

## Pacquiao seeks mercy for Filipino on death row in Indonesia

By Oliver Teves  
The Associated Press

**M**ANILA, The Philippines — Boxing icon Manny Pacquiao prayed with a Filipino woman on death row in Indonesia and promised to appeal for clemency in the latest bid from her country to save her.

Pacquiao and his wife, Jinkee, spent about an hour with Mary Jane Veloso in mid-July at a Yogyakarta jail.

Veloso was sentenced to death for drug trafficking after heroin was found hidden in her luggage at the Yogyakarta airport in 2010. She was granted a last minute stay of execution in April, but eight other convicts — two Australians, four Nigerians, a Brazilian, and an Indonesian — were executed.

“Mary Jane gave Pacquiao a scarf with his name, ‘Pacman,’ written on it. She made it on her own when she heard Pacquiao would visit her. She also gave him a ring,” said Dwi Prasetyo Santoso, chief of Yogyakarta’s Ministry of Law and Human Rights.

Two judicial reviews have failed to overturn Veloso’s conviction and death sentence, and “an appeal for clemency may be stronger” than a third review, said Edre Olalia of the Public Interest Law Center in Manila and a lawyer for her family.

In a bid to prove that Veloso was unaware she was carrying drugs, the Philippine Department of Justice is preparing to file human-trafficking, illegal-job-recruitment, and fraud charges against a woman who allegedly brought Veloso to Malaysia, where she was given a bag that held 5.7 pounds of heroin. The woman has surrendered to police and admitted that Veloso didn’t know about the drugs.

In Jakarta, Indonesia’s house speaker Setya Novanto said Pacquiao will visit the Indonesian parliament to thank the government for Veloso’s reprieve. Pacquiao is also a member of the Philippine congress and vice chairman of a congressional committee on overseas Filipinos.

Novanto said he will try to arrange a meeting between Pacquiao and President Joko Widodo.

The plight of Filipino workers overseas is a sensitive



**SEEKING CLEMENCY.** Filipino boxing icon Manny Pacquiao, second from left, and his wife Jinkee, right, sit with their compatriot, Mary Jane Veloso, who is currently on death row for drug offenses, during a visit at Wirogunan Prison in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. (AP Photo)

issue in the country where about a tenth of its 100 million people leave their homeland in search of jobs and better opportunities. The Philippines does not have a death penalty.

“We welcome all efforts that will help Mary Jane,” said Charles Jose, spokesman for the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Migrante, a group helping Filipino overseas workers, said Pacquiao’s visit “reflects the just and growing global demand that Mary Jane be granted clemency and be brought home to her family in the Philippines.”

Before his megafight with Floyd Mayweather, Jr. in May, Pacquiao promised to visit Veloso and meet with the Indonesian president to personally appeal for her life.

Footage from the prison showed Pacquiao’s wife tearful during the meeting with Veloso. The champion held back his own emotions, but teared up after the meeting where the bible-quoting boxer joined others in a prayer for Veloso, Manila Radio DZMM reported.

He also gave Veloso some money, prison warden Zaenal Arifin said.

Associated Press writer Ali Kotarumalos in Jakarta, Indonesia contributed to this story.



**ONLINE SUMMITS.** Hikers climb up Mount Fuji on the Shizuoka prefecture side in Fujinomiya, central Japan. Climbers reaching the summit of Mount Fuji are now able to share their achievement via free Wi-Fi. A Japanese mobile-phone network says it is offering free Wi-Fi at eight hotspots on Japan’s most famous mountain, including the 12,389-foot summit. (Kyodo News via AP)

## Japan launches free Wi-Fi on Mount Fuji

TOKYO (AP) — Climbers who reach the summit of Mount Fuji are now able to share their achievement via free Wi-Fi.

A Japanese mobile-phone network is offering the service at eight hotspots on Japan’s most famous mountain, including the 12,389-foot summit.

The initiative is aimed at attracting more overseas visitors to Shizuoka and Yamanashi, the two prefectures that are home to Mount Fuji. From airports to subway and bus operators, Japan has been expanding free Wi-Fi service ahead of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Users on Mount Fuji will need to enter a user ID and password provided in fliers in English, Chinese, and Korean distributed at some trailheads. NTT DOCOMO Inc. provides the service for 72 hours from the initial log-in.

## Young Micronesian soccer side overwhelmed at Pacific Games

By Dennis Passa  
AP Sports Writer

**T**he players were mostly teenagers, many of them far away from their villages in the Federated States of Micronesia for the first time. And as it turned out, it was the steepest of learning curves in the Pacific Games soccer tournament in Papua New Guinea.

The Micronesians lost the third of their three matches at the Pacific Games 46-0 to Vanuatu. That was preceded by a 38-0 loss to Fiji and a 30-0 defeat to Tahiti — 114 goals in three matches. Jean Kaltak scored 16 goals for Vanuatu, which scored at the rate of one goal every two minutes.

Micronesia coach Stan Foster said he wasn’t surprised by the results.

“Most of these guys are in their late teenage years and that’s why I selected this team,” Foster told Radio New Zealand in Port Moresby, the Papua New Guinean capital, after the Vanuatu loss. “A bit of criticism I got before we left was (for) picking a younger squad, but it’s no use picking older players who won’t be around for the next four (years).”

“Most of them have never been out of their villages let alone on to another island. I took them to Guam the other day (and it was) the first time they’ve been on an elevator or an escalator. It’s been a huge step-up for these guys and they’ve just been overawed really.”

Those villages Foster refers to are on four island states spread across 60 miles in the western Pacific Ocean — Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae. They sit about 1,800 miles north of the eastern Australian coast and about 2,500 miles southwest of the main islands of Hawai’i.

The islands, which use American currency because it is a U.S. “associated state,” have no organized soccer and often

only get practice matches against teams from visiting ships. They are not a member of the Oceania confederation or the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), so the only funding to help develop their approximately 500 players, mostly from school teams, comes from international agencies like the United Nations.

Foster said most of his team played in only seven-a-side teams and that the Pacific Games marked the first time many of them played on a pitch with 11 players.

The Pacific Games is an under-23 tournament, so the scores won’t count as any type of international record for the most goals scored in a match. That mark still belongs to Australia: Archie Thompson scored 13 goals when the Socceroos beat American Samoa 31-0 in 2001 in an Oceania qualifying match for the 2002 World Cup.

Social media wasn’t around in 2001 to help spread news of the big Australian win, and predictably Twitter was active with news of the huge Micronesian losses. The official Pacific Games website even re-tweeted a note from a New Zealand radio network which pointed out that Micronesia conceded more goals in three matches than Lionel Messi scored in the past two years (84).

“These are a team of boys and they’re playing against men,” Foster said after his team’s final lopsided loss. “But the makings are there. If we just to stick to our development, I’m sure we can join the other teams.”

“We didn’t have high expectations,” Foster added, admitting that he told his players before they left not to worry about the scores of any of their matches.

Which, as it turned out, was probably a good thing.

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