

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



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**26 May 2018**

**Saturday**



*Honor. Patriotism. Duty*

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# 'Strong institutions needed, not strongmen'

*"Protect ombudsman, protect the people"*

By ELIZABETH MARCELO

Two months before her retirement, Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales has broken her silence over perceived attacks on her office and other constitutional bodies, saying the country needs strong, independent institutions more than strong leaders.

"In closing, let me underscore that great countries do not need strongmen. They need strong institutions," Morales said in a speech at a forum organized by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) on Thursday.

"Great men eventually perish, but great institutions outlast them all. By protecting great institutions like the Office of the Ombudsman, you

are protecting the people," she added.

Without delving into details, Morales admitted that her office is facing challenges to its independence.

"A check with reality evinces that the challenges hold true to this very day. Threats and intimidation always rear their ugly head along the way, sprouting from both imperfect systems and imperfect person-

alities," Morales said.

The US-based *TIME Magazine*, in its May 14 international edition, listed President Duterte among the world's "strongmen" along with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban.

But Duterte refuted the "strongman" tag saying, "I

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## Strong From Page 1

have never sent anybody to jail for criticizing me."

He had castigated the Office of the Ombudsman reportedly for having corrupt prosecutors who would accept bribe money from officials in exchange for dismissing graft charges.

Duterte had also slammed Morales and even dared her to resign for supposedly allowing her office to use illegally obtained documents in its probe on his alleged hidden wealth.

Overall deputy ombudsman Melchor Arthur Carandang, in an interview in September last

year, said that Morales had authorized him to investigate Duterte's bank transactions when the latter was mayor of Davao City.

He claimed that his office had obtained bank documents from the Anti-Money Laundering Council showing Duterte and his family had over P1 billion worth of transactions in several banks from 2006 to 2016. AMLC denied that it had provided documents to Carandang.

In January, Malacañang ordered Carandang suspended

for 90 days for administrative offenses of grave misconduct and grave dishonesty for allegedly disclosing false information about the bank transactions of Duterte and his family.

Morales called the suspension order "patently unconstitutional" and refused to enforce it.

She maintained that the Supreme Court had declared that the Office of the President has no jurisdiction over the deputy ombudsman.

"The guarantees of independence, when properly asserted and wielded, have the power to hurdle even the strongest pressure in those fleeting epi-

sodes," Morales said in her speech. Morales also lashed out at a proposal to abolish the Office of the Ombudsman.

"One guarantee of independence is that it cannot be abolished by the legislature since it is an office created by the Constitution," Morales said.

"More importantly, the mode of removing an ombudsman is only by impeachment. Since the ombudsman is not subject to the disciplinary authority of the President, he or she is not, and should not be beholden to the appointing authority," she added.

Leyte Rep. Vicente Veloso had floated the idea of abol-

ishing the ombudsman and transferring its powers to the Department of Justice, but colleagues in the committee on constitutional amendments rejected his proposal.

In her speech, Morales also called on the members of the IBP and the public to remain vigilant in protecting the independence not only of the ombudsman but of other constitutional institutions as well saying "no single branch can control the entire government."

"The responsibility of addressing social maladies rests on the shoulders of government institutions. It is thus in-

cumbent for these institutions to be efficient, resilient and most importantly, independent in fulfilling its obligations to the people," Morales said. Morales will retire on July 26 when she turns 77.

Aside from the Office of the Ombudsman, the Commission on Human Rights also gets frequent tongue-lashing from Duterte and his supporters.

Critics of the administration had also accused Duterte of initiating the ouster of Maria Lourdes as chief justice through a quo warranto petition filed by the Office of the Solicitor General, the government's chief lawyer.

# NAPOLLES STRIPPED OF GOV'T PROTECTION

STORY BY TETCH TORRES, TUPAS AND MARLON RAMOS

The Department of Justice has removed the alleged pork barrel mastermind, Janet Lim-Napoles, from its Witness Protection Program, saying she faces no more threats.

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By Tetch Torres-Tupas and Marlon Ramos @Team\_Inquirer

The alleged mastermind in the P10-billion peso pork barrel scam has been removed from the government's Witness Protection Program (WPP), the Department of Justice (DOJ) said on Friday.

Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra said he had sent a letter to lawyers of Janet Lim-Napoles "giving notice of the termination of her provisional coverage, under the Witness Protection Security and Benefit Program (WPSBP) effective May 25."

Guevarra said the "main purpose" for which Napoles had sought to be admitted into the WPP "has become moot and academic."

"As there has been no further claim of threats to her personal security inside Camp Bagong Diwa, (we) found no reason to extend further Ms Napoles' provisional coverage under the WPP," Guevarra said.

He said Napoles had requested witness protection due to alleged threats to her life. She also sought her transfer from Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City, where she is currently detained on plunder charges, to a secure housing facility of the WPP.

### Sandiganbayan rejections

The First, Third and Fifth Divisions of the Sandiganbayan, where she is facing a string of plunder and graft charges linked to the pork barrel scam, had all denied her urgent motions to be transferred to the custody of the WPP of the DOJ.

Napoles was provisionally

admitted into the program on Feb. 27 under then Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II in exchange for her affidavit implicating more people in the multi-billion-peso scam involving legislators' Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF).

### New PDAF cases

Under Republic Act No. 6981, or the Witness Protection Act, a person to be admitted into the WPP must first execute a sworn statement describing in detail the manner in which a certain crime had been committed and his or her participation in it.

Napoles' affidavit reportedly identified a former Cabinet secretary and more senators involved in the scam.

Invoking confidentiality, the DOJ did not release her affidavit.

Napoles' lawyer Stephen David earlier said that his client was open to standing as a state

witness in the new PDAF cases being investigated by the DOJ.

#### Ombudsman's objection

But Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales rejected such a role for Napoles, saying she was "one of the principal alleged malefactors" in the scam and was therefore not qualified to become state witness.

The decision of Guevarra, who earlier vowed not to let the DOJ be used to persecute administration critics, may have aborted Napoles' supposed plan to testify against politicians identified with former President Benigno Aquino III.

It was the latest of Napoles' legal setbacks in her attempt to win back her freedom following the Supreme Court's decision in April tossing out her bail petition due to "a great presumption of (her) guilt" in the pork barrel scam.

Napoles spent only two



Menardo Guevarra

years in the Correctional Institution for Women in Mandaluyong City after she was convicted by the Makati Regional Trial Court for the serious illegal detention of her cousin Benhur Luy, the primary whistle-blower in the scam.

She was taken back to a jail

in Camp Bagong Diwa in May last year after Solicitor General Jose Calida's intervention prompted the Court of Appeals to reverse her conviction.

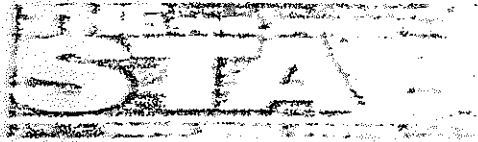
Napoles is accused of running a network of bogus foundations that received PDAF allocations from several lawmakers, who in turn allegedly earned kickbacks in exchange.

In July 2013, the Inquirer broke the story on the scam.

In June 2014, the Ombudsman indicted former Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Jinggoy Estrada, Ramon Revilla Jr and other government officials in the Sandiganbayan for plunder and graft in connection with the scam, with Napoles as their coaccused.

Revilla was accused of receiving P224.5 million in kickbacks, Estrada P183.8 million and Enrile P172.8 million. All three have denied any wrongdoing. INQ

MALACANANG PHOTO



## Rody doubts US readiness to defend Phl vs extremists

President Duterte has raised doubts whether the United States would be ready to help defend the Philippines from Islamic militants amid concerns raised by some groups over the administration's dealing with China.

"Because of the threat here in Mindanao, you must have an option of where to go. Is America ready to die for us? Are they ready to send their troops here? Or can I call China for more arms because we do not have it?" Duterte said during the inauguration of a bridge in Davao City on Thursday.

Duterte made the statement after some sectors questioned why the government did not contest Beijing's deployment of missiles and other military equipment in the South China Sea.

The US was the first to provide missiles, guns, ammunition and other weaponry as well as surveillance equipment to the Armed Forces of the Philippines when Maute terrorists laid siege to Marawi in May last year. Australia followed, providing drones.

China and Russia later donated guns and bullets.

Duterte reiterated that the Philippines could not afford to wage war against China.

He also maintained that he is not abandoning the Philippines' claims to the disputed areas in the South China Sea.

"We cannot afford a war. We cannot win a battle against China and I would only lose maybe thousands of my troops and policemen," he said.

Duterte had blamed the US for not lifting a finger when China started building military equipment in the South China Sea.

Meanwhile, Sen. Leila de Lima called on the President to convene the National Security Council (NSC) in a bid to take up China's militarization of

the South China Sea.

De Lima said the country could not afford to remain silent while China continues to construct structures and install missiles in the disputed waters.

She filed Senate Resolution 744, asking the President to convene the NSC, the principal advisory body on the proper coordination and integration of plans and policies affecting national security.

"Diplomatic actions are no longer options as the military activities of China in the West Philippine Sea have placed the whole country under perpetual threat," De Lima said.

"The President should be presented all possible actions, including forceful diplomacy, close collaboration with allies such as Australia, Japan and the United States, renewed partnership with Indonesia, Vietnam and other allies in the ASEAN, and availment of other UN mechanisms," she added.

China has reportedly deployed cruise ship and surface-to-air missiles on three islands in the Spratlys, where the Philippines is one of six claimant-countries.

Beijing has also landed bombers on an outpost in the South China Sea.

Duterte admitted shedding a tear after he led the ceremonial valve opening of the Polyard-3 well, operated by the China International Mining Petroleum Co. Ltd. in Cebu City last weekend.

"Last week, I was in Alegria, Cebu. For the first time *nakita ko 'yung apoy na* (I saw the fire)... When I turned on the valve *para lumabas 'yung (langis) pag-uwi ko sa chopper kunyari nag-wipe ako ng face ko* but I cried. At least for the first time *nakita ko oil* (I saw oil)," the President said. — Christina

Mendez, Marvin Sy 4



**NEWS BRIEFS****WPS dispute with China 'can't be solved in this lifetime'**

The country's territorial dispute with China in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) cannot be resolved in this lifetime, according to presidential spokesperson Harry Roque. Saying that the Duterte administration was "not pro-China" and would not give away territories to China, Roque said the government only wanted to set aside the contentious issues at this time and to pursue other matters in cooperation with the regional superpower. "We are not pro-China. We are not giving away our territories... Let's not touch the contentious issues first because I think the issue of the disputed islands has no resolution during our lifetimes," he said during a television interview on Thursday night on Light TV. He added that the Duterte administration was setting aside the issues with China that could not be immediately resolved. "The issues that can be agreed upon should be pursued. This is why issues of economic cooperation, trade and investments, non-contentious issues, now proceed," Roque said. —JULIEM. AURELIO

Life

May 2018

# TRINIDADIAN INQUIRY

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## **De Lima urges Du30 to immediately convene NSC**

Sen. Leila de Lima is calling for the immediate convening of the National Security Council (NSC) to determine the country's course of action in the West Philippine Sea. The opposition senator filed Senate Resolution No. 744, urging President Duterte to convene the NSC as soon as possible. "Inaction or soft diplomatic actions are no longer options as the military activities of China [in the] West Philippine Sea have placed the whole country under perpetual threat," she warned. "The President should be presented all possible actions, including forceful diplomacy and close collaboration with allies..." The NSC is the country's principal advisory body on national security. —JULIEM. AURELIO <sup>AS</sup>

## Palace: Rody's non-confrontational pivot to China 'timely'

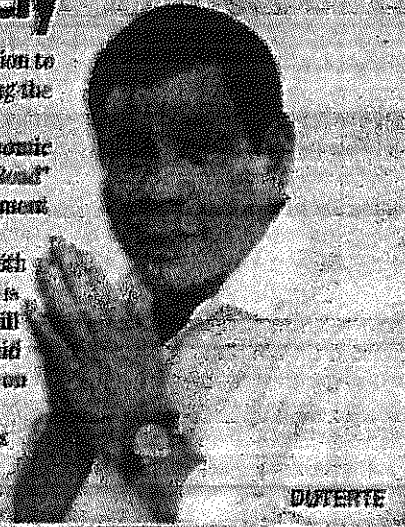
Malacañang said Thursday President Duterte's decision to pivot to China, and not to be confrontational in resolving the West Philippine Sea dispute, is very timely.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said all economic activities are now in Asia, with China's modern "Belt and Road" economic integration initiative boosting trade and investment and people-to-people exchanges in the region.

"The pivot of the President to China is in conformity with a new world history. The Silk Road details why this century is Asia's century. So our pivot is very timely because we will benefit while economic activities are in Asia," Roque said in an interview with Bro. Eddie Villanueva over Light TV on Thursday night.

The Philippines should take advantage of the country's proximity to China, the world's second largest economy.

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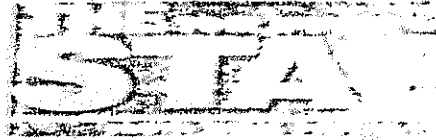


DUTERTE

# INQUIRER

## Japanese warship pays goodwill visit to Manila

An Asagiri-class destroyer of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) docked on Friday at Pier 15 in South Harbor in Manila for an overnight goodwill visit. The warship was welcomed by Captain Joselo A. Tuballa of the Philippine Navy. The welcome ceremonies were followed by a port briefing aboard the JS Setogiri, which has a 200-man crew. Capt. Susumi Moriyama, commander of the JMSDF's Escort Division Seven, and Cmdr. Tokeshi Tonegawa, commanding officer of the JS Setogiri, were scheduled to make a courtesy call on Navy chief Vice Adm. Robert Empedrad. The Setogiri is the fourth Japanese warship to visit the country this year. — JAYMEET GAMIL



## ACROSS THE COUNTRY

### 7 soldiers get medals of valor

President Duterte recognized the bravery of seven soldiers wounded in action and now recuperating at the Metro Davao Medical Research Center in Davao City in a bid to boost their morale.

During a hospital visit last Thursday, Duterte personally awarded the medals of the Order of Lapu-Lapu with the Rank of Kampilan to the soldiers in honor of their courage and sacrifice in the service of the country.

Pfc. Nicasio Badana III, Pvt. Michael Liban, Private First Class Jackson Macaraig, Cpl. Kith Domingo, Pvt. Roy Inovejas, Pfc. Roger Belas and Pfc. Daniel Fabular received the medals from the President.

Inovejas, Belas and Fabular were wounded by an improvised explosive device in Mabini, Compostella Valley last May 21.

Badana, Liban and Macaraig suffered injuries in an encounter in Surigao del Sur last May 18 while Domingo was wounded in a separate encounter last May 19.

— Christina Mendez, Edith Regalado

## VISIT AT HOSPITAL

## DU30 GIVES WOUNDED TROOPS GUNS, CASH AND . . . A COW

DAVAO CITY—President Duterte's generosity toward soldiers is now well-known but it went a step further when he offered one soldier, wounded in battle, a gift that the soldier would surely not forget—a cow.

Seven wounded soldiers recuperating at a hospital here were showered with gifts by the President, who promised them medals, pistols, money and the now famous trip to Hong Kong.

On top of all these, Mr. Duterte gave one soldier, Pfc. Daniel Fabular, a gift that he was likely to remember all his life.

The President offered Fabular a cow to be slaughtered for his wedding to his fiancée of nine years, Natasha Kresta dela Cerna.

### Overwhelmed

"I was elated and overwhelmed when the President stepped into my room, came to my bed and asked how I was doing," said Fabular, one of five soldiers wounded by an improvised explosive device planted by New People's Army (NPA) rebels at Cabuyoan village in Mabini town, Compostela Valley last week.

The 27-year-old Fabular suffered shrapnel wounds in the face, chest, arm and legs.

Dela Cerna, his fiancée, was at his bedside when the President, accompanied by Special Assistant to the President Christopher "Bong" Go and other officials, visited them at Metro Davao Medical and Research Center.

"I, too, was surprised. I'm very happy to see and meet him in person," the 26-year-old Dela Cerna said.



COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF President Duterte visits wounded soldiers at Metro Davao Medical and Research Center. He gifted one of them with a cow. —MALACAÑANG PHOTO

She and Fabular were set to tie the knot on June 16 in their hometown, Isulan, Sultan Kudarat province.

### 'Ninong'

They asked Mr. Duterte to stand as their wedding godfather, but it was not known if the President accepted the offer.

Dela Cerna said she believed the President could fit the wedding into his schedule. "After all, it's a Saturday," she said of the day the wedding falls.

Fabular said they intended to go on honeymoon in Hong Kong, still courtesy of Mr. Duterte.

The President bestowed the

Wounded Personnel Medal and Order of Lapu-Lapu with the rank of Kampilan to Fabular and Cpl. Kith Domingo, Pfc. Jackson Macaraeg, Pfc. Roger Belas, Pfc. Nicasio Badana III, Pvt. Michael Liban and Pvt. Roy Inovejas.

### Serving the country

According to Executive Order No. 35 signed by Mr. Duterte in 2017, the Kampilan medal is given to government workers and private citizens who were injured or had lost property in pursuit of the President's campaigns.

Macaraeg was wounded in a clash with the NPA in Lingig,

Surigao del Sur province, early this month. Domingo was shot in the leg in a clash with the rebels on April 19.

The soldiers said they would return to the battlefield to "continue serving the country."

"If it's already your time to go, your time will come," Fabular said.

"Death would come at its time whether you're a soldier or a civilian," he added.

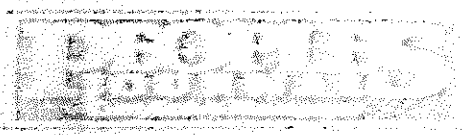
The soldiers received a total of P110,000 in cash and checks from Mr. Duterte's special financial assistance budget and the military's cash aid to wounded troopers. —FRINSTON

LIM INQ AR

**President's chief bodyguard gets new post**

Brig. Gen. Lope Dagoy, commander of the Presidential Security Group (PSG), assumed his new post on Thursday as brigade commander of the 802nd Brigade based in Leyte, replacing Brig. Gen. Francisco Mendoza Jr. Maj. Gen. Raul Farnacio, chief of the 8th Infantry Division, presided over the change of command ceremony. A member of the Philippine Military Academy "Hinirang" Class of 1987, Dagoy had led the PSG since March last year. Sources said Col. Jose Ariel Niembra, who once served under Task Force Davao and the PSG, is the strongest candidate to replace Dagoy at the PSG — FRANCES MANGOSING

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## PSG to have new commander – Malacañang sources

THE Presidential Security Group (PSG) will soon have a new commander.

Palace sources said Colonel Jose "Jim" Niembra will be PSG commander effective May 30.

He will replace PSG chief Brigadier General Lope Dagoy who assumed the post of brigade commander of the Army's 802nd Infantry Brigade in Leyte on Thursday during a change of command ceremony.

Dagoy served as the chief of President Rodrigo Duterte's security for a year and two months. He was appointed to the post in March 2017.

Before assuming the PSG top post, Niembra was its deputy group commander.

Niembra also previously served as deputy commander of Task Force Davao when Duterte was mayor.

**EMontano**

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# Soldiers dig up illegal sewage pipes in Boracay

By JARA YAP

ILOILO CITY — Soldiers used shovels to dig up illegal sewage lines in Boracay Island in Aklan, which has been closed to tourists while undergoing a six-month rehabilitation program.

Jim Sampulna, Western Visayas regional director of Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), said 100 soldiers started digging up along the island's famous stretch of white beach.

The use of soldiers from the Philippine Army's 3rd Infantry Division (3ID) was requested by DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, a former military general.

Last week, government authorities found bacteria-tainted sewage pipes buried along the

white beach.

Aghast at the discovery of the illegal pipes, Cimatu declared he will not recommend to President Duterte the reopening of the resort island if its waters do not meet safety standards.

Testing conducted by the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) found the level of coliform bacteria 74,000 probable number per 100 milliliters (MPN/100 ml), way beyond the safe level of 400 MPN/100 ml.

DENR continued to call on islanders as well as business groups such as the Boracay Foundation Inc (BFI) and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc (PCCI-Boracay) to continue supporting the rehabilitation program.

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PHILIPPINES

6

# Families of 7 heroes of Marawi siege get P10-M gov't assistance

By Alfred Dalizon

THE families of seven brave policemen who were killed during the 5-month Marawi City attacks staged by ISIS-inspired Maute and Abu Sayyaf gunmen in May last year have received a total of P10.460 million in assistance by the government, the Philippine National Police said yes-

terday.

Seven of the policemen, three of them from the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Police Regional Office and four from the elite PNP Special Action Force, were killed in operations to recover the city from the terrorists, said the PNP Directorate for Personnel and Records Management headed by Chief Superintendent Lyn-

don G. Cubos.

The three ARMM policemen were among the first casualties when Maute gunmen started sowing violence in the city on May 23, 2017. According to Cubos, the families of Chief Inspector Freddie M. Solar, Inspector Edwin Placido and Police Officer Junaid Mama have each received Spe-

cial Financial Assistance amounting to P250,000 and other benefits amounting to almost P1.5 million.

The same amount of money was received by the families of four brave PNP-SAF commandos who perished during the siege. They were identified as Police Officers 3 Alexis Mangaldan and Daruel Tegwa, Police Officer 2 Alexis Laurente and Po-

lice Officer 1 Moises Kimayong.

The families of the PNP heroes also received help from the Presidential Social Fund - Special Financial Assistance, the Office of the Chief, PNP, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, One Philippines Foundation, Inc. and Regional Comptrollership Fund, said PNP spokesman Chief Supt. John C. Bulalacao.

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REVIVING STALLED PEACE TALKS

SISON: DUTERTE'S THREAT TO KILL ME JUST WORDS OF ENDEARMENT

LUCENA CITY—Communist Party of the Philippines founding chair Jose Maria Sison on Friday said that President Duterte's threat to kill him if peace talks failed was a way of expressing endearment.

"Duterte has repeated so many times the threat to kill me

that sometimes I surmise that the expression 'kill' has actually become a term of endearment, as in some American comedies," Sison said in a statement.

On Thursday, Mr. Duterte threatened to kill Sison, his former professor, if the government's proposed peace talks

with the communists failed.

The President again invited Sison to come home and gave him two months to discuss peace with the government.

However, if the revival of the peace talks failed again, Mr. Duterte said he would personally escort Sison to the airport but

would tell him not to return to the country again because he would kill him.

No word war

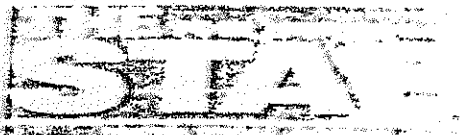
"I will really tell him: 'Son of a b\*\*\*\*, don't you ever come back here again. I will really kill you,'" Mr. Duterte said.

The President also blamed Sison for the death of soldiers and policemen during the more than four decades of communist insurgency in the country.

But Sison, who is based in The Netherlands, avoided another word war with Mr. Duterte.

"I will not reply to Duterte in

any vitriolic manner, unless he actually wrecks the work already done by the negotiating panels to prepare for the resumption of formal peace talks," said Sison, who also serves as chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. —DELFIN MALLARI JR. INQ



# Rody gives new ultimatum to Joma

DAVAO CITY - President Duterte has given Communist Party of the Philippines founder Jose Ma. Sison a window of only two months to return to the country and resume the peace talks between the government and leftist guerrillas - or face perpetual exile.

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## Rody gives From Page 1

"If nothing happens, I would tell him 'do not ever return again to this country I will kill you. You've killed so much of my soldiers and policemen' *Dapat lang* (He deserves death)," Duterte said during the inauguration of the Davao River bridge widening project the other day.

He stressed that the window is very small and that this invitation is a make-or-break deal.

If nothing significant will come out of the talks, Duterte said he would keep his word and personally escort Sison to the airport, allowing him to get out of the country instead of arresting and sending him to jail.

He added that he would make sure Sison will not be able to return to the Philippines again.

For Sison though, the re-

peated threats have become a "term of endearment."

"(Duterte) has repeated so many times the threat to kill me that sometimes I surmise that the expression kill has actually become a term of endearment, as in some American comedies," a statement posted on the National Democratic Front website reads.

The communist leader added that Duterte, by using strong words, would now appear to be eager to resume the peace negotiations rather than block them.

"It is best that Duterte and I allow and encourage the negotiating panels to continue preparing for the resumption of formal talks and make substantial progress as soon as possible," he said.

Sison, who fled to Europe after peace talks failed in 1987

and has stayed abroad since, said he is ready to go home as soon as there is "substantial progress" in the negotiations as he expressed optimism that the backchannel consultations on the resumption on peace talks are leading to better results.

He earlier revealed that an interim peace agreement is expected to be signed when formal talks resume on June 28.

Both the government and the communists, he said, were expected to announce a stand-down agreement two weeks before that.

"So, by June 14, *plantsado na* (it's all ironed out). Of course, I may be proven wrong because everything depends on that joint announcement... there may be some misunderstanding but they can be solved," Sison added.

The talks fell through in November last year following clashes between government

troops and communist rebels. Duterte claimed the government is winning the war against the New People's Army (NPA), the communist party's armed unit, in apparent reference to the arrest of Elizalde "Ka Jinggoy" Cañete who is considered to be the overall commander of the communist guerrillas in Mindanao and successor of Leonardo "Kumander Parago" Pitao, the NPA leader operating in Southern Mindanao.

Presidential adviser on the peace process Jesus Dureza, during a speech at the 22nd National Press Forum of the Philippine Press Institute at the Jen Hotel in Pasay City, challenged the media on Thursday to engage the entire country in the pursuit of peace.

He said the media have a unique role in peace building and that the public will not appreciate the milestones achieved in the peace process

if they are informed only after agreements are signed and not while the process is going on.

In Negros Oriental province, the military reported that three more heavy equipment units used to build farm-to-market roads in Mabinay town were burned by the NPA.

Capt. Ruel Llanes, 303rd Infantry Brigade spokesman, said the rebels torched a roller, backhoe and bulldozer in sitios Butokon and Begonia of barangay Bagtic and in sitio Talingting in barangay Luyang.

Senior Supt. Raul Tacaca, Negros Oriental Police Provincial Office in charge, said at least two suspects were arrested for the incident, which cost at least P14 million in damage.

In Quezon province, a soldier was killed while two NPA rebels were captured in last week's fighting between government troops and com-

munist guerrillas in General Nakar town.

Brig. Gen. Arnulfo Marcelo Burgos, commander of the Army's 202nd Infantry Brigade, said the rebel's camp in barangay Umiray fell after almost a week of cat-and-mouse skirmishes.

"More or less 15 NPA rebels abandoned their camp located along the river at sitio Pilipit following almost 20 minutes of fighting," he added.

In Cagayan province, the rebels killed Allacapan town councilor Ronel Millare while tending to his welding shop last Thursday.

Lt. Col. Isagani Nato, Northern Luzon police spokesman, condemned the terrorist attack against Millare, a former police officer accused by the rebels of spying - Edith Regalado, Jose Rodel Clapano, Jaime Laude, Gilbert Bayoran, Ed Amoroso

# Rody to Joma: Return to exile if peace talks fail

By **GENALYN D. KABILING**

In case the proposed peace talks

with the communist rebels fail, President Duterte said he would ask Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founding chairman Jose Maria 'Joma' Sison never to return to the country or else face death.

The President said he has invited Sison to return home and gave him a 60-day window for the "make or break" peace negotiations.

"Pag walang nangyari sa two months [If nothing happens in two months], I will allow him to go out. I will not arrest him because word of honor 'yan. But sabihin ko talaga sa kanya, 'p\*\*\*\*\*' mo 'wag ka nang bumalik dito. Papatayin talaga kita [that's word of honor but I'll tell him, 'Son of a b\*tch do not return here. I will kill you!'," he said during the inauguration of

a bridge project in Davao City last Thursday.

"Pag walang mangyari, sabihin ko talaga sa kanya [If nothing happens, I'll really tell him], 'Do not ever, ever return again to this country. I will kill you. You've killed so much of my soldiers and policemen,'" he added.

Duterte noted that Sison, who lives in exile in the Netherlands, has accepted his invitation to return home for the peace talks.

"I have invited Sison to come home. He has agreed. I gave him a window of two months, very small. Make or break tayo dito," he said.

The President earlier set a 60-day timeframe for peace talks he wants to revive with the communist rebels.

He, however, said the rebels must agree to a ceasefire, stop extortion activities and abandon their proposed coalition government before resuming negotiations. 2

DUTERTE TO SISON:

# 'I will kill you if talks fail'

BY CATHERINE S. VALENTE

**P**RESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte said he would "kill" Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria "Joma" Sison if peace talks between the government and the rebel group failed again.

Speaking in Davao City on Thursday night, Duterte said he had invited Sison to return to the Philippines but warned he would escort the aging rebel leader out of

the country and not allow him to go back if peace talks fell through.

"I have invited Sison to come home. He has agreed.

> Fall A2

■ FAIL FROM A1

## 'I will kill you if talks fail'

I gave him a window of two months, very small. Make or break. If we are able to understand each other, good. But if not, I will see to it and will personally maybe escort him to the airport if nothing would happen in two months," Duterte said in a mix of English and Cebuano.

"I will allow him to go out. I will not arrest him because that's word of honor. But I will really tell him, you son of a b\*\*\*\*, do not go back again here. I will really kill you," he added.

The President pointed out that many soldiers and policemen had died under Sison's rebellion.

"If nothing will happen, I will tell him, 'Do not ever, ever return again to this country. I will kill you. You've killed so much of my soldiers and policemen,'" Duterte said.

Sison on Friday brushed off the "kill" threat of President Duterte, refusing to respond in a "hostile manner."

"PRRD (President Rodrigo Roa Duterte) has repeated so many times the threat to kill me that sometimes I surmise that the expression 'kill' has actually become a term of endearment, as in some American comedies," Sison said in a statement.

"I will not reply to PRRD in any hostile manner, unless he actually wrecks the work already done by the negotiating panels to prepare the resumption of formal peace talks," he added.

Sison, who fled to Europe after peace talks failed in 1987 and has remained in exile in the Netherlands since, has said he was ready to go home as soon as there was "substantial progress" in peace negotiations between communist rebels and the government.

The CPP leader earlier this week revealed that an interim peace agreement was expected to be signed when formal talks between the government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines resume on June 28.

Both sides, Sison said, were expected to announce a stand-down agreement two weeks before that.

The talks fell through in November last year following clashes between government troops and communist rebels.

The President then moved to declare the CPP and armed wing the New People's Army declared as terrorists.

Duterte, however, had a change of heart, saying he would like to give the talks another chance.

**WITH DEMPSEY REYES**



# Joma belittles Rody's threat as comedy yarn

JOSE Maria Sison on Friday shrugged off President Rodrigo Duterte's threat to kill him, saying it would be best for them to continue "preparing for the resumption of formal talks and make substantial progress as soon as possible."

"PRRD [Duterte] has repeated so many times the threat to kill me that sometimes I surmise that the expression 'kill' has actually become a term of endearment, as in some American comedies," Sison, the chief political consultant of the communist National Democratic Front of the Philippines, said in a statement posted on the NDFP website.

*Next page*

## Joma... From A1

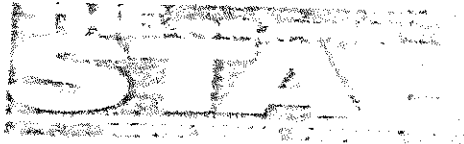
"It seems to me that in using strong words, he is eager to resume the peace negotiations rather than to block them."

Sison made his statement even as the military on Friday condemned the killing of a town councilor in Cagayan that the communist New People's Army claimed responsibility over.

Zaldy Millare, 58, was in his welding shop in Labben village in Allacapan town when he was shot and killed by two men on a motorcycle around 5:30 pm on Thursday.

"The Northern Luzon Command, together with the leadership of the province of Cagayan headed by Governor Manuel Mamba, strongly condemns this terroristic act done by the CPP-NPA," said Lt. Col. Isagani Nato.

Sison said he had "reason to be optimistic on the basis of the hard and productive work that the negotiating panels had already done in the form of back-channel consultations, consensus building and bilateral drafting, unless the Duterte regime was once more backtracking" **Francisco Tuyay**



### **NPA kills ex-police chief**

**BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya** – A town councilor in Allacapan, Cagayan was shot dead by still unidentified armed men last Thursday afternoon, with communist rebels claiming credit for the hit.

Zaldy Mallari, also the town's former chief of police, succumbed to bullet wounds after he was gunned down inside his welding shop in Barangay Labben at around 5:45 p.m.

In a text message sent to The STAR yesterday, New People's Army (NPA)-Danilo Ben Command spokesman Crispin Apolinario said Mallari was killed for war crimes and human rights abuses during his stint as Allacapan's chief of police from 2011 to 2013.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines Northern Luzon Command condemned the killing.

Meanwhile, in San Miguel town in Bulacan, a barangay chairman was killed by motorcycle-riding men before noon yesterday.

Generao Lopez, barangay captain of Labne in San Miguel, was smoking in front of a restaurant when he was shot. – Victor Martin, Raymund Catindig, Ding Cervantes, Ramon Efren Lazaro, Michael Punongbayan

# Konsehal na dating COP, nilikida ng NPA

**BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya** – Isang municipal councilor na dating chief of police (COP) ang pinagbabari ng mga teroristang New People's Army (NPA) sa Allacapan, Cagayan kamakalawa ng hapon.

Kinilala ni Sr. Supt. Warren Tolito, police provincial director ang na-

sawing biktima na si Zaldy Mallari, 58 kasalukuyang Sanguniang Bayan member at dating hepe ng pulisya ng nasabing bayan.

Sa ulat, dakong alas-5:45 ng hapon habang inaayos ng biktima ang mga nabiling spare parts ng sasakyan sa loob ng kanyang welding shop nang lapitan

**Nina VICTOR MARTIN, RAYMUND CATINDIG at JOY CANTOS**

at pagbabarilin siya ng dalawang suspek na nakasuot ng bulcap sa Brgy. Labben.

Agad na inako ng Danilo Ben Command ng NPA ang pagpatay kay Mallari.

Ayon kay Crispin Apolinario, tagapagsalita

ng grupo, nagpanggap ang mga operatiba ng kanilang Command na travelers at nangangailan sila ng auto service para malapitan ang biktima at iligpit dahil umano sa war crimes at pang-aabuso sa karapatang pantao nang siya pa ang hepe

ng pulisya sa Allacapan noong 2011-2013.

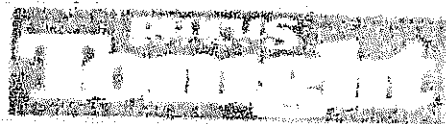
Maging kinondena ni Mailla Ting-Que, presidente ng Philippine Councilor's League (PCL)-Cagayan Chapter ang pagpatay sa kanilang kasamahan sa konshe-

Kinondena rin ng AFP-NOLGOM ang patraydor na pamamaslang ng NPA hitmen sa nasabing opisyal. Ipinabot na rin nila at Cagayan government sa pamumuno ni Governor Manuel Mamba, chairman of Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC) ang pakiramay

sa mga nauula ni Councilor Mallari.

Unang inabus si Mallari noong 2016 sa balit nakaligtas habang noong 2017 ay itinumban ng NPA ang isa ring konsehal sa Baggao, Cagayan na si Angelo Luis sa pareho ring paratang.

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# Duterte: PH winning war vs communists

**PRESIDENT** Rodrigo Duterte said the country is succeeding in its war against communist insurgency, which the military tagged as its goal after the bloody siege in Marawi. /Page 6

## DUTERTE

From Page 1

In his speech Thursday, (May 26) Duterte cited the military for rearresting Elizalde Cañete, the successor of the late Leoncio Pitao, better known as Commander Paragu.

"So the military is quite good in... we're winning the war actually," said Duterte.

Cañete, commander of the New People's Army's First Pulang Bagan Command, was at the Don Carlos Doctors Hospital in Bukidnon seeking treatment at the time the military arrested him.

The NPA leader is accused of being behind atrocities in Davao City, including the attack against Lapanday Foods Corpora-

tion, which killed fish vendor Larry Buenafe.

In the same speech, Duterte mentioned anew his planned talks with Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founding chair Jose Maria Sison, whom he invited to fly home.

Sison, according to Duterte, had agreed to visit the Philippines and had been given a window of two months for the talks.

But if there is no progress after two months, Duterte said he would tell his former professor to never return to the country again.

"If nothing happens, I will really tell him: Do not ever, ever return to this country. I will kill you. You've killed so much of my soldiers and policemen," he said.

The Philippines has resumed negotiating with

communists in "informal" backchannel talks in Europe earlier this month after Duterte ordered his men during the Cabinet meeting in April to support the resumption of the negotiation.

Duterte described this as the "last chance" for peace with the communist rebels.

Earlier, Duterte apologized for showing up late to an event in his hometown Davao City as he complained of hyperhidrosis or excessive sweating.

Duterte arrived at the inauguration of the Davao River Bridge shortly before 6 p.m. The event was scheduled at 4 p.m.

"I am sorry I'm late. Pero sinabi ko, next time do not be surprised. Hava-kan ninyo likod ko, pati pantalon, basa na. That's hyperhidrosis, excessive

sweating," the President said in his speech.

"[It has] something to do with a procedure that I underwent many years ago. It's all because of smoking. Kaya galit talaga ako sa sigarilyo."

According to the National Health Service of the United Kingdom, excessive sweating can happen for no obvious reason, "because of another condition a person may have or as a side effect of medication."

Last March, Duterte arrived more than an hour late to the oath-taking ceremony for members of the Presidential Anti-Corruption Commission in Malacañang, citing spinal pain.

The President previously admitted to having a misaligned spine as the result of a motorcycle accident years ago.

Duterte's health has been the subject of much speculation, but the president has repeatedly downplayed such concerns.

During an extended stint away from the public eye last year, he asked the public not to worry about his health.

Duterte also previously revealed that he has Burger's disease, a condition that causes constriction of the blood vessels due to nicotine, and Barrett's esophagus, a disease involving the tissue in the esophagus.



## Konsehal itinumba ng NPA rebels

Isang konsehal ng bayan ang pinagbabaril ng dalawang lalaki na mga miyembro ng teroristang New People's Army (NPA) kamakalawa ng hapon sa bayan ng Allacapan, Cagayan.

Ang biktima na namatay noon din dahil sa mga tania ng bala sa ulo at katawan ay kilalang si Ronel "Zaldy" Millare, 58, isang retiradong pulis at kasalukuyang konsehal ng Allacapan.

Batay sa ulat, bago nangyari ang krimen dakong alas-5:30 ng hapon sa talyer ng biktima na nasa tabi ng highway sa Brgy. Lebben ay bigla na lamang sumulpot sa lugar ang isang motorsiklo lulan ang dalawang lalaki at agad pinagbabaril ang biktima na namatay noon din.

Siyam na basyo ng bala ng cal 45 ang narekober ng SOCO sa crime scene.

Ang biktima ay dating hepe ng pulisya sa Allacapan AT nagretiro noong 2012 na tumakbong konsehal at nanalo.

Agad namang inako ng Communist New People's Army Terrorist Group (CNTG) sa ilalim ng Danilo Ben Command, NPA West Cagayan ang pagpatay kay Millare. - Joy Cantos, Jorge Hallare -

✓

# PNP wants control over Bangsamoro police under BBL

Philippine National Police Director General Oscar Albayalde has expressed opposition to a proposal under the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) bill that would give the regional chief minister control over the Bangsamoro police force.

Albayalde told reporters on Tuesday that a provision in

House Bill No. 6475 giving the chief minister the power "to exercise operational control and supervision and disciplinary powers over the Bangsamoro Police" was unnecessary.

"What we want is for [the setup] to remain as is. Our stand is we will put up a different re-

gional office there [in the Bangsamoro state], even just one..." he said.

### Private armed group

The PNP chief explained that the national uniformed forces should maintain control of their units in the area [which]

may otherwise become "politicized" by local powers.

"What we are [trying to avoid] is for them to be controlled, and become a large private armed group there," Albayalde said.

Under Section 8, Article XI of the proposed law, the chief minister will also be given powers

to act as ex officio member of the National Police Commission and as ex officio chair of the Bangsamoro Police Board.

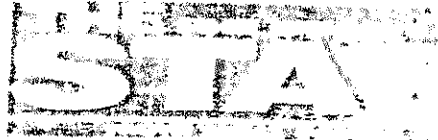
The chief minister is also tasked with, among others, selecting the head of the Bangsamoro police and his deputies, as well as employing

or deploying the elements of Bangsamoro police through the the state's police director.

Despite the provision in question, the bill expressly states that the Bangsamoro police shall remain "part of the Philippine National Police."

—JAYMEET GAMIL INQ

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# Marawi residents urged: Remain vigilant vs terror threat

By JAIME LAUDE

The government might have liberated Marawi City from Islamic State-inspired terrorists but the threat of militants still lingers in its ruins.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana issued the warning as he rallied displaced residents of the heavily devastated city to remain steadfast.

"We must remain vigilant because terrorists are just lurking in the shadows. Though we have accomplished much in our counterterrorism efforts for the past year, these endeavors still require continued perseverance, vigilance and sacrifice of everyone," Lorenzana told the gathered residents during a visit to Marawi on

Thursday.

The defense chief issued the call amid reports that remnants of the Maute group are actively recruiting members across Mindanao, particularly those living in the towns and villages located around Lake Lanao.

Lorenzana flew to Marawi a day after officials commemorated last year's attack and occupation of the city by the Maute group.

Nearly 1,000 terrorists, more than 160 soldiers and policemen and almost 100 civilians died during the five months of fighting to drive out the militants.

One of the highlights of Lorenzana's visit was the signing of a joint declaration of all-out support by the displaced

residents to government efforts in ensuring peace and order in Lanao del Sur and condemning local terrorist groups.

Lorenzana assured the people of Marawi that in no time the Islamic City will rise again and peace and development will rule the city.

"The city will be healed and the people will dance and laugh again. But to be safe we must stand firm for peace while being alert on what is happening around. Let us also continue to echo our call for peace and unity," he said.

Considered as the Philippines' longest urban warfare after World War II, the five months of fighting literally reduced Marawi City into rubble and forced thousands

of residents to abandon their homes.

Thousands of displaced residents remain in emergency shelters, unable to return to what remained of their homes under threat of unexploded bombs and booby traps.

"The concrete jungles of Marawi brought out many stories of gallantry, true courage, dedication of our troops and that of resilience of Marawi residents... One year may have passed but the pain and the ruins are still there. Rest assured that the government has been doing all it can to diminish the pain and put things back to normal," Lorenzana said.

- With Roel Pareño, John Unson, Non Alquitran, Rhodina Villanueva

# Marawi will heal, laugh, dance again – Lorenzana

By BONITA L. ERMAC and FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

MARAWI CITY — “The city will be healed and the people will dance again

and laugh again.”

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said this like a vow at the culmination program for the Marawi Week of Peace last Thursday, com- ▶12

## Marawi will heal...

mending Task Force Bangon Marawi for leading the process of rehabilitating the city.

He commended Task Force Bangon Marawi for doing a fine job in leading the rehabilitation of Marawi. Temporary shelters are already being constructed for the evacuees, while government is in the process of constructing their permanent houses, Lorenzana said.

“Foreign allies and international organizations have also been giving financial assistance for the rehabilitation and relief of this war-torn city,” he added.

### Heroes of Marawi

A somber ceremony also highlighted the heroism of soldiers who gave their life to the cause of liberating Marawi from grip of terror.

“The heart of a soldier is not measured in size but by the depth of commitment to make a difference in the lives of others. A tribute to the men and women who committed their hearts for the liberation of Marawi.”

This was the epitaph on the memorial built inside the camp of the 103rd Infantry Brigade in Kampo Ranao here in memory of the 165 soldiers and policemen who laid down their lives to liberate Marawi.

The name of each fallen officer was read in ceremonial rites during the Battle of Marawi Commemoration Program Thursday as a wreath was laid in their honor.

“I wish it could not have happened, but it happened because of the actions of some terrorists – wala tayong magagawa (there was nothing else we could do) but to deal with them in a way that we stopped them and we wipe them out,” he noted.

“The concrete jungle of Marawi brought out many stories of gallantry, true courage, dedication of our troops; and that of resilience of Marawi residents – these stories shed light during the city’s darkest times,” Lorenzana said.

“The Marawi siege also strengthened us a nation – as diverse as we are, we were unified by our desire to stop the spread of extremists’ gospel of hate and anger”

“One year may have passed but the pain and the ruins are still there. Rest assured that the government has been doing all it can to diminish the pain and put things back to normal,” he added.

### Vigilance, lessons learned

But to ensure that the Marawi incident won’t happen again, the defense official said the people should be vigilant to prevent the enemy from staging future attacks.

“We must still remain vigilant because terrorists are just lurking in the shadows. Though we have accomplished much in our counter-terrorism efforts for the past year, these endeavors still require continued perseverance, vigilance, and sacrifice of everyone for the years to come,” he added.

“This is not to celebrate the fact that Marawi siege happened. But the heroism of soldiers in the Marawi frontlines as well as other individuals and groups who sacrificed their lives during the five-month long battle,” Lorenzana said.

The siege reduced the Islamic City of Marawi into rubble only seen in Middle East countries.

### But there are lessons learned

“First, the city officials were not vigilant enough to protect their territory,” and agrees with President Duterte that Marawi residents were partly to blame for allowing the IS to gain a foothold in Marawi.

Second, is lack of intelligence and the failure to appreciate the magnitude of things that could happen, Lorenzana said. This is because “we cannot accept the fact that they can do it here what they are doing in the Middle East.”

Third, Lorenzana pointed out is that our troops are not trained for urban warfare and lacks the equipment.

He said this is the reason why govern-

ment is trying to procure equipments “so that if something like this happens, we are prepared.” Urban warfare training is expected to begin next week.

“Kung sino man ang nagkamali doon (If whoever was at fault then) it’s already water under the bridge. Hindi na tayo magtuturuan (We will not point fingers). All we can do now is to improve our processes, procedures and intelligence,” Lorenzana said.

### Order of Lapu-Lapu

Meanwhile, President Duterte vowed to provide the needs of wounded soldiers recuperating from their injury at the Metro Davao Medical Research Center (MD-MRC) in Davao City Thursday evening.

During the hospital visit, Duterte personally awarded the medals of the Order of Lapu-Lapu with the Rank of Kampilan to the soldiers in honor of their courage, bravery, and sacrifice in the service of the country.

The Order of Lapu-Lapu, Rank of Kampilan is conferred by the President to recognize exemplary service by workers of the government and private individuals who are wounded, injured, or suffered great loss of property for their participation in the advocacy of the President.

“The President had a brief chat with the wounded soldiers where he vowed to provide for their needs. He likewise assured them of their full recovery under government’s care,” the Palace statement read.

Duterte also gave financial assistance to the wounded soldiers.

The wounded soldiers were identified as Pfc. Nicasio Badana III, Pvt. Michael Liban, Pfc. Jackson Macaraig, Cpl. Kith Domingo, Pvt. Roy Inovejas, Pfc. Roger Belas, Pfc. Daniel Fabular.

Badana, Liban, and Macaraig sustained injuries during separate encounters in Surigao del Sur last week.

Inovejas, Belas, and Fabular were injured by improvised explosive device in Mabini, Compostella Valley last May 21. (With a report from Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos)



# Gov't 'bias' for Chinese firms in Marawi rehab hit

By Maricel V. Cruz and Macon Ramos-Araneta

**A**N OPPOSITION lawmaker on Friday assailed the government's bias in favor of Chinese companies in the projects involving the rehabilitation of Marawi City.

Magdalo Party-list Rep. Gary Alejano found out the alleged government bias in favor of Chinese companies during a briefing for congressmen conducted by the House committee on Muslim Affairs last May 23.

The TFBM selected the Bagong Marawi Consortium to lead the rehabilitation programs and efforts in Marawi City after it submitted an unsolicited proposal. The BMC is composed of five Chinese and three Filipino companies, Alejano said.

"Majority of the companies included in the BMC are Chinese. Two are even state-owned enterprises which mean that state funds of China would be used," Alejano said, referring to China State and China Geo Engineering Corp.

"Worries on the degree of control that China would have on these projects could not be dismissed especially since

the Filipino companies included have no history of contracting big government projects. How can we make sure that the projects will remain Filipino-led and the interests of the Maranaos in particular, will be respected and given prime consideration in the rehabilitation projects given this configuration?" he asked.

Alejano also said that during the briefing, the TFBM could not provide the records and details of the preferred firms to join the BCM and it is not clear yet how the winning contractors will recover their billions of pesos investments.

Similarly, the party-list lawmaker questioned the business record of the Chinese companies.

"The two Chinese state firms were involved in corruption and fraud scandals. In fact, they were once blacklisted by the World Bank and DPWH itself. Though

already lifted from the list, China State Engineering continued to get involved in corruption scandals in other countries," Alejano said.

"Given this record, should it not have caused alarm for TFBM to select the BMC? How can we assure that the Marawi rehabilitation would not be marred by corruption cases in the future with such kind of participating firms?" he said.

Alejano also criticized the lack of detailed planning on the Marawi rehabilitation a year after the siege.

"They have a timeline and grand proposals being presented to the public, but they have not even mapped out where these constructions will be built. Worse, they have not yet consolidated the number of displaced and affected Maranaos. How can we move forward if there is no starting point yet?," Alejano said.

He also questioned the procurement rules being observed in the Marawi rehabilitation.

The TFBM said that the National Housing Authority does not need to comply with the provisions of RA 9184 for the procurement related to the Marawi rehabilitation and would instead follow the Executive Order 49 issued by President Rodrigo Duterte.



# AFP chief cites Air Force's role in Marawi liberation

By Mario J. Mallari

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr yesterday cited the key role played by Air Force, particularly the command's fighter jets, during the Marawi City siege.

Galvez admitted that the Air Force was the "game changer" during the five-month campaign against the Islamic State-inspired terrorists who laid siege on Marawi City.

"The roar of the FA50 is the roar to victory," said Galvez in his speech during the commemoration of the Marawi Air Campaign held at the Edwin Andrews Airbase (EAAB) in Zamboanga City.

"The Philippine Air Force is the 'Game Changer' during the Marawi campaign. I admire Air Warriors for flying day and night just to provide all the needed support for our troops on the ground during the entire campaign," he added.

The AFP said that without the Air Force, there could have been more casualties on the military side.

"Without our very skilled, focused, and hardworking pilots, air crew, and air controllers, our casualties could have been more," Galvez said.

A total of 165 government troops died during the siege while thousands others were wounded.

On the other, a total of 908 terrorists, led by Isnilon Hapilon—tagged as the emir or leader of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in Southeast Asia, were killed.

Around 1,000 Air Force personnel were part of the five-month campaign of the government against the terrorists.

Galvez noted that the airmen demonstrated power that was felt 24/7 wherever they were needed.

In the five month campaign, the Air Force flew more than 1,350 sorties, transported nearly 7,000 soldiers and police personnel, and transported around 700 wounded personnel.

Galvez also acknowledged the 205th Tactical Helicopter Wing that provided various types of missions day and night, while the 220th Airlift Wing transported military and civilians, supplies, ammunition, and relief goods during the siege.

The 250th Presidential Airlift wing was also recognized for ensuring the safe flight of President Rodrigo Duterte during his numerous visits to the affected areas.

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## New Zealand offers P18-M Marawi aid

THE Government of New Zealand will make available P18 million (NZ\$500,000) in humanitarian assistance to help the people affected by the Marawi siege.

New Zealand Ambassador to Manila David Strachan said the fund will be coursed through the World Food Program.

"New Zealand recognizes the magnitude of the challenges confronting the authorities in the Philippines and is committed to doing what it can to supplement the efforts of central and local government to help the displaced persons in Marawi," Strachan said.

The New Zealand Government awards 24 scholarships annually to Filipinos who wish to pursue post-graduate degrees in New Zealand. This year, the Embassy prioritized applicants from Cebu and Mindanao, investing in the regions' youth.

Strachan added that Mindanao is a growing priority for the New Zealand Aid Program.

In November, New Zealand said it will provide P126 million (NZ\$35 million) to support the restoration of

agricultural livelihoods in Mindanao, through the Food and Agriculture Organization.

"New Zealand welcomes the prospect of the Bangsamoro Basic Law coming into force and is committed to doing what it can to support the peace process in Mindanao," Strachan said.

He added that New Zealand is also keen to explore opportunities for collaboration in Mindanao's agricultural sector, including in post-harvest technology and biosecurity.

New Zealand the other day announced the appointments of Manuel Osmeña and Vicente Lao as Honorary Consuls of Cebu and Mindanao respectively to help deepen the trade and economic partnership with the two provinces.

"The move reflects the growing interest of the New Zealand private sector in opportunities associated with impressive economic growth in Davao and Cebu. We are delighted that Mr. Osmeña and Mr. Lao, two highly respected and dynamic Filipino businesspersons have agreed to take on these new roles," Strachan has said.

*Cristina Leo-Pisco*

## Matinding leksiyon sa mga taga-Marawi

**N**OONG Mayo 23, 2017, hindi inaasahan ng mga taga-Marawi na biglang magbabago ang takbo ng kanilang pamumuhay. Parang bangungot na hanggang ngayon ay kanila pang kinatatakutan. Sumalakay ang Maute Group sa tulong ng Abu Sayyaf at ISIS. Sa isang iglap naging war zone ang kanilang lungsod.

Sinunog ng mga terorista ang kanilang mga bahay, simbahan at pati mosque. Hinostage ang mga tao sa isang ospital at tinaniman ng bomba ang mga kalsada. Nasorpresa ang Armed Forces of the Philippines at hindi malaman kung paano papasukin ang mga terorista na naglungga sa mga gusali at mosque. Nag-evacuate ang mga tao sa takot na maipit sa labanan. Humantong sila sa evacuation centers. Siksikan sila roon.

Nangyari ang lahat ng iyon habang nasa Russia si Pres. Rodrigo Duterte. Tila tinaon na wala ang Presidente. Pero tinapos ng Presidente ang pagbisita at agad umuwi para malaman ang situwasyon. Idineklara niya ang martial law sa Marawi at iba pang lugar para mapigilan ang paglawak ng terorismo.

Maraming sundalo ang dineploy sa Marawi. Pinatindi ang air strike, Pinuntirya ang mga gusali na pinagtataguan ng Maute. Napatay sina Isnilon Hapilon at Omar Maute. Si Hapilon ay dating lider ng Abu Sayyaf at tumatayong pinuno ng ISIS. Ganunman, kahit napatay ang dalawa, patuloy pa rin ang Maute sa pakikipaglaban. Tila hindi nauubusan ng bala at suplay ng pagkain. Parang napag-aralan na nila ang lahat para tumagal sa labanan.

Pero dumating din ang kanilang wakas sapagkat marami sa mga miyembro ng Maute ang nalagas. Pati ang ama ng Maute brothers ay nahuli at napatay. Hanggang pati ang ina ay naaresto.

Tumagal ng limang buwan ang bakbakan. Kalunus-lunos ang tanawin nang mapawi ang usok. Butas-butis na mga bahay, gusali at mosque. Hindi na mapakinabangan pa ang mga ito. Ganunman, kahit na dineklarang tapos na ang giyera, hindi pa rin hinayaang makapasok sa Marawi ang mga tao. Delikado sapagkat maraming nakatanim na bomba.

Matinding leksiyon ang natutuhan ng mga taga-Marawi sa pangyayaring iyon. Dapat naging mapagmatyag sila sa mga taong pumapasok sa kanilang lungsod. Hindi sana nakapasok ang mga terorista kung naging alerto sila. Nalusutan sila at sinira ang kanilang buhay at mga ar-aralan. Nasa kanilang isipan ngayon, hindi na mauulit ang karahasang iyon.

## AT GROUND LEVEL

SATUR C. OCAMPO

A disturbing proposal  
on martial law imposition

**M**ay 23, 2017 marked the beginning of two catastrophes that befell the people of Mindanao; one year later, the harsh impact on their daily lives and the profound trauma in their individual and collective psyche seem far from being assuaged.

First, there was the so-called siege of Marawi City, a nearly-five-month war between the state security forces and fighters of the Maute and Abu Sayyaf groups allegedly affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Due to almost daily aerial bombings and artillery firings by the government forces, guided by American and Australian spy planes and drones, the war caused the death of 1,000-plus fighters on both sides, with an undetermined number of civilians killed and missing; the displacement of a big number of the 400,000 residents of Marawi and adjacent municipalities; and the destruction of a wide swath of the main Islamic city (including mosques, cultural structures, and residential neighborhoods).

Today, the displaced residents who have not yet been allowed to return to Marawi are beleaguered by many problems. They feel uncertain how long their current condition will last and what future awaits them. The people of Marawi have been left out in the planning of the city's "rehabilitation" – but they want to do the rebuilding themselves, in their own way. The many questions they ask have not received satisfactory answers from government and military authorities.

Three civil-society organizations – Tindeg Ranao, Ranao Multisectoral Move-

ment, and Moro Consensus Group – are opposing the building of a P400-million new military camp for the Philippine Army in the old city hall complex which, in January, President Duterte announced would be completed by 2020. Building houses for the displaced families should be given priority, they declare. (Tindeg Ranao says 140,000 are still cramped in 67 evacuation centers and in the homes of relatives). The organizations also oppose a plan to set up a special economic zone in the city.

On the massive destruction caused by aerial and artillery bombardments, which has angered the people of Marawi, Duterte said he was assuming full responsibility as commander-in-chief of all the state's armed forces. It was right for him to say so. After the first few weeks of fighting wherein the AFP suffered many casualties in unfamiliar close-quarter fighting, it was he who ordered the city's "carpet bombing" so as to lessen the risks for the soldiers. "I will really destroy everything, and I will take full responsibility for it," he told reporters in Cagayan de Oro City.

Now the Duterte government is appealing to the people of Marawi to be patient. "The magnitude of destruction of this disaster is immense," said Gen. Eduardo del Rosario, chair of Task Force Bangon Marawi, "but we are doing our best to fast track the process [of reconstruction]. However, an analysis by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) shows that the alleged master plan for rebuilding Marawi "remains a patchwork of disconnected promises mired in multiple problems."

The other and wider catastrophe, correlated with the Marawi siege, affected not only that city but the whole of Mindanao. This was when President Duterte imposed martial law and suspended the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus simultaneously, through Proclamation 216, covering the entire island. He did so upon the recommendation of his military and security advisers. Mind that the 1987 Constitution says that "in case of invasion or rebellion, when the public safety requires it, (the President) may . . . suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus or [emphasis mine] place the Philippines or any part thereof under martial law."

Duterte opted to use both extraordinary powers in tandem, resulting in a double whammy against the people of Mindanao.

Originally set to last for only 60 days (as delimited by the Constitution), the edict has been extended twice: first by five months until the end of 2017, then by another year ending December 2018. Duterte was able to easily do that – thanks to the servile majorities in the House and the Senate that he both controls; first separately then in joint session, they endorsed the proclamation and its extensions. Thanks, too, to the pliant majority of the Supreme Court who leniently reviewed and approved the presidential issuances.

The initial stated aim of Proclamation 216 was to suppress the "rebellion" of the Maute and Abu Sayyaf groups in Marawi. This was later expanded in order to "suppress all acts of rebellion and lawless violence" in the whole of Mindanao [specifically] to "dismantle the NPA, other terror-linked private armed groups, illegal drug syndicates, 'peace spoilers' and other lawless armed groups." Except for the NPA, the other armed groups cited couldn't be deemed to be engaged in rebellion or invasion – the only specific acts for which imposing martial law and suspending the privilege of the writ can be authorized under the Constitution and only "when the public safety requires it" (Section 18, Article VII).

Yet the majority of the Supreme Court apparently let this erroneous listing pass when they reviewed, as the Constitution requires, the "sufficiency of the factual basis" for the proclamation and its extensions. Such leniency has opened the door to misinterpretations (for instance, AFP chief Gen. Carlito Galvez claims that martial law is still needed because "illegal firearms continue to proliferate" in Mindanao) and to abuses and human rights violations in the edict's implementation by the security forces, as borne out by human rights groups' reports published in the press and submitted to the relevant agencies of the United Nations.

Persistent opposition to martial rule cum writ suspension has been raised in Mindanao and many areas of the country, particularly because of Duterte's repeated intimations that he might declare martial law nationwide if "enemies of the state" cause similar "trouble" outside Mindanao.

Now comes the news report that the consultative committee (con-com) which Duterte formed to recommend charter

**OCAMPO** From page 9

changes towards shifting to a federal system of government has unanimously approved an amendment to the provision cited above adding "lawless violence" to invasion and rebellion as another reason for the imposition of martial law.

Retired Lt. Gen. Ferdinand Bocobo, a con-com member, said he suggested the amendment in view of present challenges to national security posed by "terrorism and violent extremism" to which, he

added, acts of lawless violence are related. Replying to a question, he claimed that "simultaneous or large-scale" attacks by the New People's Army would be enough reason for the President to impose martial law. "For NPA attacks to fall under 'terrorism' as ground to declare martial law, these attacks should cause widespread and extraordinary fear and panic among the populace," he explained. (He was referring to the provision of the Human Security Act of 2007, the anti-terrorism law.)

But retired SC associate justice Eduardo Nachura, a con-com

subcommittee head, goes even farther. "Lawless violence," he said, *does not have to be widespread as a ground to declare martial law or suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus.*

As if it hadn't been easy enough for him to have his way in Mindanao, now the President's men seem to be thinking up more ways to make it even more of a breeze, next time around!

Email: [satur.ocampo@gmail.com](mailto:satur.ocampo@gmail.com)



# Would anybody help place the South China Sea scenario, please?



MY SAY  
**MAURO GIA SAMONTE**

THE *Manila Times* May 20, 2018 headline reads "Beijing deploys bombers to reef."

May 21, 2018, the *Manila Bulletin* headline reads: "Duterte opens Alegria oilfields."

The *Times* story raises alarm no matter the scale, on an increasing sense of Chinese attack on the Philippines. In fact, it points out, "This means that nearly the entire Philippines falls within the radius of the Chinese bombers that took off Woody Island."

But the *Bulletin* story highlights a successful oil exploration in Alegria, Cebu, undertaken by who else but a Chinese!

On the one hand, China is pictured as the attacker. But on the other, who does China attack but itself? Anyway, as personified by the China International Mining Petroleum (CIMP), the outfit that is undertaking the oil dig project over a total land area of, says the *Bulletin* report, "197,000 hectares, with 42,749 hectares devoted to the production area."

Why will China embark on such a gigantic development project when at the same time, as the *Times* story would imply, it is setting the Philippines on a war footing? Would not this massive oil undertaking be laid to waste if those Chinese bombers went on a blasting spree all over the country?

The two phenomena just don't jibe. One or the other must be false. And since the Alegria oil dig is set to go full throttle, it is the one that is true and the war scare in the South China Sea must be the one that is false.

## US-instigated war alarm

In fact, the *Times* story is an alarm actually raised by, according to the report, "the Asia Maritime Transparency

Institute (AMTI) of the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in the wake of a video post by *Chinese People's Daily* showing the powerful "top-of-the-line" H-6 aircraft landing in one of the Chinese-controlled islands in the South China Sea.

Evidently, the war sirens are US-instigated. It is the US which has been goading the Philippine government to push the ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) favoring the country's claims to areas in the South China Sea under the United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The CSIS claims that those bombers, with combat range of 1,900 nautical miles, are aimed at China's co-claimants to the South China Sea island features, which include the Philippines. Chinese aggression on Asean neighbors has been the marked US bogey promoted by Barack Obama with his touted pivot to the Asia Pacific begin-

ning in 2008. China has not engaged in any land conquests, but on the contrary embarked on a two-pronged approach to world economic integration. The progress undergone by the revival of the ancient maritime silk route which linked trade between China, together with the East Asia, and the West, on the one hand, and the surging tide of similar advance by the Belt and Road Initiative should dispel all fears that those H-6 aircraft, powerful though they may be, are being deployed to the Spratlys for the purpose of attacking the Philippines but, quite the contrary, protecting the country in fact.

And mind you. This is not some underrated columnist's own say so. It is Rand Corp. saying it.

## China's pursuit of overseas security

The subhead is the title of a report by Timothy R. Heath published in its website by

►SamonteA6



## Would anybody help place the South China Sea scenario, please?

Rand Corp. The report is a well-documented study on the how China has been addressing its security concerns for all its people and its investments in terms of goodwill, economic development assistance and business investments in other countries.

Protection of China's population on its own land is not an issue in the Rand report. It is the security of Chinese overseas—whether nationalities, permanent residents, tourists, and transients in the host countries—that the report deals with.

The study cites: "According to a study by Texas A&M University, there were 40 million ethnic Chinese living abroad in 148 countries in 2010," with the top three Chinese-hosting countries cited being Indonesia (8 mil-

lion), Thailand (7.5 million) and Malaysia (6.5 million).

In this regard, it is significant to note that the *Times* report on the deployment of Chinese bombers in the Spratlys puts the aircraft within striking distance of the three countries cited.

Rather than be construed as preparation for a Chinese attack on those lands, the deployment of Chinese bombers in the Spratlys puts China in perfect readiness to hit back in the event any of those countries come under attack by any foreign power, east, west, south, north of the universe.

Why would China take on that job? Why, because China must love its people. Simple as that. Chinese get attacked anywhere in the world, China retaliates.

So, those Chinese bombers

can be there largely for the protection of Chinese living in the countries cited. How many are they? According to the Rand Report, 40 percent of all Chinese overseas. Just how many is immaterial. For several reasons it is difficult to quantify. In the Philippines, for example, offspring of Chinese couples, most particularly in cases of intermarriages between Filipinos and ethnic Chinese, are no longer registered as Chinese but Filipinos.

The point is, just because China is deploying bombers in the South China Sea is poised to attack countries in the region.

The Rand Report says the matter in light of the observance of the 2013 Defense White Paper that "overseas interests have become an integral component of China's national interests."

The report asserts, "Chinese leaders can be expected to seek an approach to protecting overseas interests that avoids perceptions of imperialism, limit the PLA's role, and minimize the need for military facilities in other countries." China is unlikely to be "operating military forces under its authority where possible" and to adopt non-military means of advancing security abroad is feasible.

That is Rand stating the obvious case—actually a polite reprise of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's belligerent statement to President Barack Obama late at the East Asia Summit in 2012: "We are not a war-hungry nation. But neither are we to back away from a fight when pushed against the wall. The Philippines will learn this lesson to its cost."

# Our misunderstood position in the South China Sea

THERE are factors affecting our understanding of our claim in the South China Sea. This has deeply divided us such that the US has been using this to create a wedge between this country and China. This stems from our lack of understanding of our own history and of the subsequent conventions redefining international law. Unfortunately, the Liberal Party and the opposition have been exploiting this to ingratiate themselves with the US and instigate an anti-Chinese sentiment.

The first factor is on our understanding of the historical document known to us as the Treaty of Paris signed on Dec 10, 1898. The Philippine archipelago was sold by Spain to the US for \$20 million. Maybe Spain purposely did not include the Paracel and Spratly islands because they do not form part of the Philippine archipelago or that those islets have yet to be effectively occupied to assert sovereignty over the area.

This misunderstanding was reinforced when our historians purposely ignored the degrees indicating the latitude and longitude

that form the Philippine archipelago which would later constitute the formal boundaries of the first republic in Asia. The grant of Philippine independence by the US on July 4, 1946

constitutes the same boundaries demarcated by Spain that was handed to us when the US finally granted us our "independence." It is worth noting that the US did not alter the boundaries by adding, say, new islands or territories, subsequent to its US occupation of the Philippines.

Although not directly connected to our definition of national boundary, conflict among states somehow altered boundaries of which the defeated states were ordered to return by the Allied powers the territories they

occupied and annexed during the war. The Treaty of San Francisco signed on September 8, 1951 mandated Japan to renounce all rights and claims to the Spratley and Paracel islands. Even if the San Francisco Treaty has no reference to our claim in the South China Sea, the treaty nonetheless acknowledged China as having the sovereign right over those islands. The only thing that is unclear is whether the Treaty has reference to the People's Republic of China or to Taiwan which today, both remain politically at odds.

The second factor is our misunderstanding of the role of the US. Most Filipinos do not understand whether the presence of the US military bases here is purely pursuant to its hegemonistic interest as a world power or pursuant to our existing alliance with that country. Even on that issue, there are questions whether their involvement is not due to our claim in the South China Sea, or that the Philippines is a victim of aggression to which US Congress would still have to approve the US involvement considering that our alliance is merely based on an executive agreement and not a treaty similar to Nato, where an attack would mean an automatic retaliation from other member-states.

Even if the US has manifested several times that its naval presence in the South China Sea is to assure compliance to the freedom of navigation, which is of general application for free passage. However, that gives no assurance that the US would come to our assistance in the event of conflict with China over

*“The issue divided us.”*

**M. A. P.  
INSIGHTS  
JAIME S. DE LOS SANTOS**

**Much can be learned by  
business about how the  
Army applies management in  
leading a fighting force.**

**O**n March 22, during the celebration of the 124<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Philippine Army, former Commanding Generals across generations were honored with a parade and review. The Philippine Army leadership traces its roots to Capt. General Artemio Ricarte, who is regarded as the father of the Philippine Army, and the first chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Those who attended represented almost seven decades of service to the nation from the '50s to the present.

In the profession of arms, leadership provides the human dimension in the full range of combat. Under different commanders-in-chief, during martial law, post-martial law and up to the present, the Philippine Army has been consistent in its professional conduct, because the Commanding Generals have remained true professionals.

Its slogan of "Serving the Nation, Securing the Land" rallies every soldier under all seasons to remain true to their oath. Aside from leadership excellence, former Commanding Generals followed a typical pattern that extracted the best in them to achieve high goals.

Political stability is a condition when equilibrium exists in a nation where public governance operates normally in order that the private sector can pursue

# Guardians of political stability

their normal course of business, and the rights and freedom of all citizens are protected. It is determined by the following: management of power, management of wars and conflicts, and the quality of leadership and discipline of the Army.

## MANAGEMENT OF POWER

The struggle for power is an act of domination that involves the imposition of will. Our political system has been designed to impose influence and subjugation to the less fortunate and weak. Hence, political dynasties have emerged and been nurtured to perpetuate power.

Worst, it has been used as a retaliatory tactic to punish and incriminate political opponents term after term.

Due to the unlimited ambition, and insatiable thirst for material wealth, political leaders at times have exceeded the limits of human patience. This gives rise to corruption and sometime in our history, people were no longer outraged by the political and moral abuse of their political leaders that instead of demanding laws to advance common good they followed in the footsteps of abuse and immorality.

Under these circumstances, people emulate the self-indulgence of their leaders giving rise to more corruption.

The Army under these conditions have defused the masses and acted as the balancing factor to maintain political stability. They never usurped power. In many cases in history, the politicization of the Army to the point of siding with corrupt political leaders have forced societies towards turmoil and chaos. One can only look at some European countries during the middle ages and some African and Asian countries in contemporary times to understand the gravity of such situations.

At every stage of our nation's history, the Commanding Generals have exercised their command authority with restraint and dignity, though they possess extensive and massive physical power due to the Army's arsenal of weaponry. It has and will always side with the people.

According to Gen. Colin Powell, "Of all manifestations of powers, restraint impacts most." Army leadership in abstained and mitigated the irrational application of power, always that could have pushed the nation to

instability. People Power I and II are proof of their professional conduct.

## MANAGEMENT OF WARS AND CONFLICT

The Army has never lost its core competence as a warrior, even if the main government agenda is peace. It vigorously prepares for war. Its high state of morale and discipline and the exercise of the highest quality of leadership has always made it possible for the nation to eschew the taste of defeat. The institution has neutralized and mitigated political inadequacies and the inefficiency of governance.

National discipline defines the state of order of society. Political stability is its by-product. Freedom that champions democratic values emasculates national discipline. Military organization provides the culture of national discipline.

In its strictest sense, the Army is the repository of strict discipline. Generals must be just but an innate resistance to obedience. Discipline eliminates that resistance, habitual or subconscious. Humans are afraid to go to war but discipline produces in the leader's front of an ability

to courage which produces victory in battle.

## QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND DISCIPLINE OF ITS ARMY

The Commanding Generals represent a leadership of a team professionals that have transformed and insured the death discipline of every soldier. These enduring values shape the Army's culture in war and in peace. Military preparation is the real test of character that creates a pool of military leaders. Political strategy can be further strengthened if the citizenry manifests a modest form of discipline to complement the Army. Corruption of our political leaders and the national resolve to prepare the war. Peace is an agenda that the will to win.

An environment of ease, comfort, and opportunity counterproductive to discipline. Let us not be deceived by political talk that we can achieve absolute peace because peace is only a space between two wars. Preparation and readiness for war tightens that space. (Gen. Commanding General of the Philippine Army) by virtue of their position prepared them and will to win have trained and conditioned

of soldiers to be true warriors and undaunted defenders.

All the CGPAs share a common thread that has guaranteed political stability. These military leaders are essential to their success.

A sense of destiny. The bow of the warrior is constant sacrifice. It is because they die for a cause greater than and outside of themselves.

The pattern of successful military leadership. It is the reality that every senior leader has exemplified some leadership traits and principles while in the pinnacle of his military career, exercising the noble authority to command the Army.

A shared and communicated vision. The dominant perspective that the 40 Commanding Generals shared is a commonness and a vision, which helped the Philippine Army evolve into what it is today. This vision has drawn the bond line between the leaders who reached the pinnacle of leadership and those who did not. They had the ability to see and place things in their proper perspective.

A mixture of toughness and gentleness. Guided by the heroic qualities of their calling, their character is a mix of toughness and compassion. But they also possess a high sense of self-

confidence, a source of strength in standing by their convictions and making decisions. The CGPAs reached the highest pinnacle of leadership distinction as their triumphs reflected the good and nobility of leadership.

There is much that can be learned by business leaders and professionals from how the Army applies management and leadership theories to the challenges of leading a fighting force. Solid successes and enduring legacies are the fruits of leadership and management applied with vision and commitment, insights that can enable stability and progress on many fronts. ■

*The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines or the MAP.*

BY BELIN SANTOS, a member of the Philippine Army Command, recently assigned as Chief of Personnel (Part 4) of the 1st Infantry Division (ID) at Camp Aguinaldo, Baguio City. He can be reached at [belin\\_santos@yahoo.com](mailto:belin_santos@yahoo.com), [belin\\_santos@mail.com](mailto:belin_santos@mail.com), or <http://map.org.ph>.



# ONLINE NEWS

26 May 2018

## IN GOOD HANDS | Mindanao Martial Law, Keeping the Peace

Posted by Alvin Santiago on May 25, 2018 at 7:30 AM

**CAMP GEN EMILIO AGUINALDO, Quezon City (DWDD)** – The Mindanao Region is in good hands, especially with the implementation of Martial Law.

This was the assurance given by Colonel Noel Detoyato, AFP Public Affairs Officer.

According to Col Detoyato, the AFP has two Unified Commands (Western Mindanao Command and Eastern Mindanao command) which have four (4) Army Infantry Divisions (1ID, 4ID, 6ID, and 10ID); one (1) Air Force Division (3rd Air Div), Naval Stations all over and Philippine Marine Brigades.

All of these commands and units provided the AFP with feedbacks from the populace they are serving and to those that they are in contact with.

Col Detoyato added that 1/3 of the AFP's forces are residents of Mindanao, which are also a source of their information.

Detoyato proudly stated that he is from Mindanao and all of his relatives are happy with the implementation of Martial Law.

"There are no rallies in Mindanao against Martial Law. Kung meron man, they don't represent the majority of the Mindanaons. We support the Martial Law because it makes our mission accomplishment efficient and faster, said Detoyato. **AES / MCAG.**

# WEAKENING | MAUTE-IS crumbling, but still a threat

Posted by Alvin Santiago on May 16, 2018 at 9:20 AM

**CAMP GEN EMILIO AGUINALDO, Quezon City (DWDD)** – The Maute-IS group is weakening, with the surrender recently of forty-two (42) of their members.

This was confirmed by Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff General Carlito Galvez.

With the latest surrender of a big number of Maute-IS members, the AFP is confident that even the support that this group is receiving is also dwindling.

Gen Galvez said that initially, there just ten (10) surrenderees, but after President Rodrigo Duterte had a conversation with them, this number has doubled.

He added that the recent Maute-IS surrenderees belong to a group they termed as PSR-listed and are known with the organization. Galvez believes that the success of the surrender efforts is due to the support of Local Government officials and the continuous rehabilitation of Marawi.

Meanwhile, Galvez stated that they have to confirm if Abu Dar is the new leader of the Maute-IS group, because he was the only survivor among the ten (10) leaders of the terror group that planned the Marawi siege.

*"Abu Dar is the only remaining significant figure, all of the nine have been killed and neutralized already during the battle of Marawi,"* said Galvez.

Galvez added that the AFP is strengthening its intelligence monitoring to neutralize Abu Dar and the remaining Maute-IS members. He is also not in favor in the lifting of Martial Law in Mindanao, since the ML has helped the AFP in the success of its various campaign against terrorism.

# STATEMENT | Martial Law: A Year After

Posted by Alvin Santiago on May 29, 2018 at 9:40 AM

A year since the declaration of Martial Law (ML) in Mindanao, Eastern Mindanao Command (EMC) has been consistent to its dictum in the implementation of Martial Law which is Necessity, Proportionality, and Rule of Law.

As a proof, the Commission on Human Rights and their Regional Offices have not forwarded any complaint on abuses and violation of human rights perpetrated by our troops (both from the PNP and AFP) relative to the implementation of Martial Law.

In the same manner, the Help Desk of the Ateneo Law School of Davao, a quick response mechanism which was developed to ensure that Martial Law will be implemented in accordance with the rule of law, has not forwarded any complaint nor called the attention of Eastern Mindanao Command for any misdemeanor or abuse in the ML implementation.

While there may be allegations, particularly from the progressive groups, these have not been substantiated nor proven by any means. We have challenged them to file cases and prove them in court.

As reported by the Philippine National Police, there was a significant reduction of crime rate all over Mindanao. Relatedly, the movements of terrorist groups and other threats have been limited, thereby preventing the occurrence of possible sabotage and terror attacks. Further, it also led to the arrest of different terrorist personalities in Eastern Mindanao during the implementation.

This security impact, likewise, contributed to the successful conduct of the recently concluded Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections.

While Martial Law is in effect, business confidence in the region is continuously growing as manifested by the 6.8 GDP growth and the increase in tourist arrivals, especially in Davao and other areas within Eastern Mindanao as per record of different local tourism offices.

Eastern Mindanao Command owes these to the different sectors for their support by giving inputs, suggestions, and comments to our units and troops to ensure proper implementation of the ML declaration.

While the Government continuously pursues rehabilitation in Marawi, the Eastern Mindanao Command continues to aggressively implement security measures and activities to shield its area from terroristic attacks. The Command has also aggressively engaged the different sectors and agencies of government in maintaining a physically secure environment via the whole-of-nation initiative. Coordination and Information exchange is also continuously pursued with Indonesia

to protect our porous borders. This is backed up by regular maritime patrol which is continuously being conducted by Naval Forces Eastern Mindanao in coordination with the Coast Guard and other maritime law enforcement agencies.

While our designated units continue to implement Martial Law, the Command continues to protect the communities from terroristic attacks of lawless armed groups, and this will be pursued relentlessly, with determination and enthusiasm. **EASTMINCOM / MCAg**



# SURRENDERS | NPA Amazon yields with firearms to 81IB in Abra

Posted by Alvin Santiago on May 21, 2018 at 10:47 AM

**CAMP GEN SERVILLANO AQUINO, Tarlac City (DWDD)** – A female Communist NPA Terrorist member surrendered to the Army troops of Northern Luzon Command (NOLCOM) on May 21, 2018 in the province of Abra.

A certain Genevive Daloy-on Pedro alias Ricky / Elvis, an NPA amazon from Barangay Kili, Tubo, Abra who went on lie-low status since November 2013, voluntarily yielded with one (1) M1 Carbine having a Serial Number 1801959, to Headquarters 81st Infantry "Spartan" Battalion (81IB) under Joint Task Force (JTF) "KAUGNAY" of the 7th Infantry Division (7ID), based at Brgy Bugbuga, Sta Cruz, Ilocos Sur.

Said amazon divulged that she was a former Political Guide (PG) of Team Dos, Sandatahang Yunit Pampropaganda (SYP), Komiteng Larangang Gerilya (KLG) AMPIS, Ilocos-Cordillera Regional Committee (ICRC). The surrender materialized with the cooperation of her family and the assistance of local officials in the area.

NOLCOM will keep its doors open for negotiations and will continue to engage all stakeholders to encourage more members of the Communist Terrorist Groups to lay down their arms and become a productive citizen that will contribute to nation-building.

Said personality is presently undergoing custodial debriefing at Hqs 81IB, 7ID in Brgy Bugbuga, Sta Cruz, Ilocos Sur. **NOLCOM / MCAG**

# ACADEME FOR PEACE | SND

## Lorenzana graces Mindanao Security Summit

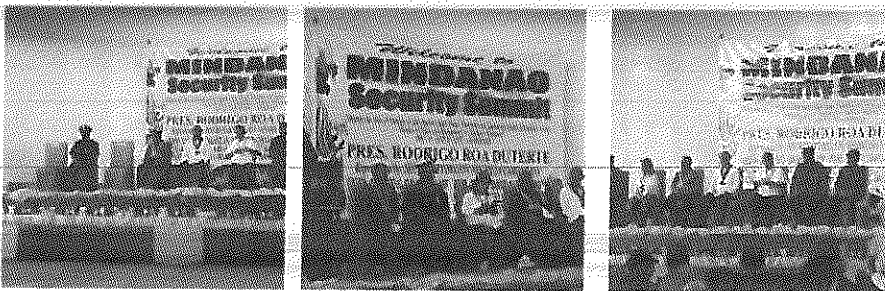
Posted by Alvin Santiago on May 25, 2018 at 11:36 AM

**CAMP GONZALO SIONGCO, Awang, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao (DWDD) –** National Defense Secretary Delfin N. Lorenzana graced the one-day Mindanao Security Summit held at Cotabato City State Polytechnic College (CCSPC) Gymnasium in Cotabato City on May 24, 2018.

The summit was attended by the academe and students that carried the theme, *“Grasping the Role of Academe in War Against Illegal Drugs, Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the Pursuit of Peace and Development in Southern Philippines”*.

The whole day activity was organized by 6th Infantry Division and CCSPC that aimed to explore the importance of education to prevent violent extremism as it gives awareness and creates a culture of peace and non-violence for sustainable development.

Also gracing the event were Western Mindanao Command and 6th Infantry Division Commander Lt. Gen Arnel B. Dela Vega, Police Regional Office of Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Director PCSupt Graciano J. Mijares, Sultan Kudarat Governor Sultan Pax S. Mangudadatu, and Cotabato City Mayor Frances Cynthia Guiani-Sayadi.



*“Let us mark this summit as a beginning of partnership that we should all sustain until we see a better and peaceful community and a progressive country where all people leave comfortably,”* Lt. Gen. Dela Vega said.

In his remarks, Secretary Lorenzana stressed the importance of education as a tool to prevent violent extremism and provides protection, stability, essential knowledge and life skills to building common core values for children and youth.

# SURRENDERS | NPA Amazon yields with firearms to 81IB in Abra

Posted by Alvin Santiago on May 25, 2018 at 10:42 AM

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NOLCOM will keep its doors open for negotiations and will continue to engage all stakeholders to encourage more members of the Communist Terrorist Groups to lay down their arms and become a productive citizen that will contribute to nation-building.

Said personality is presently undergoing custodial debriefing at Hqs 81IB, 7ID in Brgy Bugbuga, Sta Cruz, Ilocos Sur. **NOLCOM / MCAG**



*"Rest assured that my department is supportive to the academe's efforts to prevent violent extremism and de-radicalizing young people," Secretary Lorenzana said.*

The summit ended with the signing of the participants of their commitment of support. **6DPAO / MCAG**

## 4 Abu Sayyaf members surrender in Basilan

From the Philippine News Agency (May 25): 4 Abu Sayyaf members surrender in Basilan



*Bin Ajalan alias Kurerep Usuluddin turns over an M-16 Armalite rifle with attached M-203 grenade launcher to an officer of the Army's 18th Infantry Battalion when he surrenders on Friday in Ungkaya Pukan, Basilan. (Photo courtesy: Army's 18th Infantry Battalion)*

**ZAMBOANGA CITY--Four members of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) have separately surrendered this week to military authorities as offensives continue against the group in Basilan province, an official disclosed Friday.**

**Brig. Gen. Juvymax Uy, Joint Task Force Basilan commander, identified those who surrendered as**

**Uy said Ajalan, who ranks number 21 on the ASG wanted list, surrendered on Friday to the Army's 18th Infantry Battalion in Ungkaya Pukan, Basilan.**

**Uy said Ajalan brought along with him an M-16 Armalite rifle with attached M-203 grenade launchers and ammunition when he surrendered. He has two brothers, who also joined the ASG: Mudzri Usuluddin, who was captured during a firefight in 2016; and Jabir Ajalan, who surrendered last year.**

**He said Haron, Arangli and Jalil have surrendered to the Army's 18th Infantry Battalion on Monday also in Ungkaya Pukan, Basilan. They turned over three M-16 Armalite rifles when they yielded.**

Uy said Jalil confided to them that the ASG is using illegal drugs to lure more youths to join them. He added that the military will continue to partner with different local government units in Basilan to convince ASG members to surrender and live peaceful lives.

The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) has recently launched livelihood programs for surrendering ASG members in Basilan province.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1036497>

# More than 1,600 Chinese structures in South China Sea

From Rappler (May 26): **More than 1,600 Chinese structures in South China Sea**

*From basketball courts to buildings with radar equipment, nearly 800 of these Chinese structures can be found in the West Philippine Sea*



*SUBI REEF. This photo shows the artificial island on Subi Reef in the West Philippine Sea as of December 7, 2017. Photo courtesy of CSIS/AMTI/DigitalGlobe*

China has constructed more than 1,600 structures in the disputed South China Sea, and nearly half of these can be found in waters belonging to the Philippines.

This is based on data exclusively reviewed and published by Reuters on Thursday, May 24.

The data came from the non-profit group Earthrise Media, which analyzed satellite images by DigitalGlobe. The building counts spanned the years 2014 to 2017.

Based on these data, nearly 800 of these Chinese structures can be found in the West Philippine Sea, the part of the South China Sea that belongs to the Philippines. In particular, the Chinese structures can be found on the artificial islands constructed on the following reefs:

- Subi Reef, "now home to nearly 400 individual buildings," according to Reuters
- Mischief Reef and Fiery Cross Reef, that "each house almost 190 buildings and structures"

China has constructed hundreds of other structures on the Paracel Islands, which the Philippines does not claim.

All in all, China has built 1,652 buildings in both the Spratly Islands, which the Philippines claims, and the Paracels.

"In total across both island chains, China has erected more structures than all other occupants combined," Reuters reported.

Here is Reuters' breakdown of the structures built by different claimants the South China Sea:

China - 1,652 buildings  
Vietnam - 338 buildings

Philippines - 100 buildings  
Taiwan - 37 buildings  
Malaysia - 28 buildings

Reuters also noted the "shift of focus and massive expansion in the Spratlys" as of 2017.

Between 2014 and 2015, for example, there were 554 buildings in the Spratlys and 730 in the Paracels.

A few years later, there were already 1,350 buildings in the Spratlys and 805 in the Paracels.

"Most of this is due to China's island-building drive there," Reuters reported.

**Capable of holding up to 2,400 troops**

DigitalGlobe images "show neat rows of basketball courts, parade grounds, and a wide variety of buildings, some flanked by radar equipment," according to Reuters.

"Subi is the largest of China's seven man-made outposts in the Spratlys. The so-called 'Big Three' of Subi, Mischief and Fiery Cross reefs all share similar infrastructure – including emplacements for missiles, 3-km runways, extensive storage facilities, and a range of installations that can track satellites, foreign military activity and communications," the wire agency reported.

Analysts cited by Reuters, including Singapore-based Collin Koh, "said the facilities on Subi, Mischief, and Fiery Cross could each hold a regiment – between 1,500 to 2,400 troops."

Rappler is still trying to reach the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs for comment as of posting time.

The Reuters report comes after Chinese state media said Chinese bombers have landed for the first time on an island in the South China Sea.

The DFA has chosen not to publicly condemn China over these bombers, saying it was not its policy to "publicize every action" it takes.

President Rodrigo Duterte earlier stressed the need to remain "meek and humble" to receive the "mercy" of the likes of Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Acting Chief Justice Antonio Carpio and former Philippine foreign secretary Albert del Rosario, however, urged the Philippine government to file a diplomatic protest over the Chinese bombers.

"Failure to formally protest means the Philippines is acquiescing or consenting to the militarization, and worse, to the claim of China that all the islands, waters, and resources within the 9-dash line form part of Chinese territory," Carpio said.

<https://www.rappler.com>