

## Balikbayans are all smiles as SM, BDO hold a heartwarming Christmas tribute to overseas Filipinos



Piolo Pascual selfie with the audience following his performance at SM-BDO's "Pamaskong Handog" Christmas tribute to Overseas Filipinos held recently at the SM Mall of Asia Music Hall

Going home for Christmas has turned out to be a very pleasant surprise for some *balikbayans* this year as SM and BDO welcomed them with plenty of surprises, giveaways and raffle prizes through their annual "Pamaskong Handog" event, recently held at the SM Mall of Asia Music Hall.

The event, especially dedicated for the overseas Filipinos and their families, is now on its 7<sup>th</sup> year

and is said to be SM and BDO's biggest, most heartwarming Christmas celebration ever held since 2012.

Pamaskong Handog was indeed a day full of laughter, entertainment and raffle prizes as the event brought to the stage today's most in-demand artists – Piolo Pascual; Sam Milby; Moira Dela Torre; "Tawag ng Tanghalan" finalists TNT Boys, Anton Antenor Cruz and Jenny Gabriel; comedian Donita Nose and hosts MC and Lassie. Pamaskong Handog also featured BDO's social media personality dubbed as Boss Teteng whose Facebook videos garnered millions of views for his funny and entertaining tips for Filipinos overseas as well as SM's cheerful elevator girl Cheridel.

Some of the *balikbayans* couldn't hide their joy and amusement, saying the event is the first of its kind they've ever experienced. "Nagulat ako. May ganun pala. Ang daming surprises and giveaways." said, 65-year old Erminda Clarito, who works in Canada for almost 30 years.

53-year old Bernardo Vergara, who works in Saudi Arabia for more than six years also shared, "First time ko naramdaman ang pagpapahalaga sa aming sakripisyong mawalay sa pamilya, parang family bonding na rin namin ngayong Pasko".

Amid the challenges of working abroad, some *balikbayans* shared that providing for their children's education is their primary reason in choosing to work abroad, and will continue to do so for their families' future. For Evangeline Buno, who works in Macau for almost 30 years, "Motivation ko ang apo at mga anak ko. With BDO, parang katabi mo lang ang pamilya mo, Hangga't kaya ko magpadala, gagawin ko. Totoo rin yang we got it all for you ng SM. Lahat ng kailangan ng pamilya ko kumpleto, Salamat sa SM at BDO".

Violeta Suyong, who recently retired after working for 31 years in France, was able to send her three children to good universities. *“More than 20 years na ako sa BDO. More than everything, it’s their service. Yung retirement ko natatanggap ko ngayon sa aking BDO account”.*

Susana Batalla, who’s based in Italy, was also proud to share about BDO Remit’s quality service and her family’s fondness of SM saying *“Lahat sa pamilya ko, pinag-open ko ng Kabayan Savings. Ang aking pamilya ay napagsisilbihan ninyo. Maganda ang asikaso ng BDO sa akin sa Italy, lalo na ang service ng mga staff. Lahat rin kami ay suki ng SM. Walking distance lang sa amin”.*

BDO Remittance Senior Vice President and Head Genie Gloria said *“Christmas is the time when Overseas Filipinos are excited to spend Christmas with their families. This is why Pamaskong Handog has become our annual tribute to our kababayans as we would like them to feel welcome and honored while they are here. We also make sure that our products and services as well as the other efforts of the bank such as special events are anchored on their needs, not to mention our international offices’ active participation in Filipino community events overseas. This year’s Pamaskong Handog event was also held in time for the International Migrants Day.”*

*“SM shares the same mission of giving honor, gratitude and joy to the overseas Filipinos in return for their hard work and sacrifice. The goal is to make them feel special and let them experience once again how Filipinos celebrate Christmas,”* said Supermalls Joaquin San Agustin, SVP for Marketing of SM Supermalls.

SM and BDO’s synergistic collaboration does not end with Pamaskong Handog as more joint overseas Filipino events are lined up for 2019. The partnership of the largest chain of shopping malls and the country’s biggest bank goes a long way given both of the institutions’ extensive branch network all over the country.