



OUT ON BAIL. Vice President Sara Duterte shows a document after posting bail at the Quezon City Regional Trial Court on Saturday, September 5, 2026. **AFP**

VP Sara surrenders, posts bail in grave threats case

Says she fears for her life, doesn't trust the police, the court

By Charles Dantes and Rex Espiritu

VICE President Sara Duterte surrendered and posted bail at the Quezon City Regional Trial Court on Saturday, a day after an arrest warrant was issued over her alleged death threat against President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

Duterte was charged last month with "grave threats" stemming from a late-night news briefing in which she claimed to have hired a hitman to kill the President, his wife Liza and former Speaker Martin Romualdez should she be cut down first.

The alleged assassination threat also forms a crucial element of her ongoing

Senate impeachment trial, where a guilty verdict would see her removed from office and permanently banned from politics.

The Vice President later said her comments had been misconstrued.

Duterte's lawyer, Michael Poa, said the Vice President is considered as having

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LONGEST CHRISTMAS SEASON BEGINS. With the start of the 'Ber' months, a store attendant puts on display different kinds of Christmas decor at the Dapitan Arcade Quezon City on Saturday, September 5, 2026. **Manny Palmero**

583k military, uniformed staff to get 5% base pay hike in 2027

MORE than 583,000 military and uniformed personnel (MUPs) would receive a 5 percent increase in their base pay, on top of the continued P350 daily subsistence allowance, as the government proposed additional funding under the 2027 national budget.

Under the 2027 National Expenditure Program, about P74.92 billion is allocated for the adjusted base pay of Armed Forces of the Philippines personnel, while P100.55 billion is provided for Philippine

National Police personnel.

The Department of Budget and Management said the pay increase is part of the second tranche of the salary adjustments for MUPs through Executive Order 107, which takes effect on Jan. 1, 2027.

The government is also proposing P73.67 billion for the subsistence requirement of MUPs, maintaining the P350 daily subsistence allowance that is

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PCG pushes back vs. China's fresh claims over Batanes

By Rex Espiritu

THE Philippine Coast Guard has rejected China's claims over Batanes, saying Beijing's recent narratives appeared aimed at manufacturing a dispute where none exists.

PCG spokesperson for West Philippine

Sea Rear Admiral Jay Tarriela questioned the editorial published by China's state-run Global Times questioning Philippine sovereignty over the Batanes Islands.

"Batanes has six municipalities. Ibatans vote in our elections, pay our taxes, sit in our Congress, and serve in our armed forces and in our Coast Guard," he said.

He also rejected Beijing's "ancient fishing" claim in arguing that Batanes belonged to China by way of Taiwan.

Tarriela cited the 2016 arbitral ruling on the South China Sea, saying the decision established that historic fishing does not create sovereignty.

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National Artist Resil Mojares, 83

By Angelica Villanueva

NATIONAL Artist for Literature Resil Mojares, an acclaimed writer and scholar known for his work on Philippine history, literature, and culture, has passed away. He was 83.

On Saturday, Sept. 5, his daughter, Leigh Mojares Go, announced his death on Facebook, a day after the writer celebrated his birthday.

"Papa Resil was a pillar of our family, and although we will miss him dearly every day, we find comfort in knowing that he is now reunited with our dear mother, Sally, who left us in 2022," Go wrote.

Writers and scholars paid tribute to Mojares following news of his death.

National Artist for Literature Virgilio Almarino described Mojares' service to the country as invaluable, while author Danton Remoto remembered his mind as "deep and wide and full of light."

Poet Merlie Alunan said many writers drew strength from Mojares' work, while Aida Santos described his death as the loss of "another brilliant mind" in the literary community.



Resil Mojares

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Lea Salonga: 1st Pinoy to get Hollywood Walk of Fame star

By Angelica Villanueva

LEA Salonga made history as the first Filipino to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

On Saturday (Manila time), the Tony Award-winning singer and actress received the 2,855th star on Hollywood Boulevard.

"I have walked down this street many times. I've stepped on a lot of famous people, and now people get to step on me, which feels strangely appropriate for show business. I love a full-circle moment," Salonga said in her acceptance speech.

"I was a little girl in the Philippines who loved to sing and perform. I started working when I was very young, and I certainly didn't have some grand plan for how any of this was supposed to unfold. I just knew that I loved doing it."

Salonga acknowledged the many people who "opened doors for her" and other fellow Asian artists.

"I hope that someday, a young Filipino comes to Hollywood, sees my name, and thinks, 'Oh, maybe I can get here too,'" she added.

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PRESTIGIOUS HONOR. Lea Salonga makes history as the first Filipino to receive a Hollywood Walk of Fame star. **HWF Instagram**

Rody camp asks ICC: Add 'expert verification' for digital evidence

By Ratziel San Juan

THE defense team of former President Rodrigo Duterte requested the International Criminal Court (ICC) Trial Chamber III to amend its E-Court Protocol and add an "Expert Verification" field to screen digital evidence disclosed by the prosecution ahead of his Nov. 30 trial for crimes against humanity.

"In view of both the quantity and quality of the evidence disclosed to it to date, the defense is concerned that the evidentiary record in the present case risks being overwhelmed by material of dubious relevance, authenticity, and reliability," read the 12-page request filed by Duterte's legal counsel Peter Haynes.

The defense argued that much of the evidence of the prosecution includes open-source and user-generated material.

These may be difficult to verify in terms of authenticity, origin, and reliability.

According to the Duterte camp, the record of disclosure in the present case has "ballooned" since the end of the confirmation stage, with a more than 400-percent increase in the volume of evidence disclosed by the prosecution.

It added that the figure spans over 25,000 items of evidence at the time of writing, from just over 5,000 items

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COA: 50 fraud audit reports sent to OMB

By Joel E. Zurbano

THE Commission on Audit said it has submitted at least 50 fraud audit reports to the Office of the Ombudsman concerning flood-control programs, as it committed to further investigate project irregularities.

The commission made the disclosure during its proposed budget hearing for 2027 at the Senate, where senators inquired about updates on the agency's investigations into alleged irregularities in flood-control and other infrastructure projects.

"Our Fraud Audit Office has been quite busy so far. We have already completed nearly 50 fraud audit reports. All of these have been submitted to the Office of the Ombudsman, and they are utilizing them in their preliminary investigations and the cases they file," COA chairperson Gamaliel Cordoba said.

"We are pressing on and will not stop; we will continue until we have covered everything. However, our current focus

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IN BRIEF

NBI agents nab Chinese
for visa processing scam

THE Criminal Intelligence Division of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI-CRID) arrested a Chinese national at a restaurant in Pasay City for alleged involvement in a visa processing scam and robbery-extortion against a Chinese company and other foreigners, according to a press release on Saturday.

The suspect was caught in the act during an entrapment operation after accepting marked money in exchange for returning the passports to the victims. Twenty-two foreign passports belonging to victims from China, Vietnam, and Taiwan were recovered.

The NBI said the suspect allegedly deceived the victims by claiming to have influential connections at the Bureau of Immigration and convincing them to surrender their passports for visa renewal applications. The suspect allegedly did not process any applications, hid the documents, and refused to return them.

The suspect also demanded ₱150,000 in exchange for retrieving the passports. The NBI warned that withholding passports could endanger the victims by depriving them of legal identity and the ability to travel.

NBI Director Melvin Matibag said charges for robbery-extortion, estafa, grave coercion, resistance and disobedience, and obstruction of justice will be filed against the suspect. The NBI also warned the public against individuals offering quick government transactions through alleged connections and urged victims of similar extortion schemes to report them. **Gwyneth Nolasco**

National Teachers' Month
2026 kicks off in CDO

THE Department of Education (DepEd) on Saturday officially kicked off the celebration of National Teachers' Month 2026 at the Limketkai Atrium in Cagayan de Oro.

With the theme "Teacher, Ikaw Naman," DepEd said the program seeks to highlight the vital role of teachers while recognizing their contributions to educating Filipino youth. The event featured cultural performances by teachers and learners, an entertainment variety show, and a raffle.

Education Secretary Sonny Angara said the celebration is in line with President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.'s commitment to provide teachers with what they need. He commended teachers for serving as guides and going beyond their duties to make schools safe and nurturing spaces.

Angara said teachers cannot be replaced by machines amid the rise of artificial intelligence, stressing the need for a whole-of-society support system for learners and educators. Sheila Marie Amigo of Zamboanga Sibugay and DepEd Hero Jeric Maribao of Misamis Occidental were also recognized as 2026 Metrobank Foundation Most Outstanding Filipinos.

Amigo, a licensed engineer and Master Teacher I, developed DULA, an initiative that uses play to make physics more engaging. Maribao, a teacher and social media content creator, established school-based feeding initiatives that now benefit hundreds of children. Angara also cited reforms including the Expanded Career Progression System, reduced paperwork, and improved financial and medical benefits, noting that 93,344 teachers and school heads are set to receive salary increases following the release of ₱8.68 billion for career advancement initiatives. **Gabriel Oliva**

Body of 2nd missing Agana
Bridge victim recovered

THE joint search and rescue (SAR) team recovered on Saturday the body of one of two passengers who remained missing after a vehicle plunged off Agana Bridge in Tarlac on August 29, 2026.

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) said the body was found in Barangay Tampog, Bayambang, Pangasinan, on September 5 and was later identified by the victim's family.

Five people were aboard the vehicle when it fell from the bridge. One passenger survived, while three have now been confirmed dead.

One passenger remains missing, and the joint SAR team continues to search in the vicinity of Agana Bridge and surrounding waters, the PCG said.

Authorities have been conducting search and rescue operations since the incident, extending the effort to downstream areas as responders tracked possible locations of the missing passengers. **Rex Espiritu**

Prosecution building
airtight case, says Tolosa

By Maricel V. Cruz

THE House prosecution panel is concentrating on presenting evidence strong enough to meet whatever conviction threshold will be adopted in Vice President Sara Zimmerman Duterte's impeachment trial, private prosecutor lawyer Benjamin Tolosa Jr. said Saturday.

"We never engage in vote counting," Tolosa told the Saturday News Forum at Dapo Restaurant in Quezon City.

He said prosecutors have not adopted an official position on proposals to revisit the 16 votes currently required for conviction.

Their immediate task, he said, remains presenting the case before the Senate.

"Our primary focus is to present solid evidence so that, whatever the interpretation of

that two-thirds requirement—whether it amounts to 16 or fewer—we want to ensure that we secure the necessary number through the presentation of strong evidence," he said.

The Constitution requires the concurrence of two-thirds of all Senate members for conviction.

Presiding Officer Sen. Francis Escudero had interpreted this to mean that the requirement is 16 votes.

On September 3, Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri, however, said some senators wanted that threshold reviewed because several members could not attend the proceedings.

Tolosa outlined the competing views: One counts the full Senate membership regardless of attendance, while the other questions whether senators who have

not taken their oath as judges or participated in the trial should be counted.

While he understands both arguments, he said it is not yet time for the prosecution to announce its position.

"We are getting both sides, but it is not yet the time for the prosecution to state our official stand on the matter," he said.

Tolosa added: "If and when we're required to do so, we'll be ready to present our position on it."

He, however, said the Senate could revisit its earlier "interim" ruling.

"My personal opinion is that's an interlocutory order that they can revisit," he said.

He also acknowledged that interested parties could seek a Supreme Court review.

Asked whether the High Court could be consulted when the issue is not yet ripe for adjudication, he said an actual dispute was needed, rather than a request for an advisory opinion.

Tolosa said the prosecution's work will continue while the senator-judges consider how to address the issue.

"Again, as we've stated, [our goal is] to establish an airtight case so that, whatever the interpretation, we'll meet it," he said.



ON THE
MOVE.

A man pushes a makeshift cart carrying dogs and cats along EDSA in Quezon City on Saturday, Sept. 5, 2026, amid wet roads following rain.

Edd Castro

Lawmaker decries zero budget
for NCR Busway, urges solons' support

A PARTY-LIST lawmaker has called for the restoration of funding for the NCR Busway Project (which includes the EDSA Busway), Service Contracting Program, and the Fuel Subsidy Program after all three received zero allocations in the Department of Transportation's (DOTr) proposed 2027 budget.

Akbayan Party-list Rep. Perci Cendaña said the zero allocations raise serious questions about the government's priorities in the transport sector.

"The national budget is the ultimate expression of the President's priorities and commitments. When a program has a large budget, it is a high priority. When there is no budget, it is not a priority. This zero budget simply demonstrates that the millions

of commuters and the thousands of drivers and transport workers are not a priority," Cendaña said.

He warned that removing funding for the programs could worsen the daily commute for millions of Filipinos while increasing the financial burden on public transport workers.

"The NCR/EDSA Busway has provided millions of commuters with a faster and more reliable way to get to work, school, and home. Service contracting has helped keep public transport running while supporting drivers and operators, especially during times of crisis. Fuel subsidies, meanwhile, provide much-needed relief to drivers struggling with fuel price shocks caused by the war in the Middle East," Cendaña said.

During the House Committee on Appropriations' deliberations on the DOTr budget, Transportation Secretary Giovanni Lopez cited tightening fiscal space as the reason given by the Department of Budget and Management for the programs' exclusion from the proposed budget.

He criticized the administration's use of "limited fiscal space" to justify cutting the programs.

"It is disheartening that when it comes to cost-cutting, the welfare of our commuters and public transport workers is what gets sacrificed. These are not luxuries. These are essential public transport programs that directly affect the daily lives and livelihoods of millions of Filipinos," the party-list lawmaker said.

Maricel V. Cruz



LANDBANK VOLUNTEERS.
About 4,000 LandBank employees take part in community and environmental initiatives nationwide in August as part of the bank's 63rd anniversary and Volunteerific Program, contributing time, skills and ₱1.32 million in voluntary donations. LandBank

Taguig POSO
staff obstructs
inspection—Ping

By Joel E. Zurbano

Police apprehended local government personnel in Taguig City on Friday for allegedly obstructing the ocular inspection conducted by investigators from the Office of the Ombudsman at the questionable reclamation site in Laguna Lake, according to Senator Panfilo Lacson.

Lacson described the incident as "trying to act tough then meeting their match."

He said the incident was not the first reported case of harassment.

Lacson had earlier cited reports that officials of agencies, including the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), had been harassed while taking action on reclamation activities in the area.

But the Taguig City government denied this, adding that it respects the Office of the Ombudsman and its mandate to conduct investigations and perform its official duties.

It stated that a routine verification by the city's Public Order and Safety Office (POSO) team led to the encounter when they observed an unmarked black pickup parked on a bike lane in Barangay Sta. Ana, with civilians operating a drone.

When approached for identification, the men revealed they were from the Ombudsman, but an exchange occurred when a police major requested the POSO team's ID. This prompted the need for further verification, leading to the involvement of the Napindan Police Substation due to escalating tensions.



FLOOD CONTROL.
 A worker installs gabions in San Juan Village, Taal 1, Barangay Talomo, Davao City, on Friday, Sept. 4, 2026, as part of a project reinforcing riverbanks and mitigating flooding.
Robinson Niñal Jr.

PBBM admin to infuse P300m for Bukidnon airport project

THE Marcos administration will infuse an additional P300 million under the proposed 2027 national budget to complete the Bukidnon Airport next year, Executive Secretary Ralph Recto said Friday during an inspection of the ongoing construction in Don Carlos.

The new airport, under construction in Barangay Maraymaray, is designed to accommodate jet aircraft and give Bukidnon a direct connection to major economic and tourism centers across the country.

“President Marcos wants the Bukidnon Airport completed by 2027 so it can begin creating jobs, attracting investments and bringing more tourists to the province,” Recto said.

“This airport will bring not only Bukidnon, but the whole of Mindanao, closer to the rest of the Philippines and the rest of the country closer to the heart of Mindanao,” Recto emphasized. “It will allow people, products and

opportunities to move faster.”

The airport has received a total of P3.17 billion in government funding. Of this amount, P1.360 billion has been allocated under the Marcos administration.

The administration provided P1 billion for Phase IV of the airport’s development in 2022, followed by P310 million in 2024 and P50 million in 2025.

With the proposed additional P300-million allocation, the Marcos administration’s total funding for the airport will reach P1.660 billion, according to Recto.

“We will not allow this to become another project that has been awaited for a long time but never completed,” Recto said. “President

Marcos has ordered us to finish the airport and open it as soon as possible.”

The project includes a runway measuring 2,100 meters long and 45 meters wide, two stub taxiways and a 43,050-square-meter apron capable of accommodating six aircraft.

It also covers a 3,600-square-meter passenger terminal building designed to accommodate as many as 425 passengers.

A 2,500-meter runway strip, airport ancillary structures and air navigation facilities will also be constructed to support safe and efficient jet aircraft operations.

The runway is being built long enough to accommodate larger commercial aircraft such as the Airbus A320, one of the aircraft commonly used for domestic routes in the country.

“What we want is not only for airplanes to be able to reach Bukidnon. We want to accommodate more

passengers,” Recto said. “If we can accommodate bigger aircraft and attract more flights and airlines, that can help bring fares down and make air travel more affordable for ordinary Filipinos.”

“Airports do more than connect destinations,” Recto said. “They connect businesses to customers and communities to jobs, investments and essential services.”

The airport is expected to support Bukidnon’s position as a major agricultural producer by making it easier and faster to transport the province’s products, including pineapples, bananas, corn, coffee, sugar and livestock, to larger markets.

“When it becomes easier to get here, more businesses will grow, more jobs will be created and more communities will benefit,” Recto said.

Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri joined Recto during the inspection.

DSWD says strict quality control for food packs

By Maricel V. Cruz

THE Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has reassured the public that all family food packs (FFPs) and other relief items distributed to disaster-affected families undergo rigorous multilevel quality control, safety inspections and nutritional evaluation prior to distribution.

Administrative Service (AS) Director Lawyer Karina Antonette Agudo, concurrently officer-in-charge (OIC) of the Procurement Management Division (PMD), said the DSWD’s procurement of relief goods strictly adheres to Republic Act (RA) 12009, or the New Government Procurement (NGP) Act.

The NGP Act mandates standardized legal processes in government procurement rather than simple off-the-shelf commercial purchasing.

“We subject every item to the procurement process, ensuring compliance with the law—specifically RA 12009, or the New Government Procurement Act. It is not merely an internal departmental procedure; rather, we adhere to the law and its established rules. We follow a specific set of processes, documentation and timelines that need to be followed. Bidders, too, have their own set of documents and requirements to submit; that is how the process works,” Agudo said.

According to Agudo, the procurement process begins with market scoping led by the Disaster Response and Management Group (DRMG) to establish precise technical specifications for each item, including the thickness of the can, volume, liquid content and structural rib requirements to ensure durability during handling.

“In our previous procurements—in past years—we tried the easy-open type, but during actual handling, it was more prone to bursting; naturally, they aren’t lifted individually but are stacked on pallets,” Agudo stressed.

To safeguard food quality, the DSWD enforces a three-level evaluation procedure comprising post-qualification by the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) and Technical Working Group (TWG), pre-delivery inspection involving actual cooking and taste testing, and random post-delivery physical inspections at storage facilities.

To verify taste, smell, color and texture, the DSWD said suppliers are required to present a hedonic sensory test certification from the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) before any goods are accepted.

To maintain quality upon release, expiration periods are calculated strictly upon actual warehouse delivery.

In line with the DSWD’s zero-wastage policy, food packs reaching three months before expiry are immediately reallocated under the food-for-work modality of community programs such as Project LAWA (Local Adaptation to Water Access), BINHI (Breaking Insufficiency, Nurturing Hope Initiatives), residential care centers or Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU) clients.

The DSWD assures the public that measures are in place to provide efficient service, especially to those affected by disasters. This is in line with the directive of the President to ensure that the needs of families in distress due to calamities are addressed.

Moreover, officials reiterated to the public that they should report to the DSWD any untoward incidents related to the FFPs so that the Department can conduct the necessary investigation and take appropriate action.

IN BRIEF

House Bill mandates hospital ‘Teen Mom Clinics’ nationwide

A BILL is filed at the House of Representatives mandating dedicated “Teen Mom Clinics” in all public hospitals.

Under House Bill 3988, or the proposed “Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Act,” of Quezon City Fifth District Rep. Patrick Michael Vargas, the Department of Health (DOH) will be required to establish specialized Teen Mom Clinics in all public hospitals to provide comprehensive prenatal, antenatal and postnatal care, as well as postpartum counseling to prevent repeat pregnancies.

The bill also directs the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to overhaul its existing Residential Care Facilities for Disadvantaged Women. The shelters will be expanded and equipped with multidisciplinary teams, including social caseworkers, on-call obstetrician-gynecologists, full-time midwives or nurses, and psychologists trained to handle the needs of pregnant minors. **Maricel V. Cruz**

DepEd revises policies to prep scouts with skills for ‘real world’

THE Department of Education (DepEd) has revisited school-based Scouting policies alongside Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts leaders, educational partners, and other stakeholders in order to equip learners with life skills for the “real world.”

On Aug. 25, participants at the Stakeholders’ Convergence on the Harmonization of Scouting Programs in Basic Education focused on modernizing the guidelines for the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts programs under DepEd Orders Nos. 76 and 86, series of 2012. The orders outline policies for institutionalizing the programs in basic education institutions nationwide.

According to Education Secretary Sonny Angara, updating the guidelines will ensure that scouting remains inclusive and meaningful, serving as a “cornerstone” of character-building. He said the program develops practical skills such as discipline, teamwork, crisis management, leadership, resilience and civic duty. **Gabriel Oliva**

House leaders urge Senate to pass cybersecurity bill

TWO lawmakers on Saturday appealed to the Senate to prioritize the passage of the House-approved cybersecurity bill, which seeks to establish a separate agency tasked with protecting Filipinos and businesses from online fraud and increasingly advanced threats in cyberspace.

CamSur Reps. Miguel Luis Villafuerte and Luigi Villafuerte called on senators to advance the measure creating the National Cybersecurity Agency (NCSA), the crux of House Bill 9605, or the “National Cybersecurity and Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Act of 2026.” The House passed the measure on third and final reading on Aug. 12 by a vote of 198-3, with one abstention.

HB 9605 seeks to establish the NCSA under the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) as the country’s primary policy, planning, coordinating, implementing and administrative body for national cybersecurity. The bill is among the priority measures in the 20th Congress identified by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. through the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC). **Maricel V. Cruz**



MARITIME RIGHTS. Defense Secretary Gilberto C. Teodoro Jr. meets with retired Supreme Court Senior Associate Justice Antonio T. Carpio and Rear Admiral Rommel Jude Ong PN (Ret) to discuss the Law of the Sea and the Philippines’ maritime rights under international law. DND Facebook page

Growing population of aging nuns creating challenges—study

By Vito Barcelo

THE growing number of elderly nuns and Catholic religious women is creating increasing care and financial challenges for religious congregations in the Philippines, according to a study presented during a national gathering of religious superiors.

The study found that about 70 percent of members in 45 women’s religious congregations are aged 50 and above. Nearly 48 percent are over 60 years old, including 24 percent who are at least 70.

Sister Thu Do of the Congregation of the Lovers of the Holy Cross of Hanoi presented the findings on Friday during the second national convention of the Conference of Major Superiors in the Philippines. She said elder care is now a shared concern among religious congregations.

Despite their age, many religious women continue to serve in various ministries. However, caring for older members is placing increasing financial pressure on congregations, especially smaller institutes with fewer active members.

The study showed that nearly 40 percent of congregations spend more than half of their budgets on elder care, while 79 percent identified financial assistance as their most urgent need due to rising medical costs and declining income from active members.

The study also found that many convents lack facilities suited for elderly residents, such as ramps, handrails and accessible bathrooms.

Most congregations depend on outside hospitals for medical care, while only about one-third operate dedicated elder care facilities.

VP...

From A1

surrendered to authorities when she posted bail.

"In these situations, it's really surrendered," Poa said.

Duterte emerged from the courthouse holding a court order confirming she had posted a cash bond totaling P360,000.

She also underwent a standard booking procedure in which her fingerprints were recorded, though no mugshots were taken as she provided her own photos.

Duterte said in a statement her lawyers advised her to post bail for her safety.

"They explained to me that I would have better protection from civilians who would be able to monitor my situation, rather than being in detention where I would be isolated and have little protection," she said.

Prior to entering the courthouse, the Vice President told reporters she feared for her life.

"I don't want to (post bail) if no one is watching," she said, asking members of the media to accompany her as she daimed to be a victim of police harassment.

"They harassed the place where my mother and my child are. Where will I go? If I post bail, the harassment will not stop. If I don't post bail, I will go to the police. I don't trust the police. I don't even trust the court."

"Who will answer if I die tonight? Who will be held responsible? Of course, the police will just wash their hands of it, make it look like an accident, and the judge will wash her hands of it. I do not feel safe at all, whatever I do," Duterte added.

Malacañang, however, rejected Duterte's comments as "unfounded."

"The PNP is only carrying out its mandate according to law, without favoring anyone and without political motives," Palace spokesperson Claire Castro said.

"They remain professional in protecting the rights of all people under their protection. The administration has full trust in the PNP leadership and its ranks," Castro added.

Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla said the PNP accorded Duterte all due respect warranted by her position.

"It's very unfortunate that all the pressure in her life is affecting her perception. The PNP accorded her all the respect her position deserves," the DILG chief said.

"We have all the body cam footage of her warrant being served. We have all the body cam footage of her arrival to post bail. We knew of her whereabouts the night before but we did not force the warrant of arrest," Remulla added.

Under the Philippine legal code, a criminal conviction on the "grave threats" charge could carry a jail term of up to six months. **With AFP**

Rody...

From A1

received ahead of the confirmation hearing, with disclosure still ongoing.

"As a first step to mitigate against this risk, the E-Court Protocol should be further amended in advance of trial to add a new 'Expert Verification' field for open-source and user-generated evidence. This field would confirm that, when the item is submitted to the Court, it will (or will not) be accompanied by an expert report," the request read.

The defense said that any such expert report ought to include, at a minimum, information on the source of the item (both the sender/uploader and the creator of the piece of evidence, if known); its chain of custody and whether the item is the original or a copy; its metadata and any other technical aspects, such as the hash value generated at the time of capture; the steps taken to verify the material and to check for editing or manipulation.

Trump sends envoys to Moscow, Kyiv with new plan to 'end war'

WASHINGTON—US President Donald Trump said he is sending envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner to Moscow and Kyiv with a plan to end more than four years of war in Ukraine.

The move marks Washington's latest bid to break a diplomatic stalemate in Europe's deadliest conflict since World War II, which began with Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

A senior Ukrainian official told AFP the envoys were due in Kyiv on Sunday.

US outlet Axios reported they would meet Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on Saturday, and then President Volodymyr Zelensky

in Kyiv on Sunday. The Kremlin declined to comment.

Trump told reporters that the two negotiators would seek to gauge whether progress towards peace was possible.

Peace efforts have stalled due to Washington's war with Iran, while Moscow and Kyiv have intensified long-range attacks, driving up civilian casualties to levels not seen since the start of fighting.

"I sent Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, two great negotiators. They've done a great job, and we sent them over to see whether or not we can get something done. And there may be a good chance that we'll do it," Trump said.

"They're bringing with them a proposal to end the war," he said.

The US president would not say whether the plan involved Ukraine ceding territory as he has previously suggested, but added: "We have an idea for peace."

It will be the first time that Trump's businessman

friend Witkoff and son-in-law Kushner have visited war-torn Kyiv since Trump returned to office last year with a pledge to resolve the conflict.

Witkoff and Kushner, who have been involved in negotiations for ceasefires in Gaza and Iran, have travelled repeatedly to Moscow in previous attempts at diplomacy.

The renewed push for diplomacy comes as Russia and Ukraine pummel each other with long-range missile and drone attacks.

Just hours before Trump's announcement, a Russian drone struck the headquarters of Ukraine's SBU security service in central Kyiv, according to Zelensky.

The strike, which Zelensky said was aimed at the office of the agency's acting chief, was the first on its headquarters since the start of the invasion.

Despite the unprecedented nature of the strike, the Ukrainian president proposed observing a ceasefire with Russia for the duration of the US envoys' trip. **AFP**

AFFECTED BY
WILDFIRES TOO.

This handout photo released on September 5, 2026 from Yayasan Inisiasi Alam Rehabilitasi Indonesia (YIARI) and Indonesia's Ministry of Forestry shows a mother-and-baby orangutan pair being evacuated by officials due to forest and land fires in Sungai Awan Kiri village, in the Muara Pawan district of Ketapang, West Kalimantan. The vast Southeast Asian archipelago of Borneo has been battling for weeks to contain wildfires and thick smog, which has been drifting to Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines. **AFP**



How haze from Indonesian fires impacts Southeast Asia

JAKARTA—Thick smog has blanketed parts of Indonesia as the vast archipelago for weeks battles to contain fires that have burned large swathes of Borneo and Sumatra.

The hazardous smoke has led to an increase in respiratory problems, forced schools to close, and has been drifting to neighboring countries including -- Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines.

Here's what to know:

Where are the fires?

Most of the fires are concentrated on Borneo island, home to vast tropical jungle that Indonesia shares with Brunei and Malaysia, as well as Sumatra.

So far this year, nearly 300,000 hectares of land have burned in Indonesia, according to an independent estimate from the Nusantara Atlas portal.

Indonesia saw an uptick in carbon emissions since late July, and by the end of last month the levels were comparable to previous El Nino years of 2015 and 2019, Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service (CAMS) senior scientist Mark Parrington told AFP.

"We're seeing already now... really extreme fire emissions comparable to those previous strong El Nino years, and also the extent of the smoke and the haze and the air quality impacts," Parrington said.

Fires in the archipelago have released more than 23 million metric tons of carbon emissions between August 28 and September 3, according to CAMS' Fire Emission Watch portal.

It was higher than 20.7 million metric tons of emissions from fires over the same period in 2015, which was a strong El Nino year.

What causes the fires?

Analysts said that the El Nino weather phenomenon, which the United Nations said this week could turn out to be the strongest in four decades, has contributed to creating drier conditions in Indonesia and made it easier for fires to spread.

But slash-and-burn land-clearing practices also contributed to the damage, said David Gaveau, founder of the Nusantara Atlas.

"El Nino does not ignite fires. It creates the dry conditions that allow human-started fires to escape and become very large," he told AFP.

The fires are difficult to extinguish because many occurred on peatlands, a wetland ecosystem with layers of partially decomposed organic materials that become flammable when dry.

Between January and August this year, more than 210,000 hotspots were detected in peatland areas

across the country, according to NGO Pantau Gambut.

"Peat is a naturally wet ecosystem and stores large amounts of organic material. When peat is drained, this organic material is converted into fuel," Pantau Gambut spokesman Wahyu Perdana said.

What is the impact?

More than five million people across Borneo and Sumatra are directly exposed to the health risks from haze, deputy health minister Dante Saksono Harbuwono said last month.

Over 1.4 million students were attending classes remotely, with many schools closed due to worsening air quality, an education ministry official said this week.

In Malaysia, soaring pollution levels prompted the government on Friday to declare an emergency in a region of the Sarawak state in Borneo, with nearly 650 schools closed next week.

In the Philippines, air quality was slowly returning to normal after a week of reaching "very unhealthy" and "severely unhealthy" PM 2.5 levels that saw officials shutter schools in cities and provinces citing the drifting haze.

The haze also drove air quality in Singapore's central region to an "unhealthy" level on Friday, the country's National Environment Agency data showed. **AFP**

Lea...

From A1

Actors Darren Criss, Brandy, and Ming-Na Wen were among those who paid tribute to Salonga during the ceremony.

"Lea Salonga is a true trailblazer whose extraordinary talent and decades-long career have inspired audiences around the world," Hollywood Walk of Fame producer Ana Martinez said ahead of the event.

Martinez added the organization was "especially proud" to recognize Salonga, who rose to international prominence after playing the role of Kim in the musical "Miss Saigon," a performance that earned her a Tony Award.

She also provided the singing voices of Princess Jasmine in Disney's "Aladdin" and Fa Mulan in "Mulan." Her contributions to the company's films later earned her recognition as a Disney Legend.

Salonga continues to work across stage and screen. She is set to play the lead villain in the upcoming film "Forgotten Island."

PCG...

From A1

"Beijing cannot reject that arbitral ruling and then borrow its logic when convenient," the PCG official said.

The Stratbase Institute also condemned the editorial, calling the claim "revisionist" and an attempt to create ambiguity.

The think-tank said an opinion article cannot rewrite history, international agreements or the more than two centuries of continuous Philippine administration of Batanes.

"Batanes is Philippine territory, its people are Filipinos, and its sovereignty is settled and not up for debate. An opinion piece cannot rewrite history, international agreements, or more than two centuries of continuous Philippine administration," Stratbase said.

It urged the Philippine government to mount a firm, unified and sustained response through diplomacy, international law, public information and effective governance to counter narratives that undermine the country's territorial integrity.

583k...

From A1

more than twice the previous P150 rate.

For the military alone, about P30.71 billion is proposed for the subsistence allowance of 246,844 personnel.

The proposed budget also seeks to strengthen the country's defense capabilities, with P316.71 billion earmarked for the AFP, 6.85 percent higher than its 2026 budget.

The Revised AFP Modernization Program is proposed to receive P50 billion, up from P40 billion this year.

The government is also increasing the resources for AFP Personnel Services, Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE), and capital outlays to strengthen the troops' capability.

DBM Acting Secretary Kim Robert De Leon said the additional funding will support various projects aimed at enhancing military capability.

The government also allocated P242.53 billion for the PNP under next year's proposed budget, higher than this year's P226.55 funding.

About P210.55 billion of the proposed budget is intended for Personnel Services, including P100.55 billion for adjusted base pay and P28.67 billion for the P350 daily subsistence allowance of 224,421 PNP personnel.

National...

From A1

Born Sept. 4, 1943 in Zamboanga del Norte, Mojares studied at the University of San Carlos and the University of the Philippines Diliman. He later became a professor emeritus at USC.

Among his best-known works are "Origins and Rise of the Filipino Novel," "War Against the Americans," "Waiting for Mariang Makiling," "Brains of the Nation," "Isabelo's Archive," and "House of Memory."

Mojares was proclaimed National Artist for Literature in 2018 for his contributions to Philippine letters, history, and scholarship.

COA:...

From A1

is the province of Bulacan, as it appears to be the 'ground zero' for these flood control projects," he added.

The COA chief likewise said the commission was coordinating with the Office of the Ombudsman, with its auditors in the regions and provinces serving as witnesses in cases filed before the Sandiganbayan and regional trial courts, as well as during preliminary investigations.

Senator JV Ejercito, who chairs the Senate Committee on Finance, inquired about the procedure and anticipated timeline for submitting the audit findings or fraud indicators from the commission to the Ombudsman.

Cordoba responded that the commission plans to publish its annual audit reports by October 31 and will furnish Congress with physical copies of its fraud audit reports.

As this developed, senators pushed for a higher budget allocation for the Office of the Ombudsman to improve its effectiveness and strengthen anti-corruption efforts.

Ejercito said the office must have adequate funding, manpower, equipment, and technology.

"If we are serious about fighting corruption, we must support the Ombudsman. It needs to have an adequate budget, manpower, equipment, and technology to effectively carry out its mandate as the people's primary watchdog against corruption and the abuse of power," he said.

Logistics expert takes the helm as managing director of FedEx Philippines



FEDEX has appointed company veteran Garrick Thompson as Managing Director of FedEx Philippines to lead the logistics giant's expansion, cross-border trade initiatives, and regional operations.

Thompson steps into the role leading a team of over 1,300 employees, focusing on operational excellence, customer experience, and helping Philippine businesses scale globally. He will also oversee the Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Center, directing customs clearance, trade compliance, and critical cargo documentation across the Asia-Pacific, North America, and Europe.

Returning to the Philippines after five years as Managing Director of FedEx Indonesia, Thompson brings deep regional expertise. Since joining FedEx in 2007 in

New Zealand, he has held leadership roles across HR, operations, and sales. He holds a Bachelor of Management Studies in Strategic Management and Human Resources from the University of Waikato.

In his previous role as Senior Sales Manager for FedEx Philippines, Thompson drove major revenue growth and market expansion, earning the company's highest honor—the Five Star Award—for exceptional leadership and teamwork.

With over 40 years of local presence, FedEx connects Philippine enterprises to more than

BUSINESS

Long-time buddies turn to native batuan for export



Essentials Daily founder Ivan Requinta promotes native batuan powder at the 2026 IFEX.

BATUAN has long been a familiar ingredient in parts of Western Visayas, but its commercial potential remains largely untapped. For Essentials Daily, that gap represents an opportunity to turn a seasonal native fruit into a distinctly Filipino product for local and overseas markets.

The Manila-based company has built its business around batuan powder, processing the fruit into a shelf-stable ingredient that can be sold year-round despite a harvest season that runs only from December to the first half of May.

It is a significant shift for co-founder Christian Ivan Requinta, whose business initially had little to do with batuan.

Essentials Daily started in 2018 as an online seller of everyday essentials, including vegetables, fish and meat. The pandemic accelerated the company's online business, but it also exposed the limits of competing in a market where more businesses were quickly moving online.

Requinta and his business partners began looking for a more specialized niche, eventually settling on rare Filipino products. Batuan emerged as the product that clicked.

"Let's just focus on Batuan," Requinta said, recalling the decision in 2021 to concentrate the business on the native fruit.

The strategy was to take an ingredient strongly associated with Western Visayas and make it more accessible through processing.

Instead of selling the highly perishable fresh fruit, Essentials Daily dries and grinds the entire batuan fruit, including the seeds, into powder. The result is a convenient, shelf-stable product that can be shipped and stored more easily.

From essentials to niche

The business is run by Requinta together with his close friend and business partner Glenn Barabate and Barabate's wife, Jane.

Requinta and Glenn focus on business development, while Requinta also handles marketing. Glenn and Jane oversee operations.

The partners initially sold a range of products before narrowing their focus. Their decision reflected their view that online

selling would eventually become more competitive as businesses and consumers became more accustomed to e-commerce.

Essentials Daily began developing products around batuan, including its pure batuan powder, a batuan mix and a batuan tea. The company's products seek to highlight the fruit's naturally tangy and umami character while offering consumers a more convenient way to use it. The move also gave the company a product with a distinctly local identity.

Supply challenge

The same characteristics that make batuan distinctive also make it difficult to scale. The fruit has a limited production season, bearing from December through the first half of May. That means Essentials Daily has to plan its supply well ahead of time.

By October or November, the company starts talking to clients about their expected requirements so that projected demand can be matched with the coming harvest.

Its current supply comes from a wild farm in Bago City, south of Bacolod, which is owned by the group's mother company. This gives Essential Daily access to its current raw material requirements without having to purchase the fruit.

Bigger play

Essential sDaily's business model is deliberately geared toward the export market.

Rather than handling international shipments itself, the company works with consolidators that buy the products locally and take care of exporting them.

"For a small enterprise like ours, the arrangement makes economic sense. Direct exporting would require additional permits and processes, along with costs that may not be justified by the margins at the company's current scale," Requinta said.

The company has been told that its batuan products are being brought to markets including Australia, Chile and Canada.

Locally, excess production is sold online through Shopee and Lazada. The 100-gram pack sells for about P300 to P350, depending on promotions, while a 200-gram size is also available.

Native fruit business

Essentials Daily's batuan venture remains a relatively small operation, but its strategy illustrates how a niche agricultural product can be repositioned through processing and market development.

The next challenge is scale. That means finding more reliable sources of batuan, potentially investing in cultivation, developing more products and strengthening relationships with buyers that can take the ingredient into new markets.

"Many doubted and didn't believe that we could sell this abroad. We encountered so many challenges along the way, especially while securing FDA permits and certifications; preventing us from making this happen way earlier. But I guess when you believe that "anything is possible" thru prayers, hard-work, diligence, perseverance and patience; impossible is really nothing," Requinta said. **Othel V. Campos**

ICT expert champions small business tech adoption

AS ARTIFICIAL intelligence, blockchain, and cloud computing rapidly reshape the global market, local technology provider Converge ICT Solutions Inc. stressed that trust and practical guidance—not merely availability—remain the fundamental keys to driving digital adoption among Filipino micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Speaking at the ASEAN Tech Summit Manila 2026 during the session Converge senior vice president and SME group head Dindo Marzan emphasized the company's commitment to bridging the gap between complex digital tools and everyday business operations.

"The battle cry of our founders, Dennis and Grace Uy, has always been to leave no one behind in this digital age. For MSMEs to see the value of emerging technologies, there has to be dedicated guidance. A sari-sari store owner needs to see the practical, day-to-day benefit of a tool and trust it enough to use it," Marzan said.

Marzan participated in the panel alongside key government and sector leaders, including Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) undersecretary Jean Pacheco, Binnance Philippines general manager Jen Bilango, and Blockshoals Technologies Inc. head of Lgal Tonet Quiogue.

To foster digital trust among small business owners, Converge outlined a strategic framework combining accessible technology with direct operational support that includes practical guidance and risk-free trials, affordable add-on solutions, and tailored innovation.

Converge continues to expand its support for local enterprises through specialized connectivity products - including FlexiBiz, BizEdge, and Micro BizMax - pairing reliable fiber broadband with practical, low-cost digital solutions to drive inclusive economic growth.



Converge senior vice president Dindo Marzan (center) and DICT secretary Henry Aguda (second from left), with summit participants.

Water firm scores 5-award haul at 22nd Philippine Quill

WEST Zone concessionaire Maynilad Water Services, Inc. (Maynilad) clinched five trophies at the 22nd Philippine Quill Awards, recognizing the company's communication programs across water loss reduction, crisis response, community engagement, and its entry into the capital markets.

Organized by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Philippines, the prestigious awards program bestowed three Awards of Excellence and two Awards of Merit upon Maynilad's campaigns.

Leading the company's wins were three Awards of Excellence for key operational and public-facing initiatives, including the Grand Walk-the-Line: Mobilizing Enterprise-Wide Ownership for NRW Reduction; Communication Through Disruption: Managing the Pritil Leak Repair Incident; and Leak Warriors 2025: Turning Citizens into Guardians of Clean Water.

Maynilad also secured two Awards of Merit for communication strategies supporting its P34.3-billion initial public offering (IPO). These were The Maynilad IPO: Building Confidence in the Capital Markets,

and Shaping the IPO Narrative: Media Relations for Maynilad's Public Market Debut.

"These programs addressed very different communication challenges. What ties them together is the need to understand what each audience needs to know and how communication can help them. These recognitions reinforce our commitment to communication that is clear, timely, responsive, and purposeful," act on that information," said Maynilad vice president and head of corporate affairs & communication Marie Antonette H. de Ocampo.



Maynilad team shines at the 22nd Philippine Quill Awards.



Powerful performance, refined and responsive drive experience, and smarter technology

Ford Philippines elevates the everyday adventure with new Everest line-up

FORD Philippines is introducing an upgraded Everest line-up, further enhancing its mid-size SUV with more powerful performance, refined and responsive drive experience, smarter technology and refreshed design. These updates are driven by customer needs, and offer greater choices across a wide range of use cases from work and family to outdoor adventures.

"The Ford Everest has always given our customers the confidence and versatility to make more out of every journey," said Pedro Simoes, managing director, Ford Philippines. "With the latest Everest lineup, we are giving customers even more choice, technology and comfort to match the way they live, while the new Everest Platinum brings an exciting new level of power and refinement to the range."

The range is led by the new Everest Platinum 3.0L V6 4x4, powered by a 3.0L Turbo Diesel V6 engine delivering 250PS and 600Nm of torque. It is joined by the Everest Wildtrak 2.0L Turbo 4x4, Everest Sport+ 2.0L Turbo 4x2 and Everest Active 2.0L Turbo 4x2, each offering a distinct combination of features for different customer needs and lifestyles.

The addition of the V6 powertrain significantly enhances towing capability, stability and overall performance, while also delivering a responsive and refined driving experience. At the same time, Ford has optimized the 2.0L diesel engine to improve durability, simplify the system, enhance fuel efficiency and maintain consistent performance.

Another key enhancement is the 10-speed automatic transmission now standard across all Everest variants. On the 2.0L Turbo models, optimized gear spacing and a wider ratio spread help provide smooth acceleration and responsive performance across different driving conditions.

More Choices for Every Kind of Adventure

With four distinct variants, customers can choose an Everest that best fits their lifestyle, from everyday family routines and city drives to outdoor escapes and more adventurous pursuits.

At the top of the range, the Everest Platinum 3.0L V6 4x4 combines its new 250PS and 600Nm V6 diesel powertrain with full-time 4x4 and a premium seven-seat experience. Platinum-exclusive quilted leather seats, heated and ventilated front seats, a 10-way power driver's seat with memory and a 12-speaker B&O sound system make longer journeys more comfortable, while Matrix LED headlamps and 21-inch alloy wheels give it a distinctive flagship presence.

The Everest Wildtrak 2.0L Turbo 4x4 caters to customers whose weekends regularly take them beyond the city. Its 4x4 drivetrain is complemented by new 20-inch alloy wheels, Ignite Orange exterior accents and refreshed Wildtrak interior details, giving it a distinctive character for outdoor pursuits and weekend escapes.

For customers looking for a sportier Everest with more technology, the Everest Sport+ 2.0L Turbo 4x2 gains a larger 12-inch infotainment screen and expanded driver-assistance features. These include Adaptive Cruise Control with Stop & Go and Lane Centering, a 360-degree camera and Blind Spot Information System with Cross-Traffic Alert and

Braking.

The Everest Active 2.0L Turbo 4x2 offers the everyday versatility families expect from Everest, now enhanced with a 12-inch infotainment screen, dual-zone climate control and rain-sensing wipers. It also gains additional safety technologies, including Autonomous Emergency Braking with Pedestrian Detection and Forward Collision Warning.

Pricing, Colors and Dealership Availability

The new Everest Platinum 3.0L V6 4x4 is available at P2,849,000, while the Everest Wildtrak 2.0L Turbo 4x4, Everest Sport+ 2.0L Turbo 4x2 and Everest Active 2.0L Turbo 4x2 are priced at P2,669,000, P2,219,000 and P1,949,000, respectively.

The Everest Platinum is available in Absolute Black, Acacia Green, Aluminum Metallic and Snowflake White Pearl, while color availability for other variants varies. Customers can

reserve the refreshed Everest lineup at Ford dealerships nationwide starting September 2.

Truck Month Offers

To mark the arrival of the latest Everest lineup and in celebration of Truck Month, Ford Philippines is also offering customers added value through special offers.

The Everest Platinum 3.0L V6 4x4, Everest Sport 2.0L Turbo 4x2 and Everest Active 2.0L Turbo 4x2 come with Ford's 5-Star Care Package, while the Everest Wildtrak 2.0L Turbo 4x4 comes with an additional P20,000 discount plus the 5-Star Care Package.

Ford's 5-Star Care Package provides customers with added peace of mind throughout their ownership journey, combining a 5-year vehicle warranty, 5-year Scheduled Service Plan (SSP), and 5-year Emergency Roadside Assistance (ERA) for comprehensive warranty, maintenance and roadside support. The offer is available until



Hold on to win a BMW Motorbike: The Motovated Hawak Motor Challenge hits GH Mall this October

THINK you've got the grip to go all the way? The Motovated Hawak Motor Challenge is coming to the GH Mall South Wing Atrium on October 24, 2026.

The Challenge: Keep one hand on the panel and be the last participant standing to win and drive home with a brand-new BMW F450 GS!

Raffle Prizes: Beyond the grand prize, participants can also get a chance to win a Honda BeAT, KYT

helmets, Motul products, and other sponsor freebies.

How to Enter: Visit Pawchester at 5F GH Mall and avail of their pet grooming and daycare services until October 20, 2026 to qualify for the Motovated Hawak Motor Challenge.

Check out all the details on the GH Mall official Facebook page.

See you at the South Wing Atrium on October 24. Hawak. Hold on. Win big!

ACMobility launches pioneering EV safety learning program, busts myths on electric mobility

ACMOBILITY, the Ayala Group's mobility arm and leading provider of electric vehicle (EV) charging solutions and infrastructure in the country, on Friday launched its pioneering learning program "Drive Electric. EV Safety Program."

The program, designed for anyone interested in EVs, among

them EV advocates, prospective buyers, fleet operators, and the general public, aims to dispel common misconceptions about EVs by providing practical and accessible knowledge on EV technology and charging infrastructure.

By sharing comprehensive safety guidelines on EVs, ownership

economics, and information on charging infrastructure, the program empowers consumers to make informed decisions about transitioning to electric mobility.

"As we continue to build an end-to-end electric mobility ecosystem, our ultimate priority is to empower the Filipino driver to make the shift to a more sustainable and cost-effective transport option. We are taking on the commitment to spread EV safety awareness through the Drive Electric. EV Safety Program, which aims to equip Filipinos with practical tools and accessible technical knowledge on EVs," said Jaime Alfonso Zobel de Ayala, Chief Executive Officer of ACMobility.

Building Confidence through Education

Drive Electric. EV Safety Program was designed alongside professional instruction partners and developed in close alignment with key public and private entities, including the Department of Energy (DOE), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), Electric Vehicle Association of the Philippines (EVAP), and the Philippine EV Community (PEVC).

The program covers a comprehensive five-module curriculum that addresses key questions on EV safety and ownership. It delivers clear guidance on fundamental EV concepts by tackling total cost of ownership, long-term EV savings, safe charging, emergency protocols, and EV technology.



From left are: FSSUPT. Genesis Morrondoz, acting director, Directorate for Fire Safety Enforcement; Willy Tee Ten, president of Electric Vehicle Association of the Philippines; Jaime Alfonso Zobel de Ayala, chief executive officer of ACMobility; Rico Severino, president of Philippine EV Community; and Patrick Aquino, director of the Energy Utilization Management Bureau, DOE.

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‘Always Lalisa’ is a documentary which traces Lisa’s solo music, acting career, and work beyond the group



Get to know more about Lalisa

By Angelica Villanueva

For years, fans have watched **Lisa Manoban** command some of the world’s biggest stages as part of the K-pop girl group **Blackpink**. The years of group success eventually gave way to a period when Lisa began testing what she could build on her own. Now, a new documentary turns the attention to what happened when she began taking on more work outside the group. Directed by **Sue Kim**, *Always Lalisa* follows the Thai rapper, singer, and dancer through a period of independence

as she builds her solo career, pursues acting, and works on her own company while trying to maintain a personal life outside the spotlight. The film opens in IMAX and cinemas worldwide for a limited run beginning Oct. 12. In the Philippines, SM Cinema has confirmed screenings, with tickets going on sale Sept. 9. Specific cinema locations have yet to be announced. The period covered in the documentary includes the making of Lisa’s debut solo album, *Alter Ego*, and her acting debut in the third season of HBO’s *The White Lotus*. Her career has continued to expand

across music, film, and television. Lisa recently announced her upcoming EP, *Press Play*, which arrives Oct. 23, with first single “SaWaDiKa” released Sept. 3. *Always Lalisa* will have its world premiere at the 2026 Toronto International Film Festival before its theatrical rollout. After its cinema run, the documentary will stream exclusively on YouTube Premium later this year. The film is produced by Sony Music Vision in association with RCA Records and Tremolo Productions, alongside Salt Water Productions and LLOUD CO.

SHOWBIZ

Baus Rufo says he doesn’t need to tone himself down for TV



Baus Rufo credits his experience in podcasting that help him establish the on-air personality he now brings to mainstream television



Baus aims to offer informed opinions without contributing to online negativity

By Jasper Valdez

AS CONTENT creator **Baus Rufo** finds more room for himself on mainstream television, the podcaster and comedian said he has not felt the need to tone down the personality that first built his following online.

Speaking during the media conference for GTV’s new talk show *KALURKS!* on Sept. 3, Baus said coming from podcasting has helped him make the jump to television because audiences already know what to expect from him. “I think, so far, I haven’t had to. And I think that has been the beauty of starting from podcasting. You present yourself to the world and say, ‘This is who I am.’ This is how people came to know me,” Baus told *Manila Standard Entertainment*. He believes having an established identity has also allowed television producers to determine where he fits instead of requiring him to reshape himself for the medium. “There’s also an advantage to that because, in a way, the network or television gets to figure out where I fit best,” he said. *KALURKS!* puts that personality alongside **DJ Jhai Ho** and **Ashley Rivera** in a live weekly talk show covering topics ranging from showbiz, pop culture and social media to sports, politics and current events. For Baus, whose background is largely in comedy, his role in the

mix is clear. “I think my role here is really to provide levity and lightness,” he said. Keeping his personality intact, however, does not mean approaching live television with the same freedom as an informal online conversation. Baus acknowledged that *KALURKS!* requires more care because the hosts will be discussing actual stories involving other people. “In our podcast, we don’t really report on showbiz. We just react to references,” he said. “But here, as Jhai always says in our interviews, there is a need to stay within the facts and to make sure that we are respectful of people’s stories and their privacy.” He added that he wants to offer opinions without adding to the negativity that often accompanies conversations online. “That is something I am going to be cautious about—how to give informed opinions without contributing to any negativity online,” Baus said. His growing television work comes after years spent on the other side of media and publicity. Before pursuing entertainment, Baus worked in advertising for 11 years, including in public relations. “So now, being on this side of things, it’s really nice,” he said. *KALURKS!* premieres Sept. 13 and airs Sundays at 8:30 p.m. on GTV.



‘KALURKS!’ hosts (from left) Baus Rufo, Ashley Rivera, and DJ Jhai Ho

5 titles to keep you guessing this September

By Angelica Villanueva

SEPTEMBER may be the month for settling back into routine, but streaming platform Netflix is offering plenty of reasons to stay alert after dark. Its new slate includes stories of suspicious deaths, dangerous secrets and unsettling family tensions, giving mystery and thriller fans several titles to keep on their radar. For viewers who prefer tension over comfort viewing, these five releases offer different takes on suspense, from historical crime to supernatural mystery.

‘Monster: The Lizzie Borden Story’
Streaming date: Sept. 17



Ella Beatty takes on the role of Lizzie Borden in the latest installment of the *Monster* anthology, which revisits the infamous 1892 ax murders of Borden’s father and stepmother. **Vicky Krieps**, **Charlie Hunnam**, and **Rebecca Hall** join the cast.

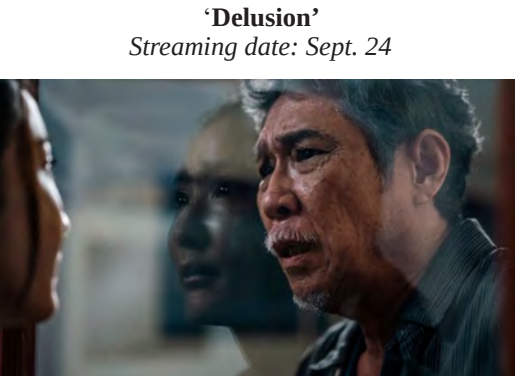
‘Plastic Beauty’
Streaming date: Sept. 17
Mayu Matsuoka stars as Fumi Numata, a gifted surgeon pushed into cosmetic medicine,



where she clashes with celebrity cosmetic surgeon Rin Tohyama, played by **Riisa Naka**.
‘The Scandal’
Streaming date: Sept. 19
Korean superstars **Son Ye-jin**, **Ji Chang-**



wook, and **Nana** lead the Joseon-set drama about a secret proposal that pulls three people into a dangerous tangle of desire and deception.



Natapohn Phornprapha leads the Thai mystery as a woman whose father becomes a prime suspect in a murder while struggling with dementia. Joining the cast are **Jespipat Tilapornputt** and **Surasak Chaiyaat**.

‘The Final Problem’
Streaming date: Sept. 25
José Coronado plays a fading actor who once portrayed famous detectives and must draw on those skills when a suspicious death occurs at an isolated hotel. **María Valverde**, **Martíño Rivas**, and **Maribel Verdú** also star the series.



3 Strokes

3 Strokes offers golf shirts, pants, gloves, bags, belts, umbrellas, and other golf accessories, including the iconic 3-stars golf cap.

3 Strokes takes big swing with first store at Vertis North

By Manila Standard Golf & Leisure

HOMEGROWN golf apparel brand 3 Strokes has taken a major step forward with the opening of its first physical store at the second floor of Ayala Malls Vertis North, marking a significant milestone for the fast-growing Filipino brand.

The store was formally opened by the three Ronquillo brothers, led by 3 Strokes founder and chief executive officer Mark Christopher Ronquillo, together with their father, Bart Ronquillo, as the family celebrated a new chapter for the brand.

For years, 3 Strokes has been a familiar sight on golf courses, at tournaments and inside pro shops. With its first mall-based retail outlet, customers can now shop for the brand even without heading to the golf course.

An avid golfer himself, Ronquillo said his active participation in tournaments has helped him better understand what Filipino golfers look for in terms of style, comfort, quality and performance.

"The story of 3 Strokes began during the pandemic, when my two brothers and I discovered golf and started playing it as a new hobby. Since there are three of us, that experience eventually inspired the name 3 Strokes," Ronquillo said.

"As I became more involved in golf, I saw

an opportunity to create a local brand that Filipino golfers could proudly wear on and off the course."

The company officially started in 2023, with the Ronquillo family playing an important role in transforming the concept into a business.

"My brothers will always be an important part of the story behind the name and the beginning of the brand. My dad was also the person who really helped me turn the idea into a business," Ronquillo said.

"His guidance, experience and support gave me the confidence and foundation to build 3 Strokes. It has always been a family journey, and each of them has been part of it in their own way."

The brand initially introduced its products by setting up at golf tournaments and personally engaging with players.

GOLF APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

The direct interaction allowed the company to gather feedback and gain a deeper understanding of the needs and preferences

of the local golfing community.

From participating in just a few events, 3 Strokes eventually expanded its presence to several tournaments every week.

Today, the brand offers a growing range of golf apparel and accessories, including golf shirts, caps, pants, gloves, bags, belts and umbrellas.

"Opening our first physical store at Ayala Malls Vertis North is a very special milestone for us. For the past few years, most customers discovered 3 Strokes through golf tournaments, social media and our retail partners," Ronquillo said.

"Now, customers finally have a permanent place where they can visit, try our products and experience the brand."

Ronquillo admitted that seeing the 3 Strokes name inside a major shopping mall remains a surreal experience.

"We started by personally bringing our products to tournaments, so having our own physical location shows how much the brand has grown," he said.

Ronquillo expressed his gratitude to his family, the company's team, customers and the Philippine golf community for their continued support.

"This store is a big step for 3 Strokes, but we still have a long way to go," he said. "Our goal is to continue improving, reach more golfers and build a Filipino golf brand that we can all be proud of."



The founding Ronquillo family with some of the top golf content creators in the country.

From rugby to pickleball, Eric Tai gets signature paddle

By Peter Atencio

ERIC "Eruption" Tai has dabbled in pickleball for the past five months after being sidelined by a knee injury.

Since then, the 42-year-old Tai has been rewarded for his efforts to learn a new sport while recovering from his condition.

Tai recently found himself with a limited-edition pickleball paddle named after him.

His days as a rugby player with the Philippine Volcanoes national men's team decades ago were remembered and honored with the launch of a copper-chrome-framed Aura Pro — Eruption Edition paddle, christened in his honor.

"I'm so overwhelmed. Sino na naman ako, to have my own signature paddle in this place, with an internationally established brand?" said Tai, as he expressed his gratitude.

Tai spoke following a birthday celebration and the unveiling of his signature paddle with Toby's Sports executives, celebrities and family members at the Tela Park Pickleball Center in Las Piñas.

Joining Tai were members of his immediate family, including his wife, Rona Samson-Tai, and their son, Legend Eric, as well as Andrea Tan, Head of Marketing and Customer Experience at Toby's Sports.

More than 300 pickleball enthusiasts also saw action in a tournament known as "The Court is Lava," which was held that day.

"So, they're already sold out. In the Philippines, it's already sold out. And it's a blessing to me. So, words can't express how grateful I am," said Tai.

Around 20 television and movie personalities also attended, including Karla Estrada, Billy Crawford, Rocco Nacino, Diana Zubiri, Eric Fructoso, Meg Imperial, Rodjun Cruz, Djanine Cruz and Claire Harrell.

"I'm very excited about that launch of Eric Tai's

signature paddle. The paddle came about before Eric and I ever thought about creating one," said Tan, whose company is part of the Quorum Group of Companies, which operates the leading sports retailer Toby's Sports in the Philippines.

The paddle they developed, known as the limited-edition Eruption Paddle, is built around high-performance specifications tailored for aggressive play and fast hand exchanges.



Eric Tai with his signature pickleball paddle. Tai with celebrities and Toby's Sports executives.

It features an advanced full-foam/polymer core construction designed for maximum energy return, durability and shock absorption during high-speed volleys.

Tan said they were inspired to name the paddle after Eric

when they saw videos of him playing pickleball and remembered the days when he was still a rugby player with the Volcanoes.

"Watching videos of Eric's game (pickleball), we immediately saw something. Obviously, Eric was an incredible athlete. While playing rugby, he was a Volcano. He was strong, fast and explosive," remarked Tan.

Tai said he got into the sport hoping to learn something new. He added that he will give himself a year to get better at the sport.

Tai, who was born and raised in New Zealand, started playing rugby when he was eight years old and was part of the Philippine Volcanoes in 2011 and 2013.

He retired from the sport in 2016, went into recreational basketball, learned to play different sports, and pursued a career in acting, hosting shows and appearing in films.

"Naging physical na ang laro, hindi ko na kaya," added Tai, referring to his transition from rugby.



Seoul of Manila Golf dangles P500K in raffle prizes, SUV as 'hole' reward

ORGANIZERS of the Seoul of Manila Golf Tournament 2026 are raising the stakes for participants, dangling a total of P500,000 in cash prizes, highlighted by a P200,000 grand prize, when the event tees off on Oct. 22 at the Pradera Verde Golf and Country Club in Lubao, Pangapa.

Adding further excitement to the tournament is a brand-new 2026 Ford Everest 4x2 Sport, which will be offered as a hole-in-one prize on a designated hole.

The one-day event, backed by Manila Standard Golf and Leisure as media partner, is expected to bring together golfers, online personalities, content creators, celebrities, corporate partners and golf enthusiasts for a day of competition, networking and entertainment at one of Central Luzon's premier golf destinations.



The country's top golf content creators and personalities are expected to take part in the event, with Manila Standard Golf & Leisure as major media partner.

Among the country's golf content creators and personalities expected to take part are Nate Nan, Kim Tablizo, Eric Mooww, Andrew Cortez, Earl Alba, Talukap Mulat Jr., Alejandro, Christian Guzman of Chasing Birdies PH, Tee-cher Carla, Malvin Castro, Kara Blythe, Ruth Golfs, Pinky Enriquez Garcia, JC de Guzman and members of the Filipino Golf community.

The event is being backed by Dowinn, one of the trusted names in the gaming industry, with organizers continuing to welcome additional golf partners and sponsors.

The tournament will feature a major raffle and awarding program, with the grand prize winner set to receive P200,000. Two winners will receive P50,000 each, while four participants will take home P25,000 each and 10 others will receive P10,000 each.

With the theme "Drive. Putt. Connect.", the Seoul of Manila Golf Tournament aims to offer more than just competition, providing participants with an opportunity to build new connections while enjoying a day on the course alongside celebrity golfers and some of the country's influential online personalities.

Registration is pegged at P10,000 per player, inclusive of the green fee, golf cart, caddie fee, lunch, raffle entries and tournament giveaways.

Registration begins at 5:30 a.m., with a 7 a.m. shotgun start scheduled at the Pradera Verde Golf and Country Club. **MS Golf and Leisure**

Mooncake x Coffee at Starbucks Philippines

STARBUCKS Philippines welcomes the Mid-Autumn Festival with the launch of its Mooncake Gift Set, a modern take on a tradition long associated with reunion, gratitude and shared moments.

A modern, molten-centered take on the traditional Mid-Autumn mooncake, the limited-edition set comes with 2 flavor assortments:



Lava Custard and Lava Cappuccino mooncake

- Lava Custard (4 pcs) – Filled with rich custard center wrapped in a soft delicate pastry for a luxurious festive treat
 - Lava Cappuccino (2 pcs) – Filled with smooth molten cappuccino lava, combining creamy coffee notes with delicate hand-crafted pastry
- As a symbol of unity and gratitude, the Starbucks Mooncake gift set is crafted for sharing and designed to pair with Starbucks whole bean coffee or Starbucks VIA Ready Brew for a complete at-home festive ritual.

CRAVINGS

JOYCE PANGCO PAÑARES, Issue Editor / email: joyce.panares@gmail.com

JASMINE, the signature Chinese restaurant of New World Makati Hotel, has rolled out its refreshed À La Carte Menu, presenting traditional Chinese cuisine through contemporary technique, refined presentation, and thoughtfully selected ingredients.

Masterfully curated by Master Chef Brandon Ng, the new menu showcases a thoughtful balance between time-honored Chinese cooking techniques and evolving dining preferences.

“These are dishes that are well-loved by everyone. They represent tradition and nostalgia,” he said during the press launch.

Guided by New World Hotels & Resorts’ purpose of “creating a future where people and places enrich one another,” Jasmine brings this philosophy to its culinary approach by partnering with local farmers, fisheries, and producers across the Philippines.

Ingredients featured throughout the menu include fresh vegetables from the Cordillera region, Bicol chili peppers, salted fish from Negros, and sustainably sourced seafood from Palawan.

The refreshed menu features standout dishes that combine refined technique, bold flavor, and modern presentation while preserving the essence of well-loved Chinese classics.

Appetizers include Crispy Bean Curd with Salt and Pepper; Imperial Peking Duck (served two ways); and Dim Sum Creations: Seafood Lobster Dumpling, Golden Harbor Salmon and Asparagus Dumpling, Assorted Mushroom and Truffle Dumpling and Jasmine Oven-Baked Curry Chicken Puff.

For the main courses, Jasmine pulled all the stops for a truly scrumptious lineup: Chinese-Style Beef Tenderloin with Onion and Mandarin Sauce, Honey Orange Chicken, Chinese-Style Scrambled Egg with Scallop and Tomato, Fried French Beans with Minced Pork and Dried Shrimp and Pork Belly and Liver Sausage Fried Rice with X.O. Sauce.

To cap the meal, Chef Brandon showcased two signature desserts – the Chilled Milk

Tradition and Nostalgia: Jasmine unveils refreshed a la carte menu



Whole Imperial Peking Duck



Assorted dumplings: Seafood Lobster; Golden Harbor Salmon and Asparagus; Mushroom and Truffle; and Oven-baked Curry Chicken Puff



Steamed Creamy Cheese Piggy Bun



Chinese-Style Scallops, Scrambled Egg and Tomato

was too cute to eat.

Indeed, whether for a family gathering, business lunch, intimate dinner, or special

celebration, Jasmine offers an elegant and welcoming setting where exceptional cuisine and warm hospitality come together.

Unlock the city’s best food spots with Grab 5-Star Eats

FINDING a new place to eat is easy. Deciding whether it’s actually worth your time and hard-earned money? That’s the real challenge.

Today’s diners want more than just aesthetic photos or fleeting social media hype. They want to be assured of quality before taking a bite.

To help diners find the perfect meal to be delivered, Grab created 5-Star Eats, an in-app food guide that eliminates guesswork and points foodies to highly rated spots guaranteed to satisfy their cravings. Instead of relying on a single critic, an influencer, or a viral food trend, this curated collection reflects what everyday diners are actually choosing.

With real ratings, reviews, and repeat orders from millions of Grab users, 5-Star Eats establishments see a 30 percent average year-on-year increase in orders—proof that consistent, high-quality food and service at these spots not only attract new fans, but also retain loyal customers who order time and again.

To bring these stories to life, Grab partnered with digital channel FEATR for a two-part video series exploring some of these highly-rated gems. When asked about these culinary spots’ origin stories, the founders had clear, simple goals that point to a shared philosophy: delivering unwavering consistency, exceptional quality, and unbeatable value with every single order.

The Anatomy of a Crafted Burger: Sweet Ecstasy

What founder Al Galang started at Cubao Expo in 2012 as a humble milk-and-cookie café has evolved into a burger heavyweight. Whether customers order their classic Cheeseburger, The Steamburger, or The Seriously Good Burg-



Laksa



Classic Cheeseburger

er (their version of a Smash Burger), Galang’s goal remains the same: every bite must match the customer’s expectations and give them a reason to keep coming back.

“We put so much effort into consistency and quality. That’s what we live for: to make sure that once you come to us, you keep wanting to come back,” he said. This commitment translates flawlessly from dine-in to delivery, making “Sweet X” a staple for at-home cravings as well.

The Taste of Celebration: Sugarbee

Sugarbee’s founder, Jenny Silayan, started with just three baked goods at local bazaars in 2003. Today, her Salted Caramel Chocolate Cake, Dulce de Leche Chocolate Cake, and decadent mini cupcakes are the centerpieces of birthdays, office parties, and even quiet celebrations after a long day, elevating ordinary moments into special ones. Silayan adheres to one simple, uncompromising standard: serv-

ing customers the food she would be proud to serve her own family.

“We want to serve the best and yummiest—something I myself and my kids enjoy eating—by maintaining the quality of ingredients,” Silayan added.

Dependable Value and Flavor: 101 Hawker Food House

Drawing from his time in Singapore, founder Rexmond Chua opened 101 Hawker Food House in 2010 to offer authentic, generous, and affordable Southeast Asian comfort food. With scratch-made sauces and spice pastes, dishes like their Nasi Goreng set meal, rich Laksa, and Hainanese Chicken consistently transport diners straight to a bustling Singaporean hawker center.

“Our main objective is to make it affordable—yung sulit siya talaga,” Chua noted, emphasizing their commitment to filling, rea-

sonably-priced meals. This spot proves that a 5-Star experience doesn’t require a 5-Star price tag, especially when it can also be delivered straight to your door.

More 5-Star Stories to Come

As the FEATR series continues, viewers will get a peek into other top-rated spots that keep foodies coming back for more. The next episode will uncover the 15-year secret behind Gino’s Brick Oven Pizza’s success, highlighting bestsellers like its Four Cheese pizza topped with fresh, house-made mozzarella. Viewers will also see how Vito’s BBQ grew from a homegrown pandemic passion project into 11 branches, driven by its fan-favorite Chicken Barbecue Skewers. Finally, the series will reveal how Tinuhog ni Benny, a humble barbecue joint near Taft Avenue, built fierce loyalty through budget-friendly student meals and active listening to customers.

Catch the second episode of the Grab 5-Star Eats x FEATR series on September 17 for more top-rated discoveries.

Find the perfect meal with Grab 5-Star Eats



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Tourism Secretary Maria Bernardita Angara-Mathay (right) and integrated resort and leisure destination president and chief executive officer Nilo Thaddeus Rodriguez formalize a partnership aimed at linking live shows, dining, leisure, and travel in Metro Manila

Boosting Philippine entertainment tourism

THE Department of Tourism (DOT) and Newport World Resorts have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen entertainment as a pillar of Philippine tourism. Signed Sept. 1, the agreement will promote live performances, cultural productions, culinary experiences, and leisure attractions to encourage longer stays, increase visitor spending, and drive repeat travel. “Entertainment has become one of the strongest reasons travelers choose to visit and return to a destination,” DOT Secretary **Maria Bernardita Angara-Mathay** said. “Through this collaboration, we hope to showcase Filipino talent and creativity as part of what makes the Philippines worth discovering.” The DOT will integrate Newport World Resorts’ offerings into its Love the Philippines

and Discover More to Love campaigns, while the resort will develop stay, dine, and watch packages and Metro Manila itineraries for visitors. Live entertainment will be anchored by Full House Theater Company, Newport World Resorts’ production arm. Its latest production, *Bongga Ka, ‘Day! The Annie Batungbikal Musical*, opens Sept. 18 at the Newport Performing Arts Theater. FHTC will also serve as the production arm of Westside Resort, which is set to open in Entertainment City this year with four theater venues. Both resorts are under Travellers International Hotel Group, which aims to position the Philippines as the “Broadway of Asia.”

The man behind ‘Gala ni Ced’

IN the vast and ever-expanding world of travel vlogging, it takes a special kind of creator to stand out. Many channels offer breathtaking visuals and aspirational journeys, but few provide the kind of grounded, practical, and deeply helpful content that truly empowers viewers to explore on their own.

Ced Gomez of the YouTube channel Gala ni Ced is one such creator. So when I ran into him recently while I was having lunch at Route 66 Diner of Plantation Bay Resort and Spa in Cebu, it was a genuinely pleasant surprise. Meeting him in person, away from the screen, only reinforced just how authentic and approachable his on-camera persona really is. What makes Gala ni Ced so compelling is its clear and focused mission: to show that the beauty of the Philippines is accessible to everyone. Ced’s videos are more than just visual tours; they are comprehensive guides designed for the everyday Filipino traveler. He understands that the biggest hurdle to travel is often the logistics, not the desire. This is why every video is meticulously structured, often featuring a “Commute Guide” that details exactly how to get to a destination using public transportation, from buses and ferries to jeepneys and tricycles.



Dee-tails
Ardee de los Angeles

THIS approach has built a loyal community. Viewers thank him for making travel feel possible, with one saying he visits places once thought unreachable and another praising his thorough vlogs on costs. His real value? Making travel feel tangible, not just a luxury. Ced’s work is not just about solitary exploration; it also serves as a key resource for Filipinos living abroad. One *balikbayan* viewer shared, “Whenever I think of places to visit in the Philippines and search on YouTube, it’s amazing to see that you already have a vlog about them.”

For those yearning to reconnect with their homeland, Gala ni Ced offers a virtual and practical bridge, showcasing the country’s evolving beauty, from the high-end comforts of a Cebu resort to the raw, untamed landscapes of the provinces. With an ever-growing library of travel guides covering a diverse range of destinations, from the adrenaline-pumping white water rafting in Cagayan de Oro to the pristine beaches of El Nido, the hidden waterfalls of Agusan del Sur, and the historic trek to Buscalan to meet **Apo Whang Od**, Ced has essentially created a comprehensive and free travel encyclopedia for the Philippines. Ced Gomez of Gala ni Ced has carved out a unique and invaluable niche. He is not just a vlogger; he is a facilitator of experiences, a budget consultant, and a travel companion for the masses. Running into him at Plantation Bay was a reminder that behind every great channel is a person genuinely passionate about what he does. His commitment to detail, transparency, and empowering his audience is why he has earned the respect and admiration of the Gala ni Ced community.



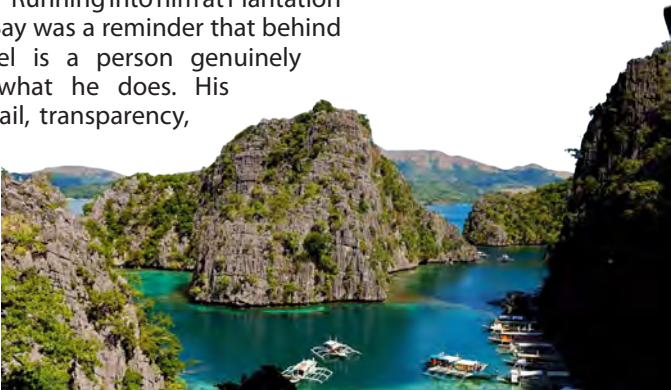
Ced Gomez adds history-driven stops to his growing library of guides for travelers looking beyond beaches and usual itineraries



At Plantation Bay Resort and Spa in Cebu, Ced Gomez’s off-camera warmth matches the practical, grounded style of his travel videos



A San Pablo, Laguna stop shows how Ced Gomez’s guides bring attention to slower trips, local scenery, and accessible travel ideas



Coron’s limestone cliffs and blue waters reflect the kind of Philippine destinations Ced Gomez makes easier to plan through practical travel guides

Ced Gomez builds travel content around routes, costs, and details that help viewers turn dream trips into workable plans

For many, navigating the complex web of Philippine transport is intimidating, but Ced breaks it down step-by-step, making it feel achievable. Even at a high-end resort like Plantation Bay in Cebu, one could sense his eye for detail, the kind of observational skill that makes his guides so thorough. Beyond the commute, his content is a goldmine of practical information. A hallmark of the Gala ni Ced experience is its transparency, particularly when it comes to finances. Viewers can expect a detailed breakdown of expenses in each video, covering

every great channel is a person genuinely passionate about what he does. His commitment to detail, transparency, and empowering his audience is why he has earned the respect and admiration of the Gala ni Ced community.

The Lind Hotels heads back to its roots with new Coron resort

MORE than a decade after first setting its sights on Coron, The Lind Hotels is finally coming home. The homegrown Filipino hospitality brand is set to open The Lind Coron in 2027, expanding into Palawan and returning to the destination where the idea for the company first took shape. Coron was The Lind Hotels’ first property acquisition more than 10 years ago. The company eventually chose Boracay, then a more established tourism destination, to launch the brand before putting its original Coron plans on hold. That decision paved the way for The Lind Boracay to grow into an internationally recognized hotel, earning several accolades and becoming the first hotel in Boracay to be included in the Michelin Guide.



Coron becomes the site of a long-delayed Palawan expansion as Pierre Henrichs outlines plans for a 91-room resort opening in 2027

“We have always believed in pioneering rather than following,” said **Pierre Henrichs**, chief operating officer of The Lind Hotels. “Coron offers a rare combination of natural beauty and untapped potential. Our goal is not only to be part of its growth, but to help shape its future by bringing a new standard of hospitality to the destination.” Set amid limestone formations, turquoise waters, hidden lagoons, and rich marine life, The Lind Coron will feature 91 rooms and villas. Private villas will have dipping pools and dedicated Villa Hosts, while dining options will include Yim, a modern Thai restaurant, and Crust, which will serve Mediterranean-inspired dishes by the infinity pool. The resort will also house The Spa Wellness Coron, as well as a dive center operated by one of the Philippines’ diving pioneers. Guests will have access to island-hopping, diving, and nearby World War II shipwrecks, while The Gallery, The Cove, and the Roof Deck will provide venues for celebrations, meetings, and weddings. “We aim to create a resort that belongs in its setting rather than competes with it,” Henrichs said. Ahead of its 2027 opening, The Lind Hotels will participate in the Philippine Travel Mart until today, Sept. 6, at the SMX Convention Center Manila in Pasay City.

When students build solutions for their own communities

By Jasper Valdez

A SCHOOL project can begin with something as simple as noticing what is not working. For three junior high school students from Philippine Science High School-Caraga Campus, that meant looking at how schools account for students during emergencies and finding a gap they believed technology could help close.

Kush D. Shekar, Lorenzo S. Pariñas and Vic Andrei P. Hernando developed Ligtas Skwela, an online school emergency management platform designed for incidents such as fires, earthquakes and firearm-related emergencies. The system recently won first place among nine finalists in the student category of the Startup Technology Pitching Competition held during the Regional Science, Technology and Innovation Week in Caraga from Aug. 27 to 29.

Pariñas, who handles the platform’s Internet of Things and cloud storage components, said the idea grew out of concerns over recent school emergencies.

“With the recent happenings in Ateneo De Zamboanga or other school shootings or maybe earthquakes or fire, we’ve noticed that sometimes in the system, they tend to not focus on the students and where they are in school,” he shared in an interview with DOST’s Claire Bernadette Mondares.

Rather than relying only on headcounts, Ligtas Skwela tracks students by name so school administrators can identify who may still be missing. The platform is divided into teacher and commander modes, allowing faculty to report the status of their classes while administrators monitor classrooms, medical needs and other developments through event logs.

“In commander mode, you’re able to see all the classrooms, all the teachers managing them and their status,” project leader Shekar said.

Hernando, who leads market research for the team, said the working platform has so far been tested only on their campus, while the group is also exploring an offline version and hardware such as physical buttons that could be used during drills or to trigger alarms.

That unfinished stage is also part of what makes the project useful as an example of student innovation. The goal was not simply to build a new app for a competition, but to start with a problem the students could see within their own environment and design around the people who would actually use the system.

Students spend much of their day inside schools, giving them a close view of routines that can be improved, from safety and communication to accessibility and everyday campus concerns. Familiarity with those problems does not guarantee a successful solution, but it can help determine where to start.

Ligtas Skwela still needs further testing before wider deployment, and the team is preparing to apply for a patent. Its development offers a simple reminder that innovation does not always begin with a new piece of technology; sometimes it begins with paying closer attention to what needs fixing.



Students of PSHS-Caraga Campus develop Ligtas Skwela to help schools track students by name during emergencies

What students gain when phones stay out of class

By Jasper Valdez

IN a classroom where smartphones are always within reach, even a brief glance at a screen can be enough to break the flow of a lesson.

Filipino students themselves have reported how often digital devices get in the way of their attention during lessons.

In the Philippines, 41 percent of 15-year-old students surveyed for the 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) said they became distracted by digital devices in most or all of their mathematics lessons. Another 37 percent said they were distracted by classmates using devices. Both figures were higher than the averages among countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Concerns over classroom distraction have also pushed Philippine schools to place clearer limits on when students can use their devices.

Under Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 006, s. 2026, learners and school personnel are prohibited from using portable electronic

devices during instructional hours, with exceptions including academic activities and emergencies. In August, Education Secretary Sonny Angara said the department was also studying whether restrictions should cover recess and break periods.

With fewer screens competing for attention, students may find it easier to stay focused on what is happening in class.

Across OECD countries, students who reported frequent digital-device distraction during mathematics lessons scored an average of 15 points lower than those who were rarely or never distracted, even after socioeconomic differences were considered.

Distraction does not always come from a student’s own device, since a nearby screen, video or conversation can also pull attention away from the lesson.

About one-fourth of students across OECD countries reported being distracted by classmates using digital devices, showing how one person’s screen can become someone else’s distraction.

Notifications can add another layer of interruption, with OECD data showing that students were less likely to report losing focus when social media and app alerts were switched off and when they did not feel pressure to answer messages during class.

Restricting personal phone use, however, is different from removing digital tools from the classroom altogether.

In the Philippines, 67 percent of



Filipino students face fewer classroom distractions when digital devices are kept away from lessons and used only for schoolwork or emergencies (AI-generated image)



DepEd’s phone-use limits put focus back on when devices help learning and when they interrupt it (AI-generated image)

students said they used digital tools for learning for at least an hour during a typical school day, based on another set of PISA 2022 findings. Digital tools used for schoolwork were positively, though modestly, associated with performance in creative thinking up to a certain level of use.

A device can be useful in class when it serves the lesson, but disruptive when it becomes a second source of attention.

A 2025 study involving 1,227 students in 30 secondary schools in England found that

students under restrictive school phone policies spent less time on their phones and social media while at school. The researchers, however, found no significant difference in overall phone use, mental well-being or several other outcomes compared with students at schools with more permissive rules.

The difference appears to be mostly confined to school hours: restricting access can reduce phone use in school without necessarily changing how students use their devices elsewhere.

Phones will remain part of how students learn, communicate and spend their time. The challenge is knowing when they should be useful tools—and when they should simply stay out of the way.

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By Angelica Villanueva

FOR a few minutes, the distance between a K-pop fan and the concert stage disappears. The usual barriers of screens, camera cuts, and arena seating give way to a closer view, where performers seem only a few steps away and even smaller details in the choreography become easier to notice.

Bringing K-pop performances within closer reach

This is the experience offered by “2026 Vision Festa: Dive Into the Stars,” an interactive K-pop exhibition at Gateway Mall 2 in Araneta City featuring performances by K-pop groups **BTS, SEVENTEEN, TOMORROW X TOGETHER, ENHYPEN** and **BOYNEXTDOOR**.

The virtual reality segment places fans inside selected performances from The Fact Music Awards, with the headset responding as the viewer looks around the space. Instead of following a fixed broadcast frame, attention can move across the stage, from one performer to another, while the production unfolds at close range.

The lineup includes BOYNEXTDOOR’s “One and Only,” ENHYPEN’s “Drunk-Dazed,” TOMORROW X TOGETHER’s “Good Boy Gone Bad,” and BTS’ “Butter.” SEVENTEEN has the longest set among the featured acts with “Ready to Love,” “Anyone,” and “Super.”

The change in perspective becomes part of the appeal. Group formations can be followed more closely, individual movements become easier to catch, and transitions that might pass quickly



Performances by popular Kpop groups anchor the interactive fan experience at Gateway Mall 2 in Araneta City



Fans revisit ‘The Fact Music Awards’ stages through a VR format

reactions inside the room can feel immediate, particularly when several viewers respond to the same moment at once.

Vision Festa continues beyond the screening itself. Visitors can move through exhibition spaces and photo zones before or after their session, turning the visit into a broader fan outing rather than a single VR activity.

The format also reflects how K-pop experiences have grown beyond concerts and album releases. Pop-up stores, exhibitions, collectible merchandise and interactive attractions now give fans more ways to engage with artists, particularly between tours or when live appearances are limited.

Presented by L-Squared Productions, Vision Festa runs until Oct. 31, 2026, on Level 3 of Gateway Mall 2 in Araneta City.

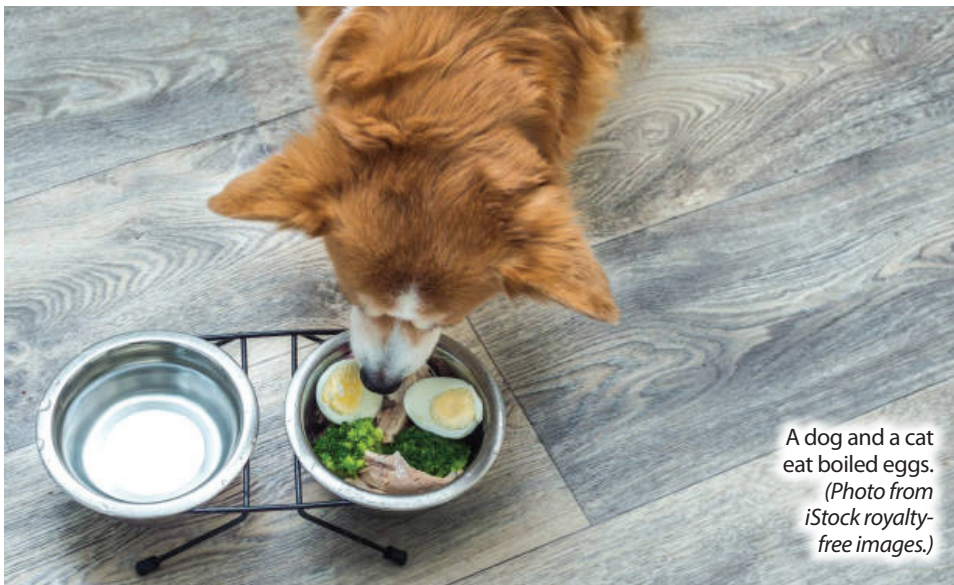


Karen Bordador leads the opening program for ‘Vision Festa’ as the K-pop exhibition begins its run at Gateway Mall 2

Screenings are scheduled at 10:30 a.m., 11:45 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 2:15 p.m., 3:30 p.m., 4:45 p.m., 6 p.m., 7:15 p.m., and 8:30 p.m. from Mondays through Thursdays.

From Fridays through Sundays, the same schedule applies with an additional 9:45 p.m. session.

Tickets are priced at P1,450 and are available through Ticketnet Online.



A dog and a cat eat boiled eggs. (Photo from iStock royalty-free images.)

By Mariana Burgos

EGGs have long been recognized as a nutrient-dense food, rich in high-quality protein, essential amino acids, vitamins, and minerals. For pet owners seeking to diversify their companion animals' diets, eggs can be an excellent addition. However, how much egg is safe and beneficial for pets like dogs and cats?

How Much Egg Can Pets Eat?

Nutritional Value of Eggs for Pets

According to the article "The Use of Egg and Egg Compounds in Companion Animal Health" by S. Beasley, eggs provide a highly digestible source of protein that supports various aspects of pet health. Eggs contain sulfur amino acids such as methionine and cysteine, which are crucial for maintaining healthy skin, coat, and immune function. The article highlights that eggs also contribute to cognitive and gastrointestinal health, making them a functional food beyond basic nutrition.

The digestibility and nutrient density of eggs make them an ideal feed ingredient. They are rich in vitamins A, D, E, and B-complex, as well as minerals like selenium and choline, which support brain function and metabolism. Because eggs are so concentrated in these nutrients, even a small amount can provide a significant boost to a pet's daily intake, provided it does not upset the balance of their primary diet.

Benefits and Risks of Feeding Eggs to Dogs

In the veterinary guide "Are Eggs Good for Dogs and Cats?" published by FurryGreen.hk, authors emphasize that eggs should be cooked properly. Cooking eliminates harmful pathogens like salmonella and deactivates avidin, a protein in raw egg whites that can interfere with biotin absorption. Biotin is essential for cellular growth and fatty acid metabolism; a deficiency can lead to poor skin and coat quality.

The article "Feeding Eggs to Dogs" from Vetic.in notes that boiled, scrambled, or poached eggs are safe for most healthy adult dogs in moderation. They contribute to muscle maintenance and overall vitality. However, the article cautions against feeding raw eggs due to bacterial contamination risks.



A dog and a cat eat boiled eggs. (Photo from iStock royalty-free images.)

Regarding quantity, Vetic.in suggests that eggs should not exceed one egg per day for medium to large dogs. For smaller breeds, half an egg or less is advisable to avoid excessive calorie intake. Dogs with conditions like pancreatitis or diabetes should avoid eggs or consult a veterinarian, as the fat content in the yolk might be too rich for their specific metabolic needs.

Feeding Eggs to Cats: Moderation is Key

Cats, being obligate carnivores, can benefit from eggs when served correctly. According to Purina's "Can Cats Eat Eggs?", fully cooked eggs are safe in small amounts. They provide essential amino acids.

Eggs should never be seasoned or served raw. The article stresses that eggs should be given only 1 to 2 times per week to prevent nutritional imbalances and weight gain.

Furthermore, raw eggs pose risks including salmonella infection and avidin-related biotin deficiency. Because cats are smaller, the impact of these issues can manifest more quickly than in larger animals. A vet-approved guide from CountryVetMom.com echoes these recommendations, emphasizing that eggs should be served plain. Plain scrambled eggs are often the easiest for cats to digest.

Safe Preparation and Serving Tips

Across all referenced articles, a consistent message emerges: cooking eggs is essential. Methods

such as boiling, scrambling without oil, or poaching are preferred. Avoid frying eggs in butter or oil, and never use salt, pepper, onions, or garlic, as many seasonings are toxic to pets. Cooking also neutralizes avidin, which is critical for pets consuming eggs regularly. When introducing eggs, start with small amounts to monitor for allergies or digestive upset. Gradually increase the portion if well tolerated, but always keep eggs as a supplement rather than a replacement for complete pet food.

How Much Egg Is Too Much?

While eggs are nutritious, overfeeding can lead to weight gain due to calorie density. Experts generally recommend limiting intake to no more than one egg per day for dogs and 1-2 times per week for cats. This ensures pets receive the benefits without risking health complications. For puppies, kittens, or pets with health issues, consultation with a veterinarian is crucial.

Eggs offer excellent digestibility and a rich nutrient profile that supports overall health. For dogs, one cooked egg per day is generally safe, while cats should be limited to 1-2 cooked eggs per week.

Avoid raw eggs entirely to prevent bacterial infections and nutrient absorption issues. By following these guidelines, pet owners can confidently include eggs as a nutritious treat that enhances their pets' diets without compromising safety.

About the Author: Mariana Burgos is a freelance artist, writer, and tutor. She has been a solo parent for 19 years now because she is the wife of Jonas Burgos, a Filipino desaparecido. She and her daughter are animal lovers and are active in advocating not only human rights but the rights of animals as well.



Pets were spayed or neutered in Imus City. **Dennis Abrina**

166 dogs and cats spayed and neutered in Imus

A TOTAL of 166 pets underwent spay and neuter procedure recently to help control stray animal population in Imus City in Cavite.

The procedure was done under the Quick Spay and Castration Training Program organized by the Office of the City Veterinarian led by Dr. Maribel Depayso-Reyes, in partnership with the Small Animal Practitioner Association of the Philippines Inc. (SAPAPI) and the City Veterinary Office of San Jose Del Monte City.

In total, 52 cats and 28 dogs underwent spaying, while 53 cats and 33 dogs were neutered at the Child Youth Development Center (Imus Pilot) in Barangay Poblacion, Imus City.

Veterinarians Dr. Russell Tianzon, Dr. John Dela Cruz, and Dr. Aldrin Esteban participated. Dr. Harris Constantino, Dr. Rhoda Baquiran, Dr. Jonarel Andres, Dr.

Arby Banaag, and Dr. Gemma Jacinto-Agapito shared their expertise, while Dr. Rhommel Mendoza, Dr. Ronell Soriano, Dr. Voltaire Basinang, Dr. Joanne Mar Sengsy, and Dr. Marjette Tirona served as mentors, guiding pet owners on proper care and the practical aspects of spay and neuter procedures.

The training aimed to equip participants with the necessary knowledge and practical skills to perform safe, efficient, and high-quality spay and neuter surgeries.

The local government of Imus, led by Mayor Alex Advincula, promotes responsible pet ownership—specifically for dogs and cats—and encourages pet owners to make it a habit to have their pets vaccinated against rabies, thereby maintaining a safe community and working towards a rabies-free city. **Dennis Abrina**

Rainy days, hidden risks: Why year-round preventive care matters for dogs

AS INTERNATIONAL Dog Day celebrates the bond between dogs and their families, it is a timely reminder to make year-round preventive care part of responsible pet ownership.

Persistent rains and flooding across communities make year-round preventive care more important than ever to keep dogs healthy and protected. These conditions can increase their exposure to parasites and other health risks, reinforcing the need for pet owners to stay proactive about their dogs' health.

This International Dog Day, Boehringer Ingelheim reminds pet owners that preventive care should not take a break when the rain comes. Keeping dogs protected through regular veterinary care, vaccinations, parasite protection, and good hygiene can help prevent health concerns throughout the year and support their overall well-being.

"International Dog Day is a timely reminder that caring for our dogs means taking proactive steps to protect their health," said Dr. Vincent Casimero, head of business segment (for pets) of Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health Philippines, Inc. "When we protect our dogs' health, we also help protect the families and communities around them. Regular preventive care helps pet owners address health risks early and give their dogs the protection they need throughout the year."

Leptospirosis: One health risk to watch

One health risk that can become more concerning during periods of rain and flooding is leptospirosis, a bacterial disease that can affect both dogs and humans. Rats are a major source of infection, and dogs can contract the bacteria through contact with water, soil, or other environments contaminated with infected urine.

While flooding and stagnant water can increase exposure, leptospirosis can also occur in urban communities where rodents are present. Early signs in dogs can include fever, lethargy, vomiting, and diarrhea, which may resemble other illnesses. Severe infections can damage the kidneys and liver, cause bleeding disorders, and lead to other serious complications. Pet owners should consult a veterinarian promptly if their dog shows signs of illness or may have encountered contaminated environments.



Everyday moments of companionship remind pet owners that keeping dogs healthy means staying proactive with preventive care, from vaccinations and parasite protection to regular veterinary visits. These simple steps can help protect dogs from a range of health risks and support their well-being throughout the year, so they can enjoy more happy moments with their families.

Leptospirosis is an important health risk to watch for, but it is only one of the concerns that can affect dogs. Changes in weather and the environment can also increase their exposure to parasites and other preventable health risks, reinforcing the importance of year-round preventive care.

Prevention starts with everyday care

Rainy weather may bring added risks, but preventive care matters in every season. A consistent preventive care routine helps pet owners protect their dogs from a range of health concerns, while regular veterinary guidance can help ensure their dogs receive care suited to their lifestyle and environment.

Pet owners can help protect their dogs by:

- Keeping vaccinations up to date based on their veterinarian's advice.
- Staying consistent with parasite protection.
- Steering dogs away from puddles, stagnant water, and floodwater.
- Making sure they have access to clean, safe drinking water.
- Keeping homes and surrounding areas clean to help keep rodents away.
- Scheduling regular veterinary visits to support preventive care and early detection.

tection of health concerns.

By making these practices part of everyday pet care, owners can help give their dogs the protection they need—not only during the rainy season, but throughout the year.

Protecting pets, families and communities through One Health

Dogs are more than pets—they are part of the family and share the same homes and environments as the people who care for them. Keeping them healthy can also help protect the people and communities around them.

This reflects the need for a One Health approach, recognizing that animal, human, and environmental health are closely linked. Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health Philippines, Inc. is committed to advancing preventive animal health and responsible pet ownership, working with veterinarians, pet owners, government, and industry partners to support healthier animals, families, and communities.

This International Dog Day, show dogs the love they deserve. Please talk to a veterinarian about year-round preventive care and the protection your dog needs.