



**CIGARETTES IN THE CROSSHAIRS.** A Filipino is seen using an electronic cigarette outside a mall in Manila, the Philippines. Health secretary Paulyn Ubial said she hopes Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte can sign a draft executive order banning smoking in public nationwide before the end of October. She also said e-cigarettes are included in the ban. (AP Photo/Aaron Favila)

## The Philippine president's next campaign: public smoking ban

By Teresa Cerojano  
The Associated Press

**M**ANILA, The Philippines — Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte is turning to another battle aside from illegal drugs: smoking.

Health secretary Paulyn Ubial told The Associated Press that she hopes the president can sign a draft executive order banning smoking in public nationwide before the end of October.

The department is pushing for the ban to start before the law providing for graphic health warnings on tobacco products is fully implemented on November 4.

Ubial said Duterte wants a 100-percent smokefree environment in public places similar to Davao, the southern city where he was formerly mayor.

Designated smoking areas are to be outdoors and away from the public, and local government units will be asked to issue ordinances to enforce the smoking ban and set penalties. She said e-cigarettes are included in the ban because they too produce smoke.

Ubial said there is no reason for smokers and tobacco companies to oppose the ban.

"I don't see any reason why they will oppose that," she told The AP. "We're not stopping them from smoking, we are just telling them not to smoke around non-smokers."

Ubial said the smoking ban was successful in Davao because the city government

strictly enforced it and created a task force of enforcers specifically to implement the ban. It was not just add-on work for the police.

It will be up to provinces and towns to determine if they will follow that example and what penalties they will impose for violators, she said.

The executive order would take effect immediately after Duterte signs it, but the rules to implement it need to be crafted by national government agencies and by local governments through ordinances.

Assistant health secretary Eric Tayag said the order aims to protect the public from secondhand or thirdhand smoke — that inhaled when a smoker is nearby or when smoke lingers afterward.

Duterte took office on June 30 vowing to expand policies from Davao such as his anti-drug campaign. The crackdown has left about 3,600 suspected drug pushers and users dead, including more than 1,500 suspects killed in gun battles with police. The killings have been widely condemned by human-rights advocates as well as the United States, European Union, and United Nations.

Many have wondered if Duterte would also expand a Davao ban on powerful firecrackers during New Year's Eve revelry. If the ban is imposed nationally, he would bring a major change in a violent celebratory tradition that has caused deaths and hundreds of injuries each year.



**EXTENSIVE BLACKOUT.** Firefighters gather around black smoke billowing from an unmanned power substation in Niiza, Saitama prefecture, near Tokyo. An extensive blackout recently struck Tokyo, affecting government offices and halting trains in the Japanese capital just before the evening rush hour. (Kyodo News via AP)

Traffic lights were also temporarily out in some locations in Tokyo.

Chief cabinet secretary Yoshihide Suga told a news conference that officials were looking into the cause of the incidents, but did not answer when asked about possible sabotage, according to NHK.

## China coach resigns, World Cup hopes looking slim

**KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)** — Despite boasting one of the world's highest-spending domestic soccer leagues, China's dreams of automatic qualification for the 2018 World Cup are almost over.

China coach Gao Hongbo resigned after a 0-2 defeat in Uzbekistan left the nation with just one point from four games in Asia's third round of qualification.

"I spoke with the heads of the Chinese Football Association before the match and we agreed if we couldn't reach a positive result against Uzbekistan I would stand down from my post," said Gao.

Marat Bikmaev and Otabek Shukurov scored a goal each in Tashkent as Uzbekistan outclassed the visitor, which lost 0-1 at home to Syria five days previously. China has only ever appeared at one World Cup, in 2002.

Despite the poor record on the international stage, there has been massive investment in Chinese soccer in recent years.

Clubs in the Chinese Super League have spent more than \$400 million on foreign players in 2016 alone. South American stars such as Hulk, Alex



**COACHING CHANGE.** China's coach, Gao Hongbo, left, argues with a referee during an Asian Football Confederation Asian Cup soccer match against Uzbekistan at Al Gharafa Stadium, in Doha, Qatar, in this January 16, 2011 file photo. Coach Gao resigned after a 0-2 defeat in Uzbekistan left the nation with just one point from four games in Asia's third round of qualification for the 2018 World Cup. (AP Photo/Kin Cheung, File)

Teixeira, Ramires, and Jackson Martinez have helped Shanghai SIPG, Jiangsu Suning, and Guangzhou Evergrande challenge at home and in the Asian Champions League.

High-profile coaches such as Luiz Felipe Scolari, Sven Goran Eriksson, and Manuel Pellegrini have also lifted the international profile of the league.

Yet despite the massive investment from the private and public sector — the government is also focusing on youth develop-

ment — the standard of the national team will take longer to improve.

Nations such as Syria and Iraq, which are not allowed to play games at home due to security concerns, have collected more points in qualification.

The top two of the six teams in Groups A and B will qualify automatically for the World Cup, with the two third-place teams going to a fourth-round match to decide which of them makes the inter-continental playoffs.

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