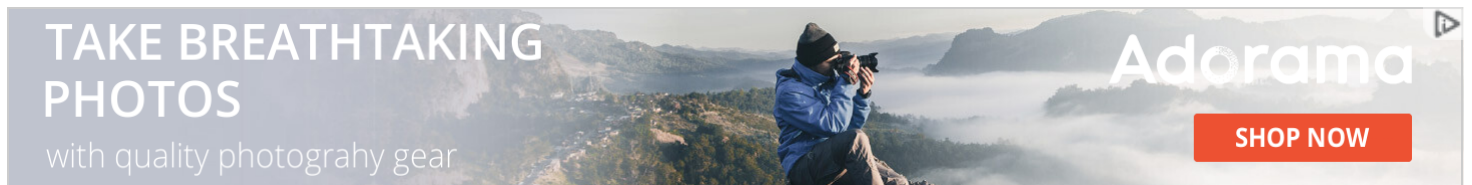


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Ecstasy ring leader 'a young woman'

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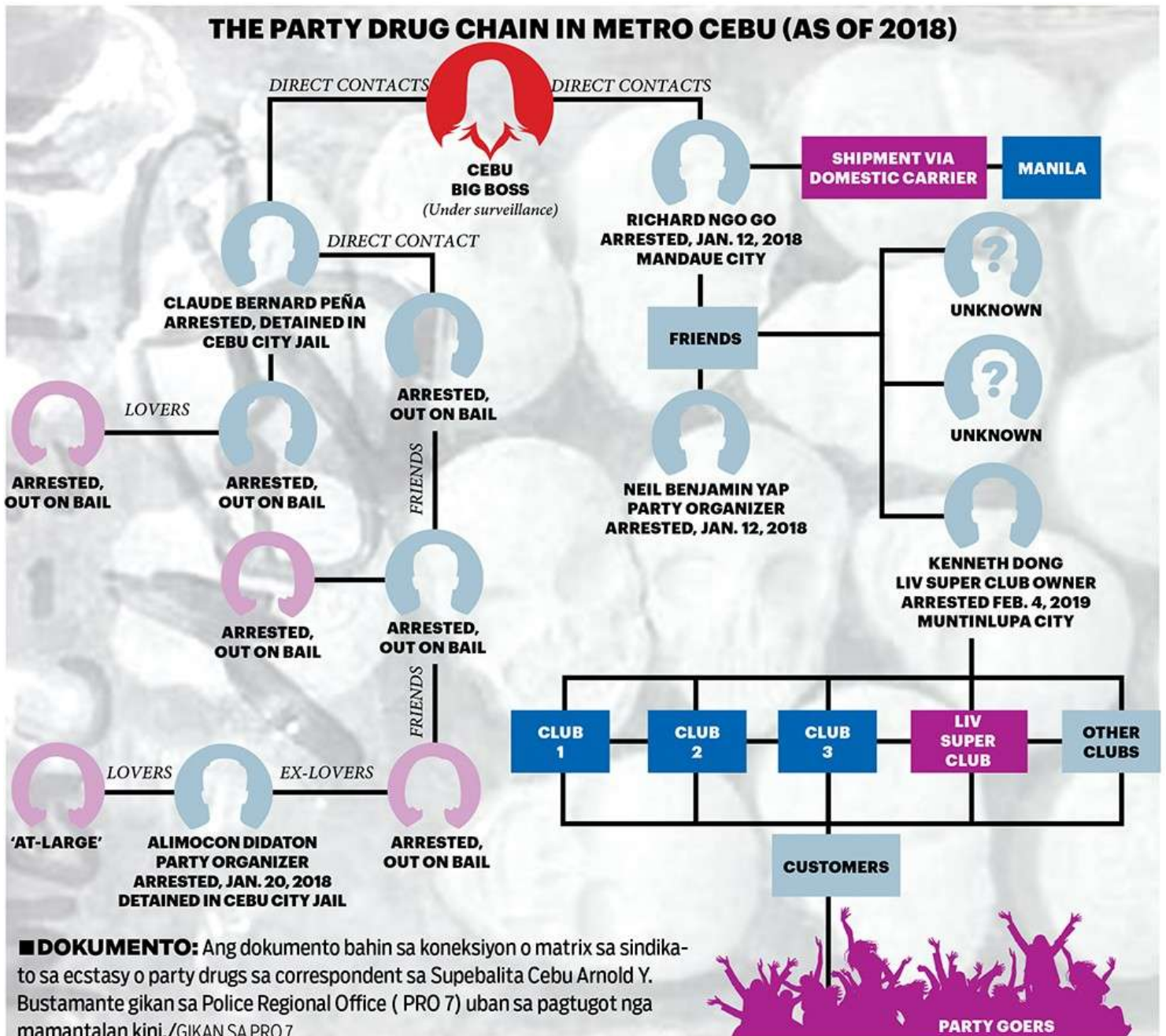
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DRUG MATRIX. The Police Regional Office 7 and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency 7 has come up with a matrix of the Ecstasy distribution channel in Metro Cebu based on their interrogation of arrested drug personalities. (SunStar graphics)

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A YOUNG woman heads a 15-member distribution channel for the illegal party drug Ecstasy in Metro Cebu. Starting October 2020, we will offer discounted rates for your paid subscription.

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Five of those involved are women including the Big Boss, eight are men, and two are still to be identified.

Eleven of them have been arrested but the female Big Boss is still under surveillance.

Former Liv Super Club owner Kenneth Dong, who was arrested on Feb. 4, 2019 in Muntinlupa City, was part of this distribution channel.

Distribution channel matrix

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This information is based on a matrix of the Ecstasy distribution channel in Metro Cebu that came into light after months of surveillance and verification done jointly by the Police Regional Office (PRO) 7 and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) 7.

The matrix was shown to Superbalita Cebu correspondent Arnold Y. Bustamante, who secured permission to make the information public.

Police officials said Metro Cebu is one of the target markets of ecstasy, a party drug popular among teenagers and most of the suppliers are women.

The transactions of the imported illegal drug often happen in party clubs.

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Four popular party clubs and a few more in Metro Cebu where the drug dealing usually takes place are being monitored by law enforcers.

The regular Ecstasy users are teenagers who belong to well-off families. They can afford to buy a tablet, which costs P2,000.

PRO 7 has intensified its campaign against party drugs, including Ecstasy tablets. Since 2018, it has a matrix on suppliers and the ring leaders.

According to the document obtained by Superbalita Cebu, a young woman has been identified as the Big Boss of the 14 drug suppliers.

"Alta sociedad"

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PRO 7 Director Debold Sinas said the Big Boss directly supplies Ecstasy tablets to an owner of a hotel in Metro Cebu.

This hotel owner, he said, was the supplier of Dong, a businessman arrested by the National Bureau of Investigation for his alleged involvement in the shipment of P6.4-billion shabu in 2017.

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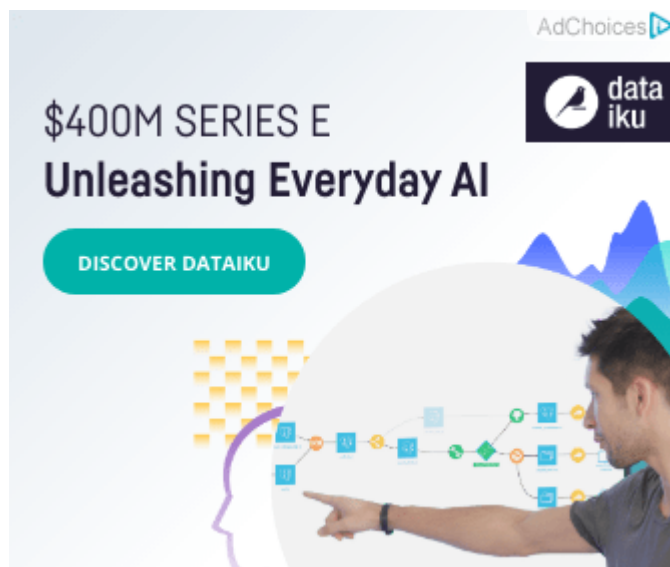
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Dong is one of the former owners of LIV Super Club in Mandaue City.

“Di ba naa na siyay (Doesn’t he own a) club? Didto sa iyang club ang distribution area lalo na pag naay big events sa (The distribution takes place in his club, especially where there are big events here in) Cebu,” Sinas said.

PRO 7 has tightened its monitoring on personalities identified in the drug matrix.

Sinas described the female suppliers of Ecstasy tablets as members of the “alta sociedad (high society).” They have wealth and legally operate their businesses.

Source

Some of those named in the drug matrix were arrested on different occasions but have been freed on bail.

“Kini na pud sila ang among ginasundan para mangadakpan na pud ni sila (We are monitoring them so we can arrest them again),” Sinas said.

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The Ecstasy ring leader supplies the party drug during big parties or entertainment events in Cebu. During those happy times, she is selling the Sinolags Festival or PHP50.

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Starting October 2020, we will offer discounted rates for your paid subscription. RID 7 Chief Remus Medina told Superbalita Cebu that the PDEA 7 and PRO 7 had a coordination that led to the arrest of a call center agent, who yielded 15 Ecstasy tablets last Feb. 7.

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PDEA 7 Director Wardley Getalla said the Ecstasy tablets in Cebu are from Europe, adding that no

one manufactures this kind of drug in the country.

The supply is usually flown into the Philippines from the Netherlands.

Ecstasy tablets are hard to detect as these are mixed with food supplements.

Fatal party

"Usually sa Netherlands or sa other parts ng Europe doon may napaulat na may mga chemist na gumagawa ng mga ganitong (chemists in the Netherlands and other parts of Europe manufacture these kinds of) illegal drugs na MDMA, o methylenedioxymethamphetamine," Getalla said.

He said Ecstasy laboratories do not exist in the Philippines, but anti-narcotics agents seized amphetamine powder that is often mixed with the other component of the drug.

The Big Boss, after getting her supplies of Ecstasy tablets, sends the contraband to her "downline" through local commercial couriers.

Last month, a 19-year-old woman died after she reportedly overdosed on one Ecstasy tablet during a Sinulog-related event in Cebu City.

Ashley Abad was with her boyfriend and friends attending an open-air concert when she collapsed. She died several hours later in the hospital. The incident is still under investigation.

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