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Drilon backs Du30 stand to hold talks in PH

By Leila B. Salaverria @LeilasINQ

Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon on Saturday said he supported President Duterte's stand to hold peace talks with communist rebels in the Philippines.

Jose Maria Sison, founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines, said moving the talks brokered by the Norwegian government to the country would violate a 1995 agreement on security and immunity guarantees forged during the administration of former President Fidel Ramos to negotiate in a neutral country.

Mr. Duterte on Thursday

canceled the scheduled June 28 resumption of formal talks in Oslo, Norway, which negotiators from the government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) had agreed upon. He said the talks would be held in the Philippines in July but did not set a date.

The two sides also were supposed to implement a stand-down agreement, or a preliminary truce, between government forces and the New People's Army (NPA) on June 21.

"The peace talks have always been held in an international ground but it did not seem to accelerate discussion. Let the real

peace talks begin in a local arena. No third party this time," Drilon said in a statement.

Gov't sincerity

Holding the talks in the country would show the government's sincerity in ending the nearly half-century-old communist insurgency and agreeing to that meant the rebels recognized the government's legitimacy, Drilon said.

"Go to the Philippines and let's talk peace," he told the rebels.

Drilon had served as an adviser to the government's peace panel under Ramos.

Despite his frustration, resentment and harsh words for the President over the cancellation of the formal negotiations Sison said the talks could still be salvaged but insisted they be held in another country.

"There is still hope for the peace negotiations to push through if only the postponement of one or two months is true," Sison said in an online interview from Utrecht, the Netherlands, where he has lived in exile since 1986.

Sison serves as the NDFP's chief political consultant in the talks.

Presidential peace adviser

Jesus Dureza said the scheduled talks had to be canceled to give time for public consultations concerning the peace process.

People's war

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana on Saturday slammed Sison for threatening to continue the armed struggle after Mr. Duterte canceled the talks.

"Instead of rationally talking with our panel to discuss how to move forward (in) the resumption of the peace talks, he goes into a tantrum and orders the NPA to wage a people's war," Lorenzana said.

"Your so-called army no



Franklin Drilon

longer listens to you. They are sick and tired of your lies and rhetoric," he added. —WITH RE-

PORTS FROM JEANNETTE I. ANDRADE AND DELFIN T. MALLARI INQ

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Satellite images bare damage to Phi shoal

By JANVIC MATEO and EVELYN MACAIRAN

Publicly-available satellite images show the considerable damage supposedly made by Chinese clam diggers in Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal since 2012, an international maritime law expert posted on social media yesterday.

Jay Batongbacal, director of the UP Institute for Maritime Affairs and Law of the Sea, shared satellite images taken from Google Earth that showed changes in the shoal since the Chinese took control of the resource-rich area six years ago.

"Using Google Earth, one can measure about 552 hectares of the back (inner) reef of Scarborough Shoal visibly destroyed by clam diggers since 2012," he said in a post on his social media accounts.

"That's visible damage, by the way. Only ground-truthing can provide a truly accurate assessment," he added.

In an earlier post, Batongbacal posted three satellite images of the shoal which showed what he said are scars left by

Chinese fishermen that used propellers to cut the reef in order to dislodge giant clams.

"The third, taken a few months after the arbitral award handed down in 2016, shows even more scars and indicating complete destruction of the area shown (approximately 2.5-kilometer distance from end to end)," he wrote.

"All this destruction took place with the China Coast Guard keeping watch over the shoal. In 2016, the CSIS AMTI (Center for Strategic and International Studies-Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative) estimated roughly half of the total reef area of Scarborough to have been destroyed," he added.

Batongbacal noted that Chinese boats continued to carry

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Satellite

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out this activity until 2017 as seen by photos taken by the media during maritime air patrols.

He said the recent complaints of Filipino fishermen against Chinese Coast Guard taking their fish indicate activities that continuously damage the shoal.

Duterte told: Protect fishermen, not yourself

Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Zarate urged President Duterte yesterday to send the Philippine Coast Guard to Panatag Shoal to protect fishermen from alleged harassment by the Chinese.

Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines-Episcopal Commission on the Laity (ECL) chairman Manila Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Pabillo said Duterte's Jackluster protest contributed to Chinese aggression in the West Philippine Sea, while Sen. Richard Gordon stressed the government cannot afford to remain docile in dealing with China if it wants to be taken seriously in its claims over its territories.

In his blog "Panaghoy," Pabillo said Duterte is responsible for China's encroachment into Philippine territory, bullying of Filipino fishermen and destruction of marine resources.

Pabillo pointed out that during Duterte's term, China was able to bring in more military hardware to the disputed West Philippine Sea, which is also being claimed by other countries including the Philippines.

The Manila bishop said Duterte takes the matter lightly, even claiming that China promised to protect him from foreign detractors who might attempt to oust him from the presidency.

"Duterte and his administration have not made any fuss on China's moves and aggressiveness. He just jokes about them and even makes innuendoes that China will protect him and not allow him to fall. If this is the message he sends out, China or its part will not hesitate to do what it wants," Pabillo said.

"So again we can say that Duterte has a great influence in the Chinese aggression even if he does not have any direct hand in it," Pabillo noted.

Pabillo said there is not even any strongly-worded protest against "our big neighbor" even if Filipino fishermen are already being harassed in their own territories.

"The Chinese have even the gall to claim that it is by their own goodwill that Filipinos fish in their (that is, our) seas," Pabillo said.

Pabillo also pointed out that China is not a defender of human rights or the rule of law, does not accept international law if it is not to its advantage and uses its might to bully a poor neighbor, like what it is doing in the West Philippine Sea.

"China can easily bully us too if we allow it to gain any foothold in our territories and in our policies. Duterte too is playing the same game. He has no moral compass to guide him," Pabillo said.

Even if Duterte has often said that he loves the Philippines, the bishop doubted his sincerity.

Pabillo said the Chief Executive has "no love of country... He uses situations just to his own advantage. He does not care about the Filipinos or about the future of the country."

Zarate, for his part, said the President should send the PCG to accompany or escort the hapless fisherfolk at Panatag Shoal, also known as Bajo de Masinloc, or in other Philippine-claimed areas in the West Philippine Sea.

"We have to show China that we are serious in defending our people as well as our territory. Our officials should always assert our independence, instead of them acting as apologists for China, which apparently now treats the Philippines as her vassal state," Zarate said.

China took control of Panatag Shoal in 2012 after a standoff between Chinese and Philippine vessels. Beijing refused to honor an agreement mediated by the United States to end the standoff and made it appear that the Philippines backed down, the previous administration said.

Under the 2016 United Nations Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling that invalidated China's territorial claim over the whole of the South China Sea, including a large part of the country's exclusive economic zone, Panatag Shoal was declared a traditional fishing ground of Filipinos, Chinese and Vietnamese.

"China is apparently treating the Duterte administration as a pushover by doing what they want in Bajo de Masinloc and the rest of the (West

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Philippine Sea) without nary a whimper from Malacañang," Zarate said.

"We are not saying that we declare war on China. But what we need is for Malacañang to stand up for our fisherfolk and our territory. We have already suggested in the past the filing of a diplomatic protest and increasing patrols of our seas, among others. One thing is clear though, the government must do something now to stop this invasion of China," Zarate said.

Zarate also cautioned the US against exacerbating tension in the disputed sea.

"The situation in the West Philippine Sea is already getting serious. The US and China should stop their sabre rattling so as to lessen tension. The Philippines and other small claimants are in a

situation akin to having two bullies in their backyard raring for a fight and thrashing each other without regard for the backyard or the houses nearby," he said.

He urged claimant-states like the Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Taiwan and Malaysia to work together to ease tension in the West Philippine Sea.

Fishermen from Zambales and Pangasinan have reported that Chinese Coast Guard personnel have been taking part of their catch in Panatag Shoal area and that Chinese fishermen have destroyed coral reefs there.

Seek foreign help

Gordon said the government must be more aggressive in dealing with China, which has been claiming areas in the disputed South China Sea and clearly establishing a military presence there.

In an interview over *theRIZ*, Gordon

said the Philippines' claims over the West Philippine Sea would not be taken seriously by China since it has no military might to speak of at all.

He recalled how China refrained from acting so aggressively when the US still had its military bases in the Philippines.

With the American bases long gone, Gordon said there is nothing standing in the way of China doing what it wants in the disputed waters.

Gordon urged the government to reach out to its allies such as the US, Japan, New Zealand, Korea and Australia for support.

He said the Philippines must make its presence felt in the West Philippine Sea by building its own structures there, whether these are airfields, buildings or any structure to show signs of occupation.

Gordon said diplomatic protests against China should also be filed if this has not yet been done in order to show that the country would not

allow itself to be bullied.

Even if these actions could result in some form of retaliation from China, Gordon said the country should be ready to accept this because pushing back is the right thing to do.

Gordon said it is time the government takes the strengthening of the armed forces seriously because this has been neglected by all of the previous administrations.

He recalled how he pushed for the allocation of 13 percent of the collections from the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) law for building up the military, but this was not carried.

"You cannot have any bargaining chip if you don't have a strong armed forces," Gordon said.

Gordon said he has met with Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana to find out what the military needs in the 2019 national budget. — With Jess Diaz, Marvin Sy

Mischief Reef sums up PH-China relations

MISCHIEF Reef is part of the disputed Spratly Islands. It is merely 217 kilometers from Palawan, the nearest landmass. From the ancient maps to internationally-accepted territorial delineations, it has been, with little doubt, part of Philippine EEZ. All other ownership claims rest on fraud and easily-to-debunk



SUNDAY STORIES

MARLEN V. RONQUILLO

concoctions, like China's favorite "nine-dash line."

Mischief Reef, as befits the name of the once-lonely atoll that used to disappear during high tide, is area where Beijing acts with a combination of mischief and force to push through with its territorial annexations and global ambition—and wrest total control over one of the most important maritime lanes in the world. The

area generally covered by what we call the West Philippine Sea is Exhibit A on how shabbily China regards its Asian neighbors and the world. There are even no pretensions such as "Manifest Destiny"—only an abuse of powerless neighbors via crude mischief and naked display of power.

The saga of Mischief Reef, from

a sanctuary for Filipino fishermen and fishermen from other countries during rough weather to a staging ground for China's territorial ambition, began modestly in 1995 with the construction by China of a platform topped by four octagonal structures with a Chinese flag on top. It was mischievously misrepresented as a mere structure

for fishermen seeking shelter—perhaps to mask Beijing's designs at Mischief Reef and the other atolls in the Spratly Islands. Much of the world did not pay mind to that mid-1990s mischief.

Recently, according to CNBC, a report that Beijing neither confirmed nor denied (which means

► Ronquillo A4

Mischief Reef sums up PH-China relations

the report was factual), Beijing has deployed missiles at Mischief Reef, Fiery Cross Reef and Subi Reef, all part of the Spratly island group.

Mischief Reef's evolution, from a mid-'90s "shelter" for fishermen to its current role as a 21st century missile deployment area, was the result of a carefully-planned, heavily-funded and frenzied infrastructure build-up, then full-blast militarization, at the Spratly atolls. The missile deployment was preceded by positioning anti-aircraft guns and close-in-weapons systems at the reefs. All these structures rested on artificial islands complete with runways and hangars.

These are not defensive structures, but obvious preparations for future conflicts, according to military experts.

In theory and in practice, these reefs within the Philippine exclusive economic zone cannot be appropriated for any function except to act as sanctuaries for fishermen whiling away bad fishing weather.

The main physical features of the atolls "are not features that are capable of appropriation by occupation or otherwise." Beijing knows this but such features are just flimsy, nominal hurdles to Beijing's ambitions.

What has happened at Mischief Reef symbolizes, again, the combination of mischief and aggression that has been the hallmarks of China's relation with the Philippines. The sucking up to China by the government of President Duterte has left the general public clueless on China's true designs and intentions and global ambitions. The information the public gets are the inflated scope of China's economic assistance to the Philippines, the surging trade ties with China, the issuance of the so-called "Panda bonds," and the influx of Chinese workers into Philippines.

What we get from the news are the aids and grants and other forms of economic collaboration with China. And those information paper over the scary aspects of the

China-PH relations: the bigger and more important territorial issue, the deployment of both mischief and aggression to literally reduce us to a China vassal, and a client-state bending and bowing to China's territory-grabbing and aggression.

The cluelessness of most Filipinos on Beijing's real agenda was also the reason behind the meek acceptance that came in the wake of the hydrographic surveys done several years back by elements of the People's Liberation Army at the Benham Rise.

On what official cover the PLA personnel used in their "survey" of the Rise was not even clear. But what they did after the so-called "research and survey" was reprehensible. They filed for naming rights in Chinese, of course, on the strategic components of the Rise—a prelude, of course, to a possible grabbing of the Rise.

What was scarier, opined former national security adviser Roy Golez who just passed away, was the possible search by the

Chinese for spots at the Benham Rise, those strategic areas underneath that can hide submarines. Golez was wary of Beijing's true intention and was vocal about it. He trained at Annapolis, probably the best school in the world for aspiring naval officers.

The tilt toward China has historic roots. China, during the old times, was our first major trading partner. There was a one-way migration pattern that took place—impoverished Chinese families from the Southern part moving to the Philippines to make their fortune (they did).

But there was no imperial component of that earlier relationship; it was just about migration and trade.

Today, it is an entirely different relationship, a sort of master-servant relations. It made the recent celebration of Independence Day a hollow affair. We probably celebrated a new version of "Subservience Day" a few days back; only there is a new master. And that new master is China.

JAPAN 'INCLINED' TO GIVE PH NAVY MORE PATROL PLANES

THE Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force is inclined to give the Philippine Navy more Beechcraft King Air TC-90 patrol aircraft, Navy flag officer-in-command, Vice Admiral Robert Empedrad said.

"During my last visit to Japan, the head of the JMSDF said he is inclined to give the PN more of the aircraft (TC-90) they earlier gave us," Empedrad said in Filipino in an interview with the military-run DWDD radio on Wednesday.

The JMSDF has earlier given the Navy five TC-90 patrol aircraft, three of which have been activated while the other two are being equipped and painted for Philippine service.

The TC-90 was offered by Japan shortly after the Agreement Concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology was finalized on Feb. 29, 2016.

The TC-90 has a range of more than 1,000 nautical miles and a cruising speed of 226 knots, and is capable of carrying eight passengers, along with the pilots.

These additional TC-90s are expected to boost the Navy's capability in intelligence surveillance reconnaissance, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and maritime air surveillance, Empedrad said. PNA

AK





PNP, AFP verify Bulacan Reds raid

The Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) are verifying a raid allegedly made by the New People's Army (NPA) in a company owned by Chinese tycoon in the City of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan.

In a statement issued by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) on its website, it said "The NPA forces in Mt. Sierra Madre-Southern Tagalog under Rosario Lodronio Rosal Command (RLRC-NPA-Mt. Sierra Madre-Southern Tagalog Sub-Regional Command) congratulates the red fighters and commanders of NPA-Bulacan in their successful raid against the armed goons of Chinese tycoon Lucio Tan in Barangay Ciudad Real, San Jose Del Monte City, Bulacan."

The NPA team had reportedly carried out the raid between 11 a.m. and 12 noon Wednesday and had carted "seven firearms, including five long firearms and two .9mm pistols with bullets."

Chief Supt. Amador Corpus, regional police director for Cen-

tral Luzon, and Maj. Gen. Felimon Santos, commanding general of the 7th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army, said they are still verifying the report.

NPA propaganda suspected

On the other hand, Lt. Col. Arnel Cabugon, commander of the 48th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army, said that as of 1:00 p.m. on Friday the Bulacan police and the 80th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army have yet to confirm if there was really such an incident.

"Baka propaganda lang yan (maybe it is just a propaganda)," Cabugon said.

Supt. Fitz Macariola, police chief of the City of San Jose del Monte, said that no one has reported anything about the incident and added that the company is located in the mountainous part of the city bordering the province of Rizal that is hard to access and is being guarded by a security agency.

"We are still verifying the report," Macariola added. **PNA**





Dureza defends move to reset talks with Reds

By JOSE RODEL CLAPANO

The "resetting" of the peace talks with the communist rebels was intended to protect what the government peace panel and the National Democratic Front (NDF) have gained during its back channel talks, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza said.

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Dureza From Page 1

In a statement on Friday, Dureza said the government is planning to invite resource persons who participated in the recent back channel talks to engage with the public.

Dureza stressed the peace talks with the NDF, the umbrella organization representing the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army (CPP-NPA), was "reset."

"The resetting of the planned peace talks is exactly for the purpose of protecting the gains achieved in the back-channel talks prior to formal resumption of peace negotiations," Dureza said.

He said history shows many peace deals that suffered setbacks due to lack of public support.

"And this is precisely why we have decided to engage the public and have consultations with various sectors to protect those gains," Dureza said.

He said the public's support and participation has greatly helped the government's peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation (MILF) and the government wants to use that as a pattern.

"We have even planned on inviting resource persons who participated in the recent back channel talks from both

sides to engage the stakeholders together. We have already witnessed how this helped in the Bangsamoro peace efforts where leaders of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front participated actively in the effort," Dureza said.

He said the public must not be kept in the dark about the peace talks.

"Getting public support and goodwill even while still in the course of peace negotiations is truly indispensable. Suddenly springing finished peace agreements upon a public who have been kept in the dark during the negotiations can certainly undermine those efforts," Dureza said.

CPP founding chairman Jose Ma. Sison slammed Presi-

dent Duterte for the cancellation of the peace talks scheduled on June 28.

Sison said it was "disappointing and frustrating" that Duterte decided to cancel the peace talks at the last minute as preparations are underway for the resumption of formal peace negotiations between the government and the NDF in Oslo, Norway.

Sison urged both panels to make public the stand down agreement signed on June 9.

"The press and the public have the right to know the content of the stand down agreement that was signed on June 9, 2018. This agreement has been unilaterally scrapped by the (government). And the press and

public wish to know why. They also want to know the contents of agreements signed on June 10, 2018 pertinent to the June 28-30 resumption of formal peace talks and the interim peace agreement which have been unilaterally cancelled by the (government)," Sison said.

A report from ANC said the government and NDF were supposed to sign an interim peace agreement on June 28 which included the formation of a "bilateral preparatory committee" to lay the groundwork for Sison's homecoming and a one-on-one meeting with President Duterte.

The CPP also issued a statement saying the cancellation of the peace talks is "totally

unacceptable."

The CPP said Malacañang made the announcement withdrawing from the scheduled talks after consulting with national security officials.

Dureza, however, said "both sides of the negotiating table must be hand in hand in this effort, and we truly hope that the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines will join us in this crucial endeavor as any negative reaction can only further jeopardize the gains so far jointly achieved."

"While we do respect whatever stand they may have on the matter, we do hope our peace partners in the CPP-NPA-NDF will view all these developments in this light,"

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Ex-Kadamay members accuse group of threats

Families who broke away from the militant group Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (Kadamay) said their former organization had been sending them death threats. In a complaint filed at the Bulacan police on Saturday, members of Team JB, who broke off from Kadamay, said motorcycle riders had been harassing them for turning their backs on Kadamay, said Jeffrey Ariz, head of Team JB which separated from Kadamay in May. Team JB members were among 8,000 Kadamay members who forcibly occupied 6,000 idle units in six government housing projects last year. Among the units they occupied were 1,980 homes put up by the National Housing Authority for members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Philippine National Police and the Bureau of Fire Protection. Team JB members clashed with Kadamay over Kadamay's demand to get the houses for free, according to Ariz. "We are ready to pay," said Team JB secretary Arnavie Duterte. —CARMELA REYES-ESTROPE

NPA using housing units occupied by Kadamay?

By JAIME LAUDE and RAMON EFREN LAZARO

PANDI, Bulacan – Housing units in government projects occupied by members of the urban poor group Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap have been infiltrated by New People's Army (NPA) rebels, according to a splinter group of Kadamay.

Jeffrey Ariz, the leader of the breakaway group, said communist rebels are using some of the housing units to train NPA recruits.

"They have been conducting teach-ins... Some of them... have been doing house-to-house visitation... in search for recruits as young as 11... and to intimidate us," Ariz said.

He said their former colleagues also occupied idle units in three other housing

projects in this town intended for government workers to be displaced by infrastructure projects in Quezon City.

"I don't know if President Duterte knows this... the President had only allowed us to occupy housing units here at Villa Luis," Ariz said.

One of the residents cited the Atlantica project in Barangay Mapulang Lupa, which was transformed into a recruitment and training center of

NPA recruits.

Lt. Col. Julio Eugene Osias, 7th Infantry Division spokesman, said they are still validating the allegations of the splinter group.

"We have seriously taken these concerns... It's a police matter for now," Osias said even as he noted that the military is conducting a parallel investigation of the issues being raised by both parties.

Death threats

Ariz sought police assistance yesterday, saying those who bolted Kadamay are receiving death threats.

"We were given two options... to rejoin the group or be dead," he said.

Ariz said among the reasons they bolted Kadamay was because its leaders forced them to join anti-government protests and pay a fee amounting to P150.

At a meeting with Chief Inspector Manuel de Vera, Pandi police chief, Ariz said Kadamay leaders also threatened to eject them from their units.

Ariz said they mobilized their members into groups to check on each other.

Pat Tupas, Pandi-Kadamay spokesman, denied Ariz's allegations, saying the latter left their group over alleged anomalies.

Tupas said Ariz is facing an investigation in connection with Kadamay's missing funds.

– With Rhodina Villanueva

'5 TOP REDS GO INTO HIDING'

By Joyce Pangco Pañares

FIVE of six rebel leaders with standing arrest warrants who were supposed to participate in the now canceled peace talks in Oslo have gone underground, a military source said, even as Communist Party of the Philippines founding chairman Jose Ma. Sison blamed President Rodrigo Duterte for the situation.

"Duterte has made it impossible for our consultants to present

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themselves before the proper courts. Duterte removed the safe environment for them to face the court again," Sison told **Manila Standard** in an interview during the weekend.

"In deciding to cancel the June 28 resumption of the formal peace talks, Duterte has killed the possibility of our six consultants to join the negotiations. It is difficult to talk to someone who acts crazy and flipflops like Duterte," Sison added.

A Manila court earlier allowed CPP chairman Benito Tiamzon, Adelberto Silva, Randall Echanis, Vicente Ladlad and Rafael Baylosis to leave for Norway for the peace negotiations.

A separate court in Taguig also allowed communist leader Alan Jazmines to join the five as consultants of the CPP-National Democratic Front.

Defense lawyer Rachel Pastores of the Public Interest Law Center said it would not come as a surprise if her clients, except for Baylosis who is still under detention, would jump bail and refuse to surrender.

"With the exception of Baylosis, the others are not in police custody. Who can blame them [if they have gone underground]? There is a clear threat to their security and lives. This government has branded them terrorists," Pastores said in a phone interview.

"The decision of the government to postpone the peace talks was so unfair. It was a waste of time and money. *Lokahan ba yan?* [Are they trying to pull a fast one on us?] The security and freedom of the NDF consultants should not be based on whimsical decisions of the government," she added.

Baylosis posted a bail of P150,000 but he has yet to be released while Silva paid P100,000 in bail.

"If they do not surface, I don't think anyone can blame them. I can't do anything about that," Pastores said.

On Friday, Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra said the safety and immunity guarantees extended to the NDF consultants no longer stood.

"Since the peace talks were deferred upon orders of the President, the basis for the court order [for their release] no longer exists and the prosecution will consequently move for the revocation of said orders," Guevarra said.

A1

DND: JOMA LIKE A SPOILED BRAT

**By Francisco Tuyay
and Vito Barcelo**

DEFENSE Secretary Delfin Lorenzana has branded self-exiled former Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP/NPA) founding chairman Jose Ma. Sison a "spoiled brat" who was detached from reality.

Lorenzana described Sison as desperate when the latter went into an outburst and ordered a "people's war" following the aborted resumption of the stalled peace talks where he had

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DND: ...
From A1

his tantrum nearly 10,400 kilometers away.
"Mr. Sison is acting like a spoiled brat, which he is, and proves that he is very out touch with reality here" Lorenzana said.

The peace talks between the communist party and the government, scheduled to resume on June 28, developed a hitch, according to security sources.

In a related development:

• Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon on Saturday threw his support behind President Rodrigo Duterte's call that the peace talks with communist rebels be held in the country.

"I support the President's decision. The venue of the next round of peace negotiations with the rebel groups should be the Philippines," Drilon, who served as a peace process adviser in the past administrations, said in a statement.

"It's about time that we change the venue of peace talks with the National Democratic Front and it is about time that it takes place on Philippine soil," he added.

Drilon, who had once served as an advisor to the government's peace talks with

the National Democratic Front, said, "The change of venue should not hinder the peace process."

While the Norwegian government has played a valuable role in the country's peace process, Drilon said that "the time has come for the Philippines and the Communist Party of the Philippines—New People's Army—National Democratic Front to talk among themselves."

"The peace talks have always been held in an (sic) international ground but it did not seem to accelerate discussion. Let the real peace talks begin in a local arena. No third party this time," Drilon said.

Lorenzana made the remarks following Sison's response to the government's decision to postpone the peace negotiation to give them more time to achieve a better result that would benefit all concerned parties, especially the public.

Sison, who was once Duterte's professor at the Lyceum of the Philippines when the latter was pursuing his pre-law course, commented on the peace postponement, saying the Duterte administration was "obviously not interested in serious peace negotiations and that the revolutionary forces and the people have no choice but to singlemindedly wage a people's war" to achieve liberation.

WORD WAR ERUPTS OVER DELAYED TALKS

KEY players in peace talks between the government and the local communist movement have begun to call each other names over delayed negotiations to end the decades-old Maoist insurgency in the country.

The delay apparently stemmed from President Rodrigo Duterte proposing that the peace talks be held in the Philippines instead, not Norway, as originally agreed upon by the two sides.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana on Saturday called exiled Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria "Joma" Sison a "spoiled brat" when Sison told his forces to renew their "people's war" after Duterte made the proposal.

In a statement, Lorenzana said Sison is "out of touch with reality" when he ordered the members of CPP and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), to continue resisting the government.

"Mr. Sison is acting like a spoiled brat, which he is, and proves that he is very out of touch with reality here.

"Instead of rationally talking with our [negotiating] panel to discuss how to move forward the resumption of the peace talks, he goes into tantrum[s] and orders the NPA to wage a people's war," the Defense secretary said.

More people from the NPA, according

► Talks A8

WORD

to Lorenzana, are surrendering now to the government and seeking help in reintegrating with mainstream society.

"They are sick and tired of your lies and rhetoric, and are in fact heeding the call of President Duterte to come down and live peaceful lives and they are doing just that," he added.

Sison earlier said on the same day that the delay in the peace talks with the government is "unacceptable" and called Duterte "whimsical and foolish."

Peace Process Adviser Jesus Dureza previously announced that the government had decided to delay the peace negotiations with the communist rebels, citing the need to consult the public first.

In canceling the scheduled resumption of formal peace talks, Duterte and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) are refusing to tread the path of peace as a way of addressing roots of the armed conflict, Sison said.

"What is clear is that Duterte is obsessed with waging all-out war against the people and talks of peace only as a way of inducing the surrender of the revolutionary forces through a prolonged ceasefire without resolving through concrete reforms such as rural poverty, hunger, joblessness, low wages, insecure jobs and others," the communist leader added.

In being non-sensical and capricious, the President is unprepared in continuing the peace talks and "completely indifferent to the pressing issues of land reform, national industrialization and overall economic development,

issues which the Filipino people have long demanded," Sison said.

The delay, however, paves the way for the CPP and the NPA to become more resolute in waging war across the country "in order to defend the Filipino people against the assaults of the fascist regime," he added.

"The [CPP] directs the NPA to continue to consolidate, strengthen and expand its ranks and its mass base across the country, rouse the people to fight their oppressors and exploiters, mount widespread tactical offensives targeting the worst of the AFP's fascist units, as well as the ruling regime's criminal and fascist cohorts, in order to frustrate the US Duterte regime's Oplan: Kapayapaan and its aim of crushing the people's armed resistance this year," Sison said.

In the Senate, Minority Leader Franklin Drilon also on Saturday said he agrees with the President's proposal that the Philippines must be the venue of the next round of peace negotiations with the communist rebels.

"I support the President's decision. It's about time that we change the venue of peace talks with the National Democratic Front [NDF] and it is about time that these take place on Philippine soil," he said.

NDF is the National Democratic Front, an umbrella group that counts the CPP and the NPA as members.

"The change of venue should not hinder the peace process," according to Drilon, who once served as an adviser to the government's peace panel.

While the Norwegian government has played a valuable role in the country's peace process, he said, "the time has come for the Philippines and the CCP-NPA-NDF to talk among themselves."

"The peace talks have always been held in an international ground but it did not seem to accelerate discussion. Let the real peace talks begin in a local arena. No third party this time," Drilon added.

"Perhaps, it can accelerate discussions and both panels can finally come to an agreement," the senator said.

Drilon added that the Philippines hosting the peace negotiations can boost the confidence and sincerity of both parties in the peace process.

"The Philippine as the venue of the peace talks speaks volumes [about] government's sincerity to end the decades-long armed struggle with the rebels," he said.

By agreeing to hold the peace talks in the country, the communist groups will be able to show that "it has truly agreed to recognize the legitimacy of the government as the duly-constituted authority," Drilon added.

He said there is no reason for the communist rebels to reject the President's proposal because the latter is truly sincere in the peace talks.

"We will never achieve a true and lasting peace if the CPP-NPA-NDF, after a series of peace negotiations that took place, would still say they do not recognize the legitimacy of the government," Drilon added.

"It is about time that they show they really do. Go to the Philippines and let's talk peace," he said.

Duterte terminated the peace talks between the government and the communist rebels last year, citing the latter's lack of sincerity.

Later on, he tagged the communist rebels as "terrorists."

**ROY NARRA D.R. AND
BERNADETTE E. TAMAYO**

'Kadamay in Pandi infiltrated by NPA'

PANDI, Bulacan: The communist New People's Army (NPA) has infiltrated the government housing projects here occupied by urban poor group *Kalipunan ng Damayang Atahitap* (Kadamay), by recruiting the residents as gunmen, according to a breakaway group.

The housing projects under the super-

vision of the National Housing Authority (NHA) were also being used as training grounds of the communist rebels, according to Jeffrey Ariz, leader of the former Kadamay members.

About 300 families withdrew their memberships from Kadamay a month ago

> Pandi A2

Kadamay

because of this, he said.

P150 per rally

Vilma de la Cruz, one of the defectors, said the presence of NPA rebels and the charging of P150 for every protest had alarmed their group, which prompted them to walk away from Kadamay.

De la Cruz told reporters they were being threatened by several leaders of Kadamay, who said there were only two options for them: either re-activate their memberships or get killed.

"Lagi po silang nag-babahay-bahay, 'yun pong mga leader, naniningil po sila lagi nang naniningil po kapag mag-rally (The leaders are always making rounds, house to house, charging us every time there's a rally)," de la Cruz claimed.

Ariz said Kadamay leaders employed the tactics they used in Pandi last year in storming the housing units in Rodriguez, Rizal last week. The houses are intended for the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police.

According to him, Kadamay leaders were "recruiting" members in the cities of Caloocan and Manila to occupy the housing projects.

"Bago po sila mag-occupy, mag-meeting ang mga leader ilang araw bago nila gawin ang pag-okupa, tapos sasabihan nila 'yung mga taong papasok sa pabahay na iyon (Before occupying any housing project, the leaders of Kadamay would meet days before the occupation of the projects. Before they storm the project they alert the recruits)," Ariz said.

NPA fighters

But what alarmed them the most was when several leaders of Kadamay allegedly recruited residents to become fighters for the NPA, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

De la Cruz explained that the leaders would look into each household to see if there were 11-year-old children and older who could be recruited to in the NPA.

She said there have been "numerous" recruits since they occupied the housing projects in March last year.

"Madalas, lalaki po ang hinahanap nila, 11 years old pataas (Most of the time, they are looking for 11-year-old boys)," de la Cruz said.

Ariz said Kadamay occupied six housing projects, with some being used as "grounds" of the NPA for training.

These are the subdivisions of the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), Villa Louise (for the police and military), Padre Pio, Pandi 3, Atlantica and Villa Elise.

According to Ariz, Atlantica had the most number of communist rebels.

Georgina Tuston, one of the defectors, said all areas were being occupied by the communist fighters.

"Doon po sila [sa Atlantica Subdivision] tinuruan na mag-aral ng paano lumaban sa gobierno para po sa madaling salita, mga NPA po (They are being taught in Atlantica on how to fight the government or in other words, becoming NPA cadres)," Tuston told *The Manila Times* in a separate interview.

Tuston and de la Cruz, voicing their sentiments in front of the media and other former members,

said the NPA recruiters came from different provinces near Bulacan.

"The reason we withdraw from Kadamay is because of our children and we don't want them to become enemies of the state and soon-to-be members of the NPA, and we think this is the right thing to do for our children," Tuston said.

"We cannot stomach anymore their threats and their protests which we disliked," she added.

The subdivision of Atlantica is surrounded by persons wearing red ribbons and bandoliers on their heads and arms, with some using it to cover their faces, according to the former Kadamay members.

Ariz called on the President to provide them security because of the supposed NPA threats.

14 leaders

The defectors also identified 14 leaders of Kadamay who were making such threats to them.

They are Imelda Borloza, Mercy Mandin, Rowena Esparez, Mely Raz, Concepcion Opalla, Patrick de Ocampo, Janet Villamor, Rolyn Abangan, Milo Maurillo, Violeta Bagaforo, Rosario Soria, Melchor Saludares, Analyn Tumaos-as and Aiko Balcos.

The defectors said the leaders put up the barricade at the subdivision's entrance gate.

Ariz said all the leaders have been living in leisure within the area. He singled out Raz, who, he said, owns a Starex van, occupies four lots in Villa Louise, and has a husband who is a seaman.

The defectors brought the reporters to the area occupied by Raz, where a white Starex van was seen at one of her four lots.

In front of her garage space for the Starex, a variety store was also

seen. Some defectors claimed that it is also owned by Raz.

"My question is, what your motive?" a visibly irked Raz asked reporters, after finding out her house was being observed.

She was accompanied by Pat Tupas, the spokesman of Kadamay's Pandi municipal chapter, who also addressed the queries of visiting reporters.

As he went near the area where the defectors were, they immediately shouted at him and the remaining active members.

Tupas then belied the claims made by the defectors, particularly the P150 to P300 fee for rallies outside the area and the supposed NPA threats.

He also defended the blockade at the entrance gate, saying it was for the safety of the Kadamay residents.

"This is to ensure that there would be no commotion inside the housing units and to assure our members of their security," Tupas said in Filipino.

Policemen from the PNP Police Regional Office of Central Luzon went to the area even before the two factions of Kadamay faced off and threw insults and allegations at each other.

Upon the entry of reporters, the active Kadamay members barred the media, asking for identification cards for each one.

Sought for comment, the Pandi municipal police station said it was validating reports on the presence of the NPA rebels in the housing projects.

"We would want to ask the residents to take videos of actual scenes that there are NPA rebels carrying firearms in the area, and with that, we shall take action," said Chief Insp. Manuel de Vera Jr., Pandi police chief.

DEMPSEY REYES

Joma a 'spoiled brat' – DND chief

CPP head out of touch with reality

Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founding chairman Jose Maria "Joma" Sison got a beating from Department of National Defense (DND) Secretary Delfin Lorenzana yesterday who called Sison a "spoiled brat" and being out of touch with reality due to Sison's gripes about the delayed start of the peace negotiations.

Last Thursday, Sison said it is "both disappointing and frustrating" that "Duterte has unilaterally cancelled the scheduled start of the stand-down ceasefire on June 21 and the resumption of formal talks in the peace negotiations in Oslo a week later on June 28."

"Because the GRP [Government of the Republic of the Philippines] under Duterte is obviously not interested in serious peace negotiations, the revolutionary forces and the people have no choice but to single-mindedly wage people's war to achieve the national and social liberation of the Filipino people," Sison said.

In a statement, Lorenzana said Sison, "Instead

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of rationally talking with our panel to discuss how to move forward the resumption of the peace talks, goes into tantrum and orders the NPA [New People's Army] to wage a people's war."

Sison reacted to chief government peace negotiator Jesus Dureza's statement also on Thursday that Mr. Duterte wanted the resumption of the peace talks between the government and communist rebels to be held in the Philippines next month, not late in June as was previously agreed upon during informal talks in the Netherlands.

Sison wanted the talks to be held either in Oslo, Norway or in Vietnam which he termed as "neutral" venues.

In a televised interview last Friday, Sison also accused Mr. Duterte of sabotaging

the peace talks to lay the ground for imposing martial law nationwide despite the President's initiative to open a 60-day window for the resumption of the negotiations.

"His ego is robbing many of Filipinos, whom he has misled all these years, of what could be their best chance ever to rejoin their families and live productive lives," Lorenzana said in a statement.

"Your so-called army no longer listens to you, they are sick and tired of your lies and rhetoric."

"Mr. Sison, [it is] so easy for you to order the NPA to wage war and get killed while you are safely in the Netherlands enjoying a life of comfort and leisure. Your so-called army no longer listens to you," Lorenzana said.

"They are sick and tired of

your lies and rhetoric, and are in fact heeding the call of President Duterte to come down and live peaceful lives and they are doing just that. They have been surrendering in droves since November last year. So you think you can force the government to the peace table by waging war? Don't underestimate President Duterte," Lorenzana added.

Stand down turned down

Sison also claimed that government also unilaterally scrapped a "stand down" agreement signed last June 9 by GRP and the NDFF panels.

He added the public has the right to know the content of the scrapped stand down agreement.

"This agreement has been unilaterally scrapped by the GRP. And the press and public wish to know why," Sison said.

He added the contents of

agreements signed last June 10 "pertinent to the June 28 to 30 resumption of formal peace talks and the interim peace agreement which have been unilaterally cancelled by the GRP" should also be revealed.

"All the aforementioned documents are of public interest and have become archival materials that are worthy of contemporary and historical study," Sison said.

He added both or either of GRP and NDFF negotiating panels can share the documents with the press and public.

NDFF got advance notice

National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFF) chief negotiator Fidel Agcaoili, in another statement, said the communist movement was informed in advance of the deferred start of the negotiations.

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Don't underestimate Duterte, Defense chief warns Joma

By AARON B. RECUENCO

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana on Saturday warned Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founding chairman Joma Sison that he can't force President Duterte to go back to the negotiating table through an all-out offensive against the government.

"Mr. Sison is acting like a spoiled brat, which he is, and proves that he is very out

of touch with reality here. Instead of rationally talking with our panel to discuss how to move forward the resumption of the peace talks, he goes into tantrum and orders the NPA (New People's Army) to wage a people's war," said Lorenzana.

"So you think you can force the government to the peace table by waging war? Don't underestimate President Duterte," he added.

Lorenzana was reacting to

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Don't underestimate Duterte, Defense...

◀1

the statement of Sison who was quoted saying that the suspension of the resumption of peace talks would leave them with the no choice but to wage a "people's war for national and social liberation."

Sison had accused the Duterte administration of unilaterally suspending the peace negotiations that was supposed to be scheduled in the last week of June.

Lorenzana said it is easy for Sison to call for intensified attacks since he is living in comfort in the Netherlands, where he had sought political asylum.

The Defense chief was referring to the NPA, the armed wing of the CPP which is at the forefront of communist insurgency in the Philippines for almost five decades now.

The military said the NPA's strength is dwindling, with the latest estimate at 4,000 fighters.

"Your so-called army no longer listens to you. They are sick and tired of your lies and rhetoric, and are in fact heeding the call of President Duterte to come down and live peaceful lives and they are doing just that. They have been surrendering in droves since November last year," said Lorenzana.

"His ego is robbing many of Filipinos, whom he has misled all these years, of what could be their best chance ever to rejoin their families and live productive lives," he added.

521 flee conflict

In Agusan del Norte, a total of 126 families or 521 individuals fled their homes and farmlands due to an armed conflict between the Army's 29th Infantry Battalion (29th IB) and NPA terrorists in the hinterland of Zapanta Valley, Barangay Bangayan, Kitcharao town.

In a report to Director Rodolfo of the Disaster Response and Management Bureau (DRMB) on Friday, Regional Director Mita Chuchi Gupana Lim, of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD-Caraga Region 13), said the villagers have sought refuge in the Bangayan Covered Court, Barangay Bangayan.

Lim said classes at the Zapanta Valley Elementary School were also temporarily transferred to the HV Dagani Elementary School to ensure the safety and security of students.

"The Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO) of Kitcharao, with the DSWD 13 Field Regional Office, already distributed food items and other immediate needs to the affected residents being sheltered at the Bangayan Covered Court," Lim said.

The residents were fleeing skirmishes between the 29th IB and the NPA in Zapanta Valley that started last June 10. (With a report from Mike U. Crismundo)

PNP blames Kadamay for violent protest

By MARTIN A. SADONGDONG

The Philippine National Police (PNP) yesterday put the blame on militant urban poor group Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (Kadamay) for the violence that broke out at the dispersal of workers of condiment giant, NutriAsia, Inc., who had been on strike since early this month in Bulacan.

Since June 2, workers of NutriAsia, Inc. had formed a picket line outside NutriAsia Inc.'s factory in Barangay Lambakin, Marilao, Bulacan to protest the supposed dismissal of at least 50 contractual employees who reportedly formed a union, the alleged substandard and inadequate safety gear and equipment, and the extreme humid condition inside the factory which they claimed could reach as high as 40 degrees Celsius.

However, local police intervened and broke the picket line on Thursday which apparently erupted to a violent clash. At least 10 workers were reportedly hurt on the part of the workers while Senior Superintendent Chito Bersaluna, Bulacan Provincial Police Office (PPO) said 10 were injured on the part of the PNP.

Senior Superintendent Benigno Durana Jr., PNP spokesperson, said it was not the police who initiated the violent clash but members of Kadamay who "infiltrated" and "encouraged" the protesters to confront the lawmen. 2

Drilon backs Duterte on peace talks venue

By Marlon Purificacion

OPPOSITION Senator Franklin Drilon threw his support behind President Rodrigo Duterte's call for the peace talks with communist rebels to be held in the country.

"I support the President's decision. The venue of the next round of peace negotiations with the rebel groups should be the Philippines," Drilon said, who served as a peace process adviser in past administrations.

"It's about time that we change the venue of peace talks with the National Democratic Front (NDF) and it is about time that it takes place on Philippine soil," he added.

Drilon, who had once served as an advisor for the government's peace talks with the National Democratic Front, said that the change of venue should not hinder the peace process.

While the Norwegian government has

played a valuable role in the country's peace process, Drilon said that "the time has come for the Philippines and the Communist Party of the Philippines - New People's Army - NDF to talk among themselves."

"The peace talks have always been held on an international ground but it did not seem to accelerate discussion. Let the real peace talks begin in a local arena. No third party this time," Drilon said.

"Perhaps, it can accelerate discussions and both panels can finally come to an agreement," he added.

The minority leader said that the Philippine's hosting of the peace talks can boost the confidence and sincerity of both parties in the peace process.

By agreeing to hold the peace talks in the country, the communist group will be able to show that it has truly agreed to recognize the legitimacy of the government as the duly-constituted authority,



DRILON

according to Drilon. Drilon added that there is no reason for the rebel groups to reject it if the latter is truly sincere in the peace talks.

"We will never achieve a true and lasting peace if the CPP-NPA-NDF, after a series of peace negotiations that took place, would still say they do not recognize the legitimacy of the government," Drilon said.

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NEWS

TONIGHT

Duterte's call for PH peace talks backed

Drilon says gov't, rebel groups may finally come to agreement

By MARLON PURIFICACION

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Drilon added that there is no reason for the rebel groups to reject it if the latter is truly sincere in the peace talks.

"We will never achieve a true and lasting peace if the CPP-NPA-NDF, after a series of peace negotiations that took place, would still say they do not recognize the legitimacy of the government," Drilon said.

ARMM WORKERS FEAR MASSIVE DISPLACEMENT

By Nash B. Maulana

COTABATO CITY—Officials and employees have painted a grim scenario of massive displacement and tugs-of-war of workers and teachers for positions in a smaller Bangsamoro bureaucracy, when the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao is abolished.

The Senate version of the Bangsamoro Basic Law would inevitably displace workers and teachers in the ARMM from their current employment or mid-level positions, officials said.

ARMM human resource managers (HRMs) said a separation package amounting to 300 percent of all affected employees' basic salaries was also reduced to only 200 percent in an amendment introduced by Iloilo Senator Franklin Drilon, an ally of former President Benigno C. Aquino III.

Anak Mindanao Party-List Representative Makmod Mending Jr. told the **Manila Standard** that he had originally proposed a 300 percent separation package for permanent ARMM

employees, separated from government service because of the BBL.

Worse off, practically only one position would be available for two or more displaced employees or teachers when agencies are merged, said Engineer Avila Abubakar, the HRM of the Office of Regional Governor Mujiv Hataman.

For instance, Abubakar said, the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education are merged under BBL education provision, and so only one set of plantilla positions would exist for both agencies that used to have separate sets of staffing patterns and employees.

Abubakar said the merger of agencies into single entities would leave only one set of positions up for grabs for three or more contending applicants in an Autonomous Region for Bangsamoro.

Drilon had said the separation package and the size of bureaucracy should be reduced, considering constraints in government financial resources.

ONLINE NEWS

17 June 2018

Topic	Author	Source
	CNN	
400 miyembro ng NPA, mahigpitnabinabantayan ng militar sa northern Luzon	BomboRadyoDagupan	BomboRadyo
Special team ng gov't peace panel, makikipag-usapsa NDFP sa weekend – Sison	BomboRadyoCauayan	BomboRadyo
Kasunduansa GRP-NDF informal talks, hindibinabalewala – Dureza	BomboReymundTinaza	BomboRadyo
JomaSison hits cancellation of peace talks	Jose RodelClapano	Philippine Star
Ordnance teams foil roadside bombings in central Mindanao	John Unson	Philippine Star

Special team ng gov't peace panel, makikipag-usapsa NDFP sa weekend – Sison

Posted By: [Bartolomeo](#) on July 16, 2018 | [1749 Views](#) | [Comments](#)

CAUAYAN CITY – Mariingtinutulanni Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria SisonangnaisniPangulong Rodrigo Duterte na idadagay sa Maynila ang peace negotiations simulasaikalawanglinggo ng Hulyo.

Sa pakikipag-ugnayan ng BomboRadyoCauayan kay Sison, iginiitnitonahindi raw siyapapayag at ang National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) sa gusto ng presidentenailagaysiya at angusapangpangkapayapaansakontrol ng chief executive.

Aniya, nakasaadkasisa Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) naang peace negotiations ay dapatisagawasa foreign neutral venue para hindimasingitan ng mgaarmadong peace spoilers o saboteurs.

Sinabi pa niSison, may special team ang Government Peace Panel nakakausapsa NDFP sadaratingna weekend kaugnay ng ipinagpalibannapagsisimulangmuli ng peace talks nanakatakdasanasaHunyo 28.

Kasunduansa GRP-NDF informal talks, hindibinabalewala – Dureza

Panel sa 12:00 PM, June 10, 2019 | 10:51 AM sa [Comment](#)

Nilinawni Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza hindibinabalewala ang mga pagkasunduan sa pagitan ng gobyerno ng Pilipinas at National Democratic Front (NDF) sa isang informal talks sa Oslo, Norway.

Ito ay sakabila ng pagpapalibani Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa katakdasanang pagbabalik ng formal peace talks sa June 28.

Sapanayan ng Bombo Radyo, sinabini Sec. Dureza ito ay pag-aaralan ni Pangulong Duterte at magbabase ng pinalnadesisyon kaugnaysa peace talks.

Ayon kay Sec. Dureza, habang hinahintayang desisyon ni Pangulong Duterte, sasamantala hinila ang pagkakataon para konsultahin ang publiko at iba pang stakeholders para maiwasang maulit ang pagkakamalian sa karaan.

Una ng hinikayaini Communist Party of the Philippines – New People's Army (CPP-NPA) founding chairman Jose Maria Sison ang magkabilang panel naisa publiko ang mga nilagdaang kasunduan sa backchanneling talks na hindi umano iginalang ni Pangulong Duterte sa kanyang desisyon.

Joma Sison hits cancellation of peace talks

Jose Rodal Clapano (The Philippine Star) - June 16, 2018 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Communist Party of the Philippines founding chairman Jose Ma. Sison on Thursday criticized President Duterte for unilaterally cancelling the resumption of peace talks with the rebels.

Sison said it was "disappointing and frustrating" that Duterte decided to cancel the peace talks at the last minute as preparations are underway for the formal peace negotiations between the government and the National Democratic Front (NDF) in Oslo, Norway on June 28.

Sison said Duterte and his administration have simply shown no interest in serious peace negotiations.

As a result, Sison warned that communist rebels would "singlemindedly" wage the people's war.

Sison said the written agreements pertaining to the scheduled events have been signed by no less than the respective chairpersons of the government and the NDF negotiating panels.

The agreements signing was witnessed by the Royal Norwegian special envoy Idun Tveit on June 9.

"I urge the two negotiating panels to release to the public and to the press the written and signed agreements of June 9 and 10 signed by the chairmen of the (government) and NDF negotiating panels and by the members of their respective special teams," Sison said.

For their part, the military brushed aside the threat aired by Sison that the rebels would continue the people's war in the wake of the suspension of the peace talks.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman Col. Edgard Arevalo said the military wants lasting peace but the troops should perform their mandate to restore peace.

"While we subscribe to the shared aspiration towards the attainment of a just and lasting peace through dialogues and deliberations, the AFP shall continue to perform its mandate to protect the people, ensure the peace and the territorial integrity of the country," Arevalo said.

Sources said the President had a change of heart after senior military officials reportedly requested him to delay the resumption of peace talks for three months after consultations with all stakeholders.

The militant group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) said the cancellation of the peace talks is not a good sign for the peace process as a whole.

"The reason offered by Peace Adviser Jesus Dureza, of the need to hold public consultations, appears flimsy and disregards years of public fora and consultations held on the peace talks,"

Bayan secretary-general Renato Reyes said. Reyes said several lawmaker and peace advocates have already expressed support for the talks.

"There have been signed agreements this June for the holding of formal talks at the end of the month which could lead to an interim peace agreement which includes important socio-economic reforms. We fear that the postponement will undermine the goodwill that has been created in the series of backchannel talks and may waste an opportunity to address the serious economic crisis facing the nation," he said. – With Rhodina Villanueva, Artemio Dumlao, Jaime Laude

Ordnance teams foil roadside bombings in central Mindanao

John Limson (philstar.com) - June 16, 2018 - 2:39pm

MAGUINDANAO, Philippines — Authorities foiled on Friday attempts by communist rebels and Islamic State-inspired militants to set off roadside bombs in Sultan Kudarat and North Cotabato provinces.

Captain Arvin Encinas, public affairs officer of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said Saturday bomb experts were able to promptly deactivate the improvised explosive device found by motorists along a thoroughfare in the town proper of Esperanza, Sultan Kudarat.

The IED was packed with metal fragments with jagged edges and rigged with a detonating contraption that can be activated from a distance.

image: <https://video.unrulymedia.com/native/images/in-art-close-icon-126x128-16481b937f87b244a645cdbef0d930f8.png>

It was the second roadside bomb found and defused by Army ordnance men in the same town in a span of three weeks.

The police and Army intelligence units in Sultan Kudarat said the brigand Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, which boasts of allegiance to the Islamic State, was behind the pre-empted bombing plots.

"The 6th ID is thankful to the patriotic residents of Esperanza who helped prevent what could have been a deadly IED incident there," Encinas said.

About two hours later, passersby found a powerful roadside bomb along a road in Barangay Tomanding in Arakan, North Cotabato, where there is strong presence of the New People's Army.

Responding police and Army bomb disposal teams safely dismantled the IED, weighing about 15 kilos.

Superintendent Aldrin Gonzalez, spokesman of the Police Regional Office-12, said personnel of the Arakan municipal police are certain the powerful IED was planted by NPAs to retaliate for losses in recent encounters with Army units in North Cotabato.

"No doubt the NPA was behind that thwarted bombing because the IED found there was identical with those recovered in NPA camps in North Cotabato that were overrun by government forces recently," Gonzalez said

The IED, placed inside a large bag, was left ready for detonation on a grassy side of a road in Barangay Tomanding.