

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



TEAM ARMY

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

15 January 2018

Monday

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

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BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | JANUARY 15, 2018 | MONDAY

NORTHEAST MONSOON AFFECTING NORTHERN AND CENTRAL LUZON
TAIL END OF A COLD FRONT AFFECTING EASTERN SECTION OF SOUTHERN LUZON
EASTERLIES AFFECTING EASTERN SECTION OF MINDANAO
AS OF 8:00 AM, JANUARY 14, 2018

LAOAG CITY 20 - 29 °C	TUGUEGARAO CITY 19 - 25 °C	SUNRISE 6:25 AM	SUNSET 5:46 PM
SBMA/CLARK 22 - 30 °C	BAGUIO CITY 15 - 21 °C	MOONRISE	MOONSET
METRO MANILA 23 - 29 °C	TAGAYTAY CITY 19 - 26 °C	4:43 AM	4:21 PM
	LEGAZPI CITY 24 - 30 °C	LAST QUARTER	NEW MOON
		8:22 AM	10:17 AM
		LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
		MANILA SOUTH HARBOR	
		4:50 AM	8:58 PM
		0.13 Meter	1.02 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

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

METRO MANILA 23 - 29 °C	TAGAYTAY 24 - 30 °C	TACLOBAN 24 - 28 °C	TACLOBAN 24 - 29 °C
TUGUEGARAO 20 - 27 °C	LEGAZPI 25 - 30 °C	GAGAYAN DE ORO 23 - 29 °C	GAGAYAN DE ORO 23 - 29 °C
LAOAG 20 - 29 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA 25 - 32 °C	METRO DAVAO 25 - 31 °C	METRO DAVAO 25 - 31 °C
BAGUIO 14 - 22 °C	ILDILQ/BACOLOD 26 - 30 °C	ZAMBOANGA 24 - 32 °C	ZAMBOANGA 24 - 32 °C
SBMA/CLARK 23 - 30 °C	METRO CEBU 25 - 30 °C		

MONDAY - FRIDAY
11AM & 5PM

SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!

WEEKDAYS
6AM, 6:30 PM & 9PM
WEEKENDS
6AM

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CARPIO: IT'S DUMB TO GIVE CHINA ACCESS TO PH RISE

SC justice says Manila should stop Beijing's marine research until it honors the int'l court ruling on the South China Sea.

By Marlon Ramos
@MRamosINQ

It would be “dumb” of the Philippines to allow China to explore Philippine Rise despite Beijing's disrespect for a UN-backed arbitral court ruling recognizing Manila's sovereign rights in the West Philippine Sea, Supreme Court Senior Associate Justice Anto-

nio Carpio said on Sunday.

Carpio, the leading figure in the Philippines' fight to nullify China's claim to almost all of the South China Sea, said the Duterte administration should stop Beijing from conducting marine scientific research in Philippine Rise until it accepted the July 2016 decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague.

The ruling invalidated China's sweeping claim and declared Beijing had violated Manila's sovereign right to fish and explore for resources in the West Philippine Sea, waters within the Philippines' 370-kilometer exclusive economic zone in the South China Sea.

China, which did not take part in the arbitration, ignored the ruling and went on to build artificial islands on

reefs in the Spratly archipelago, topping some of them with runways and military installations.

President Duterte, however, has refused to assert the Philippine legal victory, preferring loans, investment and development assistance from China.

The ruling would benefit other claimants to territory in the South China Sea that would also challenge Chi-

na's excessive claim.

Besides the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam and Taiwan also have claims in the South China Sea, through which \$5 trillion in global trade passes every year.

“The refusal of China to comply with the arbitral award of the [Hague tribunal] is not a ‘normal circumstance’ and thus the Philip-

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ines should refuse China's request for [marine scientific research] in Benham Rise," Carpio said in an e-mail to the Inquirer, referring to Philippine Rise by its old name.

Mr. Duterte issued Executive Order No. 25 in May last year changing the name of Benham Rise to Philippine Rise.

The rise is a 13-million-hectare underwater plateau in the Philippine Sea, 250 kilometers east of Isabela province, believed to be rich in resources.

The United Nations officially recognized the rise as part of the Philippine continental shelf in 2012, giving the country sovereign rights to explore and exploit resources on the submerged plateau.

The rise became the subject of controversy early in March last year after Mr. Duterte said he had allowed Chinese survey vessels to go there as part of an agreement.

Then acting Foreign Secretary Enrique Manalo said he was unaware of any such statement made by Mr. Duterte.

It was unclear at the time whether Mr. Duterte knew where the rise was. He never explained his statement.

Two months later, he issued the order renaming the area Philippine Rise.

China research allowed

Last week, Magdalo Republic Secretary Alejano said the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) had allowed a research vessel operated by the Institute of Oceanology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences to conduct research in Philippine Rise despite China's militarization of its artificial islands in the South China Sea.

Alejano said the DFA had rejected a similar request for a research permit from a French nonprofit, Tara Expeditions Foundation.

Foreign Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano defended the DFA's decision, saying the law allowed foreign research in Philippine territory so long as a Filipino scientist is aboard the research vessel and the findings of the study are shared internationally.

But Carpio said "the Philippines would be dumb to grant

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China's request."

"If a bully has squatted on your front yard and requests to look at your backyard, would you grant the request of the bully?" he said.

China has "squatted on the West Philippine Sea and refuses to leave despite the ruling of the [international arbitral] tribunal," he added.

Carpio said countries that had ratified the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos) were duty-bound to enforce and respect the contents of the international law in its entirety.

"By refusing to accept the award of the ... arbitral tribunal pursuant to the dispute settlement provisions of Unclos, China is not accepting its obligation under Unclos," Carpio said.

Exclusive right

"China should not be allowed to enjoy its rights under Unclos ... while it refuses to accept its obligation under the arbitral award. Otherwise, China is cherry-picking and not taking Unclos



Supreme Court Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio

as one package deal," he said.

Carpio said the President and Cayetano were in no position to cede the country's ownership of several islands and waters in the West Philippine Sea.

Carpio, whose criticisms of the Duterte administration's

diplomatic approach to the West Philippine Sea dispute has gotten him in Mr. Duterte's crosshairs, said Filipino scientists should be aboard China's marine research vessels to ensure that the Chinese were not "exploring for purposes of exploitation."

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gation to allow foreign states to conduct [maritime research on] its continental shelf like Benham Rise 'to increase scientific knowledge of the marine environment for the benefit of all mankind,'" he added.

But the findings of such scientific marine explorations "must be made known to the whole world," Carpio said.

"The [marine scientific research] by foreign states in Benham Rise is purely for scientific research and cannot be conducted to explore the mineral resources for purposes of exploitation of these resources," he added.

Beijing's modus operandi

Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate urged the DEA to rethink its decision to allow Chinese exploration in Philippine Rise, calling the supposed Chinese research a repeat of Beijing's "modus operandi" to undermine Manila's maritime claims in the South China Sea during the Arroyo administration.

In a statement, Zarate said on Sunday that a joint marine seismic undertaking (JMSU) between the Philippines and China in 2005 gave Beijing access to valuable data on natural gas deposits and "jeopardized" the Philippines' claim to Recto Bank, or Reed Bank, in the Spratly archipelago.

Zarate said the Philippines lost control and supervision over exploration for oil and other minerals at Recto Bank when the Arroyo administration entered into the deal with China National Offshore Oil Corp. and Vietnam Oil and Gas Corp.

"With the JMSU, the Arroyo administration effectively sold out the country to the Chinese, who were granted unbridled access [to] our maritime territory, especially the gathering of valuable data on natural gas deposits in our territories like Recto Bank," he said.

"Our bad experience with the JMSU, where our country was placed in a very disadvantageous position... is bound to happen again in the case of [Philippine Rise]," he added.

Bayan Muna challenged the JMSU in the Supreme Court in 2008. The case remains unresolved -WITH A REPORT FROM VINCE.F.NONATO INQ

"Under Unclos, the Philippines has exclusive sovereign right to explore and exploit the mineral resources [on] its extended continental shelf like Benham Rise. Neither the President nor the foreign secretary can waive this exclusive sovereign right to a foreign state," he added.

As to Cayetano's claim that a law had authorized a foreign state like China to conduct academic maritime research within Philippine territory, Carpio said there was actually no local statute that specifically covers such an arrangement.

But the Philippines' ratification of Unclos in 1982 made the international treaty part of the country's local legal system, Carpio said.

Article 246 of Unclos states that "coastal states" like the Philippines "shall, in normal circumstances, grant their consent for marine scientific research projects by other states," he said.

"The Philippines has an obli-

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ne land.

15 January 2018

The Manila Times

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Army clueless on location of abducted police officer

THE Philippine Army on Sunday admitted it has not determined the exact location of the deputy police chief abducted by the communist New People's Army (NPA) in North Cotabato last December 28.

On Friday the NPA issued a statement calling Police Insp. Menardo Cui as "prisoner of war" (POW), weeks after he was taken at gunpoint in a store on his way to President Roxas police station.

Rigoberto Sanchez, spokesman of NPA Southern Mindanao, said the NPA under the Mount Apo Sub-Regional Command has declared Cui a POW.

"POW Cui, as with other previous prisoners of war, is being given political education that includes short courses on the history and problems of Philippine society and the need for people's war while under the custody

of the NPA," Sanchez said.

He also accused the Army's 39th and 15th Infantry Battalions and the Philippine National Police (PNP) in the area for conducting "unlawful search of several civilian homes."

Maj. Gen. Noel Clement, commander of the Army's 10th Infantry Division, said his unit and the PNP have been conducting intelligence operations to determine the location where the communist rebels were holding Cui.

"Based on our reports, he is being kept somewhere in North Cotabato. Our effort in coordination with the PNP is to locate him and conduct operations," Clement told reporters in a text message.

Asked if the Army has determined the exact location of Cui, Clement replied, "negative."

DEMPSEY REYES

15 January 2018

The Manila Times

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Nationinbrief

NEW ARMY MECHANIZED INFANTRY CHIEF URGES MEN TO WORK BETTER

CAMP O'DONNELL, Capas, Tarlac The new commander of the Army's Mechanized Infantry Division (MID) based here urged his fellow soldiers to work better hand-in-hand as they confront more challenges in their duties. Major General Gilbert Gapay made the call as the MID celebrated the traditional New Year's call recently following a command conference. He is optimistic that his men would perform better with their Constitutional mandate and said he is prepared to lead them by example, especially in war on terrorism and invasion, including the goal for Army transformation roadmap. A member of Philippine Military Academy's "Sinactala" Class of 1986, Gapay assumed the post last December, replacing Major General Edgar Gonzales who retired after 37 years of military service. He carries a long list of training, accomplishments, and leadership experience in the service, including his stint at the Western Mindanao Command during the Marawi crisis. As Army Aviator, Gapay is considered as one of the pioneers in the development of the country's Army Aviation Battalion. **JERRY HERNANDEZ**

15 January 2018

1946
1986
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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14 leftist terrorists yield to gov't forces

By FRANCIS T. WAKRFIELD

The military yesterday said 14 communist rebels yielded to the troops of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Joint Task Force Central in Sultan Kudarat Province on Friday.

The surrender of the 14 NPA fighters took place following the surrender of nine members of the Communist Terrorist belonging to the Platoon Myphone, Guerilla Front 73 last January 10.

The AFP's Western Mindanao Command said Paquito Sambiling alias Kato, 32; Honasan Lu alias Nas, 29; Andet Bandy alias Lung, 36; Badag Watamama alias Mamalu, 30; one Alladin alias Den, 16; Unsag Wanday alias Kagi; Ulong Gongga alias Gwapo, 19; Montol Aming alias Tulan, 42; Alladin Watamama alias Tonton, 29; Limbagas Aming alias Datu Dan, 45; Gasa Bando alias Iwang, 31; Pudin Dadayan alias Pudz, 21; Tony Baug alias Bet, 33; and Boni Aming alias Bukwi, 40, surrendered to the soldiers and policemen at 8:30 a.m.

The rebels turned themselves in with their firearms, which consisted of two caliber-30 Garand rifles, an M14 rifle, a caliber-5.56 homemade Tongram, and a caliber .45 pistol.

"In our initial debriefing, it was found that the Communist terrorists were members of Platoon Telego of the Guerilla Front 73, FSMR (Far South Mindanao Regional Committee)," reported Maj. Gen. Arnel Delavega, commander of the Joint Task Force Central.

"All of them were presented to Mayor Jun-jun Ecija of Senator Ninoy Aquino Municipality before noontime Friday," he added.

Just two days earlier, nine communist terrorists also laid down their arms and surrendered to the soldiers.

Those who surrendered were identified as Juni Moadas, 51; Anas Epic, 45; Ango Mison, 43; Ethel Gampong, 42; Wil Sonap, 40; Dindo Vicente, 37; Jampor Mokatil, 33; Alex Makalbing, 33; and Jerry Makalbing, 25.

The group turned over two M1 Garand rifles, a homemade caliber-5.56mm pistol, two fragmentation hand grenades, and a smoke grenade.

"Agila and his group surrendered to the elements of the 33rd Infantry Battalion in Barangay Midtungok, Senator Ninoy Aquino, Sultan Kudarat at 4 p.m. of January 10," Dela Vega said.

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Rody wants private talk with Joma

By ALEXIS ROMERO

President Duterte may have scrapped negotiations with communists and branded them as terrorists, but he remains open to the possibility of talking to Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria Sison.

"Gusto ko si Sison pumunta dito. Kaming dalawa mag-usap, kaming dalawa lang dito

sa kwarto (I want Sison to come here. The two of us will talk, only the two of us in this room)" the President told *MindaNews* in an interview in Davao City last Friday.

Sison, who has been on self-imposed exile in the Netherlands since 1987, has urged Duterte to resume the peace talks, which were terminated last November after communist rebels staged a series of

attacks against government forces.

He has refused to return to the Philippines, citing threats to his life. Security officials say the threats are also posed by Sison's rivals in the communist movement.

Duterte's spokesman Harry Roque Jr., however, said the resumption of talks was not likely because of the treacherous acts

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Rody From Page 1

of the New People's Army (NPA), armed wing of the communists.

Asked whether the doors of the peace talks are permanently shut, Duterte replied, "I don't know but it would need more than just a show of good faith."

"When the time came for a termination (of the negotiations), suddenly all those... the activity is activated, everywhere, anywhere... and they start waging a war against the government," the President added.

Presidential peace adviser

Jesus Dureza was tight-lipped when asked whether he was optimistic about the prospects of the talks with the communists.

"Let's just wait what develops from here on. We know the President's dream is to have sustainable peace but what has happened has provided new challenges that need new paths and ways to peace," Dureza

said in a text message.

Duterte has blamed the communists for the collapse of the talks, saying they are pushing for a coalition government, a setup that he said is not allowed by the Constitution because it would involve "sharing" of the country's sovereignty.

The President has also classified the CPP and NPA as "terrorists," a move that would

enable the justice department to declare them as terrorist organizations before the courts pursuant to the Human Security Act of 2007.

Despite the scrapping of talks, Duterte declared a unilateral ceasefire with the communists that took effect from 6 p.m. on Dec. 23 to 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 26 and on the same hours from Dec. 30 to Jan. 2.

The National Democratic Front, which represented the rebels during the talks, also declared its own ceasefire that took effect 6 p.m. on Dec. 23 to 6 p.m. on Dec. 26, and the same hours on Dec. 30 to Jan. 2.

But the military claimed that the communists violated their own ceasefire by attacking soldiers in Mindanao.

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Rody From Page 5

Duterte revealed that he had spoken with Sison about the killing of government troops during the ceasefire.

Sison reportedly claimed that they had no control of their forces because of "limited communication."

Duterte said he would return to the negotiating table if the communist rebels, whom he described as arrogant, "go lower." *MindaNews* reported.

"The way they answer they are very arrogant... son of a b****. They have no ideologies," the President said.

Duterte said he had told

Dureza and government peace panel chairman Silvestre Bello III that he was "not in the mood for love and talks."

"*Bumaba muna sila* (They should come down first)," Duterte added.

Duterte admitted in the interview that branding the CPP and NPA as terrorists would not solve the decades-old communist rebellion, the longest-running Maoist insurgency in Asia.

"No, but it can lessen their number," the President said.

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Duterte said the NPA ambush in Bukidnon last November, which left a six-month old girl dead, prompted him to cancel the talks.

"The problem now is they are not actually addressing the roots. They are out to take out government and... assassinating," the President said.

When he assumed office in 2016, Duterte vowed to forge a political settlement with communists, even appointing people associated with the Left to government posts as a goodwill measure.

Among the Left-leaning personalities given posts were former agrarian reform secretary Rafael Mariano, former social welfare secretary Judy Tagurwaló, National Anti-Poverty Commission lead convenor Liza Maza, labor undersecretary Joel Maglunsod and former Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor chairman Terry Ridon.

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Duterte challenges Sison to 'one-on-one'

By Ted Tuvera

President Duterte dares Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founding chairman Jose Maria Sison to meet him one-on-one to show that Sison and the whole communist movement are committed to negotiating peace.



SISON

In an interview with Davao City-based media MindaNews, the Chief Executive said that he's willing to resume with the "temporarily terminated" peace negotiations between the government and the CPP-led National Democratic Front (NDF) if the CPP head accedes to his invitation.

The self-proclaimed leftist President has challenged Sison to sit and meet with him.

"I want Sison to come here. The two of us will talk. Only the two of us here in this room," Mr. Duterte said.

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From page 1

Sison, who resides in Utrecht in the Netherlands for some 30 years, used to be Mr. Duterte's undergraduate professor in the mid-1960s.

The President back in 2016 invited Sison to come home in the Philippines but some time late in 2017, Mr. Duterte has threatened to throw Sison back to jail if he steps out of his Dutch asylum.

Also, the President said the communist rebels should also consider laying their arms for good and "surrender" if they really want peace.

The President also revealed that Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza and Government peace panel chairman and concurrent Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III has been urging him to continue the halted dialog.

"But I said I'm not in the mood for love and talks, as the song goes," Mr. Duterte said.

"I don't know if I'm still open to talks with the communists but it would need more than just a show of good faith," he added.

Moreover, Mr. Duterte lamented the rebels' attitude towards the government.

Saying that they have been "very rude," the Chief Executive reiterated that he cannot simply enter into a coalition government with the CPP and its legal wing, the National Democratic Front (NDF).

"When I found out the thrust was really – summing it up all – the workshop paper and the reports of Dureza and Bello – seems to me the thrust is towards a coalition government," Mr. Duterte said.

"Son of a bitch, they can't even hold a barangay for five hours," he stressed, mocking the rebels' political power in areas where they operate.

Lorenzana – CPP delusional

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, meanwhile, said the CPP was delusional in claiming that they could win and establish a communist government in the country.

The CPP issued this statement in wake of military pronouncements about its armed branch New People's Army's (NPA) capability to conduct large-scale depredation and extortion this year.

Lorenzana said that this statement was issued by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) based on forward assessment backed by careful study, evidence-based evaluation and massive support from the local government units and communities.

"Almost everyday, we hear news about their members all over the country who are surrendering to the government. It is because they cannot stand the rotten system of the group and they aim for peace and meaningful change.)" the Department of National Defense (DND) chief said.

These series of surrenders forced the CPP-NPA to double their deceptive recruitment efforts, using social issues and twisting facts to gain support, targeting the vulnerable sectors of the society to include students, women, children, urban poor and cultural minorities, he added.

"But they cannot fool the people anymore because their true motives are exposed. They cannot hide their extortion activities, destruction of property and livelihood, coercion, violence and murder of innocent civilians," Lorenzana said.

Lorenzana added empty talk of the CPP-NPA would not diminish the troops' resolve to finally put a stop to the communist-terrorists' decades-long exploitation of indigenous peoples and rural communities.

"For far too long, they have impeded progress, denying the Philippines a chance to fully develop and depriving the Filipino people the opportunity to improve their quality of life," he added.

With the AFP set to conduct more intensified activities and focused operations against the CPP-NPA, Lorenzana said the government's arms remain widely open to those who wish to return to the fold of law.

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ACROSS THE NATION

14 NPAs yield to AFP

The military yesterday said that 14 communist rebels yielded to the troops of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Joint Task Force Central in Sultan Kudarat Province on Friday. The surrender of the 14 NPA fighters took place following the surrender of nine members of the Communist Terrorist belonging to the Platoon Myphone, Guerilla Front 73 last January 10, 2018. The AFP's Western Mindanao Command said Paquito Sambiling alias Kato, 32; Honasan Lu alias Nas, 29; Andet Banday alias Lung, 36; Badag Watamama alias Mamali, 30; one Alladin alias Den, 16; Unsag Wanday alias Kagi; Ulong Gongga alias Gwapo, 19; Moritol Aming alias Tulan, 42; Alladin Watamama alias Tonton, 29; Limbagas Aming alias Datu Dan, 45; Casa Bando alias Iwang, 31; Pudín Dadayan alias Pudz, 21; Tony Baug alias Bet, 33; and Boni Aming alias Bukwi, 40 surrendered to the soldiers and policemen at 8:30 a.m. The rebels turned themselves in with their firearms which consist of two cal. 30 Garand rifles, one M14 rifle, one cal 5.56 Homemade Tongram, and one cal .45 pistol. **(Francis T. Wakefield)**

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MNLF formally joins fight vs terror, drug groups

E. HONOVE JARDON

ZAMBOANGA CITY - The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) has officially joined government forces in the fight against rebel groups, drug lords, and other neophyte terrorist groups in Muslim-dominated areas in Mindanao.

MNLF Chair Yusop Jikiri said MNLF forces in Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi have joined police and military forces, as well as other government agencies, in running after drug lords and terrorists in their localities as a contribution to the leadership of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte.

"We and our people now want to live in peace, and free from the use of drugs. It is for this reason why we joined the bandwagon of President Duterte in the fight against terrorism, and drug distribution and addiction in our areas," he said.

He said the MNLF leadership did

not want the Muslim people, particularly those who live in areas where there is strong MNLF presence, to be involved in illegal activities like the use and sale of drugs, and terrorism such as kidnapping.

He said the extension of martial law in Mindanao was a laudable move, and was considered as one of the best measures the government has adopted to control illegal activities in some provinces in Mindanao.

Martial law was first declared on May 23 last year after fighting erupted in Marawi City.

Even with the fighting in Marawi over, military and police intelligence sources claimed that extremist groups were still recruiting new members in various parts in Mindanao.

Last month, lawmakers, upon the recommendation of the security sector, voted to extend martial law for a year.

As this developed, Jikiri asked the national government to consider ex-

tending livelihood assistance to the people in Muslim-dominated areas in Mindanao, particularly those living in Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi.

He said most of the people in these province suffer from poverty due to the lack of government infrastructure support programs, and livelihood assistance programs.

He claimed that poverty was "the root cause of all evil things like rebellion, terrorism, kidnapping and drug addiction and distribution."

As such, Jikiri said the MNLF will continue to be a "partner of the government in fighting against any form of criminality in this part of the country."

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, who serves as martial law administrator in Mindanao, ordered Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) Governor Mujiv Hataman of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao last Thursday to conduct a closer monitoring of local chief executives in Mindanao.

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From rebel soldier to soldier of God

The patron saint of the Armed Forces of the Philippines is St. Ignatius of Loyola, the Spanish founder of the Society of Jesus. The youngest of 13 children, he was baptized Inigo, which later became Ignatius. At 17, Ignatius joined the army and fought in many battles without suffering any serious injury. But at the Battle of Pamplona against French forces, a cannonball hit him in the legs, requiring several surgical operations that ended his military career and left him with a limp for the rest of his life.

The cadet chapel in Fort Gregorio del Pilar in Baguio City, home of the Philippine Military Academy, is named after St. Ignatius. The only cathedral found in AFP camps nationwide is located in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City, and is also dedicated to the soldier-saint of Loyola.

Sometime in 1996, I attended one of the first Masses of a newly ordained priest, Fr. Gregory Ramos, at St. Ignatius church. (This was before its being designated a cathedral.) In attendance with Father Ramos were Fathers Victor Apacible and Jose Alan Dialogo. The presbyteral ordination of the three priests was held earlier in July, at Manila Cathedral with Jaime Cardinal Sin as the ordaining prelate. Prior to joining the priesthood, Father Vic was a dentist, while Father Jose served in his community as a schoolteacher.

In the case of Father Gregory, he entered the PMA in 1977, joining Class of 1981. Among his batchmates was Catalino Cuy, the first captain of the cadet corps. Incidentally when Cuy was first captain, one of the men under him was a third-class cadet private by the name of Eduardo Año. Año who almost failed to make it to the PMA because of height requirements, would move on from cadet private to AFP chief of staff, presiding over the liberation of Marawi City prior to his retirement last October. He now serves as secretary-designate of the Department of the Interior and Local Government. Cuy, on the other hand, vacated his DILG post to become chair of the Dangerous Drugs Board. Which goes to show that life is a journey of ups and downs, and that the people you meet on the way up are bound to be the same folks you meet on the way down. The class valedictorian was cadet Thawip Netniyom from Thailand.

At the time of the EDSA Revolution, Father Greg was a first lieutenant serving as assistant G-3 (operations) for the Philippine Army Light Armored Regiment at Fort Bonifacio. If the attack on Camp Crame had materialized, he would probably have been in the thick of the action considering his unit.

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In 1989, Father Greg, now a captain, was a company commander of the Second Light Armored Battalion stationed in Davao City. When the coup broke out in December, this time he joined the rebel forces and went underground. It was during this period, after months of searching for a more meaningful life, that Greg decided to apply at a prenovitiate house run by the Society of Jesus. However, because of his background, he was referred to The Holy Apostles Seminary for professionals. This was in 1991. Five years later, he was ordained along with 20 others.

Fr. Greg Ramos is one of only two academy graduates to convert to a religious life. A number of his classmates have described him as a quiet, reserved person given to helping others, and his change of profession did not come as too much of a surprise for them. In church for his first Mass at Camp Aguinaldo were his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Alberto Ramos, along with many of his classmates who had gathered to listen to his homily and receive the blessings of the newly ordained soldier of God.

Almost five years later, Father Greg was diagnosed with cancer of the bone marrow. He would survive this initial battle with the disease going into remission for a number of years.

In November 2017, the results of serum protein tests showed that the cancer had recurred. He is still active but has limited his work to lighter loads like saying Mass in the morning and in the afternoon at BF Homes Paranaque. Father Greg would be most grateful for any assistance as he faces another battle with the Big C. He can be reached at (0917)8438368, or at the PMA Alumni Center in Camp Aguinaldo at Tel. No. 912-5074 or 912-9318.

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Lorenzana: CPP 'delusional' in victory vs. gov't

By Priam Nepomuceno

MANILA -- Department of National Defense (DND) Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said that it is the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) which was delusional in claiming that they could win and establish a communist government in the country.

The CPP issued this statement in wake of military pronouncements about the New People's Army's (NPA) capability to conduct large-scale depredation and extortion this year.

Lorenzana said that this statement was issued by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) based on forward assessment backed by careful study, evidence-based evaluation and massive support from the local government units and communities

"Halos araw-araw ay nababalitaan natin ang pagbabalik-loob sa pamahalaan ng kanilang mga miyembro mula sa iba't-ibang lalawigan at kabayanan dahil hindi na masikmura ng mga ito ang kabulukan ng kanilang sistema, at dahil na rin sa pagnanais nila ng kapayapaan at makabuluhang pagbabago, (Almost everyday, we hear news about their members all over the country who are surrendering to the government. It is because they cannot stand the rotten system of the group and they aim for peace and meaningful change.)" the DND chief said.

These series of surrenders forced the CPP-NPA to double their deceptive recruitment efforts, using social issues and twisting facts to gain support, targeting the vulnerable sectors of the society to include students, women, children, urban poor and cultural minorities, he added.

"Pero hindi na nila malilinlang kailanman ang taumbayan dahil lantad na ang kanilang totoong motibo at layunin. Hindi na nila maitatago ang ginagawa nilang pangingikil, paninira ng mga ari-arian at kabuhayan, pamimilit, pananakit at pagpatay, maging ng mga inosenteng sibilyan, (But they cannot fool the people anymore because their true motives are exposed. They cannot hide their extortion activities, destruction of property and livelihood, coercion, violence and murder of innocent civilians.)" the DND chief stressed.

Lorenzana also said that empty talk of the CPP-NPA would not diminish the troops' resolve to finally put a stop to the communist-terrorists' decades-long exploitation of indigenous peoples and rural communities.

"For far too long, they have impeded progress, denying the Philippines a chance to fully develop and depriving the Filipino people the opportunity to improve their quality of life," he added.

With the AFP set to conduct more intensified activities and focused operations against the CPP-NPA, Lorenzana said the government's arms remain widely open to those who wish to return to the fold of law.

"This administration is revitalizing the Comprehensive Local Integration Program (CLIP) which offers livelihood assistance, immediate cash assistance and firearms remuneration to rebel returnees.

In addition, it offers a reintegration package that includes livelihood and capacity development trainings, all aimed at providing rebel returnees and their families social equity and a fair chance to be productive members of the society," the DND chief emphasized. **(PNA)**

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SolGen asks SC to dismiss consolidated petitions vs. ML extension

By Christopher Lloyd Calivan

MANILA -- The Office of Solicitor General (OSG) asked the Supreme Court (SC) to dismiss the last three petitions assailing the constitutionality of the full-year extension of martial law in Mindanao.

This, after the high court has consolidated all four petitions seeking to declare as unconstitutional the one-year extension given to martial law in Mindanao.

The SC made the announcement in its official Twitter post after two of the four petitions were filed on Friday.

With this consolidation, the SC is set to conduct oral arguments for all four petitions on Tuesday at 2 p.m. and Wednesday at 10 a.m..

The OSG is expected to represent the respondents led by President Rodrigo Duterte in the oral arguments.

In a 63-page comment, Solicitor General Jose Calida said the three petitions filed by Lumad leader Eufemia Campos Cullamat, human rights groups and militant groups; former Commission on Human Rights (CHR) Chairperson Loretta Ann Rosales; and the group led by Christian Monsod, who was one of the framers of the 1987 Constitution must be dismissed due to lack of merit, noting the proclamation of martial law was a matter entirely different from its extension.

"The declaration of martial law is an act of the President. The extension, on the other hand, is the prerogative of the Congress," Calida said.

"It follows that the judicial review of the proclamation of martial law is different from judicial review of the extension," he said.

According to Calida, the President requests the martial law extension but it is the Congress that extends martial law, if it finds that invasion or rebellion persists and public safety requires it.

"In view of the presumption of constitutionality accorded to the extension of martial law, it is incumbent upon all the petitioners to overturn the presumption, meaning, show facts that the extension is without basis," Calida opined.

"These Petitions rail against the extension of the martial law because Marawi has been liberated, and there is no rebellion, or the communist rebellion in Mindanao allegedly does not endanger public safety to warrant the extension and suspension," Calida said.

"It should be noted that Marawi is not the entire Mindanao. The liberation of Marawi did not signal the end of the rebellion in the whole of Mindanao," said the solicitor general.

"The Supreme Court has already recognized in *Lagman v. Medialdea* that there are other rebel groups in Mindanao that have launched offensives. Because of the widespread atrocities in Mindanao and the linkages established among rebel groups, the armed uprising in Marawi cannot be equated with the rebellion in the other parts of Mindanao," he explained.

Calida further argued that it is not the place of the Petitioners to dictate on the President as to which Commander-in-Chief power is most appropriate in dealing with the ongoing rebellion.

"Due deference must be made to the judgment call of the President, as it is based on vital, relevant, classified, and live information not ordinarily available to the public. The President is privy to such sensitive data, release or publication of which could do more harm than good," Calida said, addressing Petitioners' contention that martial law is unnecessary.

"Apart from disregarding the Supreme Court's earlier ruling, Petitioners also want the Court to believe that communist rebellion is not detrimental to public safety, notwithstanding the numerous attacks made on civilians in the name of the Marxist ideology," Calida added.

The first petition was filed last December 27 by a group of congressman led by Albay 1st District Rep. Edcel Lagman.

This was followed last January 8 by the group led by Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Zarate and Anakpawis Representative Ariel Casilao.

Rosales filed the petition last Friday (January 12) morning followed by another in the afternoon from the group of Monsod and Dinagat Islands Rep. Kaka Bag-ao.

The four petitions were echoing the same arguments that there was no longer factual basis to extend martial law and suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus in Mindanao since President Rodrigo Duterte already declared last October that Marawi City — the center of skirmishes between government troops and ISIS-inspired Maute group — had been liberated.

Also named respondents in the four petitions were Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III and Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez, Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Interior and Local Government officer-in -charge Eduardo Año, National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon, Philippine National Police chief Director General Ronald Dela Rosa and Armed Forces chief of staff General Rey Leonardo Guerrero.

On Dec. 13, a total of 240 members of Congress voted to approve to extend martial law in Mindanao, while only 27 voted against it. The approved extension would take effect beginning Jan. 1, 2018 until Dec. 31, 2018.

In December last year, the high court upheld with finality the constitutionality of President Duterte's declaration of martial law in Mindanao.

The SC's 82-page landmark decision, penned by Associate Justice Mariano Del Castillo, said that the 1987 Constitution grants Duterte the prerogative to put any part of the country under martial rule. **(PNA)**