

Army Vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride



ARMY

Serving the people. Securing the land.

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS NEWS CLIPPINGS

14 May 2016

Saturday

Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land

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Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.



24-HOUR PUBLIC WEATHER FORECAST

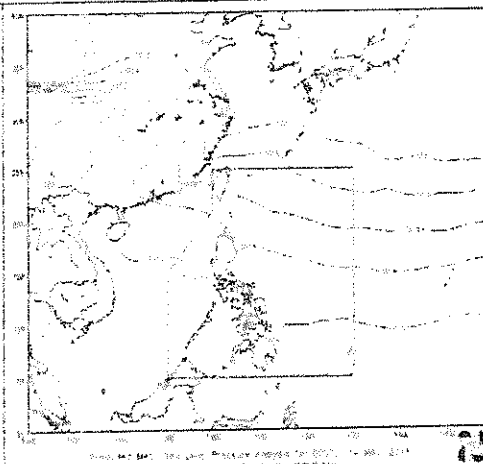
ISSUED AT: 5:00 AM 14 MAY 2016

VALID BEGINNING: 5:00 AM TODAY UNTIL 5:00 AM TOMORROW

SYNOPSIS: TAIL-END OF A COLD FRONT AFFECTING EXTREME NORTHERN LUZON. EASTERLIES AFFECTING THE EASTERN SECTION OF THE COUNTRY.

FORECAST: CLOUDY SKIES WITH LIGHT TO MODERATE RAINS AND ISOLATED THUNDERSTORMS WILL BE EXPERIENCED OVER THE ISLANDS OF BATANES, CALAYAN AND BABUYAN. PARTLY CLOUDY TO CLOUDY SKIES WITH ISOLATED RAINSHOWERS OR THUNDERSTORMS MOSTLY IN THE AFTERNOON OR EVENING WILL PREVAIL OVER METRO MANILA AND THE REST OF THE COUNTRY.

LIGHT TO MODERATE WINDS BLOWING FROM THE EAST TO SOUTHEAST WILL PREVAIL OVER EXTREME NORTHERN LUZON AND COMING FROM THE EAST TO NORTHEAST OVER THE REST OF THE COUNTRY. THE COASTAL WATERS THROUGHOUT THE ARCHIPELAGO WILL BE SLIGHT TO MODERATE.



PAGTAYA: MAULAP NA KALANGITAN NA MAY MAHINA HANGGANG SA KATAMTAMANG MGA PAG-ULAN AT PULU-PULONG PAGKIDLAT-PAGKULOG ANG MARARANASAN SA MGA ISLA NG BATANES, CALAYAN AT BABUYAN. BAHAGYANG MAULAP HANGGANG SA MAULAP NA PAPAWIRIN NA MAY PULU-PULONG MGA PAG-ULAN O PAGKIDLAT-PAGKULOG LALO NA SA DAKONG HAPON O GABI ANG IIRAL SA KAMAYNILAAN AT SA NALALABING BAHAGI NG BANSA.

MAHINA HANGGANG SA KATAMTAMANG HANGIN MULA SA SILANGAN HANGGANG SA TIMOG-SILANGAN ANG IIRAL SA DULONG HILAGANG LUZON AT MULA NAMAN SA SILANGAN HANGGANG SA HILAGANG-SILANGAN SA NALALABING BAHAGI NG BANSA. ANG MGA BAYBAYING-DAGAT SA BUONG KAPULUAN AY MAGIGING BANAYAD HANGGANG SA KATAMTAMAN.

EXTREMES OF TEMPERATURE AND RELATIVE HUMIDITY FOR THE 24-HR PERIOD ENDING AT 8:00 PM YESTERDAY AND RECORDED AT PAGASA WEATHER STATION, SCIENCE GARDEN, DILIMAN, QUEZON CITY:

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE: 1:50 PM YESTERDAY — 35.5°C	MAXIMUM RELATIVE HUMIDITY: 6:00 AM YESTERDAY — 64 %
MINIMUM TEMPERATURE: 6:00 AM YESTERDAY — 25.6°C	MINIMUM RELATIVE HUMIDITY: 11:00 AM YESTERDAY — 42 %
TIDAL PREDICTIONS ALONG MANILA BAY (Courtesy of NAMRIA)	OVER METRO MANILA:
HIGH TIDE TODAY: 3:22 PM 0.90 METER	SUNRISE / SUNSET MOONRISE / MOONSET AND ILLUMINATION
LOW TIDE TODAY: 11:53 PM 0.04 METER	SUNRISE TODAY: 5:28 AM MOONRISE TODAY: 12:19 PM
	SUNSET TODAY: 6:16 PM MOONSET TOMORROW: 1:01 AM
	ILLUMINATION TODAY: 53 %

For more information and queries, please call at telephone numbers 927-1335 and 927-2877 or log on to www.pagasa.dost.gov.ph.

PREPARED BY: MPM

CHECKED BY: MLM

Tracking the sky helping the country

WFFC BIR Road Diliman, Quezon City

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24-Hour Weather Forecast and Extended Weather Outlook for Selected Cities:

ISSUED AT: 5:00 AM 14 MAY 2016

VALID BEGINNING: 5:00 AM TODAY UNTIL 5:00 AM TOMORROW

CITIES	24-Hr Weather, Winds and Sea Condition Forecast from 5AM today until 5AM tomorrow		Extended Weather Outlook Duration: 5AM until 5AM of the following day				
	14 MAY		15 MAY	16 MAY	17 MAY	18 MAY	
Metro Manila	26°C 35°C	Light to Moderate East Manila Bay: Slight to Moderate	26°C 35°C	26°C 35°C	26°C 36°C	26°C 36°C	
Tuguegarao City	26°C 37°C	Moderate East	26°C 37°C	26°C 38°C	26°C 38°C	25°C 35°C	
Laoag City	26°C 34°C	Light to Moderate East Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	26°C 34°C	26°C 34°C	25°C 34°C	25°C 33°C	
Baguio City	17°C 25°C	Light to Moderate East	17°C 25°C	17°C 25°C	17°C 26°C	17°C 26°C	
SBMA (Olongapo) / Clark Zone (Angeles City)	26°C 37°C	Light to Moderate East Subic Bay: Slight to Moderate	26°C 36°C	26°C 36°C	26°C 36°C	26°C 35°C	
Tagaytay City	23°C 32°C	Light to Moderate East	23°C 32°C	23°C 31°C	23°C 32°C	23°C 32°C	
Lipa City	24°C 33°C	Light to Moderate East	24°C 33°C	24°C 34°C	24°C 34°C	24°C 33°C	
Legazpi City	26°C 33°C	Moderate East Coastal Waters: Moderate	27°C 35°C	26°C 33°C	27°C 33°C	26°C 32°C	
Puerto Princesa City	26°C 33°C	Light to Moderate East Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	26°C 34°C	27°C 34°C	26°C 33°C	27°C 34°C	
Iloilo City / Bacolod City	26°C 33°C	Light to Moderate East Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	26°C 34°C	26°C 33°C	26°C 33°C	25°C 34°C	
Metro Cebu	26°C 34°C	Light to Moderate East Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	26°C 33°C	26°C 33°C	26°C 34°C	26°C 34°C	
Tacloban City	26°C 32°C	Moderate East Coastal Waters: Moderate	26°C 32°C	26°C 33°C	28°C 32°C	26°C 33°C	
Cagayan de Oro City	26°C 33°C	Light to Moderate East - Northeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	25°C 33°C	24°C 32°C	25°C 33°C	24°C 33°C	
Valencia City	22°C 32°C	Light to Moderate East - Northeast	23°C 31°C	22°C 32°C	21°C 30°C	23°C 32°C	
Metro Davao	25°C 34°C	Light to Moderate East - Northeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	25°C 33°C	24°C 32°C	24°C 32°C	25°C 34°C	
Zamboanga City	25°C 34°C	Light to Moderate East - Northeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	25°C 33°C	25°C 34°C	24°C 32°C	25°C 33°C	

LEGEND:

	Clear skies		Partly Cloudy to all times Cloudy with Rainshowers and/or Thunderstorms		Occasional Rains		Rains with Gusty Winds
	Partly Cloudy Skies		Cloudy skies with Rainshowers and/or Thunderstorms		Monsoon Rains / Rains		Stormy
	Partly Cloudy to all times Cloudy with Rainshowers		Light Rains				

END OF FORECAST

PREPARED BY: MPM

CHECKED BY: MLM

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Pullout of soldiers from tribal communities urged

By Hector Lawas

HUMAN rights group Karapatan yesterday urged President-elect Rodrigo Duterte to include in his priorities the immediate pullout of military troops from indigenous communities in Mindanao.

This as Karapatan disclosed that current operations of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in this region have resulted in 318 deaths and forcible evacuation of thousands of indigenous people.

"There are still more than 2,700 evacuees at the Tandag Sports Complex in Surigao del Sur and at

the United Church of Christ in the Philippines-Haran in Davao City. The pullout of military troops in their communities and the disbandment of paramilitary groups can enable them to go home," Karapatan Secretary General Cristina Palabay said in a statement.

Also, the group called on the Duterte administration to consider releasing all political prisoners and to resume peace negotiations between the Government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).

"We challenge the Duterte presidency to build on the people's votes that

were mostly repudiation of everything that is the 'tuwid na daan'. He can start by junking Oplan Bayanihan and similar counterinsurgency programs and take the road to genuine peace by addressing the roots of unpeace and the ongoing civil war through the negotiating table," Palabay said.

Palabay said as of March 2016, there are 543 political prisoners detained on false criminal charges. Of the 543, 18 are NDFP peace consultants, whose protection under the GPH-NDFP agreement on safety and immunity guarantees have been violated.

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Human rights group seeks AFP pullout from IP areas

By HECTOR
LAWAS

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COA questions DND's use of P128.6-M calamity fund

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

The Department of National Defense (DND) spent P128.626 million meant for disaster relief and response to purchase overpriced items like bottled water and to repair and reconstruct facilities in violation of law, the Commission on Audit (COA) said yesterday.

State auditors said government money meant for calamity victims was spent for things that were "not in accordance with the purposes of Quick Response Fund (QRF)"

The money used for the

repair and reconstruction of DND facilities is supposed to be a standby fund to ensure immediate action during calamities, they added.

State auditors said the DND is not an implementing agency for rehabilitation and reconstruction projects since that is the job of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

Pursuant to Republic Act 10121, the QRF is a "standby fund for relief and recovery programs in order that situation and living conditions of people

in communities or areas stricken by disasters, calamities, epidemics or complex emergencies may be normalized as quickly as possible," they added.

"There are other government agencies which facilities were likewise affected by disasters but could not have these repaired/reconstructed because they have no capital outlay in its budget, thus for DND and its bureaus to take advantage of the QRF lodged in their budget for their own facilities may not

be proper," they said.

"The purpose of the fund transfer will not directly benefit the people living in communities or areas stricken by calamities, epidemics, crises and catastrophes who are the intended beneficiaries in the above definitions of QRF."

State auditors questioned the DND's purchase of medicine, medical supplies and bottled water totaling P8.355 million last year as they were more expensive by at least

1.967 million compared to the same items bought in retail.

"Review of the disbursement vouchers and supporting documents disclosed that the prices of the above items procured out of QRF are higher by at least "1,967,062.44," the COA said.

"The overpricing of various purchases noted above rendered doubtful the reasonableness of the cost of the rest of the procurement made out of QRF."

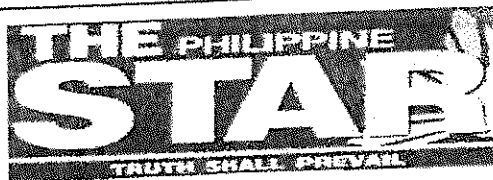
State auditors said the DND must strictly implement the provisions of the General Ap-

propriations Act on the utilization of the QRF.

They advised the DND to "see to it that procurement out of QRF are strictly in accordance with RA 9184," or the Government Procurement Reform Act.

In response, the DND said the programs, activities and projects charged against the QRF are also geared toward ensuring that the situation and living conditions of people in communities or areas stricken by calamities, crises and catastrophes may be normalized as quickly as possible.

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France, Phl ink defense cooperation pact

By JAIME LAUDE

Amid maritime tension in the Spratlys island chain, the Philippines continues to strengthen its defense alliances with friendly states.

Last Wednesday the government forged a defense agreement with France.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and French Ambassador Thierry Mathou inked the defense cooperation arrangement, which both countries had been working on since 2014.

"Our relationship would be further enhanced as we institutionalize our cooperation through this agreement," Gazmin said during the signing ceremony held at the defense department at Camp Aguinaldo.

Gazmin said both countries could start working on the implementation of the deal.

Under the arrangement, both countries agreed to focus their cooperation on high-level dialogues and defense policy consultations, visits of defense and armed forces authorities, education and training exchanges, and cooperation in defense equipment, logistics and defense industry.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines is deemed to be one of the weakest in the region. Manila has been on a diplomatic offensive to boost security alliances and its defense capability.

It is also enlisting the support of other countries for

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France, Phl From Page 1

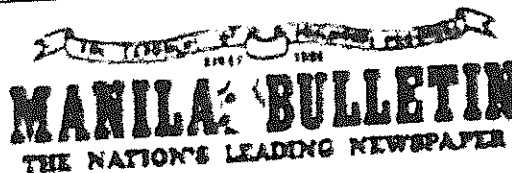
its maritime arbitration case against China. The case questioned the legality of Beijing's nine-dash line territorial and maritime claims to almost the entire South China Sea.

"The conclusion of the Philippines-France Defense Arrangement is very timely given the increasing defense and security challenges both countries are confronted with. The

cooperation provided for in the agreement could enhance the two countries' defense capacities and capabilities essential in addressing such challenges," defense spokesman Peter Paul Galvez said.

Aside from its key ally the United States, the Philippines also has standing defense cooperation agreements with Japan, Australia and several Asian countries.

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Gazmin, Mathou sign PH-France defense deal

Defense Secretary Voltaire T. Gazmin and French Ambassador Thierry Mathou have formally signed the agreement that bolsters defense cooperation between France and the Philippines.

The defense arrangement, wherein both countries have agreed to commonly work on areas and issues involving defense and security, was signed on May 11 at the Department of National Defense (DND) in Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo.

The two countries have been negotiating the said defense arrangement since 2014.

In a statement, the DND said the agree-

ment would serve as framework of defense cooperation for the Philippines and France.

Under the framework, both countries agreed to focus their cooperation on high-level dialogues and defense policy consultations, visits of defense and armed forces authorities, education and training exchanges and cooperation in the fields of defense equipment, logistics and the defense industry.

"Our relationship would be further enhanced as we institutionalize our cooperation through this Agreement," Gazmin said during the signing ceremony. (Elena L. Aben)

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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DBM execs face raps

By JUN RAMIREZ

Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales ordered yesterday the filing of graft and corruption charges against six officials of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) in connection with the alleged purchase of substandard rubber boats in 2010.

They were identified as DBM Undersecretary Evelyn Guererro, Director IV Lourdes Santiago, Procurement Management Officer V Julieta Lozano, Procurement Management Officer III Mervin Ian Tanquintic, Administrative Assistant III

Alvin John Perater and ad hoc member Lt. Malone Agudelo.

Also impleaded in the complaint was Anthony Hernandez of the Joavi Philip-pines Corporation, the inflatable rubber boats supplier.

Morales said Joavi failed to comply with certain specifications like the absence of intercommunication or inflation valves, over-pressure valves and roll-up floor.

She noted the boats were designed as sport model and not for military use and that the said DBM officials conspired with Joavi causing financial losses to the government.

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China, US generals work out mechanism for a stable South China Sea

BEIJING (AP) - Seeking to calm escalating tensions in the South China Sea, top generals from China and the U.S. spoke by phone and said they were ready to work out an effective mechanism to prevent confrontation and

maintain stability in the region.

Chinese Chief of the General Staff Fang Fenghui told the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff Joseph Dunford in a video conference Thursday that China values freedom of navigation. ▶8

China, US generals work... ◀1

tion "more than any other country in the world," according to a statement posted on the Defense Ministry's website.

While denying that Beijing was responsible for current tensions, Fang said China wanted to expand communication and cooperation with the US to prevent the issue impacting on the overall relationship.

"The common ground and prospects for cooperation between China and the US far exceed our disagreements and contradictions," Fang was quoted as saying. China wants to take the big picture of China-US relations as the

basis for approaching the South China Sea issue, Fang said.

The conversation followed a sharp verbal exchange following a US destroyer's sail-by past China's largest man-made island in a move to exercise freedom of navigation.

China said it deployed two navy fighter jets, one early warning aircraft and three ships to track and warn off the USS William P. Lawrence as it sailed Wednesday within 12 nautical miles (22 kilometers) of Fiery Cross Reef, the limit of what international law regards as an island's territorial sea.

Routine missions

The reef - which used to be submerged at high tide for all but two rocks - is now an artificial island with a long airstrip, harbor and burgeoning above-ground infrastructure. It dwarfs all other features in the disputed area, was recently visited by China's military No. 2 and became prominent in the Chinese media when a famous singer of patriotic anthems entertained troops there.

China said such "provocative actions" justified it in boosting "all categories of military capacity building" on its island strongholds in the South China Sea.

In Washington, State Department Spokesman Josh Earnest said such "innocent passage" cruises were routine missions intended merely to reinforce the Navy's determination to "fly, operate, and sail anywhere that international law allows."

"And we certainly do not want to see the tensions increase, because of the risk that that could pose to the extensive commerce that's conducted in that region of the world," Earnest said.

"We have done that at least a couple of times just in the last four or five months. It is not intended to be a provocative act. It is merely a demonstration of a principle that the president laid out on a number of occasions, which is that the US will fly, op-

erate and sail anywhere that international law allows," Earnest said, adding that this operation was undertaken in consistent with that principle.

China has sought to bolster its claim to almost the entire South China Sea by constructing new islands such as Fiery Cross Reef atop coral outcroppings, adding to them airstrips, harbors and military infrastructure. The US refuses to recognize the new features as enjoying the legal rights of naturally occurring islands, and while it takes no formal position on sovereignty claims, insists that all nations enjoy the right to freely sail and fly through the strategically vital area. (With a report from PNA/PTI)

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US attack jets deployed to Clark

By ELENA L. ABEN

Four United States ground attack jets deployed to Clark Air Base as part of US Pacific Command's (US PACOM) first iteration of the air contingent in the Philippines have flown out of the country.

This, after the four US Air Force A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft completed four maritime situational awareness flights in and around the West Philippine Sea

and 24 training sorties with Philippine Air Force (PAF) personnel.

They departed the Philippines on April 30, and will be replaced by the second air contingent iteration at a later date.

In an article posted on the Pacific Air Forces website, Capt. Susan Harrington, PACAF public affairs, said the four A-10C Warthogs together with two HH-60G Pave Hawks flew a final mission April 28 in international waters west of the Philippines.

The aircraft conducted air and mari-

time domain awareness missions for two weeks, to provide greater transparency in international waters and airspace.

"This represents a significant milestone in our efforts to strengthen our regional presence, enhance partnerships and ensure security while laying the groundwork for all future joint air contingent deployments," said Gen. Lori Robinson, PACAF commander and U.S. PACOM's Theater Joint Forces Air Component commander.

"We sincerely thank our Philippine partners for providing this exceptional opportunity to strengthen our interoperability," he added.

It will be recalled that the four A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft and two HH-60G Pave Hawks rescue helicopters remained in Clark after the conclusion of this year's Balikatan Exercises last April 15.

They were part of the newly stood up US air contingent whose missions include operations ranging from air and maritime domain awareness, personnel recovery, combating piracy, and assuring all nations have access to air and sea domains throughout the region in accordance with international law.

Throughout their time in the country, the A-10s flew four missions in international waters and international airspace increasing air and maritime domain awareness while promoting regional stability and security.

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BusinessMirror

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China, US vie for supporters before South China Sea ruling

CHINA and the US are pulling out all the stops before a court ruling on China's territorial claim to a large part of the South China Sea, with a flurry of diplomatic and military activity across Southeast Asia in recent weeks.

The stakes are high. While the international tribunal's decision on the case brought against China by the Philippines isn't enforceable, it could create momentum either for or against Beijing, which has been busy reclaiming land in a waterway that hosts more than \$5 trillion of trade a year.

The matter being considered by the tribunal in The Hague more than 10,000 kilometers from the South China Sea goes to the heart of the strategic rivalry between the US and China in the western Pacific. For China and the US, which is not a claimant but has positioned itself as the champion of freedom of navigation in the area, the race is on to win the support of as many nations—large and small—as possible before the decision is handed down.

"If you think in terms of a chess board, everyone is moving pieces around in anticipation of the next phase of events in the South China Sea emerging from that PCA finding," said Malcolm Davis, senior analyst at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute in Canberra, referring to the Permanent Court of Arbitration. The ruling is expected mid-2016.

Senior officials have been busy. China's top military officer recently visited Fiery Cross Reef—about 500 km from the Philippines—along with a group of singers to entertain troops. Foreign Minister Wang Yi has roped in Russia and is claiming support from countries as diverse as Gambia, Poland and Qatar for aspects of China's argument the tribunal has no jurisdiction and disputes should be solved bilaterally.

The country even made a botched effort to get Fiji to back its position, and its ambassadors are demanding outsiders stop meddling.

Meanwhile, US Defense Secretary Ash Carter joined an aircraft carrier in its patrol of the waters, shortly after agreeing to a beefed

up agreement that lets US troops rotate through military bases in the Philippines for the first time in decades. The USS *William P. Lawrence*, a warship, sailed this week through the 12-nautical-mile territorial zone around Fiery Cross Reef, where China has completed an airstrip.

Coast guard vessels

THE Philippines is only one of several Southeast Asian claimants in the South China Sea—others include Malaysia and Vietnam—but it has been the most vocal. Since it turned to international arbitration in 2013, China has built more than 3,000 acres of land on seven features in the area, and its coast guard and naval vessels have become a more frequent presence.

Part of the diplomatic flurry is aimed at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the central voice through which countries in the region speak on the South China Sea. So far, Asean has avoided criticizing China by name, while calling for tensions to be minimized. China is keen to keep it that way—and just needs one Asean member to side with it to do so. China's trade with Asean in 2014 was more than \$360 billion, well above the US.

Others, including the US, are stressing the need for a firm, united Asean response to the arbitration ruling.

So Chinese and US diplomats are crisscrossing the region. Wang met leaders of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia and Lao PDR, and this week top diplomat Yang Jiechi visited Malaysia and Indonesia. Daniel Russel, the senior US diplomat for East Asia, finished a swing through Laos, Vietnam and Malaysia on May 12. President Barack Obama visits Vietnam this month before traveling to Japan for a Group of Seven summit, where he may seek endorsement of the tribunal's legitimacy.

If The Hague ruling is not in China's favor, the country, given its refusal to participate, will almost certainly reject the outcome. The question then becomes how it responds. At one extreme it may choose to ratchet down tensions by halting construction on the features it already occupies.

At the other end of the scale, it may start building an island on the Scarborough Shoal, seized from the Philippines in 2012, and a prospect raised by chief of naval operations Adm. John Richardson in March. The uninhabited shoal lies several hundred kilometers from Manila in an otherwise mostly empty area of the South China Sea.

Chinese radar, aircraft and missiles based on Scarborough would be able to reach Manila, as well as bases to be used by US forces. Building on the shoal would be the "final nail in the coffin" for Asean-based efforts to manage the tensions, according to Zack Cooper, a fellow at the Center for Strategic & International Studies in Washington.

A wild card is this week's election of Rodrigo R. Duterte as Philippine president. Duterte has given mixed messages, indicating he may negotiate with China or, at the other extreme, take a jet ski out to personally lay claim to a disputed feature.

Bloomberg News

“If you think in terms of a chess board, everyone is moving pieces around in anticipation of the next phase of events in the South China Sea emerging from that PCA finding.”—AUSTRALIAN STRATEGIC POLICY INSTITUTE

14 May 2016

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

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Joma: Duterte must honor past deals

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—The administration of presumptive President Rodrigo Duterte should respect and comply with existing agreements between the government and communist rebels to ensure the success of the peace negotiations, exiled Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria Sison said on Friday.

In an online interview, Sison said Duterte's representatives and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) "should reaffirm the existing agreements and comply with the obligations therein."

"The NDFP can negotiate only with a government that knows how to respect and comply with agreements," said Sison, NDFP's chief political consultant, from the Netherlands.

Luis Jalandoni, NDFP peace panel chair, earlier assailed President Aquino for his supposed "disrespect" of agreements signed by government and CPP-NDFP representatives during the administration of former President Fidel Ramos.

NDFP records showed that more than 10 significant agreements had been approved by representatives of both parties since 1992, including two ma-



SISON

jor agreements—the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (Jasig), signed on Feb. 24, 1995, and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (Carhrihl), signed on March 16, 1998.

Under the Jasig, consultants and staff of the NDFP, who were

part of the negotiating team, were granted immunity from arrest and detention. It also provided safety guarantees "to create a favorable atmosphere conducive to free discussion and free movement during the peace negotiations, and avert any incident that may jeopardize the peace negotiation."

Carhrihl was the first of four substantive peace agenda items that would form the final peace settlement with the NDFP to end the more than four decades of communist rebellion. The agreement sought to uphold principles of human rights and international humanitarian law in the context of armed conflict.

In his campaign speeches, Duterte had declared that he would reopen peace negotiations with the NDFP if elected president.

Jalandoni, in a separate on-

line interview on Thursday, called for an immediate meeting with Duterte's representatives to discuss how to proceed with the resumption of peace talks.

Concrete actions

"The next step is for authorized representatives of both sides to meet and discuss concrete actions and plans to effectively move the peace negotiations decisively forward. These could include a mutual ceasefire, which would be a [gesture of goodwill] from both sides," Jalandoni said.

While the proposed meetings could be done in a venue agreed by both parties, Jalandoni reminded Duterte that past agreements stipulated a "neutral" foreign venue for formal peace negotiations.

Sison said a mutual ceasefire could be worked out to main-

tain peace during the negotiations.

"The two sides can simply write down the agreement that their respective principals order their operational commands and units to cease and desist from carrying out offensives and firing at their adversaries," he said.

Sison said there could also be "provisions to ensure the implementation of the agreement, investigate the ceasefire violations and discipline those responsible for these."

Peter Laviña, Duterte's spokesperson, earlier said Duterte might order the release of jailed communist rebels to pave the way for the resumption of peace talks.

Jalandoni welcomed Duterte's offer but clarified that the release of political prisoners was not a precondition to the holding of formal talks.



14 May 2016

Joma assured it's safe to come home

SELF-EXILED Communist Party of the Philippines founding chairman Jose Ma. Sison will find himself under full police and military protection should he decide to return home and resume peace talks with the incoming Duterte administration, the Philippine National Police spokesperson said yesterday.

PNP spokesman Chief Superintendent Wilben M. Mayor said that although Sison is wanted for rebellion, his name expectedly would be included in the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) between the incoming administration and the communist movement in case the two groups resume talks aimed at ending the more

than four-decades-old leftist insurgency in the country.

Mayor explained that although all officers of the law can serve a warrant of arrest issued against any individual in the country, there are instances when the warrant may not be served on persons given safe conduct passes by the government during peace talks.

"There have been instances wherein CPP/NPA leaders who are the subjects of warrants of arrest were not arrested because they were issued safe conduct passes for being members of their peace panel," Mayor said.

The PNP spokesperson said that based on the pronouncements of the presumptive president, "we're going in that direc-

tion."

"We will soon have a new administration and it appears that its policy is geared towards the peace process. Let's give it a chance," he said.

The 77-year-old Sison flew to Utrecht, Netherlands when peace talks failed in 1987. The CPP's armed wing, the New People's Army is said to be composed of some 4,000 guerrillas, down from a peak of 26,000 in the 1980s. Despite their size, the NPA however remains a force to reckon with in some parts of the country where they have consistently launched surprise attacks on "soft targets" including police and military installations and mining, logging and telecommunication facilities.

Alfred Dalizon

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Joma won't be arrested if he comes home -- PNP

By **ALFRED DALIZON**

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Mayor said that in case peace talks between the incoming Duterte government and the Sison-led movement materializes, Sison will be assured of government protection.

He said that copies of 'safe conduct passes' being issued to rebel representatives are usually being given to military and police units to make them understand that the subjects should not be arrested during the peace talks.

The 77-year-old Sison flew to Utrecht, Netherlands when peace talks failed in 1987. The CPP's armed wing, the New People's

Army, is said to be composed of some 4,000 guerrillas, down from a peak of 26,000 in the 1980s. Despite their size, the NPA, however, remains a force to reckon with in some parts of the country where they have consistently launched surprise attacks on 'soft targets' including police and military installations and mining, logging and telecommunication facilities.

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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SWIMMING AGAINST THE CURRENT

Tapping external sources of support

By JESUS P. ESTANISLAO

THE Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) as "protector of the people" can never distance itself from the people. It will have to make progress, using its AFP Transformation Roadmap (TR), along the governance and transformation pathway, only with the people. It will have to win the support and cooperation of the very people it is supposed to serve, and whose interests it is expected to protect and promote. It has become very clear to the AFP, given its doctrine articulated in the IPSP: Bayanihan, that peace and development can be won and secured through three closely inter-related approaches: the whole of the organization (in this case, the "whole of AFP"); the "whole of government" (i.e. working in close solidarity with other government agencies); and the "whole of the nation" (i.e. working with all segments of the civilian sector in a positive and mutually supportive manner).

It is for this reason that under the AFP TR, all AFP units have to be closely and functionally aligned with the strategic priorities included in the transformation roadmap. The "whole of AFP" would need to move forward, towards the attainment of its vision, by fostering and observing the "culture of jointness". In other words, there are no impenetrable silos artificially erected between AFP units. Indeed, every AFP unit

must contribute to the achievement of targets set in the CS AFP Performance Scorecard.

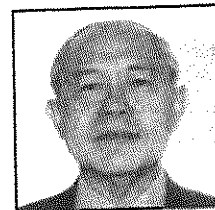
Even as the process of internal alignment is being strengthened under the "whole of AFP approach", similar positive steps should be undertaken to give flesh and substance to the "whole of government" and "whole of the nation" approaches. The AFP is already involved in a whole gamut of activities aimed at strengthening working relationships with other government agencies at all levels; it has also started to reach out towards, and work closely, with civil society organizations and other segments of the civilian sector.

All these processes and activities associated with all three approaches inevitably involve the Office of the Chief of Staff of AFP. To help ensure that they are connected with, and properly supportive of, the AFP TR, the AFP has decided to formally set up a Multi-Sector Governance Coalition (MSGC). A small, collegial body--as small as a normal Board of Directors in any modern corporation, and as collegial as any corporate Board of Directors--the AFP MSGC serves as a Board of Advisers to the CS AFP. Its members are drawn from government, business, academe, media, and civil society. The CS AFP may draw from its advice, perspectives, and expertise, let alone the networks into which the members of the MSGC are plugged and connected into, so as to provide any assistance to the AFP as it pursues the different strategic

priorities in the AFP TR.

Outside of providing advice and any assistance to the CS AFP, the members of the MSGC may serve as external assessors of the performance claims, made under the AFP TR. They can give their "imprimatur" of the actual gains the AFP may present to the general public, in fact because they have checked the actual records and overseen the external audit process. Furthermore, several members of the MSGC may have specific expertise, which the AFP would badly need, such as expertise on real estate and area development (needed in connection with determining the best and proper use of AFP-owned real estate assets). Some members of the MSGC may also use the media platforms where they have an influence in order to communicate more effectively to the general public the accomplishments of the AFP under the AFP TR.

Since the AFP MSGC has been meeting regularly for a few years now, it has become clear that it has great potential for helping the CS AFP in meeting the targets set in the AFP Performance Scorecard. It is up to him to tap into such a potential, particularly in substantiating the two other approaches that the IPSP: Bayanihan calls for, the "whole of government", and the "whole of the nation". This would top off the "whole of AFP" approach, which is being secured through the internal alignment of all AFP units with the AFP TR.



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At Ground Level

By SATUR C. OCAMPO



Duterte's 3 prime goals in first 6 months

Well ahead of his formal proclamation as the nation's 16th President by the joint session of the Senate and the House (sitting as National Board of Canvassers for the presidential and vice presidential contests), Rodrigo R. Duterte has lined up three big initiatives concurrently within the first six months of his administration.

The initiatives will implement Duterte's three-pronged platform, said Peter Laviña, his campaign spokesperson and now member of a transition team formed by the presumptive president. These are:

- Pursue a 24/7 fight against drugs, criminality, corruption, and poverty (the single promise highlighted in his presidential campaign that generated a groundswell of popular support);

- Call on Congress to pass a law for the election of members of a Constitutional Convention to undertake a "major rewriting" of the 1987 Constitution. Objectives: to institute a shift to a federal parliamentary form of government, and to ease the current restrictions on foreign ownership of land, public utilities, educational institutions, and participation in the exploitation of natural resources; and

- Pursue negotiations and forge peace agreements toward political settlements of the protracted armed conflicts both with the Left revolutionary forces and the Muslim rebel organizations. (Laviña described this step as a "golden opportunity" because the long-term Davao City mayor has been close to both the leaders of the Left and the Bangsamoro organizations.)

How the anti-drugs and anti-criminality drive will be carried out remains to be seen. (Thankfully the threatened killings en masse haven't been repeated!) Relatively tame steps, such as imposing a curfew and banning the sale of liquor after midnight (as in Davao City), have been mentioned thus far.

On rewriting the Constitution, the proposal to shift from a unitary to a federal system of government has stirred spirited debates, which should be encouraged. However, easing the restrictions on foreign ownership continues to meet strong public opposition since this was formally proposed under the Estrada administration. A joint resolution on this proposition, sponsored by the Senate and House leaderships, is pending in the 16th Congress.

The amendments to be recommended by the proposed Constitutional Convention, Laviña said, would be submitted to a plebiscite during the mid-term elections in 2019. Per Duterte's timeline, if the shift to a federal system is adopted by the Con-Con and ratified in the plebiscite, the first federal elections would take place after the end of Duterte's term in June 2022.

The third initiative is to pursue peace negotiations, specifically with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, which the P-Noy government shunted aside in 2013, but didn't formally terminate. Various peace advocates – human rights defenders, church leaders and formations, nongovernmental organizations, and communities – have zealously pushed for resuming the talks.

Last April 25, Duterte took time out from his campaign to engage in a Skype discussion with Jose Ma. Sison, CPP founding chair and NDFP chief political consultant, on the urgency of resuming the talks. Recalling Duterte's plan to visit the Vatican after the elections, Sison suggested – and Duterte acceded – that they meet up in Europe so they could talk more extensively. Sison disclosed recently that Duterte and CPP representatives were having preparatory talks on the European meeting.

Besides the apparent rapport between them (Duterte was Sison's student on the history of political thought at the Lyceum of the Philippines in the 1960s), the new president can readily avail of useful advice from three political allies who had played key roles in the peace talks.

The first one is former President Fidel V. Ramos, who endorsed Duterte's presidential candidacy and presumably is a senior adviser. It was during Ramos' tenure that the GRP-NDFP peace talks – initiated by President Corazon C. Aquino in 1986 but aborted after the Mendiola Massacre in February 1987 – acquired traction and produced 10 substantive and procedural agreements in on-and-off negotiations between 1995 to 1998.

The most important agreement signed so far has been the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL), which the European Parliament hailed as a "landmark" accord. It provides for compensation to civilian victims of HR-IHL violations. Surely, Ramos would be interested to see the completion of the peace edifice he started to build – and not allow it to crumble, as the P-Noy government apparently has done.

The two others (both Duterte's long-time buddies in Davao) are Jesus Dureza, a former congressman, and Silvestre "Bebot" Bello III, incumbent congressman and former justice secretary. Dureza had been Ramos' peace adviser, and Duterte has indicated he would harness him back to that job. Bello was a member of the government peace panel under Ramos and panel head under President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

To his credit, Bello publicly defended the integrity of the agreements he had worked hard for, particularly the Joint Agreement on Security and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG), when the P-Noy government peace adviser, Teresita Deles, tried to discredit the accord and violated its provisions. Bello would be a good choice to be Duterte's chief peace negotiator with the NDFP.

Once the negotiations are resumed at the stage that these were suspended by P-Noy, it's important for earnest and assiduous implementation of the CARHRIHL to follow. Doing that could turn out to be Duterte's landmark legacy as president – rectifying the violations by all previous administrations of human rights and international humanitarian law during the almost 50-year armed conflict.

* * *

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★

14 May 2016

The Manila Times

Page A1

Sison and Duterte deserve each other

BY MAURO GIA SAMONTE
COLUMNIST

I WON'T speculate. To me, there has never been a question of ifs or buts in making a decision, particularly decisions of far-reaching social and political impli-

cations. Social and political phenomena—and I don't say this from the perspective of the academe but from hands-on learning—have a way of conforming to inexorable laws of development. You only need to know the start of a certain

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■ SAMONTE FROM A1

Sison and Duterte deserve each other

process of social development to be able to determine where that process is leading to.

When, for instance, Jose Maria Sison sought to re-establish the Communist Party of the Philippines in 1968, you could say as early as then that a wedge would be driven through the Philippine proletarian movement. The otherwise already strong and unified workers struggle under the aegis of the *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas* (PKP) would split up depending on the existing world rift between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. The Philippine working-class movement was under the sway of the Soviet Union, hence the Sison initiative of establishing the new CPP (from the old merger party of *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas-Partido Sosyalista ng Pilipinas*), bannered Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse Tung Thought was clearly a push for the Chinese line in the local scene of its antagonism with Russia on the world scale. From then on, the great proletarian revolution in the Philippines that in 1950 was already perceived as poised for a takeover of Malacañang, was headed for defeat.



MY SAY

MAURO GIA
SAMONTE

Thus despite the fire and fury of the Sisonite National Democratic Revolution, which appeared headed for victory by the time Marcos was appearing to fall in 1986, that revolution must crumble from an endemic characteristic of failure. The rigid, inflexible anti-US Imperialist line of the revolution stood no chance at all against the US-instigated purely anti-Marcos line which the Cory followers—the non-revolutionary populace—embraced heart, body and soul. Coupled with its catastrophic boycott error in the 1986 presidential snap elections, the endemic defeat of the National Democratic Revolution took its gravest toll: sitting by the roadside while Cory and the yellow forces took over Malacañang.

To begin with, that development called EDSA I was just a fitting finale of the gamut of processes that were the re-establishment of the new Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the formation of the New People's Army (NPA), which came about as a result of the meeting of then University of the Philippines professor Jose Maria Sison and Huk commander Bernabe Buscayno, alias "Kumander Dante"—which meeting was brokered in Hacienda Luisita by who else but Cory's husband, Ninoy Aquino.

Doesn't this throw us back to our original proposition?—"You only need to know the start of a certain process of social development to be able to determine where that process is leading to."

Ninoy started it all and the Aquino dynasty, from Cory down to their son, reaped all the harvest.

I embark on this reminiscence impelled by a most pressing question.

Duterte, perceived to have won the May 9 presidential election, albeit on the basis of partial unofficial returns, had come out openly to be an ally of Sison and his revolutionary remnants and, in fact, had chanted in a public rally in Davao City: "Mabuhay ang NPA."

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That chant certainly signaled the start of a process for Sison, in much the same way that Ninoy's instigated meeting between him and Dante was in 1968. That 1968 start ultimately led to EDSA I. Where will this Sison start with Duterte lead to? Given the chaos and breakdown of law and order in the aftermath of the Sison-Dante meeting with Ninoy in 1968, I am inclined to believe the country is in for bad times under a Duterte presidency.

In the first place, the schism Sison implemented within the

CPP with his Re-Affirm in 1991 has persisted and appears unceasing. Revolutionaries have been pitted against one another solely on the basis of whether one was RA (Reaffirmist) or RJ (Rejectionist). The purge he swept throughout the Party in this summary manner has decimated the revolutionary ranks, which on the eve of EDSA I were counting 25,000 regulars of the New People's Army, 500,000 people's militia capable of armed combat, and an undetermined number of Armed Propaganda Units spread all over the land on which the party organization had reached the level of Commissions. Within these commissions were poised to arise Armed Independent Regimes, preparatory to establishing a people's republic encompassing the whole Philippine archipelago.

But a people's republic was not the destined result of the Ninoy-Sison-Dante tryst in 1968; it was EDSA I.

With Sison gaining ascendance in a Duterte government, he shall have the pleasure of finally proclaiming victory for his nearly half-century of protracted struggle—a struggle capped by three scores of his furlough in the Netherlands, shopping in malls and rocking in disco joints, while his fanatical cultist followers endlessly suffer deaths and injuries in lopsided battles with government forces. Duterte will save the day for a discredited revolutionary movement, a discredited revolutionary leader.

This is the scariest development a Duterte government can bring to the country. Like Duterte who betrays an acute sense of megalomania, Sison has shown no regard for human rights, as evidenced by summary executions of rebels suspected of being government deep penetration agents (DPA). At the helm of the CPP Politburo, which implemented the wide-scale policy of rubbing out suspected government spies in the revolution, was a former solon whose loyalty to Sison had been unquestioned, ergo his executions of comrades was quite in line with this loyalty.

Nor has Sison shown reverence at all for life. The nation must be told time and again that the infamous Plaza Miranda bombing in 1971, which killed eight, including a seven-year-old girl cigarette vendor, was a craftsmanship of Sison, as bared in the Joint Investigation by the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee and the Committee on Justice, in 1989.

For that carnage alone, Sison deserves multi-life sentences. And what about the admitted assassination by him of NPA chief Rolando Kintanar and NPA leader Arturo Tabara? Are these to be condoned in the name of peace? Criminal charges have been filed in court against Sison for these killings. Sison had been enjoying accommodation by the Netherlands, which has no extradition treaty with the Philippines. For which reason he gets unmolested by the police despite the charges which otherwise would warrant his arrest.

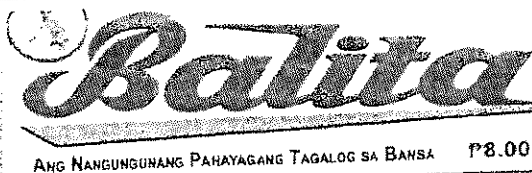
Welcoming Sison back to the Philippines with even a guarantee of peaceful living topped by a potential power sharing of some sort, depending on eventual negotiations between Sison's rebel group and the government, is the height of injustice.

But then again, as madmen given to no qualms whatsoever about killing people—all sorts, men, women, minors and children—Duterte and Sison do just deserve each other.

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Army Core Purpose: Serving the people Securing the land

18 May 2016



Page. 1



SENTIDO KOMUN

LANDAS TUNGO SA KAPAYAPAAAN

Celso Lagmay

Sa biglang sulayap sa larawan ni President-Select Rodrigo Duterte sa pahina ng Manila Bulletin kamakalawa, tiyak na walang hindi kikilabutan sa takot. Isipin na lamang na siya ay napaliligiran ng mga armadong rebelde ng New People's Army (NPA); ang Pulang Bagani Battalion na pinamumunuan ni Kumander Elizalde 'Ka Yancey' Canete. Marahil, ang naturang eksena ay naganap sa isang bahagi ng kagubatan nang isuko ng mga rebelde sa bagong-halal na Pangulo ang limang opisyal ng Philippine National Police (PNP) na dinukot ng naturang rebel group.

Sa nabanggit na larawan, hindi ko nabakas ang mga kilos na lagi nating napapansin kay Duterte noong kasagsagan ng kampanya: yaong kanyang pagiging mabagsik lalo na kung binibigyang-diin ang pananamantala at paglaganap ng mga karahasan sa mga komunidad at droga.

Sa halip, nadama ko ang marubdob na adhikain ni Duterte na paigtingin ang kapayapaan at pagkakasundo-sundo ng lahat ng nagbabangayan at hindi nagkakaunawaang sektor ng sambayanan. Pagdating sa usaping pangkapayapaan o peace talks, nais niyang harapin hindi lamang ang mga rebeldeng NPA kundi maging ang iba't ibang sektor ng mga rebeldeng Muslim sa Mindanao. Kabilang na rito, marahil, ang Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) at iba pa. Nais din kayang harapin ng bagong-halal na Pangulo ang mga private army na inaalagaan, wika nga, ng makapangyarihang mga pulitiko at malalaking negosyante?

Hindi ko nakadaupang-palad si Duterte kahit minsan sa buhay ko, subalit naniniwala ako na hindi siya mahihirapan sa pakikitungo sa mga nabanggit na naghaharing grupo. Ang mga estratehiya na ipinamalas niya sa Davao City na maraming taon din niyang pinamumunuan ay sapat na upang tiyakin ang kanyang tagumpay sa ganitong mga pakikipagsapalaran. Ang paglipol ng mga kriminal at mga sugapa sa droga ay marapat lamang sa isang komunidad na pinamumugaran ng mga mararahas.

Ang planong pagpapalaya sa mga political prisoner na kinabibilangan ng mga rebelde ay epektibo ring elemento sa peace process. Kaakibat ito ng inaasahang paglahok ng mga haligi ng Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) at National Democratic Front (NDF) na pinamumunuan ni Jose Maria Sison. Isa itong paraan upang mawakasan ang pag-aaklas ng NPA.

Ang lahat ng ito ay maituturing na isang higitang hakbang tungo sa kapayapaan.

18 May 2016



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EDITORIAL

MINDANAO—DUMATING NA ANG PANAHOON PARA SA REHIYON

ANG pagkakahalal kay Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte bilang susunod na pangulo ng Pilipinas ay nagpasigla ng pag-asa na mapagtutuunan na ng sapat na atensiyon ang Mindanao kumpara sa natamo rito sa nakalipas na mga administrasyon.

Sa katunayan, simula 2011 ay tumataas ang imilalaan sa Mindanao mula sa pambansang budget. Para sa 2016, ang bahagi nito sa P3-trilyon pambansang budget ay P380.9 bilyon, kumpara sa P594 bilyon para sa Luzon at P285.4 bilyon sa Visayas. Ang mga pondong ito para sa pagpapaunlad sa mga rehiyon ay mas prioridad kaysa mga pambansang programa, gaya ng depensa at ugnayang panlabas.

Sa nakalipas na mga taon, ang pondo para sa Mindanao ay kadalasang napupunta sa imprastruktura, agrikultura, programang pangkabuhayan, at serbisyong panlipunan. Ang ambag ng rehiyon sa pambansang ekonomiya ay karaniwan nang nagmumula sa agrikultura. Mindanao ang pangunahing pinanggagalingan ng pinya, saging, kamoteng-kahoy, kape, at goma, gayundin ng malaking bahagi ng kabuuang produksiyon ng niyog at mais sa bansa. Sagana rin ito sa mahahalagang likas na yaman, partikular sa pagmimina at kagubatan.

Ngunit mistulang hindi nabibiyayaan ang mamamayan ng Mindanao sa mga benepisyo ng kaunlarang pang-ekonomiya, at maraming dahilan ang ikinatwiran dito. Isa sa mga ito ang kawalan ng industriya, na isinisasi sa kakapusan ng supply ng kuryente, upang magkaloob ng trabaho at lumukha ng mga produkto para sa lokal na konsumo, gayundin para mailuwas sa ibang bansa. Ngunit ang pinakamalaking suliranin ay ang pangloob na seguridad, kapayapaan at kaayusan.

Nagtatagumpay ang administrasyong Aquino na makuha ang suporta ng pinakamalaking armadong grupo sa Mindanao, ang Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), bagamat nakabimbina pa rin ang pagpapatibay sa kasunduan hanggang hindi pa naaaprubahan ang Bangsamoro Basic Law. Nagkaroon ng kasunduan ang mga naunang administrasyon sa Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). At naniyan din ang New People's Army na dating aktibo sa Central Luzon, ngunit kalaunan ay lumipat na sa ilang lugar sa Mindanao.

Dapat na alam ni President-elect Duterte, na ilang dekadang nagsilbi bilang alkalde ng Davao City, kung paano tutugunan ang mga problemang ito at kung saan magsisimula. Ngayong kontrolado na niya ang kapangyarihan at ang pondo ng pambansang gobyerno, dapat na magawa niyang pangasiwaan ang mga operasyon ng maraming ahensiya na nakatutok sa seguridad at pagpapaunlad upang matumbok ang mga partikular na suliranin sa mga puntong pamilyar siya.

Sa panahon ng kampanya, isinulong niya ang maraming ideya at programa, kabilang ang pederalismo upang mahimok ang iba't ibang rehiyon sa bansa na gawing prioridad ang kaunlaran. Marami sa mga programang ito ang nangangailangan ng paghabago sa Konstitusyon, at kasabay nito, ang sapat na panahon. Gayunman, mayroong mga programa na maaaring agad na maisakatuparan, gaya ng pagpapanumbalik ng kapayapaan at kaayusan at pagsugpo sa krimen, partikular na ang may kinalaman sa ilegal na droga.

Naghihintay ang buong bansa sa magiging tugon sa mga problemang ito — kaya naman siya ang ibinoto ng nakararaming Pilipino kaysa ibang kandidato. Ngunit kahit pa resolbahin niya ang maraming suliranin sa bansa, mauunawaan natin — at buong lugod na tatanggapin — ang atensiyong ipagkakaloob niya sa minamahal niyang rehiyon, ang Mindanao, na panahon nang tutukan ang kapakanan.

ONLINE NEWS

14 MAY 2016

AFP mum on Joma Sison's plan to return to Philippines

From the Philippine Star (May 13):



Jose Maria Sison, a former social science and English professor, founded the Communist Party of the Philippines on Dec. 26, 1968. File photo

The military on Friday kept mum on reports that Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Ma. "Joma" Sison would end his self-exile and return to the country after Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte assumes the presidency.

"This is still highly speculative and hence, we have respectfully declined to comment," Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla told The STAR.

The 125,000-strong Armed Forces, nevertheless, vowed to support the national security policies of Duterte, who already have nearly 16 million votes as of this writing.

"The AFP fully supports whatever policy would be set by the next commander-in-chief," Padilla said.

"We are also in favor of holding peace talks with all groups so we can have lasting peace in our country," he added.

Padilla said the gains of economic development would be felt if the security issues of the problem are resolved.

Earlier, Sison said he would end his decades-long self-exile in the Netherlands if Duterte, his former student, visits him. He also said that the prospect for the peace talks with the government "seem to be bright at the moment."

Sison, a former social science and English professor, founded the CPP on Dec. 26, 1968. The CPP is the political arm of the communist rebellion in the Philippines while the New People's Army (NPA) is its military wing.

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Military officials claim that the NPA has less than 4,000 members, down from a peak of more than 25,000 in the 1987.

Negotiations between the government and the communists hit a snag after the two parties failed to reach an agreement on jailed rebel leaders.

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), which represented the CPP and NPA in the talks, had demanded the release of rebels facing criminal cases, saying they are working as peace consultants and should therefore be immune from arrest.

The NDFP said releasing the jailed consultants is in line with the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees signed by peace negotiators in 1995.

Government negotiators, however, rejected the demand, saying there is no way to confirm the identities of the rebels especially those using aliases.

During the campaign period, Duterte's rivals claimed that the mayor has close ties with the NPA and warned that communism would prevail in the country if he wins.

<http://www.philstar.com>

ADDRESS INDIGENOUS CONCERNS: Cordillera IPs challenge Duterte

From the Manila Times (May 12):

The Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA) challenged president-elect Rodrigo Duterte to dedicate his first 100 days in office addressing the urgent issues of indigenous peoples nationwide.

Representatives of the CPA said Duterte knows the problem well, since he comes from Mindanao and is well aware of the spate of killings of the Lumad in the region.

CPA's concern also include political vilification of indigenous activists and advocates, and the brazen non-recognition of indigenous peoples' right of self-determination.

"We have had our share of such discrimination and violation in the Cordillera, homeland of the indigenous Igorot. We were part of the delegation of indigenous peoples that trooped to Malacañang in 2011, at the start of BS Aquino's term, to submit the Indigenous Peoples Agenda," part of CPA's statement said.

But they lament that their effort resulted to nothing as Aquino's term proved only to be a continuance of its predecessor, with the same programs and policies unleashed at the expense of the people, especially the vast marginalized majority.

"We specifically put forward our Cordillera Peoples Agenda, which tackles the core concerns of indigenous peoples' rights—ancestral land and self-determination, with concrete legislative demands on the urgent issues of human rights and peace, mining, energy, genuine regional autonomy, food security and political participation and good governance", the CPA said in a press statement.

The agenda further includes sectoral concerns of drivers, women, youth, workers, senior citizens and persons with disabilities. The resumption of the peace negotiation between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF) was also highlighted in the agenda.

The agenda resulted from the Cordillera Day 2016 organized by CPA in the provinces of Benguet, Abra,

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Mountain Province, Ifugao, Kalinga, Apayao, including the City of Baguio in April.

CPA hopes that the incoming president will look into these issues and consider these in his program of action for the first 100 days in office, confident that the Duterte administration will listen to the voice of indigenous peoples.

There were more than 100 highland tribal groups in the Philippines. The Igorot tribes include Bontoc, Ibaloi, Ifugao, Isnag, Kalinga, Kankana-ey and Tinguian.

Other mountain peoples in Luzon are the Isnags of Apayao province, the Gaddangs along the border of Kalinga and Isabela provinces, and the Ilongots of Nueva Vizcaya and the Negritos, as well as the Mangyan in Mindoro.

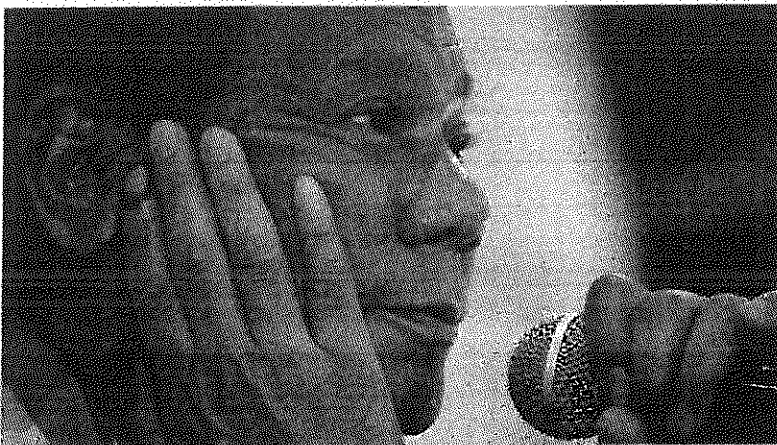
Among the most important groups in Mindanao collectively called the Lumad, are the Manobo, with bigger ethnographic groups such as Ata-Manobo and the Matigsalug in Davao City, Davao del Norte and Bukidnon Province; the Langilan-Manobo in Davao del Norte; the Agusan-Manobo in Agusan del Sur and Agusan del Norte; the Pulanguiyon-Manobo of Bukidnon province; Ubo-Manobo in Davao City and North Cotabato province, including the Arumanen-Manobo of Carmen, North Cotabato.

There are also the Dulangan-Manobo in Sultan Kudarat; the Talaandig, Higaonon and Bukidnon in Bukidnon province; the Bagobo, Mandaya, Mansaka, Tagakaulo of Davao; the Subanon of Zamboanga; the Mamanua in Agusan-Surigao border region; the B'laan, Teduray and Tboli in Cotabato province, and Luwa'an in Samal island, and many others.

<http://www.manilatimes.net>

Duterte urged: Remove troops from Mindanao indigenous communities

From the Philippine Daily Inquirer (May 13):



Presidential frontrunner and Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte attends a press conference after he cast his vote in Davao City, on the southern island of Mindanao on May 9, 2016. AFP FILE PHOTO / NOEL CELIS

Human rights group Karapatan on Friday called on presumptive President-elect Rodrigo Duterte to include on his list of priorities the immediate pullout of military troops in indigenous communities in Mindanao.

To date, Karapatan said operations of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have resulted in the death of 318 people and the forcible evacuation of thousands of indigenous people.

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"There are still more than 2,700 evacuees at the Tandag Sports Complex in Surigao del Sur and at the United Church of Christ in the Philippines-Haran in Davao City. The [pullout] of military troops in their communities and the disbandment of paramilitary groups can enable them to go home," Karapatan Secretary General Cristina Palabay said.

The group also said the Duterte administration should release all political prisoners and resume the long-stalled peace negotiations between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GPH) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).

"We challenge the Duterte presidency to build on the people's votes that was mostly repudiation of everything that is the 'tuwid na daan (straight path).' He can start by junking Oplan Bayanihan and similar counterinsurgency programs and take the road to genuine peace by addressing the roots of unpeace and the ongoing civil war through the negotiating table," Palabay said.

While the government denies the existence of political prisoners, Palabay said that as of March 2016, there are 543 political prisoners detained on false criminal charges. Of the 543, 18 are NDFP peace consultants, whose protection under the GPH-NDFP agreement on safety and immunity guarantees has been violated.

There are also 88 ailing and 48 elderly among the political prisoners, mostly poor peasants fighting for their land rights.

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net>

21 NPA rebels face raps for ambush in Candoni

From the Visayan Daily Star (May 13):

Twenty-one members of the New People's Army are facing two counts of murder, and two counts of frustrated murder charges before the Negros Occidental Provincial Prosecutor's Office, in connection with the ambush of policemen on Feb. 18 in Candoni town.

Named as respondents in the criminal complaints are Rogelio Dañoso, alias Ka Gildo, of Sitio Aglolomot, Brgy. San Isidro, Toboso; Alfredo Sabio, alias Karta, of Brgy. Caningay, Candoni, and 19 other John Does.

The filing of charges against the NPA suspects stemmed from the ambush they had conducted against policemen who were responding to a crime incident, on Feb. 18 in Brgy. Caningay, Candoni.

The incident, claimed by the NPA Armando Sumayang Command Jr, cost the lives of PO1 Henry Vell Pacheco and PO3 Joe Harry Peralta, and injuries to two other Candoni policemen, and two civilians:

Chief Inspector Lino Dalisay, chief of the NOCPPO Provincial Investigation and Detective Management Branch, said the same suspects were also charged on May 2 before the Provincial Prosecutors Office for the theft of three M-16 assault rifles and a Glock 9mm pistol, and malicious mischief, for damages to the Mahindra police patrol car.

In 2009, Dañoso was arrested in Bacolod City, for illegal possession of firearms. He was later freed from jail, after posting bail.

<http://www.visayandailystar.com>

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Gazmin, French ambassador sign arrangement for defense cooperation

From the Philippine News Agency (May 13):

Department of National Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and French Ambassador Thierry Mathou formally signed on May 11 the arrangement which will serve as framework of defense cooperation between the Philippines and France.

The two countries have been negotiating for the defense arrangement since 2014, DND spokesperson Dr. Peter Paul Galvez said in a statement on Friday.

Under this framework, both countries agreed to focus their cooperation on high-level dialogues and defense policy consultations, visits of defense and armed forces authorities, education and training exchanges and cooperation in the fields of defense equipment, logistics and defense industry.

"Our relationship would be further enhanced as we institutionalize our cooperation through this agreement," Gazmin said.

The conclusion of the Philippines-France Defense Arrangement is very timely given the increasing defense and security challenges both countries are confronted with.

The cooperation provided for in the agreement could enhance the two countries' defense capacities and capabilities essential in addressing such challenges.

Furthermore, this would enable France and the Philippines to cooperate in various regional security concerns to include humanitarian assistance and disaster response, maritime security and counter-terrorism, among others.

Both countries look forward to the initiatives that would be implemented in accordance with the defense arrangement.

"Now that the agreement has been signed, we could start working on its implementation. I am optimistic that we would be able to draw up a tangible cooperation pursuant to this agreement in the near future," Gazmin said.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph>

Improvised bombs found inside South Cotabato provincial jail, stricter security measures up

From the Philippine News Agency (May 13):

Security has been tightened in the South Cotabato Provincial Detention and Rehabilitation Center (SCPDRC) after an attempt by some inmates to bolt out of jail using improvised explosive devices (IED), officials said today.

South Cotabato Gov. Daisy Avance Fuentes directed jail officials to strictly enforce jail policies on visitors while investigation was going on as to who was behind the bomb-making activities inside South Cotabato's largest the prison facility.

Several improvised bombs were found inside the compound but jail guards could not determine as to how the IED made its way inside the compound.

The IEDs were found on the eve of election day. Jail officials believed bombing suspects could be behind the bomb making and had planned to escape on election day while security officials were busy.

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