santiago.

Part 3 was the celebratory dinner/dance/entertainment session. Master of Ceremonies was Sir Marc de Luna (KCR). Everyone was now relaxed and ready to mingle. The rest of the evening was spent dancing with guests and members of the KOR and the Ladies of KOR. A highly attended party, indeed! And it was nice to see you, Sir James de la Paz and your lovely wife, Lady Rose! Until next issue and God Bless !!!

Conservatives put forward motion to oust Greg Fergus as Speaker of the House

Conservatives are asking the House of Commons to vote to remove Speaker Greg Fergus from the role over partisan language that appeared in an ad for an event in his riding.

Conservative MP Chris Warkentin moved a motion Monday afternoon that, if passed, would find Fergus in contempt of Parliament and declare the Speaker's chair vacant.

"This Speaker has demonstrated countless times that he is unfit to be a non-partisan speaker," Warkentin said in the House chamber.

"He's a very, very effective partisan Liberal and ... we've lost trust in his ability to govern this place."

Warkentin moved the motion after Deputy Speaker Chris d'Entremont ruled that the use of partisan language in the ad amounted to a prima facie question of MPs' privilege.

The online posting for "A Summer Evening with the Honourable Greg Fergus" included a line that took aim at Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre. It accused him of pursuing Conservative policies "that would risk our health, safety and pocketbooks" and promoted a Liberal plan to "grow an economy that works for everyone."

The Liberal Party apologized to Fergus in a letter last week, saying the language posted on the event page was the auto-populated, standardized language the party uses for events on its website.

The language was posted without Fergus's knowledge and "as a result of a miscommunication between the Party and the riding association," said the letter from Azam Ishmael, the party's national director.

"The Liberal Party unequivocally apologizes to you for this mistake, and we take full responsibility."

Liberal MP Kevin Lamoureux accused the Conservatives of launching a partisan attack on Fergus.

"They have constantly ... had it in for this Speaker," he said in the House.

The Speaker presides over the business of the House of Commons and is meant to act as an impartial arbiter of House proceedings. While the Speaker is elected as a member of a party, the role is considered nonpartisan — no Speaker sits in a party caucus.

Abridged version of report by Darren Major · CBC News · May 27, 2024



Speaker of the House of Commons Greg Fergus takes part in the Speakers Parade prior to question period on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Wednesday, May 1, 2024. (Sean Kilpatrick/The Canadian Press)

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FILIPINO STAR

SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

Adjeng Buena Ventura finally fulfills her dream



Adjeng Buena Ventura has just released her first album titled Unravel

Never let go of your dream. That is what Adjeng Buena Ventura is telling everybody with the release of her album Unravel. It took her years but she finally did it. I can just imagine how satisfied she must feel knowing that her songs are now out there for everybody to enjoy.

Some 20 years or so ago Adrienne Sarmiento, whose friends turned her into Adjeng, was the girl vocalist every band dreamed of. Pretty with a sweet voice and hardworking, she made singing her career after graduating from Miriam College. She made her mark with showbands like Sipol and Wink, both of which were known for making smooth perky pop music.

Adjeng was privileged in the sense that opportunities simply

opened up for her. She went into modeling and theater acting. She was a writer for television shows and magazines. She hosted events and TV programs. She reached a



point when she could have done anything and succeeded at it. That anything included marriage to Rodrin Buena Ventura and two children.

Throughout all these, Adjeng never gave up on her music. She prioritized her family and her live gigs were drastically reduced. But she would from time to time, do a recording with Sipol, sing in church or when the mood hits her, compose songs which kept her visible through songwriting competitions.

The arrival of digital platforms encouraged Adjeng to take up singing solo again. Admittedly, the likes of YouTube, Spotify and other outlets made it easy for singers who put their families first to remain active in their careers. With no record label to deal with and no promotional requirements, it was easy to just record a song, upload it on those platforms and then hope for lots of likes and downloads.

This was what Adjeng had been doing these past few years, writing songs, recording them and then uploading them. The results were quite good and always show her happy, positive vibe. Say No is a happy piece with shades of rock. Walk On Water is a sweet inspirational to which handclaps should come naturally. Please is a breezy ballad about falling in love, which happens to be my favorite. She even released a beautiful Christmas tune, In Awe.

With so many of her songs already out there in the cloud, it took only a little push for Adjeng to complete the transition to a full album. And so here it is titled Unravel and containing the songs Rollercoaster, Never, Be Kind, Kaya Mo Yan, Must Be Love, More Than a Little, Quicksand, and what I believe is an anniversary song dedicated to her husband, Still Kilig.

So, think how long it took for Adjeng to come up with her first album. Twenty years, several careers, a husband, and two children. But she never gave up. No wonder Unravel has such a joyful sound. Adjeng is fulfilled, satisfied with her work, and happy. Listen and think of the lesson she imparts. Never let go of your dream. ■

Content creator Arshie Larga joins Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia list



Ramon Christian Larga, a content creator who goes by Arshie Larga, has joined the Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia for the Media, Marketing & Advertising category roster.

In a video posted to his social media, Larga tearfully yet excitedly shared the good news to his fans and detailed his reaction when he received the email from the media company.

"Until now, speechless pa rin po ako as in pagkagising ko kaninang umaga ito agad yung bumungad na email sa akin kaya sobrang ganda ng gising ko pero hindi ko alam kung ano ang mararamdaman ko," the content creator said.

He then went on to thank the person who nominated him for the esteemed list as well as his fans who have supported him and his videos.

"For sure po na hindi ko makukuha or hindi po ako marerecognize sa listahan na ito kung hindi po dahil sa inyo," said Larga.

He expounded on how he began his advocacy without expecting to receive anything in return as he was already content with serving as a way to help people receive what they need.

"Maraming maraming salamat po sa inyo," he said wholeheartedly.

As a registered pharmacist content creator, Larga is known for his informative videos that educate viewers about medicines and health-related inquiries. He was previously recognized as "TikTok Creator of the Year" during the TikTok Awards Philippines 2023.

The Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia list features people under the age of 30 who have made an impact on their respective fields. ■

KC Concepcion greets Sharon Cuneta on Mother's Day despite 'estranged' relationship



Sharon Cuneta with daughter KC Concepcion

KC Concepcion took to her Instagram to greet her mom and actress Sharon Cuneta on Mother's Day despite being "estranged" from each other.

In an Instagram post on Sunday, May 12, KC expressed her gratitude towards Sharon whom she described as the first person she had ever loved.

"To my beautiful mama, it's your day. I pray for us to enjoy life's pleasures and adventures together soon. You're the first person I ever met, and ever loved, it's because of you that I'm here today," KC wrote.

"Trust in the way you raised me – I will always strive to make you proud and feel that having me was worth it. I love you. I wish I could give you the world so you wouldn't have to worry about anything for another second. Happy Mother's Day mama!" she continued.

In an interview with TV5, the Megastar revealed that she had been hurting as she was having problems with KC.

"Pati mga anak ko tulad sina Frankie, my God, they're kids. Wala silang ginagawa.

Ano man ang problema namin ng panganay ko because at this point, we're estranged. And I'm very, very hurt," stated Sharon.

The seasoned singer-actress further explained it's better that way, emphasizing that what's important is her love to her children.



"But there are things na, tama na 'yun. Amin na lang. Kahit bali-baliktarin mo ang mundo, mahal mo pa rin ang anak mo. So tiis-tiis na lang muna. Dadating ang point na ayoko nang isiksik ang sarili ko sa anak ko," she added. ■

Bea Alonzo files charges against Ogie Diaz, Cristy Fermin



Bea Alonzo

Film and TV actress Bea Alonzo has filed three separate cases against entertainment columnists Ogie Diaz and Cristy Fermin. She was accompanied by her lawyer, Attorney Joey Garcia, and manager Shirley Kuan.

In a post shared by GMA showbiz reporter Nelson Canlas, the actress showed up at the Quezon City Prosecutors Office on Thursday, May 1, to file cyber libel cases against the veteran entertainment hosts and their co-hosts on their respective online programs.

Alonzo also submitted a complaint against a netizen who

identified himself/herself as someone close to her.

Canlas added that the actress claimed she became a victim of wrong, malicious, and misinformation from Fermin and Diaz's "source".

"Kasama dito ang umano'y sunud-sunod na paninira kay Bea sa kanilang mga columns at mga show. Kabilang na ang issue na umano'y 'di pagbabayad ng tamang buwis ng aktres," wrote Nelson.

As of writing, Fermin and Diaz have yet to release a statement regarding the charges filed against them. ■

Luis Manzano is clear of cancer after head lump detection



The "It's Showtime" hosts are TV host Luis Manzano revealed on Saturday, May 4, that he could now feel relief after finding that he was clear of cancer, following a biopsy.

In his recent vlog, Luis shared the good news with his fans that after consulting a specialist and undergoing several tests, the lump was not cancerous. The celebrity asked for consultations after his stylist found a small lump on his head, which he described as a mole before.

"May kailangan i-biopsy dito sa taas ng ulo ko. Parang ang biopsy

kung 'di ako nagkakamali ay i-check kung cancerous or not or kung malignant or benign," said Luis.

"Akala ko dati pa, nunal, kaya niloloko ko yung mga tao na matalino ako, may nunal ako dito. Bata pa ako, alam kong may ganyan na ako," he added.

Narrating his journey doing a series of checkups, the 43-year-old host also explained that aside from wanting to know the causes of his lump, he also aimed to spread awareness.

Luis also shared how anxious he was as he waited for the results of his examinations.

Before ending his vlog, he also revealed that he would be undergoing blood test just to make sure about the possible causes of the lump.

"So far it looks okay, pero may kailangan lang idagdag na blood test para makasiguro lang na hindi problema ito. Nothing's definitive. Still, tuloy-tuloy ang dasal," Luis stated.

Showbiz Gossip *Continued from p.15*

Kylie Verzosa stuns at Cannes Film Festival 2024



Filipina beauty queen turned actress, Kylie Verzosa, made a dazzling return to the red carpet of the prestigious Cannes Film Festival on Wednesday, May 15.

Verzosa, the reigning Miss International 2016, stole the show at the opening ceremony making heads turn in a custom-designed black mermaid gown by Filipino fashion designer Mark Bumgarner. The intricate Chantilly lace gown accentuated her sophistication and confidence as she glided down the red carpet.

To complete her glamorous look, Verzosa accessorized with exquisite diamond jewelry from the renowned French brand Messika.

The actress, who graced the festival for the second time, attended the opening night screening of "Le Deuxième Acte" (The Second Act).

She expressed her excitement on social media, stating, "So happy to be here... Such an honor," and in a separate post, "Walking on a dream... it was such a dream to be here again." ■

Catriona Gray shines at New York premiere of 'The Idea of You'



Miss Universe 2018 Catriona Gray stunned the crowd once again with her show-stopping look during the red carpet premiere of the director Michael Showalter's "The Idea of You" starring Anne Hathaway and Nicholas Galitzine.

"Thrilled to be invited to attend the NYC premiere of #TheIdeaOfYou," said Gray in her post on Instagram, showing a few photos of herself in the streets of New York.

The beauty queen turned heads on the red carpet as she wore a brown asymmetrical dress designed by Filipino

fashion designer Rajo Laurel partnered with a pair of black stockings and a few dazzling accessories from the luxury brand Bulgari.

Gray also took the time to acknowledge her stylist Danae Vernisse Dipon, who had also worked with celebrities like Kathryn Bernardo, Maine Mendoza, Francine Diaz, Miles Ocampo, and Ria Atayde.

Prior to her attending "The Idea of You" red carpet premiere, Gray had also conducted an online interview with Hathaway and Galitzine as part of the film's promotion. ■

Lovi Poe opens up on early career struggles



Lovi Poe

Lovi Poe looks back on the criticisms she faced while she was building her career in the Philippines and Hollywood as well.

Due to her “morena” complexion, many have told her that she had no future in showbiz.

“I was told I was never going to make it because I was flat chested, because my skin was darker. I started at 15. It affected me,” she shared on her contract signing with skincare brand SCD. “But I gave it a few days to sulk... I will just enjoy myself, do well at work, and take care of myself.”

She realized that she has to mind her own self more than others’ opinions.

“Don’t let yourself feel down, stay positive, and work to become your best,” Poe emphasized. “Making yourself beautiful is not about skin. You can be beautiful whatever color you are... If you take care of yourself — it will come shining through.”

From a teen who is struggling with her insecurities, she learned how to love her own skin and just enjoy being who she is.

From then on, she embraced her uniqueness above any other person’s expectations of her.

“I asked myself, ‘do I have to do all these things because that is

what society wants?’ Until one time, I had a conversation with my manager, I was stubborn, I was like ‘You know what, who cares? I will do me, if they don’t like I’m flat chested, I will just do well in my acting, in different aspects. I may have darker skin color, so what?’ And it worked well for me,” she narrated.

“All you have to do is take care of yourself even more than anyone else. Everything suddenly came through and it was no longer a problem. Since Ethen I said I will stand my ground if. I look and feel happy, I am O.K.,” Poe added.

Having turned criticism into motivation, Poe hopes to stand as an inspiration, proving that self-acceptance and perseverance are keys to success in any field.

“I am not saying I made it but I am happy where I am,” she emphasized.

Apart from her Hollywood stints, Poe had just wrapped up shooting the film “Guilty Pleasure” with JM De Guzman and Jameson Blake.

She is slated to produce a horror film with Director and screenwriter Jerrold Tarrog and do an action flick with director Richard Somes. ■

Michelle Dee hopes successor Chelsea Manalo will ‘lead by example’



(From left) Chelsea Manalo and Michelle Dee. Image

Content creator and actress Michelle Dee expressed her support to her successor, Miss Universe Philippines 2024 Chelsea Manalo, as she advised the latter to “lead by example” throughout her reign.

Dee took to her Instagram page on Friday, May 24 to congratulate Manalo on her Miss Universe Philippines win, saying she passed her crown to someone with “such a genuine heart.”

May you lead by example always in all ways,” she wrote.

“Congratulations to our new Miss Universe Philippines 2024 @manalochelsea. We had a brief interaction backstage and I can really say that we crowned a woman with such a genuine heart.”

The actress-beauty queen said the crown “looks so good” on Manalo despite her “initial hiccup” on how she plopped it on the latter’s head.

“Manifesting only the best for you and our home... Despite my little initial hiccup, the @jewelmer crown looks so good on you,” she said.

Blackpink’s Lisa waves checkered flag at 2024 F1 Miami Grand Prix



Lisa from Kpop girl group Blackpink has surprised her fans as well as racing enthusiasts with her appearance at the 2024 F1 Miami Grand Prix.

The Kpop idol was chosen to wave the checkered flag signifying the end of the race, which saw the first top podium finish by McLaren’s Lando Norris.

Lisa joins the roster of celebrities that have received the

honor of waving the checkered flag by the finish line, with some being actor Tom Holland, football player David Beckham, and singer Justin Bieber.

Apart from her stint of holding the flag, Lisa had also taken a photo with Red Bull’s Max Verstappen, who finished the race in second place, at the Red Bull garage along with the famed RB20 car and the rest of the team’s crew.

Zelensky calls on Biden and Xi to join Ukraine peace summit

Sunday 26 May 2024 10:42, Sky News

President Volodymyr Zelensky has directly called on his US and Chinese counterparts to join his latest summit for peace in Ukraine.

Speaking from Kharkiv in northeastern Ukraine on Friday, Mr Zelensky announced a "global peace summit", co-hosted by Switzerland, starting on 15 June.

He claimed 80 countries have already confirmed their attendance.

But he said: "I am appealing to the global leaders of the world who are still outside the global efforts of the global peace summit."

"To President Biden, the leader of the United States, and to

President Xi, the leader of China, we do not want the UN charter to be burned.

"Please show your

leadership in advancing the peace." He added that it must be "real peace - not just a pause in the strikes" after various ceasefire

officials said.

On Saturday, a strike on a shopping centre killed six people, injured 40, and left a further 16 unaccounted for, local authorities said.

Elsewhere in the city, an additional 11 people were injured as a result of strikes, including a 13-year-old boy.

Just over the border, in Russia's Belgorod region, the regional governor there said four residents died as a result of Ukrainian attacks on Saturday.

Mr Zelensky warned a new Russian offensive is being planned northwest of Kharkiv.

Ukrainians and military analysts have repeatedly warned of depleting weapon supplies on the frontline.

Earlier this month the US agreed to a further \$2bn (£1.6bn) in military support for Ukraine.

It has consistently resisted calls to send US troops there, in line with NATO's refusal for direct involvement in the conflict.

China has resisted calls by NATO and its member states to take a direct stance against Russia in support of Ukraine. President Xi hosted Russian leader Vladimir Putin in a show of "friendship" earlier this month.



President Volodymyr Zelensky has directly called on his US and Chinese counterparts to join his latest summit for peace in Ukraine.



Several people have been killed after a crowded DIY store in the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv was hit by Russian strikes, regional officials say.

Top UN court orders Israel to stop Rafah offensive

Raffi Berg, May 24, 2024
BBC News

The UN's top court, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), has issued a dramatic ruling, ordering Israel to "immediately halt its military offensive in Rafah".

It acted in support of a South African application last week which sought a number of measures against Israel, accusing it of stepping up what it says is a genocide.

Presiding judge Nawaf Salam said the situation in Gaza had deteriorated since the court last ordered Israel to take steps to improve it.

Israel has vehemently denied the allegation and signalled it would ignore any order to halt its operation. Reading the court's ruling on Friday, Nawaf Salam said "Israel must immediately halt its military offensive, and any other action in the Rafah Governorate" which could bring about "the physical destruction" of the Palestinians - alluding to what constitutes genocide under international law.

Israel, he added, must also allow unimpeded access to Gaza to any UN body investigating allegations of genocide.

The ruling also reiterated a requirement for Israel to enable "unhindered provision at scale" of basic services and humanitarian aid for Gaza.

"The humanitarian situation [in Gaza] is now to be characterised as disastrous," the ruling said.

Israel rejected the court's ruling and said its military offensive in Gaza was in line with international law. "Israel has not and will not carry out military operations in the Rafah area that create living conditions that could cause the destruction of the Palestinian civilian population, in whole or in part," National Security Adviser Tzachi Hanegbi said in a joint statement with the foreign ministry.

War cabinet minister Benny Gantz said Israel would continue its offensive "wherever and whenever necessary - including in Rafah".

Meanwhile, the Palestinian ambassador to the UN, Riyad Mansour, hailed the ruling and called for Israel to abide by it.

"We expect that resolutions of the ICJ be implemented without hesitation," he said. "That's mandatory. And Israel is party to the convention." Following news of the ICJ ruling, the European Union's top diplomat, Josep

Borrell, said the bloc's commitment to

the rule of law and its support for Israel "are going to be quite difficult to make compatible".

Reuters Machinery disposes of rotten eggs as Rafah crossing remains closed to aid Reuters Heavy machinery disposes of rotten eggs, part of aid packages, as Rafah crossing remains closed to aid Aid agencies and the UN say insufficient amounts of aid are reaching people in Gaza, which they say is facing famine.

The UN suspended food distribution in Rafah on Tuesday because of the perilous situation there. Israel says it has made "extensive efforts" to ensure that humanitarian aid is "flowing into Gaza".

Judge Salam also said that the court found it "deeply troubling" that Israeli hostages were still being held by Hamas and other armed groups in Gaza, and called for "their immediate and unconditional release".

Israeli opposition leader Yair Lapid criticised the ruling, calling it an "abject moral failure" that the ICJ did not connect their bombardment of Rafah to the release of the hostages.

South Africa's foreign ministry chief Zane Dangor called the ruling "groundbreaking", alluding to it being the first time the court has made an explicit order to Israel to halt action in a part of Gaza.

Hamas said it welcomed the

decision which it said "demands that the brutal Zionist entity [Israel] stop its aggression" in Rafah".

Minutes after the ruling was delivered, Israel warplanes carried out a series of air strikes on the Shaboura camp in the centre of Rafah.

A local activist at nearby Kuwait Hospital told the BBC that rescue teams in the hospital were unable to reach the site of the raids due to their intensity.

Israel began a long-anticipated offensive in Rafah about three weeks ago, vowing to destroy the remaining Hamas battalions there. It says it believes Israeli hostages are also being held in the town.

The UN says more than 800,000 Palestinians have fled from Rafah since the offensive began. About 1.5 million had been sheltering there from the fighting elsewhere in Gaza.

The hearing is part of a case brought by South Africa to the ICJ in December, claiming Israel was committing genocide in Gaza. That case is ongoing.

Israel began its offensive in Gaza after gunmen from Hamas, the organisation which ruled the territory, attacked Israel on 7 October, killing about 1,200 people and taking 252 others back to Gaza as hostages.

At least 35,800 Palestinians have been killed in the war since then, according to Gaza's Hamas-run health ministry.

Quebec minister tables bill to restrict evictions for three years amid housing crunch

Thomas Laberge

The Canadian Press

Updated May 22, 2024 5:5

Quebec's housing minister acknowledged on Wednesday that the province is in a housing crisis, as she tabled a bill that would impose a three-year moratorium on certain types of evictions and boost protections for low-income renters aged 65 and older.

France-Élaine Duranceau's proposed legislation would prevent landlords from evicting renters in order to subdivide, enlarge or change the use of a housing unit.

"An eviction or the threat of an eviction causes immense stress, and we want to prevent as many Quebecers as possible from finding themselves in that situation given the few alternatives at their disposal right now," she told a news conference.

"In a crisis context, losing one's housing can have immense consequences which can lead to homelessness, so we must avoid that," she added.

An owner would still be allowed to repossess a unit for a close family member.

The moratorium would last three years but would end early if the rental vacancy rate for all Quebec cities with more than 10,000 people reaches three per cent. The vacancy rate was 1.5 per cent in Montreal in January, according to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Duranceau's bill would also extend Quebec's law against evicting low-income seniors to cover people beginning at age 65 instead of 70, and it would raise the income at which a person becomes eligible. The government estimates that some 24,000 households would be protected by this new measure.

Are you concerned about finding



Quebec Housing Minister France-Elaine Duranceau (Canadian Presse)

housing ahead of July 1? Please contact us for a possible news story: MontrealDigitalNews@BellMedia.ca

The seniors eviction law is named after former Québec solidaire co-

solidaire have long pushed for the measures in the bill, and met with Duranceau several times to discuss the changes.



spokesperson Françoise David, and Duranceau on Wednesday acknowledged the left-wing rival party's contribution to the expansion of the legislation. Members of Québec

"We share the objective of protecting the most vulnerable people from the impacts of the crisis and we have had very good collaboration on this issue so far," Duranceau said.

Wednesday's announcement represented a shift for the minister, who has been criticized in the past for a housing bill that allowed landlords to reject lease transfers, which are a popular tool tenants have used for years to limit rent increases. During detailed studies of that bill, Duranceau rejected proposals from opposition parties to increase protections for seniors, insisting that her legislation included sufficient measures to shield people of all ages from evictions.

Her change of heart, she said Wednesday, was due to the shifting situation, including the "massive arrival of non-permanent residents" to the province. And she said she wasn't ruling out further legislation to address the housing crisis as the situation evolves.

There was mixed reaction to the announcement, ranging from praise from Québec solidaire to criticism from the Liberals. Québec solidaire's Christine Labrie said the bill was "a revolution" in tackling the housing crisis, noting that the ideas it contained originated with her party.

Réseau FADOQ, a group representing seniors, said the bill was a big step forward in protecting older renters, adding, "We see that political pressure gets results."

Liberal member Virginie Dufour called the bill a "charm operation" that would do little to solve the lack of housing, but said her party would still support it.

That sentiment was echoed by a group representing landlords and building managers, which said the bill's intentions were "laudable" but that it "will not help resolve the widespread housing shortage, which continues to grow."

This report by The Canadian Press was first published May 22, 2024.

Quebec's Felix Auger-Aliassime, Leylah Fernandez open in Paris with comfortable wins

Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime and Leylah Fernandez posted comfortable wins in the opening round of the French Open on Monday.

Montreal's Auger-Aliassime was a 6-2, 6-4, 6-4 winner over Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka.

Auger-Aliassime fired seven aces and won 84 per cent of his first serves in a match marred by two rain delays.

Fernandez, from Laval, Que., followed with a 6-2, 6-0 victory over Jessika Ponchet of France.

The Canadian opened with her first of five breaks in a match that took just 69 minutes to complete.

Neither Canadian faced break point.



Felix Auger-Aliassime from Montreal and Leylah Fernandez from Laval won their matches at the French Open on May 27, 2024. (Jean-Francois Badias/ Rebecca Blackwell, The Associated Press)

Auger-Aliassime, seeded 21st in Paris, will next face German qualifier Henn Squire. The 31st-seeded Fernandez will next play China's Wang Xiyu.

Two other Canadians were scheduled to play their opening matches in Paris on Monday, including Bianca Andreescu of Mississauga, Ont. She returns to the court to face Spain's Sara Sorribes Tormo in her first match in nearly 10 months after injuring her back at the National Bank Open in Montreal last August.

Also Monday, Denis Shapovalov, of Richmond Hill, Ont., faces Luca Van Assche of France.

This report by The Canadian Press was first published May 27, 2024

THE NORTH AMERICAN FILIPINO STAR

May 2024 Pictorial News



More than 30,000 people in the UK were infected with HIV and Hepatitis C after being given contaminated blood products in the 1970s and 1980s.

A public inquiry into what has been called the biggest treatment disaster in NHS history will announce its findings on Monday. Victims are campaigning for compensation.



Wildfires of note in Alberta

A wildfire of note is determined to be of significant public interest and may pose a threat to public safety, communities or critical infrastructure.



Palestinians carry boxes of humanitarian assistance after rushing the trucks transporting the international aid from the new U.S.-built temporary floating pier near Nuseirat in the central Gaza Strip on Saturday. AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



President Joe Biden receives an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Morehouse College during the 140th Morehouse College Commencement ceremony on May 19, 2024 in Atlanta, Georgia. PARAS GRIFFIN/WIREIMAGE VIA GETTY IMAGES



Palestinian truck drivers and United Nations vehicles wait near the Rafah border gate on the Gazan side to cross the Egyptian side after the Israeli army took control of the vital crossing and announced that it would close the entrance of aid supplies, as Israeli operations continue in Rafah, Gaza on May 14, 2024. HANI ALSHAER/ANADOLU VIA GETTY IMAGES



Donald Trump's former lawyer Michael Cohen has given a third day of testimony at a New York court in the ex-president's hush-money trial. The defence has attacked Cohen's credibility as a witness, highlighting his convictions for lying to Congress and other criminal charges. Cohen, who once said he would take a bullet for Trump, testified he lied out of "loyalty" and to "protect" Trump when he was his personal counselor.