



# PHILIPPINE Fiesta

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Duterte threatens to scrap VFA  
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## Thousands denied entry at NAIA



Passengers who arrived on a flight from Guangzhou, China are seen at a pre-departure area waiting for a flight back to their port of origin after they were denied entry at NAIA yesterday.

BY RUDY SANTOS

MANILA, Philippines — Thousands of incoming passengers of various nationalities who came from China, Hong Kong and Macau were prevented by immigration

officials from entering the country yesterday at Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) after Malacañang issued a directive banning all passengers coming from the areas due to the outbreak

of the 2019 novel coronavirus acute respiratory disease (nCoV ARD).

Immigration supervisors in three NAIA terminals said they were confused

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## Stop blaming Chinese for nCoV, that's xenophobia - Duterte

BY KRISSEY AGUILAR

MANILA, Philippines — President Rodrigo Duterte on Monday urged Filipinos to stop blaming the Chinese for the outbreak of the 2019 novel coronavirus (nCoV), calling it in bad taste.



Pres. Rodrigo Duterte

“Blaming Chinese is xenophobia,” Duterte said Monday in a press briefing held in Malacañang. “You hate anything that is Chinese, that is not good. China has been kind to us. We can also show the same favor to

them.”  
“Stop this xenophobia thing. They're blaming the Chinese who came from

China. It can always incubate in some other places,” he added.

Duterte described social media posts urging that the Chinese be sent back home.

“Everyone's saying, send the Chinese back home. It is not only a case of bad taste, but it is not good for us Filipinos to be saying that,” Duterte said. “Remember that there are now so many Filipinos in China, and they cannot go

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## 49ers lose Super Bowl 2020: Crucial pass interference, touchdown rulings go against team in tough loss

BY JEFF KERR & R.J. WHITE

From George Kittle's OPI to the Chiefs' go-ahead TD, the 49ers felt snake-bitten on Sunday

The San Francisco 49ers suffered an epic collapse in the late stages of Super Bowl LIV, holding a 20-10 lead halfway through the fourth quarter that turned into a deficit by the two-minute warning and ended in a 31-20 loss to the Kansas City Chiefs. The incredible Chiefs comeback will be the story of the game, but a penalty late in the first half wound up being a crucial missed opportunity for the 49ers, and the butterfly effect of the call had potential hidden ramifications for the final result, especially coupled with another close call later in the game.

The 49ers had a golden opportunity to take the lead over the Chiefs just before halftime of Super Bowl LIV. Jimmy Garoppolo threw a 42-yard pass to All-Pro tight end George Kittle that would have put the 49ers at the Chiefs' 13-yard line with six seconds to play. The play was called back, however, as Kittle was



Kansas City Chiefs Patrick Mahomes

called for offensive pass interference on Chiefs safety Daniel Sorensen that negated the team's longest pass play of the first half. The 10-yard penalty forced the 49ers to take a knee and go into halftime tied 10-10 with Kansas City.

Here was the pass interference play in question. NFL head of officiating Al Riveron gave his explanation on why the call was made, a quick reaction from the league on a play that cost San Francisco points.

Kittle, one of the best blocking tight ends in the NFL, rarely gets called for offensive pass interference.

In fact, before Sunday, Kittle had been called for offensive pass interference only once in his career, in Week 10 against the New York Giants in 2018.

The Chiefs used an epic fourth-quarter comeback to win their first Super Bowl title in 50 years, and there's a lot to go over. Will Brinson and the Pick Six Podcast Superfriends break down everything about Chiefs-49ers in Super Bowl LIV; listen below and be sure to subscribe for daily NFL goodness fired into your eardrums.

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# Coping with nCoV

BY ANN MARIE PAMINTUAN

**Yum yum... maybe you've seen the videos.**

One is of the woman eating bat soup, with a whole bat staring up like a creature from hell. Either she or the restaurant at least made some effort at presentation, artfully draping the bat on one side of the soup bowl rim.

More importantly, the bat was dead and looked cooked.

Not so the creature in another video clip, which could vie for gross-out video in this coronavirus season. This being the Lunar Year of the Rat, the video shows a man with a plate before him, again artfully laid out with sliced tomatoes and... are those moving baby mice?

Yes, they are. The man picks up one with chopsticks, dips the squirming gray bubwit in what looks like lemon butter sauce, and without hesitation pops the creature into his mouth, chews, and prepares to pick up another one.

Our resident singkit in the newsroom told us it must be a "honey mouse" – nearly bite-size mice fed with honey and eaten just a day or two after birth, although the usual color is white rather than mousy gray. Something similar to our day-old chick, except the day-old chick is of course from hens, and is deep-fried in boiling oil.

The Chinese woman in the bat video has since come out in public – after being bashed on social media for contributing to the transmission of the novel coronavirus – to apologize and clarify that she ate the bat soup in Palau, not China, and it was in 2016.

We're still waiting for the guy eating the live mice to also come out – although he might see no need, since no one is linking rodents to the novel coronavirus, a.k.a. the 2019-nCoV. His meal venue is believed to be somewhere in China's Guangdong province.

I'm using a.k.a., a police term, because law enforcement is what comes to mind in describing suspected nCoV cases as PUIs – "persons under investigation."

You'll probably feel like a suspect, too, if you are a possible carrier of a virus with the potential to kill you, plus your family, friends and people you touch or who are within range of your sneeze and cough.

That possibility of harming other people should encourage self-reporting as nCoV spreads rapidly with no vaccine as yet available.

It should also encourage people to refrain from what scientists consider to be risky behavior at this point – such as eating exotic animals, especially live.

We must note that Filipinos also eat bats. Called kabog, the fruit-eating creatures have a wingspan of up to a meter and their torso can weigh about a kilo – much larger than the one in the video. The torso is cut up and thoroughly cooked, with the head and wings not part of the plating.

Field rodents are also eaten here, just like in China and other parts of Asia. But again our rat eaters prefer the animals cooked.

SARS, also from coronavirus, is believed to have originated from civets bought live for food from markets in China. We might sniff at this, but at least the Chinese eat the cat meat. We, on the other hand, eat their poop. OK, more accurately, we drink the pricey coffee processed from the beans that

the civets excrete with their poop after they feed on coffee berries. Still...

Snakes – another suspected source of nCoV – are also eaten here, as well as monitor lizards, locusts, dogs, duck embryo, cats in siopao. So we can't be judgmental about the gustatory delights in other cultures.

But we can refrain from indulging our taste for exotic food – at least until a vaccine is developed and the nCoV threat subsides.

This is one of the pieces of advice given by medical professionals and scientists to the public as the newest coronavirus strain gallops around the planet.

Contrary to the nCoV "infodemic" of fake news, it's still OK to eat sashimi, and I guess the Koreans can safely nosh on live baby octopus. With seafood, only the usual precautions are needed: it must be fresh and properly cleaned.

Wildlife is a different issue. You don't know where bats and civets have been or what they've eaten. Handling them alive and then slaughtering and preparing them for cooking can facilitate "zoonotic transmission" – the transfer of pathogens from animal to human.

This is according to microbiologist and infectious disease specialist Raul Destura, deputy director of the Philippine Genome Center at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

"Anything that is (eaten raw), you bypass the process of heat," Destura told "The Chiefs" this week on Cignal TV's One News. "The sterilization process is not there."

So hold the bat soup and squirming honey mouse, for now.

Other precautions that people can take against killer pathogens, according to Destura and health professionals, are basic hygiene practices: regular hand washing with soap and water, observing sneezing and coughing etiquette, and keeping oneself clean.

There's a photo also going around of an advisory supposedly from the World Health Organization. At the bottom of a to-do list it advises: "Avoid unprotected sex with live wild or farm animals."

It's a measure of the panic over nCoV that there are people who wonder if the advisory is authentic, considering that there are nutcases who engage in bestiality.

The panic is certain to increase following the confirmation of the Philippines' first nCoV case yesterday and the death of one of those being tested for the virus.

Albay 2nd District Rep. Joey Salceda, who is proposing the creation of a Center for Disease Control and Prevention, cautions against "silliness" and overreactions to the threat.

Salceda told The Chiefs that going to health centers over the most minor symptoms could overwhelm facilities. He has a point, but this must be reconciled with Destura's call for civic responsibility in "self-reporting" for those who believe they are possible nCoV carriers.

With no end to the deaths and with the infection numbers rising by about 1,000 a day in China alone – a much faster rate than SARS – it's becoming harder to draw the line between silliness and prudence in responding to the nCoV threat.

In my case, I've got my ordinary facemask, and I'm skipping kilawin.

# Mamba out

BY LEA SALONGA

Sunday night went exactly as I planned it: two birthday parties filled with singing, laughter, friendship and food. The first was for Andrew Fernando, our Judge Turpin in the recent run of "Sweeney Todd." His friends threw him a fete to celebrate his 50th birthday. It wasn't anything extravagant; just members of his family, colleagues, friends and students, all of whom obviously adore him. One by one, they came up to the front of the room to pay Andrew tribute in song, whether from the jazz, OPM or musical theater worlds. It was such a sweet evening, and I'm so glad I went.

The next birthday belonged to Nyoy Volante (no, I didn't ask him how old he was turning). Once you enter the front door, you are instantly met by musicians jamming whatever song, whether Carole King, Disney or Stevie Wonder, all impeccably sung by either a bandmate of Nyoy's, a theater actor—of which there were not just a few—or Nyoy's daughter, Sophie. For the record, she sang "Zombie" by The Cranberries, and the place was rocking out.

After the ebullience of Sunday evening, I stayed up as I normally do, chatting with friends until the wee hours of the morning when a status update from one of them sent shock waves through me: "Holy cow. Please don't let this news about Kobe Bryant be true." We hung on, still optimistic that perhaps the news outlet got it wrong. That it was a case of mistaken identity. That it wasn't him. And then, one by one, the Los Angeles Times, Sports Illustrated and Variety, among others, delivered one of the most heartbreaking headlines of this year so far: Kobe Bryant was killed in a helicopter crash.

Already this sent fans reeling, as Kobe was an absolute superstar in the 20 years that he played for the Los Angeles Lakers. His reputation on the court is one of tenacity, discipline, speed and competitiveness, earning him the moniker "Black Mamba."



Off the court, he has been marred by controversy early in his career, being accused of rape (he settled out of court in a civil suit filed by his accuser).

Not long after, even more heartbreaking news arrived, that Kobe's 13-year-old daughter Gianna was killed along with him. She is almost exactly the same age as my little girl, so this news sucker-punched me hard.

Gianna wasn't just his daughter, but was also a basketball player. Numer-

ous videos online show just how gifted she was. How she seemed to carry the same tenacity and drive that marked her father's career, not to mention unreal shooting ability at such a young age (she was referred to as "Mambacita").

Given her talent, there was no doubt that she would enjoy a magnificent college career, after which she would head right into the WNBA, carrying on her father's storied legacy.

All over social media, fans, friends and former NBA players paid tribute to the man that cemented quite a legacy, inspiring so many others to follow the work ethic he applied to basketball into their own lives.

But perhaps the more painful part of this nightmare is that his daughter, the one being looked to as the carrier of that legacy, will no longer be able to fulfill it. Father and daughter shared a passion for the sport.

In the numerous photos and videos of them together on the court, he would break down the game for her. Coach her team from the sidelines. Upload a video of an amazing shot she'd make. And just be a proud dad.

Every single parent hugged their little ones more tightly in the last couple of days, knowing full well how fragile and unpredictable life can be. The Bryants left behind Vanessa (wife of Kobe and mother of Gianna), and Gianna's three sisters Natalia, Bianca and Capri. We express our sincerest condolences to them.

To you all, I ask you to love fully. We only get one shot at this; let's live life well.



## Editor's Note

Love can be all that we have, even if we lose everything in the world. This goes to say that we should let everyone dear to us know that we love them everyday. Tomorrow is never promised.

The month of January was catastrophic to the people of Batangas and surrounding areas in the Philippines, due to the Taal eruptions. They were displaced from their homes for several weeks. Just as they are able to return to their homes, the outbreak of Corona virus becomes another thing to be worried about. And it's not only happening in the Philippines, as it includes America, and the rest of the world.

We are saddened in the passing of Kobe Bryant, along with his daughter and the other passengers of the helicopter that crashed, killing all of them. I myself don't personally know them, but because so many people are affected by their tragic death, I could feel the loss, as if having lost a family of my own.

I watched the Super Bowl this past weekend and felt somewhat assured that they would win after watching the first half of the game against the Kansas City Chiefs. But as much excitement the amazing performance of Shakira and Jennifer have brought the viewers, the second half of the game became doomed for SF 49ers, their avid fans, and myself included.

As we deal with life in general, hang on to the faith, have hopes, and love with all our might. Do it today, as tomorrow may never come!

Happy hearts month,  
Dinnah San Pedro

# 'Son of God' couldn't stop FBI raid

BY NIMFA U. RUEDA

Three administrators of the Philippine-based Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KOJC) Christian sect were arrested on Wednesday (Thursday in Manila) for participating in an immigration fraud scheme that brought followers to the United States to raise funds for an alleged bogus charity.

Church members were tricked into becoming fundraisers "and then arranged sham marriages and other illegal mechanisms" to keep them in the country, according to a US Department of Justice press statement.

The federal criminal complaint alleged that the church members solicited donations for the nonprofit Children's Joy Foundation USA, claiming they would benefit impoverished children in the Philippines.

Prosecutors said that instead of going to poor Filipino children, the money raised was used to finance church operations and the lavish lifestyle of church founder and leader Apollo Quiboloy, a self-proclaimed "appointed son of God" who claimed last year that he had ordered an earthquake in Mindanao to "stop" shaking the ground to prevent further destruction.

The church claims a membership of 6 million people and it backed the 2016 candidacy of President Duterte, a close friend of Quiboloy.

Arrested were Guia Cabactulan, Marissa Duenas and Amanda Estopare. Cabactulan, 59, was described as a top church official "who maintained direct communication with KOJC leadership in the Philippines."

Prosecutors said Duenas, 41, allegedly handled fraudulent immigration documents for the church workers. Cabactulan and Duenas were arrested at a church compound in Van Nuys, where they lived, about 27 kilometers northeast of downtown Los Angeles.

Van Nuys is in the San Fernando Valley and home to a large number of Filipino-Americans.

Estopare, 48, who allegedly enforced fundraising quotas for church workers,



Pastor Apollo C. Quiboloy

was arrested in Virginia.

Federal agents raided the church compound in Van Nuys, the Children's Joy Foundation office in Glendale, and three other locations in the Los Angeles area.

Searches were also conducted at two locations linked to the church in Hawaii, and agents fanned out across the United States to interview witnesses as part of a larger investigation of alleged human trafficking.

Two years ago, a leader of a Hawaii branch of KOJC was arrested smuggling cash onto a private plane in Honolulu bound for the Philippines, according to court records.

Investigators said Felina



**KINGDOM UNDER FIRE** An FBI agent who took part in a raid on the Kingdom of Jesus Christ church in the Van Nuys section of Los Angeles on Wednesday fixes a tarpaulin cover on its fence. Three leaders of the Christian sect founded by Apollo Quiboloy were arrested on an alleged immigration fraud scheme that resulted in sham marriages to keep its members in the United States. —AP / Grig C. Montegrando

Salinas declared she was carrying \$40,000. But investigators said they discovered \$335,000 and \$9,000 in Australian currency stuffed in socks in her carry-on suitcase, according to documents filed in US District Court in Honolulu. US law requires travelers to declare currency in excess of \$10,000.

### Sham marriages

A total of 82 sham marriages had been arranged by the church administrators in the past 20 years, according to immigration records summarized in the affidavit.

The affidavit alleged that the church established daily cash solicitation quotas for the church workers and if these quotas were not met, workers suffered abuse, according to victims who have fled KOJC.

"Records show that KOJC accounts received approximately \$20 million in cash deposits from 2014 through mid-2019, ... [and] most of these funds appear to derive from street-level solicitation," according to the affidavit, which noted that

"little to no money solicited appears to benefit impoverished or in-need children."

The affidavit summarized the experiences of a series of victims who fled KOJC and provided information to the FBI over the past several

years.

Some of them described being sent across the United States to solicit donations, working long hours to reach their daily quotas, receiving little to no pay for their efforts, and participating in sending large sums of cash back to the Philippines on commercial and private flights.

### Conspiracy charge

The charge of conspiracy to commit immigration fraud carries a statutory maximum penalty of five years in federal prison.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Daniel Ahn and Jake Nare of the Santa Ana (California) Branch Office.

In a statement in Davao City where he is based, Quiboloy denied the allegations, which he said had saddened him.

"Under no circumstances

does KOJC or its members engage in any act that violates the law," the statement said.

"We are ready, able to show and prove the innocence of the administrators of the Kingdom," it said. "We will show to you that the (KOJC) administrators were just exercising the religious rights of spreading the Good News to the whole world. We will face these charges and we await our day in court."

His lawyer, Israelito Torreon, said the allegations were "nothing but a grand conspiracy of lies, concocted by former members of the Kingdom who struck an alliance with forces who had an axe to grind against Pastor Apollo C. Quiboloy." Torreon did not identify who he was referring to.

"They are into this grand conspiracy in order to put to shame Pastor Apollo C. Quiboloy and the Kingdom of Jesus Christ," he said.

## Duterte highlights Philippines-China ties in Chinese New Year message

BY RATZIEL SAN JUAN

MANILA, Philippines — President Rodrigo Duterte said he hopes for stronger ties between the Philippines and China in his Chinese New Year 2020 message released on Saturday.

"The fact that we are celebrating this event and embracing it as one of our own reflects the strong and inseparable bond that has been forged through centuries of friendly and beneficial relations between the Philippines and China," read the president's message published on social media by PTV.

The president's pro-China statement comes barely a couple of days after his threat to terminate the Visiting Forces Agreement between the Philippines and the United States.

The Presidential Commission on Visiting Forces has since started processing the termination of the VFA.

Duterte has been criticized by the opposition for verbally using the said agreement as leverage for Sen. Bato dela Rosa's US visa, apparently only holding an anti-imperialist stance "when convenient" and not being as firm in foreign affairs related to



President Rodrigo Duterte and People's Republic of China President Xi Jinping. — Presidential photo/Ace Morandante.

rising power China.

"As we open a new page in our shared history, may we foster even stronger bonds of friendship with those of Chinese descent all around the world through cooperation, investments, cultural exchanges, and people-to-people ties," Duterte said.

The president also said he hopes that the Chinese-Filipino community will continue to hold socio-civic and charitable acts "that will uplift the lives of our people, especially the power and the marginalized."

"Together, these small acts of kindness shall create a ripple effect that will benefit not only those belonging to your community but also countless others, creating a much bigger wave of compassion that will eventually redound to the greater good of our country."

China has maritime dis-

putes in the resource-rich South China Sea with the Philippines, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei. Over \$5 trillion in trade passes yearly through the waterway.

However, the Permanent Court of Arbitration on July 12, 2016, ruled that China's "nine-dash line" territorial claim

literal dash marks in maps of China that allege its claim to around 80% of the South China Sea — is invalid.

The international tribunal determined that China not only violated the Philippines' sovereignty but also left irreversible environmental consequences.

Evidence includes the stealing of giant clams and sea turtles, harmful fishing practices that damaged the fragile coral reef ecosystem in the South China Sea, conducting massive land reclamation at seven reefs in the Spratly Islands and construction of artificial islands.

While the Hague decision had a legal basis and was ground on valid evidence, the Philippine government under the Duterte administration refuses to assert the findings with China.

## Chinese drug convict testifies vs De Lima

Convicted Chinese drug lord Peter Co, one of the government's key witnesses against Sen. Leila de Lima, finally testified before a Muntinlupa City Regional Trial Court (RTC) on Friday as the nearly three-year-old trial of the lawmaker, a staunch critic of President Duterte, finally picked up pace after much delay.



Peter Co (left) and Sen. Leila de Lima

Friday next week.

The witness claimed that De Lima, during her stint as justice secretary, sought his help to raise P10 million for her 2016 senator-

rial campaign. Peter said he came to know about it sometime in November 2012—four years before the elections—through two

Continued on page 6

Peter spoke in his native Fookien dialect during his direct examination that lasted about two hours at the sala of Judge Liezel Aquiatan of RTC Branch 205. He will return to the stand for his cross-examination on

# 'Made in China': how Wuhan coronavirus spread anti-Chinese racism like a disease through Asia

BY KOK XINGHUI

As Singaporeans gathered over the Lunar New Year weekend, jokes were cracked about Chinese eating habits and how a propensity to eat "anything with four legs except the table and everything that flies except planes" had given rise to the Wuhan coronavirus.

One meme said there was no need to worry – the virus would not last long because it was "made in China".

The jokes, tinged with racism, soon grew into a call for the city state to ban Chinese travellers from entering. A change.org petition started on January 26 had 118,858 signatures as of Wednesday afternoon. Among those calling for health to be prioritised over tourism dollars was Ian Ong, who wrote: "We are not rat or bat eaters and should not be made to shoulder their nonsense."

In Malaysia, there have been calls to block Chinese tourists and social media posts claiming the outbreak is "divine retribution" for China's treatment of its Muslim Uygur population. Some mosques in Malaysia have also closed themselves off to tourists.

In Japan, a shop in a mountain town prompted an apology from tourism authorities after it posted a sign saying: "No Chinese are allowed to enter the store. I do not want to spread the virus"

From noon on Wednesday Singapore has blocked the entry of tourists who had visited Hubei province in the past 14 days, or who hold passports issued in the province. Malaysia has also stopped issuing visas to Chinese travellers from Hubei.

The Singapore government has said the travel ban was due to global trends showing that most of the infections were in people who had been to the province and the country wanted to minimise im-

port of the virus to Singapore.

The growing stigma has even reached European shores. Graduate student Sam Phan wrote in the British newspaper The Guardian about how a man on the bus in London had scrambled to get up as soon as Phan sat down. "This week, my ethnicity has made me feel like I was part of a threatening and diseased mass. To see me as someone who carries the virus just because of my race is, well, just racist," he wrote.

In Canada, Toronto website BlogTO said a stigma was also attached to Chinese food, noting that a similar thing happened during the 2003 outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (Sars), which infected 8,000 people globally and killed nearly 800. The website noted racist comments on its Instagram post about a new Chinese restaurant, which some posters urged diners to avoid because it "may have bat pieces in there or whatever else they eat".

The comments were in part a reference to a video of a Chinese social media influencer tucking into a bowl of bat soup. Some posters have claimed the video is evidence of "disgusting" Chinese eating habits, though the video was in fact filmed three years ago in Palau, a Pacific island nation where bat soup is a delicacy.

It is still unknown how the coronavirus made the jump from wildlife to humans, but early on in the outbreak the Huanan Seafood Market in the central city of Wuhan was widely assumed to be the origin of the disease. The market has a thriving wildlife trade, selling animals from foxes to wolf puppies, giant salamanders to peacocks and porcupines.

However, in recent days, research has emerged suggesting the market may not be the source of the virus.

The medical journal The Lancet on January 24 said that of the first clinical cases, 13 out of 41 had no link to the market.

The first patient showed symp-



Wrongly accused? The Huanan Seafood Market in Wuhan. Photo: Simon Song

toms on December 1, meaning human infections must have occurred in November 2019 given the two-week incubation period. Researchers said the virus could have spread in Wuhan before the cluster within the market was discovered.

Similarly, the virus' genome has been sequenced but researchers are not sure if it comes from bats – as Sars did – or snakes. Still, experts said it is not so much about what meat is eaten, but how thoroughly it is cooked and the hygiene precautions taken during food preparation.

"The chef is at greatest risk," said infectious disease specialist Leong Hoe Nam, who was closely involved in Singapore's fight against Sars, which killed 33 people and infected 238 in the city state.

Leong said anybody could catch a virus from an animal.

"It is a case of the right person meeting the wrong virus at the wrong time. It could happen to anyone studying viruses, or meeting the bats in the most inopportune time," he said, referring to a case in Melaka, Malaysia, when a bat flew into a house and infected a 39-year-old man and his family.

Painting the coronavirus as a Chinese problem was like "dealing with the problem with a sledge hammer, implicating all Chinese nationals rather than dealing with bad food safety practices and diets", said National University of Singapore sociologist Tan Ern Ser.

Nanyang Technological Univer-

sity (NTU) sociologist Laavanya Kathiravelu said xenophobic social media posts were an extension of colonial-era stereotypes.

"Chinese, in these xenophobic accounts, are seen as taking resources away from deserving local populations, and having uncouth

behaviour. More broadly, this can also be seen as informed by older stereotypes of Chinese as dirty, having bad hygiene and undesirable culinary practices," she said.

Even Singapore government ministers have spoken out.

Minister for National Development Lawrence Wong, who co-chairs a task force set up to deal with the virus, said on Monday: "I want to assure Singaporeans that the government will do everything we can to protect Singaporeans and Singapore but this does not mean overreacting, or worse, turning xenophobic."

Singaporean playwright Zizi Azah, who is based in New York, said it was illogical to pin the virus on a race. "Illness knows no geographical or racial boundaries and it really is the luck of the draw, isn't it? Where something starts and where it gets to," she said.

## Stop blaming Chinese From page 1

out because coming in and going out of China is prohibited."

Earlier, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said around 50 Filipinos in Wuhan had already expressed desire to return to the Philippines.

The DFA, however, said their repatriation would be subject to China's rules on disease containment, including immigration clearances, quarantine process, among others.

Duterte held an emergency meeting with top government of-

Mohamed Imran Mohamed Taib, director of the Centre for Interfaith Understanding, cautioned against the effects of dehumanising Chinese people as uncivilised. "It is not due to 'Chinese-ness'; the fact that these people are Chinese is incidental, not the reason for the emergence and transmission of the virus. The virus could have emerged in any other part of the world, just as Ebola started in Congo and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome in Saudi Arabia," he said.

Singapore's Minister for Education Ong Ye Kung on Monday called for empathy, saying that Singaporeans would not have liked it if during the Sars outbreak other countries had asked Singaporean expatriates to leave.

"We're an international hub, we can well be quite hard hit by such epidemics. So I'd say do not do unto others what you do not want others to do unto you. We all must tackle the problem objectively."

In Malaysia, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad clarified that any mosques that had closed themselves off to tourists had not done so on the government's advice.

"This is not a government policy and it is an irresponsible act," he said on Wednesday, warning the public against spreading fake news that could stir racial tensions.

"Even though we believe in freedom of expression, it does not mean we can be antagonistic and agitate the feelings of others."

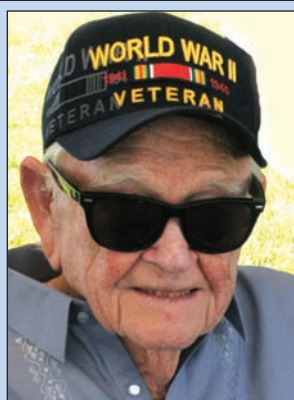
officials regarding measures about the deadly virus which has already killed over 300 and infected more than 17,000.

Among those present at the meeting were Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, Health Secretary Francisco Duque, Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr., Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra, Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez, Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade, and Interior Secretary Eduardo Año.

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## It's time for Southeast Asia to stand together against China – with Indonesia leading the way

BY ANKIT PANDA

For the final weeks of 2019 and into the new year, China and Indonesia have been facing off over the sovereignty of waters around Jakarta's Riau Islands, in the South China Sea.



Indonesian troops undergo inspection at Natuna military base in the Riau islands.

Jakarta's exclusive economic zone, a 200-nautical-mile zone within its afforded special rights to exploit marine resources, overlaps with China's capacious nine-dash line claim, under which Beijing asserts rights over nearly 90 per cent of the critical waterway.

That means the core of the ongoing dispute between the two countries boils down to resource exploitation rights within a section of the South China Sea northeast of the Natuna Islands.

While Indonesia's claim is founded in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea – a convention both Beijing and Jakarta have signed and ratified – the Chinese claim dates back to questionable territorial assertions first made in the latter part of the first half of the 20th century.

**Indonesia is not the Philippines – especially in the realm of material capabilities that it can bring to bear in pushing back on China – but it still stands to gain from asserting its rights under international law**

Tripling down on its alienation of Indonesia amounts to a massive strategic miscalculation by China, ultimately. Instead of building a bridge to Jakarta at a time when the United States appears adrift in Asia, China is alienating what could otherwise be an important partner.

At a time when the Trump administration is vindicating the foreign policy instincts of many in Jakarta who see value in the country's middle-of-the-road, autonomous foreign policy, Beijing is giving cause for a rethink.

To be sure, Jakarta is far from bandwagoning with the United States when it comes to the South China Sea.

Ever careful to emphasise its position as a nonclaimant of territory in the disputed waters, Indonesia has made clear that it is in a position to push back on Chinese challenges to its maritime sovereignty independently.

For an archipelagic state like Indonesia, maritime boundaries are as good as national borders.

The 2019-2020 round of tensions in the waters around the Natuna islands aren't Indonesia's first crack at dealing with Chinese coercion. Jokowi, during his first term, contended with multiple incidents in 2016 – the same year the Philippines received a favourable judgment from The Hague-based international tribunal invalidating China's nine-dash line claim in the South China Sea.

Back then, Indonesia's former defence minister used an evocative metaphor to describe Jakarta's view of the challenge around the Natuna islands. Ryamizard Ryacudu called the islands a "front door" to Indonesia, warning that if it weren't guarded properly, the "thieves" would come in.

The premise of that metaphor was that Indonesia would need to find a way to deter China from asserting its claims to the southernmost extent of the nine-dash line by imposing costs, effectively practising a

strategy of deterrence by denial.

In the intervening years, Indonesia simply hasn't had enough capacity to implement such a strategy, even if the political will to defend the Natunas was there. Indonesia did build up its capacity in the area, including by deploying warships, fighters, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets.

None of Indonesia's options in dealing with the challenge from China are likely to be swiftly effective, but Jakarta does have recourse.

The most important will be for Indonesia to take its place as first among equals in Southeast Asia – particularly within the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) – and take a greater interest in collective regional resistance against Chinese revisionism.

Following the 2016 arbitral tribunal ruling largely in the Philippines' favour, what should have become apparent is the value of international legal norms in helping weaker countries push back against China.

Manila, however, had just seen a change in leadership; President Rodrigo Duterte abandoned his predecessor's approach and began a period of rapprochement with China.

It's not yet too late for Indonesia to lead Southeast Asia back toward institutionalised solutions, especially as negotiations continue toward an Asean-China code of conduct for the South China Sea with an anticipated agreement by 2021.

The fact that Asean this year is chaired by Vietnam, which has been the most forward-leaning of the territorial claimants in the South China Sea against China in recent years, should facilitate matters, too. It's time for Southeast Asia to stand together against China; Indonesia can and should lead the way.

## Dead man lies on empty street at China's virus ground zero

'It's terrible,' a woman at the scene says. 'These days many people have died.'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

WUHAN, China – A grey-haired man wearing a face mask lies dead on the pavement at ground zero of China's virus epidemic, a plastic shopping bag in one hand.



**CORPSE.** This photo taken on January 30, 2020 shows an official in a protective suit checking on an elderly man wearing a face mask who collapsed and died on a street near a hospital in Wuhan. Photo by Hector Retamal/AFP

AFP journalists saw the body on Thursday morning, January 30, not long before an emergency vehicle arrived carrying police and medical staff in full-body protective suits.

The man lay straight on his back in front of a closed furniture store. Medical staff in blue overalls gently shrouded his body with a blue blanket.

The ambulance left, and police stacked supermarket cardboard boxes to hide the scene.

AFP could not determine how the man, who appeared to be aged in his 60s, had died. AFP contacted police and local health officials afterwards but could not get details on his case.

But the reaction of the police and medical staff in hazmat suits, as well as some of the bystanders, highlighted the fear pervading the city.

A woman standing near the man, wearing pink pyjamas and a Mao cap, said she believed he had died from the virus.

"It's terrible," she said. "These days many people have died."

Wuhan is the epicenter of the outbreak of the new coronavirus, which is believed to have jumped from wild animals at a city market into humans.

The virus, which emerged late last year, has claimed at least 213 lives and infected thousands in China, with at least 159 deaths in Wuhan alone.

With the virus spreading to other countries, the World Health Organization has declared the crisis a global health emergency.

### Torment

Authorities have imposed an unprecedented lockdown of Wuhan, blocking off roads out of the city and banning flights, in a bid to stop the virus spreading.

Those who are trapped are enduring a tormenting wait for the lockdown to end, for a cure to be found, or even just for check-ups at overwhelmed hospitals.

AFP reporters in Wuhan have seen long queues at hospitals, with some patients saying they had queued for two days to see a doctor.

Many brought their own chairs for the wait.

With most traffic banned, people who venture outside have to walk or bike everywhere in the huge city.

The dead man on the street on Thursday lay one block from the Wuhan Number Six Hospital, one of the main medical centers for treating those with virus symptoms.

A team of forensic experts who examined him were immediately sprayed with disinfectant by colleagues after removing their hazardous material suits.

One man smoking near the scene was told sharply by police to put out his cigarette and don a face mask.

He quickly followed their orders.

In the two hours that AFP observed the scene, at least 15 ambulances passed by, attending other calls.

Finally, a white van with blacked-out windows arrived to take away the man.

The body was zipped into a yellow surgical bag, and carried into the van on a stretcher.

Staff immediately began to clean the ground as the van drove away, disinfecting the streets where the body had lain.

## Thousands denied entry at NAIA

From page 1

when they received messages through Viber earlier yesterday that they were instructed to deny entry of all incoming passengers who flew in from China, Hong Kong and Macau.

The passengers – mostly Chinese, but also including Indians, Dutch and French – were dismayed after they were stopped from disembarking the plane and brought to a bay where they would wait for boarding back to their airports of origin.

Some 30 flights from China arrived at NAIA terminals 1, 2 and 3, while 19 flights from Hong Kong and four flights from Macau arrived in the three terminals.

Recommended guidelines

With the safety of the country and all persons within the territory as prime considerations, and upon further advice from the Department of Health that the nCoV

has affected all regions of China, President Duterte immediately approved the following recommended guidelines of the Inter-agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases:

- Temporarily ban the entry of any person, regardless of nationality, except Filipino citizens and holders of Permanent Resident Visa issued by the Philippine government, directly coming from China and its Special Administrative Regions;
- Temporarily ban the entry of any person, regardless of nationality, except Filipino citizens and holders of Permanent Resident Visa issued by the Philippine government, who, within 14 days immediately preceding arrival in the Philippines, has been to China and its Special Administrative Regions;
- Impose a mandatory 14-day quarantine for Filipinos and Permanent Resident Visa holders coming from any place in China

and its Special Administrative Regions;

- Temporarily ban Filipinos from travel to China and its Special Administrative Regions; and
- Establish a repatriation and quarantine facility.

Accordingly, all heads of departments, agencies, offices and instrumentalities of the government, government-owned and controlled corporations, government financial institutions, state universities and colleges, and local government units are hereby directed to adopt, coordinate and implement the guidelines, and such other guidelines which the task force may subsequently issue on the matter, consistent with the respective agency mandates and relevant laws, rules and regulations, until the threat is over.

# Duterte's threat to end defense agreement could harm US efforts to deter China in South China Sea, experts say

BY SETH ROBSON

**P**hilippine President Rodrigo Duterte's latest anti-American rant could do real damage to the longtime Pacific allies' defense relationship, some security experts say.

Duterte, who began his term in 2016 by insulting U.S. leaders and stating his intention to move closer to China and Russia, last week threatened to terminate the Visiting Forces Agreement that governs the deployment of U.S. troops to his country.

The U.S. Embassy in Manila declined to comment on the issue Monday.

But Jeffrey Ordaniel, assistant professor of international security studies at Tokyo International University, said in an email from Manila on Tuesday that all military exercises in the Philippines would have to be reviewed and likely need a new legal framework to back them up if Duterte follows through on his threat.

"Washington will also [be] less likely to continue to commit to Philippine defense in the South China Sea, given that there was no way for its troops to be in Filipino territory," he said.

U.S. counterterrorism assistance, which might also be impacted, is irreplaceable, according to Patricio Abinales, a Philippines expert at the University of Ha-

waii.

Duterte's threat to terminate the agreement came in response to the U.S. revoking its visa for one of his closest political allies, Sen. Ronald "Bato" Dela Rosa. Thousands of extrajudicial killings took place during a bloody drug war while Dela Rosa was chief of the Philippines National Police from 2016-18.

## Duterte's threat

"I'm warning you. This is the first time," Duterte said in a speech Thursday, according to the Philippine Daily Inquirer newspaper. "If you do not correct that, I will terminate the basis of Visiting Forces Agreement."

A day later, broadcaster Russia Today aired an interview in which Duterte said the U.S. sees his country as "a vassal state."

"America is not the Philippines and the Philippines is not America. It ain't that way anymore, and I refuse to dovetail under American foreign policy," he said. "I cannot get a credible posture from the Americans; I can get it from the Russians and China." The comments mark a return to the anti-American rhetoric that Duterte favored early in his term when he insulted then-President Barack Obama and called for the withdrawal of U.S. Special Forces from Mindanao and the end of bilateral military exercises.



The latest anti-American remarks by Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, shown here on April 9, 2017, could do real damage to the long-time Pacific allies' defense relationship, according to security experts.

U.S.-Philippines relations had appeared warmer under the administration of President Donald Trump. American officials have refrained from public criticism of the drug war and military exercises have continued. U.S. Army Green Berets helped Philippine troops win a bloody battle against Islamic insurgents who had captured the southern city of Marawi in 2017.

However, there appears to have been only minimal progress under an agreement for shared use of Philippine military bases by U.S. forces.

Duterte has declined to challenge Chinese occupation of disputed territory in the South China Sea, even after an international court ruled in the Philippines' fa-

vor. He scrapped plans for joint U.S.-Philippine patrols and naval exercises in the waters early in his term.

It's unclear how termination of the Visiting Forces Agreement, which includes guidelines on visas and jurisdiction over crimes committed by American troops, might affect the U.S.-Philippines military relationship.

However, it might impact large-scale annual exercises such as Balikatan and Kamandag, U.S. support for counterterrorism efforts and assistance during natural disasters such as Typhoon Haiyan, which prompted the deployment of a U.S. aircraft carrier and thousands of personnel to help with relief efforts in 2013.

The Philippines and U.S. are allies under the 1951

Mutual Defense Treaty, which mandates both countries support each other in case of an external aggression.

## 'Game of chicken'

Abinales said Duterte is playing a "game of chicken" and the Visiting Forces Agreement would probably not be terminated.

Ordaniel said he expects the Philippine military establishment is trying to save the agreement.

"Duterte's term expires in 2022.

There is still hope that reason will prevail and that Manila can find a face-saving way to not follow through with the president's pronouncements," he said. "But there are those surrounding the president who, instead of advising him on the course of action most beneficial to Filipino interest, will instead kowtow and downplay the negative impact of [ending] the VFA," he said.

The best the U.S. can do is to remain calm and highlight the benefits of the agreement, Ordaniel said.

"The Alliance is an anchor to Philippine national security. The VFA allows for the U.S. to fulfill its treaty obligations," he said.

Without an agreement, conducting operations under the

alliance becomes difficult, for example, during contingencies in the South China Sea, Ordaniel said.

"It will be virtually impossible for the U.S. to preposition troops, defense equipment and [humanitarian and disaster assistance] supplies without a VFA," he said.

The U.S. could lose a long-term opportunity to deter the Chinese in the South China Sea, he said.

"Beijing will certainly be happy with this," Ordaniel said. "One of the very few options available for the U.S. to influence China's behavior in the South China Sea, long-term, is to work with its alliance with the Philippines. It's difficult to deter China in maritime Southeast Asia from Guam, Okinawa or Darwin. They're simply too far away."

It's unlikely that the Philippine military establishment was consulted ahead of Duterte's speech, Ordaniel said.

"Duterte has proven to be an inconsistent and misinformed leader who, on many occasions, does not act or speak on the basis of facts, proven statistics, or intelligence information," he said.

"This episode demonstrates that four years into the presidency, Duterte's parochial concerns and whims still prevail over the Philippines' long-term national interest."

## Chinese drug convict testifies vs De Lima

From page 3

P10 million and had the money given in two installments to the De Lima campaign.

Tony, who was convicted of drug trafficking in 2001, was killed in a prison riot in 2016, he recalled.

Peter said he himself contributed P1 million to the supposed De Lima campaign kitty.

In an interview after the

hearing, one of De Lima's counsels dismissed Peter's testimony as mere hearsay. Quid pro quo

"Unfortunately [Tony] is dead and we have no way of verifying or counterchecking those facts," said defense lawyer Filibon Tacardon. Peter also said Sebastian and Tan initially proposed a quid pro quo: in exchange for P10 million, Peter would be given

a cell phone, a motorcycle, and air-conditioning for his quarters in the maximum security compound.

Peter also claimed the supposed campaign money was raised mostly by fellow Chinese inmates linked to the drug trade.

"Not ordinary people" "I cannot disclose their names because they are also Chinese nationals," Peter said through an interpreter. "Not only would I be in danger but also my family in China. They are not ordinary people, they have some influence."

Tacardon said that in the next hearing "we would also focus on the sources ... the way the money transferred from Peter Co, Tony Co, Hans Tan, Jay-bee Sebastian then back to Tony Co."

## 49ers lose Super Bowl 2020:

From page 1

Despite the quick defense by Riveron, reactions to the flag in real-time were mixed, and the call certainly felt in the moment like it would be costly for the 49ers, wiping potential points off the board and preventing the team the chance to double up by scoring to open the second half.

If the second half goes the same, the 49ers then find themselves behind just one point after the Chiefs scored to take the lead with less than three minutes left. If that's the case, perhaps they punt on fourth-and-10 from midfield, then try and get the ball back around the same spot with about one minute remaining no

timeouts left needing 15-20 yards for a potential game-winning field goal.

But let's rewind a minute to that Chiefs go-ahead touchdown. On third-and-5, Patrick Mahomes hit Damien Williams flaring out toward the sideline, and the running back muscled through an attempted tackle to score the biggest touchdown of his career. Or did he?

Williams stepped out of bounds either right before or right after he reached the ball across the goal line, and after replay, the officials couldn't find anything to reverse the call, so it stood as a touchdown. Which is fair -- you could look at the replay 100 times and not be perfectly sure one way or the other.

But if the ruling is that he

stepped out short, the call would have likely stood as well. That would have left the Chiefs to choose whether to kick a field goal from fourth-and-inches to tie the game, or go for the dagger. What would they have done? We'll never know.

If the 49ers had their extra field goal from the first down, the call for the Chiefs would obviously be to go for the touchdown to take a one-point lead with the extra point. And if the 49ers defense makes a stand, they're likely Super Bowl championship.

Football truly is a game of inches and close calls, and the 49ers know that all too well after Sunday.

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# Duterte threatens to scrap VFA

PerryScope  
By PERRY DIAZ

Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte warned the U.S. last January 24, 2020 that he would scrap the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) if Washington did not reinstate the visa of Sen. Ronald dela Rosa, Duterte's political ally.

Dela Rosa is a former Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief who is now a senator. When he was PNP Chief, dela Rosa, led the government's anti-drug campaign, Oplan Tokhang, which claimed the lives of more than 5,000 drug users and pushers that human rights advocates say were denied due process. Human rights watchdogs, however, said the death toll in the drug war could be as high as 27,000. They also said many were defenseless victims.

As a result, dela Rosa has been targeted by the U.S. for the extrajudicial killings (EJK) and human rights violations. Dela Rosa was sanctioned by the U.S. and his U.S. visa was revoked and assets and properties in the U.S. frozen.

The Philippines said that imposing sanctions is tantamount to meddling in Philippine internal affairs. However, advocates claim it is the sovereign prerogative of the sanctioning country to impose sanctions. Besides, the Philippines is a United Nations member; thus, it is committed to honor universal human rights. With the adoption of the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act by the U.S. Congress, a lot of people suspected of corruption and human rights violations are at risk of being sanctioned.

## Duterte's ultimatum

The visa revocation angered Duterte and he demanded that the U.S. restore dela Rosa's visa; otherwise, he will terminate the VFA. He gave the U.S. government a one-month ultimatum.

The VFA, signed in 1998, gave legal status to thousands of U.S. troops who were rotated in the country for regular military exercises and humanitarian operations. It replaced a previous agreement that allowed American naval and air bases in the Philippines.

The US and the Philippines conduct between one to two joint military exercises annually. In October 2019, there were an estimated 1,400 US Marines who participated in a military exercise with 600 Filipino troops. If VFA is terminated, the joint exercise known as Balikatan (shoulder-to-shoulder) will no longer be held. All other military assistance and training will be discontinued.

Since 2002, U.S. has deployed about 250 Special Forces troops

to the southern Philippines. They have been working quietly alongside Philippine troops spread throughout the region. They are part of a counterterrorism campaign.

## Battle for Marawi

During the five-month battle for Marawi in 2017, the Pentagon played down the American military's role, stating that troops there provided only support and assistance. However, officials said Marine commandos helped break the siege by training Philippine snipers who were struggling to defeat expert marksmen among the extremists who proved difficult to target within the city's concrete buildings.

U.S. Special Forces have been working quietly alongside Philippine troops spread throughout the country's southern region. The United States Army's only Special Operations civil affairs team in the



Pres. Duterte and Sen. (Bato) Dela Rosa

Philippines is also helping the villages around Marawi, where security concerns prevent State Department officials from traveling.

## Military aid

The U.S. also provided at least P2.84 billion in assistance, which included advanced weapons and two C-208 Cessna aircraft to the Philippine Air Force. The surveillance aircraft were used to help in fighting against the rebels in Marawi City.

With the impending termination of VFA, the question is: What happens to the U.S. military aid? Most probably the U.S. will continue providing military weapons to the Philippines. But it's interesting to see if Duterte would accept them since he would look hypocritical to accept them after terminating VFA.

## Military agreements

Then there is the question of three other military agreements between the U.S. and the Philippines: Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT), Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) and Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA).

The MDT calls for the U.S. to come to the defense of the Philippines if it's attacked by a foreign power. However, both countries' defense secretaries have recently said that the MDT needs to be reviewed to reflect current security threats, including an increasingly



U.S. Special Forces

powerful China.

But the MDT cannot be invoked and get immediate response from the U.S. It has several stipulations, which require some time before the U.S. is ready to send its forces to defend the Philippines. First, "Armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security."

The United Nations would most likely seek a cease-fire between the Philippines and China. If it failed to achieve a cease-fire, then the second article is invoked, that is, "Each Party recognizes that an armed attack in the Pacific Area on either of the Parties would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common dangers in accordance with its constitutional processes." Constitutional processes mean that the U.S. Congress shall convene for the purpose of declaring war against the country attacking the Philippines.

Realistically, the U.S. Congress would not declare war against the attacking country, particularly China. It would probably seek a cease-fire. But by the time cease-fire is in place, China would have secured and occupied a large chunk of territory.

## Different scenario

But it would have been a different scenario if the Philippines did not kick out the U.S. bases in 1992. With a huge airbase and naval base on Philippine territory, China wouldn't dare attack the Philippines because U.S. response would be immediate. The U.S. forces on Philippine territory would have to defend themselves; thus, no US congressional approval is needed by the US forces.

EDCA is an agreement between the U.S. and the Philippines signed in 2014. It is intended to bolster

stock in an accelerated process reserved for allies and close partners of the U.S.

## End of American presence

With an MDT that is on the brink of obsolescence, a VFA that is terminally inutile, and an MLSA that would probably be scrapped as a consequence to VFA's termination, what is left of the once vaunted US-Philippine military alliance, the most powerful military partnership in Asia? Sad to say, it's moribund and could die anytime. And how is Duterte going to defend Philippine territory from China or homegrown militants? Don't expect the U.S. to come to the aid of Philippine troops in Mindanao needing special forces support, sophisticated airborne monitoring, and advanced weapons. With an air force with no warplanes, a navy with no warships, and undertrained military personnel, the Philippines would be unable to defend its vast territorial waters.

With Duterte's threat to end VFA



Joint military exercises between Philippine and American forces brings to fore the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA).

the U.S.-Philippine alliance. It allows the U.S. to rotate troops into the Philippines for extended stays and allows the U.S. to build and operate facilities on Philippine bases, for both American and Philippine forces. It gives Philippine personnel access to American ships and planes.

But other than building a warehouse for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief supplies at Cesar Basa Air Base in Pampanga Province, EDCA remains on the drawing board after the US and the Philippines have identified and agreed to use five existing military facilities to host American forces. And without a fully implemented EDCA, the Philippines lost its maritime rights in the South China Sea to China. The United States is seen as a paper tiger unable to protect its allies or defend freedom of the seas.

The MLSA is used to allow U.S. forces on training engagements to turn over military equipment and ammunition expeditiously to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). The timely transfers greatly enhance the AFP's counterterrorism efforts.

Through the MLSA, the AFP is able to receive select munitions and equipment from U.S. military

in one month, China and Russia are probably drawing up a plan for the conquest of the Philippines, dividing the archipelago into two vassal states. And it won't be long before the entire country is balkanized into mini puppet republics kowtowing to China and Russia.

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# Filipino in Singapore

BY DALE ESPERANTE

On my second full day in the city-state of Singapore, aka Lion City, I followed a local recommendation to visit Orchard Road. As I stepped off the MRT (subway), I followed the sign for Ion Orchard, known as the classiest mall in this part of the city. You name the designer and they will have a shop—Prada, Tiffany, LV, Dolce Gabbana, Armani, and you get the idea.

There is also a classy food hall in the basement with a classy name. Instead of just calling it Food Court, it is known as Food Opera. After wandering inside for a while, I felt the urge to see the outside. As I stepped out the door, I couldn't help but say wow! The architecture and the cleanliness of the city amazed me and made me do an automatic reach for my selfie stick to record the moment.

Directly across the street are more malls and mega-stores. On the corner of Orchard and Scott Road, I couldn't find a pedestrian crosswalk to reach the other side. I had to ask a local



In front of Ion Orchard, the classiest mall of Singapore.

who pointed at a pedestrian crossing about a mile away. It seemed like a mile away under the blazing sun. So I walked, but found out later that there were pedestrian underpasses nearby. Oh well, I'll know next time. I finally reached Lucky Plaza, where I heard a lot of Tagalog being spoken. After walking for a bit, I saw a lot of Filipino businesses in this mall. Business names such as Kabayan Remittance PTE LTD, Pinoy Gift Shop, Chick Point, Jollibee, Lutong Pinoy, and much more. I was not ready to dine after a big breakfast in the morning, so I moved on to find another mall called Far East Plaza.

I was getting lost so I started asking a passer by who happened to be a Filipina who was also getting lost. We teamed up to find our way to our intended des-

tinations. We were successful. I also found out that she is a staff of Chick Point, a business I saw at Lucky Plaza. Before saying our goodbyes, she invited me to stop over later to take a closer look at their business. I promised I will, after I get done exploring more of the other department stores. When I reached Far East Plaza, I found a tailor that was vlog about on YouTube. The tailor is Alan Askot, owner of Ascott Tailoring. I decided to say hello to introduce myself. I ended up ordering a custom-made shirt and pants for a reasonable amount of money. Something that might cost double back here in the states. One thing I like about this tailor, he promised to have my clothes ready in two days. Whereas, I saw ads from other tailors promising to deliver the finish product within hours, some for as short as three hours! I don't think the quality of the work will be good when it is rushed. I am happy to wait two days for Ascott Tailor to finish my order.

After miles and miles of walking in the heart of Singapore's shopping district, I decided to pay my new friend at Chick Point a visit. Here is their story:

Edith Vergara Mabuyo started Chick Point in the Philippines on 22 December 2018, in



Edith, the owner, and sister-in-law, Mylene. Photos by Dale Esperante



Filipino food stalls found at the Lucky Plaza Mall's food court.



Beautiful facade of Chinatown buildings.



Right outside the food court of Lucky Plaza.

Barangay Bagbag, Tanauan City. Then they opened a branch in Singapore the following month. So far, they already have a branch in Thailand as well as three branches in the Philippines. Besides the original branch in Tanauan City, one opened in Baguio City and another in Taysan, Batangas.

I met Edith through Mylene (Mhai) Dolor Vergara, the Filipina I met earlier whom I asked for directions to Far East Plaza. When we found out we were both getting lost, it became fun to finally find our way. Edith and Mhai are sisters-in-law. They travel for business between the Philippines and Singapore at least once a month. While they are in the Philippines, their staff, one Malaysian and two Filipinos in Singapore manage the business.

Before launching Chick Point, Edith had to build up relationship with the OFWs in Singapore. The opportu-

nity to launch the business in Singapore came in January 2019. I asked Edith for words to encourage our kababayans who may be thinking about venturing in business. Paraphrasing her response, "Putting together a business is difficult especially when you're alone and lacking capital. However, when we joined with others to combine our resources, it became quite easy. That's why we are always open to OFWs. Invest part of your OFW income in the business. Invest now for your future." When I asked her to share something about herself, this is what she said: "I'm just an ordinary person aiming to do some extraordinary things by the Grace of God through helping people. Making a difference in the lives of other people. I came from a poor family that's why I work hard. I graduated from Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) with

a Bachelors degree in Office Administration. I have three kids. One is still attending De Lasalle Lipa." She is also active in organizations, such as, VCM-NW short for Value Chain Methodology-Nutriwealth, and SATOUR meaning Sustainable Agri-Tourism.

Edith and the business are actively raising awareness as well as resources to help out those who suffered and still suffering the effects of the recent Taal Volcano eruption. The call is to RISE Up Batangas! "Since we are from Tanauan Batangas and affected by the eruption of Taal, we help by raising funds to assist the people in the surrounding areas."

It is good to know that our kababayans who are living, working, or owning a business in Singapore are thriving. It is a beautiful and clean city with laws that may seem strange, but proven to be effective. Examples: No Durian can be brought in the subway, no chewing gum allowed, no spitting outside, no littering, and more. Break the rules and you will be heavily fined. You won't find public trash containers out in the open. Your used Kleenex must be carried in your purse or pocket to be thrown in your own trash can at home. There are much more to see and appreciate in this clean city of Asia. Now where is my camera? It's time for another selfie.

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### New Year at Magellan Hall



Dinner, dancing, a little bit of entertainment, some raffles, and more dancing all evening by American Legion Post 604 on New Year's eve at Magellan Hall in Sacramento, Ca.



Photos by Dale Esperante

### Maharlika Lions Club Medical and Dental Mission



Joint Medical Mission of Sacramento Maharlika Lions Club and Mt Apo Lions Club of Davao City served the town of Magsaysay, Davao Del Sur.

### Santo Nino Family Group Dinner and Dance



The Saint Paul Church host a special celebration of the Feast Day of the Jesus Infant (Santo Nino) on January 2, 2020. The Dreamgirls won first place in the group dance competition. Sinagtala took second place, and Kapitbahay landed third place.



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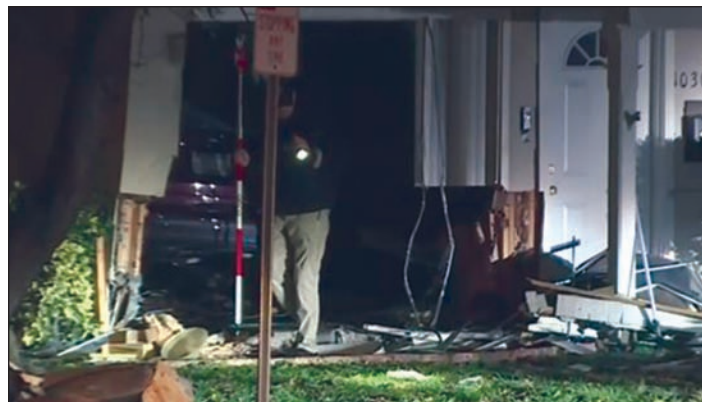
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## Couple Reunited After Suspected DUI Driver Crashed Into Home, Killing Loved One

BY RYAN HILL

RANCHO CORDOVA (CBS13) – The cuts, bruises and casts aren't the only reminders of a horrific day for Daniel Williams and his wife Lorrie. The couple was watching football with family when the unthinkable happened.



Williams' family home.

Ring cameras on the Williams' family home captured the scene of the crash mere seconds after the car careened into their living room.

"He was going so fast that by the time the capture aperture opened he was in my house," Daniel Williams said.

The car plowed into Daniel's baseball, San Francisco 49er and dog-loving mother, Jan, killing her.

"I wish she was here. I still wish I could have protected her better. I just miss her," Daniel Williams said. "It was almost surreal that my mom was gone."

The man the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office says was drunk and behind the wheel, Gary Circle, was also caught on the family's surveillance camera as he searched for one of the two kids that were inside the car at the time of the crash.

"In this day and age, to be that selfish and that mind-numbingly stupid to have children in your vehicle," Lorrie Williams said.

"I don't know why anybody would do that; to endanger



Daniel Williams with his mother, Jan.

the children that were with him. It's selfish," Daniel Williams said.

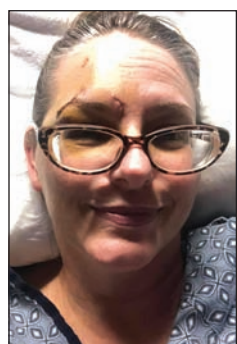
On Wednesday, Daniel and Lorrie saw each other for the first time since the crash because they were taken to different hospitals.

Daniel was taken to UC Davis where he underwent surgery and had three titanium plates and 36 screws put in his chest to hold the bones in his chest in place. Lorrie was taken to Mercy San Juan to be treated for a broken back and traumatic

brain injury.

"Once we saw each other, it was surreal because it's the same person," Lorrie Williams said. "But, we had both just been through 10 days of pure hell physically and emotionally."

The couple says they're forgiving people but this may be something they can't get past.



Lorrie Williams.

"He [Circle] did a horrible thing. A thoughtless, cruel, horrible thing. For no reason at all, he completely, like she was saying, destroyed aspects of our lives. He took my mother," Daniel Williams said.

Daniel said he and his family may not want to move back into the home after the crash. He also told CBS13 that the 49ers had sent him a care package on Thursday full of gear from the team.

## 'Better safe than sorry': How Sacramento residents are preparing for coronavirus

BY THEODORA YU

Novel Coronavirus reaches the United States: What you should know

No known cases of the novel coronavirus have shown up in Northern California. That's not stopping people in Sacramento from being prepared.

Some people are even trying to help.

The virus, which was first identified in Wuhan, China, and has no specific antiviral treatment recommended for patients, now has more than 7,000 confirmed cases and a death toll of 170 in the country. On Thursday, the World Health Organization declared the outbreak a "public health emergency of international concern."

A Sacramento organization on Wednesday announced the postponement of a Lunar New Year celebration scheduled in early February. The announcement came two days after the city of Elk Grove canceled its Lunar New Year celebration that was scheduled for Friday.

However, many locals say they are not sweating about the virus yet.

Michelle Liu, owner of Yong Tai Ginseng, a Chinese herbal store on Stockton Boulevard, said she does not sense panic in the community, although more people came in and asked for antiviral herbs or products to boost their immune systems.

According to Liu, many inquired for the isatis root electuary beverage, a dietary supplement that some feel is effective in strengthening the immune system and preventing the flu.

"Everyone was asking for it, and it was sold out in the past two days," Liu said in Cantonese. "Many of them don't necessarily have the habit of drinking it. They drink it now just to be safe."

While the electuary beverage packet is out of stock at the store, the isatis root herbal plant is available.

Liu believes customers aren't panicking, but are taking precautionary measures.

Although her store does not sell face masks, she bought some and plans to

donate them and some cash to people in China.

Liu is a member of the group China Council for the Promotion of Peaceful National Reunification, one of some overseas Chinese organizations to donate medical supplies to those in need in China. The supplies will go through the Consulate-General of China in San Francisco to the Red Cross Society based in Hubei province, where the city of Wuhan is. She bought 120

fever to consult a doctor.

He said the media need to educate the public on coronavirus preventive measures and the ways the virus can spread.

Chloe Leung, who previously lived in Sacramento and now resides in the Bay Area, came to purchase herbs at Wah Tsun. Raised in Hong Kong and having experienced the SARS outbreak in 2003, Leung said she is aware of the virus.

"My parents (in Hong



Michelle Liu, owner of Yong Tai Ginseng on Stockton Boulevard, is donating face masks supplies to the Red Cross Society in Hubei, China to those in need.

face masks to be donated "to those who need them the most, as they cannot afford to go about without it."

"We understand how hopeless they felt," Liu said of people in China. "Many of us pondered on the ways to support them when it (coronavirus) happened. We are all Chinese people. Those who are suffering are just

Kong) go to work wearing face masks every day," Leung said in Cantonese. "But it's not like they are not going out. It's unavoidable."

But Leung and her friends aren't too worried, as the number of cases in the U.S. is still small. She has a friend who is purchasing face masks for his parents in China, albeit unsure how



Savey Keo, a dispenser at Wah Tsun Chinese Herbs Co. in south Sacramento, tells his clients to wear a face mask just to be safe.

regular citizens. We try to do as much as we can."

Savey Keo, a dispenser at herbal store Wah Tsun Chinese Herbs Co., told some of his clients who came to him with coronavirus concerns to wear a mask just to be safe.

"You have to protect yourself, or else you are going to regret it when you get infected. Better safe than sorry," Keo said in Cantonese. He wears a mask at work.

Keo recommended to his clientele an herbal soup with ingredients such as lily bulbs and monk fruit to clear their lungs and remove phlegm. He advised those who run a

much he could purchase.

Michael Melendez, a downtown Sacramento resident, said despite the virus' spread, he's not worried about it reaching Sacramento.

"Everybody just got to wash their hands when they get home," Melendez said. "Any kind of symptoms (of flu) I would just go to the doctor."

"I think it (coronavirus) is contained," said Daniel B. Lorenz, a Sacramento resident. "As long as the government monitors individuals entering from at-risk areas, I think everything will be fine."



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# 3 new cases of coronavirus confirmed in Northern California; U.S. cases jump to 11

BY CATHIE ANDERSON & VINCENT MOLESKI

Public health officials confirmed three new cases of coronavirus in Northern California – including an adult woman in Santa Clara County and a husband and wife in San Benito County – bringing the number of cases of the disease in the United States to 11. In California, according to the CDC, six people are now sickened by the virus.

“I understand that people are concerned, but based on what we know today, the risk to general public remains low,” said Sara Cody, the health officer for the Santa Clara County Public Health Department. “A second case is not unexpected. With our large population and the amount of travel to China for both personal and business reasons, we will likely see more cases, including close contacts to our cases.”

The Santa Clara case involves a woman who came there Jan. 23 from the Wuhan area of China to visit her family, Cody said, and except to seek medical treatment, she has isolated herself at her family’s home. Wuhan is where the new coronavirus outbreak originated, and the vast majority of the cases have been diagnosed there and in the surrounding Hubei province.

This is a mild case of the disease, Cody said, and the traveler has only made contact with family members since her arrival. The patient’s family also is currently isolated at their home, the health officer said, and will not be leaving in order to prevent possible spread of the illness.

This patient has no connection to the other case of coronavirus that Santa Clara officials announced Friday. In addition to the two Santa Clara County cases, public health officials also have announced one case in Los Angeles County and another in Orange County.

In San Benito County, officials Sunday told the San Jose Mercury News that a 57-year-old man, who recently traveled to Wuhan, had contracted the illness, and passed it onto his 57-year-old wife, who did not travel, according to a news release.

Both individuals have not left their home since returning from China, according to San Benito County officials.

Public health officials with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have said they expect to see more cases of new coronavirus, a respiratory illness that

causes fever, coughing and shortness of breath, as travelers come to the United States from China.

To house individuals who are displaying symptoms, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services asked Pentagon leaders to set aside housing at four U.S. military bases where overseas travelers can be quarantined for 14 days. The U.S. Department of Defense announced Saturday that four bases, including two in California have been selected. They are: Fairfield’s Travis Air Force Base, just 32 miles from Sacramento; Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar, near San Diego; the Army’s Fort Carson, Colorado, 168th Regiment Regional Training Institute; and Lackland Air Force Base, near San Antonio, Texas.

The Pentagon announcement means there could be as many as three military installations in California housing people with the new coronavirus. March Air Reserve Base in Riverside already is housing U.S. government employees evacuated out of Wuhan, China.

Originally, public health officials said the government evacuees would be quarantined for only 72 hours, but they changed that to 14 days after the World Health Organization declared a public health emergency out of concern of the potential spread of the illness. Shortly after the WHO announcement, the U.S. government made a similar declaration in the United States. Three U.S. airlines — American, Delta and United — have suspended service to China.

Pentagon officials said that military personnel and their families will have no contact with the quarantined individuals. Rather, HHS staff or contractors will be take care of caring for them.

As announcement of new U.S. cases trickle in and federal officials open up quarantine sites, Americans have become anxious about the potential for human-to-human transmission. To date, there has been only one such case in the United States, and that individual was the spouse of a Chicago traveler who had returned from the Wuhan area.

### Protecting yourself

Still, residents in the Sacramento region



Masking-up

bodily fluids, airborne germs can still penetrate through the sides of the mask and into the respiratory system.

No public health agency recommends face masks for public use. Health workers do use N95 respirator masks and other types of face masks for protection, but they have been fitted for the devices and trained in how to use them effectively.

To cope with anxiety, psychologist Lynn Bufka of the American Psychological Association recommended some foundational steps you can take to maintain your emotional stability: Get regular sleep, adequate amounts of physical activity and decent nutrition. You can also seek social support from friends, Bufka said. Sometimes it’s good to checking in with a friends to see whether concerns are realistic, but be careful which one you choose, she said, because sometimes a friend will actually contribute to anxiety.

There are also everyday precautions that people can take to prevent cold and flu, and they’re recommended by the CDC:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If you really can’t get to soap and water, then use a hand sanitizer that has at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Can’t wash your hands right away? Avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes as these are areas where the pathogens can grow.
- Do not stand close to people who are sick. That may mean taking the stairs rather than an elevator.
- If you take an elevator, try not to touch buttons with your fingers. That’s also true for other objects or surfaces that other people may touch. Clean and disinfect those areas if you can. Otherwise, avoid touching them.
- Cover your mouth when you cough or

have been stocking up on face masks out of a belief that the devices will help them ward off infection. Public health officials note that, although surgical masks provide some protection against spray of

sneeze, either using a tissue or your elbow. Throw used tissues in the trash right away.

- If you are sick, stay at home. If you have traveled to China or have been on an international flight with others from Wuhan in the last two weeks, you may wish to seek medical treatment for any symptoms. Call ahead to let them know why you’re coming. They may wish to admit you into an isolated unit.

### Investigating the illness

Public health officials still are investigating how and when this new coronavirus spilled over into humans, but that can take months or years to determine. What they do know is that, like severe acute respiratory syndrome and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, this new respiratory virus originated with bats.

So far, data shows that this illness has not been as deadly as either SARS or MERS. About two in every 100 people have died from new coronavirus, according to the reported data. With MERS, 30 to 40 out of every 100 people died and with SARS, the mortality rate was about nine of every 100. Epidemiologists said that, judging by what they know of MERS, they believe the new coronavirus has an incubation period of two to 14 days.

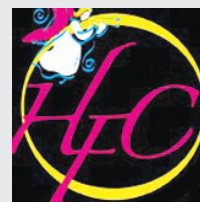
About 300 people have died after contracting new coronavirus, and more than 14,500 cases have been reported since December when the disease leapt into headlines after an outbreak was linked to a market in China. However, researchers at the University of California, Davis, have said that the illness likely had been circulating among a small number of people in China for months — or even years — before this but that those individuals had not sought treatment because they thought they had cold or flu.

Over the last 10 years, UC Davis has been leading a global investigation into coronaviruses and other pathogens that can be transmitted to humans. They have done the work with grant funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development, using community health workers to do surveillance and and sampling on more than 145,000 animals and humans to learn how these diseases get transmitted and how to minimize that risk.

Nearly 75 percent of all new, emerging, or re-emerging diseases affecting humans in this era originate from animals.



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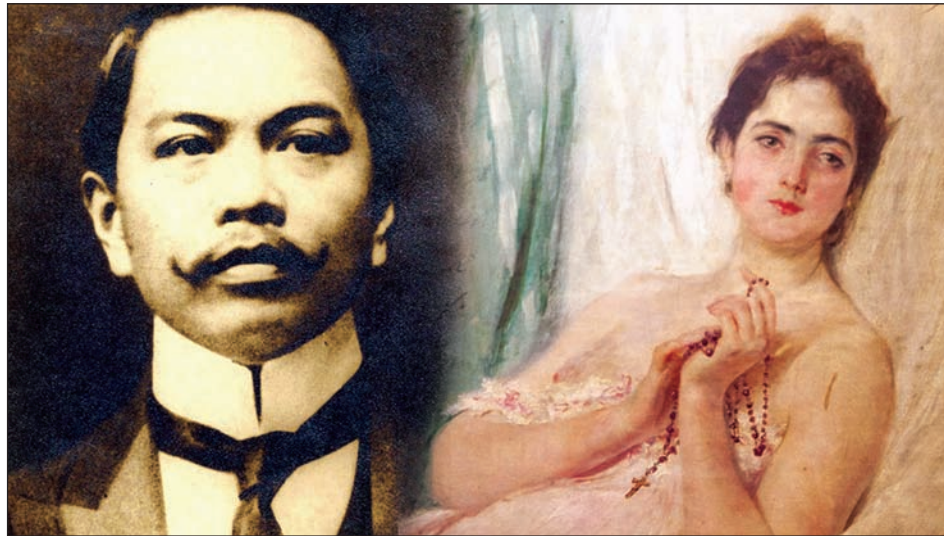
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# The Darker Life of Juan Luna:

## The life of Juan Luna is decorated with triumphs

BY MARIO ALVARO LIMOS

**T**extbooks have always painted a positive image of the life of Juan Luna: an ilustrado, a part of the Propaganda Movement, and the Philippines' foremost master painter. And yet we gloss over the most glaring, terrifying, and tragic event that haunted Luna all throughout his life and beyond: He killed his wife and her mother.



Juan Luna and wife Maria de la Paz Pardo de Tavera

In 1886, when Luna was 29 years old, he married the love of his life, Maria de la Paz Pardo de Tavera, or simply Paz. After marrying, they sailed to Europe, making sure to stop by Venice and Rome before finally settling in Paris. Two years earlier, Luna had created the "Spoliarium," which won one of several gold medals at the Exposición Nacional de Bellas Artes.

Luna and Pardo de Tavera lived happily for the first few years of their marriage. They had a son, Andres, who would later become one of the Philippines' most discerning architect in the pre-war period. One of his most notable projects is the Crystal Arcade building, which was erected in 1932. Luna and Pardo de Tavera also had a daughter, Maria, who died during childbirth.

The couple came from respected families, were both well-off, and had plenty of things in common, including a close friendship with Jose Rizal. If photographs and Luna's paintings of Pardo de Tavera offered clues, they'd tell a story of a content and happy relationship between the couple.

Life in Paris was romantic, until

the arrival of one Monsieur Dussaq into the life of Juan Luna and Paz Pardo de Tavera. In 1892, four years into their marriage, Luna and Pardo de Tavera's marriage was already on the rocks. Luna's temper, like his brother Antonio's, was not one to be toyed with for he had very poor control over his emotions. For Luna, anger and jealousy were two deadly tempests that also made him crazy.

Earlier in the year, Pardo de Tavera made the mistake of speaking to Luna quite fondly of a certain man whom she had met in Mont-Dore, a mountainous vacation destination in central France. Luna did not like what he heard. Months later, on September 4, 1892, Dussaq called on the Luna residence looking for Pardo de Tavera. Luna became enraged.

Luna threatened Pardo de Tavera that he would harm her if she



Luna, Rizal and Ventura

continued to speak to other men, especially Dussaq. When he was not convinced of her fidelity, he made good on his threat, eventually assaulting and beating her. As if those were not enough, Luna also destroyed Pardo de Tavera's clothes, prompting her to leave him and seek refuge elsewhere.

Luna surreptitiously followed Pardo de Tavera and discovered that Dussaq was also in the house where she escaped to. Deranged

and convinced that Pardo de Tavera was lying and having an affair, he returned to the house the following day and beat her with his cane.

Luckily, Doña Juliana, Pardo de Tavera's mother, heard the commotion and immediately summoned her sons to protect her daughter from Luna, who threatened to shoot them with his revolver.

### HOW JUAN LUNA MURDERED HIS WIFE AND MOTHER-IN-LAW

Weeks later on September 22, 1892, Pardo de Tavera's brothers Trinidad and Felix came to visit and check on her and her son, who was sick at the time. The visit was brief, because the brothers decided to get breakfast at a nearby café.

Doña Juliana and Pardo de Tavera decided that they did not want to be left alone in the house, so they went downstairs and made their way to the café. But in the doorway, they saw Luna holding a gun. He fired multiple times at Pardo de Tavera and her mother, who screamed and ran back upstairs and locked themselves in the bathroom.

Meanwhile, Trinidad and Felix heard the gunshots and ran back to the house immediately. Luna

was prepared for them, and also fired at them, seriously wounding both brothers. Afterward, he went upstairs and looked for the two women, whom he found cowering on the bathroom floor.

He pointed his revolver at Doña Juliana and killed her with one shot to the head. Then, he turned his gun on his wife, and also shot her in the head. Somehow, she survived the gunshot, but eventually died in the hospital 11 days later.

### LIFE OF JUAN LUNA: HOW HE GOT AWAY WITH MURDER

Five months after Luna murdered his wife and mother-in-law, a fact that he admitted to doing, he was acquitted by the court. It was a time when criminal and civil laws in Paris greatly favored men. In just one day of session, the court dismissed the charges against Luna on the grounds of temporary insanity caused by passion.

Apart from being found to have had temporary insanity when he killed his wife and her mother, an unwritten law in France at that time allowed husbands to punish or kill their wives who were found to commit adultery. In the end, the most punishment Luna was made to pay was a price of 40 francs, which was the cost of court documentation. Five days after his acquittal, he moved to Madrid with his son, where he spent the next 17 years.

The Pardo de Tavera family shunned Luna forever, for they never received the justice for the deaths of Doña Juliana and Paz Pardo de Tavera. Her brother, Trinidad Pardo de Tavera, who would become a respected historian, doctor, and statesman, blackened out the face of Juan Luna in every family photograph where Luna was present.

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# Capping, Pinning & Candle Lighting Ceremonies

Speaker:  
Gabriel Ortigoza, Ph.D.  
College of Nursing  
Central Philippine University  
Jaro, Iloilo City, Philippines  
December 6, 2019

“If you save one life, you are a hero. If you save hundred lives, you are a nurse.”  
– unknown

Welcome to the field of nursing. Welcome to the profession of heroes.

Capping and Pinning are among the most memorable ceremonies in the life of nursing student. A nursing cap is placed by clinical instructor on female student's head while a pin is hooked by clinical instructor to the left breast white clinical uniform of male student nurse. These ceremonies signify recognition of sophomore to the sisterhood and brotherhood in nursing profession.

The Most Trusted Profession. Nursing top the most trusted and ethical profession 17 years in a row. On January 9, 2019, American Hospital Association published that once again, nursing ranks as the most trusted profession in Gallup's ethics survey. The annual poll of Americans found that 84 percent of respondents rated the honesty and ethical standards of nurses as high or very high.” This poll simply says that nurses have moral ascendancy to govern. Welcome to the most trusted and ethical profession.

Invest in Education. Silver and gold, have I none. In other words, I may not have vast hectares of farmlands or properties in my possession but that is not important. What is significant is you have education. Having education is a lifetime investment. It stays with you even if everything in this world is damaged by force majeure or natural calamities such as earthquakes, typhoons and landslides. Or calamities caused by men like fires and wars. The worth of education is priceless. It is incomparable. And the good news is we can share it to others.

Success is Dependent on Education. Theories and clinical skills are taught at school. You are bombarded with tons of information to make you succeed in your nursing profession. The goal is for you to prosper and become our colleagues in this healing industry. CPU has produced thousands of successful nurses and they are all over the world. I am grateful to CPU for my nursing education. It is at CPU where I was molded to become what I am now - a true-blooded Centralian nurse.

Strong Nursing Foundation. As student nurse you have all the time



Gabriel Ortigoza, Ph.D.

to study and deepen your knowledge, practice your skills, and develop right attitude in nursing. Read all available literatures related to your course. Search online to expand your understanding. And use your critical thinking in decision making. Master the skills you learn from nursing laboratory as you will surely use them in your clinical. The head-to-toe assessment is one of the important skills as you will use it wherever nursing unit you work - it may be at medical-surgical, telemetry, ICU, ED, OR, PACU, OB-Gyn, NICU, clinic, home health, etc. Remember to properly use your thermometer, sphygmomanometer and stethoscope. These three-basic medical equipment plus good bedside manners are vital in the success of your profession.

Job Opportunities. Once you become registered nurse you can freely apply where to work. You may apply at private or public hospital, locally or abroad or pursue higher education. The choice is yours. Please put into consideration the short- and long-term benefits offered by those institutions. A Salary Grade 15 for Philippine government nurses under Department of Health has been affirmed by the Supreme Court with starting monthly pay of thirty thousand five hundred pesos (P30,500.00) while military nurses under the Armed Forces of the Philippines has monthly base pay of forty-eight thousand eight hundred twenty-nine pesos (P48,829.00) plus allowances such as subsistence, clothing, combat, cold weather, loneliness pay, flight nurse, and other fringe benefits. If you desire to work abroad you will be receiving much higher pay. For example, a new graduate nurse at Kaiser Permanente in Sacramen-

to, California receives \$60+ per hour plus hourly differential of \$7+ for evening shift and \$11+ for night shift. As the registered nurse accumulates number of years in the service the pay is getting higher and higher up to over \$100 per hour. As registered nurse, your service to human being is important. Again, the choice is yours.

Health Teaching. Health teaching is one major link that will break or make the continuum of care. In fact, it is one of the weakest links. The strength of an organization is dependent on its weakest link. We need to make sure the patient and their significant others understand our teaching. As you go to your clinical and to the field for your community health nursing please prepare yourselves with information you want to share with your clients. Mastery of the subject matter is a major factor in the success of teaching. Be ready to share that vital information and arm them with knowledge based on science; not on myths. One of the common teachings we do as nurses is on management of diabetes, hypertension, weight loss, prevention and detection of stroke and heart attack. We need to invest time on these topics because the return is priceless.

Advise to Nursing Students. My advice to all of you is to strengthen your foundation in nursing and your Christian education at CPU.



Candle lighting ceremonies



Certificate of awards given by Gabriel Ortigoza

Develop your appetite to learn. Do not be afraid to ask. As the Chinese proverb says, “He who asks a question is a fool for five minutes, he who does not ask a question remains a fool forever.” This is the best time for you to ask all the questions in your mind while you are still at school under the tutelage of excellent nursing professors who are available to answer your queries and are duty bound to guide you in the right path of nursing education.

At the clinical, it is important for you to plan for the day. Read your patient's history, the reason why they came to the hospital, and the plans for them. When you get report during change of shift, listen attentively to the endorsement of outgoing nurse as there are vital information shared during that very moment. Take vital signs to include pain assessment and encode it to EMR (Electronic Medical Record) as soon as possible as the physicians and other members of the health care team are waiting for it. Review your patient's laboratory results. Perform proper HTT assessment as soon as possible. Before the end of shift do rounds to your patients and ask them if

they are okay and if they need anything. If they do, address it before your shift ends. That is the glimpse of the day's shift. As you adjust to your hospital work, you can develop your own style that works for you. As an old adage say, “You can skin the cat in different ways.” And please go beyond what is expected of you.

My last important advice to you is to avoid wasting your time on social media. Facebook and Instagram are addicting. Don't waste your precious time on social media. Sometimes you know more on what's going on with that viral post than your nursing subjects. Use your time wisely. Don't live a sedentary lifestyle. Be productive and know your lessons by heart.

Light in Darkness. As nurses, we represent light in the darkness. I remember one of my Sunday School songs which goes like this, “let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good work, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” At nighttime during the Crimean War, the wounded soldiers were looking forward to see that Lady with a Lamp. I am referring to Florence Nightingale. Her lamp symbolizes life. She came in the middle of the night with her lamp to treat the sick and the wounded. We are the new generation Nightingales. We must be an instrument of healing to this sickly world. We must continuously bring hope to the hopeless.

Bible Verse. Finally, I want to leave you one of my favorite verses in the holy bible. Please keep it at the tablet of your heart. It is found in the book of Proverbs 3:5-6, “Trust in the Lord with all your hearts and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your path.”

Congratulations and God bless you.

# Why the death of Kobe Bryant hits us so hard — and how to cope

We may not have known Kobe Bryant personally, but the grief some of us feel over his death is still very real.

BY NICHOL SPECTOR

It's November, 1996, and I'm 13 years old. My father and I are sitting court-side at the Los Angeles Forum as the Lakers take position.

"Keep an eye on this kid," my dad says, nudging me to glance up from my hot dog and peanuts. "He's gonna be a star."

Dad is talking about Kobe Bryant, the 18-year old wunderkind who, standing only about five feet from where I sit, looks to be about three times my size.

"Just out of high school," Dad continues. "Can you believe it?"

No, I can't believe it. Bryant's magnificent height and build make him look older to me, but his face is boyish and sweet, bearing a puckish grin. The crowd is going crazy and suddenly, so is my heart: it dawns on me that Kobe is the most beautiful boy (for I cannot yet see him as a "man") I've



A woman looks at a mural by artists Muck Rock and Mr79lts of Kobe Bryant and his daughter, Gianna, after they were killed in a helicopter crash in Los Angeles on Jan. 27, 2020.

ever seen.

I actually don't remember much of Bryant's first game, performance-wise; but I do remember how his sweat laced around his temples, and glistened on his cheekbones and that, at one moment, he was so close to me, I felt the hot wind surge off his body. I also remember (though admittedly, this

may have happened later that season) that another player soared over me after the ball and, with his enormous foot, conked me right on the head. As people in nearby seat huddled around me asking if I was OK, my sole concern was whether Kobe had seen the embarrassing incident.

I never met Kobe Bryant,

but I felt like I knew him, in fact, felt like I loved him, and when I learned that he died (along with 8 others, including his 13-year-old daughter, Gianna), my stomach lurched with the bad kind of butterflies and my eyes welled. I spent much of the day in bed, reading story after horrific story on the helicopter crash that snatched those beauti-

ful lives away but an hour from where I was lounging around like it was any old Sunday morning in Los Angeles.

Kobe Bryant was an inspiration to many — but not all. We can't ignore why.

I was surely not alone in my despair as people around the globe took to social media to share their shock and dismay. Gay L. Polk-Payton, an attorney and judge in Mississippi who named her 21-year old son Gabriel Jekobe (French for "I Kobe") Payton, after Kobe Bryant had hardly gotten out of bed since she heard the news.

"I lost it when I found out he died," Polk-Payton tells me, choking up. "And then when I found out Gianna was with him, his baby girl he nurtured so much and who idolized him, I just lost it all over again. I had to take [Monday] off of work. I've been in the same clothes for two days. I'm just a mess." This grief is valid and the worst thing you can do is deny it

Polk-Payton is giving herself the time she needs to mourn and accepting that this is a real loss. Her way is the healthy and healing way to go about it, according to therapists.

A loss must be grieved whether it is a personal relationship or whether it is a relationship from a distance.

"This loss is very real because Kobe Bryant was a real person whom we all feel like we knew at some level," says Tami Frye, a licensed master social worker and faculty member for Walden University's Master of Social Work program. "He met a need for most of us by providing entertainment and by giving us joy. We pulled for him when we watched him play and we were saddened when we saw him lose. We felt in some way we were part of his life and he was part of ours. Now that part is over. An ending like this must be grieved. A loss must be grieved whether it is a personal relationship or whether it is a relationship from a distance."

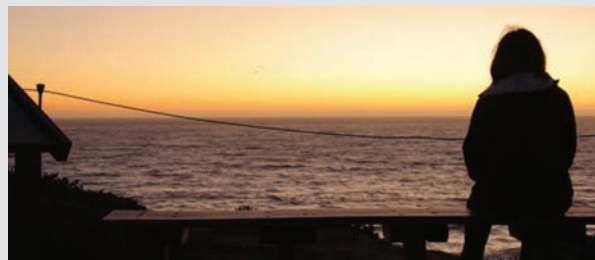
## Alone. In a strange land...

BY MEREMEL ASIS HECHONA

You just arrived. A new place. A new environment. You don't know anybody. You ask yourself. What will I do? Where do I start? You look around. It smells different. It feels different. It looks different. From home. From what you're used to. You started to feel anxious. A wave of panic starting to crawl, creating an unimaginable fear. Creepy, persistent, increasing, slowly eating u, exploding like madness..

And then you remember. The reason why you're here, why you left home, leaving love ones in great sadness. And then you remind yourself. You can do this. Its gonna get better. Everything will fall into place. You just have to stand firm, focus and stay tough.

Armed with determinations, you face the odds, unsure at times but you



kept on going. After all, you decide this, you thought hard and long and you're here. There's no way that you will give up. Not you.

With determination, knowledge, wit, you tried to blend. You need to adapt how they live, how they act. You need to understand, accept and respect that's how the way they do it. Not easy at first. Culture is different, language different but you learned. Every little detail, every single thing.. You struggled. Being alone can be deafening, cold, unbearable lonely but you never falter. You're determined. Amidst the weakness that at times hits you, you hold yourself strong and mighty. You're eager. You don't want to miss a thing. You will succeed no

matter what it cost u..

Years passed. Sitting in your front porch. You look back on all the years that gone by. Aint easy. Multiple times you tried. Multiple times you failed. Multiple times you pick yourself up and start all over again. Looking around, sitting in your comfortable home with your family. You smiled. You can now sit back and relax. Not wanting to hurry. Not wanting to push yourself to the edge. You don't have to do it anymore. Its over. You're done. You're resting. You are settled. No more aches, No more pains. . You made it. What a journey it has been..

## It was my dream to become a specific type of mom...

BY MARIA KANG

*The one you saw running with her dog and children on the weekends.  
The one who had a trusted circle of girlfriends she could engage with.  
The one who had sexy date nights with her spouse.  
The one who enjoyed her career and traveled the world.  
The one who had deep bonds with her children...  
The one who's confident, inner light warmed and attracted the people around her...*

As I see the eyes of people who watch me and my family when we are out running or on social media, I know they see what I saw when I first witnessed a mom doing the same thing when I was a teen.

I saw possibilities.

That mom showed me you can be healthy after kids. Another mom showed me you can have a loving and deep relationship with your children. My grandparents role modeled a long-lasting 70yr marriage. My mother imprinted that grit, hustle and faith can help build flourishing businesses.



Besides the great examples, the observations is where we learn so much. I hope this page has demonstrated that you can overcome the hard. You can break up and make up. You can be overweight and get fit. You can start with nothing and achieve great somethings.

Let's instill the hope. Let's embrace the hard. Let's be the example. Let's be the observation. Let's believe we are in the process of becoming the person we were meant to be. LET'S BE.

## Two Sarahs wed in March

BY RICKY LO

**Wedding bells will be ringing for two Sarahs in March.**

Sarah Lahbati and Richard Gutierrez will start sending invitations to their wedding on March 14 right at home and not, as previously rumored, out of the country. It is expected to be an engrande event and their two children might be included in the entourage (Zion as Bible Bearer and Kai as Ring Bearer?).



Sarah Lahbati and Richard Gutierrez

Sarah Geronimo and boyfriend Matteo Guidicelli are somewhat secretive about their wedding which is also set in March, according to the STAR source who is close to the sweethearts. If we are to believe Matteo, it will be a 'simple and small wedding with the family' as he told The STAR in an interview in May last year at about the time he and Sarah got engaged abroad. The source didn't mention the venue and the exact date. 'There might be last-minute changes, though,' she added.



Sarah Geronimo and Matteo Guidicelli

## 'Every day Valentine's Day': Kim Chiu, Xian Lim reveal 'secret' to happy relationship

BY JAN MILO SEVERO

Kapamilya celebrity couple Kim Chiu and Xian Lim admitted that they have not yet talked about getting married even if other celebrity couples around them have been getting engaged.

In an interview with the media after the press conference of their new teleserye "Love Thy Woman," Kim and Xian said they are still young as compared to other celebrity couples who just got hitched.



Celebrity couple Xian Lim and Kim Chiu

"Ay bata pa kami, matatanda na 'yung ikakasal, mas elder sa amin," Kim said.

"Hindi namin pinag-uusapan ang future, every day lang kami," Kim added.

"Hindi pa," Xian said.

"Huwag na natin unahan, ito muna tayo," Kim added.

When asked what's the secret for their long and happy relationship, Xian said, "It's freedom."

"Kumbaga si Kim, she has the freedom to do everything she wants as an artist. And she also gives me the freedom to do whatever it is I feel like I need to do," the actor explained.

"Hindi namin hinahawakan sa leeg n'ung isa't-isa."

The couple said they also have no plans yet for Valentine's Day.

"Walang plano e. Every day is Valentine's Day sa amin e," Xian said.

"Love Thy Woman," which premieres on ABS-CBN this February 10, also stars Yam Conception.

It is directed by Jeffrey Jeturian, Andoy Ranay and Jerry Lopez Sineneng and produced by Dreamscape Entertainment.

## Robert Pattinson's 'Batman' reveals cast, starts filming

MANILA, Philippines — Principal photography has begun on Warner Bros. Pictures' "The Batman."

Director Matt Reeves (the "Planet of the Apes" films) is at the helm, with Robert Pattinson (upcoming "Tenet," "The Lighthouse," "Good Time") starring as Gotham City's vigilante detective, Batman, and billionaire Bruce Wayne.

Starring alongside Pattinson as Gotham's famous and infamous cast of characters are Zoë Kravitz ("Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald," "Mad Max: Fury Road") as Selina Kyle; Paul Dano ("Love & Mercy," "12 Years a Slave") as Edward Nashon; Jeffrey Wright (the "Hunger Games" films) as the



Robert Pattinson will play both the caped crusader and the billionaire Bruce Wayne.

GCPD's James Gordon; John Turturro (the "Transformers" films) as Carmine Falcone;

Peter Sarsgaard ("The Magnificent Seven," "Black Mass") as Gotham D.A. Gil Colson; Jayme Lawson ("Farewell Amor") as mayoral candidate Bella Reál; with Andy Serkis (the "Planet of the Apes" films, "Black Panther") as Alfred; and Colin Farrell ("Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them," "Dumbo") as Oswald Cobblepot.

Reeves and Dylan Clark (the "Planet of the Apes" films) are producing the film, with Simon Emanuel, Michael E. Uslan, Walter Hamada and Chantal Nong Vo serving as executive producers.

Reeves' behind-the-scenes creative team includes Oscar-nominated director of photography Greig Fraser ("Lion," upcoming "Dune"); his "Planet of the Apes" production designer, James Chinlund; editors William Hoy (the "Planet of the Apes" films) and Tyler Nelson ("Rememory"); Oscar-winning VFX supervisor Dan Lemmon

("The Jungle Book"); Oscar-nominated SFX supervisor Dominic Tuohy ("1917," "Star Wars: Episode IX – The Rise of Skywalker"); Oscar-nominated sound mixer Stuart Wilson ("1917," the "Star Wars" franchise); Oscar-winning costume designer Jacqueline Durran ("1917," "Little Women," "Anna Karenina") and costume designers Glyn Dillon (the "Star Wars" franchise) and David Crossman ("1917," the "Star Wars" franchise); hair designer Zoe Tahir (upcoming "No Time to Die," "Spectre"); and Oscar-nominated makeup designer Naomi Donne ("1917").

"Batman" was created by Bob Kane with Bill Finger.

Based on characters from DC, "The Batman" is set to open in theaters June 25, 2021 and will be distributed worldwide by Warner Bros. Pictures. [Philstar.com](http://Philstar.com)



### PERSONAL INJURY and IMMIGRATION

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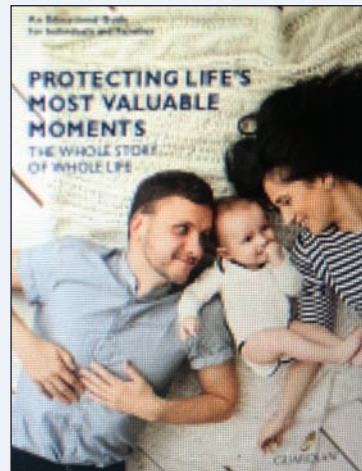
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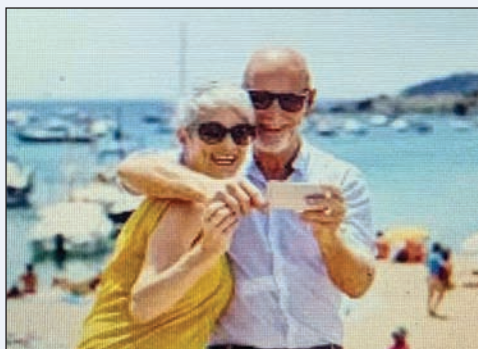
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<b>PRHF Discount</b>	<b>-\$895.00</b>
<b>Total After Discount</b>	<b>\$7,827.68</b>
<b>Due at Signing</b>	
<b>30% Down Payment</b>	<b>\$2,348.30</b>
<b>72 Months No Interest Payment Plan</b>	<b>\$76.10/Month</b>

Plot Price - Upright Market	\$7948.00
Endowment Care Fund (12%)	\$953.76
*Interment Fee	\$895.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,796.76</b>
<b>PRHF Discount</b>	<b>-\$895.00</b>
<b>Total After Discount</b>	<b>\$8,901.76</b>
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