

# THE NORTH AMERICAN FILIPINO STAR

Volume LXIV No. 4 April 2026 Montreal's only Filipino-Canadian newspaper

## April by-elections sweep secures majority government for Marc Carney



L to R: Tatiana Auguste (Terrebonne, QC), Prime Minister Marc Carney, Dolly Begum (Scarborough-Southwest), and Danielle Martin (University-Rosedale) photo taken before the April 13 by elections posted on X

As of April 2026, Prime Minister Mark Carney's Liberal government has secured a majority in the House of Commons after sweeping three federal by-elections. This milestone, combined with several high-profile floor-crossings from opposition parties, has fundamentally shifted the political landscape and provided the government with a stable

runway until the next scheduled general election in October 2029.

### By-Election Results & Majority Status

The Liberals successfully captured all three seats in the April 13, 2026, by-elections, bringing their caucus to 174 seats in the 343-seat House (two more than the 172 required for a majority).



Prime Minister Mark Carney, right, and Danielle Martin, Liberal Candidate for University-Rosedale by-election riding visit a local business in Toronto on Monday, March 30, 2026. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Nathan Denette

University-Rosedale (ON): Won by physician Danielle Martin. Scarborough Southwest (ON): Won by former provincial NDP deputy leader Doly Begum. Terrebonne (QC): Won by Tatiana Auguste in a narrow victory over the Bloc Québécois, reversing a judicial annulment of the 2025 result.

### The "Cobbled Majority":

This is the first time in Canadian history a majority has been formed mid-mandate through a combination of by-elections and five opposition defections (floor-crossers).

### Significance for the Next 3 Years

See Page 3 Liberal majority

## WTM Day 2026 fosters learning and connection for women in tech (see p.3)



Information agents on hand welcomed attendees as they arrived for Women Techmakers Day on Sat., April 18/26 at Collège de Maisonneuve. (Johanie Bouffard, CityNews)

## One time grocery, essentials top up coming for Canadians in June. What you need to know



The government says more than 12 million Canadians will receive ongoing support through the combined one time and quarterly payments. Photo: iStock/Getty Images. © 2022 Julie Kislev julia1272@hotmail.com Story on page 3



**FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK**

**Insights and perspectives from the Filipino-Canadian diaspora conference**

**Zenaida Ferry-Kharroubi**

Having been invited to speak at the recent McGill and University of Montreal conference—my first formal invitation in six decades in Canada—was a deeply personal milestone. It allowed me to reflect on my own transformation from the corporate world to the classroom, a journey fueled by McGill's 1-G program. Today, that experience, combined with the powerful insights shared at the conference, has solidified and renewed my resolve to build a learning center dedicated to helping ethnic minorities and underserved citizens integrate and thrive.

I have always believed, as Nelson Mandela did, that education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world. For years, I carried the weight of this belief quietly, never asking for help. But as I see our global landscape shifting, I realize that promoting global citizenship is a mission that requires a village. My goal is to bridge the gap for those who arrive in Canada with dreams but face the walls of language and cultural barriers. By creating a curriculum specifically designed to transition underserved newcomers into our secondary and university streams, we aren't just teaching skills—we are empowering future leaders to thrive within our cultural mosaic and, in turn, help the next generation do the same. To turn this vision into a reality, I am looking for more than just staff; I am looking for pioneers. I am calling upon licensed teachers in Science, Technology, English, French, and Mathematics to join me in building a curriculum that

secures a permit from the Ministry of Education and, more importantly, secures the future of our newcomers.

By joining this venture, you are not just teaching; you are building a bridge for families—perhaps even your own—to thrive in a country that celebrates identity rather than erasing it. Canada is a cultural mosaic where we can remove the borders that divide us and live as one family. But to protect our health, prosperity, and security, we need the collective expertise of scientists, engineers, and educators working in unison. Let us stop working in isolation and start building the world's best home, together.

This project is the culmination of 37 years of dedication, but its roots go back even further—to 1861, when Benson Flores became the first recorded Filipino to arrive in Canada. Since then, many waves of our compatriots have arrived seeking a better life. Yet, while we have thrived in local businesses like restaurants, service shops, grocery stores, video stores and daycare centers, our community has yet to establish the major institutions like hospitals, universities and large-scale corporations that secure a permanent legacy. Our lack of representation in higher political office stems from this missing foundation of institutional power. We have some political leaders but we should have more, considering that almost a million Filipinos are now living in Canada.

My dream is to break this cycle by building an accredited private school that will evolve into a university in the

future by those who will pick up the work I started. We must move beyond the local and temporary to create an institution that trains our own future doctors, nurses, engineers, and entrepreneurs. By producing outstanding professionals and business leaders, we naturally cultivate the political leaders of tomorrow who will run for office and advocate for us all. Joining my team of licensed teachers is not just a job; it is the first step in

building a landmark for our community that will stand for centuries.

I believe that miracles can happen as building something greater than one's financial resources is not an obstacle but a challenge to be met with persistence, resilience and fortitude.

If you are a licensed teacher reading this column, I would be grateful if you join my team. Let us contribute to "build Canada strong" by working along with our elected leaders.#

**Philosophical concepts in the psychology of teaching and learning for professional and personal development**

Pedagogy vs. andragogy

The primary difference between the philosophy of education in childhood (pedagogy) and adulthood (andragogy) lies in the purpose, autonomy, and utilization of experience. Childhood philosophy focuses on constructing

foundational knowledge, fostering growth, and preparing for future life, while adult philosophy emphasizes self-directed, practical application to address immediate life or career needs. Both philosophies serve as guides for teachers who wish to help their students succeed.

**Philosophies of Education**



**Essentialism**  
learning the essential like the 3Rs



**Perennialism**  
utilizing the great books



**Progressivism**  
learning by doing



**Existentialism**  
having individual choice.



**Behaviorism**  
modifying behavior



**Constructivism**  
constructing meaning



**Reconstructionism**  
having social reform

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# WTM Day 2026 fosters learning and connection for women in tech

By Johanie Bouffard

Posted April 18, 2026 4:35 pm. Last Updated April 18, 2026 5:38 pm.

More than 400 participants gathered at College de Maisonneuve on Saturday for Women Techmakers Montreal, an event bringing together the tech community to explore the future of the industry, with workshops and discussions on AI, careers, leadership, and gaming.

"No matter where you are in the stage, if you are searching for your first job in tech, if you are already in tech and you are trying to do the next step, it's a way to understand what are the other doing, what are their challenges that you are not alone," said Stefania Pecore, the chapter lead of Women Techmakers Montreal.

Stefania Pecore, chapter lead of Women Techmakers Montreal. (Johanie Bouffard, CityNews)

Noor Hammodi, an AI engineer, explained that, "Tech is a very big field, it's a big umbrella. So if you're someone who's more technical, there's something for you. If you're someone [who] wants something a little bit more vague, you want



**Speakers Michell Payano and Mahsa Rezaei in a photo booth at Women Techmakers Day on Saturday. (Johanie Bouffard, CityNews)**

something more in leadership, there's a little bit of everything for everyone in tech.

Adding, "It's nice to come to events like this to meet other engineers, other people that work in tech, and to discuss ideas and to network and just have a good time."

Mahsa Rezaei, the founder & CEO of Intelligent Nest & Mamanest, hosted a panel with policymakers and tech leaders, using data from a

seven week program to explore barriers facing English speaking women in Quebec's tech industry.

"We are really experiencing a tough time for English speakers, unfortunately, getting a job here in Quebec. And the data and the research show that they have high profiles. They're willing to contribute, and Quebec is losing a lot of money, not tapping into their potential. So we

wanted to understand what are the problems out there," said Rezaei.

Speakers Michell Payano and Mahsa Rezaei in a photo booth at Women Techmakers Day on Saturday. (Johanie Bouffard, CityNews)

Now in its 11th edition, Pecore hopes the event will keep amplifying voices and untold stories of women in tech.

"I really hope that this event will grow even more, that we can reach even more people, and especially that we can reach even more voices because each voice is important," said Pecore.

Rezaei adding, "Everyone is invited in tech. We don't need to have a tech background to be in there. Tech is giving a lot of opportunities and flexibility, especially to women. So my invitation for every woman out there, please use this opportunity and use all of the amazing events that are happening right now in Montreal. And find your positioning in tech, which might be a little bit intimidating, but then when you start, you can find your spot."#

## One time grocery, essentials top up coming for Canadians in June. What you need to know

By Lucas Casaletto

Posted Apr 17, 2026 11:19:41 AM.

Millions of Canadians will receive a one time payment on June 5 as the federal government rolls out a temporary top up to help offset rising grocery and household costs.

The payment is part of the transition to the new Canada Groceries and Essentials Benefit, which will officially replace the GST/HST credit starting in July.

The announcement was made on Friday in Vaughan by Wayne Long, Secretary of State for the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and Financial Institutions, who said the measure is designed to offer immediate affordability relief as food prices continue to outpace overall inflation.

What the June 5 payment is

Eligible Canadians will receive a one time top up equal to 50 per

cent of their GST/HST credit for the 2025-26 benefit year. The payment will appear in accounts the same way the GST/HST credit normally does.

The government says the top up is intended to bridge the gap before the new benefit launches in July.

Who will receive it

You will receive the June 5 payment if you (and your spouse, if applicable) filed a 2024 tax return and were entitled to the GST/HST credit in January 2026.

No separate application is required.

How much will you get?

The amount varies based on income and family size. According to federal estimates, a family of four could receive up to \$1,890 in 2026, including the June top up. A single person could receive up to \$950 in 2026, including the top up.

with China and India, aiming to double non-US exports over the next decade.

**Relations with US:**

Relations remain strained under US President Donald Trump. Carney has positioned himself as a "wartime leader" in a trade war, using counter-tariff revenues to support impacted Canadian workers.

**Immigration:** The government is moving toward a strategy of stable targets and transparent pathways for international students, particularly in STEM, while also advancing a "border security bill" to

Examples provided by the government include:

A family of four with \$40,000 net income:

\$533 one time top up on June 5  
\$272 increase for the 2026-27 benefit year  
Total increase: \$805

A single person with \$25,000 net income:

\$267 one time top up on June 5  
\$136 increase for the 2026-27 benefit year  
Total increase: \$402

What happens in July

On July 3, the GST/HST credit will be renamed the Canada Groceries and Essentials Benefit.

The structure and eligibility rules will remain the same, but quarterly payments will increase by 25 per cent for the next five years. Payments beginning in July will be

manage refugee claims and law enforcement powers.

**Domestic Policy:** Immediate focus has shifted to affordability, including a temporary suspension of federal fuel taxes and major investments in housing and AI infrastructure.

**Defence:** As a majority, the Liberals face increased pressure to deliver on significant promises regarding national defence and transforming Canada into an "energy superpower".

The Conservative Party, led by

based on information from 2025 tax returns.

The government says more than 12 million Canadians will receive ongoing support through the combined one time and quarterly payments.

Why the program is changing

According to federal data, food prices have risen faster than overall inflation since 2020, costing the average household an additional \$782. The new benefit is intended to help offset grocery bills and other essential costs that have risen faster than inflation.

"We know that many Canadians are feeling the pinch when buying groceries and necessities," Long said. "We are offering this one time payment to help with affordability and relieves some of that pressure for those who need it most."

Pierre Poilievre, has criticized the legitimacy of this majority, calling it the result of "backroom deals" rather than a general election mandate. However, the current alignment likely ensures no federal election will be triggered before 2029.

Summaries of the by-election results and editorial analysis about the leadership style of Prime Minister Marc Carney - files from CBC News, CTV News, BBC, The Hub, Globe and Mail (Canadian Press)

From Page 1 Liberal majority

With a majority, the Carney government can now pass legislation without relying on the support of opposition parties like the NDP, effectively ending the period of minority governance that characterized the last several years.

**Category Impact of the New Liberal Majority**

**Trade:** Carney aims to diversify trading partners to reduce reliance on the US. This includes re-opening trade and investment talks

# A dream of the ancestors: First Nations University of Canada celebrates 50 years

What we're doing is living the dream, we're living that vision,' FNUniv president Jacqueline Ottmann says

Darla Ponace · CBC News · Posted: Apr 15, 2026

Even before it was established, First Nations University of Canada was a dream of the ancestors, says its current president.

"We know that all education is identified within treaties as a value," Jacqueline Ottmann said.

"The desire and vision for a higher education institution that was First Nation-owned and operated was alive and very real for First Nation leaders."

FNUniv first opened its doors in May 1976 as Saskatchewan Indian Federated College.

The vision was for a culturally safe institution that teaches Indigenous core values, systems and languages.

"What we're doing is living the dream, we're living that vision," Ottman said.

In its early days as SIFC, its operations were scattered among various buildings throughout the University of Regina's campus. Eventually, it moved into a set of trailers located behind the College West building.

It was renamed in 2003 when the new Regina campus opened its doors nearby on the atim kâ-mihkosit (Red Dog) Urban Reserve, the result of a historic partnership with Star Blanket Cree Nation on Treaty 4 Territory.

A building is shown through a metal sculpture of a bison. The name on the building is visible through cutouts in the sculpture.

This agreement established Canada's first urban reserve focused on education, underscoring a commitment to Indigenous sovereignty, self-determination and genuine nation-to-nation collaboration.

Designed by internationally recognized Indigenous architect Douglas Cardinal, the Regina campus building faces south, mirroring the structure of a traditional sundance lodge.

The design process was guided by elders, who also chose the colours for each level to symbolize the natural world.

Ottmann said construction of the new building was a momentous event. The long-term goal is to achieve self-governance within the next 50 years, she said.

"The vision is also for the university to be self-determined and fully autonomous, so that's something that we're working towards right now, is academic autonomy. We're autonomous in every other way. And so that is just one of those major priorities and goals that we're working towards."

She's proud of all alumni — more than 6,500 of them — and current and future students who work hard and will continue to do so in the future to complete their studies.

Blair Stonechild was one of the first official instructors, hired in December 1976.

"It was something that was very



First Nations University of Canada's main campus is in Regina. (Jacob Morgan/CBC)

new because there had never been a post-secondary institution like this," he said.

"I remember Ida Wasacase, the founding president, said, 'Well, why don't you come and teach a class?' And so I gave it a go, and it was a bit of a challenge because we had so few teaching materials," he recalled.

"I remember that first class in January 1977, we had about a dozen students, and that was the start of the whole thing."

Over the last 50 years he's had



Dr. Blair Stonechild has been a professor at First Nations University of Canada for 50 years. (Will Draper/CBC)

the chance to see many programs develop and staff members and students come through.

"I think a lot of people don't realize how significant an accomplishment this is, because a lot of people really questioned whether an institution like this would work and also question what's the value and why is it necessary to have a First Nations institution," he said.

"We've definitely proven that we have many unique things to offer. We also provide an environment that is culturally relevant and a community type of atmosphere that really enables Indigenous students to thrive as well as many non-Indigenous students who come here and they want to learn about our culture and our history."

Stonechild said it's a safe and positive environment for everyone to learn.

When he first became a professor it wasn't his original plan; at one point he wanted to be a lawyer and go to law school, because he knew about land claims and the treaties, he said.

"I always tell people that the most things I ever learned in higher education was not from the universities, but rather was from the elders. That is something which I wanted to share with other students."

When he attended residential school and a non-Indigenous high school in Regina, he always felt there was never proper acknowledgement and respect for Indigenous people or culture, Stonechild said.

"I always felt that we were as good as anyone else as far as the quality



Jacqueline Ottmann is the current president of the First Nations University of Canada. (Darla Ponace/CBC)

of our abilities and our character. I always felt that education was a sense of empowerment. I know it certainly was for me."

He found it deeply fulfilling to watch students on their journeys



FNUniv's annual spring celebration powwow will be held on April 18 and 19 at the Brandt Centre in Regina. (Bryan Eneas/CBC)

through FNUniv. Initially, some were unaware of the formal process, believing that obtaining a degree was as simple as

walking in and taking classes.

"Students found out that there's a lot of hard work involved, and it takes a lot of focus," he said.

"For a lot of students, it took a bit of stumbling through, I guess you might say, to finally find their grounding. But with determination, and despite having family problems and raising kids and stuff, they managed to succeed."

He attributes much of that success to faculty members, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

"Without them, I don't really think we could have achieved the quality that we have. There are many, many people who helped make this place a success," Stonechild said.

The now-emeritus professor is retiring from full-time teaching. While he looks forward to this new chapter, he plans to stay connected with the university and may return for occasional teaching, he said.

Sol G. Sanderson, a founding member of the university, said it was important to fight for the institution in the 1970s so more Indigenous people could learn about Canadian history from an Indigenous perspective, and Indigenous philosophies would have a place to thrive.

"Over 500 years of colonial genocide policies targeting the termination of our way of life — the educational system was destroyed by these 500 years of colonial policies," Sanderson said.

"When we look at that process of our way of life and our worldview, our philosophy or customs or traditions or practices, our beliefs and values that were outlawed by the [British] empire laws and policies."

He hopes the university's next goal to secure jurisdiction over Indigenous education, aligning with treaty rights, will come to fruition in the next 50 years, he said.

FNUniv's annual spring celebration powwow will be held on April 18 and 19 at the Brandt Centre in Regina. Special speakers, acknowledgments and a dance will be

held for alumni. Everyone is welcome.

# Balita sa wikang Pilipino TAGALOG NEWS

## 48 binitbit ng NBI sa 'Love Scam' hub sa Parañaque

Ludy Bermudo - Pilipino Star Ngayon  
April 21, 2026 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Inaresto ng National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) ang 48 indibidwal kabilang ang pitong dayuhan na sangkot sa iligal na pagpapatakbo ng online “Love Scamming”, Pig Butchering” at “Cryptocurrency Investment Fraud”, sa isang entrapment operation sa isang condominium sa Parañaque City, noong Abril 17.

Lumilitaw sa ulat na sinalakay ng NBI-Special Action Unit (NBI-SAU) ang online scam hub, na mala-call

units, natukoy ang mga nakahandang scripts sa digital files—ang step by step na susundin ng scam agent sa pakikipag-usap at panghihimok sa potensyal na mga biktima, para sa modus-operandi.

Uutusan din umano ang biktima na maglipat ng pondo sa pamamagitan ng iba’t ibang cryptocurrency wallets at pinapanatili rin ang pakikipag-ugnayan sa mga biktima upang patuloy na huthutan.

Isinailalim na sa inquest proceedings ang mga suspek sa reklamong paglabag sa Section 4(b)(2)



**National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) officials present to the media 48 arrested suspects, including Filipino and foreign nationals, from an alleged online scam hub operating inside a condominium complex in Parañaque City during a press briefing on April 20, 2026.**

center office ang set-up nang mapatunayan sa isinagawang validation ang iligal na gawain, gamit ang Warrant to Search, Seize, and Examine Computer Data (WSSECD).

Nadatnan ng mga ahente ng NBI-SAU sa ilang condominium units ang maraming computer workstations, laptops, mobile phones, internet routers, at iba pang digital devices, na katulad ng set-up ng lehitimong call center.

(Computer-Related Fraud) ng Republic Act 10175 (Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012) at ng RA 12010 (AFASA Law).



Sa pagsusuri sa computer

## Tumaas ang tiwala (trust) kay Pangulong Marcos, bumaba ang “performance” ng VP Sara Duterte



**President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (kanan) at Vice President Sara Duterte (kaliwa)**

MANILA, Philippines — Ang tiwala at “performance rating” ng pangulong Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. ay tumaas nitong unang “quarter” ng 2026 mula sa survey na ginawa mula ng 19-25 ng Marso. 54% ng mga respondents ay may tiwala kay Presidente Marcos, Jr. Ito ay may 6% na pagtaas sa 48% sa survey noong Disyembre 2025. Iyong mga taong walang tiwala kay Marcos ay halos hindi nagbago, mula sa 31% na naging 30% samantalang ang mga taong hindi makapagpasya (undecided) ay bumaba mula sa 22% at naging 16%.

Ang mga Pilipinong nasisiyahan sa “performance” ni Marcos ang tumaas mula sa 51% at naging 54% ngunit ang mga hindi nasisiyahan ay bumaba ng kaunti mula sa 27% na naging 26%.

Sara’s ratings Patuloy ang tiwala ng mga Pilipino kay Vice President Sara Duterte kahit na ang “trust ratings” niya ay hindi nagbago, may kaunting pagbabago sa “performance rating

Mula sa 53%, may 55% ang nagsabing may tiwala sila sa kanya samantalag 26% naman ang walang tiwala. Ang 19% ay “undecided” na bumaba sa dating 21%.

Sa “performance,” 50% ang may tiwala sa kanya, na bumaba ng 4% mula sa Disyembre 2025.

Iyong mga “dissatisfied” ay nanatiling 28% at iyong mga hindi makapagpasiya, (undecided) ay nanatili sa 28% at iyong mga undecided respondents ay tumaas mula sa 18% at naging 22%.

Ayon sa OCTA, ang pagtaas ng “performance ratings at “trust” kay Marcos ay dahil sa persepyon sa kanya ay nagiging mas malinaw at pabor sa kanyang leadership.

“Taken together, these findings point to a widening perception gap: while public assessments of the President appear to be becoming more defined and favorable, views of the Vice President are becoming more mixed and differentiated,” OCTA said.

“This divergence may reflect evolving public expectations shaped by both domestic political developments and external pressures, including global geopolitical tensions and their potential economic impacts, and may influence how Filipinos assess leadership responsiveness and governance in the coming period,” it added.)

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# “Voices of the Filipino Community in Quebec: Memorializing the Past, Building the Future”

By Jess Agustin

Last weekend, something remarkable happened at Université de Montréal.

The conference “Voices of the Filipino Community in Quebec:

The conference opened on Friday evening with a keynote by Ethel Tungohan, Canada Research Chair in Canadian Migration Policy, Impacts, and Activism at York University, setting a strong foundation for the day that followed.

diaspora. The response was overwhelming and humbling. Many came up afterward asking for a copy of the speech. It is forthcoming for publication.

But the keynotes were only part of the story. The three panels,

brought moving personal stories, deep insights, and grounded analysis that no keynote speech could replace. They were the heart of it.

And it ended on a note of promise: the final panel on Negotiated Identities featured all young, dynamic



L to R: Fely Rosales-Carino, Community News Editor, North American Filipino Star; Amy Manon-og, Chair, Filipino-Canadian Nurses Heritage Guild; Zenaida Ferry-Kharroubi, Chief Editor & Publisher, North American Filipino Star & Director-General, Gilmore College International.; Prof. Kazue Takamura, Senior Faculty Lecturer Institute for the Study of International Development, McGill University; and Roy Liu, performance artist. Panel 1 speakers delivered their speeches on the topic of “Remembering the past,” held in the morning of April 11, 2026 at the University of Montreal, 3744 Jean Brillant, Montreal, QC.



Jess Agustin, keynote speaker for the day which sets the tone for the three panels of speakers on “Remembering the Past, Community Placemaking, and Negotiated Identities.”



L to R: Penelope Joy Lagora, Pinoys on Parliament; Amihan del Rosario Tapan, McGill Filipino Asian Students Association; Shari Ramos, Filipinos of Montreal; and Veronica Jano Bertiz, Centre Kapwa.



L to R: Al Abdon, Chairman, Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal; Jasmin de la Calzada, Chairperson, Pinay Quebec; Rev. Artemio Calaycay, Priest, Iglesia Filipina Independiente; and Eric Lazaro Magno, chef and owner, Buboy (Filipino restaurant).

Memorializing the Past, Building the Future” exceeded all expectations. Well attended, deeply engaged, and long overdue.

I had the honor of delivering the Saturday keynote, speaking on memories, community place-making, and negotiated identities in the Filipino

Remembering the Past, Community Placemaking, and Negotiated Identities, were where the conference truly came alive. The panel presenters

women whose voices, energy, and clarity bode well for the future of the

See Page 7 Filipino community

# Staffing shortages worsened by Bill 9 that includes publicly funded daycare centers

The recent passage and expansion of secularism legislation, specifically Bill 9 and Bill 94, have significantly altered staffing rules within Quebec's public schools and broader government sectors. These laws prioritize the "laicity" (secularism) of the state by restricting the use of religious symbols and practices among staff.

## Bill 9: Reinforcement of Laicity in Québec

Adopted in April 2026, Bill 9 expands the restrictions established by the original 2019 secularism law

### •(Impact on Daycare Staff (CPEs):

The most significant change applies to workers in publicly funded and subsidized daycare centres (centres de la petite enfance). These staff members are now subject to the same ban on wearing religious symbols that applies to public school teachers.

### •Expansion to Private Schools:

The ban on religious symbols now extends to new employees in subsidized private schools.

### •Restrictions on Religious Practice:

The law prohibits religious practice (such as group prayer) in public institutions including universities, CEGEPs, hospitals, and foster homes.

### •Acquired Rights (Grandfathering):

While staff employed before the bill was introduced may be eligible for "acquired rights" to keep wearing religious symbols, this protection is lost if they change positions or move to a different daycare or school.

**Bill 94:** Expansion in Public Schools Adopted in October 2025, Bill 94 (often



**Daycares say the CAQ government's new secularism bill, which bans staff from wearing religious symbols, will create staffing, financial and logistical headaches. (Rowan Kennedy/CBC News)**

referred to alongside Bill 9) broadened the 2019 ban to cover virtually all school personnel.

• **Staffing Reductions:** Unlike the original law that targeted teachers and principals, this bill affects secretaries, janitors, lunch monitors, and even parent volunteers who interact with students.

• **Job Losses:** Reports from April 2026 indicate that school service centres (CSS) are losing dozens of staff members. For example, Montreal's largest service centre, the CSSDM, reported losing over 100 support staff due to non-compliance or resignations.

• **Retroactive Deadlines:** The "acquired rights" cutoff was set to March 19, 2025 (the day the bill was tabled), meaning anyone hired between March and October 2025 is ineligible for exemptions.

### Other Staffing and Budgetary Measures

Beyond secularism laws, recent administrative and budgetary changes have also impacted staffing levels:

### •Hiring Caps and Budget Cuts:

In mid-2025, the government initially proposed \$570 million in cuts to the education system and imposed strict hiring caps. After significant pushback from school boards, the government reinvested \$540 million and lifted the official hiring caps in October 2025, though schools must still operate within their allocated budgets.

• **Legal Challenges:** The Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) and the English Montreal School Board (EMSB) have launched legal challenges against budgetary rules that prevent them from accessing surplus funds for staffing.

### Specific Sectors Affected

The following sectors now face bans on wearing religious symbols or providing religiously tailored services:

• **Educational Childcare Services:** Workers in subsidized daycare centres (CPEs) and home-based childcare coordinating offices are now prohibited from wearing religious symbols.

• **Subsidized Private Schools:** These schools must now comply with the religious symbol ban and can no longer select students or staff based on religious criteria. Failure to comply within three years can result in the loss of government accreditation and subsidies.

• **Health and Senior Care:** Employees in private health institutions under government agreement (such as long-term care homes) and intermediate resources for seniors or adults with disabilities are now subject to the symbol ban.

• **Youth Protection:** The ban now covers personnel within the youth protection system and those involved in youth justice supervision or custody.

• **Immigration Services:** Staff providing welcome, francization, or integration programs for immigrants are prohibited from wearing religious symbols.

• **Public Post-Secondary Institutions:** Dedicated prayer spaces are banned in universities and CEGEPs during operating hours, though exceptions exist for certain heritage chapels (e.g., Loyola Chapel at Concordia and Birks Heritage Chapel at McGill).

Summaries of news from CTV News, CBC News, Global News, Montreal Gazette, and City News (Montreal)

From Page 6 Filipino Community  
Filipino diaspora in Canada. It brought to life the closing words of my address: "Memory without hope can harden into grief. Hope without memory becomes shallow. We need both. We need pagalala and pag-asa. Remembrance and hope."

The conference also celebrated Filipino artistic excellence, and the artists gave it life. Mara "Mar" Cortez, the Filipino-Canadian multidisciplinary artist whose stunning work graces the conference poster,

Pagalala at Pagasa (Remembrance and Hope), joined us via Zoom from Vancouver, bringing her research into Baybayin and precolonial Filipino visual culture into the room. Mishael Eusebio, Juilliard-trained opera singer and recent Grammy nominee, reminded us that the Filipino diaspora story is also one of extraordinary artistic achievement, made possible, as he himself says, by parents who left everything behind in the Philippines to give him this life. And Roy Lumagbas, alias roylu., Gatineau-based visual and

performance artist, brought the restless, socially engaged energy that has defined his practice from Cebu to Quebec.

Together, the two days flowed with a coherence that is rare. The themes built on each other. The conversations went deep.

There have been many events involving Filipino organizations and academia, especially here in Montreal. This one stands apart in its scope, its depth, and its willingness to engage the Filipino diaspora.

Heartfelt congratulations to the organizers: CSEASI/ICESEA, CETASE at Université de Montréal, McGill University, and the McGill Southeast Asia Lecture Series.

<https://southeastasiastudiesmontreal.ca/>. And to the McGill Arts Opportunities Fund for making it possible.

This should not be a one-time event. It has already sparked interest in other parts of Canada. Similar initiatives in cities like Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, and Ottawa are not just recommended. They are needed. #

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## Six women win 2026 Goldman prize, world's top environmental award

First all-women cohort of winners hails from Colombia, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, South Korea, the UK and the US.

By Lyndal Rowlands, Al Jazeera  
Published On 21 Apr 2026

This year's prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize has been awarded to six grassroots environmental activists from around the world for their efforts to fight climate change and save biodiversity.

For the first time since the prize

Colombia.

Finch, Europe's winner, told The Times newspaper she will use her prize money to keep fighting fossil fuels.

Together with the Weald Action Group, she fought oil drilling in southeastern England for more than a decade, securing the "Finch ruling" from the Supreme Court in June 2024, stating



Iro Tanshi speaks to her team members as they set out to set traps for bats in Etankpini village in Odukpani, Cross River State [Handout/File: Etinosa Yvonne/Goldman Environmental Prize]

was created in 1989 by philanthropists Richard and Rhoda Goldman, all recipients of the award are women: Iro Tanshi, from Nigeria; Borim Kim, from South Korea; Sarah Finch, from the United Kingdom; Theonila Roka Matbob, from Papua New Guinea; Alannah Acaq Hurley, from the United States; and Yuvelis Morales Blanco, from Colombia.

Sometimes described as the "Green Nobel", the Goldman Prize

that authorities must consider fossil fuels' impacts on the global climate before granting permission to extract them.

Two other recipients have fought against the destructive environmental impact of mining projects.

Papua New Guinea's Roka Matbob, winner for Islands and Island Nations, led a successful campaign that saw the world's second-largest mining company, Rio Tinto, agree to address



Yuvelis Morales Blanco, winner of the 2026 Goldman Environmental Prize, shows a fish caught on a tour with fishermen along the Magdalena River in Colombia [Handout: Christian EscobarMora/Goldman Environmental Prize]

recipients are chosen from each of the world's six primary regions. They each receive \$200,000 in prize money.

"While we continue to fight uphill to protect the environment and implement lifesaving climate policies – in the US and globally – it is clear that true leaders can be found all around us," said John Goldman, vice president of the Goldman Environmental Foundation.

"The 2026 Prize winners are proof positive that courage, hard work, and hope go a long way toward creating meaningful progress."

Morales Blanco, the winner for the region of South and Central America, fought some of the world's biggest oil companies to successfully stop the introduction of commercial fracking into

environmental and social devastation caused by its Panguna copper mine, 35 years after it was closed following an uprising.

And the award recipient for North America, Acaq Hurley, from the Yup'ik nation in the US, successfully fought alongside 15 tribal nations to stop a mega-copper and gold mining project that threatened ecosystems in Alaska's Bristol Bay region, including the largest wild salmon runs in the world.

Meanwhile, Nigeria's Tanshi, Africa's winner, rediscovered the endangered short-tailed roundleaf bat and has been working to save its refuge, the Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary, from human-induced wildfires.

## Chernobyl's radioactive landscape is a testament to nature's resilience and survival spirit

By DEREK GATOPOULOS and EVGENIY MALOLETKA

Updated 3:27 PM EDT, April 19, 2026

CHERNOBYL, Ukraine (AP) — On contaminated land that is too dangerous for human life, the world's wildest horses roam free.

Across the Chernobyl exclusion zone, Przewalski's horses — stocky, sand-colored and almost toy-like in appearance — graze in a radioactive landscape larger than Luxembourg.

On April 26, 1986, an explosion at the nuclear power plant in Ukraine sent radiation across Europe and forced the evacuation of entire towns, displacing tens of thousands. It was the worst nuclear disaster in history.

Four decades on, Chernobyl —

domesticated horses. The modern name comes from the Russian explorer who first formally identified them.

"The fact that Ukraine now has a free-ranging population is something of a small miracle," said Denys Vyshnevskiy, the zone's lead nature scientist.

With human pressure gone, parts of the exclusion zone now resemble European landscapes from centuries past, he said, adding: "Nature recovers relatively quickly and effectively."

The transformation is visible everywhere. Trees pierce abandoned buildings, roads dissolve into forest, and weathered Soviet-era signs stand beside leaning wooden crosses in overgrown



Abandoned houses are seen overgrown with vegetation at the Chernobyl exclusion zone in Prypiat, Ukraine, Monday, April 6, 2026. Chernobyl is the Ukrainian name for the city. (AP Photo/Evgeniy Maloletka)

which is transliterated as "Chornobyl" in Ukraine — remains too dangerous for humans. But the wildlife has moved back in.

Wolves now prowl the vast no-man's-land spanning Ukraine and Belarus, and brown bears have returned after more than a century. Populations of

cemeteries.

Hidden cameras show the horses adapting in unexpected ways. They seek shelter in crumbling barns and deserted homes, using them to escape harsh weather and insects — even bedding down inside.

The horses live in small social



Wild Przewalski horses graze in a forest inside the Chernobyl exclusion zone, Ukraine, Wednesday, April 8, 2026. Chornobyl is the Ukrainian name for the city. (AP Photo/Evgeniy Maloletka)

lynx, moose, red deer and even free-roaming packs of dogs have rebounded. Przewalski's horses, native to Mongolia and once on the brink of disappearing, were introduced here in 1998 as an experiment.

Known as "takhi" in Mongolia ("spirit"), the horses are distinct from domestic breeds, with 33 pairs of chromosomes, compared with 32 in

groups — typically one stallion with several mares and their young — alongside separate bands of younger males. Many died after their introduction, but others adapted.

Declared extinct in the wild in 1969, Przewalski's horses survived only through captive breeding before

See Page 9 opposite Chernobyl

# U.S. President Trump's mixed messages on the Middle East War, cease fire and the Strait of Hormuz

As of April 20, 2026, the Middle East is under a series of interlocking, high-stakes ceasefires and diplomatic negotiations involving the United States, Iran, Israel, and Lebanon. While a temporary truce has halted the largest scale of offensive operations, the situation remains extremely fragile due to ongoing blockade disputes and isolated tactical violations.

## Status of the War in Lebanon

A 10-day temporary ceasefire between Israel and the Lebanese government came into effect on April 16, 2026.

**Truce Terms:** Brokered by the United States, the deal involves a cessation of offensive hostilities to allow for direct peace negotiations. Israel maintains a 10km "Forward Defense Line" in southern Lebanon, which remains restricted to returning residents.

**Hezbollah's Position:** Hezbollah has indicated it will abide by the truce conditionally, demanding a total Israeli withdrawal and a "comprehensive halt" to all attacks.

**Recent Violations:** The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has reported continued tensions, including the killing of a French peacekeeper on April 18 during an ordnance-clearing mission in southern Lebanon.

**Diplomatic Next Steps:** A second round of high-level direct talks between Israeli and Lebanese officials is scheduled to take place in Washington, DC, this Thursday, April 23.

## Status of the War in Iran

The broader conflict between the United States, Israel, and Iran is currently governed by a two-week ceasefire that began on April 8, 2026.

**Expiration Looming:** This initial

From Page 8 Chernobyl

reintroduction efforts rebuilt a global population of about 3,000, according to Florian Drouard, an operations manager at a program for the horses at Cevennes National Park in southern France.

"This species is a remarkable example of successful reintroduction," he said. "While it is still far from being fully secure, it has shown that with proper preparation, a species kept in captivity can regain the social and ecological behaviors needed to live freely."

The horse, he said, has proved unexpectedly adaptable, adapted to open landscapes but now also thriving in Ukraine's partly forested environment.

Tracking the animals at Chernobyl takes time. Vyshnevskiy often drives alone for hours, setting motion-sensitive camera traps in camouflaged casings attached to trees. Despite persistent radiation, scientists have not recorded widespread die-offs, though subtler effects are evident. Some frogs have developed darker skin, and birds in higher-radiation areas are more likely to develop cataracts.



**Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump meet at Trump's Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Florida, on, December 29, 2025. Jonathan Ernst/Reuters/File**

14-day truce is nearing its end. While U.S. officials have signaled readiness for a second round of talks in Islamabad, Iranian leadership has expressed wariness, citing continued U.S. "threats" as a barrier to further participation.

**Strait of Hormuz Crisis:** A critical point of contention is the freedom of navigation. Iran briefly opened the Strait of Hormuz on April 17 but reimposed restrictions the following day, accusing the U.S. of violating the deal by maintaining a naval blockade on Iranian ports.

**Military Readiness:** Despite the lull, both sides remain on high alert. The U.S. military recently seized an Iranian vessel, *Touska*, for allegedly evading the blockade, an act Tehran labeled as "piracy".

**Humanitarian and Economic Impact**

**Casualties:** In Lebanon, the death toll has reached 2,387 since

However, new threats have emerged.

Russia's 2022 invasion brought fighting through the exclusion zone as troops advanced toward Kyiv, digging defenses into contaminated soil. Fires linked to military activity swept through forests.

Harsh wartime winters have also taken a toll. Damage to the power grid left surrounding managed areas without resources, and scientists report increases in fallen trees and dead animals — casualties of both extreme conditions and hastily built fortifications.

"Most forest fires are caused by downed drones," said Oleksandr Polischuk, who leads a firefighting unit in the zone. "Sometimes we have to travel dozens of kilometers to reach them."

Fires can send radioactive particles back into the air.

Today, the zone is no longer just an accidental refuge for wildlife. It has become a heavily monitored military corridor, marked by concrete barriers, barbed wire and minefields — a landscape of what some describe as grim beauty. #

March. In Iran, figures exceed 2,000 deaths and 26,000 wounded.

**Displacement:** Over 1 million people are currently displaced in Lebanon.

**Global Markets:** Oil and gas prices have hovered around peak levels due to the blockade, though market analysts suggest a final resolution could lead to immediate relief at the pump.

As of April 2026, the relationship between Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu regarding the wars in Lebanon and Iran is characterized by intense direct pressure from Trump, who has positioned himself as the "exclusive arbiter" of Middle Eastern war decisions. While Netanyahu initially persuaded Trump into a broader conflict with Iran, Trump has since shifted to aggressively imposing ceasefires that often catch the Israeli government off guard.

**Key Developments in Lebanon**

**Ceasefire:** On April 16, 2026, Trump announced a 10-day ceasefire in

ceasefire as an opportunity to "make a historic deal" with Beirut, while insisting that Israeli forces would remain in an expanded 10-kilometer security zone in southern Lebanon.

**White House Summit:** Trump has invited Netanyahu and Lebanese President Joseph Aoun to the White House for peace talks, marking the first such direct high-level engagement since 1983.

**Coordination and Conflict Over Iran**

**War Stance:** Trump recently denied that Netanyahu "talked him into" the war with Iran, asserting that his own long-held belief that Iran must never obtain a nuclear weapon was the primary driver.

**Imposed Truce:** Trump previously forced the end of a 12-day war against Iran in June 2025. As of late April 2026, a separate two-week ceasefire with Iran is set to expire, with Trump indicating it is "highly unlikely" he will extend it without a firm deal.

**Strategy:** Trump claims to have already "obliterated" Iran's nuclear facilities with B-2 bombers and is currently pressuring for the removal of Iran's enriched uranium stockpiles.

**Leverage vs. Sovereignty:** Critics and opposition leaders in Israel, such as Gadi Eisenkot, have criticized the "pattern" of ceasefires being imposed on Israel from Washington, suggesting Netanyahu is increasingly unable to resist Trump's demands.

**Broader Strategic Dynamic**

**Diplomatic Trade-offs:** Analysts from the Washington Institute suggest Netanyahu may be acquiescing to Trump's ceasefire demands in Lebanon and Gaza in exchange for a harder U.S. line against Iran's central nuclear program.

**Regional Mediators:** While the U.S. remains the primary actor, Pakistan has emerged as a key mediator



Lebanon through social media, reportedly leaving Netanyahu and his cabinet stunned.

**Direct Prohibition of Strikes:** Shortly after the truce began, Trump explicitly stated on Truth Social that Israel is "PROHIBITED" from further bombing in Lebanon by the U.S., using uncharacteristically forceful language with an ally.

**Netanyahu's "Historic Deal" Framing:**

Despite the perceived coercion, Netanyahu officially framed the

between the U.S. and Iran, helping facilitate the coordination that led to the latest regional truces. #

Summaries based on news reports from CNN, Al Jazeera, BBC, Associated Press, and Reuters.

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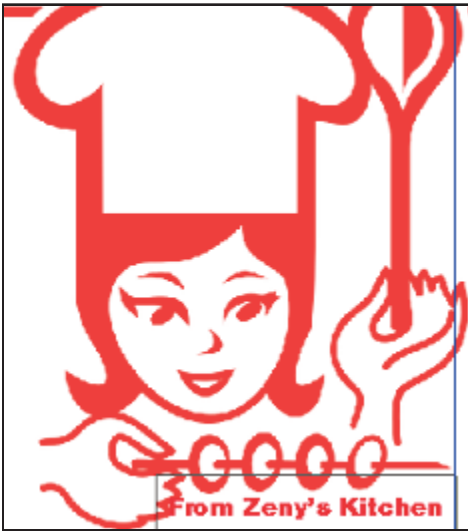


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## Popular Asian Cuisine



### Saucy Beef with Broccoli

This 20-minute saucy beef and broccoli recipe combines tender, thin-sliced sirloin with fresh broccoli in a savory, thick soy-oyster sauce. Key steps include marinating the beef with cornstarch for tenderness and using beef broth for a rich sauce.

#### Ingredients

Beef: 1 lb Flank or Sirloin steak (thinly sliced against the grain)  
Broccoli: 2-3 cups florets  
Marinade: 2 tbsp Soy Sauce, 1 tbsp Cornstarch

#### Sauce:

1 cup Beef broth, 3 tbsp Oyster sauce, 1 tbsp Soy sauce, 1 tbsp Brown sugar, 1 tbsp Cornstarch

Aromatics: 1 tbsp minced Ginger, 3 cloves minced Garlic

#### Instructions

Marinate: Mix beef with marinade ingredients; let sit for 15 minutes.

Sear Beef: Heat 1 tbsp oil in a wok or large pan over high heat. Sear beef until browned, then remove.

Cook Broccoli: Add broccoli to the pan with 2 tbsp water, cover, and steam for 3 minutes until tender-crisp.

Make Sauce: Combine sauce ingredients and add to the pan. Bring to a simmer until thick.

Combine: Add beef back to the pan, toss to coat, and serve immediately over rice.

For the best results, use a sharp knife to cut the beef as thinly as possible against the grain.



Pad Thai

To cook Pad Thai, soak 4-5 oz rice noodles in warm water until soft but firm (10-30 mins), then stir-fry garlic and shallots in a wok. Sear proteins (shrimp/chicken) and tofu, set aside, scramble eggs, then toss in noodles, sauce (tamarind, fish sauce, palm sugar), bean sprouts, and chives. Top with crushed peanuts and lime wedges.

#### Key Tips:

Noodles: Use 2-3 mm wide rice sticks; soak in warm water, do not boil.

Sauce: Combine 2-3 tbsp tamarind paste, 2-3 tbsp fish sauce, and 1-2 tbsp palm sugar.

The Cook: Use high heat in a wok, working quickly.

#### Step-by-Step Instructions:

Prep: Soak noodles. Whisk sauce ingredients together.

Aromatics & Protein: Heat oil over high heat. Sauté minced garlic, shallots, and sliced protein (shrimp/chicken/tofu) until cooked.

Eggs: Push ingredients to the side, crack eggs into the center, and scramble.

Combine: Add drained noodles and sauce to the wok. Stir-fry until the sauce is absorbed.

Finish: Toss in bean sprouts, garlic chives (or green onions), and half the peanuts.

Serve: Serve immediately with remaining peanuts and lime wedges.



Filipino Sinigang na Hipon

This Filipino Sinigang na Hipon (sour shrimp soup) recipe requires boiling tomatoes, onions, and radish, then simmering with tamarind soup base, shrimp, string beans, okra, eggplant, and water spinach (kangkong) for a tangy, comforting meal. Key tip: Only cook the shrimp for 3-5 minutes until they turn orange to avoid overcooking, ensuring they remain tender.

#### Instructions

Boil water in a cooking pot. Add onion, tomato, and radish. Cover and continue to boil for 8 minutes.

Add shrimp. Cook for 1 minute.

Add Knorr Sinigang sa Sampaloc Recipe Mix. Stir until it dilutes completely. Cover and cook for 3 minutes.

Add long green pepper, snake beans, okra, and eggplant. Stir. Cook for 5 minutes.

Put the kangkong stalks into the pot.

Season with fish salt and ground black pepper.

Add kangkong leaves. Cook for 1 minute.

Transfer to a serving bowl. Serve warm with rice.



### Chicken with Cashew Nuts

This brief stir-fry recipe for Chicken with Cashew Nuts delivers a "better-than-takeout" meal in approximately 30 minutes.

#### Ingredients

##### Protein:

1.5 lbs boneless, skinless chicken breasts or thighs, cut into 1-inch pieces.

##### The Crunch:

1 cup unsalted cashews (roasted or toasted).

##### The Sauce: Whisk together

1/4 cup soy sauce,  
1/2 cup chicken broth,  
1 tbsp hoisin sauce,  
1 tbsp brown sugar,  
1 tsp sesame oil, and  
1 tbsp cornstarch.

##### Aromatics:

2 cloves minced garlic,  
1 tsp fresh ginger, and  
2 sliced green onions.

##### Vegetables (Optional):

1 bell pepper and  
1 cup broccoli florets.

#### Instructions

1) Coat & Sear: Toss the chicken in a bowl with a little salt, pepper, and cornstarch. Heat oil in a large skillet or wok over medium-high heat and sear the chicken until golden brown (about 5-7 minutes). Remove chicken from the pan.

2) Sauté Aromatics: In the same pan, add a bit more oil if needed. Sauté the garlic, ginger, and vegetables (if using) for 2-3 minutes until crisp-tender.

3) Thicken Sauce: Return the chicken to the pan. Pour in the whisked sauce mixture. Cook for 1-2 minutes, stirring constantly until the sauce thickens and glazes the chicken.

4) Finish & Serve: Stir in the cashews and sliced green onions. Serve immediately over steamed jasmine rice.

To elevate your Chicken with Cashew Nuts, you can use restaurant-style "velveting" for ultra-tender meat and add specific heat sources for a spicy kick.

Pro-Tip: "Velveting" for Tender Chicken Chinese restaurants often use a technique called velveting to create that signature silky, tender texture.

The Baking Soda Method: Toss 1 lb of chicken with 3/4 tsp. Let it sit for 20-30 minutes then rinse it thoroughly

and pat dry before cooking.

The Cornstarch Marinade: Alternatively, marinate the chicken for 15-30 minutes in a mixture of 1 tbsp cornstarch, 1 tbsp soy sauce, and 1 tbsp oil or Shaoxing wine. The starch creates a protective barrier that locks in moisture during high-heat frying.

Cut Against the Grain: When prepping, always slice your chicken across the muscle fibers

#### Spicy Sauce Variations

If you want to turn up the heat, swap or add these ingredients to the base sauce:

Thai Style: Add 1.5 tbsp of Thai chili paste (Nam Prik Pao) and a few dried red chilies for a smoky, sweet heat.

Szechuan Style: Use 2 tbsp of red chili paste (Sambal Oelek or Gochujang) and 2 tsp of crushed Szechuan peppercorns for a "numbing" spicy effect.

Quick Kick: Stir in 1 tbsp of Sriracha hot sauce or 1 tsp of crushed red pepper flakes directly into your whisked sauce.

Indo-Chinese Style: Add 1 tbsp of garlic chili sauce and an extra pinch of white pepper for a sharp, savory bite.



### Japanese Tiramisu

Making Japanese matcha tiramisu involves replacing coffee with a matcha-infused syrup and layering it with a lightened mascarpone cream.

#### Ingredients (approx. 8x8 pan)

Soak: 1 1/2 to 2 Tbsp matcha powder, 1 cup hot water, 1-2 Tbsp sugar.

Cream: 8 oz (250g) mascarpone (softened), 3 large egg yolks, 1 cup (240ml) heavy cream, 1/3 to 1/2 cup sugar, 1 tsp vanilla.

Ladyfingers: ~24-30 ladyfingers (Savoardi).

Topping: Extra matcha for dusting.

#### Instructions

Prepare Matcha Soak: Whisk 1 1/2-2 tsp matcha powder and sugar into hot water until dissolved; let it cool completely.

#### Make Mascarpone Cream:

Option A (Egg-free): Whip heavy cream, sugar, and vanilla to stiff peaks, then fold in softened mascarpone until smooth.

Option B (Classic): Beat egg yolks and sugar over a double boiler until thick and pale (160°F/71°C). Whisk in mascarpone. Separately whip heavy cream to soft peaks, then fold into the yolk mixture.

#### Assemble:

Quickly dip ladyfingers into the cooled matcha syrup (do not soak long or they will turn mushy). Arrange a layer of ladyfingers in a dish. Spread half the cream mixture over them. Repeat with a second layer of soaked ladyfingers and the remaining cream. Chill & Serve: Refrigerate for at least 4-6 hours, preferably overnight, to set. Before serving, dust generously with matcha powder. #



## Social Tidbits Montreal Community News Fely Rosales Cariño

Greetings to my faithful socialites! Are you enjoying the beautiful sunshine yet? And the April showers? Would you rather choose a snow storm or a downpour? I am partial to the latter. Well, let's be reminded that God sends both and we can still be thankful either way. Ezekiel 34:26 says that "I will cause showers to come down in their season; they will be showers of blessing." And let's see how our Filipino community is a blessing to us all.

### Friends4Cause

On March 20, 2026, the Filipino community opened its doors to a new kid on the block! Say hello to Friends4Cause, Côte-des-Neiges/Notre-Dame-De-Grace (CDN/NDG) Chapter headed by its Founder and President, Carmelo Tortolano. In its souvenir booklet, it states that F4C is a "new chapter dedicated to supporting children in palliative care, families in need, and those who need it most." Tortolano is also the founder of G4C (Give4Hope) charity. Tortolano's team includes Directors Gyl Dufresne, Kenny Danzil, Romavel Dipad, Maria Fernandez, Gemma Lanoba, Esphe Manaog, and Alma Tablada, who is also an Ambassador of the Umbrella Organization. Advisors are Rey Balansi and Al Abdon.

The opening ceremony started with the Philippine National Anthem and O Canada (presented by Sir Alfredo Erguiza and Sir Stephane Morin). Yours truly gave the Invocation and Mr. Tortolano delivered his Welcome Address. Special guests were MNA Elizabeth Prass (D'Arcy-McGee), MNA Michelle Setlakwe (Mont-Royal-Outremont), and Councilor Melanie Thiagarajah (Darlington District). The Special Recognition Ceremony was to honor those children living with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Certificates of Recognition were given to Bianca Terrigno (parent Lea Bravo Fuentes), John Albert Pinos (parent Janelyn Pinos), Paolo Angelo Morata (parent Rosario Morata), and F4C Ambassadors Silvio Pasquale Gioia and Michael Gioia.

The night was full of entertainment numbers. First to perform was Kimberly Callao (1st Runner-up, Nationwide Search for Filipino Canadian Talent 2025 and Monnaie Money Award Winner 2026). Then she sang a duet with Jonathan Pantaleon (Grand Champion, Academie Quebec 2008). Next was a dance number by Munting Maria Clara's Fashion Show 2025 led by

Naomi Olga Zaragoza. From the same group was a song performance by 1st Runner-up Leina Elyse Monte. Special Certificates of Participation were also awarded to the following: Ma. Philina Lyka Lanoba Aman (parent Gemma Lanoba), Leonardo Josef Maniquiz (parent Michelle Maniquiz), Airyl John Villanueva (parents Mr. & Mrs. Felix & Leonora Villanueva), Ryder Tolentino, and Ivan Lososo. Other special numbers were Momshies Dance Grooves, Airyl John Villanueva (ZIN Zumba), and Hyper Trio (Zin Junbel, Camille, Stephanie, Maria & Emma). Alma Ydeo Tablada gave the closing remarks. Congratulations F4C and welcome to the Filipino community!

### Dancing at the Palace, AFSM

A spring dance party was held by the Association of Filipino Seniors of Montreal (AFSM) on March 21, 2026 at the Ganesh Palace on 300 Marcel Laurin, St. Laurent. The Parade of Colors was presented by the flag bearers Mr. Felimon Dolomente (Philippines), Mr. Julius Abad (Canada), and Mr. Herelio Munoz (Quebec). Miss Lorna Litan gave the Invocation, AFSM President Mr. Reuben Mendoza delivered the Welcome Address, and Tenne Rose Dayandante gave a brief inspirational message. The dancing was nonstop and the place was packed. The crowd was entertained by Jhun Bonyad who rendered a vocal solo and The Beasties Dance group put on a solid performance. Emcee Miss Amelia San Juan (AFSM Secretary) was a good host and DJ Boboy kept up the beats. President Mendoza's message states, "Thank you to all our members, guests, performers, volunteers, and supporters for sharing your time, energy, and joy with us. Your presence makes our community stronger. May we continue to celebrate friendship, culture, and togetherness." Thank you Reuben and your Executive Board for making us dance the evening away.

### Coronation Night 2026, FAMAS

On March 28, 2026 everybody, it seems, drove to the Palace Convention Center at 1717 Corbusier, Laval to witness a grand event of the Filipino Association of Montreal and Suburbs (FAMAS). The excitement was building up for the coronation of Mrs. FAMAS 2026. The opening program started with the entrance of colors by the three flag bearers Raymund Lastra (Quebec), Martin Chaloux (Canada), and Francisco Bernabe Jr. (Philippines). The national anthems Lupang Hinirang and O Canada were

played and then FAMAS Secretary Alona Amano gave the Invocation. FAMAS President Josemari (Jojo) Laud, resplendent in his barong Tagalog,, delivered his Welcome Address with aplomb as seasoned speakers do. (By the way, a belated Happy Birthday greetings to you, Jojo!). Then Remelie Bisares (FAMAS Director of Special Projects) and Francisco Bernabe Jr. (FAMAS Vice President External) gave brief messages of acknowledgment. Milany Thiagarajah sent a taped message of congratulations to the event.

After dinner, the judges were presented: Veronica Majestrado, Jasmin Denault, and Anjie Lou Penullar. The Tabulators were also introduced: Lorenza Penullar, Isabelle Dela Piedra, and Marissa Ubaldo. While awaiting the announcement of winners, the crowd was treated to the Infinity Dancers and to terrific singers Renz Ivan Costales and Adiva (Ngayon at Kailanman).

Special mention also to the following categories: Mrs. Charity, Mrs. Popularity, Most Liked on Social Media, Mrs. Congeniality, Mrs. Photogenic, Best in Talent, and Best in Gown. Now, for the presentation of major awards for 2026: Mrs. Manila Maria Cristina Garabitez (escort Michael Staughton), Mrs. Mindanao Raizza Baterbonia (escort Francis Bernabe), Mrs. Visayas Anamour Villanueva (escort Mike Mikhail) and Mrs. Luzon Janette Fernandez (escort Josemari Laud). Each of the winners received a sash, a bouquet, a crown, a trophy and a cash prize. That is some booty! And the previous Mrs. FAMAS 2024, Alma Ydeo Tablado gave her farewell walk. And here is a farewell message for Alma who wore her crown as the first FAMAS Queen! You represented FAMAS wonderfully, responsibly, with grace and dignity. Alma, a deserving winner, thank you for the memories. You did us proud!

Finally, the grand winner of the evening, who also received a sash, a bouquet, a crown, a trophy, a cash prize, and a scepter ... drum roll please... Mrs. FAMAS 2026 is Jocelyn Reynon who was escorted by Ruddy Claros Campos and serenaded by President Jojo Laud (really, what a delightful surprise!). Congratulations, Jocelyn! Enjoy your reign in 2026. As the night ended, let's not forget the good and hard work of Ian Descaller (Emcee), Bryan Davis (photographer) and Dennis Mayuga (DJ) who made the evening enjoyable. And thank you, Jojo; we need to hear your voice more often. See you at the next FAMAS

gathering.

### 4th Gawad ng Pagkilala & 8th Anniversary FHSM

On the evening of April 11, 2026 we saw the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal (FHSM) congregate at 6767 Cote des Neiges in a double celebration. FHSM Chairman Al Abdon, officers and members put on a lovely spectacle for their 8th Anniversary and 4th Gawad Ng Pagkilala (Recognition Award). You see men in their barongs and the ladies in different Filipiniana styles. Emcees Kim Gultia and Jane Cayanan were the dynamic duo that kept the pace going. They were fluent, competent, and fun; teasing the crowd to rein in their attention. On the menu, I & I International Cuisine Catering provided salmon steak, beef meatballs, and chicken barbecue breasts among others. Desserts were fruit platters, tiramisu, macaroons and many more. The buffet table was made available even past mealtime to accommodate latecomers. The official photographer of the evening, Bryan Davis, took pictures before guests went to enjoy their meal.

The program started with the national anthem by Cadet Corporal Xyril Sison of 555 Maple Leaf Squadron. The crowd stood and sang; most still know the lyrics of Lupang Hinirang. Minda Mazzone introduced the keynote speaker, the Philippine Ambassador to Canada Jose Victor V. Chan-Gonzaga, who used the key word "malasakit" (care & compassion) in his speech. He mentioned three ways to show this: malasakit towards fellow Filipinos through community service and valiant acts of compassion; malasakit should lead to excellence (doing things well which elevates the Filipino community); and malasakit towards our motherland in upholding Filipino values to represent our fellow Pinoys. As Ambassador Gonzaga states, this also includes voting which affirms that Philippine issues still matter to us. He asserts the embassy's support to FHSM. Furthermore, he noted the challenge of the sustainability of succession for leadership. His challenge to us: to preserve and promote Filipino traditions to future generations. The theme of Malasakit was picked up by Sona Lakhoyan Olivier, MNA for Chomedey, who affirms that caring for the Filipino culture also makes Quebec richer. She was happy to deliver a Certificate of Recognition from the National Assembly to Marilis and

See Page 18 Social Tidbits

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# FILIPINO STAR

## SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

# Janine Gutierrez shares lessons from 'adulthood phase'



**Janine Gutierrez**

Actress Janine Gutierrez opened up about her "adulthood phase," sharing how living independently has taught her some of life's most important lessons.

During her guest appearance on "Oh My Gan," Janine spoke about the joys and challenges of living alone, saying the experience helped her become more responsible, self-aware, and comfortable in her own company.

Janine revealed that while she had already moved out of their family home years ago, transferring to a different condo last year felt like a new chapter in her life.

She said one of the things

she enjoys most about this stage is slowly building a home filled with meaningful items.

"Sabi kasi nila that it's better to slowly build your home with your travels, sa mga bagay na makahulugan para sa'yo, para it grows with you," she shared.

For the actress, living independently also gave her a deeper appreciation for solitude and rest.

"I enjoy the time that I have to rest alone. Ako yung gagawa ng pagkain ko. Yung kami lang ni Punchy, my dog," she said.

Janine added that one of the biggest lessons she learned from living alone is mastering

everyday life skills that many people take for granted.

"Siguro yung life skills, talaga," she said, recalling how she learned to do laundry, cook, and take care of bills on her own.

She said those experiences made her feel more capable not only of caring for herself, but also of helping her siblings and family.

"Pakiramdam ko nung natutunan ko na alagaan yung sarili ko, mas nagkaroon din ako ng skills na matulungan yung mga kapatid ko, yung family ko," she explained.

Still, Janine admitted that stepping into independent living was scary at first, especially with the weight of financial

commitments and personal responsibility.

"Siguro yung unang kailangan mo is tapang," she said. "Hindi ka pa sure kung kaya ko ba itong financial commitment."

But for Janine, the rewards of living alone have gone far beyond practical skills. She said it also taught her how to enjoy her own company and become more intentional about the people she allows into her life.

"One thing I learned also is to enjoy my own company," she said. "Kapag happy ka sa ikaw lang, parang mas nagiging conscious ka din sa kung sino ang bibigyan mo ng oras mo."

## Kim Chiu celebrates birthday by giving free gas, groceries to drivers



**Kim Chiu**

Kim Chiu marked her 36th birthday by giving back to transport workers, distributing free gasoline, meals, and grocery packs to hundreds of jeepney and tricycle drivers.



On Tuesday, April 21, Chiu shared photos on her Instagram Story showing the initiative, which benefited around 600 drivers. The donations were funded through proceeds from her recent closet sale.

“Thank you to everyone who supported my #KimChiuClosetBazaar dahil sa tulong niyo nakapagbigay po tayo sa 600 Jeepney and Tricycle drivers ng gas, meal and grocery pack (We were

able to provide gas, meal, and grocery pack to 600 drivers). Maraming salamat (Thank you so much),” she wrote.

She also expressed gratitude to the group Buena Pamilya for helping carry out the activity. “Thank you Buena Pamilya for helping me make this possible. Di ko kakayanin mag isa ito lahat (I wouldn’t get to do all this alone. Salamat sa inyo (Thanks to you guys),” Chiu added.

Chiu first held her closet sale in January, saying at the time that proceeds would go to charity, though she had yet to disclose the beneficiaries.

The actress has been involved in various charitable efforts. In 2025, she made headlines after personally purchasing construction materials for victims of the 6.9-magnitude earthquake that struck Cebu province.

Recently, Chiu also drew attention after completing a short business course in Paris.

The actress-host is currently riding the success of the romantic drama thriller “The Alibi,” where she stars alongside Paulo Avelino. Following its digital release last year, the series is now airing on free television. ■

## ‘Pantropiko’ to the world: BINI conquers Coachella



**BINI**

Girl group BINI made history as the first Filipino act to perform at the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival, taking the stage on Friday, April 10, in the United States — a landmark moment for OPM and Philippine music on the world stage. They performed 10 songs during their 45-minute set at the Mojave stage of the festival, held in Indio, California, which drew music fans from all over the world.

“Being here with all of you has been the sweetest ‘cherry on top’ of our journey so far,” shared Maloi. Fan support flooded in before, during, and after the performance, which was livestreamed live on the official Coachella YouTube channel. #BINI\_CoachellaWk1 shot to the top of worldwide trending topics on X, topping charts in the Philippines and the United Arab Emirates, reaching #2 in Canada and Singapore, #5 in



BINI opened with “Shagidi,” then moved through “Zero Pressure” and “Out Of My Head.” They brought the crowd to their feet with Filipino favorites “Karera” and “Salamin, Salamin,” before delivering “Blink Twice” and “Cherry on Top.” The set also featured the live debut of new track “Blush,” followed by “Bikini,” and a rousing finale with “Pantropiko.”

Throughout the set, members Aiah, Colet, Maloi, Gwen, Stacey, Mikha, Jhoanna, and Sheena took moments to express their gratitude for the chance to represent the Philippines on one of music’s grandest stages.

“We are so grateful to be here to represent the Philippines on a global stage and to share with you guys our music,” said Aiah.

Australia, and #6 in both Puerto Rico and the United States.

Several other BINI-related topics also trended, including Pinoy Pride, BINICHELLA, Mojave, Walo, Blink Twice, Salamin Salamin, Karera, Zero Pressure, Cherry on Top, Shagidi, and Pantropiko. The headline “BINI Makes History as First All-Filipino Act at Coachella 2026” further trended under X’s Today’s News section.

Back home, fans — known as Blooms — gathered for watch parties across Metro Manila and surrounding cities, organized by the fan group BLOOM Philippines.

BINI is set to return to the Coachella stage for their second weekend performance on Saturday, April 18 (PHT). ■

**Showbiz Gossip** *Continued from p.15*

## Anne Curtis on tripping in front of Anne Hathaway and Meryl Streep: 'Of all times!'



**Meryl Streep, Anne Curtis and Anne Hathaway.**

Kapamilya actress and TV host Anne Curtis had a candid and unforgettable "Andy Sachs" moment after she tripped in front of Hollywood stars Anne Hathaway and Meryl Streep during the press tour of *The Devil Wears Prada 2* in Tokyo, Japan.

In a video she posted on Instagram, Anne was invited to pose for a photo before the interview. As she stepped toward the center to stand

between them, she accidentally tripped over what appeared to be a metal stand.

Trying to quickly recover, Anne attempted to pick up the object and immediately apologized. The moment was met with warmth and humor from the Hollywood stars.

Meryl took it lightly, saying, "You're not the first. You won't be the last." ■

## Olivia Rodrigo releases new single 'Drop Dead' with music video filmed at Palace of Versailles



**Olivia Rodrigo**

Olivia Rodrigo released her first single titled "Drop Dead," off her new album *You Seem Pretty Sad* for a Girl so in Love.

The Filipino-American singer dropped the track on Friday, April 17 (PH time).

"'Drop Dead' is out now!!!! I love this song so much!!! It's the first chapter in the story of 'You Seem Pretty Sad for a Girl so In Love' and it makes me wanna skip around and roll the windows down and make out!"

Olivia posted on her Instagram page upon the release of the song.

She also shared the details about the filming for the music video of the song, which was also released on the same day.

"I was lucky enough to film the music video at the Palace of Versailles a few months ago with the wonderful @petrafcollins and I'm so stoked with how it turned out. I hope you guys love it as much as I do", she said. ■

# Steve Harvey to join Dingdong Dantes in upcoming 'Family Feud PH' episode



American television host Steve Harvey is set to appear in an upcoming episode of "Family Feud Philippines," marking what the program described as a "historic moment on Philippine TV."

The announcement was made via the show's official Instagram page on Tuesday, April 21, teasing Harvey's guest appearance alongside resident host Dingdong Dantes.

"Kapuso Fam, ito na ang hinihintay n'yo! Survey says... it's STEVE HARVEY on Family Feud Philippines!" the caption read, adding that the special episode will air on Friday at 5:35 p.m.

Harvey is known as the longtime host of the original U.S. version of "Family Feud." In the Philippines, his popularity surged following his widely publicized hosting mishap during the Miss Universe 2015 pageant.

During the live coronation, Harvey mistakenly announced Colombia's Ariadna Gutierrez as

the winner instead of the Philippines' Pia Wurtzbach, prompting an unprecedented onstage correction.

The incident has remained part of local pop culture discourse, even referenced years later. In 2023, Filipino actor Alden Richards drew comparisons to Harvey after a similar mix-up during the Miss Universe Philippines 2023 coronation night, when he incorrectly announced a winner during the Special Awards segment.

Meanwhile, Dantes, who leads the Philippine edition of the game show, recently made headlines for supporting charitable efforts linked to the program.

Dantes expressed gratitude to Angat Buhay, founded by former Vice President Leni Robredo, after winning contestants were given the opportunity to donate their prize money to help fund the construction of a two-classroom facility in Quezon province. ■

# Asian Communities Form Alliance to Promote Asian Heritage Month for Prosperity and Inclusion



**Representatives from Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Laotian and Vietnamese organizations at the Asian Heritage Month (AHM) panel surrounding the AHM logo in Montreal on April 21, 2026. (Courtesy: Centre for Research-Action on Race Relations)**

(Montreal, April 21, 2026) - At a brief press conference held at the SANAAQ Center, AMAPI, an alliance of five community organizations in coordination with CRARR (Center for Research Action on Race Relations) presented its new logo and a calendar of activities for the Asian Heritage Month which will be observed during the month of May.

In the press release, it stated that the Alliance seeks to rally communities of origins from the Pacific Region to promote full Asian visibility, recognition and representation in different sectors considering the fact

that the 2021 census statistics showed a population of 218,385 members of the five Asian communities from the Pacific Region plus the Japanese and Korean communities that number 153,800 individuals on the island of Montreal. These figures show that Asians form the third largest "visible minorities" or racialized groups in Montreal behind the Black and Arab communities. Despite these numbers, Asian Montrealers are still largely underrepresented in many sectors such as law, education, politics, media, sports and culture. Often seen as a "model minority," Asians are present in

## Business community calls for swift action from the new Quebec cabinet



**Quebec Premier Christine Frechette, right, is applauded by her cabinet at the legislature in Quebec City Tuesday, April 21, 2026. (Jacques Boissinot/The Canadian Press)**

Following the unveiling of Premier Christine Fréchette's new cabinet on April 21, 2026, Quebec's business community has expressed a mix of optimism and urgency, calling for immediate measures to bolster the economy and address chronic labour shortages.

### Key Demands from Business Groups

**Labour and Immigration:** The Conseil du patronat du Québec (CPQ) is pushing for higher quotas for temporary foreign workers (TFWs) and simpler rules for the Quebec Experience Program (PEQ) to provide businesses with more predictability.

**Regulatory Relief:** Organizations like the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) are calling for a significant reduction in red tape, the

elimination of Quebec-specific rules that hinder productivity, and a carbon tax rebate for SMEs and farmers.

**Fiscal Discipline:** Businesses are urging the new government to maintain strict fiscal discipline to avoid any further tax or fee increases in the coming months.

**Public Procurement:** The CPQ highlighted the need for procurement mechanisms that allow for greater participation by local Quebec businesses in public investment projects.

**Timing:** Leaders emphasized that "the clock is ticking" with only a few weeks of parliamentary work remaining before the summer recess, making swift action critical to send a clear signal that Quebec is easy to do business in. #

science and technology, finance and small business particularly in the food industry, but they are largely absent on public and corporate boards, management, the courts and professional licensing bodies.

For AMAPI organizations, the fact that many public institutions have not proclaimed Asian Heritage Month and hosted or funded AHM activities reflects the lack of recognition of Asian communities. The deteriorating state of Chinatown, now gravely threatened by an overflow of public resources for at-risk populations instead of culture, economic and infrastructure investments, is another sign of inadequate institutional support for the oldest and most visible Asian heritage of Montreal.

Despite inadequate government support, AMAPI has nonetheless been able to pull together support and resources from more than 30 public,

private and community organizations to host a dozen activities in Laval, Montreal and Longueuil that are also multicultural and intergenerational. Full details of AMAPI supported activities will be available online as of April 30, also known as Journey to Freedom Day, as officially designated by a bill introduced in 2015 by Conservative Senator Thanh Hai Ngo to commemorate the exodus of Vietnamese refugees and their acceptance in Canada after the fall of Saigon and the end of the Vietnam War.

AHM (Asian Heritage Month) was officially proclaimed by the Government of Canada in 2002 after the Senate adopted a motion proposed by Liberal Senator Vivienne Poy to officially designate May as Asian Heritage Month. #

Source: Press Release from CRARR

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## A Canadian First: CIUSSS West-Central Montreal Launches World Health Organization Program Focused on Healthy Aging

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Montreal, April 20, 2026 – Too often, early signs of health decline in older adults, such as changes in mobility, memory, nutrition, or mental health, go unnoticed until they result in a fall, hospitalization, or loss of independence. A new initiative being launched by CIUSSS West-Central Montreal, in collaboration with key academic partners, aims to change that.



Through its Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Health of Seniors, Schouela CEDurable, CIUSSS West-Central Montreal is launching the Integrated Care for Older People (ICOPE) program developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), becoming the first organization in Canada to implement this internationally recognized approach to healthy aging.

Led and coordinated by Schouela CEDurable, in collaboration with the Division of Geriatric Medicine at McGill University and the RUISSS McGill network, the ICOPE program enables care teams to identify early signs of decline and respond sooner through coordinated person-centred care.

“Too often, the system intervenes only once a crisis occurs,” said Dr. Gustavo Duque, Scientific Director of Schouela CEDurable. “ICOPE allows us to focus on prevention, early action, and collaboration, with the goal of helping older adults maintain autonomy and quality of life for as long as possible.”

### A global framework, implemented locally

Already implemented in more than 40 countries worldwide, the WHO’s ICOPE program focuses

on five key areas essential to everyday functioning: sensory ability, cognition, mobility, vitality, including nutrition, and psychological health.

By encouraging care teams to share information and work more closely together, including primary care, geriatrics, home support services, academic partners, and community organizations, the approach aims to reduce gaps in care and ensure early signs of decline are

addressed sooner.

### International expertise supporting a Canadian milestone

The launch of the ICOPE program at CIUSSS West-Central Montreal is supported by the involvement of Dr. Matteo Cesari, Scientist in Geriatrics and Gerontology at the World Health Organization. Dr. Cesari played a central role in the program’s design and global rollout and is internationally recognized for his leadership in healthy aging, frailty, and integrated models of care, lending international credibility to CIUSSS West-Central Montreal’s adoption of ICOPE and its commitment to translating global best practices into meaningful benefits for older adults. - Available for interviews

• Dr. Gustavo Duque, Scientific Director, Schouela CEDurable

• Dr. Elise Levinoff, Chief of the Division of Geriatric Medicine, Jewish General Hospital



festival 1970 by Ryan Cayabyab). The Panday Tinig Choral Ensembles under the leadership of Paul Imperial and Editha Fedalizo also performed. Their rendition of Dahil Sa 'Yo was touching. The crowd was also treated to two dance groups, the Golden Maidens and Pamana ni Luzviminda (Array 2 couples and Pitik Mingaw).

Finally, let's acknowledge the ten Awardees of Gawad Ng Pagkilala 2026: Sir Rey Balansi (Community Service & Leadership Award), Corazon Baquiran (Cultural Arts & Music Service Award), Sir Dario Boco (Community Service & Heritage Award), Sir Gerry Danzil (Excellence in Senior Program and Sports Award), Jovy Narvas (Community Service & Compassion Award), Marilis & Reynaldo Padilla (Humanitarian & Service Award), Jeannette Perignon

## Canada Post says it will move ahead with plan to end home delivery



**A woman checks for mail at her community mailbox in the Pointe-Claire neighbourhood of Montreal on Friday, Sept. 26, 2025. (THE CANADIAN PRESS/Christinne Muschi)**

Canada Post is moving ahead with its modernization plan, which will see the end of door-to-door mail delivery as had been expected under restructuring directives, the Crown corporation said in a statement Tuesday.

The changes come as part of the federal government’s direction to Canada Post to “implement transformative changes to ensure we can meet the evolving needs of Canadians without becoming a recurring burden on taxpayers,” the statement said.

“These proposed changes include converting the remaining addresses that still receive delivery at the door to community mailboxes and modernizing our retail network,” a Canada Post statement said.

Last year, the federal government said Canada Post would be allowed to end door-to-door mail delivery to individual addresses and close or convert some post offices in a bid to stabilize its operations and restore its financial footing.

The government will also allow Canada Post to adjust its delivery

standards for non-urgent letter mail, allowing it to be moved by ground instead of air to “reflect today’s lower volumes.”

Joël Lightbound, the minister responsible for Canada Post, said the changes are necessary to ensure the survival of the beleaguered national mail carrier and Crown corporation.

“This situation is not sustainable,” he said. “Canada Post is effectively insolvent, and repeated bailouts are not a long-term solution.”

Lightbound had said last fall, when he lifted the moratorium on further conversions to community mailboxes, that there are roughly one-quarter of Canadians still receiving daily mail delivery — about four million addresses — who will now be served by community, apartment or rural mailboxes instead.

Lightbound said those conversions will be phased in over the next nine years, “the bulk of which” will be in the next three to four years.

— With files from Global’s Sean Boynton

From Page 13 SocialTidbits

Reynaldo Padilla, who live in her riding of Chomedey! The couple own and operate Marche Filipino in Victoria, a welcoming place for eating and other services.

Musical entertainment included a serenade by Filipino Canadian tenor, Mishael Eusebio, who holds degrees from the Julliard School of Music and the University of Cincinnati’s College-Conservatory of Music. He was the tenor soloist-in-residence with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. With such an accomplished background, it was a joy to hear him deliver 3 songs: La Bella Filipina, Jocelynang Baliwag, and Kay Ganda ang Ating Musika (which won the first metro Manila popular music

(Community Leadership Award), Juan Alejandro Robles (Professionalism in Nursing Award), and Aileen Vargas (Community Leadership & Cultural Development Award).

Among those who enjoyed the night were Rose & Sir James de la Paz (former FAMAS President, Founder of Council of Canadian Filipino Association of Quebec, CCFAQ), Nico & Minda Mazzone (President, Federation of Filipino Canadian Association of Quebec, FFCAQ), Andy & Lolita Odulio (President of Seniors of West Island and Suburbs, SWIS), Claire & Sir Dario Boco (President, CCFAQ), Maggie Calcetas (Founder of Filipino Nurses Association of Quebec, FNAQ) and son Ted, Pastor Orlan Racacho, Zenaida Ferry-Kharroubi, Editor & Publisher, North American Filipino Star and Director-General,

Gilmore College International, Robin & Cristy Hunter (CCFAQ Officer), Michael Davantes and Tenne Rose Dayandante (ICI TV) with photographer Amir Karim, Christos & Lolita Sideris (President, Pangasinan Association of Quebec), Sir Dante Tabamo (FAMAS Adviser) and Ester & Ramon Vicente (President of Family Services). Looking forward to the next Gawad 2027!

As we say goodbye to winter and hello to spring, may I point you to heaven above from whom all blessings flow. And may I pray Hosea 6:3 that says, “Let us know; let us press on to know the LORD; His going out is sure as the dawn; He will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth.”

Until next issue. God Bless!



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 Montreal, Quebec, Canada

**APRIL 2026 COMMUNITY NEWS PHOTO GALLERY**



Gawad ng Pagkilala (Awards of Recognition) were presented to ten outstanding Filipino-Canadians for their achievements in different endeavors, from the left: Dario Boco, Gerry Danzil, Reynaldo Balansi, Aireen Vargas and her two children, His Excellency, Phil. Ambassador Jose Victor V. Chan-Gonzaga, Al Abdon, Chairman of the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal, Marilis & Reynaldo Padilla, Jovy Narvas, Jeannette Perrignon, Cora Baquiran and Juan Alejandro Robles. Photo taken on April 11, 2026 during the 8th anniversary of the (Photo by Z. F. Kharroubi)



Souvenir photo with the Philippine Ambassador to Canada, His Excellency, Jose Victor V. Chan-Gonzaga (center) with Zenaida Ferry-Kharroubi and Pastor Orlan Racacho, at the FHM Awards night, April 11, 2026 (sent by Pastor Orlan Racacho).



The Filipino Nurses Association of Quebec held their induction ceremony on March 27, 2026 at the FAMAS community center.



Dr. Ethel Tungohan, (center) the keynote speaker on April 10, 2026 at the Filipino Diaspora conference. Others in the photo: L to R: Michael Davantes, Pinoy Pa Rin TV host, Amy Manon-og, Vice-chair, FHM; Zenaida F. Kharroubi, Director-General, Gilmore College Int'l., and editor, N.A. Filipino Star, and Mrs. Tungohan.