

# International NEWS MEDIA

JUNE 2024

## AMID SCORCHING TEMPERATURES

# DEATH TOLL AT HAJJ PILGRIMAGE TOPS 1,300

CAIRO — More than 1,300 people died during this year's Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia as the faithful faced extreme high temperatures at Islamic holy sites in the desert kingdom, Saudi authorities announced Sunday, June 23.

Saudi Health Minister Fahd bin Abdulrahman Al-Jalajel said that 83% of the 1,301 fatalities were unauthorized pilgrims who walked long distances in soaring temperatures to perform the Hajj rituals in and around the holy city of Mecca.

The minister said 95 pilgrims were being treated in hospitals, some of whom were airlifted for treatment. He said the identification process was delayed be-

cause there were no identification documents with many of the dead pilgrims.

The fatalities included more than 660 Egyptians. All but 31 of them were unauthorized pilgrims, according to two officials in Cairo. Egypt has revoked the licenses of 16 travel agencies that helped unauthorized pilgrims travel to Saudi Arabia, authorities said.

The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said most of the dead were reported at the Emergency Complex in Mecca's Al-Muaisem neighborhood. Egypt sent more than 50,000 authorized pilgrims to Saudi Arabia this year.

Saudi authorities cracked down on

unauthorized pilgrims, expelling tens of thousands of people. But many, mostly Egyptians, managed to reach holy sites in and around Mecca, some on foot. Unlike authorized pilgrims, they had no hotels to return to to escape the scorching heat.

In a statement Saturday, Egypt's government said the 16 travel agencies failed to provide adequate services for pilgrims. It said these agencies illegally facilitated the travel of pilgrims to Saudi Arabia using visas that don't allow holders to travel to Mecca. The government also said officials from the companies have been referred to the public prosecutor for investigation. - AP



Muslim pilgrims arrive to cast stones at pillars in the symbolic stoning of the devil, the last rite of the annual Hajj, in Mina, near the holy city of Mecca, Saudi Arabia, June 18, 2024. (Photo credit: AP)

## Message from the President of the Philippines on the 126th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence



MESSAGE

I am one with the Filipino people in commemorating the 126th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence.

On that glorious day in Kawit, Cavite 126 years ago, the triumphant tunes of our national anthem echoed throughout the jubilant air as our flag freely waved for the first time. It heralded the birth of the Philippines and declared to the world our untiring resolve to chart our own destiny as a sovereign nation.

A century and a quarter has passed since we unshackled the chains of subjugation yet the fervor of nationalism persistently burns brightly in each of us today. We stand united as ever, upholding with pride the hard-earned liberty bequeathed to us by our forebears.

While the times may be different, our struggles remain the same. Still, we continue to witness the true spirit of freedom in every Filipino who fights fairly in their day-to-day lives. We see it in the resilience of our farmers and fisherfolks as they provide us sustenance. We see it in the dedication of our teachers as they nurture the minds of the future generation. We see it in the tenacity of our soldiers as they protect every inch of our territory, adamant as they are in the certainty that Filipinos do not, and shall never, succumb to oppression.

As we celebrate the founding of our nation today, let us dedicate ourselves to the challenging but rewarding task of realizing the full potential of the Filipinos and building a Bagong Pilipinas—one that truly embodies the ideals of a just, progressive, and independent Republic.

Maligayang Araw ng Kasarinlan at mabuhay ang malayang sambayanang Pilipino!

FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.

MANILA  
12 June 2024

THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

## Los Angeles Mayor Bass congratulates Dr. Claudia Sheinbaum as President-Elect Of Mexico

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass released the following statement congratulating Dr. Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo as President-elect of Mexico:

"Today, I extend my warmest congratulations to President-elect Dr. Claudia Sheinbaum on her historic election. She has been a true leader in Mexico, as a professor, a Nobel laureate, as the Mayor of Mexico City, and now as its first female President. Last October, I had the pleasure of meeting with Dr. Sheinbaum in Los Angeles, where we spoke about our shared priorities and the ongoing strong relationship between Los Angeles and Mexico. I look forward to Los Angeles' continued partnership with Mexico as we continue to create safer and more equitable communities for those we serve. Congratulations, President-elect Sheinbaum."



## US northeast may get relief from heat wave

Americans from New York to Washington may finally get a reprieve on this week starting Monday, June 24, from the oppressive heat wave of the past week, although sizzling temperatures threaten much of the Southeast and Southwest, weather forecasters said.

Reports by the news agencies quoting the National Weather Service said the heat wave will likely peak in the Southwest, Mid-South and Plains early in week, with heat index readings exceeding 110 degrees Fahrenheit (43 Celsius) in some places.

Meanwhile, the Upper Midwest can expect severe thunderstorms on Monday while the Southwest may get monsoon-like conditions due to moisture coming from the remnants of Tropical Cyclone Alberto that could produce flash flooding.

Although the final day of the heat wave in the New York-

Washington corridor was forecast for Sunday, heat advisories were still in effect throughout the country.

More than 100 million people across the U.S. were under heat warnings on Sunday, June 23, when temperatures surpassed 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) in many places.

Palm Springs, California, hit a high of 112 F (44 C) on Sunday while Las Vegas recorded a high of 109 F (43 C).

Death Valley, a remote part of the California desert that is 282 feet (86 meters) below sea level and often has the nation's high temperature, reached 121 F (49 C).

Climate change has fueled dangerous heat waves across the Northern Hemisphere and will continue to deliver dangerous weather for decades to come, research shows.

## World leaders gather in Switzerland, Zelenskyy shows hope for peace

World leaders have gathered in the Swiss city of Burgenstock on Saturday, June 15, to discuss a peace plan for Ukraine. Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Ukraine's president, says he hopes the summit will give momentum for peace.

In a news conference with Swiss President Viola Amherd, Zelenskyy called for united international support to put pressure on Russia to end its invasion. He said, "Everything that will be agreed upon at the summit today will be part of the peace-making process that we all need."

The Swiss government says delegates from 100 countries and organizations are taking part in the two-day discussions. They include nations from what is collectively known as the Global South. China and Russia are not taking part. - NHK



## WikiLeaks' Assange pleads guilty, secures freedom, ends legal fight

SAIPAN, NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS — WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has pleaded guilty to a single felony charge for publishing U.S. military secrets in a deal with Justice Department prosecutors that secures his freedom and concludes a drawn-out legal saga that raised divisive questions about press freedom and national security.

The plea was entered Wednesday morning in federal court in Saipan, the capital of the Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. commonwealth in the Pacific. He arrived at court shortly before the hearing was to begin and did not take questions.

Though the deal with prosecutors required him to admit guilt to a single felony count, it would also permit him to return to his native Australia without spending any time in an American prison. He had been jailed in the United Kingdom for the last five years, fighting extradition to the United States on an Espionage Act indictment that could have carried a lengthy prison sentence in the event of a conviction. The abrupt conclusion enables both sides to claim a degree of victory, with the Justice Department able to resolve without trial. - AP

## News Breakers

### Ukraine begins talks to join European Union

The European Union and Ukraine began membership talks, a process that could take years and which Russia has historically tried to prevent.

The talks come a decade after Russian troops seized the Crimean Peninsula to keep Ukraine from forming relationships with the West. The accession negotiations began on Tuesday, June 25, during an intergovernmental conference held in Luxembourg. Olga Stefanishyna, deputy prime minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration, spearheads Ukraine's delegation. - VOA

### 15 cops killed in synagogue, church attacks in Russia

MOSCOW - At least 15 police officers, several civilians, and an Orthodox priest have been killed in attacks on police posts, churches and a synagogue in Russia's North Caucasus republic of Dagestan, authorities said on Monday.

Police killed six gunmen, who attacked two Orthodox churches, a synagogue, and a police post in the cities of Derbent and the Dagestan capital, Makhachkala on Sunday, said Sergei Melikov, the governor of the Muslim-dominated republic. Melikov announced three days of mourning throughout the republic.

### N. Korea sends 350 trash balloons to Seoul, Gyeonggi

SEOUL — North Korea on Tuesday, June 25, launched around 350 trash-carrying balloons toward South Korea overnight, Seoul's military said.

It was the fifth launch of its kind since last month, the military added. Some 100 balloons, mostly carrying scrap paper and waste, landed in Seoul and the northern part of Gyeonggi Province, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said in a notice to reporters.

As of 9 a.m., there were no balloons floating in the air, while an analysis of retrieved balloons showed they did not contain toxic substance, the JCS said.

Seoul's military said it is ready to carry out loudspeaker broadcasts any time and warned the implementation of such psychological warfare would depend on North Korea's action. With the latest batch, North Korea is estimated to have launched nearly 2,000 trash-carrying balloons since May 28.



## RADIO MANILA, PHILIPPINE VILLAGE HISTORIC MARKER UNVEILED

LOS ANGELES – The cultural and historical significance of Radio Manila as the first 24-hour radio station dedicated to Filipino-Americans in the United States was recognized with the unveiling of the historic marker at 4515 Eagle Rock Blvd., former site of the Philippine Village, on Thursday, June 13, 2024.

The historical marker was made possible through the efforts of Los Angeles City Councilmember Kevin de Leon of Council District 14, which remains the district with the largest Filipino American population, most of whom reside in Eagle Rock and the broader Northeast Los Angeles area.

Although the Philippine Village has since been torn down and Radio Manila is no longer broadcasting, Eagle Rock remains a hub of the Filipino American community in Eagle Rock.

The unveiling of the historical marker coincided with the celebration of the 126th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence, which made the event doubly noteworthy for its historical and cultural significance.

“Today, we honor the legacy of Radio Manila, the first 24-hour radio station in the United States dedicated to Filipino-Americans. This station right here in Eagle Rock was a beacon of hope and a vibrant voice for our community. Radio Manila was not just a radio station; it was a cultural bridge that connected Filipino-Americans to their roots providing a vital link to the language, music, the news, as well as the traditions of the Philippines,” De Leon said as he extolled what Radio Manila stands for in the community.

The marker honors not only the lasting legacy of Radio Manila and the Philippine Village but also the services

and contributions of Filipino-Americans who, according to De Leon, “enrich the beautiful tapestry of our community.”

Present during the unveiling of the historic marker were Dr. Oscar L. Jornacion, a recognized business leader, who established and pioneered the 1st Tri-Media Group of Companies and was the owner of Philippine Village where Radio Manila was headquartered, his wife Gilda Jornacion, former staff members and employees of Radio Manila, California Examiner/Philippine Media, friends, members of the community, and business owners who were once tenants and lessees of Philippine Village.

Dr. Jornacion, in his remarks, thanked the City of Los Angeles and Councilmember Kevin de Leon and his staff for the honor and recognition they have bestowed on Radio Manila and Philippine Village. Acknowledging the close ties between the Philippines and the United States, Dr. Jornacion said, “The Philippines and the United States have fostered a long-lasting relationship for many years. Our countries have been friends and allies for a long time. We fought wars together. The Filipinos were with you during World War 2, during the Korean War, during the Vietnam War, and we will always fight alongside the Americans.”

Although Awee Abayari, the brains behind Radio Manila and its former Station Manager, was unable to attend the historic event, she sent her greetings.

“It is very emotional for me not to be able to attend today’s event, but distance does not deter me from feeling the joy of the community that we served for many years and will continue to serve,” she said.



She expressed her deepest gratitude to Councilmember Kevin de Leon, Alice Roth and the entire organizing community of Council District 14, and shared the recognition with the Filipino American community and supporters of Radio Manila and Philippine Village.

“This most unforgettable recognition is for the Filipino American community and the entire listening world that have supported Radio Manila and Philippine Village all these years,” she added.

Radio Manila with its last broadcast in 2015 was a pioneer by itself. As the first radio station in the United States that

offered 24-hour programming dedicated to the Filipino-Americans, it provided news from the Philippines that impact the Filipino communities in the United States, played Filipino music, aired radio plays and dramas, held contests, and conducted interviews of government officials, business leaders, immigration advocates, leading personalities and celebrities both from the Philippines and the United States.

The Philippine Village, meanwhile, was home not only to Radio Manila and the 1st Tri-Media Group of Companies’ newspapers (California Examiner, Phil-

ippine Media, World Reporter), and the Philippine-American Expo and Trade Shows, but also to numerous businesses, retail shops, religious organizations, a health and day care center, and was a popular venue for many social events and celebrations.

In closing, De Leon said, “Although Radio Manila is no longer broadcasting and the Philippine Village that once stood right here has been torn down, the spirit from what’s inside the heart still lives on today. They laid the foundation for what Eagle Rock is today, a hub of Filipino-American culture.” - *EMWagner*

## FILIPINOS ACROSS THE WORLD CELEBRATE THE 126th ANNIVERSARY OF PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE



**Statement of US Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken on the occasion of the 126th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence**

On behalf of the Government of the United States of America, I send my warmest congratulations to the people of the Philippines as you celebrate your Independence Day on June 12.

Today, I reaffirm the longstanding United States-Philippines alliance and celebrate the vibrant ties between our peoples, rooted in our long and interwoven history and shared sacrifice. The United States is proud of its work with the Philippines to realize our shared ideals as democracies, uphold international law, pursue inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and promote human rights. Recent strides in scientific and technology cooperation, economic investment, and security collaboration, among many other areas, reflect the mutual priority we place on this pivotal relationship. As we work together to uphold international law in the South China Sea, the United States remains unwavering in our commitment to the defense of the Philippines under the Mutual Defense Treaty. More broadly, we remain committed to working alongside the Philippines, as friends, partners, and allies, as we strive for a safer, more prosperous world.



**Scott, Moylan introduce resolution recognizing Philippines Independence Day**

WASHINGTON – As co-chairs of the U.S. Philippines Friendship Caucus, Congressmen Bobby Scott (VA-03) and James Moylan (GU-AL) introduced H.Res.1290, recognizing “the historic significance of the 126th Anniversary of the sovereign and independent country of the Philippines on June 12, 1898” and supports the recognition of “Philippines Independence Day.”

CONGRESSMAN BOBBY SCOTT | CONGRESSMAN JAMES MOYLAN

While this resolution recognizes the Philippines’ resiliency and fight for freedom throughout history, it also reaffirms the bonds of friendship and cooperation which have existed between the United States and the Philippines and commits to strengthening these bonds, as well as commends the two countries’ shared values and mutual defense.

This resolution is co-led by Representative Scott and Delegate Moylan and is co-sponsored by Delegate Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan (MP-AL), and Reps. Don Bacon (NE-02), Juan Vargas (CA-52), Ed Case (HI-01), Darrell Issa (CA-48).



## World Vision highlights race against time in Papua New Guinea, saying humanitarian support crucial for landslide recovery

PORT MORESBY (May 28, 2024) — Global humanitarian organization World Vision is responding to the devastating landslide in Papua New Guinea that is feared to have killed as many as 2,000 people and has left thousands more without basic necessities and at risk of further danger. Joint assessments conducted by government disaster management authorities, U.N. agencies and humanitarian agencies like World Vision reveal that May 24 disaster has impacted nearly 7,900 people and completely destroyed Tulipari village.

Early reports from the United Nations estimated 670 fatalities; however, that number is expected to rise. Papua New Guinea government officials have estimated that over 2,000 people were buried by debris. The true scale of the disaster remains unclear due to limited communication and the ongoing search efforts.



People gather at the site of a landslide in Maip Mulitaka in Papua New Guinea's Enga Province on May 24, 2024. A massive landslide struck a village in Papua New Guinea's highlands on May 24, with many feared dead.

## Peace Corps Director Carol Spahn administers oath of service to 21 new Peace Corps volunteers in Armenia



YEREVAN, Armenia — Peace Corps Director Carol Spahn administered the oath of service to 21 new Peace Corps volunteers who will live and work in Armenia over the next two years teaching English and supporting youth projects.

The swearing-in ceremony on May 22nd concludes three months of pre-service training in country and underscores a new chapter in the 32-year relationship between the agency and the government of Armenia. U.S. Ambassador to Armenia Kristina Kvien, Armenian government officials, community partners, and Peace Corps Armenia staff attended the ceremony.

"Today not only marks the beginning of a transformative journey for the Peace Corps' newest group of volunteers, but also the continuation of an enduring partnership with the Armenian people," said Peace Corps Director Carol Spahn. "This new group of volunteers will build on a 32-year foundation, made strong through the relationships formed during service. I would like to thank the Armenian people for opening their hearts and homes; the bonds of friendship and human connection that begin during service extend for a lifetime."

## MAKE-A-WISH TO RECRUIT 1 MILLION 'WISHMAKERS'

NEW YORK CITY -- The wishes that Make-A-Wish grants wouldn't be possible without the support of countless "WishMakers" such as donors, volunteers, corporate partners, community advocates and more.

"WishMakers" — a term for anyone who steps up to take action for wish kids — are everywhere, but more "WishMakers" are needed in order for Make-A-Wish to achieve its lofty goal to bring the life-changing impact of a wish to every eligible child.

WWE Superstar Cody Rhodes and the Impractical Jokers, who have helped grant wishes, and Make-A-Wish America President and CEO Leslie Motter has recently launched "WishMakers Wanted," a global campaign with the stated intent to recruit 1 million people worldwide. People can sign up to become a "WishMaker" at wishmaker.org.

## FIL-AM CHEF WINS JAMES BEARD AWARD

LOS ANGELES — Filipino-American Chef Lord Maynard Llera won the James Beard Award for Best Chef: California at the 2024 James Beard Awards held in Chicago, Illinois.

Chef Llera features Filipino dishes from his hometown of Quezon Province at his multi-awarded restaurant, "Kuya Lord," located in Melrose, Los Angeles, California.

Dubbed as the "Oscars of food," the James Beard Awards are considered as one of the most prestigious awards in the hospitality industry.

Established in 1990, the James Beard Awards are among the nation's most prestigious honors recognizing leaders in the culinary and food media industries.

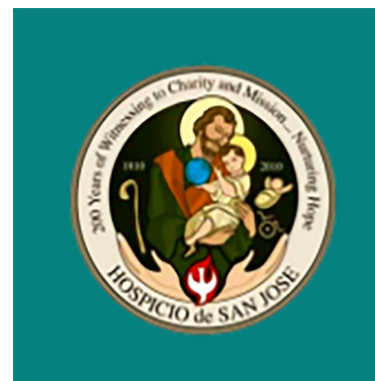
The Best Chef award is given to chefs who set high standards in their culinary skills and leadership abilities, and who are making efforts to help



Filipino-American Chef Maynard Llera (Photo courtesy of Eater Los Angeles)

create a sustainable work culture in their respective regions, while contributing positively to their broader community.

## Children and youth welfare development at Hospicio de San Jose



Sister Martha Abejero Gamolo  
Administrator  
Hospicio de San Jose

In Hospicio de San Jose, abandoned, surrendered, orphaned and neglected children — or those in difficult circumstances — are given the shelter and care they need while we submit documentary requirements for them to be considered legally-available for adoption by the DSWD.

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+ 632 8736 9184  
admnhospiciodesanjose@gmail.com

## UP Manila develops potent herbal solution vs. fungal skin infections

MANILA — The University of the Philippines Manila's National Integrated Research Program on Medicinal Plants (NIRPROMP) has created an herbal lotion against skin fungal infections using the Akapulco plant, a perennial shrub widely distributed in the Philippines.

Skin infections are prevalent among Filipinos due to environmental factors, such as heat and humidity, and socioeconomic conditions, such as overcrowding, poverty, and poor hygiene.

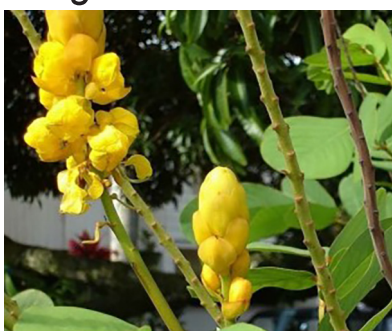
Institute of Herbal Medicine - National Institutes of Health (IHM-NIH) Director Dr. Cecilia Maramba-Lazarte noted that Azole antifungals treat such

infections effectively but are often expensive and require prolonged application.

"Traditional healers and those of other cultures have used Akapulco (scientific name: *Senna alata*) to treat skin diseases. The antifungal activity of Akapulco has been well-documented in various studies."

It contains several phytochemicals, including chrysophanic acid and anthraquinones, which exhibit strong antifungal activity against *Epidermophyton*, *Microsporum*, *Trichophyton*, and *Penicillium*.

Lazarte said the effectiveness of Akapulco preparations had been measured by the results of seven random-



Akapulco (Courtesy of Google images)

ized controlled trials involving 726 patients. - PNA

## Boys Town elects 124th Mayor

BOYS TOWN, Neb. — Boys Town youth has recently elected Ethan Ismert of Kansas City, Kansas, the 124th Mayor of the Village of Boys Town. Ava Levering was elected Vice-Mayor.



Ethan Ismert of Kansas City, Kansas, the 124th Mayor of the Village of Boys Town.

Ethan Ismert is 17 years old, and his campaign theme was "Raise Your Voice, Make a Choice; Vote Ethan 2024".

"I feel that almost all youth at one point or another have experienced their voices not being heard," said Ismert. "As

mayor I want to hear your voice".

Ethan is Captain of the Cheer Team, involved in Student Council, Peer Ministry, and member of National Honors Society. His goal is to attend a university to study nursing. His Family-Teachers are Kenny and Kouri Brown.

Ava Levering is Captain of the basketball and soccer teams and plays volleyball and softball for Boys Town. She is also in JROTC drill team and apart of peer disciple. After graduation, she wants to be an investigations officer in the Air Force or attend college for forensic science. Ava's Family-Teachers are Eddie and Tiffany Pace.

Father Edward J. Flanagan conceived the self-government system at the Village of Boys Town in 1926 as a tool for its citizens to build character, citizenship, and a sense of community.

## SALVATION ARMY

### Constance's Story

Constance is a hard working, independent mother who has been providing for herself and her family since the age of seventeen. She never expected she would one day need help from The Salvation Army...

She had been welding automotive parts for fourteen years when her employer filed for bankruptcy.

As a single mother her biggest concern was providing stability for her family. That's when she found The Salvation Army Bed and Bread program that delivers warm meals to communities on a regular basis.

Since then, Constance as started her own business and has been working hard to provide for her family, regaining the financial independence and stability that she provides for her family.

## ALL IMMIGRATION ISSUES

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## PH needs support from int'l community to resolve dispute with China – UP prof

MANILA - The Philippines needs the support of the international community amid the brewing tension between the country and China in the West Philippine Sea (WPS).

This was the assessment made by professor and lawyer Jay Batongbacal from the University of the Philippines (UP) during a news forum in Quezon City on Saturday, June 22.

He said China's latest provocative actions which injured one Philippine Navy personnel must be noted. China must be held accountable "for having caused this damage, for essentially attacking the vessel with those knives in order to disable them," he said.

But the professor opined the dispute between the Philippines and China can still be resolved.

The important thing, he said, is for the Philippines to show where the country stands. He said the Philippines is still open for peaceful negotiations. He also said the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) and the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) are still very much in effect.

Meanwhile, Batongbacal shared the rules and jurisprudence in international law related to the Ayungin Shoal incident marred by Chinese provocations.



Screengrab from a CNN news report showing confrontation between Chinese and Philippine vessels in another near collision near the disputed Spratly Islands.

"There are rules and jurisprudence on this issue particularly in International Humanitarian Law and the laws of armed conflict. And in those rules or laws, incidents such as skirmishes, isolated skirmishes, geographically-isolated skirmishes may be considered as what legally might be classified as 'frontier incidents,'" said Atty. Batongbacal.

## UN food agency warns of 'catastrophic levels of hunger' in southern Gaza

The United Nations' food agency has called for an immediate ceasefire in the conflict in Gaza, saying that catastrophic levels of hunger may develop soon in the southern part of the territory.

The humanitarian situation in Gaza is deteriorating as fierce fighting between Israeli forces and Hamas continues, while negotiations for a ceasefire and the release of hostages are making slow progress.

On June 15 a local Palestinian media outlet cited medical sources saying that 19 people were killed in an attack on homes in northern Gaza. Gaza health authorities said on Friday that 37,266

people have died since the conflict began in October last year.

World Food Programme Deputy Executive Director Carl Skau spoke at the end of his mission to Gaza. He said people there told him that they need sanitation, basic health care and some level of dignity, and that everyone he spoke to wants a ceasefire.

He said escalating fighting in some parts of Gaza, including Rafah in the south, makes it nearly impossible for humanitarian operations to deliver desperately needed food aid. He also mentioned the fear of extreme hunger. - *NHK World*

## UN: World losing 4 football fields worth of healthy land per second

ANKARA – The world is losing almost four football fields worth of healthy land every second due to degradation from desertification, data by the United Nations suggest.

At this rate, over 100 million hectares of healthy land are lost annually, according to data compiled by Anadolu ahead of June 17, marked as World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought since 1994.

UN data reveals that since 1900, droughts have killed at least 11 million people while affecting over 2 billion people.

The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought aims to raise public



awareness about desertification, land degradation and drought.

This year the day will be marked with the theme, "United for Land: Our Legacy. Our Future." It aims to mobilize all segments of society to support sustainable land stewardship. - *Anadolu*

## Discussions on deterring malicious cyber activity and the UN framework of responsible state behavior in cyberspace

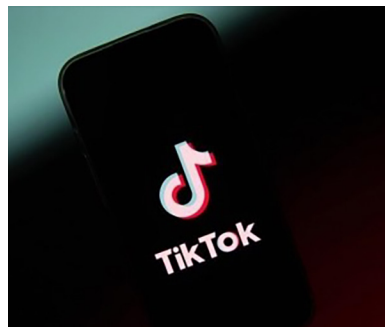
On June 13 and 14, 2024, the United States Department of State hosted 22 countries and the European Union for discussions focused on efforts to deter malicious cyber activity and coordinate international responses, led by Liesyl Franz, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Cyberspace and Digital Policy Bureau's Office of International Cyberspace Security.

Representatives from Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the European Union exchanged

views and national experiences.

Participants recognized that every country faces different circumstances. They noted the growing cyber challenges in the Indo-Pacific region, the growing global ransomware threat, the war in Ukraine, and malicious cyber activity designed to destabilize and undermine democratic processes and societies. Nearly half the people of the world are going to be going to the polls in 2024. Representatives considered foreign policy approaches to current and emerging threats of concern in cyberspace and building resilience against those that transgress the norms of responsible state behavior in cyberspace using all tools of statecraft.

## CHINESE TECH GIANT BYTEDANCE MULLS JOB CUTS IN INDONESIA



ISTANBUL – Chinese tech giant ByteDance is mulling over laying off 450 employees in Indonesia as part of its restructuring efforts following the merger of its e-commerce unit, TikTok Shop, with the Indonesian e-commerce company Tokopedia.

The layoffs account for 9 percent of ByteDance's workforce in the country, the Jakarta Globe reported.

Nuraini Razak, Tokopedia's director of corporate affairs, corroborated that the layoffs stem from the merger.

"We had to make necessary adjustments to the organizational structure as part of the company's strategy to continue growing," Nuraini was cited as saying in an official statement. - *Anadolu*

## JAPAN, INDIA PLEDGE DEEPER COOPERATION

Japan's Prime Minister Kishida Fumio and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi have agreed to deepen bilateral cooperation with an eye on an upcoming visit by the Indian leader to Japan.

Kishida and Modi recently met on the sidelines of the Group of Seven summit in Italy.

Kishida noted that the Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership is in its 10th year. He said looking ahead to the next 10 years, he hopes that bilateral relations will deepen and become more diversified. - *NHK World*

## KING AND QUEEN OF THE NETHERLANDS PAY WORKING VISIT TO UNITED STATES

His Majesty King Willem-Alexander and Her Majesty Queen Máxima recently travel led to the United States for a working visit to the states of Georgia and New York. The visit will take place from Monday, June 10 to June 13, 2024. In Georgia the King and Queen visited Atlanta and Savannah, and in New York they visited Albany and New York City.

The King and Queen were accompanied by the Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management, Mark Harbers. In New York State they were joined by the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, Liesje Schreinemacher.



Royal House of the Netherlands

## Filipino victims of labor exploitation in Brussels repatriated

BRUSSELS – Five Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) who were victims of labor exploitation were repatriated on 12 June 2024. Two others were repatriated on 27 May 2024. The OFWs were recruited by an employer based in Poland, and subcontracted to Belgian companies. Flemish labor inspectors found that the Filipinos had been provided spurious contracts and work permits, and were living in poor conditions.

Through the assistance and support of the DFA Office of the Undersecretary for Migration Affairs, the Philippine Honorary Consulate in Flanders, the Migrant Workers Office in Berlin (MWO-Berlin), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Filipinos were repatriated and given support to restart their lives. OFWs in Europe are encouraged to take steps to avoid being victimized by unscrupulous employers, such as by ensuring that their work contracts and A1 permits or residence IDs are valid.

## US Aid and HCM's Department of Industry and Trade celebrate advances in renewable energy and energy efficiency

HO CHI MINH CITY -- On May 20th, the United States Mission to Vietnam, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) Department of Industry and Trade (DOIT), celebrated their joint success in a five-year partnership advancing renewable energy and energy efficiency in HCMC.

At an event held in HCMC, representatives from both governments and the private sector came together to mark the close of USAID's Vietnam Urban Energy Security project and highlight key results achieved since 2019. Among the participants were Deputy Principal Officer Anne Benjaminson of the U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City, USAID/Vietnam



Mission Director Aler Grubbs, and leadership of the HCMC Department of Industry and Trade and the HCMC Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

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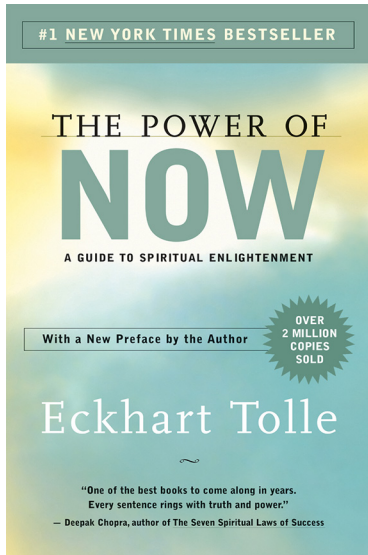
## INM Book Choice

**THE POWER OF NOW:  
 A GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL ENLIGHTENMENT**  
 By ECHART TOILE

It's no wonder that The Power of Now has sold over 16 million copies worldwide and has been translated into over 30 foreign languages. Much more than simple principles and platitudes, the book takes readers on an inspiring spiritual journey to find their true and deepest self and reach the ultimate in personal growth and spirituality: the discovery of truth and light.

In the first chapter, Tolle introduces readers to enlightenment and its natural enemy, the mind. He awakens readers to their role as a creator of pain and shows them how to have a pain-free identity by living fully in the present. The journey is thrilling, and along the way, the author shows how to connect to the indestructible essence of our Being, "the eternal, ever-present One Life beyond the myriad forms of life that are subject to birth and death."

Featuring a new preface by the



author, this paperback shows that only after regaining awareness of Being, liberated from Mind and intensely in the Now, is there Enlightenment.

## Ways to prevent wasted food at home

Planning, prepping, and storing food can help your household waste less food. Below are some tips to help you do just that:

### Planning and Shopping Tips

Making a list with weekly meals in mind can save you money and time. Buy only what you expect to use.

- Keep a running list of meals and their ingredients that your household already enjoys - that way, you can easily choose, shop for, and prepare meals that you are likely to consume.
- Look in your refrigerator, freezer, and pantry first to avoid buying food you already have.
- Plan your meals for the week before you go shopping and buy only the things needed for those meals.
- Make your shopping list based on how many meals you'll eat at home.
- Include quantities on your shopping list noting how many meals you'll make with each item to avoid over-buying.



- Buying in large quantities (e.g., buy one, get one free deals) only saves money if you use all the food before it spoils.
- Buying food from bulk bins saves you money and reduces food waste and packaging if you purchase the amount of food you need.
- Purchase imperfect produce or upcycled products. Imperfect produce may have physical imperfections but is just as safe and nutritious and can sometimes be found at discounted prices. - EPA

## Calorie restriction builds strong muscle, stimulates healthy aging genes

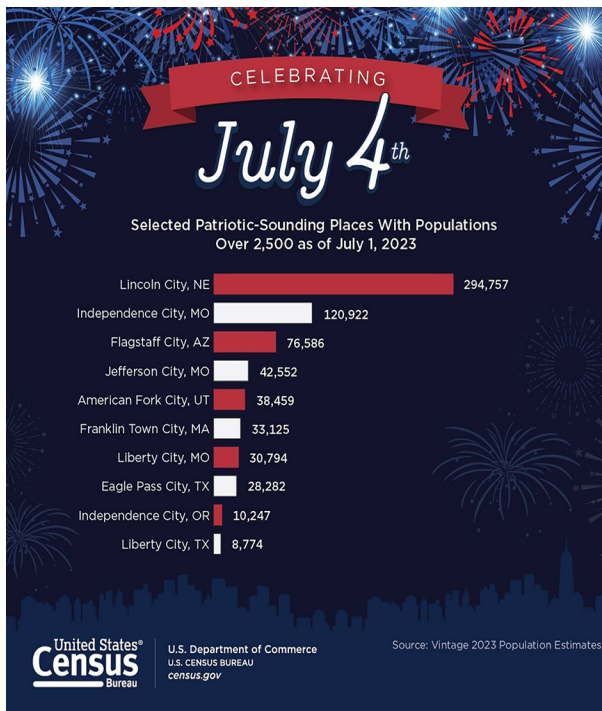
Reducing overall calorie intake may rejuvenate your muscles and activate biological pathways important for good health, according to researchers at the National Institutes of Health and their colleagues. Decreasing calories without depriving the body of essential vitamins and minerals, known as calorie restriction, has long been known to delay the progression of age-related diseases in animal models. This new study, published in *Aging Cell*, suggests the same biological mechanisms may also apply to humans.

Researchers analyzed data from participants in the Comprehensive Assessment of Long-Term Effects of Reducing In-

take of Energy (CALERIE), a study supported by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) that examined whether moderate calorie restriction conveys the same health benefits seen in animal studies. They found that during a two-year span, the goal for participants was to reduce their daily caloric intake by 25%, but the highest the group was able to reach was a 12% reduction.

"A 12% reduction in calorie intake is very modest," said corresponding author and NIA Scientific Director Luigi Ferrucci, M.D., Ph.D. "This kind of small reduction in calorie intake is doable and may make a big difference in your health."

Source: National Institute of Aging



The **BURJ KHALIFA** (known as the Burj Dubai prior to its inauguration) is a skyscraper in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. It is the world's tallest structure. With a total height of 829.8 m (2,722 ft, or just over half a mile) and a roof height (excluding antenna, but including a 242.6 m spire) of 828 m (2,717 ft), the Burj Khalifa has been the tallest structure and building in the world since 2009. - Wikipedia

**Safety Tips**

- Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks, including sparklers.
- Make sure fireworks are legal in your area before buying or using them.
- Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishap.
- Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
- Never try to re-light or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully.
- Never use fireworks while impaired by alcohol or drugs.
- More Fireworks Safety Tips: [cpsc.gov/fireworks](https://www.cpsc.gov/fireworks)

**How & When Injuries Occurred**

2023 Injuries by Firework Type: 800 Firecrackers, 700 Sparklers. 66% of injuries occurred in the weeks before & after the July 4th holiday.

**Injuries & Deaths**

9,700 people were treated in ERs for fireworks injuries in 2023. 8 Deaths from Fireworks in 2023.

**Most Injured Body Parts**

42% of the injuries were burns. Other injuries: 19% EYES, 22% HEAD, FACE, & EARS, 35% HANDS & FINGERS, 11% THROAT/OTHER.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The number of signers of the Declaration of Independence: 56

### It is also worth noting that:

- John Hancock, a merchant by trade, was the first signer. In 2021, more than 1 million business establishments nationally with paid employees were in the retail trade industry like Hancock. Source: 2021 County Business Patterns, Table CB2100CBP
- Benjamin Franklin, who represented Pennsylvania, was the oldest signer of the Declaration of Independence at age 70. Pennsylvania had a resident population of 12,961,683 on July 1, 2023. Edward Rutledge of South Carolina was the youngest signer at age 26. South Carolina had a resident population of 5,373,555 on July 1, 2023.

## SAINT THERESA OF PORTUGAL

Also known as: Tarasia, Teresa  
 Memorial: 17 June  
 Born: 4 October 1178 in Coimbra, Portugal  
 Died: 18 June 1250 at Lórvão Abbey, Portugal of natural causes  
 Canonized: 20 May 1705 by Pope Clement XI (cultus confirmed)



Born a princess, the oldest daughter of King Sancho I. Married to King Alfonso IX of Leon, Spain; northern Portugal formed part of her dowry. Mother of three children. Several years into the marriage it was dissolved by the Vatican upon the revelation that Theresa and Alfonso were cousins.

Single again, Theresa returned to Portugal where she converted the Benedictine monastery at Lórvão into a convent for 300 Cistercian nuns. Theresa then moved into the convent, though she did not take vows. In 1231 she left to settle

a bitter succession dispute between her children over the throne of Leon. With peace between them, she returned to the convent, took vows, and remained there as a nun for the rest of her life.

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## Staying safe during extreme heat

Heat related illnesses and deaths are largely preventable with proper planning and action. There are preventative actions that people can take before heat events occur, as well as actions to take while experiencing heat:

- During times of high temperatures, stay indoors in areas with access to air conditioning. If you do not have access to air conditioning in your home, locate an open cooling center in your area, ex. your local mall, library, church, or other space.
- Make sure to hydrate with water throughout the day, and avoid sugary beverages or drinks with caffeine.
- Take cool showers or baths.
- Do not rely on a fan as your primary cooling device.
- Avoid strenuous activities that can result in overexposure to the sun.
- If you are outdoors, make sure to wear light-colored clothing, a hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen.
- Never leave people or pets in a vehicle.
- Check on family, friends, and neighbors who do not have air conditioning and who spend much of their time alone.

What are the signs of heat related illness?

Heat-related illnesses happen when a person's body temperature rises faster than it can cool itself down. This can cause damage to the brain and other vital organs. Types of heat related illnesses include:

- Heat Cramps - Muscular pains and spasms due to heavy exertion. They are often the first signal that the body is having trouble with the heat.
- Heat Exhaustion - Typically occurs when people exercise heavily or work in a hot, humid place where body fluids are lost through heavy sweating. Blood flow to the skin increases, causing blood flow to decrease to the vital organs. This results in a form of mild shock.
- Heat Stroke - A life-threatening condition. The victim's temperature control system, which produces sweating to cool the body, stops working. The body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may result if the body is not cooled quickly. A person who is experiencing heat stroke needs medical attention. - [heat.gov](http://heat.gov)

Heat Exhaustion	Heat Stroke
<p><b>ACT FAST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to a cooler area</li> <li>• Loosen clothing</li> <li>• Sip cool water</li> <li>• Seek medical help if symptoms don't improve</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACT FAST</b></p> <p><b>CALL 911</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move person to a cooler area</li> <li>• Loosen clothing and remove extra layers</li> <li>• Cool with water or ice</li> </ul>
<p>Dizziness Thirst Heavy Sweating Nausea Weakness</p>	<p>Confusion Dizziness Becomes Unconscious</p>
<p><i>Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke.</i></p>	<p><i>Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.</i></p>
<p>Stay Cool, Stay Hydrated, Stay Informed!</p>	



### Driving Tips

## DANGERS OF DRIVING INTO SUN

Driving on a beautiful sunny day can provide stunning scenery, but it can also create a hazard if the driver's view is compromised by a glaring sun.



Just after sunrise and before sunset the sun can shine directly into drivers' eyes, leaving many motorists driving with a glare. This glare can make it much harder to see the road ahead and potential hazards creating an added risk to drivers.

When sun glare is an issue slow down and use extra caution especially while driving through school zones.

So how can you protect yourself? AAA offers these tips for motorists when driving into the sun:

- Invest in polarized sunglasses – they can help reduce glare.
- Utilize your sun visor – it can help to block out the sun.
- Leave more following room – when the sun is in your eyes it can be hard to see what the car ahead is doing. This is one more time when it pays to leave more room between you and the next vehicle.

- Drive with your headlights on to increase your visibility to other drivers
- Additional tips:
  - Keep your windshield clean, inside and out
  - Check your windshield for pitting and cracks
  - Avoid storing papers or other items on the dashboard
  - If having a difficult time seeing the road, use lane markings to help guide you.

Rarely will visibility be absolutely perfect while driving, but if motorists know this and make the proper adjustments, you can minimize any additional risks that come with less-than-optimal visual conditions.

## WAYS TO SUPPORT AND CARE FOR OUR ELDERS

1. Spend some quality time with them
2. Never criticize their advice
3. Always respect them
4. Plan to eat together
5. Help them to age in the digital era
6. Encourage bonding with your kids
7. Choose caregiving services whenever needed

Source: Assured Home Nursing

## 4 STEPS TO FOOD SAFETY

How do you prevent food poisoning?

Did you know that an estimated 1 in 6 Americans will get sick from food poisoning this year alone? Food poisoning not only sends 128,000 Americans to the hospital each year—it can also cause long-term health problems. You can help keep your family safe from food poisoning at home by following these four simple steps: clean, separate, cook and, chill.

**Clean:** Wash Hands, Utensils, and Surfaces Often

Germs that can make you sick can survive in many places around your kitchen, including your food, hands, utensils, cutting boards, and countertops.

**Separate:** Don't Cross Contaminate  
Use separate cutting boards and plates for produce, meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs:

**Cook to the Right Temperature**  
Food is safely cooked when the internal temperature is high enough to kill germs that can make you sick:

**Chill:** Refrigerate and Freeze Food Properly

Refrigerate perishable foods within 2 hours:

Source: [foodsafety.gov](http://foodsafety.gov)

## HOW TO AVOID A SCAM

### Four Signs That It's a Scam

1. Scammers PRETEND to be from an organization you know. Scammers often pretend to be contacting you on behalf of the government, a business, like a utility company, a tech company, or a charity asking for donations.
2. Scammers say there's a PROBLEM or a PRIZE. They might say you're in trouble with the government. Or someone in your family had an emergency. Others will say you won money in a or sweepstakes but have to pay a fee to get it.
3. Scammers PRESSURE you to act immediately. They might threaten to arrest you, sue you, take away your driver's or business license, or deport you.
4. Scammers tell you to PAY in a specific way. They often insist that you can only pay by using cryptocurrency, wiring money through a company like

MoneyGram or Western Union, using a payment app, or putting money on a gift card and then giving them the numbers on the back of the card.

Some will send you a check (that will later turn out to be fake), then tell you to deposit it and send them money.

### How To Avoid a Scam

Block unwanted calls and text messages.

Don't give your personal or financial information in response to a request that you didn't expect.

Resist the pressure to act immediately.

Never pay someone who insists that you can only pay with cryptocurrency, a wire transfer, a payment app, or a gift card. And never deposit a check and send money back to someone.

Before you do anything else, stop and talk to someone you trust.

## Health Update

By DR. ZHAOPING LI

Director of UCLA Center for Human Nutrition

**Q:** Can relying on TikTok trends for nutritional advice be harmful? If so, what should people look out for?

**Dr. Li:** Absolutely. Nutrition advice needs to be scientifically based and should come from those who have been formally trained in the field. The foods we eat play an important role in disease prevention and treatment, so it should be considered medicine.

People – especially parents and teens – should seek advice from physicians, health care providers, and those trained in nutrition, such as registered dietitians. They can also get information from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and websites of major academic medical centers.

**Q:** Take the "oatzeptic" example circulating social media today. Is there any scientific evidence supporting the effectiveness of oats and lime juice for weight loss?

**Dr. Li:** No, but by coining a name that sounds like Ozempic, I can see why people might be easily fooled into thinking it may be based on science or work like Ozempic. If oats and lime juice are used as meal substitutes, it may support weight loss efforts, but the weight loss would be due to a calorie deficit.

Oats and oatmeal are nutritious and should be considered part of a healthy diet. They have been proven to help reduce cholesterol and blood pressure. Fiber in oatmeal can also impact hormones that regulate hunger and appetite and help one feel full for longer. Lime juice is a source of vitamin C. But depending on this concoction for dramatic weight loss is foolhardy and could be especially harmful to those with underlying health conditions or the elderly.

## Public Affairs with AWEE ABAYARI



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## 300 int'l delegates in Cebu for UN tourism events

CEBU CITY – Over 300 delegates from 30 countries worldwide will converge in Cebu this week for the two events of the United Nations Tourism Organization (UNTO).

In a statement, the UNTO said the country was chosen to host two separate events, both will be held here.

The first event –the inaugural of the UN Tourism Regional Forum on Gastronomy Tourism for Asia and the Pacific, takes place on June 26.

“It will bring together destinations and international experts to exchange knowledge and best practices, with the

objective of harnessing its transformative power, especially for the benefit of local communities and the environment,” the organizers said.

The UN Tourism will hold its 36th Joint Commission Meeting of the Commission for East Asia and the Pacific and the Commission for South Asia on June 28.

The statement said the Joint Commission Meeting is a major UN meeting. The tourism body is expected to discuss preparations for the World Tourism Day 2024.

The delegates will also discuss on

Friday the implementation and prioritization of sustainable tourism, adopting a theme that focuses on green tourism and education.

The provincial government will highlight Cebu’s tourism as one of the country’s biggest players in the industry.

The provincial government’s media arm said the delegates of the two events will be treated on a tour to Camotes Island, Dalaguete, Argao, and the world-renowned Bojo River in Aloguinsan town.

The province will also host a gala night and fashion show, featuring creations of Cebuano designers. (PNA)



**UN TOURISM.** Governor Gwendolyn Garcia and her daughter, Department of Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia-Frasco (left and right, facing camera), discuss with provincial officials the final preparation for the two events of the United Nations Tourism Organization on June 26 and 28, 2024. The province will treat the 300 international delegates to a tour of Cebu’s prime destinations. (Photo courtesy of Cebu Capitol PIO)

## A SUMMER OF CULTURE IN PALMA

### Mystical traditions and new Julian Opie art exhibition

With its captivating blend of history, culture and natural beauty, Mallorca’s capital of Palma offers the perfect sunny escape for travellers seeking to immerse themselves in the essence of Mediterranean life. From the magical Night of San Juan to British artist Julian Opie’s brand-new art street exhibition, Palma is the place to be this summer.

The enchanting annual celebration of La Noche de San Juan (Saint John’s Night) takes place on the evening of the summer solstice on 23 June, with bonfires marking the transition from spring to summer. This mystical tradition is said to bring good luck to those who leap over the fire and make a wish. Throughout the island and across Playa de Palma’s beaches, visitors can mark the shortest night of the year by taking part in the music and dancing, watching the fireworks and walking through the torchlit beaches.

A popular area to visit during the day is Palma’s Parc de la Mar, the park located at the foot of the medieval walls, in front of the iconic La Seu Cathedral. Various activities here, such as drumming courses, folk dances and cooking displays



attracting thousands of people each year. The night officially begins at 11pm with the “correfoc” (fire-run) when local Mallorcans traditionally dress up as devils and run through the streets with torches. This is said to scare away evil spirits and bring good luck. At midnight, participants often mark the end of the rituals by bathing in the moonlight on the nearby beaches of Playa de Palma.

## UN Tourism launches its first regional Forum on Gastronomy Tourism in the Philippines

The First UN Tourism Regional Forum on Gastronomy Tourism for Asia and the Pacific will take place in Cebu, The Philippines, on 26-27 June 2024. Organized in conjunction with the 36th Joint Meeting of the UN Tourism Commission for East Asia and the Pacific & the UN Tourism Commission for South Asia (36th CAP-CSA), it will mark the first time that the Gastronomy Forum is taken to the regional level.

Driven by the growing interest in food among travellers seeking authentic experiences, as well as the substantial opportunities it presents for sustainable socio-economic development, cultural exchange, and community well-being, the First UN Tourism Regional Forum on Gastronomy Tourism for Asia and the Pacific will serve as a platform to celebrate the power of gastronomy tourism. It will bring together destinations and international experts to exchange knowledge and best practices, with objective of harnessing its transformative power, especially for the benefit of local communities and the environment.

## Las Vegas is fireworks destination for the 4th of July celebration

From spectacular fireworks extravaganzas to fabulous pool parties and wow-worthy resident headliners, Las Vegas is an ideal destination for Fourth of July.

Several fireworks shows will light up the night sky throughout the week all around the Las Vegas valley. Many resorts are also putting on special firework viewing parties for the occasion.



## Sofia to host 20th World Meeting of Bulgarian Media in May 2025

ISMIL, Ukraine – Sofia will host the 20th World Meeting of Bulgarian Media on May 24, 2025, Bulgarian News Agency (BTA) Director General Kiril Valchev announced at the closing of the 19th edition in Ukraine held on June 18-21.

The BTA set the 20th World Meeting on May 24 which is the Day of the Holy Brothers Cyril and Methodius, of the Bulgarian Alphabet, Education and Culture, and of Slavic Literature in Bulgaria.

BTA has had five strategic goals in recent years and BTA has organized meetings dedicated to four of them, Valchev said.

The 2018 meeting in Skopje has a theme “Media and Memory”, the 2021 meeting in Bulgaria’s Rila monastery and Kyustendil was about “Media and the Truth”, the 2022 meeting in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv was about “Media and Salvation”, the 2023 meeting in the Bulgarian town of Kazanlak was about “Media and Freedom”.

“The fifth, and probably the major goal of the media, is knowledge,” he said, referring to the motto of the next meeting. The last meeting’s theme was “Media and Community”.

Valchev said the point of these meetings is for the Bulgarian media to help preserve the Bulgarian community. He said there should be a permanent narrative about Bulgarians abroad, which should be directed to them by the Bulgarian media around the world and the media in Bulgaria.

Organized by BTA, the 19th World Meeting of Bulgarian Media was held in Odesa, Bolhrad, and Izmail, Ukraine on June 21. It was supported by Aurubis Bulgaria, A1 Bulgaria, Glavbolgarstroy Holding AD, Euroins Insurance Group, Postbank, SOF Connect, and the 13 Centuries of Bulgaria National Endowment Fund.- BTA



**WORLD MEETING.** Bulgarian News Agency (BTA) Director General Kiril Valchev at the Science and Universities as appearing in Bulgarian Media panel during the 19th World Meeting of Bulgarian Media in Izmail, Ukraine on June 21, 2024. The BTA organized the event. (BTA Photo/Milena Stoykova)

## Sports

### PH athletes begin training in France for 2024 Olympics

MANILA – Work began in earnest at the Team Philippines training camp in Metz, France on Sunday with Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) president Abraham “Bambol” Tolentino and Chef de Mission Jonvic Remulla leading the rounds at the all-in facility where the Olympics-bound Filipino athletes will get in harness for a month.

This marks the first time that the POC is conducting a training camp for Olympic athletes a month before competition—the Paris Olympics start July 26.

The first batch of the 15 Filipino athletes who are so far qualified for the Olympics included weightlifters Vanessa Sarno and Elreen Ando, boxers Aira Villegas, Hergie Bacayadan, Carlo Paalam and Nesthy Petecio, rower Joanie Delgado and weightlifter John Febuar Ceniza.

Expected to arrive in Metz in the next few days are boxer Eumir Felix Marcial, fencer Samantha Catantan and gymnasts Carlos Yulo, Emma Malabuyo and Levi Ruivivar.

Team Philippines to Paris, Tolentino said, would breach the 20-athlete mark with more qualifiers expected in athletics, golf and swimming—the sport’s international federations will announce the official qualifiers for the Olympics this week.

“The Paris campaign is now in full throttle,” he said. (PR)



**OFF TO METZ.** Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) president Abraham “Bambol” Tolentino (2nd from right) and secretary-general Wharton Chan (left) pose for posterity with 2024 Paris Olympics-bound Filipino athletes at the NAlA Terminal 3 before they leave for Metz, France on Saturday (June 22, 2024). Also in photo are (from left) weightlifters Vanessa Sarno and Elreen Ando, boxers Aira Villegas, Hergie Bacayadan, Carlo Paalam and Nesthy Petecio, rower Joanie Delgado and weightlifter John Febuar Ceniza who will hold a month-long training camp for Olympics set July 26 to Aug. 11. (Photo courtesy of POC)

### PH to host inaugural FIFA Futsal Women’s World Cup in 2025



**FUTSAL WORLD CUP 2025.** Photo show from left): FIFA futsal manager Laura Cusco, director for tournaments Jaime Yarza, PFF president John Gutierrez, and FIFA head of Olympics, Futsal and Beach Soccer Kasra Haghghi. (PNA photo by Jean Malanum)

MANILA – The Philippines will host the inaugural FIFA Futsal Women’s World Cup next year.

Philippine Football Federation (PFF) president John Gutierrez made the announcement during a press conference at Citadines Bay City in Pasay City recently. He was joined by FIFA director for tournaments Jaime Yarza, FIFA head of Olympics, Futsal and Beach Soccer Kasra Haghghi and futsal manager Laura Cusco.

The Philippines was selected among six bidders that included Brazil, Spain and Italy.

The schedule of the tournament is yet to be finalized.

The format will have 16 teams to be drawn into four groups. The top two teams in each group will advance to the knockout phase and eventually to the quarterfinals, semifinals, playoff for third place and final match.

The Philippines is already qualified as host and will join three teams from Asia. The other qualifiers will come from Africa (1), Central, North America and Caribbean (2), South America (3), Oceania (1) and Europe (4).- PNA



# Happy WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

For a better tomorrow, let's start planting more trees and reducing pollution. Make this planet a better place to live.



**UN**   
**environment  
programme**

The 51st edition of World Environment Day was a record-breaking success, with an unprecedented 3,854 official events and tens of millions of online engagements drawing attention to how humanity can counter three often-overlooked perils: land degradation, desertification and drought.

"From Times Square to Trafalgar Square to bus shelters and airports in Beijing, Beirut and Osaka, to billboards in Botswana, Eswatini, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe – World Environment Day is clearly on everyone's mind," said Inger Andersen, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Many of the 5 June discussions focused on how restoring landscapes – a process that includes everything from planting trees to curbing pollution – can help end land degradation, which affects more than 3 billion people.