

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



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20 January 2017


Friday

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

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


NEWS HEADLINES

20 January 2017




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NEWS / All



KIDNAPPED KOREAN KILLED IN CAMP CRAME

President Duterte dismissed the policemen involved in the murder of Lee Suk Joo as the Department of Justice approves the filing of charges against the killers



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
DUTERTE TELLS GOVERNORS: STOP DRUGS, OR ELSE

1,800 trees to make way for MRT 7

Fill-Arms bracing for 'Trump effect'

NK missiles to rain on Trump's parade

Djokovic bows out of Aussie Open

WHA? Are the 2017 Miss Universe contestants?

WTO: Are we on Miss Duterte's hot desk?



WHA? Did Matteo win the Oscars?

NEWS BY THE HOUR
TALKING TALKING VILLAGE CHIEF

BUSINESS / JO
IT'S SOLAR VS FOX NEWS

REMEMBERING DONNA VILLA

Chinese New Year Countdown
Jan 27 - 7 PM




'If martial law looms, I'll keep quiet about it'

MDA linked on common MRT-LRT station

Tycoons vow to spur dev't of Mindanao

Special, not emergency, powers OK'd for traffic




Miss U bets repack food for expectant moms

20 years for scaling P251? Penal Code overhaul starts

Body sends profound respect to pope

Spencer urges: 'Same 'nuroc reps'



The Audi Driving Weekend

Take control and take off

January 21 - 22, 2017 | 10 AM - 4 PM



The Manila Times

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High Court on PI DT case: If there's a breakdown in negotiations, it is the fault of the firms' Filipino directors

Fit the end of DJJ's Separation from the IGP?

ANALYST EXPECTS RADICAL CHANGES IN WASHINGTON

'Trump, Duterte will walk the talk'

Police men charged for killing Korean exec

Obama tells supporters 'we'll be okay'

How SCS fails in Parliament


'Robredo camp running but of explanations'

Smart franchise faces rough sailing in Senate



Korean killed in Camp Crame

2 cops, 1 civilian, 41 others, many for cops



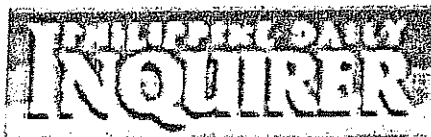
Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

20 JANUARY 2017

PAGE NR.	TITLE	WRITER	NEWSPAPER
1	Weather Forecast	-	PDI p.A10
NATIONAL NEWS			
2-3	Kidnapped Korean strangled inside Camp Crame	Tetch Torres	PDI p.A1
4-5	Joma sees peace deal by 2020	Rocky Nazareno	Manila Bulletin p.1
ARMY NEWS			
6	DND chief, AFP top brass touch base in remote Tawi-Tawi town	Francis Wakefield	Manila Bulletin p.16
7	2 Pinoys rescued from Abus	Roel Pareño	The Phil Star p.4
8	2 more Abu hostages freed	Mario Mallari	The Daily Tribune p.3
9-10	Always ready to help AFP 4 th ID continues its Ops in Cagayan de Oro	Lui Caludio	www.dwdd.com.ph
AFP RELATED NEWS			
11	'Terror groups may have sleeper cells in Phi'	Christina Mendez	The Phil Star p.7
12	US commander warns more IS attacks in Asia- Pacific	AFP	The Phil Star p.7
13	Navy warfare unit secures Miss U event in Batangas	Michael Punongbayan	The Phil Star p.9
14	Gov't, NDF resume peace talks	Karlos Manlupig	PDI p.A13
15	Reds say joint ceasefire hopes slim	Victor Reyes	Malaya p.B2
EDITORIAL/COMMENTARY			
16-17	The Sulu Sea: Vast, beautiful, dangerous	Ma Isabel Ongpin	The Manila Times p.A4
18-19	Have Reds offered anything?	-	The Daily Tribune p.6
ONLINE NEWS			
20-21	Oplan Kapayapaan': NPA, MILF, MNLF tag as 'peace-inclined' groups		www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com
22-23	Gov't, rebels smile through feuds in Rome peace talks	Karlos Manlupig	www.inquirer.net
24-25	PH expresses hope as 3rd round of peace talks between GRP and NDF resume in Rome		www.interkaksyon.com

20 January 2017



Page: A10

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | JANUARY 20, 2017 | FRIDAY

TAIL-END OF A COLD FRONT AFFECTING THE EASTERN SECTION OF VISAYAS AND MINDANAO NORTHEAST MONSOON AFFECTING LUZON (As of 5:00 PM - Jan. 19, 2017)

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

COP PRESS SEA

SUNRISE 6:25 AM	SUNSET 5:49 PM
MOONRISE 11:52 PM	MOONSET 11:57 AM
FULL MOON JAN 12 7:34 PM	LAST QUARTER JAN 20 8:13 AM
LOW TIDE 9:45 AM 0.11 Meter	HIGH TIDE 5:01 PM 0.55 Meter

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers
 Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms
 Cloudy skies with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms
 Light rains

	JAN 21	JAN 22	JAN 21	JAN 22	JAN 21	JAN 22		
METRO MANILA	22 - 31 °C	22 - 30 °C	TAGAYTAY	19 - 25 °C	19 - 26 °C	TACLOBAN	24 - 28 °C	25 - 29 °C
TUGUEGARAO	21 - 28 °C	21 - 27 °C	LEGAZPI	24 - 29 °C	25 - 28 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	24 - 28 °C	24 - 30 °C
LAOAG	20 - 29 °C	21 - 29 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	26 - 31 °C	27 - 30 °C	METRO DAVAO	25 - 30 °C	25 - 31 °C
BAGUIO	12 - 22 °C	11 - 21 °C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	25 - 29 °C	26 - 29 °C	ZAMBOANGA	24 - 31 °C	25 - 32 °C
SBMA/CLARK	23 - 30 °C	23 - 29 °C	METRO CEBU	24 - 29 °C	25 - 30 °C	<p style="font-size: x-small;">SABOT MO, PADALA MO!</p>		

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20 January 2017



Page: A1

Kidnapped Korean strangled inside Camp Crame

FROM A1

By Tetch Torres-Tupas
@T2TupasINQ

Former Hanjin executive and South Korean businessman Jee Ick-joo was strangled inside Camp Crame, headquarters of the Philippine National Police, shortly after he was kidnapped by rogue policemen in October, according to a Department of Justice (DOJ) resolution.

The resolution, a copy of which was obtained by the Inquirer, quoted one of the officers accused, Senior Police Officer 4 Roy Villegas, as implicating a fellow cop, Senior Police Officer 3 Ricky Sta. Isabel, as the leader of the group.

In his affidavit, Villegas said he heard Sta. Isabel talking to a certain "Sir Dumlao." "Sir, I heard you know these people and this operation was sanctioned by you," he quoted Sta. Isabel as saying.

Villegas said Sta. Isabel then ordered them to ignore Dumlao. He was also the one who brought packaging tape and surgical gloves before ordering them to cover Jee's head.

"He finally recalls seeing respondent Sta. Isabel strangling and killing the victim," the DOJ resolution stated.

After the deed was done, Villegas said Sta. Isabel called a certain "Ding," who agreed to receive the body in exchange for P30,000 and a golf set. Then the body was taken to the funeral home in Caloocan.

"He joined the operation as he believed then that the operation is a legitimate police operation against the herein victim who, according to respondent Sta. Isabel is involved in illegal drugs," the DOJ resolution stated.

"He reiterates that he thought all along that the surveillance and police operations which he participated in are legitimate police operations," the resolution said. "When he realized it, he did not resist and instead, he obeyed the instruction of respondent Sta. Isabel for fear of his life and that of his family."

The DOJ resolution, which approved the filing of kidnapping-for-ransom with homicide against Sta. Isabel, Villegas, Ramon Yalung and several John Does said all the respondents failed to submit evidence denying their participation in the crime.

Very angry

President Duterte became "very angry" when he mentioned Jee's case during a meeting with governors on Thursday, according to Pampanga Gov. Lilia Pineda.

"The policemen behind (the kidnapping) are not my people," President Duterte said, according to Pineda. "I wonder why they are not afraid of me." The South Korean envoy had asked for a briefing about the case.

PNP Director General Ronald dela Rosa said he believed Sta. Isabel was "the most

guilty" and therefore should be disqualified as a state witness.

"I'm very, very angry. I'm very, very offended. I would have melted away in humiliation right at this very moment because it happened within Camp Crame," Dela Rosa said in Malacañang. "If I have my way, I would kill these policemen-cum-kidnappers. But I cannot do it because that's illegal."

Jee, together with his Filipina maid, was taken by two unidentified men from their house in Pampanga last Oct. 18. The maid said the men told her that her boss was involved in illegal drug activities, but that they eventually released her.

Another police officer, Christopher Baldovino, admitted in his testimony that he was part of the surveillance operation that was conducted prior to the abduction of Jee.

The DOJ said the respondents failed to counter the evidence against them as well as the testimonies of the maid, the victim's wife Choi Kyung-jin, and the admission made by Villegas and Baldovino.

"The special complex crime of kidnapping for ransom with homicide is committed when the person was killed on the occasion, in connection, in the course of or subsequent to his detention, regardless of whether the killing was purposely sought or was merely an afterthought. In this case, it was respondent Sta. Isabel who killed the victim by strangulation," it said.

sees the investigation.

"We had the opportunity to personally inform her of her husband's death and cremation," Bolivar said. "She was thankful for the bureau's swift work."

"They wanted to grow old here, permanently stay here in the Philippines," he added.

Bolivar said a tearful Choi demanded answers and asked what they did to deserve being targeted. "I have no answers for her," he admitted.

Sta. Isabel allegedly led officers in taking Jee, 53, from his Angeles City home in the guise of a drug raid. The South Korean Embassy on Wednesday said that the Philippine foreign office had confirmed that Jee was strangled and his remains burned, but that the officers responsible still extorted ransom amounting to P5 million from his wife.

South Korea demands probe

The South Korean foreign ministry, in a statement, said the government had informed them of the death and that it had ordered a special prosecutor to investigate the case. It said it was shocked that the police were involved, and sought assurances that the nearly 1 million Koreans who visit the country regularly would be safe.

"We express our strong regrets for the incident committed by the police officers under the pretext of performing official duties," the South Korean Embassy in Manila told the Inquirer on Thursday. "We call for the complete and thorough investigation into this unfortunate case as soon as possible."

Lookout order

At the same time, the department also issued an immigration lookout bulletin order against Sta. Isabel, who resigned this week and is in the custody of the National Bureau of Investigation.

The bulletin order has a similar effect of a court-sanctioned travel ban. Individuals included in the order may still travel abroad, but only with the approval of the justice secretary.

In signing the order, the department noted the severity of the accusation and that "there is strong possibility that (he) may attempt to place himself beyond the reach of the legal processes... by leaving the country."

On Wednesday, Choi visited the NBI headquarters in Manila and spoke for over an hour with Director Roel Bolivar, commander of Task Force on Illegal Drugs, which over-

Body

Bolivar said they were investigating how the body was taken to Gream Funeral Services in Caloocan City. Gream is owned by Gerardo Santiago, chair of Barangay Bagbaguin 165 and a retired cop reportedly formerly assigned to the Northern Police District, where he worked with Sta. Isabel in the past.

Recovered at the site on Wednesday night were 14 golf clubs owned by Jee worth P100,000. It is believed the clubs were used to partly pay for his cremation.

Santiago is currently out of the country, visiting one of his children in Canada. —WITH REPORTS FROM TARRA QUISMUNDO, JHESSET O. ENANO, MARLON RAMOS AND JEROME ANING INQ

20 January 2017



Page: 1

Joma sees peace deal by 2020

Gov't panel confident joint ceasefire may be sealed in 3rd round of talks

By **ROCKY NAZARENO**

ROME, Italy – Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founding chairman and National

Democratic Front (NDF) senior political consultant Jose Maria (Joma) Sison believes that a comprehensive agreement that would end hostilities between the government and the leftist group

could be reached “as early as 2020.”

Likewise, the Philippines government (GRP) peace panel, led by Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III, expressed optimism that a joint ceasefire agree-

ment will be finally approved in the third round of talks with the local communist group.

“I am one with President Duterte’s optimism that in this round of talks,

we are able to finalize and approve the joint ceasefire agreement. Toward this agenda, the GRP panel has come prepared to exchange and discuss our drafts on said agreements.” ▶6

said Bello, the GRP panel chairman. Before leaving for the third round of talks, Bello said the government was looking forward to the signing of a peace agreement this year.

Speaking at yesterday's opening of the third round of talks between the GRP and the NDF, Sison expressed his confidence that both sides will be able to sign agreements on socio-economic affairs, and political and constitutional reforms that would "lay the full basis of the Comprehensive Agreement on the End of Hostilities and Disposition of Forces as early as 2020-2021."

"The advantage of having the CASER (Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms) and CAPCR (Comprehensive Agreement on Political and Constitutional Reforms) signed and approved by both principals within the first two years of the Duterte government is that these agreements shall be implemented for at least two years before the end of said government," Sison said.

He added that "the prospect is in

sight that within six months, the CASER shall already be ready for signing."

The CASER, said to be the backbone of the talks, tackles contentious issues related to genuine land reform, national industrialization, and the expansion of social services.

Concerning the signing of a CAPCR, Sison pointed out that the NDF was "willing to maintain its alliance with the GRP and Duterte administration by cooperating in the founding of the Federal Republic of the Philippines, creating a parliamentary system, and making a new Constitution that upholds, defends and promotes national independence, democracy, economic development, social justice, cultural progress, independent foreign policy and international solidarity with peoples and all countries for peace and development."

"In various ways, President Duterte can prove in real and concrete terms that he is truly a patriotic and progressive President, and fights against the imperialists and oligarchs for the benefit of the people," he said.

As it is, the NDF is asking for the release of nearly 400 more female, sickly, and elderly comrades who are in jail.

For the government peace panel, part of its preparation for the third round of talks focused on the immediate release of imprisoned communist insurgents once a bilateral ceasefire accord is signed here.

But the NDF has raised new issues that could derail such a plan.

"We clearly state today that the release of the political prisoners should not be seen as a mere confidence-building measure or a gift to the NDF. It is an obligation of the GRP under CARHRHIL (Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Laws)," said NDF peace panel chairman Fidel Agcaoili.

Agcaoili argued that the political prisoners "should not be treated as trump cards to extract concessions from the NDF."

"Such conduct is bound to further erode mutual trust and confidence," he said.

Both Sison and Agcaoili also expressed concern over violations of the unilateral ceasefire with the continued



While Sison's statement was welcomed in this third round of talks to end 47 years of armed conflict between the government and the insurgents, there was scant reference in his speech about the possibility of reaching an agreement on a joint ceasefire by the end of this week-long negotiations here.

Sison only said that he was satisfied by the exchange of drafts by the two sides on the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) which will be tasked with overseeing the implementation of the bilateral ceasefire.

The GRP panel, on the other hand, has reportedly been given specific marching orders by President Duterte to forge a deal for a more permanent, bilateral ceasefire here as a pre-condition for the release of more political prisoners, which started last August with his order to free 22 NDF consultants.

Earlier reports said Duterte is willing to immediately order the release of more political prisoners once he sees a copy of a formal agreement on the implementation of a joint ceasefire – a deal which has never before been struck between the two sides in decades of negotiations under five previous Presidents.

implementation of Oplan Bayanihan and Oplan Kapayapaan by the military in the countryside, as well as the government's anti-illegal drugs campaign Oplan Tokhang and Double Barrel.

Meanwhile, Foreign Affairs Secretary Perfecto Yasay Jr. attended the opening ceremony, but said he was in the country for bilateral talks with his Italian counterpart.

Yasay said he had the opportunity of fulfilling two of the most important items in his bucket list when he came to Rome.

He acknowledged meeting Sison, who he had looked up to as a student at the Central Philippines University in Iloilo, as one of such bucket list items. The other in his bucket list is his personal audience with Pope Francis Wednesday, together with Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza.

Norwegian Ambassador to the Philippines Eric Forner and Royal Norwegian government chief mediator Ambassador Elizabeth Slattum also graced the opening ceremonies, which was also attended by over a dozen congressmen who came to observe the peace negotiations.

70 January 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 16

DND chief, AFP top brass touch base in remote Tawi-Tawi town

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and high-ranking officials from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Wednesday visited the island municipality of Sibutu – the county's southwestern most island in the province of Tawi-Tawi – to check on troops and enlist the support of the community in the government's campaign against terrorism, kidnapping, piracy, and illegal drugs.

Lorenzana was accompanied by AFP Chief of Staff General Eduardo Año and Army chief Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda, Navy chief Vice Admiral Ronald Joseph Mercado, Air Force chief Lt. Gen. Edgar Fallorina, and 11 generals

and flag officers, among others.

After a briefing, Lorenzana hosted a dialogue with municipal and barangay officials led by Sibutu Mayor Alshefa Pajiji, barangay Captains, and military commanders in Tawi-tawi.

Lorenzana underscored the importance of local leaders' cooperation to ensure the wellbeing of the nation.

Pajiji, meanwhile, lamented the incidence of kidnappings around the island has adversely affected his municipality.

Pajiji assured the military leadership of his support and that of his constituents to help in the campaign to end the criminal activities of the Abu Sayyaf, among other concerns.

Año assured the mayor of the AFP's focused and unrelenting campaign

against the bandits.

He, however, stressed that the Abu Sayyaf can only thrive in places where they can find refuge or support.

Hence the people of Sibutu can help a lot by denying the ASGs sanctuary and logistics.

"The people should be actively involved in monitoring the arrival of strangers or the occurrence of criminal activities in the island. The residents should organize themselves to be active partners of government in providing security, livelihood, and development opportunities," Año said.

Calbi Nami, the President of the Association of Barangay Captains, for his part, sought the assistance of government for solar lights to illuminate their streets and communities to uplift

the lives of some 30,000 residents of the Municipality.

Año mentioned that AFP partner-stakeholders have, in the past, successfully embarked on similar solar lighting projects.

He said his commanders can call on the said groups anew to discuss the possibility of engaging on another project for Sibutu thru the Joint Task Force Tawi-Tawi under the command of Brigadier General Custodio Parcon, Jr.

After the dialogue, Pajiji profusely thanked Lorenzana and his entourage for reaching out to them.

"It's been many years since this municipality was ever visited by a high government official, much less by a Secretary of National Defense," Pajiji said.

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45-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

January 2017



Page: 4

2 Pinoys rescued from Abus

ZAMBOANGA CITY –

Government troops rescued two Filipino hostages of the Abu Sayyaf yesterday morning in Indanan, Sulu, according to

By ROEL PAREÑO

the military.

The Joint Task Force Sulu (JTFS) sent a report to the Armed Forces Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) and identified the freed hostages as Dolcesimo Almires and Esteban Janamjam.

The victims were rescued by elements of the JTFS led by Lt. Col. Arnel Baccay of Air Intelligence Service Group and Joint Intelligence Task Force Sulu led by Lt. Col. Yusop Hassan at about 9:15 a.m. in Barangay Tagbak, Indanan.

The two hostages were immediately brought to the JTFS headquarters at Camp Teodulfo Bautista, Barangay Busbus in Jolo, Sulu.

The military said based on the debriefing, the victims disclosed that they were abducted on Oct. 25, 2016 while on board their boats off Pangutaran, Sulu and were held by the Abu Sayyaf group led by sub-leader Jaber Susukan in Barangay Kumapid, Talipao town.

The victims disclosed that they were escorted by two Abu Sayyaf members and were on their way to another area in Parang, Sulu yesterday when they were intercepted and rescued by the troops.

Their Abu Sayyaf escorts reportedly escaped after sensing the presence of the government forces.

January 2017



Page: 3

2 more Abu hostages freed

By Mario J. Mallari

Two more Abu Sayyaf hostages were released by their captors in Sulu province yesterday morning.

Reports said that Dolcesimo Almires and Esteban Janmjam were recovered by elements of the military's Joint Task Force-Sulu along Barangay Tagbak in Indanan

town at around 9:15 a.m.

The two were abducted by the Abu Sayyaf last October 25, 2016 along the high seas of Pangutaran, Sulu.

During initial debriefing, the two said that they were kept by the Abu Sayyaf band of Jaber Susukan in Barangay Lumapid, Talipao also in Sulu.

They said that they were released and told by their captors to go to an area in Parang, Sulu.

The two were subsequently recovered by elements of the JTF-Sulu, led by Lt. Col. Arnel Baccay.

The victims were subsequently brought to Kampo Heneral Teodulfo Bautista in Busbus, Jolo for debriefing and medical check up.

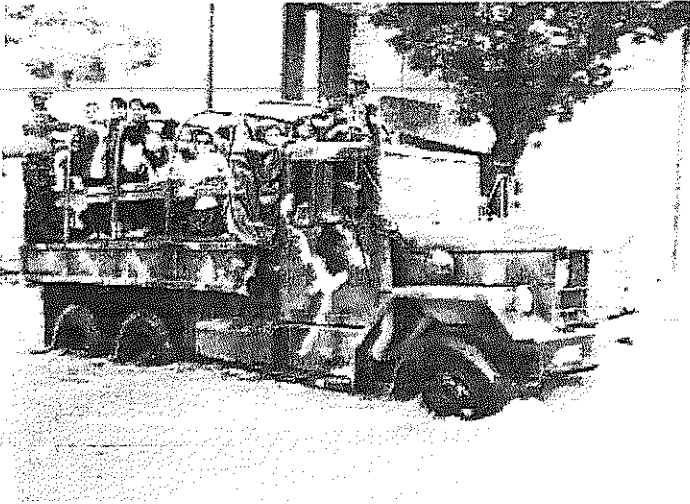
Earlier, the Abu Sayyaf also freed a South Korean and his Filipino companion – both crew members of a commercial vessel sea jacked along the high seas of southern Philippines.

Reports said that P25 million in ransom was paid to the Abu Sayyaf for the release of the two sea farers, who were turned over to the Moro National Liberation Front.

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ALWAYS READY TO HELP | AFP 4th I.D. Continues its Ops in Cagayan De Oro

by Luf Claudio



Camp Aguinaldo — Armed Forces of the Philippines Spokesman Brigadier General Restituto Padilla gave an update on the hard efforts of the troops in the 4th Infantry Division, Philippine Army in line with the massive floods brought by the recent low-pressure area in Cagayan De Oro.

The troops were advised by the local government to 'retrograde' or diminish their hard efforts in the said area since the weather had already been better.

As of now, only 20 families are left in Camp Evangelista, and they are waiting for the advice on when they can go back to their respective homes



The current mode of operation in Eastern Mindanao area, according to Padilla is clean-up drive and a total of 1,000 personnel to assist.

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The total number of casualties is yet to be updated, but Padilla regretfully said that there are reported deaths despite warnings and advisories sent to the public since a lot of citizens do not have access to cell phone and radio.

"I can assure you the Armed Forces will always be ready to provide assistance in the event of any similar weather disturbance such as this." Padilla stated. – EPJA

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20 January 2017



Page: 7

'Terror groups may have sleeper cells in Phl'

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

With members of the Islamic State actively sowing terror in many areas around the world including Europe, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana did not discount the possibility that there are IS sleeper cells already operating in the country.

Lorenzana made the revelation when asked why President Duterte has been expressing serious concern on the IS and even openly discussed this before members of the diplomatic corps during the New Year reception or *vin d'honneur*.

"I think we should not understate it. They are all over the world. They are active in Europe so they might have cells here. It's the right attitude that we should not downplay it," the defense secretary said in a chance interview in Malacañang yesterday.

During his speech yesterday after the oath-taking of po-

lice generals at the Rizal Hall in Malacañang, Duterte was unable to hide his growing concern over how the tentacles of the IS group have reached the country.

He noted that the Abu Sayyaf, which has been tagged in many kidnap-for-ransom activities in Mindanao, has pledged allegiance to the IS.

"*May pumasok na sa Mindanao* (They have entered Mindanao), the Abu Sayyaf has pledged allegiance to ISIS, *nagbibidahan sila* (they are trying to prove) who is more brutal," Duterte said in his speech.

He also revealed that there are tons of shabu being peddled in Mindanao. Some groups, including the dreaded Maute group, have expanded their operations to Leyte.

He lamented many are victimized or "enslaved" by their addiction to drugs.

– Jaime Laude

January 2017



Page: 7

US commander warns of more IS attacks in Asia-Pacific

NEW DELHI – A top US military commander warned Wednesday that the Asia-Pacific region is at risk of attacks by Islamic State (IS) group fighters returning to their home countries.

As the group loses territory in the Middle East, radicalized fighters from Bangladesh, Indonesia and elsewhere are likely to target their native countries, Commander of the US Pacific Command Admiral Harry Harris said.

"It's not a theory. It's real. In the past year alone, ISIL has made its murderous intentions clear in places like Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and the United States," he said at an geo-political conference in New Delhi.

The warning follows a similar warning from a Jakarta-based think tank in October, which said the main danger lies in the strife-torn southern Philippines where a handful of Islamic extremist groups have sworn allegiance to IS.

Southeast Asia – parts of which have long struggled with Islamic militancy – suffered its first IS attack in January last year when extremists

launched a deadly suicide bombing and gun assault in Jakarta, leaving four attackers and four civilians dead.

IS-linked militants also killed 20 hostages in a restaurant in Bangladesh last year in one of the deadliest such incidents in the country.

Harris said India has so far successfully thwarted any such attacks at home but called for a concerted effort by the global community to deal with the threat in the region.

Nearly 60 Indians have joined the IS group since 2014, according to an official count.

Harris, who was speaking at India's annual "Raisina Dialogue" conference attended by officials from 65 countries, also touched on the ongoing South China Sea feud, saying the US is ready to confront China on the issue of free movement in the resource-rich area.

China claims most of the South China Sea despite competing claims from the Philippines and other Asian countries.

Beijing has fuelled regional tensions by turning tiny, ecologically fragile reefs and islets in the strategically vital waterway into artificial islands hosting military facilities. – AFP

January 2017



Page: 9

Navy warfare unit secures Miss U event in Batangas

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

Commandos of the Naval Special Operations Group (NAVSOG), the elite special warfare unit of the Navy, were deployed to secure the Miss Universe candidates and other participants during their trip to a beach resort in Batangas yesterday.

The NAVSOG members escorted the beauty queens that also included Miss Universe 2015 Pia Wurtzbach during their visit to Navy headquarters in Manila and also provided security to the yacht that the contestants boarded on their way to the Pico de Loro Beach and Country Club in Nasugbu, Batangas.

Navy officials said the security and accommodation it gave the candidates of the Miss Universe 2016 pageant were "a manifestation of the support and commitment to the tourism initiatives of the national government that promote positive image of the country and help boost its economy."

The beauty queens assembled at the Navy headquarters along Roxas Blvd. before they boarded the yacht *M/Y Happy Life* that was docked at the Commodore Divino Pier.

Officers, enlisted personnel and civilian employees were given a brief opportunity to see the beauty queens from various parts of the world in person.

Navy chief Vice Admiral Ronald Joseph Mercado led naval personnel in welcoming the Miss Universe candidates and pageant organizers, who were accorded military honors upon their arrival.

The Navy said sailors also lined the edges of the pier, demonstrating the traditional "manning the rail," a method of saluting or rendering honor as the beauty queens passed to board the yacht owned by former Ilocos Sur governor Chavit Singson.

Wurtzbach and Singson were joined by 16 candidates

during the visit to Batangas, which is part of the journey of the delegates across the country in the lead-up to the pageant night at the Mall of Asia Arena on Jan. 30.

The group arrived at Pico Sands Hotel around 3 p.m., more than two hours after they departed Navy headquarters aboard Singson's yacht.

Singson is a major sponsor in the country's hosting of the 65th Miss Universe pageant.

The delegates had lunch and held a private photoshoot at the resort prior to a beach program late afternoon yesterday.

Handcrafted neckpieces, made out of upcycled Coca-Cola pull tabs by the Artisan Women of Tondo, were presented to the candidates during the program.

The group was among the women economic empowerment programs supported by Coca-Cola Philippines under the 5by20 global initiative.

Coca-Cola Philippines vice president for public affairs and communications Adel Tamano said the event was a welcome opportunity for the local artisans to showcase their products.

In Davao City, despite the heavy rains that welcomed another batch of Miss Universe, ethnic dancers and music greeted the candidates at around 1:30 p.m. at the international airport.

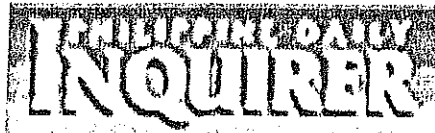
The candidates traveled by bus to the Eden Mountain Resort where they were treated to a sumptuous lunch.

After the required pictorials at the resort, the candidates were then brought to SM Lanang Premiere where they held a fashion show wearing gowns made by local designers.

The Davao ancillary event of the Miss Universe pageant has Phoenix Petroleum Inc. as main sponsor.

– With Janvic Mateo, Edith Regalado

26 January 2017



Page: AB

Gov't, NDF resume peace talks

By **Karlos Manlupig**
@kmanlupigINQ

ROME—The government and the National Democratic Front (NDF) peace panels appear to have different expectations of the third round of negotiations but both parties said they were determined to make it successful.

Government chief negotiator and Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III said both parties wished to see a significant progress in the proposed bilateral ceasefire agreement, which will replace the present 5-month unilateral ceasefire declarations.

"Hopefully we can have a positive development on the discussion on the joint ceasefire agreement and then a consensus on the socio-economic reforms and there will be initial discussion on political and constitutional reforms," Bello said on Wednesday evening.

The deadline for the craft-

ing of the bilateral ceasefire agreement is on Oct. 26 yet but the two parties have failed to resolve the issues on the release of political prisoners, and alleged ceasefire violations on the ground.

The government earlier promised that more releases will be made once the NDF agree to sign a bilateral ceasefire agreement.

"Bebot (Bello) is unfair. He should not tie the ceasefire with the releases," NDF chief negotiator Fidel Agcaoili previously said.

Agcaoili said during the first round of talks in August that the government asked the NDF to extend its one-week unilateral ceasefire.

"They said it would be an exchange. The NDF will extend its ceasefire and the government will release political prisoners. So we took it. But since August no political prisoners were released," Agcaoili said on Wednesday. —WITH A RE-

PORT FROM AP

70 January 2017

Malaya
The National Newspaper

Page: B2

Reds say joint ceasefire hopes slim

BY VICTOR REYES

THE National Democratic Front of the Philippines said the chance of having a joint ceasefire with the Duterte administration is already slim due to various issues, including the continued detention of more than 400 political prisoners and the “reckless” war on drugs.

NDFP chief negotiator Fidel Agcaoili issued the statement Wednesday, on the eve of the third round of the formal peace negotiations in Rome. The joint ceasefire is among the issues due to be discussed in the talks.

Agcaoili said the NDFP has already raised its protest to the government about the continuing violations of the previously-signed Comprehensive Agreement on Respect of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) and the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG).

“These violations place into serious question the sincerity of the GRP in its peace negotiations with the NDFP. For if previously signed agreements are not honored, what guaran-

tees does the NDFP have that future agreements would not be similarly violated by the GRP?” he asked.

Agcaoili said the issues he raised are the “grave violations of the CARHRIHL and JASIG and the broken promises on the release of political prisoners have made the extension of the NDFP’s unilateral ceasefire untenable.”

“The prospect for forging a bilateral ceasefire agreement has grown dim,” he said.

He noted the arrest and conviction of JASIG-protected NDFP consultants Eduardo Sarmiento, Emeterio Antalan and Leopoldo Caloza over “trumped-up charges.”

He said government then suggested that the three withdraw their appeals for the granting of presidential pardon.

“As a result, their conviction became final. But until now, they have not been pardoned and continue to languish in prison. This is not only a violation of CARHRIHL and JASIG but also a serious betrayal of trust,” he said.

Agcaoili said several NDFP consultants have been subjected to surveillance and harassment by “motorcycle riding

men. He said JASIG provides NDFP consultants protection from such actions and are even allowed to carry firearms for their security.

“Despite a protest filed with the GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) panel, the surveillance and harassment continued, obliging the consultants to take counter measures,” he said.

Agcaoili said the NDFP has also demanded justice for NDFP and JASIG-protected personalities – enforced disappearance victims Leo Velasco; Prudencio Calubid, his wife and relatives; Rogelio Calubad and his son; Nestor Entice and his wife; Leopoldo Ancheta; and Philip Limjoco; and murder victim Sotero Llamas.

He said soldiers have continued their operations in areas they suspect as under the control, or are influenced or sympathetic to the communist movement on the pretext of peace and development projects.

“They occupy schools, health and day care centers, barangay halls, public plazas, and even bus stops and private residences in more than 43 provinces and 146 municipalities all over

the country. They conduct illegal searches and interrogations to identify relatives of NPA members as well as supporters and sympathizers of the revolutionary movement to terrorize the people. They impose food blockades and restrictions on the movement of residents, disrupting their economic activities,” he said.

Government and the NDFP separately declared unilateral truce days before the start of the first round of talks in August last year. The two sides are working on a more permanent one.

Agcaoili also cited the government’s war on illegal drugs which he said has drawn concerns from “reputable human rights and lawyers’ organizations.”

The NDFP chief negotiator said the war on drugs has resulted in the killing of innocent people “due to brutal, reckless and indiscriminate methods employed by the police in its anti-drug operations.”

The other issues Agcaoili raised are the non-indemnification of human rights violations during the martial law years, the hero’s burial accorded to strongman Ferdinand Marcos.

January 2017

The Manila Times

Page: A 4

The Sulu Sea: Vast, beautiful, dangerous

THE following has been going on in the Sulu Sea in the past few months. First, a multiple number of sea-jackings for kidnapping for ransom purposes of international ships passing international waters. And the latest, the abduction and killing at sea of eight fishermen in the area. The very latest is the sudden freedom given to an Indonesian ship captain and a Filipino crewman after having been kidnapped months ago. Actually, "sudden" would not be the correct term. They were freed because ransom was obviously paid after time-consuming negotiations. The Philippine government disclaims having paid ransom or ~~knowing anything about ransom~~ being paid.



AMBIENT VOICES

MA. ISABEL ONGPIN

Meanwhile, the Philippine Coast Guard and the PNP Maritime Group, the primary government agencies tasked to conduct maritime law enforcement operations, have been citing lack of capacity to perform these mandates. The Philippine Navy, on the other hand, has been deputized to conduct maritime law enforcement operations in these areas, over and above its traditional defensive and ~~assist said agencies. Recent events~~

have shown that efforts in countering this scourge at sea have been wanting, to say the least. In this regard, the Philippine government has undertaken initiatives that led to a trilateral arrangement with our southern neighbors, Malaysia and Indonesia, to undertake coordinated and synergized efforts to address these common criminal and security concerns. While it could be an immediate solution, this could compromise our position on existing contentious bilateral issues in the medium to long term, such as boundary questions in some areas of the Southern Sulu Sea. So far, these patrol agreements are evidently not working too well as sea-jackings and kidnappings are still going on.

The Sulu Sea is vast, beautiful and dangerous, perhaps from prehistoric times. Typhoons do not ordinarily pass there but lawless elements consisting of pirates, kidnappers and slave traders have been present, organized and successful for a long time.

While the Abu Sayyaf and others of their ilk now claim ideological motives for their criminal activities, the truth is that from the history that we know, slave trading has always been the livelihood, occupation, rite of passage of sailors from the area. Today's activities are just the modern manifestation of an ancient occupation.

From the late 18th to the 19th centuries, slave trading was big **► OngpinA5**

business with international connections. Slaves ended up sold in Batavia which had a flourishing slave market and perhaps locally too. Many towns from the Visayas to Luzon have watchtowers on their coastlines dating from those times as their populations were victims of slave-raiding elements from Mindanao.

In modern times when slave trading is illegal and outlawed as well as obsolete, kidnapping for ransom is the new business plan.

The Coast Guard and PNP Maritime group need more boats but they also need to use more intelligence and improved tactics. If their ear is on the ground, they may just hear of plans for future raids and undertake preemptive actions and/or effective counter-action operations. People will always make slips of the tongue. Or, they should have agents to telegraph them. If this is not feasible, a study of history would be apropos. Traditional slave-raiding

routes should be reviewed along with the seasonal winds of the year which, when they converge into a favorable synergy (the amihan, or northeast wind for one), full alert should be de rigueur. In the past, with the use of sailing boats, these were essential conditions for sailing-towards raids. Now there are fully mechanized and faster boats that can take on the elements. But the coastlines are the same and their familiarity brings these raiders to keep to them, so traditional routes are still followed, if by faster boats and more high-powered arms these days. Northwestern and northeastern Mindanao, the western Zamboanga peninsula, the Southern Sulu Sea were traditional routes which are utilized until now.

Moreover, these lawless elements can no longer blissfully sail to the Visayas and Luzon without being interdicted because the seas are now full of other boats, communication is faster and better

defenses are at hand. They are now confined to the following areas: the Zamboanga Peninsula, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi from which to initiate raids and sea-jackings and then return to their safe havens. If a kidnapping/sea-jacking occurs, the raiders will immediately home in to their redoubts in these areas as their safe grounds. But if our maritime and security force vessels are on patrol, on guard and acting intelligently, they should be able to preempt these criminal acts at sea by denying them safe sanctuary or at least keep them on the run.

If this sounds easier said than done or too theoretical, let us be reminded that after the kidnapping raid at Dos Palmas in Palawan in May 2001, the Philippine Navy put up a task force group, Stingray, to secure tourist resorts and beaches in the Visayas, Mindanao and Palawan areas and prevent the re-occurrence of kidnappings and depredations by criminals and terrorists from the

16

sea. The task force, using intelligence, psychological operations such as parading the few gunboats at its disposal to be seen and noted, fast communication and Navy Seals as organic units of the group and on board at all times, effectively preempted any kidnappings or terrorism at sea during its existence. In addition, they stationed themselves at chokepoints to and from where the pirates would have to pass to initiate a raid or return to safe havens. Also, the Coast Watch South, a Philippine Navy unit then provided the task force with the needed technical and human intelligence requirements, in addition to those provided by other government intelligence units and offices. No more such raids occurred at the resorts and the pirates moved on to non-Philippine areas. So, it can be done, as the past has proven. Given these experiences and evident good practices in the past, it is now an

imperative for the government and all stakeholders to synergize and level up efforts to effectively and efficiently suppress and put an end to piracy, terrorism and other forms of criminality in Southern Philippines.

But one more imperative has to be implemented as well to succeed in this endeavor—the cooperation of local government officials. Pirates, criminals and terrorists prepare on land and come back to land in the course of their nefarious activities. If local government officials stop tolerating these activities and report them to the proper authorities, half of the battle would be won. It is a fundamental fact that criminality and terrorism conducted at sea all begin and end on land. Thus, while a lot of effective and efficient preparations and counter-measures can and should be done at sea, the equally critical efforts should be undertaken on land.

The present situation of con-

tinuous mayhem has to be outmaneuvered. It will never be easy as we are dealing with pirates who know the sea from racial memory, past and present experience and an enduring livelihood of raids, kidnappings and ransoms.

Furthermore, they are organized and specialized. Those who kidnap turn the victims over to those who transport them elsewhere to be kept hostage by others in turn, while another group conducts the ransom negotiations. It is important to know what and who one is dealing with as in "know your enemy" and learn from the past. Ideally, and in the long run, of course, a change of livelihood would have to be introduced through full, sustainable and inclusive development of these traditional pirate areas.

I am echoing the opinion of a resource person who has had the experience of present conditions in the Sulu Sea.

January 2017



Page: 6

EDITORIAL

Have Reds offered anything?

The communist movement that always equates its pursuits as being for the interest of the “people” is now seeking an end to the ceasefire that the National Democratic Front (NDF) unilaterally imposed but only after being continuously badgered by Rody.

Rody had long declared his own ceasefire before the communists acceded to answer in return.

The NDF rationalized its plan to end the ceasefire on Rody's unmet promises to the insurgents amid the ongoing peace negotiations.

“The strong sentiment of the NDF forces on the ground and the masses in many parts of the country is for the withdrawal of the NDF unilateral ceasefire, because of broken promises on the release of political prisoners and violations of the ceasefire by the government,” NDF peace panel chairman Fidel Agcaoili said.

The probable truth is that the claimed masses' support for the armed Reds are non-existent. If the masses are truly with the commies, it is because they fear retribution from these armed Reds should they go against the armed commies.

The local movement is led by long-exiled Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) chairman Jose Ma. Sison. The CPP follows a hardline Maoist doctrine which was derived from the former Soviet Union's Red front ideology.

The concept it is espousing which is a socialist communal state has long been discredited.

The Chinese have opted for an open economy while maintaining its supposed communist political setup while the Soviet Union has broken and from which emerged the Russian republic.

The communist movement is still carrying an ideology that believes a social and cultural upheaval is needed through an armed revolution to allow workers and peasants, the proletarians, to have a predominant role in a new government, which remains a theory.

Communist movements around the world, however, revolved around a key powerful figure who exercises dictatorial powers and not a state ruled by proletarians.

The NDF is calling for the release of 434 political prisoners affiliated with the communist movement even before the signing of the peace agreement, which by the indication of the communist leaders may not come at all.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS – Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com – Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

The government is seeking a peace deal within 12 months but Agcaoili said the communists would need at least two more years to realize a series of economic and political reforms before even beginning “serious discussions” on a final peace pact.

Those economic and political reforms have yet to be agreed on and were the agenda in current negotiations in Rome.

The NDF, the CPP’s political arm, is now claiming a consensus has been reached to terminate its unilateral ceasefire.

Based on past negotiations with the rebel group, the release of the political prisoners did not help in reaching a peace deal but only benefited the strengthening of the CPP which was able to consolidate its forces after the release of some of its major officials.

Agcaoili said “the panel is also very aware that the people are tired of promises from politicians and the Manila government that are routinely broken.”

The real public, however is skeptical over the NDF’s demand since its interest appears more on the retrieval of its top cadres rather than forging a peace agreement.

Rody already had shown goodwill in negotiating for peace with the communists in surrendering some government posts to its allies and pardoned 18 CPP leaders who were convicted for murder and kidnapping.

Rody, however, is not ready to fall into what appears to be a trap laid out by the CPP in the current negotiations.

“My aces are in prison,” he said, referring to the jailed communists.

“If I release them, all my cards are lost. There would be nothing else to talk about,” he added.

Rody’s statement showed his awareness of the capability of the communist movement in terms of advancing its agenda.

The government’s time frame for the signing of a peace pact with the communists is an agreement by August which is impossible to meet considering the outlandish demands of the NDF.

The NDF, beyond grudgingly imposing a unilateral ceasefire after Rody complained that it has not complemented an earlier unilateral ceasefire of the government, had not shown a commitment to the peace process.

The government accommodating the NDF should have limitations while the claimed “masses” the NDF frequently refers to are waiting for the communist movement to show sincerity.

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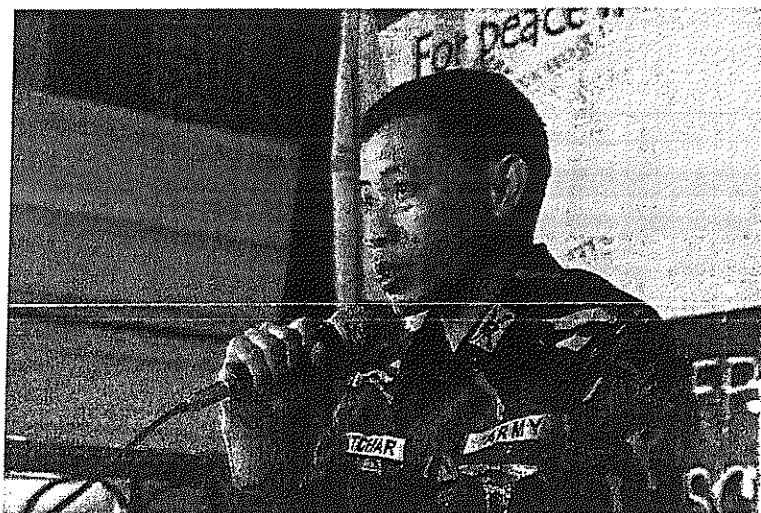
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ONLINE NEWS 20 JANUARY 2017

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Oplan Kapayapaan': NPA, MILF, MNLF tag as 'peace-inclined' groups

From the often pro-CPP online publication the Davao Today (Jan 19): 'Oplan Kapayapaan': NPA, MILF, MNLF tag as 'peace-inclined' groups



Capt. Rhyar Batchar says that the AFP's now is aimed at the "ISIS-inspired" armed groups such as the Abu Sayyaf Group, and the Maute group. On August last year, the army sent as many as 1,000 soldiers to Jolo, Sulu to fight the ASG. (Paulo C. Rizal/davaotoda.com)

A new security plan dubbed as "Oplan Kapayapaan" or the Development Support and Security Plan Kapayapaan (Peace) will focus on supporting government development efforts to address internal security threats, an Army spokesman here said.

"We are now focused in the support of nation building, support to law enforcement authorities in the fight against criminality and illegal drugs, civil military cooperation, peace building advocacy, and the application of military forces against terrorists and other armed threat groups," said Capt. Rhyar Batchar in a press briefing on Wednesday, Jan. 18.

Under the new security plan, the armed-wing of the Communist Party which is the New People's Army, the Moro National Liberation Front, and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front are now referred to as "peace inclined groups" as all three are currently in talks with the government.

"Oplan Kapayapaan" will eventually replace the Internal Peace and Security Plan Bayanihan or known as "Oplan Bayanihan."

Batchar pointed out that AFP's now is aimed at the "ISIS-inspired" armed groups such as the Abu Sayyaf Group, and the Maute group. On August last year, the army sent as many as 1,000 soldiers to Jolo, Sulu to fight the ASG.

Read: [Army sends elite troops to Sulu to fight ASG](#)

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In a separate interview, Joint Task Force Haribon commander Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay said they will be supporting the government's developmental efforts by using their capabilities to bring services to far flung areas.

Gapay also downplayed criticism against IPSP Bayanihan, saying that these accusations of human rights violations were "mere propaganda."

"The presence of the army in far flung areas and communities are for peace and development. These areas are not frequented, others have not even seen their barangay captains and other government agencies," Gapay said.

"Being with pervasive development, we bring these agencies with us and provide them security. It's not militarization, it just so happens that there are security threats that's why our partner agencies cannot reach them," he added.

But Pastor Jurie Jaime, of Exodus for Justice and Peace, who has facilitated dialogues for the release of prisoners expressed doubts over the sincerity of the Army's new security plan.

"The Oplan Bayanihan as a counterinsurgency plan was patterned after the United States Counter Insurgency Guide. If Kapayapaan was only an 'enhanced' version, then it cannot give us true peace," Jaime told DavaoToday in a phone interview.

Jaime maintained that human rights violations committed under the "Oplan Bayanihan" were real and were documented by a voluminous dossier.

Read related story: [City Council tells AFP to leave schools, barangay halls](#)

"The documents gathered during fact finding missions cannot be called as simple propaganda. There have been documented numbers of political deaths, especially that of activists and human rights defenders who struggled against mining, corruption, and neoliberal policies in general," he pointed out.

"That is not counting incidents of encampment in schools and in barangay halls. Those are violations of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Respect for Human Rights and the International Humanitarian law. Those violations cannot be just propaganda because they were well documented," Jaime said.

<http://davaotoday.com/main/politics/oplan-kapayapaan-npe-mili-mhlf-tao-as-peace-inclined-groups/>

www.inquirer.net

Gov't, rebels smile through feuds in Rome peace talks

By: Karlos Manlupig - Correspondent / @kmanlupigINQ

Inquirer: Mindanao / 08:39 PM January 19, 2017



Communist Party of the Philippines founder Jose Maria Sison (right) and Foreign Affairs Secretary Perfecto Yasay Jr. (left) are seen having a coffee break during the third round of peace talks between the Philippine government and the communist rebels in Rome, Italy, on Jan 19, 2017. (Photo contributed by Atty. Edre Olalia, counsel of the communist negotiator National Democratic Front of the Philippines)

ROME — The third round of talks between the Philippine government and communist rebels opened here Thursday (Manila Time, Jan. 19) and despite the challenges and unresolved issues, the atmosphere remained warm and full of optimism.

The weight of the issues did not stop government peace panel chair and Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III from exchanging jokes with National Democratic Front chief negotiator Fidel Agcaoili — especially on the issue of the release of political prisoners.

"Ka Fidel is looking at me," Bello said in jest.

"Watching you," Agcaoili quickly replied, which elicited laughter from those attending the opening ceremony.

The government delegation has 77 members, including 10 lawmakers, while the NDF's was composed of 58 members.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Perfecto Yasay Jr. was also present at the opening ceremony, which NDF chief political consultant Jose Maria Sison recognized as a manifestation of the seriousness of President Rodrigo Duterte in the peace process.

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Bello admitted that it was a leap of faith to resume the negotiations "which to many, after almost three decades of peace talks, seem to be intractable and more so, immovable to others."

"Against this pessimism, however, we decided to come forward and tried anew the talk for peace. Resuming the talks we did, with only the steady guiding hands of President Duterte for us to hold on as we venture on the difficult tasks of sensing each other and understanding each other's fears and dilemma. Doubly difficult were the challenges of unlearning war in order to wage peace," Bello said.

Bello expressed his confidence in the capacity of both parties to discuss and make progress in the remaining substantive agenda – including socio-economic reforms, political and constitutional reforms, and of ending hostilities and disposition of forces.

"I am also hopeful we can meaningfully discuss the issues that persistently confront our negotiating table, such as prisoner release; the implementation of the reconstructed JASIG list; the full operationalization of the Joint Monitoring Committee of CARHRIHL; and the amnesty program," Bello said.

He added that the government, through Duterte's guidance, has continued nurturing high hopes for the forging of a bilateral ceasefire agreement in this round of talks.

"Likewise, I am one with President Duterte's optimism that in this round of talks, we are able to finalize and approve the joint ceasefire agreement. Towards these agenda, the GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) panel has come prepared to exchange and discuss our drafts on said agreements," Bello said.

But Agcaoili responded that the release of 392 political prisoners "should not be seen as a mere confidence-building measure" especially in achieving a bilateral ceasefire agreement.

"It is an obligation of the GRP under CARHRIHL. Neither should the political prisoners be treated as trump cards to extract concessions from the NDFP," Agcaoili said.

"We reiterate the determination of our panel to do everything necessary to make these negotiations a success. We owe it to the people," Agcaoili said.

Bello and Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza also manifested the same level of confidence in the talks.

Dureza also extended the special Papal blessing for peace in the country. **SFM**

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PH expresses hope as 3rd round of peace talks between GRP and NDF resume in Rome

By: Agence France-Presse

January 19, 2017 8:20 PM



The government's chief negotiator Silvestre Bello III (L) engages in peace talks with Prof. Jose Maria Sison, chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, in Oslo, Norway, in the August 2016 file photo. (Credit: ndfp.org)

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The online news portal of TV5

MANILA, Philippines - The Philippines expressed hope Thursday of securing a permanent ceasefire deal with communist rebels waging one of Asia's longest insurgencies, as peace talks resumed in Italy.

The communists have been waging a "national democratic revolution" since 1968 to overthrow a capitalist system that has created one of Asia's biggest rich-poor divides and claimed 30,000 lives, according to the military.

A new round of negotiations began in Rome on Thursday, with the government's chief negotiator Silvestre Bello III saying longstanding contentious issues could be "hurdled".

"I am one with President (Rodrigo) Duterte's optimism that in this round of talks, we are able to finalize and approve the joint ceasefire agreement," Bello said at the opening of the talks.

"There are reasons to hope we can hurdle the task."

Duterte, 71, said it was his "dream" to secure a lasting peace deal within his six-year term.

After assuming office in June last year, the self-styled socialist launched the peace process and appointed three communists to his cabinet.

Both sides agreed to a temporary ceasefire during talks in Oslo, Norway last August.

The government said then it was aiming for a final peace deal within 12 months.

However, the communists said this week they would need at least two more years after negotiators agreed on a series of economic and political reforms before even beginning "serious discussions" on a final peace pact.

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24

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On Wednesday, the communists' chief negotiator Fidel Agcaoili reiterated the rebels' demand that nearly 400 jailed guerillas be released.

Duterte last year released 18 top leaders to kickstart the peace process but had refused to free the rest, calling them his "aces" in a "poker game".

"The broken promises on the release of political prisoners have made the extension of the (communist) unilateral ceasefire untenable," Agcaoili said.

In the week-long talks in Rome, negotiators will discuss some of the toughest and most complicated issues involving political, economic and constitutional reforms at the heart of the communists' grievances.

Despite the obstacles, the communists understand their best chance for securing most of their goals is during the presidency of Duterte, who has pivoted his nation's foreign policy away from the United States towards China.

The following are the opening statements of both panels in their respective websites:

- Silvestre Bello III for the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process:

<https://peace.gov.ph/2017/01/opening-statement-grp-panel-chair-silvestre-bello-iii-3rd-round-talks-grp-ndf-rome-italy/>

- Prof. Jose Maria Sison for the National Democratic Front of the Philippines:

<https://www.ndfp.org/statement-opening-ceremonies-third-round-talks-rome/>

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