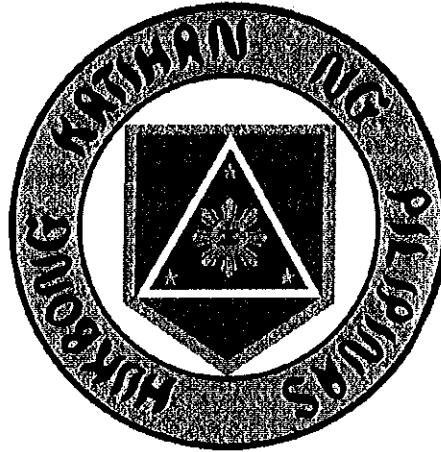


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## **NEWS CLIPPINGS**

**28 February 2019**

**Thursday**

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# EX-SOLON QUESTIONS 'ONEROUS' CHINA LOAN

STORY BY MELVIN GASCON

Terms of a P3.2-billion funding for the Chico River irrigation project are allegedly disadvantageous to the Philippines because of its high interest rate and fees, and the hiring of a Chinese contractor. **A4**

## FROM A1

By Melvin Gascon  
@melvingasconINQ

The Philippines has entered into an "onerous" loan agreement with China for an irrigation project in the Cordillera, former Bayan Muna Rep. Neri Colmenares said on Wednesday.

At a press briefing, Colmenares said this should compel top government officials to disclose the terms of all agreements they had entered into with the Chinese government.

"The loan agreement for the Chico River Pump Irrigation Project is onerous and highly favors China. It is a disaster for the Philippines," said Colmenares, who obtained a copy of the document from a non-government organization.

The project is covered by a 20-year loan with Export-Import Bank of China as lender and the Philippine government as borrower. Upon completion, it will supply water to around 8,700 hectares of agricultural land, benefiting 4,350 farmers and their families, and serve 21 barangays in Kalinga and Cagayan provinces in northern Luzon, according to the government.

But the terms of the funding deal highly favor China, which is guaranteed payments of high interest rates and pref-

erence for Chinese contractors, Colmenares said.

### Other projects

A separate document obtained by Bayan Muna showed that aside from the Chico River project, other "first basket projects" totaling P205 billion are to be financed by China.

These include:

- Philippine National Railway South Long Haul Project worth P175.3 billion, of which P14 billion is supposedly for "consultancy services"

- New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam of the Manila Water Sewerage System (P12.2 billion)

- Davao-Samal Bridge Construction Project of the Department of Public Works and Highways (P17.9 billion)

The Chico River project was signed on April 10, 2018, by China's ambassador Zhao Jianhua, on behalf of the lender bank, and Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III, on behalf of the Philippine government.

### Interest rate, fees

According to Colmenares, the contract for the \$62.086-million loan (P3.2 billion at current exchange rates) sets an annual interest rate at 2 percent, with an additional annual "commitment fee" of 0.3 percent of the loan and a "management fee" of 0.3 percent.

He said the 2-percent interest rate was exceedingly high



**WARY OF DEBT TRAP** A protest rally in Makati City against the China-funded Chico River Pump Irrigation Project greets the arrival in Manila of Chinese President Xi Jinping in November 2018.

compared with the 0.25 percent for loans offered by other countries.

"Our children will continue paying this highly disadvantageous loan as we get enmeshed in a debt trap in the amount of hundreds of billions of dollars from China," he said.

#### **Automatic appropriation**

The contract is also riddled with other "highly onerous"

terms, said the former party-list lawmaker.

Under the agreement, China is guaranteed to be "paid in full without counterclaim or retention," and will not be made liable to pay any taxes or charges for the entire transaction, including any interest income it earns from the loan.

"China even dictated the content of our budget laws by demanding that payment be au-

tomatically included in the general appropriations law, practically usurping the constitutional power of Congress to solely decide the content of our yearly budget," Colmenares said.

He said the deal also designated China CAMC Engineering Co. as contractor.

With these terms, the Chinese contractor is likely to hire Chinese nationals and displace Filipino workers,

Colmenares said.

While Philippine laws require contractors to undergo a procurement or bidding process, China simply imposed its own contractor, he said.

"We are like a province of China that it can dictate on. These kinds of agreement is humiliating to the Philippines and must be stopped," he said.

#### **Patrimonial property**

Under a "vaguely worded" provision, the agreement will allow China to own patrimonial property in the country, according to Colmenares.

"A dangerous component of the agreement is ... Section 8.1 that does not recognize our sovereign rights in the country and could allow China to take control of our patrimonial properties should we fail to pay the loan," he said.

"This allows China's takeover of our patrimonial properties and resources deemed by China's tribunal to be 'of commercial use,'" Colmenares said.

He cited the experience of Sri Lanka, where China took over the Hambantota Port after Sri Lanka failed to pay its debt due to the delay in the opening of the port's commercial use.

Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Zarate called out the Philippine government to be transparent on the deals with China and allow public access to its "contents and other relevant documents." INQ

# Duterte eyes new peace deal with Nur

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

President Duterte is looking at striking a new peace agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) following the creation of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA).

Duterte and Nur Misuari met at Malacañang last Monday, a day before the MNLF founding chairman left the country to attend the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) summit in the United Arab Emirates and another summit in Morocco.

"I told Nur we are on good terms. Nur said he is willing to talk and he has waited this long for me to make a decision when he comes back," Duterte said in a speech during the general assembly of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines.

Duterte stressed Misuari is willing to talk peace.

"Maybe it's age. He only wants to talk. He does not want to fight," Duterte said.

He said he has directed Presidential Adviser for the Peace

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## Duterte From Page 1

Process Carlito Galvez, Interior Secretary Eduardo Año and Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana to draft the peace agreement.

"We still need that (peace agreement with MNLF). And they are revolutions driven with territorial intentions or objectives. Once you have ironed that, and we are able to talk to them, you must understand Philippine history and the core of what ails this country," he said.

Lorenzana and Año were present during the meeting of the President and Misuari.

"And I told them (Lorenzana and Año), time for us to craft a new deal for the MNLF of Misuari," the President said in his speech.

The MNLF forged a peace agreement with the govern-

ment under then president Fidel Ramos in 1996.

The agreement also allowed the creation of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) with Misuari as its first governor.

Misuari has faced a series of legal battles, including charges of rebellion in the Zamboanga siege in 2013 and charges of graft and malversation of public funds.

The Sandiganbayan allowed Misuari to post bail to attend the OIC summit in Abu Dhabi and the Parliamentary Union of the OIC member states in Morocco.

Duterte admitted he exerted influence to enable Misuari to leave the country despite the corruption charges filed against him.

"He was not allowed by the

court to go out because he has pending charges when he was armed. So I had to make some arrangements. I told them, this is a personal request of mine, which I do not do at any time, at any other time," he said.

Duterte, a lawyer by profession, did not actually say how he was able to convince the courts to allow Misuari to leave the country for official business.

The Sandiganbayan took notice of Misuari's role in the government's efforts to achieve peace in Mindanao.

Lorenzana revealed Misuari will likely be designated as an emissary to the United Arab Emirates.

"The talks between the President and Misuari only centered on small issues, like his (Misuari's) trip to Morocco," Lorenzana said.

Misuari's trip to Morocco could be connected with the

ongoing government efforts to secure the safe release of three Filipino hostages currently being held in Libya by rebel forces.

It was gathered that leaders of the Libyan rebel forces currently holding the three Filipino hostages were former allies of the MNLF during the Mindanao war in the 1970s.

Late last year, a Filipino team was already in Morocco to pick up the Filipino hostages in Tripoli, reportedly with the help of MNLF elders.

The release, however, did not push through due to renewed fighting between the rebel forces and Libyan troops.

"It is highly probable that he (Misuari) will be designated as government emissary in UAE. There are lots of events and issues out there," Lorenzana said.

National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said talks will continue between the President and Misuari once he returns from his mission abroad.

According to Esperon, the OIC had also indicated that it would want to deal with the MNLF regarding the final peace agreement signed in 1996.

Esperon said he has yet to "look into the sentiments of the OIC" but he is sure that they are happy over the latest developments, which went through the proper democratic processes.

The MNLF under Misuari had been complaining about the supposed inequitable distribution of positions at the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA), the interim governing body of the newly created Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Min-

danao (BARMM).

The BARMM had replaced the ARMM following the ratification of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) during a plebiscite on Jan. 21 held under the peace agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

The MILF broke away from the MNLF several years before the 1996 peace agreement.

The Muslim rebel group tried to talk peace with the Ramos administration up to the term of former president Joseph Estrada but failed.

It was during the administration of former president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo that the MILF initially succeeded in forging a peace deal, the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain, but the Supreme Court struck it down as unconstitutional in 2008.

- With Jaime Laude

## Rody, Pompeo set to tackle economic, military partnership

President Duterte might discuss the country's mutual defense cooperation with the United States as well as freedom of navigation issues with US Secre-

tary of State Mike Pompeo tonight in Manila.

This was according to National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon who expressed optimism that the brief

meeting would boost further the long-time defense alliance between the Philippines and the US, despite Duterte's cozying up

**Turn to Page 2**

### Rody From Page 1

to China.

"We have a lot of mutual concerns with the United States, they are long time allies, and they have helped us in so many ways. They are friends

so we can talk about that," he said at the weekly Kapihan sa Manila Bay hosted by STAR associate editor Marichu Villanueva.

Pompeo is set to arrive at

Villamor Air Base in Pasay City tonight and pay a courtesy call on Duterte before the latter flies back to his province in Davao for the weekend. Pompeo's visit ends tomorrow.

"We can talk about mutual defense, we can talk about freedom of navigation operations

which nobody is objecting to... We have a wide range of topics that we can discuss," he said. He declined to give details.

Some analysts see FONOP as a form of US "challenge to Beijing's move in the South China Sea." Beijing has been muscle flexing in the South

China Sea and West Philippine Sea, especially through deployment of warships and reclaiming of land feature. In an apparent bid to appease the Filipinos and repay Duterte's friendliness, China has offered to bankroll infrastructure projects in the

Philippines.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. admitted that Pompeo had advised him to "read the fine print" when dealing with China.

- With Christina Mendez, Elizabeth Marcelo, Pia Lee-Brago



# Joint massive operation on vs illegal posters

By SHEILA CRISOSTOMO

With the Philippine National Police (PNP) and other government agencies, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) will spearhead today a "joint massive" operation to take down unlawful campaign materials in Metro Manila related to the May 13 midterm polls.

In a joint statement, the agencies said yesterday they have banded into a joint task force that will now work to make sure that campaign rules on candidates' posters are strictly implemented.

"Pursuant to the provisions in the Fair Elections Act and Comelec Resolution No. 10488, the joint task force will scour major thoroughfares in Metro Manila to remove and tear down all prohibited forms of campaign propaganda materials," they noted.

The task force is composed

of the PNP's National Capital Region Police Office and Directorate for Operations; Department of Public Works and Highways; Department of Transportation; Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

Based on the Comelec resolution, campaign posters should not be more than two by three feet and posted or displayed only in designated common poster areas or private property with the consent of the owner.

According to Comelec spokesman James Jimenez, election officers are mandated to designate common poster areas in their areas of jurisdiction and that the Comelec will be documenting those that they will take down for possible filing of appropriate charges against the candidates

concerned.

## Disqualify abusive pols

The PNP also said it will recommend before the Comelec the disqualification of candidates still using sirens, blinkers and other emergency devices in their campaign sorties.

PNP chief Director General Oscar Albayalde said disqualification could be an option for candidates who refuse to heed his warning.

Albayalde on Tuesday directed the Highway Patrol Group (HPG) to strictly enforce the provisions of Presidential Decree 96 that prohibits the use of sirens, blinkers, horns and other gadgets to get through road traffic ahead of other motorists.

He issued the order after receiving text messages from irate civilians about politicians who are using sirens,

blinkers and other devices on their convoy while traveling along EDSA and other major thoroughfares.

Under PD 96, sirens and blinkers can only be used on motor vehicles for official use of the PNP, Armed Forces of the Philippines, National Bureau of Investigation, Land Transportation Office, Bureau of Fire Protection, other similar agencies and hospital ambulances.

Violation of the order will result in the revocation or cancellation of a vehicle's certificate of registration.

HPG director Chief Supt. Roberto Fajardo, for his part, urged the public not to vote for candidates who cannot even follow a law prohibiting the use of sirens and blinkers.

The Department of Justice likewise reminded prosecutors to be neutral and non-partisan when they perform their duties in the elections.

In a Department Circular, Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra warned prosecutors who will sit as members of the board of canvassers during the polls of the constitutional prohibition against partisan political activity and electioneering by non-political government officers and employees.

"Please be reminded that electioneering or engaging in partisan political activities by one holding a non-political office is a punishable offence. Any violation of the foregoing prohibitory rule shall be strictly and severely dealt with to the extent allowed by existing laws, rules and regulations," read the order.

Prosecutors sit in BOCs in provinces, districts, cities and municipalities during the canvass of votes.

They are tasked to canvass votes received by each candidate and proclaim election

winners.

In another development, there will be no changes in the honoraria that teachers will receive for serving in the upcoming midterm elections.

The memorandum of agreement signed by the Comelec and Department of Education (DepEd) showed that the benefits teachers would receive would be similar to those released in last year's barangay elections.

In its agreement with Comelec, DepEd reiterated its commitment to support the conduct of the upcoming polls by providing the list of public school teachers who are willing to serve in the elections.

The DepEd earlier said it has allocated a budget for the establishment of help desks to provide support to those who will serve in the elections. 2

— With Emmanuel Tupas,  
Edu Punay, Janvic Mateo

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## Rody wants Trillanes' mom probed over Navy deals

By ALEXIS ROMERO

President Duterte wants the 84-year-old mother of his fierce critic Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV to face a probe on her deals with the Philippine Navy.

Duterte said he would press for a subpoena on Trillanes' mother because the senator had gone overboard in criticizing him.

*"Iyong nanay niya. Contract contract. Eh kung sumobra ka... (His mother bagged contracts. You went overboard). We will initiate an investigation kagaya mo (just like what you did) and I will subpoena your mother sa ayaw mo't sa hindi (whether you like it or not)," Duterte told a gathering of mayors in Manila last Tuesday.*

*"We also have the contempt power but we have to go to court," he added.*

Duterte also claimed that

Trillanes had received special treatment at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) because of his father's influence.

*"This braggart does not stop. The PMAers know this. His father would bring him to a room and feed him," the President said.*

*"During the grueling training at the PMA, his father would excuse him," he added.*

Days before the 2016 polls, Trillanes claimed Duterte did not declare billions in his bank accounts but the allegation did not prevent the former mayor from winning by a landslide.

Last year, Duterte claimed Trillanes' mother Estelita was a supplier of the Navy, an accusation that the senator described as a "low blow."

Trillanes challenged yesterday Duterte to stop harassing his ailing mother and instead answer the

various allegations against him.

He issued the statement after Duterte on Tuesday said he will have the opposition senator's octogenarian mother subpoenaed for alleged irregularities when she was a private supplier for the Navy.

*"The problem with Duterte is that he can't handle me so it's my mother who's sick that he's turning his ire on. Bring it on, do your worst while I count the days," Trillanes said in Filipino.*

He said since September last year, Duterte has been saying that he asked different agencies to investigate the supposed anomalous transactions of his mother.

*"But up to now, he has yet to show even a shred of evidence to prove his baseless allegations. Now, Duterte is threatening to subpoena my mother," the senator said.*

— With Paolo Romero

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## Trillanes' mother faces questioning

By GENALYN D. KABILING

The mother of Senator Antonio Trillanes IV would be summoned to a government investigation into her business transactions with the military, President Duterte said Wednesday.

"We will initiate an investigation kagaya mo and I will subpoena your mother sa ayaw mo't sa hindi. Baka sabihin mong walang power ano --- there is," the President said during the assembly of mayors at the Manila Hotel Wednesday.

"We also have the contempt power but we have to go to court," Duterte added.

Back in September, the President alleged that Trillanes' mother had supply contracts with the Philippine Navy while his father was in the military service.

Two months later, Duterte announced the government has launched an investigation into the business deals involving Trillanes' parent.

"We are looking into the paper. We're investigating quietly 'yung mga deals sa panahon ng tatay pati 'yung involved ang

nanay [during the time of his father and those that involved his mother]," Duterte said last November. "And he can be very sure na lalabas lahat 'yan [it will all come out]," he added.

The President made the latest statement after lashing out again at Trillanes, a fierce critic of his administration, before the gathering of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP).

He called Trillanes a coward for surrendering to authorities after staging a mutiny against the Arroyo administration.

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The Manila Times

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A1

## Duterte mulls subpoena vs Trillanes' mother

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte wants prosecutors to subpoena the 84-year-old mother of one of his staunchest critics.

Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th, over her alleged irregular deals with the Philippine Navy.

► Subpoena A2

### ■ SUBPOENA FROM A1

## Duterte mulls subpoena

In remarks during the 2019 general assembly of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines on Tuesday evening, Duterte said he would investigate the deals involving Trillanes' mother Estrelita, whom he had described as a "supplier" of the Navy.

"You (Trillanes) did too much... We will, initiate an investigation like you did and I will subpoena your mother, whether you like it or not," he added.

"You may tell me I do not have power,

there is. We also have the contempt power but we have to go to court," Duterte said.

The 84-year-old Estrelita Trillanes suffers from advanced Parkinson's disease.

Duterte lashed out at Trillanes anew, saying the ex-navyman survived the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) only because he was pampered by his father.

"This cocky... This PMAer, he was being borrowed by his father. He is there in his room, being fed," he added.

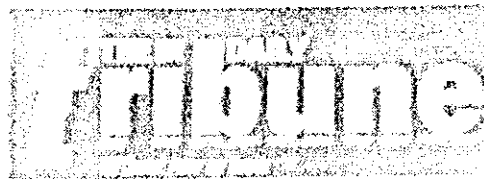
Trillanes on Wednesday said the

threat of Duterte to subpoena his mother would prove nothing.

"Since September last year, Duterte has been saying that he asked different agencies to investigate the supposed anomalous transactions of my mother. But up to now, he has yet to show even a shred of evidence to prove his baseless allegations," he said in a statement.

"Now, Duterte is threatening to subpoena my mother. Just do it and let it be another humiliating episode for you like the fake offshore bank accounts you alleged against me," Trillanes added.

**RALPH U. VILLANUEVA  
AND JAVIER JOE ISMAEL**



## Mom's deals up for review

President Rodrigo Duterte said he would summon the mother of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV over alleged anomalous deals in supply contracts with the Philippine Navy (PN).

"If you go too far... We will initiate an investigation like you did and I will subpoena your mother whether you like it or not. You may say we have no power to do that, but there is," Mr. Duterte said.

The President, who is a longtime lawyer, said the government has the power to cite for contempt "but we have to go to court."

He alleged that the contracts of

Estelita, Trillanes' mother, with the PN would be a case of conflict of interest.

The President previously said the government was "investigating the deals quietly."

### Conflict of interest

Duterte first made the accusation against Trillanes' mother in September 2018 during a televised one-on-one interview with Chief Presidential Legal

**Turn to page 6**

Counsel Salvador Panelo, also the presidential spokesman.

The senator's mother transacted with the PN when the lawmaker and his deceased father, Antonio Trillanes Sr., were still serving in the military.

Trillanes, however, denied the President's claim.

The senator said he will "voluntarily" walk into any detention facility, even in Davao City, if Duterte could prove his claims against his mother.

### Son also slapped with cases

The President's threat to legally cite Trillanes' mother came after criminal charges for inciting to sedition have been filed by Pasay prosecutors against the senator for inflammatory statements made by the lawmaker last year shortly after his amnesty was revoked by Malacañang.

In a resolution which accompanied the formal criminal information charge sheet filed before the Pasay Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 44 dated 30 January 2019, Assistant City Prosecutor Reynaldo Teyado recommended the inciting to sedition charges filed against Trillanes.

The complaint was initiated by Labor Undersecretary Jacinto Paras, Presidential Anti-Corruption Commission Commissioner Manuelito Luna and lawyers Eligio Mallari and Nasser Marohomsali.

# Rody to hale Trillanes' mom to court

By Nat Mariano

**P**RESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte said Tuesday night he will summon the mother of opposition Senator Antonio Trillanes IV over her alleged anomalous dealings with the Philippine Navy.

In his speech during the general assembly of local government leaders at the League of Municipalities of the Philippines, Duterte said the government had the power to summon Trillanes' mother.

"You went overboard. We will initiate an investigation like you, and I will subpoena your mother whether you like it or not," Duterte said.

"You may say we have no power, there is. We also have the contempt power, but we have to go to court."

But Trillanes said Duterte would just end up embarrassing himself again if he subpoenas his mother.

"Duterte is threatening to subpoena my mother. Just do it and let it be another humiliating episode for you like the fake off-

shore bank accounts you alleged against me," Trillanes said in a statement.

Duterte's statement was in connection with the government's investigation into the supposed business dealings of Trillanes' mother, Estelita, with the Philippine Navy.

Trillanes then hit back at the President for not showing "a shred of evidence" to back up his claims.

"Since September last year, Duterte has been saying that he asked different agencies to investigate the supposed anomalous transactions of my mother. But up to now, he has yet to show even a shred of evidence to prove his baseless allegations," Trillanes said.

"Now Duterte is threatening to subpoena my mother. Just do it and let it be another humiliating episode for you like the fake

offshore bank accounts you alleged against me.

"The difficult thing with Duterte is since he can't harass me, he is now singling out my sick mother. Go ahead, do your worst while I count the days."

At the height of the President's revocation of Trillanes' amnesty in September 2018, Duterte claimed Trillanes' mother had supply transactions with the Philippine Navy when the lawmaker and his father were still in the military service.

A month after that, the President said the supposed dealings were being investigated.

Trillanes has since slammed Duterte for dragging his 84-year-old mother, who currently suffers from advanced Parkinson's disease, into their political quarrels. A2

# Rody eyes 'subpoena' for Trillanes' mom

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR  
and RAYMOND AFRICA

PRESIDENT Duterte on Tuesday threatened to start an investigation into supply contracts made with the Philippine Navy by the mother of his staunch critic, Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, to determine if there were irregularities in the transactions.

He also said he would have the 84-year-old Estelita Fuentes-Trillanes "subpoenaed" for the investigation. Duterte has said Mrs. Trillanes was a supplier of the Navy.

Trillanes, a former Navy lieutenant, dared Duterte to make good of his threat. He said Duterte

has no proof and it will be "another humiliating episode" for the President.

Duterte made the threat at the assembly of the League of Municipalities Tuesday night.

"Sumobra ka. We will initiate an investigation, kagaya mo, and I will subpoena your mother, sa ayaw mo o sa hindi (You've gone overboard/If you go overboard. We will initiate an investigation, like in your case, and I will subpoena your mother, whether you like it or not)."

He made the statement while endorsing the senatorial candidacy of his former special aide, Christopher "Bong" Go who was inves-

tigated by the Senate for allegedly intervening in a Navy frigate deal.

Duterte first talked about ordering an investigation in September last year, a month after he ordered the voiding of the amnesty awarded to Trillanes by the previous administration. In November last year, Duterte said an investigation has been started.

Trillanes, as a Navy lieutenant in 2003, joined a mutiny against the Arroyo administration. He and the other detained mutineers were later amnesty by the Aquino administration.

Among allegations made by Trillanes against the President is that he has millions in "hidden

wealth."

Duterte, at the Tuesday event, said the Executive has the power to subpoena a person and to declare him or her in contempt.

He reiterated that Trillanes had acted like a spoiled brat when he was still at the Philippine Military Academy. He said Trillanes had often been excused by his father, the late Navy Capt. Antonio Trillanes Sr., from grueling exercises at the PMA.

Duterte also reiterated he is willing to open his bank accounts if Trillanes would also open his.

He said he is even willing to sign

See RODY > Page B3

## RODY

a law that would waive any need for the issuance of a waiver to open the bank accounts if Trillanes would also open his account.

Duterte said he is willing to face the senator in a gun duel.

## NO EVIDENCE

Trillanes said Duterte likes to make up stories against his detractors.

"Since September last year, Duterte has been saying that he asked different agencies to investigate the supposed anomalous transactions of my mother. But up to now, he has yet to show even a shred of evidence to prove his baseless

allegations," he said in a statement.

"Now, Duterte is threatening to subpoena my mother. Just do it and let it be another humiliating episode for you like the fake offshore bank accounts you alleged against me," he added.

Trillanes was referring to his alleged bank account at the DBS bank at the Alexandra Retail Center in Singapore and another in Zurich, which Duterte said contained "millions."

To prove the President wrong, Trillanes, accompanied by select members of the media, went to the DBS bank in Singapore to secure a certification that he has no account with the bank. The bank refused to issue a certification because he is not a depositor of that bank.

Duterte later admitted he just made up the story about Trillanes' account.

"Mahirap dito kay Duterte hindi lang ako kaya, kaya ang Nanay kong may sakit ang pinagdidiskitahan. Sige lang, do your worst while I count the days

(The trouble with Duterte is that he is going after my ailing mother because he cannot bear me)," he said.

Trillanes last year said his mother is suffering from advanced Parkinson's Disease. On whether his mother was a Navy supplier, he said would not know because he was in high school when his father was still in the Navy. He said his father retired in 1988 and died in 1998.



## Trillanes' mother faces gov't probe

The mother of Senator Antonio Trillanes IV would be summoned to a government investigation into her business transactions with the military, President Duterte said Wednesday.

"We will initiate an investigation kagaya mo and I will subpoena your mother sa ayaw mo't sa hindi. Baka sabihin mong walang power ano - there is," the President said during the assembly of mayors at the Manila Hotel Wednesday.

"We also have the contempt power but we have to go to court," Duterte added.

Back in September, the President alleged that Trillanes' mother Estelita Trillanes was engaged in supply contracts with the Philippine Navy while his father was in the military service.

Two months later, Duterte announced the government initiated an investigation into the business deals involving Trillanes' parent.

"We are looking into the paper. We're investigating quietly 'yung mga deals sa panahon ng tatay pati 'yung involved ang nanay," Duterte said last November. "And he can be very sure na lalabas lahat 'yan," he added.

The President made the latest statement after slamming anew Trillanes, a fierce critic of his administration, before the gathering of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP).

He branded Trillanes a coward when he opted to surrender to authorities after staging a mutiny against the Arroyo administration.

### 'JUST DO IT'

Trillanes IV on Wednesday challenged Duterte to prove his claim that his ailing mother had been involved in anomalous dealings with the Philippine Navy.



TRILLANES

In a statement, the opposition lawmaker and staunch Duterte critic responded to the Chief Executive who said that he will initiate an investigation and subpoena his 84-year-old mother for allegedly being involved in transactions with the Navy.

"Since September last year, Duterte has been saying that he asked different agencies to investigate the supposed anomalous transactions of my mother. But up to now, he has yet to show even a shred of evidence to prove his baseless allegations," Trillanes said.

"Now, Duterte is threatening to subpoena my mother," he added.

Trillanes told Duterte to continue with his plan, which he assured will end to no avail.

The former Navy lieutenant said the Chief Executive was "picking on" his mother because the latter "could not" handle him.

"Just do it and let it be another humiliating episode for you like the fake offshore bank accounts you alleged against me," he challenged the President.

"Sige lang (Go on), do your worst while I count the days," he added, alluding to the last three years of Duterte's presidency. (Genalyn D. Kabiling and Vanne Elaine P. Terrazola)

## Ina ni Trillanes, ipatatawag sa imbestigasyon

NI GENALYN D. KABILING

Ipatatawag ang ina ni Senador Antonio Trillanes IV sa imbestigasyon ng gobyerno sa kanyang business transactions sa militar, sinabi kahapon ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

"We will initiate an initiate investigation kagaya mo and I will subpoena your mother sa ayaw mo't sa hindi. Baka sabihin mong walang power ano -- there is," sinabi ng Pangulo sa pagtitipon ng mga mayor sa Manila Hotel kahapon.

"We also have the contempt power

but we have to go to court," idinagdag ni Duterte.

Noong Setyembre, sinabi ng Pangulo na ang ina ni Trillanes ay sangkot sa supply contracts sa Philippine Navy habang ang kanyang ama ay nasa military service.

Makalipas ang dalawang buwan, ipinahayag ni Duterte na iniimbestigahan ng gobyerno ang business deals ng mga magulang ni Trillanes.

"We are looking into the paper. We're investigating quietly 'yung

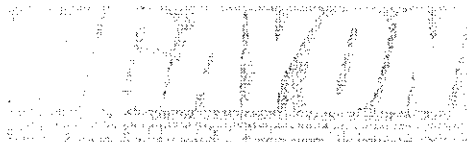
mga deals sa panahon ng tatay pati 'yung involved ang nanay," sinabi ni Duterte noong Nobyembre. "And he can be very sure na lalabas lahat 'yan," idinagdag niya.

Naglabas ng pahayag ang Pangulo matapos muling kastiguhin si Trillanes, matinding kritiko ng kanyang administrasyon, sa pagtitipon ng League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP).

Tinawag niya si Trillanes na duwag nang ito ay sumuko matapos mag-aklas laban sa administrasyong Arroyo.

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## ***Digong balak i-subpoena ang ina ni Trillanes***

Plano ni Pangulong Duterte na paimbestigahan ang ina ni Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV upang pagpaliwanagin sa mga kwesyonableng transaksyon nito noong naglilingkod pa bilang non-uniform personnel sa Philippine Navy.

Ayon sa Pangulo, napipikon na siya kay Trillanes dahil sa patuloy na pagbanat nito sa kanyang pamilya kaya planong idamay na nito ang 84-anyos na ina ng senador.

"Sumobra ka. We will initiate an investigation kagaya mo and I will subpoena your mother sa ayaw mo't sa hindi. Baka sabihin mong walang power, there is. We also have the contempt power but we have to go to court," pahayag ng Pangulo.

Una ng inihayag ni Trillanes na huwag idamay ang kanyang ina na may sakit.

"Just do it", ang sagot naman ni Trillanes sa balak ni Duterte na paimbestigahan ang kanyang ina.

Sinabi ni Trillanes, simula noong Setyembre 2018, palaging sinasabi ni Duterte na aatasan niya ang iba't ibang ahensiya ng gobyerno na imbestigahan ang mga transaksyon ng kanyang 84-taong gulang na ina na mayroon na ngayong Alzheimer's na hanggang ngayon ay wala namang naipapakitang ebidensiya sa kanyang mga walang basehang akusasyon. (Rudy Andal/Malou Escudero) V



***Sa mga gov't transactions...***

# **DU30 PLANONG I-SUBPOENA ANG**

## **INA NI TRILLANES**

**P**lanong paimbestigahan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang 84-anyos na ina ni Sen. Antonio Trillanes matapos na mapikon ito sa mga banat ng huli sa kanya at kanyang pamilya.

Ayon kay Pangulong

Duterte, kaya niyang ipa-subpoena ang ina ni Sen. Trillanes na si Mrs. Estelita Trillanes upang pagpaliwanagin sa mga kwestyunableng transaksyon nito noong naglilingkod pa bilang non-uniform personnel sa Philippine Navy.

Ayon sa Pangulo, napipikon na siya kay Trillanes dahil sa patuloy na pagbanat nito sa kanyang pamilya kaya planong idamay na nito ang 84-anyos na ina nito. "Sumobra ka. We will initiate an investigation kagaya mo and I will

Nina RUDY ANDAL at MALOU ESCUDERO

subpoena your mother sa ayaw mo't sa hindi. Baka sabihin mong walang power, there is. We also have the contempt power but we have to go to court," wika ni Pangulo.

long Duterte kamakalawa ng gabi sa Manila Hotel.

Nauua nang inihayag noon ni Trillanes na huwag idamay ang kanyang 84-anyos na ina na may sakit pa.

"Just do ito", naman ang sagot ni Trillanes sa balak ni Pangulong

Duterte na ipa-subpoena ang kanyang ina dahil sa mga diumano'y kwestyunableng transaksyon sa Philippine Navy.

Sinabi ni Trillanes, simula noong Setyembre 2018, palaging sinasabi ni Duterte na aatasan niya ang iba't ibang

ahensiya ng gobyerno na imbestigahan ang mga transaksyon ng kanyang 84-taong gulang na ina na mayroon na ngayong Alzheimer's na hanggang ngayon ay wala namang naipapakitang ebidensiya sa kanyang mga walang basehang akusasyon.

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# PDEA 11 to destroy 39 bricks of cocaine found in Davao Or

By ANTONIO L. COLINA IV

**D**AVAO CITY - The 39 bricks of cocaine worth P215 million recovered off the coast of Barangay Santiago in Caraga town, Davao Oriental on Sunday will be destroyed this week, Philippine Drugs Enforcement Agency (PDEA) 11 Director Antonio E. Rivera said.

Rivera said in an interview at the sidelines of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) - Philippine Na-

tional Police (PNP) press briefing on Wednesday here that the recovered illegal drugs were supposed to be destroyed within 72 hours, but added they were still waiting for the go signal from PDEA Director General Aaron N. Aquino.

He said authorities were still investigating the individuals behind the dumping of the cocaine off the shores of Caraga, but they suspected that a Colombian drug cartel is behind it.

"Who are the countries producing this stuff? Colombia, South American

countries. We assumed it came from them. They are the origin. The main ingredient is coca plant, which grows in South America," he said, adding that another drug cartel from Mexico, Sinaloa, could also be behind it.

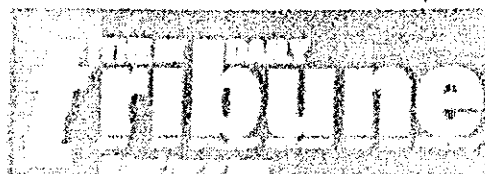
Rivera said they were still looking at the possibility that the drugs might have been dropped at the high sea and had been blown to the shores in Caraga before villagers discovered them.

"Another thing is, it could be a diversionary (tactic), they intentionally dropped it so that our focus would be on

the east part of the country, and somewhere else, they would sneak in huge amounts of drugs or shabu," he said.

He added it was also possible that the seized illegal drugs were supposed to be delivered to other countries with Philippines as the transshipment hub, claiming that cocaine was not as prevalent as shabu in the country because it's expensive.

"That's the subject of our investigation now to know who are behind this and who are the recipients of the cocaine," he said.



## Disaster department gains traction

The adverse effects  
of the changing  
climate patterns  
and extreme  
weather conditions  
are critical points in  
our nation's security

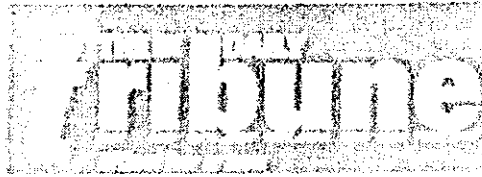
Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana on Tuesday said efforts to establish a Department of Disaster Resilience is gaining ground.

Speaking at the thanksgiving ceremony for the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Operation Center in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City, Lorenzana said calamities in recent years show the need for the country to step up and utilize fully its best disaster risk reduction and management assets.

"The adverse effects of the changing climate patterns and extreme weather conditions are critical points in our nation's security. Recall what happened to our country during the times of 'Ondoy,' 'Yolanda' and 'Usman,'" Lorenzana noted.

He said the lessons learned in these calamities, prompted the efforts to advocate for the upgrading of the Office of the Civil Defense to the Department of Disaster Resilience. 3

CRP



## MDT fate in agenda

By Kristina Maralit and Mario J. Mallari

The Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) between the United States and the Philippines will likely be among the major topics of discussion during US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's visit to the country tomorrow.

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**Any subject matter that is mutually beneficial to both countries will be discussed**

**From page 1**

President Rodrigo Duterte and Pompeo have set a meeting at the Villamor Airbase in Pasay City.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana earlier had sought the review, amendment and possible scrapping of the pact.

Lorenzana had sought a Department of National Defense (DND) review of the 67-year-old agreement to see if it is still relevant to the Philippines' "national interest."

"I have just directed our lawyers to start looking into it," he said.

"That's 1951. It's a 67-year-old treaty. Is it still relevant to our national interest? That's what we should look at. Let us look at it dispassionately, without considering about past ties, about future ties — dispassionately," he said, adding the end goal of the review is either "to maintain it, strengthen it or scrap it."

### **Terror also up in meet**

Combating terrorism will be another topic during the meeting.

**Pompeo will also meet Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. to discuss issues of mutual interest.**

Pompeo will be in the country until Friday, 1 March. It is the US official's first visit to the Philippines since assuming office in April last year.

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said the Chief Executive and

Pompeo are expected to touch on issues "mutually beneficial" to the two countries.

"Any subject matter that is mutually beneficial to both countries will be discussed or any matter for the secretary to raise," Panelo said at a Palace briefing.

The MDT was inked by the two countries as a commitment to defend each together in the event of an armed attack.

"If the US Secretary of State will bring it up then it would definitely be tackled," Panelo said.

### **Meeting with Locsin set**

Pompeo will also meet Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. to discuss issues of mutual interest, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

While there was no official agenda issued by the DFA, the two top diplomats are expected to discuss important issues concerning Manila and Washington.

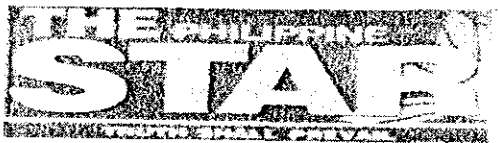
In an advisory, the DFA yesterday said Locsin and Pompeo will be issuing separate statements at 10 a.m. on Friday after the bilateral meeting. A joint press conference is also scheduled.

Pompeo is scheduled to arrive at DFA headquarters at around 9 a.m.

The DFA meeting will cap the two-day official visit of Pompeo who is arriving today in Manila from Vietnam where a summit between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un was held.

This is the second time in three months that Locsin and Pompeo are meeting. Last December, the two met in Washington.

During the December meet, Pompeo reaffirmed the alliance between the two countries, including Washington's commitment to the 1951 MDT which was sought for review by the DND.



### **Reds burn heavy equipment in Negros**

BACOLOD CITY -- Suspected New People's Army rebels burned five tractors and a vintage vehicle in Manjuyod, Negros Oriental on Monday.

About 50 communist rebels raided the compound owned by Martin Longa, chairman of Barangay Sta.

Monica, and set the heavy equipment on fire.

Senior Superintendent Raul Tacaca, Negros Oriental police director, said the rebels also took two cellular phones, two handheld radios and a Wi-Fi device.

Initial damage was pegged at P3 million.

Authorities said Longa confirmed that the rebels demanded that he pay them P500,000 in so-called protection money.

Last month, communist guerrillas burned 11 heavy equipment and two generator sets owned by a mining firm in Ayungon town also in Negros Oriental. Damage was estimated at around P120 million.

|| - Gilbert Bayoran



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## Former rebels continue to avail of support from the government

By **MIKE U. CRISMUNDO**

**CAMP BANCASI, Butuan City** – Another batch of former New People's Army (NPA) members have availed of the government's financial and livelihood support, according to the area command of the Army's Northeastern and Northern Mindanao 4th Infantry (Diamond) Division (4th ID).

Brig. Gen. Franco Nemesio M. Gacal, commanding general of the 4th ID, the largest maneuvering division of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in Mindanao, said the former CPP-NPA rebels got the support from the government through the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program or E-CLIP.

A total of 223 ex-rebels, who surrendered to the different units under the 4th ID since January, this year, availed of the E-CLIP.

Cash assistance of P65,000 for livelihood opportunities was extended to each of the former NPA rebels, Gacal said.

Some of the former rebels

are still undergoing the E-CLIP process, he said.

Recently, 31 former CPP-NPA rebels received their livelihood and immediate cash assistance during ceremony held in Cagayan de Oro City, the 4th ID chief reported.

"Hopefully, the assistance of the government to the former rebels will pave way to change their lives for the better and become good examples for their former comrades to go back to mainstream society," Gacal said.

The 4th ID chief has called other remaining CPP-NPA members who are still running in the mountains to come down and avail the E-CLIP and peace and development program of the government.

"As we embark on a 'peaceful war' by bringing in government services to resolve social ills in the remote communities, we have to continue our security patrols in the hinterlands so the remaining CPP-NPA terrorists will not have the chance to disrupt our peacekeeping campaign," Brig. Gen. Gacal added.

## **BARMM leaders to get P31 B from budget**

By JEZZ DIAZ

The Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) that will administer the new autonomous Muslim region in Mindanao for three years will inherit operational funds of more than P31 billion this year.

The amount is the funding level President Duterte has recommended in his proposed P3.757-trillion 2019 national budget for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). The Senate and the House of Representatives have retained the amount.

On Tuesday, ARMM Gov. Mujiv Hataman turned over leadership of the regional government to Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) leader Murad Ebrahim, who heads the transition body that will run the new Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

Hataman was expected to make a detailed accounting of the funds, personnel, equipment and other assets ARMM is entrusting to BARMM.

In his still-to-be-enacted proposed budget for this year,

**Turn to Page 6**

## BARMM From Page 1

the President allocated a total of P31.117 billion to ARMM divided as P13.4 billion for salaries, P4.659 billion for maintenance and other operating expenses and P13.059 billion for capital outlay, the bulk of which is for infrastructure projects.

The allocation for salaries is huge because of thousands of public school teachers under the region's education department.

The ARMM outlay is further distributed into 12 expense classes: P236 million for regional legislation; P1.278

billion for regional autonomy administration and finance resources management; P40.3 million for peace, law and order, and human rights protection and promotion; P629.6 million for agriculture, fishery and land reform; P56.1 million for employment and industrial peace; and P147.1 million for trade, industry and investment development.

Some P11.2 billion goes to education, science and technology, and P10.8 billion to roads and public infrastructure facilities.

Ebrahim, as concurrent minister of public works and highways, and Mohaguer Iqbal, as education minister, will oversee the expenditure of the largest budgetary allocations for the new autonomous region.

The remaining expense classes and their funding are P1.5 billion for health and nutrition, P157 million for social welfare and protection, P67.5 million for transportation and communications, P33.2 million for environment conservation and management and human settlement.

The projects, programs and activities to be funded under

the 12 expense classifications are all detailed in the ARMM budget.

The regional government is required to approve a budget plan and follow procurement laws and regulations.

Some previous Muslim officials are facing criminal charges for alleged misuse of the autonomous region's funds.

Funding for ARMM more than doubled under the administration of former president Benigno Aquino III and Hataman's leadership of the region.

A lawmaker said Islamic banks are crucial to

the Bangsamoro's development as an independent region.

Leyte Rep. Henry Ong, chairman of the committee on banks and financial intermediaries of the House of Representatives, said it would be best for the BTA to lobby for the measure crucial for the region's economy.

"To boost the economy of the BARMM, I express the hope that the proposed Islamic Banking law be prioritized immediately after Congress reconvenes post-May elections," he said.

"Aside from the national budgetary support and for-

eign grants, new investments are needed in Northern Mindanao and BARMM. Having more investment flows through Islamic banks and expanded financial inclusion will further spur economic activity," Ong said.

Ong explained Islamic banks will allow private investors and governments in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and parts of Africa to engage business in the BARMM.

He said Islamic banks will act as financial conduits, advisors and depositary institutions. — With Delon Porcalla, John Unson, Jose Rodel Clapano, Jaime Laude

## 4 suspects slain in Bulacan, Maguindanao

Four suspects, two of them alleged drug pushers, were killed in police operations in Bulacan and Maguindano in the past two days.

Senior Superintendent Chito Bersaluna, Bulacan police director, identified the fatalities as Lamberto de Guzman and Apple dela Rosa.

Bersaluna said the suspects drew their guns when they sensed they had sold shabu to undercover agents in Barangays Longos in Pulilan and Balagtas, respectively.

Police said 12 sachets of shabu, two .38-caliber revolvers, two cell phones and marked money were recovered from the fatalities.

Superintendent Laurente Acquirot, Plaridel police chief, said Renato Sy was killed in pursuit operations after wounding Senior Police Officer 3 Dennis Salamat in shootout in Barangay Tabang.

A .40-caliber pistol was reportedly recovered from Sy.

Six sachets of shabu, a hand grenade and a .38-caliber revolver were reportedly recovered from Sy's suspected cohort Jerico Tanghal, who was arrested.

Sy and Tanghal were accused of stealing the motorcycle driven by a certain Annabelle Bernas.

Police said Tenti Taup Mangarin, Sultan Kudarat's most wanted person, was killed in a shootout with police officers at his hideout in Barangay Meti, Datu Blah Sinsuat in Maguindanao.

Mangarin, who was facing charges for multiple murder, arson, vehicle theft, extortion and illegal drugs, reportedly fired at law enforcers serving a warrant of arrest.

The suspect was tagged in the burning of heavy equipment owned by Jargon Construction Co., which is involved in government projects in Lebak and Kalamansig towns.

Police said M16 rifles were recovered at the scene.

### MILF member nabbed

In Zamboanga City, Rajiv Abubakar, 34, was arrested in a drug sting in Barangay Mampang yesterday.

Police said nine sachets of shabu and marked money were recovered from the suspect.

Abubakar claimed he is a member of the 113rd command of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) based in Tungawan, Zamboanga Sibugay.

Authorities were verifying the suspect's involvement with the MILF.

— Ramon Efreñ Lazaro, John Unson, Roel Pareño

# Duterte wants new Misuari 'deal' crafted

By Christine O. Avendaño  
@10avendanoINQ

President Duterte said a "new deal" with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) faction, led by its founding chair Nur Misuari, must be crafted after he had appointed members of a transition government that would run a new autonomous Muslim region in Mindanao.

"Nur said he is willing to talk, and he has waited this long for me to make a decisive decision when he comes back," Mr. Duterte told a national assembly of mayors at the Manila Hotel on Tuesday night.

Misuari was to leave on Wednesday for meetings with world Muslim leaders in the United Arab Emirates and Morocco.

He was given permission to

travel abroad by the Sandiganbayan, where he was arraigned on Tuesday on graft and malversation charges in connection with "ghost textbooks" contracts when he was governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

## Not guilty

He refused to enter a plea, so the court entered a not guilty plea for him.

On Monday, Mr. Duterte met with Misuari who asked that he be allowed to leave the country.

"I said: 'Fine. You have done that several times. You can go,'" Mr. Duterte said he told Misuari.

The President said he told Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and Interior Secretary Eduardo Año, who were present during his meeting with Misuari, that



Nur Misuari

"It's time for us to craft a new deal for the MNLF of Misuari."

Misuari "only wanted to talk," he said. "(Misuari) doesn't want to fight. And I told him, with more reason."

Mr. Duterte did not say what the new agreement would include.

In ceremonies in Malacaniang on Friday, the President swore into office Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) chair Murad Ebrahim as interim chief minister of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA), which will act as the transition government of the new Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

Murad on Tuesday formally took over the leadership of the region from ARMM Gov. Mujiv Hataman.

#### **MILF control**

The MILF controls 41 seats in the 80-member BTA, which will govern the region until the first BARMM elections are held in 2022.

A faction of the MNLF led by Yusop Jikiri complained that it

was given only five seats, not 10 according to some reports.

Despite his disappointment, Jikiri appealed to his supporters to respect the decision of the national government.

"For me, there is no problem. All we can do is watch how they would run the new autonomous region and if the autonomy [would be used to] really serve and address the situations of people on the ground," he said.

Another MNLF leader, vice chair Firdausi Abbas, threatened to put up another faction to protest against what he called the MILF's "virtual dictatorship."

Abbas, a lawyer and the sultan of Lanao, questioned the ability of the appointed BTA members to govern the region. He urged Congress to call an

election within six months so that the people could choose who they wanted to lead them in the new Muslim homeland.

#### **No prominent area**

Murad downplayed Abbas' statements.

"If I remember right, he was not a member of MNLF until recently," Murad said. "I don't see how strong Mr. Abbas' following on the ground is because we don't see a prominent area where he is in command of any group."

Murad explained that it was the government that decided whom to appoint to the interim government, which would allow the MILF to transition from a revolutionary group into mainstream governance. —WITH REPORTS FROM JOFFREY MAITEM AND JULIE ALIPALA INQ AB

# Duterte eyes new pact with Misuari

BY CATHERINE  
S. VALENTE

**P**RESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte has made "some arrangements" to allow Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) founder Nur Misuari to travel overseas, saying they were preparing for negotiations for a new peace agreement.

In remarks before the general assembly of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines on Tuesday night, Duterte said he had yielded to Misuari's request to allow the latter to travel abroad before participating in peace talks.

The President, who referred to Misuari as his "brother," met with the MNLF founder in Malacañang on Monday night.

★PactA2

## Duterte eyes new pact with Misuari

"I said, let him travel overseas, for the sake of [the government's] efforts in pursuing peace and order in Mindanao, you know, because I still have to craft [a peace deal with Misuari], we in government," Duterte said in English and Filipino.

He had sought Misuari's cooperation in the formation of the new Bangsamoro autonomous region whose interim government is led by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which had broken away from the MNLF.

Misuari is on trial before the Sandiganbayan Third Division for graft and malversation over the allegedly anomalous purchase of P77 million worth of educational materials when he was governor

of then Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). The ARMM was a result of a final peace agreement between Misuari's MNLF and the Ramos administration in 1996.

On Tuesday, the Sandiganbayan granted Misuari's motion to travel abroad for his participation in the 46th session of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Council of Foreign Ministers in the United Arab Emirates and the meeting of the Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States in Morocco.

Misuari is scheduled to fly to Abu Dhabi on Wednesday and will proceed to Morocco on March 11, based on his itinerary. He is expected to return to the Philippines between March 17 and 20.

The talks between the President and Misuari come amid the supposed "rumblings" in the MNLF about the new Bangsamoro autonomous region, which implements a 2014 peace deal between the government and the MILF.

The MNLF has reportedly expressed concern about the composition of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA), saying it was only given a few seats in the interim government of the new Bangsamoro region that replaced the ARMM.

Under the law creating the Bangsamoro region, the BTA or the interim government will be composed of 41 nominees from the MILF and 39 individuals nominated by the government.

MILF Chairman Murad Ebrahim

has been appointed interim chief minister of the BTA that will govern the region until new regional leaders are elected in 2022.

Duterte said he had received a commitment from Misuari to hold peace negotiations and craft a "new deal" with the government upon his return to the country.

He added that Presidential Peace Adviser Carlito Galvez, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and Interior Secretary Eduardo Año would be tasked to help craft the agreement with the MNLF.

Misuari led a siege of Zamboanga City in 2013 to protest a decision of the government of then President Benigno Aquino 3rd to hold talks with the MILF.

The Misuari faction of the MNLF accused the government of abrogating its agreements with the group when it held negotiations with the MILF.



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# Duterte eyes peace deal with MNLF

Lorenzana looking seriously at threat to establish a new faction of the Moro group

By GENALYN D. KABILING and FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

**T**he government is prepared to craft a new peace deal with Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) amid plans to resume talks with its chairman Nur Misuari, President Duterte announced Tuesday night.

The President said Misuari, former governor of the Autonomous Region in

Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), has also expressed willingness "to talk, not fight" with his government during their conversation in Malacañang Monday night.

"Ilong kay Nur, areglo na tayo. Sabi ni Nur, he's willing to talk. He's waiting for me to make a decisive decision when he comes back," the ►10

# Duterte eyes peace...

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President said during the assembly of the League of the Municipalities in the Philippines at the Manila Hotel.

"Sabi ko it's time to craft a new deal for the MNLF," he added.

He said that Presidential Peace Adviser Carlito Galvez Jr., Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año would be tasked to help craft the agreement with the MNLF.

"Kailangan pa natin 'yan. And but they are revolutions driven with territorial intentions or objectives," he said.

Duterte noted that the government's talks with the MNLF would be held when Misuari returns from his trip abroad.

## New MILF faction?

While President Duterte may have an easier time addressing Misuari's sentiments, the task of appeasing another disgruntled key member of the MNLF may be more difficult.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said that they are taking seriously the threat made by a Moro leader lawyer Firdausi Abbas that he would establish a new faction in protest of the MILF's hold of majority of positions in the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA).

Abbas protested what he called a "virtual dictatorship" by the MILF, even questioning their ability to govern the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

"Of course, kasi delikado iyan, kasi hindi na matapos iyang trouble natin kung [its dangerous because our trouble will not stop if] every faction there will create their own trouble to destabilize the existing order," Lorenzana said.

"Tignan muna natin kung ano iyang gusto niya [Let's see what he wants]. We have to engage him by the OPAPP (Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process) siguro kung ano ang... [what he]."

"Kilala ko iyan si Firdausi Abbas, eh [I know Firdausi Abbas] maybe we should to talk to him kung ano ang gusto niya [to know what he wants]," he added.

In an interview over ABS-CBN News, Abbas said he would "pursue the crusade along pacifist lines" once he quit the MNLF.

"Right now, we have no respect for people (which) I find contemptible and despicable," said Abbas, who is recognized as sultan of Lanao.

Lorenzana also said that as far as he is concerned the MNLF is well represented in the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA).

"They (MNLF) are included as they have seven members in the BTA," Lorenzana said.

"What I overheard is that they are sulking because only seven of them are included. But they are still fortunate to

have seven members in the BTA," he added.

When asked to clarify his statement, Lorenzana said the BOL or Bangsamoro Organic Law is a Moro Islamic Liberation Front activity.

"This BOL is like more of an MILF activity. During the campaign period for the BOL, the most active is the MILF," Lorenzana said.

"The MNLF had minimal participation, except in Sulu, in Jolo, in Sulu province by Jikiri. In other areas they seldom participated," he added.

But Lorenzana is hopeful the rumblings would not result into more serious problems.

## New Duterte-Misuari meeting

President Duterte met Misuari at the Palace Monday night and apologized for the delay in the implementation of the proposed federalism initiative in the country, the Palace announced Tuesday. Another meeting will be set between the President and Misuari soon.

The Sandiganbayan had earlier granted Misuari's motion to travel to the United Arab Emirates and Morocco to attend the summits of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Council of Foreign Ministers as well as the 14th Session of the Parliamentary Union of Islamic Cooperation Member States next month.

Duterte admitted he made some arrangements to allow the safe passage of Misuari, believing the MNLF leader would return to the country. He added that he considers Misuari as his brother.

"Now there is Misuari, he saw me last night. He was not allowed by the court to go out because he has pending charges when he was armed. So I had to make some arrangements. Sabi ko, this is a personal request of me, which I do not do at any time, at any other time," he said.

"Sabi ko, papasulkin - ah palabasin ninyo. Sabi ko, for the sake of - alam mo na because I still have to craft," he said.

Misuari also assured the President that he would return home after his trip abroad.

"Whenever we see, we embrace each other because I consider him a brother. Tapos sabi niya, 'papuntahin mo lang ako, babalik ako.' Sabi ko, 'Fine. You have done that several times, you can go.' So nag-courtesy call siya tapos umalis siya," Duterte said.

The upcoming talks between the President and Misuari come amid the "rumblings" in the MNLF about the new Bangsamoro Autonomous Region.

The MNLF has reportedly expressed concern about the composition of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, saying it was only given a few seats in the interim government.

The law creating the BARMM that

replaced the old ARMM is part of the peace pact forged by the government with the MILF, which broke away from the MNLF several years ago.

The administration of then President Fidel V. Ramos forged a peace pact with the MNLF in 1996.

## BTA members

Meanwhile, Malacañang released Wednesday the appointment papers of the 76 members of the BTA, five days after President Duterte administered their oath in Malacañang.

It was earlier announced that MILF Chairman Ahod Balawag Ebrahim, known as Murad Ebrahim, was appointed Interim Chief Minister of the BTA.

The other BTA members, mostly nominees of the MILF are: 1. Ghazali Jaafar; 2. Ali Solaiman; 3. Mohagher Iqbal; 4. Abdulraof Macacua; 5. Ibrahim Ali; 6. Haron Abas; 7. Mohammad Zainoden Bato; 8. Said Salendab; 9. Mohammad Yacob; 10. Malik Mantawil; 11. Ali Salik; 12. Abdulwahab Pak; 13. Said Shick; 14. Ubaida Pacasem; 15. Hussein Muñoz; 16. Abdullah Gayak; 17. Eduard Guerra; 18. Aida Silongan; 19. Abdul Dataya Sr.; 20. Raissa Jajurie; 21. Tucao Mastura; 22. Mibpantao Midtimbang; 23. Al-Syed Sali; 24. Saffrullah Dipatuan; 25. Abdullah Ahang; 26. Maleiha Candao; 27. Narciso Ekey; 28. Bainon Karon; 29. Basit Sarip Abbas; 30. Suwaib Oranon; 31. Akmad Abas; 32. Abdullah Macapaar (Commander Bravo); 33. Faiz Alauddin; 34. Hadji Abdulaziz Mohammad Esmael; 35. Marjanie Macasalang; 36. Lanang Ali Jr.; 37. Ali Pangalian Balindong; 38. Zesar Hajaj Alil; 39. Melanio Ulama; 40. Muslima Abubakar Asmawil; 41. Muslimin Jakilan; 42. Sahie Sappayani Udjah; 43. Adzfar Hailid Usman; 44. Omar Yasser Semal; 45. Romeo Sema; 46. Punduma Batinting Sani; 47. Abdul Raji Sahrin; 48. Hatimil Hassan; 49. Zul Qarneyr Abas; 50. Musa Diamla; 51. Rasul Ismael; 52. Sitti Shihara Mastura; 53. Amilbahar Mawallik; 54. Eddie Mapag Alih; 55. Khadafeh Mangudatu; 56. Jamel Macaraya; 57. Modayao Sacar; 58. Abraham Burahan; 59. Edrieza Nasser Rimbang; 60. Paisalin Tago; 61. Nabila Pangandaman; 62. Laisa Alamia; 63. Suharto Ambolodto; 64. Susana Anayatin; 65. Maisara Dandamun-Latiph; 66. Mussolini Lidasan; 67. Don Mustapha Loong; 68. Jose Iribani Lorena; 69. Abdulnuhmin Mujahid; 70. Romeo Saliga; 71. Alzad Sattar; 72. Nabil Tan; 73. Hamid Aminuddin Datu Barra; 74. Anna Tarhata Basman; and 75. Baintan Adil Ampatuan.

President Duterte has yet to name four more members of the BTA, which was earlier revealed to be composed of representatives from Moro and non-Moro groups, indigenous peoples, women, youth, settler communities, and traditional leaders. (With a report from Argyll B. Geducos)

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# Ex-Maute fighters enter gov't's returnee integrated program

By BONITA L. ERMAC

MARAWI CITY – At least 135 former Maute-Islamic State (IS) terrorist group members were formally integrated into the government's program returnee integrated program in a ceremony held at the Social hall, New Capitol complex here Tuesday.

The program is aimed at helping the former terrorist rebels to start a new life.

Col. Romeo S. Brawner Jr., 103rd Infantry (Haribon)-brigade commander, said the group was composed of Maute-IS fighters, who surrendered during and towards the end of the Marawi siege in 2017.

They were mainly fighters, with an 11-year-old boy as the youngest among them.

"It means, that some of them, ito iyong lumalaban nung unang mga araw nung siege, din ito iyong mga nakatakas nung hindi pa na-cordoned

iyong main battle area (they were the ones who fought in the first days of the siege. They were also the ones who managed to escape when the battle area was not yet cordoned off", he said.

Brawner also bared that most of those who surrendered likewise turned over their firearms.

Some were supporters of the terrorist group, while others were relatives of the fighters, he added.

Brawner also confirmed that one of the returnees was a sub-leader named White Lawaan, who had been included in the AFP's most wanted list.

Brawner said the returnees will not only receive benefits, but they were also urged to help the government by convincing their former colleagues to surrender.

"If they have any information to help us in

our program in campaigning to have peace, they should inform us also", he added.

The returnees also received seedlings, among others, which symbolize their return to the community as peace-loving civilians. Most of them were farmers before they were recruited by the terrorist group.

According to one of them, Khan, they were just victims and were deceived.

"Our poverty and ignorance was exploited and taken advantage of. We were made to believe that by joining, eternal peace will be achieved," said former Maute-IS member Khan.

"We have been misled, pinaniwala kami na (they made us believe that)) what we're doing have high rewards

from above, yet we were wrong. It only caused disruption at di pagkakaisa ng mga (and disunity among the) Muslim," he stated.

They pledged support to the government and promised never to go back to the group.

A comprehensive profiling of Maute IS returnees was also conducted February 26 to know their reasons and issues of joining to address their respective needs including their families.

The returnees will be closely monitored to avoid incident to happen again of which one had returned to the group, said Brawner.

The local government will be the lead of this re-integration program while AFP and PNP are there to support the national and local government.

Other private organizations and international partners like United Nations Development Program (UNDP) are pouring in support for the welfare of the returnees. {

## Murad hands off on PH's Sabah claim

**ZAMBOANGA CITY:** Chief Minister Murad Ebrahim of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) on Wednesday said he would not meddle in the Philippines'

claim to Sabah, a federal state of Malaysia, saying the dispute was between Manila and Kuala Lumpur.

The Philippines' stand on Sabah stems from a claim of the Sultanate

of Sulu to the mineral-rich Malaysian state, which is near Tawi-Tawi, one of five provinces under the Bangsamoro region.

➤ **SabahA2**

### ■ SABAH FROM A1

## Murad

Ebrahim, also the chairman of the rebel group Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which signed an interim peace deal with Manila in 2014, was recently named by President Rodrigo Duterte as head of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, after a plebiscite this year that ratified the Bangsamoro Organic Law that will run the new autonomous region for three years until elections are held.

"*Hindi namin papasukin 'yan* (We won't touch that issue). It is the central government [in Manila] that should pursue the claim if there are strong grounds to pursue it," Ebrahim said in an interview with the ABS-CBN News Channel, adding, "We do not want to complicate the peace process. *Lalong lalo na sa* (Especially the) peace process, *malaki ang natulong ng* (much was done by) Malaysia to forge the agreement. *Ayaw natin ma-affect ito* (We don't want the

Sabah issue to affect it)."

Kuala Lumpur helped broker peace talks since the time of President Benigno Aquino 3rd and even deployed peacekeepers in Mindanao who worked alongside MILF.

"We are Filipinos. We are Bangsamoro, but we are Filipinos. We are not Malaysians. So whatever the position of the Philippine government, we are bound to support," Ebrahim added.

Malaysian media had reported Philippine Ambassador to Kuala Lumpur Charles Jose as saying that Manila was maintaining its claim over Sabah, but the Duterte administration would not actively pursue it to focus on providing assistance to thousands of undocumented Filipino workers in Sabah.

Malaysia's Foreign Ministry reacted to Jose's statement, which was made during a recent courtesy call on Sabah Chief Minister Shafie Apdal Shafie.

The ministry said Manila's assertion over Sabah had no basis, although Malaysia continues to pay every year the heir of the Sultan of Sulu.

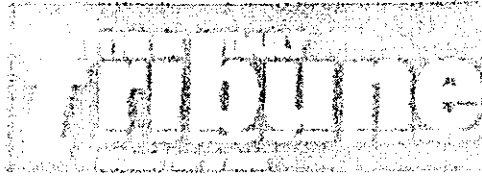
"The Foreign Ministry has continued to reiterate Malaysia's position, namely the claims on Sabah are without basis," the ministry said, adding that Sabah has been recognized by the United Nations and the international community as part of Malaysia since the formation of the Malaysian Federation on Sept. 16, 1963.

"As such, Malaysia does not recognize and will not entertain any claims by any party on Sabah," the ministry said.

Malaysia had expressed concern over a proposal by a member of the Philippines' 25-man consultative committee tasked with reviewing and proposing amendments to the Constitution, to include the Sabah as the country's 13th federal state.

Sabah is home to about 2.3 million Malaysians and 889,000 non-Malaysians. Malaysia is still paying cession money to the Sultanate of Sulu although it lays claim on the Sabah, a gift given by Brunei to the Sultan of Sulu for helping quell a rebellion in 1658.

**AL JACINTO**



## MNLF faction seeks wider BTA representation

A faction of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) is seeking wider representation to the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA).

In a TV interview Tuesday, MNLF vice chairman Firdausi Abbas protested as "tyrannical" the allocation of more than half of the 80 seats in the BTA for the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) men.

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**The MILF should not have a controlling majority of the BTA.**

Abbas is urging Congress to call for an election within six months instead of waiting for 2022 so the "Bangsamoro people will be given the chance finally to choose their representatives and those they want to be in the government."

"Three years is a long time and without the mandate of the people, that is tyrannical. It's a no-no for us because we worked for this. We labored for this. We sacrificed for this—not these people," said Abbas.

Earlier, Abbas threatened to establish a splinter group after the MILF was given 41 of 80 seats in the BTA while the MNLF was given five of 39 seats allotted for appointees of President Rodrigo Duterte.

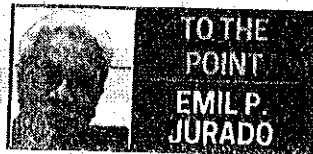
The MILF negotiated the peace deal with the government in 2014, which led to the Bangsamoro Organic Law that was ratified earlier this year. However, the MNLF earlier signed its own peace agreement with the Philippine government in 1996.

Abbas, who claim to lead a faction composed of 32 MNLF commander, stressed the MILF should not have a controlling majority of the BTA.

BTA interim minister and MILF chair Murad Ebrahim earlier said the three-year transition to be led by a team composed mostly MILF men was deliberately done to allow them to transform from armed rebels to bureaucrats.

**EMN**

## Junk the celebrations



AS I said, the so-called People Power Revolution is a myth. There was nothing to celebrate last Feb. 25, even though it was declared a non-working holiday.

This is because a "revolution" entails something else—structural change, to be precise. There are many examples of real revolutions, and what happened at Edsa in February 1986 was not comparable to them.

What in fact happened then was just a turnover of power from one elite political family to another.

*“Scented, sanctified, glamorized”*

Historians Salvador Escalante and J. Augustus Dela Paz of the Truth and Justice Foundation said it too well when they pointed out that there was never a revolution because there were only less than half a million people out of the more than 80 million Filipinos at that time.

The Yellows simply glamorized, scented and sanctified Cory Aquino.

Escalante and Dela Paz added that there was nothing to commemorate and celebrate, because people went to Edsa to celebrate an accident of time, place and personalities.

I can go on to cite instances of change in regime throughout history, but I would just be repeating what others have said before.

It's time we discontinued the hype and malarkey.

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What did the historic Pope Francis-initiated summit on sex abuse by members of the clergy achieve?

The summit brought forth not only the sexual scandals and coverup, but the willingness and readiness of the Catholic Church to finally address the issue. It highlighted the need for change:

It also allowed the victims to speak out. As a result, concrete steps to address abuse were identified. The most important step was that the policy of coverup will no longer be allowed.

We expect that after the Vatican summit, the implementation of a 2016 law holding bishops and other superiors accountable for any coverup will be clarified.

The Church now recognizes that abuse, and subsequent coverup, are egregious crimes.

Pope Francis is indeed leading the cleansing of the Catholic Church.

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The reported signs of discontent among some sectors of Moroland on the formation of the Bangsamoro Transition Commission is expected.

For one thing, the Moro National Liberation Front, the original secessionist movement under Nur Misuari, out of which the Moro Islamic Liberation Front came from, was "outside the kulambo" if you know what I mean. It was not included at all in the Bangsamoro Organic Law.

There's a clear reason. It's because

Turn to A5

## Junk the...

From A4

Misuari has Tausug origins, while the MILF is a combined force of Maranaos and Maguindanaoans. It's always a tribal issue among the Moros.

This is also why Sulu did not ratify the BOL in the plebiscite.

Now, President Duterte is talking to Nur Misuari, obviously to placate him considering the fact that Misuari enjoys a measure of influence among members of the IS-inspired Abu Sayy-

af Group.

But what can Duterte offer Misuari—money? Power?

It all boils down to the fact that with the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, the MILF now has power and money – by the billions, mind you. Other clans and tribes cannot tolerate this. Can President Duterte resolve this? I doubt it.

\*\*\*

I am saddened with the passing of Makati College dean Tommy Lopez. Tommy was my assistant during the

martial law days when I was manager of the public affairs department of the Robert-Benedicto-controlled Kanlaon Broadcasting System that operated Channels 4,2,9 and 13.

Tommy and I enjoyed our days together. He was a congenial person, a joy to work with. My deepest condolences to the family.

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Malacañang claims that President Duterte had nothing to do with the assassination threats that Caloocan Bishop Virgilio David has been get-

ting.

But didn't the President tell people to rob and kill bishops and priests, because they have been stealing from the faithful?

Now Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo says that Mr. Duterte was just using hyperbole when he uttered those words.

I want to laugh but can't. Death threats are a serious thing.

His words against members of the clergy who have been critical of his war against drugs is sufficient to en-

courage criminals to take him seriously. My gulay, with spokesmen like Panelo, who needs enemies?

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The continued dumping of waterproof bundles of cocaine bricks on the Eastern seaboard, supposedly by the Colombian drug cartel, can only mean there remains great demand for drugs.

This also means that the market for cocaine has been growing. The poor cannot afford cocaine.

[www.emiljurado.weebly.com](http://www.emiljurado.weebly.com)

## Jihad

**T**HE term was not used in official pronouncements when the Bangsamoro Organic Law was being crafted, but minutes after political authority was passed from the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) -- a constitutional body -- to the Congress-created Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, the leader of the victorious Muslim faction declared that they will launch a "jihad" against corruption.

Also on the same day, President Duterte held a meeting with Nur Misuari, chairman of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), whose members complained that they were left out in the rush to form the Bangsamoro Transition Committee. Worse, several MNLF leaders said they are repudiating the Bangsamoro Organic Law, stressing it is unacceptable. They even averred that several appointed leaders of the BARMM are unqualified, stupid and "despicable." Misuari himself is silent on this ongoing acrimonious debate.

**'Filipinos who supported both President Aquino and President Duterte on the issue of giving full autonomy to the Muslims, short of cutting Philippine territory in the south and giving it to them, are somewhat disappointed to see two or more factions of Muslims fighting over the spoils.'**

As the MNLF sulks from its legislative defeat, the MILF is already talking of jihad, and while the term was used in connection with the BARMM leadership's benign or even praiseworthy campaign against corruption, it brings chills in spine as "jihad" is an all-encompassing term that includes internal struggle, surrender to Allah or God, self-sacrifice, and ultimately, martyrdom in the way of the suicide bombing community.

The Chief Executive's short meeting with Misuari presumably took up the issue of three foreigners -- Malaysian and Indonesian -- who had been held hostage for ransom by the Abu Sayyaf, a problem where Misuari's influence may be a key.

But most importantly, Duterte and Misuari discussed the future of MNLF under an MILF-led Bangsamoro authority, even after the Bangsamoro Organic Law had been passed and ratified by the region's voters.

Filipinos who supported both President Aquino and President Duterte on the issue of giving full autonomy to the Muslims, short of cutting Philippine territory in the south and giving it to them, are somewhat disappointed to see two or more factions of Muslims fighting over the spoils. B4

Well-meaning citizens would ask: We thought President Duterte promised a comprehensive and long-lasting peace in the Southern Philippines with the passing of the BOL? This wish looks far from being realized if the first few days of the handing of power between the ARMM and the BARMM are any indication.

Peace has been illusive in Mindanao, and to his credit, President Duterte has done his part in trying to set up the BARMM and later, the federal system of government for the Philippines. Let us try to make these nascent institutions work.





**SEÑOR  
SENADOR**  
Erik Espina

### Katanungan sa insurgency

**K**UNG nais daw nating maliwanagan at makamtan ang tamang hakbangin tungo sa tamang solusyon sa isang malaking problema, marapat lamang na hinayin ito ng tumpak at wasto.

Sa proseso ng pagtatanong,

malalaman ang kaliwanagan kung ano kailangan gawin. Halimbawa ay ang isyu ng communist insurgency na sinabuyan ng iba't ibang hanay o kilusan mula sektor panlipunan. Maaaring budburan ng sili ang mga sugat na natamo ng ating demokrasya sa pagpayag ng "party list", sa mga "progresibo" (kuno) sa ating Mababang Kapulungan.

Saan ba talaga nagsimula ang komunismo sa ating republika? Magugunita noong 1950s ang grupo ng Hukbalahap, na isa sa lumaban sa mga mananakop na Hapones. Kalaunan ay nagpalit ang layunin at anyo nito at nagsilbing pugad ng armadong kilusan ni Luis Taruc. Naganap ang pagtatayo ng

Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas sa ilalim ng mga kapatid na Lava. Ito ang panahon nang ipasa ng Kongreso ang RA 1700 o mas kilala sa tawag na 'Anti-Subversion Law'. Sa buod na paliwanag, nagkaroon ng pagsusuri hinggil dito hanggang sa nabisto ng Senado at Mababang Kapulungan na may banta sa ating malayang republika mula sa organisadong grupo ng mga komunista, sa pamamagitan ng pagbuwal ng ating pamahalaan at paggamit ng dahas.

Ang payak na pagsapi sa ganitong samahan ay krimeng maituturing na pinarurusahan ng nasabing batas. Sumibol sa sunod na mga dekada ang CPP (Communist Party of the Phil.) na

niluto ni Jose Ma. Sison sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas (UP). Habang ang NPA ay sa Hacienda Luisita itinatag. Tama ba na ang UP, TUP at iba pa ay maging paanakan ng CPP ng mga batang matatalino subalit walang kamuwang-muwang na nilululong sa maling ideolohiya? Tama ba na ang pondo ng bayan pa ang kinakasangkapan para ihain sa mga totoy na sikilin ang demokrasya at isulong ang madugong himagsikan? Nang tanggalin ni Pangulong FVR at Speaker Jose de Venecia ang RA 1700, lalo bang lumala ang terorismo? Nang magkaroon ng mga komunistang congressman, lumobo ba ang nakolektang pondo ng CPP para sa rebelyon? Panahon na bang buhayin muli ang RA1700? *7*



## Namnamin ang kalayaan at demokrasya

**B**AGAMAT inidolo niya si ex-Pres. Ferdinand E. Marcos na pinatalsik ng Edsa People Power Revolution noong Pebrero 25, 1986, hinikayat pa rin ni President Rodrigo Roa Duterte ang mga Pilipino, lalo na ang mga milenyal o kabataan, na namnamin at pahalagahan ang kalayaan at pagbabalik ng demokrasya na natamo ng bansa matapos ang maraming taon ng diktadurya sa ilalim ng martial law. Hindi nakadalo si PRRD sa ika-33

anibersaryo ng EDSA One dahil may mga mahahalaga siyang appointment nitong Pebrero 25. Sa kanyang mensahe, sinabi niyang umaasa siya na lahat ng Pilipino ay makahuhugot ng inspirasyon sa okasyong ito na nagpatumba sa isang diktador na sumupil sa kalayaan, nagkadena sa demokrasya at ginawang busabos ang bansa.

Tinawagan niya ang mga milenyal na pahalagahan ang Edsa People Power Revolution na nagbigay-laya sa panunupil ng diktador na hawak sa leeg ang Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) at ng noon ay Philippine Constabulary-Integrated National Police (PC-INP). Pinamunuan nina dating Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile at ex-AFP Vice Chief of Staff at PC-INP Chief Fidel V. Ramos ang pagkalas sa Marcos regime.

Sa unang pagkakataon, hindi nakadalo si ex-Pres. Fidel V. Ramos sa ika-33 anibersaryo ng Edsa One. Hindi nasaksihan ng sambayanang Pilipino ang pamosong paglundag ni FVR na kanyang ginagawa tuwing selebrasyon ng Edsa Revolt.

Ayon sa mga report, medyo may sakit ang dating Pangulo. Si FVR ay magiging 91-

anyos na sa susunod na buwan (Marso). Nasa bahay lang daw si FVR dahil kumikiro ang gout. Si Mr. Tabako ay isa lang din ang bato o kidney kung kaya lagi siyang nag-e-exercise at isang health buff.

oOo

Siyanga pala, salungat ang mga senador, kabilang ang sumusuporta sa Duterte administration, sa suhestiyon ng Pangulo na hayaan na lang manatili sa bansa ang mga Chinese na ilegal nagsisipagtrabaho rito. Maging ang Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) ay kontra sa mungkahi ni PRRD dahil kailangang kumuha ng work permit ng mga Chinese na nais magtrabaho sa Pilipinas. Badya nga ni Senate Pres. Tito Sotto: "Dura lex, sed lex" (Latin legal maxim) o kung tatagalugin ay "Malupit ang batas ngunit ito ang batas". Dagdag pa ni Sotto na alyado ng Pangulo, "deportasyon ang resulta kapag ang mga batas natin ay nilabag ng mga dayuhan.

Ipinaliwanag ni PDU30 na hindi niya basta-basta maiutos ang deportasyon ng mga Chinese na ilegal na nagtatrabaho sa bansa dahil baka gumanti ang China n

Pres. Xi Jinping. Ayon sa presidente, may 400,000 Pinoy ang nagtatrabaho sa China. Gayunman, sinabi ng mga senador at ng DOLE na nagtatrabaho ang mga Pilipino sa China bitbit ang work permit at hindi sila illegal aliens doon.

Sa pinakahuling ulat, nilinaw ng Malacañang na ipatutupad ng gobyerno ang immigration laws laban sa Chinese workers na walang permit. Ang reaksiyon ng Palasyo ay bunsod ng pahayag ng Trade Union Congress of the Philippines at ng iba pang grupo ng manggagawa, na dapat magtulungan sa pag-iimplementa ng batas tungkol sa foreign workers upang matiyak na ang mga Pinoy ay hindi nadedelgado sa trabaho sa sariling bayan.

Bukod kay Sotto, kinontra rin nina Sens. Panfilo Lacson at Joel Villanueva ang suhestiyon ni Pres. Rody na payagan na lang ang ilegal Chinese workers sa Pinas upang hindi gantihan ang libu-libong Pilipino na nagtatrabaho roon. Pero, Mr. President, nasa China ang ating OFWs na dala-dala ang kanilang work permit hindi tulad ng mga Chinese dito sa atin na walang work permit.

## Editorial

## Walang nalalaman sa karapatan

**B**INATIKOS kamakailan si National Youth Commission (NYC) chairman Ronald Cardema dahil sa proposal niyang alisin ang state scholarships sa mga estudyanteng aktibista na sumasali sa anti-government protests ganundin sa New People's Army (NPA). Aniya, ang paglaban aniya sa pamahalaan ay paglaban sa nakararaming Pilipino kaya dapat tanggalan ng scholarships ang mga estudyante sa state universities.

Ang proposal ni Cardema ay nagpapakita na salat siya sa kaalaman sa nakasaad sa Konstitusyon ng Pilipinas na ang mamamayan ay may karapatang magpahayag ng saloobin. Maski si President Duterte

ay nagsabing hindi siya sang-ayon sa proposal ni Cardema.

Sabi ng Presidente, walang masama kung magpahayag ng kanilang saloobin ang mga estudyante. Expression lang yun. Sabi naman ni Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo, ang pagsali ng mga estudyante sa grupo na naka-aligned sa Left ay hindi ground para alisin sa kanila ang scholarships.

Ikinatwiran naman ni Cardema na ang kanyang proposal na pag-aalis ng scholarships sa militants ay inspired sa sinabi ng Presidente noon na ibibigay na lamang ito sa mga lumad o indigenous people na gustong mag-aral sa unibersidad. Ito raw ang kanyang pinagbatayan at naninindigan dito.

Sa ganitong pahayag ni Cardema, nagpapakita nga na salat siya sa nalalaman sa Konstitusyon. Maski sa mandate ng NYC ay taliwas ang kanyang proposal sa pagkat nakasaad doon na ang mga kabataan ay dapat hayaang magsalita ng kanilang saloobin. Lahat nang kabataan o estudyante ay may karapatang magsalita kabilang ang pagprotesta sa kalsada.

Dapat magbitiw si Cardema sa puwesto dahil sa kawalan nang nalalaman sa karapatan ng mamamayan na magsalita ng saloobin.

## ONLINE NEWS

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# NPA leader yields in Zamboanga Norte

By Hirohito Cadion

**PAGADIAN CITY, Zamboanga del Sur** -- A New People's Army (NPA) rebel leader has surrendered to military authorities in the Zamboanga del Norte town of Gutalac, officials said Wednesday.

Lt. Col. Leon Onggao, the newly-installed commander of the Army's 42nd Infantry Battalion, identified the NPA rebel surrenderer only as a certain Ian, a team leader.

Onggao said Ian, who turned over a .45-caliber pistol with ammunition, surrendered around 7 a.m. Tuesday in Barangay Sas, Gutalac.

"Ian is frustrated and disappointed with the terrorist group (NPA) leadership because of the unfulfilled promises for a monthly salary of PHP7,000 and weekly support of PHP4,000 for his family just to join their ranks," Onggao said.

He said Ian and other combatants were deceived by NPA commanders that they will be killed by government forces if they decide to surrender.

Col. Bagnus Gaerlan Jr., Army's 102nd Infantry Brigade commander, said they expect more NPA rebels to surrender and avail of the government's Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP).

Gaerlan said E-CLIP provides the former rebels the opportunity to start a new life and live peacefully as productive citizens together with their families.

Brig. Gen. Roberto Ancan, the Army's 1st Infantry Division commander, has called on the remaining NPA rebels to return to the fold of the law and "join the concerned stakeholders in addressing our issues peacefully."

Ancan, who is also the Joint Task Force Zampelan (the Zamboanga Peninsula and Lanao Provinces) commander, commended the efforts of the troops that led to the surrender of the NPA leader in Zamboanga del Norte. (PNA)

[www.pna.gov.ph](http://www.pna.gov.ph)

## 2ID slams NPA attack on Mindoro hydro plant

By Saul Pa-a

**CALAMBA CITY** -- The commander of the Philippine Army's 2nd Infantry Division (2ID) condemned the burning of hydro power plant equipment by members of the outlawed New People's Army (NPA) communist terrorist group in Naujan, Oriental Mindoro.

Maj. Gen. Rhoderick M. Parayno decried this latest attack by the NPA during the first Regional Development Council (RDC) and Regional Peace and Order Council (RPOC) summit at the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) RDC conference room in Barangay Milagrosa, this city on Tuesday.

Parayno described the NPA's burning of the heavy equipment stationed at the 8-megawatt Santa Clara hydro power plant on Monday as a violation of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) as stated in Republic Act 9851 or the "Act on Crimes Against International Humanitarian Law, Genocide and Other Crimes Against Humanity."

"The NPAs have violated, and is continuously violating IHL to prevent the people to develop, enjoy development and remain poor and hard up so that they will forever be under the clutches of insurgency," Parayno said.

Latest report reaching the 2ID headquarters said the NPA arsonists torched three Volvo articulated dump trucks, a backhoe, two KIA service vehicles, a fuel truck, two trucks, two loaders, two transit mixers, two mobile cranes, a crawler crane, a batching plant and a crushing plant.

Reports showed the rebels took along with them four laptops, 12 handheld radios, two cellphones, a shotgun and a 9-mm pistol.

As this developed, military and police authorities are now conducting intensified pursuit operations and beefing up checkpoints against the rebels.

Col. Marceliano V. Teofilo, commander of the 203rd Brigade based in Mindoro, said that "due to the series of NPA setbacks in Mansalay and San Jose last week, they attacked the soft target like the power plant in Naujan to divert the attention of the pursuing troops."

Teofilo lamented that the electricity that would have been generated by the hydro power plant would have benefited the rural communities, especially the Mangyan tribal communities.

"The Communist NPA Terrorists have already destroyed it and they are hampering the developments in Mindoro province," he added. **(PNA)**