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NEWS CLIPPINGS

03 October 2018

Wednesday



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AFP, PALACE DIFFER ON TRILLANES CASE

STORY BY LEILA B. SALAVERRIA AND CHRISTINE O. AVENDAÑO

General Galvez says Senator Trillanes applied for amnesty in 2011, but presidential spokesperson Roque insists the best evidence is the former military rebel's application form, which is missing.

A4

FROM A1

By Leila B. Salaverria and Christine O. Avendaño @Team_Inquirer

Did Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, as a military rebel seven years ago, apply for amnesty or not?

Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, thinks so.

Malacañang, however, doesn't care what Galvez, who is not a lawyer, says.

The best proof that Trillanes applied for amnesty is his application form, according to presidential spokesperson Harry Roque.

Senate hearing

The application form cannot be found in the files of the Department of National Defense (DND) and the AFP deputy chief of staff for personnel, or J1.

Trillanes grilled military officials during a hearing on the DND budget for 2019 on Tuesday, asking them if, based on their investigation, he indeed filed for amnesty in 2011.

He noted that he was given an amnesty certification.

Answering Trillanes' questions, Galvez deferred to Col. Josefa Berbital, who had submitted an affidavit stating that the

former Navy junior officer applied for amnesty and admitted his guilt, contradicting President Duterte's claim that he failed to apply for amnesty and admit guilt in attempts to overthrow the government in 2003, 2006 and 2007.

Mr. Duterte cited the absence of an application form as basis for his Proclamation No. 572 voiding Trillanes' amnesty, ordering his arrest, and giving instructions for the revival of the rebellion and coup d'état cases against him that were dismissed by the courts in 2011.

Galvez said he suspected that there were "lapses" in the handling of the amnesty documents, that these were not forwarded to J1.

This was why Lt. Col. Thea Joan Andrade from J1 issued a certification that "there is no available copy of [Trillanes'] application for amnesty in the records," Galvez said.

'According to her'

He said that according to Berbital, who headed the secretariat that processed in January 2011 amnesty applications resulting from Proclamation No. 75 of then President Benigno Aquino III, the amnesty process "was administered at the GHQ [General Headquarters]."

Trillanes pressed Galvez to say if he applied for amnesty or not.



AMNESTY ROW — Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., the military chief of staff, talks with Senators Antonio Trillanes IV and Risa Hontiveros after a Senate hearing on the defense budget on Tuesday. He testified that Trillanes applied for amnesty in 2011 but that he suspected there had been "lapses" in the handling of amnesty documents that led to the loss of the former military rebel's papers. —LYN RILLON

Galvez replied: "According to her," referring to Berbigan.

The military chief also said there were apparently some "lapses" in the handling of documents related to the amnesty.

"Our suspicion is that the repository of the documents did not bring these down to us at GHQ," he said.

Trillanes said he was satisfied with Galvez's answers.

"It does not matter. He (Galvez) is not a lawyer," Roque said in Malacañang when told by reporters about the military chief's testimony in the Senate.

"I'm talking as a lawyer, best evidence rule. And besides, that's in the courts and one

court has said that the pictures and everything else that Senator Trillanes adduced are not enough and, of course, I concur as a lawyer. Certainly you don't expect me to take the side of Chief Galvez who was not a lawyer over the words of a learned judge," Roque said.

He said Galvez's testimony

would not help Trillanes' case because the court had already decided, referring to the decision of Judge Elmo Alameda of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 150 to reopen the rebellion case against the senator.

Calida role

At the budget hearing in the Senate, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana spoke about the involvement of Solicitor General Jose Calida in the amnesty row.

Lorenzana said Calida called him up on Aug. 16 asking if he could help produce the "amnesty records" of Trillanes and several others.

Lorenzana said he told Calida to have his staff coordinate with his office.

They found a copy of Proclamation 75 and the amnesty document signed by former Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin, he said.

Calida, he said, later wrote to GHQ to get other records, and a member of the J1 staff certified that Trillanes' application form for amnesty could not be found.

Lorenzana said the DND had started to investigate the loss of Trillanes' amnesty application form and had invited members of the committee that handled the 2011 amnesty grant to shed light on the matter. INQ

AFP chief clears LP, Trillanes in ouster plot

NBI has witness in 'Red October'

By PAOLO ROMERO

It's "Red October" and only the Reds or communists are involved. Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Carlito Galvez yesterday cleared the Liberal Party (LP) and Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV of alleged involvement in any plot to overthrow the government.

But the AFP chief warned that the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), with its armed wing the New People's Army (NPA), is trying to involve legitimate political groups and certain LP members for the ouster of President Duterte, and that Trillanes himself has called for the ouster, so there is no inconsistency between the statements of Galvez and Duterte.

Trillanes applied for amnesty, says AFP chief. Story on Page 10.

personalities without their knowing it through cutouts and "linkages."

Malacañang also insisted that there is "collusion" among communists and

"We will not support any unconstitutional approach or unconstitutional move. In fact, if you have information

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AFP

From Page 1

on any member of the LP, would you tell us? We will expel (him or her) because that is in violation of our Constitution," LP president and Sen. Francis Pangilinan said.

"Let me assure you, if there (is) recruitment (in the military), it's not coming from Magdalo," Trillanes told Galvez, referring to the group

that the senator formed in staging the 2003 Oakwood mutiny.

Galvez could not give a categorical answer and instead requested an executive session with senators on the matter.

Meanwhile, as "Red October" rumors swirl, President Duterte reiterated his promise to soldiers that he would take care of them as long as he is Chief Executive.

"I will take care of you as long as I am in power. I will never aban-

don you," Duterte told members of the Army's 803rd brigade in Catarman, Northern Samar yesterday in Filipino.

"You will never have any worry at all. Just work," Duterte added.

The President also ordered the military to "neutralize" communists, among the forces that he claimed are seeking to overthrow him.

Neutralize is a military term that refers to the arrest, capture

death or surrender of members of armed groups fighting the government.

"We are not into crime prevention," Duterte said. "We are going for neutralization now."

"There is no crime prevention because the crime is being perpetrated 24 hours a day. So you do not need to ask whether there is a warrant," Duterte added.

Duterte said NPA sparrow units, which are allegedly behind the killing of soldiers and former rebels, should be "neutralized" even without an arrest warrant.

"If they carry firearms, you are a sparrow, you can be neutralized," Duterte said.

Duterte also advised soldiers to strengthen their intelligence-gathering efforts against the rebels.

"Once you get them, it's neutralization. I will be criticized but I'm telling you, I am guiding you what is practical and what is true and legal. That's legal," he said.

As this developed, presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr. yesterday said there is no inconsistency in the statements of Duterte and Galvez, who he said did not discount the possibility that individual members of LP are conspiring with communists.

"It could be true that there is no formal memorandum of agreement between the (LP) itself and the CPP-NPA. It does not prevent leading personalities with the (LP) from having such collusion," Roque said in a press briefing.

Roque added that the Duterte administration remains convinced that such collusion exists, citing Trillanes' previous statements that he wants the President out of office.

"No one will admit (collusion). But there is (intelligence) information in this regard and as far as we are concerned, we are considering all these information as valid and we are ready to face them," the presidential spokesman said.

"(Trillanes) has repeatedly called for the ouster of the President, so there's no inconsistency. He has told, he has actually verbalized time and again (that Duterte) should step down," Roque added.

Asked if Duterte would identify the LP members involved in the ouster plot, Roque said: "I don't know if he's willing to name names, maybe you should ask him."

Roque reiterated that Duterte continues to enjoy the support of Filipinos despite the reported destabilization plots.

"We don't recognize any viable threat against the administration because the people are solidly behind the President," Roque said.

The spokesman also shrugged off claims that the destabilization talks are being used to prod Duterte to impose martial law nationwide.

"He is just performing his duty. Martial law was needed in Mindanao. He does not need martial law in Luzon and Visayas," Roque said.

Pressed if the administration would seek the arrest of those seeking to oust the

President, Roque said the government would not make such move "as long as they don't constitute a clear and present danger."

'Agitation'

Galvez described "Red October" as "elaborate" and "pervasive" that includes the agitation of high school and college students from the University of the Philippines and several other universities, labor groups and indigenous peoples, using issues like high prices and human rights violations.

Galvez noted that CPP founding chairman Jose Maria Sison has video addresses with students while forums have been conducted likening the Duterte administration to that of Ferdinand Marcos' dictatorship.

The AFP chief claimed that front organizations have already successfully agitated labor unions that led to unrest in major companies.

Galvez added that allied organizations in Europe have opened a "people's court" to try Duterte for al-

leged crimes against the people.

All of these will be accompanied by heightened attacks by the NPA in the countryside, Galvez said.

The agitation intensified with the Sept. 21 rallies on the 46th anniversary of Marcos' martial law declaration, and would be peaking on the CPP's 50th anniversary on Dec. 26, Galvez said.

During the deliberations on the proposed P183-billion budget of the Department of National Defense yesterday, opposition senators took turns grilling Galvez on Red October.

"This is the sinister plot of the CPP-NPA," Galvez said.

Galvez added that communist rebels, directed by Sison from the Netherlands, are trying to use the same destabilization templates they used in the past like the 1971 Plaza Miranda bombing and during the administration of former president and now Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's administration.

Once the country is in political and economic turmoil, the CPP-NPA aims to overthrow the government and take over, Galvez said.

When asked by Pangilinan whether he agrees that a "rev-gov" (revolutionary government) is unconstitutional, Galvez answered: "Yes, your honor."

House probe

The Makabayan bloc of seven leftist party-list representatives asked the House of Representatives to look into Red October.

In a resolution, the group led by Rep. Carlos Zarate of Bayan Muna said military officials have misled the President on the supposed plan to remove him from office.

The lawmakers said the same military officers who gave the President wrong information have cleared those supposedly involved in the alleged plot one after another.

"These put the military's allegations in question. It is imperative that the (House) investigate the so-called Red October plot or similar ones alleged by the AFP as such may be a prelude to massive crackdown against the opposition and may result in human rights violations on a massive scale," they said.

Witness appears

Meanwhile, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has made a breakthrough in its probe on Red October.

An official privy to the investigation told *The STAR* that a witness has surfaced before the NBI and gave "significant details" on the alleged plot to oust Duterte.

The source, who requested anonymity for lack of authority to speak on the matter, did not give details of the testimony taken on Monday night pending verification of probes and also due to the sensitivity of information that "involves national security matters."

But the insider hinted that the witness appeared to have "bolstered AFP's information."

Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra refused to confirm this, saying he has not yet received any report from the NBI.

AFP gains

The AFP yesterday boasted how it is gaining ground against the CPP-NPA and other terrorist groups.

Recent developments supposedly show that rebel and terrorist groups are experiencing significant setbacks following more intense military operations conducted by security forces nationwide.

"We have seen that rebel groups have lost the support of the public," Galvez said in Filipino. "Those who surrender tell us that they experience hardship and see no reason to remain in the movement."

"It is not too late for you to surrender and leave your current miseries from fighting a useless cause," Galvez told CPP-NPA rebels.

The AFP chief also commended the troops who have foiled attacks that might have killed innocent civilians.

"Remind every unit and every soldier, airman, sailor and marine not to let our guard down against terrorists," Galvez said.

Col. Noel Detoyato, AFP's public affairs office chief, said the trend of NPA regulars and supporters coming back to the fold of the law continues.

During debriefing, Detoyato said these former rebels provided the AFP with information against the CPP-NPA.

For his part, Col. Alberto Desoyo, 303rd Infantry Brigade commander, said he is not aware of any personality from Negros island who is linked to Red October.

"If you are not with them and did nothing wrong, I don't think you have to be bothered," Desoyo added.

But Noli Rosales of Kilusang Mayo Uno-Negros Occidental chapter told *MBC Aksyon Radyo* that he was among seven included in the supposed list.

Rosales dared government authorities to run after the CPP-NPA and not activists who are defending workers and their rights.

- With Alexis Romero, Jess Diaz, Edu Punay, Michael Punongbayan, Gilbert Bayoran

Welcome gift to Xi: Oil exploration deal

By Julie M. Aurelio
@JMAurelioINQ

The Philippine government wants to sign a joint oil exploration agreement with China in the West Philippine Sea by November when Chinese President Xi Jinping visits Manila.

Malacañang said it was hopeful that a joint agreement would help pave the way for commercial oil production by 2027, which would reduce the Philippines' dependence on foreign petroleum products.

"We are doing everything we can to make sure that when President Xi comes here, we can sign the joint exploration so we can begin looking for natural gas and oil and ensure our energy security," said presidential spokesperson Harry Roque.

Setting conflict aside

Roque made the remarks in a press briefing on Tuesday, amid another round of price increases in petroleum products.

He said the Philippines

must set aside its territorial conflict with China and pursue joint exploration in the West Philippine Sea.

The proposed joint exploration agreement in the contested territory, according to Roque, could be signed when Xi visits Manila next month.

Earlier, the government said it was working on a framework for a possible joint oil exploration with China without the Philippines compromising its territorial claims.

"It is clear that we have to pursue joint exploration and set aside our territorial conflict," Roque said.

Oil reserves

"Preliminary studies showed that Service Contract (SC) 72 has oil reserves. We hope to get this so we will no longer depend on imported oil," Roque said.

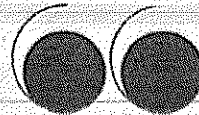
He added that the government hoped to tap the oil reserves in the West Philippine Sea, particularly in SC 72, which

covers Reed Bank.

The Malampaya natural gas field in Palawan has a contract until 2022, but the field could still supply gas until 2032.

"As it is, we're really dependent on foreign crude products. If Malampaya, which gives us electricity, runs out, we'll have a bigger problem," Roque said.

This was the reason that the government was hoping to have commercial oil production in SC 72 by 2027, he said. INQ 15



It is clear that we have to pursue joint exploration and set aside our territorial conflict

Harry Roque
Presidential spokesperson

Govt pushing exploration deal with China — Palace

A joint exploration by China and the Philippines in the disputed South China Sea (SCS) will help alleviate rising oil prices in the country, Malacañang said on Tuesday.

On Tuesday morning, Caltex, Eastern Petroleum, Flying V, Petro Gazz, Filipinas Shell, Phoenix Petroleum, PTT Philippines, Seaoil, Total and Unioil

Deal **A2**

■ DEAL FROM A1

Govt

adjusted their pump prices.

The price hike brings the common price of diesel to P48.30 per liter, gasoline to P59 per liter and kerosene to P53.67 per liter.

In a news briefing, Palace spokesman Harry Roque Jr. said that according to past studies, Service Contract (SC) 72 in the Recto Bank (Reed Bank) houses abundant oil supply, which would lessen the Philippines' reliance on imported fuel.

"Filipinos understand that we cannot do anything if there are no [stocks of] gasoline in our country. Which is why we are studying and pushing for the joint exploration in the West Philippine Sea, because as we understand it, based on studies, there are natural gas and oil in SC 72," Roque added.

"The President said if we will let rifts [with China] stop the exploration in SC 72, what will happen to us? We will still rely on the imported oil. Now, it is clear. We need to push for the joint exploration," he said.

There are no other places in the Philippines that have oil and natural gas, but SC 72, according to Roque.

He said both countries are looking into signing a treaty on the joint exploration before Chinese President Xi Jinping arrives in the Philippines in November.

Xi is expected to visit the country after the Asia-Pacific Economic

Cooperation (APEC) summit in Papua New Guinea next month.

"We are doing everything we can to make sure that when President Xi comes here, we can sign a joint exploration and we can start finding natural gas and oil, so we will have energy security," Roque said.

Duterte has kept a cordial relationship with China since taking his oath as President.

He has also visibly taken a much softer stance against China over land and water disputes compared to his predecessor, Benigno Aquino 3rd, who filed an arbitration case against Beijing over the disputed SCS (West Philippine Sea).

This is despite China's installation of missiles and other militarization efforts in the area and the United Nations Permanent Court of Arbitration's thrashing of China's "nine-dash claim" on the entire West Philippine Sea, after the issuance of the The Hague ruling on July 12, 2016.

The ruling declared that Filipino fishermen should enjoy fishing rights at the Panatag Shoal and that the Spratly Islands, as well as the Panganiban (Mischief) Reef and Ayungin (Second Thomas) Shoal.

Duterte has repeatedly said he is willing to have a joint exploration in the area with China.

He also defended his approach, saying it would be better if the Philippines was kept in China's good side because if not, an unwinnable war might follow.

RALPH U. VILLANUEVA

China destroyer nearly rams US warship

Sino vessel approached within meters of USS Decatur's bow in an 'unsafe and unprofessional' encounter

WASHINGTON—A Chinese warship sailed within meters of an American destroyer, forcing it to change course in an "unsafe and unprofessional" encounter as the US vessel was in contested waters in the South China Sea, an official said on Monday.

The USS Decatur guided-missile destroyer was conducting what the military calls a "freedom of navigation operation" on Sunday, when it passed within 22 kilometers of Gaven and Johnson reefs in the remote Spratly Islands.

The 22-km distance is commonly accepted as constituting the territorial waters of a landmass.

China claims nearly all of the South China Sea, though Taiwan, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam all claim

parts of it.

Beijing claims all of the Spratlys and has built a number of military installations on the islands.

A UN-backed arbitration court, however, has dismissed as baseless China's maritime claims.

During the operation, a Chinese Luyang destroyer approached the USS Decatur in "an unsafe and unprofessional maneuver in the vicinity of Gaven Reef in the South China Sea," said the US Pacific Fleet spokesperson, Commander Nate Christensen.

'Increasingly aggressive'

The Chinese ship then conducted a series of "increasingly aggressive maneuvers, and warned the Decatur to depart



LEAVE OR ELSE Beijing says a Chinese Luyang destroyer gave the USS Decatur (shown in photo) a "warning to leave" because the latter entered the area "without permission." —AP

the area," he added.

The Chinese "destroyer approached within 45 meters of Decatur's bow, after which Decatur maneuvered to prevent

a collision."

In a statement, the Chinese Ministry of Defense said that its ship had "given a warning to leave" to the vessel after it en-

tered the area "without permission."

"The US has repeatedly sent warships into the territorial waters near Chinese reefs and islands in the South China Sea," it said.

Mattis' reaction

In Paris, US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis on Monday said he did not see relations between the United States and China worsening, a day after his trip to China was canceled and tensions had started affecting military ties.

The United States and China are embroiled in a trade war, sparked by US President Donald Trump's accusations that China has long sought to steal US intellectual property, limit access to its own market and unfairly subsidize state-owned companies.

Reuters reported on Sunday that China had canceled a security meeting with Mattis that had been planned for October.

A US official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said Mattis was no longer going to China.

"There are tension points in the relationship, but based on discussions coming out of New York last week and other things that we have coming up, we do not see it getting worse," Mattis told a small group of reporters traveling with him to Paris.

"We're just going to have to learn how to manage this relationship ... We'll sort this out," he added.

Mattis said he would talk to his Chinese counterpart directly "when the time is right." —AP

REPORTS FROM AFP AND REUTERS

China, US warships face-off in disputed South China Sea

BEIJING/WASHINGTON (Reuters/AFP) - China expressed anger on Tuesday after a US Navy destroyer sailed near islands claimed by China in the disputed South China Sea, saying it was resolutely opposed to an operation that it called a threat to its sovereignty.

The Foreign Ministry in Beijing said in a separate statement it strongly urged the United States to stop such "provocative" actions.

A Chinese warship sailed within yards of an American destroyer - forcing it to change

course - in an "unsafe and unprofessional" encounter as the US vessel was in contested waters in the South China Sea, an official said Monday.

The USS Decatur guided-missile destroyer was conducting what the military calls a "freedom of navigation operation" Sunday when it passed within 12 nautical miles of Gaven and Johnson reefs in the remote Spratly Islands.

The 12-mile distance is commonly accepted as constituting the territorial waters of a landmass.

During the operation, a Chinese Luyang

destroyer approached the USS Decatur in "an unsafe and unprofessional maneuver in the vicinity of Gaven Reef in the South China Sea," US Pacific Fleet spokesman Commander Nate Christensen

said. The Chinese ship then conducted a series of "increasingly aggressive maneuvers, and warned the Decatur to depart the area," he added.

The Chinese "destroyer approached within 45 yards (meters) of Decatur's bow after which Decatur maneuvered to prevent a collision."

On Monday, a US defense official said that security talks due to take place later this month in Beijing between Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and his Chinese counterpart had been canceled. 3

Chinese warship chases US destroyer

WASHINGTON, D.C.: A Chinese warship sailed within yards of an American destroyer — forcing it to change course — in an “unsafe and unprofessional” encounter as the US vessel was in contested waters in the South China Sea, an official said Monday (Tuesday in Manila).

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➤ Warship A2

WARSHIP FROM A1

Chinese warship chases US destroyer

within 12 nautical miles of Gaven and Johnson reefs in the remote Spratly Islands.

The 12-mile distance is commonly accepted as constituting the territorial waters of a landmass.

China claims nearly all of the South China Sea, though Taiwan, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam all claim parts of it.

Beijing claims all of the Spratlys and has built a number of military installations on the islands.

During the operation, a Chinese Luyang destroyer approached the USS Decatur in “an unsafe and unprofessional maneuver in the vicinity of Gaven Reef in the South China Sea,” US Pacific Fleet spokesman Commander Nate Christensen said.

The Chinese ship then conducted a series of “increasingly aggressive maneuvers, and warned the Decatur to depart the area,” he added.

The Chinese “destroyer approached within 45 yards (meters) of Decatur’s bow, after which

Decatur maneuvered to prevent a collision.”

In a statement, the Chinese Ministry of Defense said that its ship had “given a warning to leave” to the vessel after it entered the area “without permission.”

“The US has repeatedly sent warships into the territorial waters near Chinese reefs and islands in the South China Sea,” it said.

The behavior “gravely threatens China’s sovereignty and security, gravely damages relations between China and the US and their militaries, and gravely injures regional peace and stability.”

US-Chinese relations have been strained on multiple levels since Donald Trump became president in 2017.

A trade war launched by Trump has infuriated Beijing, as did his authorization of a \$1.3 billion arms sale to Taiwan, which China considers a rebel province.

Washington last week enacted new tariffs against China covering another \$200 billion of its imports.

China has taken a series of retaliatory measures, including scrapping a US warship’s planned port visit to Hong Kong and canceling a meeting between the head of the Chinese navy and his American counterpart.

On Monday, a US defense official said that security talks due to take place later this month in Beijing between Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and his Chinese counterpart had been canceled. **AFP**

China, US destroyers in close 'unsafe' encounters

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China, US...

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The behavior “gravely threatens China’s sovereignty and security, gravely damages relations between China and the US and their militaries, and gravely injures regional peace and stability.”

US-Chinese relations have been strained on multiple levels since Donald Trump became president in 2017.

A trade war launched by Trump has infuriated Beijing, as did his authorization of a \$1.3-billion arms sale to Taiwan, which China considers a rebel province. **AFP**

China condemns US for S. China Sea freedom of navigation operation

BEIJING. — China expressed anger on Tuesday after a US Navy destroyer sailed near islands it claimed in the disputed South China Sea, saying it resolutely opposed an operation that it called a threat to its sovereignty.

Beijing and Washington are locked in a trade war in which they have imposed increasingly severe rounds of tariffs on each other's imports.

A US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the destroyer the USS Decatur travelled within 12 nautical miles of Gaven and Johnson Reefs in the Spratly Islands on Sunday.

The operation was the latest attempt to counter what Washington sees as Beijing's efforts to

limit freedom of navigation in the strategic waters, where Chinese, Japanese and some Southeast Asian navies operate.

China's Defense Ministry said a Chinese naval ship had been sent to warn the US vessel to leave.

The ministry said China has irrefutable sovereignty over the South China Sea islands and the waters around them, and the situation there is progressing well thanks to the hard work of China and countries in Southeast Asia.

"The US side repeatedly sends military ships without permission into seas close to South China Seas islands, seriously threatening China's sovereignty and security, seriously damaging Sino-US military ties and seriously harming

regional peace and stability," the ministry said.

"China's military is resolutely opposed to this," it said.

The Chinese armed forces will continue to take all necessary steps to protect the country's sovereignty and security, the ministry said.

China's Foreign Ministry said in a separate statement it strongly urged the United States to stop such "provocative" actions and to "immediately correct its mistakes."

The operation also comes as military ties between the two countries have dived, with China also angered by US sanctions on China's military for buying Russian arms and by US support for

self-ruled Taiwan, which Beijing claims as its own.

US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said on Monday he did not see relations between the United States and China worsening, a day after his trip to China was cancelled.

Reuters reported on Sunday that China cancelled a security meeting with Mattis that had been planned for October. A US official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said Mattis was no longer going to China.

China has not yet commented on the matter.

Chinese Defense Minister Wei Fenghe is due to visit the United States later this year but China's Defense Ministry suggested last week that may not happen. — Reuters

ASEAN unity is 'lifeline' in resolving issues — former Japan PM

By JOY E. MARAZA

Bulletin on Sunday

Unity within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is the "lifeline and guiding light" in resolving a contentious issue like the South China Sea, former Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda told the Manila

In a one-on-one interview, the former Japanese leader noted that the South China Sea is a serious issue that hinges upon maritime order.

Under such situation, what's called for in utmost is the firm resolution to maintain and uphold the unity of ASEAN."

ASEAN unity is 'lifeline' ... <1

"The unity of ASEAN is the lifeline and guiding light in this region. I should like to see an action based on sensible thinking and reasonable act," Fukuda said when asked how Japan could help unify the 10 member countries comprising the regional bloc amid the tension brought about by the maritime disputes.

Fukuda set down for an exclusive interview on the eve of the commemoration of the 41st year of the launching of the Fukuda Doctrine at the historic Manila Hotel.

The former Japanese leader said it is something for everyone in the region to "look closely" whether China will continue to support the same thinking.

"In other words, here again a thorough-going solid discussion with China will be necessary," he said, adding that Japan stands ready to support ASEAN members in their effort to achieve unity and centrality.

Rise of China

While admitting that China's influence is being felt in the region, Fukuda pointed out that such occurrence is only about "projection of power."

"China will not be able to exercise this influence any longer or solidify its presence," he stressed.

Fukuda, who served as prime minister from 2006 to 2007, said one key to maintaining strategic balance in the region is to "stabilize." The relationship between the two largest economies in Asia — Japan and China.

He believes that a stabilized Japan-China relation would exert a good influ-

ence on ASEAN and on other regions, as well.

"Unless we try to achieve this, we will not be able to see the development of this region as a whole," Fukuda said.

Indo-Pacific and ASEAN

With all the challenges facing the region, Fukuda said the Indo-Pacific strategic alliance is important in helping the ASEAN respond to issues such as piracy, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and natural disasters in prone areas like Indonesia, Japan and the Philippines.

More than half of the world's population resides in the Indo-Pacific region, and ASEAN is geographically situated right in its center.

"How to resolve these issues is very important and these are the type of issues ASEAN alone will not be able to resolve," he said.

First and foremost, Fukuda hopes that surrounding countries like Japan and others would cooperate with ASEAN.

"Having ASEAN in the center, this is something we place a great importance on," he said.

Japan-ASEAN ties

During the interview, Fukuda painted a very rosy picture of the Japan and ASEAN relations over the last four decades since his father — former Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda — unveiled what is now known as the Fukuda Doctrine.

Fukuda Doctrine, which continues to serve as the guiding principle of Ja-

pan's diplomatic relations with Southeast Asian countries, was formally introduced before a gathering of Southeast Asian leaders and representatives at the Manila Hotel in August 1977.

Former Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos and Foreign Affairs Secretary Carlos P. Romulo were among the dignitaries who witnessed the launching of the Fukuda Doctrine, a major post-war Japanese foreign policy towards Southeast Asia.

"All in all, the relationship between Japan and ASEAN continue to develop in a very smooth manner without a hitch. In the past 40 years, consistently we have witnessed the strengthening of our relationship year after year," he said.

Citing the latest statistics, Fukuda said the number of Japanese companies, manufacturing facilities and production plants established in ASEAN is now more than 12,000.

On top of this, the number of Japanese residing in ASEAN countries is now close to 200,000 while the number of Japanese tourists has increased from 870,000 in 2010 to 3.15 million in 2017.

PH role

Fukuda made a special mention of the Philippines for the important role it played in the development of the Japan-ASEAN relations. In November last year, Manila hosted the 50th founding anniversary of the ASEAN.

"We highly appreciate the position and role of the Philippines as a stable power and the point of stability. We do hope and expect that such role of the Philippines will continue," the former Japanese leader said.

Mattis cancels trip to Beijing

WASHINGTON, D.C.: A meeting between Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and his Chinese counterpart has been canceled, a US defense official said late Monday, amid rising tensions between the two nations.

The Pentagon had been working on a plan for Mattis to travel to Beijing later this month to meet General Wei Fenghe for security talks, but China ultimately declined to make him available, the official told Agence France-Presse.

In light of that, the decision to scrap the visit came primarily from the US side, the official added.

It would have been Mattis's second trip to China as Pentagon chief, following a June visit when he met Chinese President Xi Jinping, as well as Wei and a number of other officials.

The US embassy in Beijing declined to comment.

The trip cancellation comes as friction between the US and China continues to rise, particularly over trade.

President Donald Trump's trade war has infuriated Beijing, as did his authorization of a \$1.3 billion arms sale to Taiwan, which China considers a rebel province.

Washington last week enacted new tariffs against China covering another \$200 billion of its imports.

And Washington last month placed financial sanctions on China for its recent purchase of Russian Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets and S-400 surface-to-air missile systems.

China reacted by scrapping a US warship's planned port visit to Hong Kong and canceling a meeting between the head of the Chinese navy and his American counterpart.

On Sunday, a US warship sailed through waters off the contested Spratly Islands in the South China Sea—in the latest implicit challenge to Beijing's sweeping territorial claims in the region.

There was no immediate reaction from China, but a similar US operation in July, involving the disputed Paracel islands, prompted a furious Beijing to deploy military vessels and fighter jets.

The Pentagon said all US military operations in the area "are designed in accordance with international law and demonstrate that the United States will fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows." AFP

'China rise may lead to new reg'l order'

By Rey E. Requejo

THE rise of China both as economic and military power may lead to a new regional order in Asia, but it is not enough to dethrone the United States as a dominant power in the region in the near future, according to a Japanese expert.

Speaking during a symposium commemorating the 41st founding anniversary of Fukuda "Heart-to-Heart" Doctrine in Manila, professor Dr. Mie Oba of the Tokyo University of Science sounded the alarm bells on the challenges to peace and prosperity in the Southeast Asia, particularly the shift in the balance of power in the region.

Oba said one of the challenges facing the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and Japan was the "seismic shift in the balance of power" with the rise of China as dominant power in the region.

"The rise of China has had big impact on regional circumstances," Oba said, noting that "this country first achieved large-scale economic development and now, it is mobilizing that expanding power to promote the further build up and modernization of its military."

More importantly, she added, China was pursuing a two-pronged, pro-active foreign policy by asserting its sovereignty in regions such as the South China Sea and the East China Sea, then by demonstrating a regional vision as found in its Belt and Road Initiative.

"This kind of idea and the leadership it promotes could lead to the construction of a new regional order in Asia," she said.

While the leverage of the US is declining, Oba said she did not believe "there will be an easy transition of power from the United to China in the near future.

She cited the US continuing efforts to keep its commitment to Asia affairs alive by launching its Indo-Pacific Strategy to support infrastructure development and financial assistance for security cooperation. A6

ANNUAL BILATERAL MEETING OF SENIOR DEFENSE OFFICIALS IN MANILA

US, PH AGREE TO INCREASE JOINT MILITARY EXERCISES TO

281 FROM 261

American and Filipino defense officials have agreed to accelerate military engagements between the two longtime allies, in an effort by the Trump White House to reaffirm the US commitment to the Philippines, The Washington Times reported on Monday.

Adm. Philip Davidson, the US Indo-Pacific commander, and Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, announced the plan to increase the number of American and Philippine "joint security activities" from the current annual level of 261 to 281, the Times said, quoting a report from The Associated Press.

The Times said the agreement was reached as part of the annual assembly of senior US and Philippine military leaders in Manila.

'Kamandag' exercises

Joint exercises between US and Filipino Marines also started on Monday at Subic International Airport in Zambales province.

Called "Kaagapay ng Mandirigma ng Dagat" (Cooperation of Warriors of the Sea) or "Kamandag" (Venom), the activity involved 1,000 US Marines and 350 Philippine Marines.

About 100 Japanese Marines came as observers of the joint exercises that would be held un-

til Oct. 10 in different parts of the main Philippine island of Luzon.

Capt. Jerber Anthony Belonio, spokesperson for the Philippine Marine Corps, said the exercises would focus on counterterrorism operations, as well as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

The Times quoted Col. Noel Detoyato, spokesperson for the Philippine military, as saying the 20 additional joint engagements would drill down into increasing cooperative efforts between the two nations in the areas of counterterrorism, humanitarian aid and maritime security.

Detoyato, however, declined to provide details as to how many of the additional, individual drills would focus on each of the three priority areas outlined during the senior-level meeting in Manila, the Times said.

Philippine security officials are seeking amendments to an 11-year-old antiterrorism law to enable the country to deal more effectively with threats following reports that local terrorists affiliated with the Islamic State (IS) jihadi group are rebuilding their forces after their defeat in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur province, last year.

Commenting on the Times'



US EMBASSY

'KAMANDAG' Brig. Gen. Chris McPhilips, chief of the US 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade; Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Caser, inspector general of the Philippine Navy; and Brig. Gen. Melquiades Ordiales, deputy chief of the Philippine Marines, preside over the opening of this year's "Kamandag" (Venom) joint exercises between American and Filipino Marines at Subic International Airport on Monday.

les, the Times reported on Sunday that there were more fighters affiliated with IS in Southeast Asia, especially armed groups based in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao in the southern Philippines, than there ever were battling US forces in Afghanistan and Iraq during the height of the US-led wars there.

"Foreign terrorist fighters are heading home from the war zone in Iraq and Syria or traveling to third countries to join [IS] branches there," the Times quoted Ambassador Nathan Sales, the US Department of State's top counterterrorism coordinator, as saying.

The Times said the threat exploded into view in May last year when members of the Maute gang of extortionists and a faction of the Abu Sayyaf bandit group that had pledged allegiance to IS overran Marawi and held it for five months.

It said the black banners of IS flew over Marawi—the first city in Southeast Asia to be seized by an IS affiliate—until October, when the Philippine military, backed by US intelligence and air power, took back control.

—REPORTS FROM THE WASHINGTON TIMES, JEANNETTE I. ANDRADE AND JULIEM. AURELIO INQ

report on Sunday that IS fighters were returning to Mindanao to try to establish a caliphate or province for the jihadi group in Southeast Asia, presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said on Tuesday that President Duterte supported the strengthening of security laws, including the amendment of the Human Security Act to allow the state to hold terror suspects longer with-

out filing charges against them. "Let them attempt to do their evil work but we will always be ready to enforce the laws of the Philippines," Roque said.

Most terrorist attacks

The announcements came days after a new US Department of State assessment placed the Philippines, for the first time, among the five countries with

the most terrorist attacks, the paper said.

The Philippines, along with Afghanistan, India, Iraq and Pakistan, were the sites of nearly 60 percent of terrorist attacks last year, it said, quoting from the state department assessment released last week.

Citing figures from the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Stud-

REQUEST TO AFF

JUSTICE DEPT' SAYS PALPARAN IN NBP ON OCT. 4

By **Dona Z. Pazzibugan**
@dpazzibuganINO

Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra said he had personally asked Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. to order the transfer of convicted retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr. to the New Bilibid Prison (NBP).

Guevarra said he talked to Galvez after Palparan's request to delay the transfer was denied by the court.

Guevarra told reporters on Tuesday that Galvez "assured me" that the Armed Forces of the Philippines "will immediately comply."

He said the target date for the

transfer was on Thursday, Oct. 4.

Palparan, along with Lt. Col. Felipe Anotado Jr. and Staff Sgt. Edgardo Osorio, was sentenced to life imprisonment on Sept. 16, for the kidnapping and serious illegal detention of University of the Philippines students Karen Empeño and Sherlyn Cadapan. INQ 16

Court orders Palparan moved to Bilibid

By EDU PUNAY

A Bulacan court has ordered the immediate transfer of convicted former Army major general Jovito Palparan Jr. from the custody of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) in Muntinlupa City, Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra said yesterday.

Guevarra said the Malolos Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 15 in Bulacan has denied the motion of Palparan seeking to defer his commitment to the national penitentiary pending the resolution of his motion for reconsideration on his conviction for the abduction of two University of the Philippines-Los Baños (UPLB) students who have remained missing for the past 12 years.

There is no more reason for Palparan to stay in AFP cus-

today, he added.

"I have personally discussed the matter with AFP chief of staff Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., who assured me that the AFP custodial center will immediately comply without prejudice to the resolution of any further judicial review," he told reporters in a text message.

Guevarra said the convicted retired general dubbed by human rights groups as "The Butcher" is expected to be transferred to the NBP tomor-

row morning.

Palparan and his two co-accused - Lt. Col. Felipe Anotado and S/Sgt. Edgardo Osorio - were found guilty of the kidnapping and serious illegal detention of missing UPLB students Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño, who were snatched in Barangay San Miguel, Hagonoy, Bulacan in June 2006.

They were also ordered to indemnify the family of the missing with P100,000 in civil damages and P200,000 as moral damages in the verdict handed down by Judge Alexander Tamayo.

The three filed an appeal on the RTC's decision, but government prosecutors stressed that Palparan, Anotado and Osorio should be immediately brought

to the NBP pending the resolution of their appeal.

Ready for 'The Butcher'

The NBP is ready for Palparan's arrival, Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) chief Ronald dela Rosa said yesterday.

He said while they do not know when Palparan would be transferred, "we have long been ready for him and the maximum security compound is ready for him."

Dela Rosa assured the public that there will be no special treatment for Palparan.

"He will be treated like an ordinary inmate at *kaya naming bantayan siya* (we can guard him)," he said.

- With Robertzon Ramirez

Palparan transferred to Bilibid Wednesday

CONVICED military general Jovito Palparan Jr. will be transferred to the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) in Muntinlupa City on Wednesday (October 3) to serve his sentence, a Palace official said.

Palace spokesman Harry Roque Jr. told reporters that Armed Forces chief Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. confirmed to him the transfer date of Palparan.

"Sir, accordingly this coming Wednesday," Roque said, quoting Galvez.

Palparan and two others were sentenced last month to life imprisonment for the 2006 kidnapping and disappearance of University of the Philippines students Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño.

After handing down the sentence, Malolos Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 15 Judge Alexander Tamayo

issued a commitment order for the transfer of Palparan, and Lt. Col. Felipe Anotado Jr. and Staff Sgt. Edgardo Osorio to NBP.

Army spokesman Louie Villanueva earlier confirmed that Palparan is still in their custody.

"Gen. Palparan is still under the custody of Army Custodial Center since the army is still waiting for the decision of the court (regarding) his disposition," Villanueva said.

He said Palparan has a pending case with another court, which issued a separate commitment order stating that the retired army major general should remain in the custody of the military. **A3**

Palparan was charged before Bulacan RTC Branch 19 for the disappearances of brothers Raymond and Reynaldo Manalo.

CATHERINE S. VALENTE

Ex-Gen. Palparan sent to Bilibid

By Rey E. Requejo

A BULACAN regional trial court has ordered the immediate transfer of convicted retired Army Major Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr. from custody of the Armed Forces of the Philippines to the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa City.

Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra said the Malolos, Bulacan Regional Trial Court, Branch 15, junked the motion of Palparan seeking to defer his commitment in the national penitentiary pending resolution of his motion for reconsideration on his conviction in the abduction of two University of the Philippines Los Baños students who have remained missing for 12 years.

With the court ruling, Guevarra said that there is no more reason for Palparan to stay with AFP's custody.

"I have personally discussed the matter with AFP chief of staff Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., who assured me

that the AFP custodial center will immediately comply without prejudice to the resolution of any further judicial review," the Justice secretary said, in a text message.

Galvez said the convicted retired general, dubbed by human rights groups as "The Butcher" is expected to be transferred to NBP tomorrow (Thursday) morning.

Palparan and his two co-accused-Lt. Col. Felipe Anotado and S/Sgt. Edgardo Osoño - were found guilty for kidnapping and serious illegal detention of missing UPLB students Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño, who were snatched in Barangay San Miguel, Hagonoy, Bulacan in June 2006.

They were also ordered to indemnify the family of the missing with P100,000 in civil damages and P200,000 as moral damages in the verdict handed down by Judge Alexander Tan,go.



Palparan move to Bilibid set

By Kristina Maralit

Malacañang yesterday revealed the transfer of former Philippine Army (PA) Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr., convicted of kidnapping of two University of the Philippines (UP) students, to the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) in Muntinlupa may be executed today by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

Palparan, found guilty of kidnapping UP students Karen Empeño and Sheryn

Turn to page 6

Palparan move to Bilibid set

From page 1

He could only avail himself of parole after 30 years. Palparan turned 68 years old last 11 September, four days before his conviction

Cadapan by a Malolos, Bulacan Court on 7 September, is currently detained at the Army Custodial Center in Taguig City.

His detention at the Army Custodial Center, however, was questioned by human rights and Left groups which claimed Palparan should be jailed at the NBP.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque, however, said Palparan's transfer may take effect today.

His contemporaries in the AFP described him as a staunch anti-communist.

The possible move was relayed by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. to Roque Monday night.

"Sir, accordingly this Wednesday (October 3)," Roque quoted Galvez's short message as saying.

Palparan was brought straight to the Army Custodial Center in after Malolos Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 15 Judge Alexander Tamayo found him

guilty of kidnapping the two activist students, along with two other co-accused, former Army Lt. Col Felipe Anotado and former Army Staff Sgt. Edgardo Osorio.

He was sentenced to life in prison—or reclusion perpetua—for the disappearance of Cadapan and Empeño in 2006. He should serve between 20 and 30 years in prison.

He could only avail himself of parole after 30 years. Palparan turned 68 years old last 11 September, four days before his conviction.

Tagged as "The Butcher" for his extremist stance against insurgents at the height of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's "Oplan Bantay Laya" campaign, Palparan was the commanding officer of the 7th Infantry Division in Central Luzon.

Cadapan and Empeño were tagged as members of the New People's Army (NPA) by their kidnappers, according to court records.

They were reportedly abducted and tortured although there were no traces of the two from then. The student activists were doing fieldwork in Hagonoy,

Bulacan in June 2006 when they went missing.

Palparan is also being tried for another kidnapping and illegal detention of brothers Raymond and Reynaldo Manalo at the sala of Judge Francisco Felizmenio of Bulacan RTC Branch 19.

Palparan was brought straight to the Army Custodial Center after Malolos Regional Trial Court Branch 15.

Palparan became the country's most wanted fugitive after the Malolos Court ordered his arrest in 2011.

He went on hiding for three years until he was arrested in August 2014 in the vicinity of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PU) in Manila, ironically a known hotbed of student activism since the 1970s.

His contemporaries in the AFP described him as a staunch anti-communist. He was praised as a hero of the government anti-insurgency campaign by Arroyo in 2016.

Arroyo is now the Speaker of the Lower House.

Palparan ordered transferred to NBP

BY ASHZEL HACHERO

A MALOLOS, Bulacan court has ordered the immediate transfer of retired Army Gen. Jovito Palparan to the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa City two weeks after he was sentenced to life imprisonment for the June 2006 kidnapping of UP students Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño.

Palparan is currently detained at the Philippine Army Custodial Center in Taguig City.

The same Malolos court had junked the petition filed by Palparan seeking to defer his transfer to the NBP.

Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra said Branch 15 of the Malolos City RTC ordered Palparan's immediate transfer.

Guevarra said the RTC cited a circular issued by the Supreme

See PALPARAN > Page B3

PALPARAN

Court in 2013 directing all trial court judges to cause the immediate transfer of convicted persons to the NBP, regardless of the pendency of a motion for reconsideration or an appeal.

"I have personally discussed the matter with AFP chief of staff Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., who assured me that the AFP custodial center will immediately comply without preju-

dice to the resolution of any further judicial review," Guevarra said, adding Palparan is expected to be transferred to the NBP on Thursday, October 4.

Aside from life imprisonment, the court also directed Palparan and his co-accused, Lt. Col. Felipe Anotado and Staff Sergeant Edgardo Osorio, to pay the families of Empeño and Cadapan P100,000 as civil indemnity and P200,000 as moral damages in

each case.

Bureau of Corrections director Ronald "Bato" Dela Rosa had earlier said Palparan would most likely be detained at the NBP's maximum security compound.

Dela Rosa also said Palparan will spend his first 60 days at the NBP's Reception Diagnostic Center to undergo quarantine and medical examinations to determine his physical and mental state.

Russian forces too much for Pinoys... in tug-of-war

By JAIME LAUDE

VLADIVOSTOK – The Russian Navy proved too strong for the Philippine Navy (PN), but although the Filipinos lost the friendly

games, they certainly won new friends.

The first engagement yesterday was a tug-of-war between members of the Marine contingent of the Navy's Task Force 87 (NTF-

87) against a Russian Navy team held at the compound of the Russian Pacific Fleet in the Far East here.

While the Russians took two of the supposed

Turn to Page 3

Russian From Page 1

three-match contest against their Filipino foes, the winning trophy was given to the Filipino Marines with matching shirts for each player, courtesy of their Russian counterparts.

Navy and Marine footballers also proved no match for the Russian Navy footballers, but the Pinoys likewise took home the trophy for scoring a lone goal – against the opponent's 10.

The same fate befell the PN's volleyball team that lost all three sets to the well-prepared Russian

Navy spikers.

The games were held on a football field, a half hour drive to the city's outskirts.

NTF-87 commander Capt. Florante Gagua was seen cheering the teams. He said winning or losing is not as important as developing the bond and friendship between the two forces.

Russian sailors and Marines were in the Philippines last year and early this year where friendship games were also held.

"It's OK. We might have lost in all the games, what is important is we have won ourselves new friends," NTF-87 spokesman Lt.

Edward Pablico said.

Yesterday's friendly games were part of the series of engagements that include shipboard tours of a contingent of Russian sailors on the Philippine Navy's Strategic Sealift Vessel BRP *Tarlac*.

A reciprocal shipboard tour was also done by a contingent of Filipino sailors and Marines on Russia's warship nearby.

In the late afternoon, the NTF-87 officials led by Gagua and *Tarlac* skipper Capt. Estelito Lagadia Jr. played host to their Russian counterparts in a dinner held at the helicopter hangar of the ship.



PH Navy warship dumating na sa Russia

Dumating na kahapon ang BRP Tarlac (LD 601) ng Pilipinas sa Vladivostok, Russia para sa arim na araw na port call visit at inaasahang lalakas pa ang kooperasyon at alyansa sa pagitan ng Philippine Navy team at ng counterpart na Russian Navy.

Ang nasa 400 officers at enlisted personnels ng Philippine Navy na lulan ng strategic sealift vessel BRP Tarlac (LD-601) ay dumating nitong Lunes ng hapon sa Vladivostok.

Agad namang tumanggap ng maimit na welcome ang Philippine Navy team sa pangunguria ni Naval Task Force (NTF) 87 Chief Captain Florante Gagua.

Nabatid na sinalubong ang mga ito ng Russian Navy officers at ng mga kababaihang Ruso na hinigyan ang mga ito ng limapay na may asin bilang bahagi ng komilang tradisyon sa pagtanggap ng mga bisita.

Ang Philippine Navy team ay dumating sa Russia matapos ang sampung araw na paglalayag sa karagatan.

Sinaksihan naman ni Philippine Ambassador To Russia, His Excellency Carlo Sorreta at Defense Armed Forces Attache Col. Dennis Francis Pastor ang nasabing welcome ceremony para sa PH Navy team. - *Joy Cantos*

2

Bicol to benefit from infra, social services — Go

PILI, Camarines Sur — Special Assistant to the President (SAP) Christopher “Bong” Go has given assurance that the Bicol region will benefit from the infrastructure and social services programs of the Duterte administration.

“The government wants a faster flow of shipments and services in and out of Camarines Sur. The world-class transportation projects for your province and the Bicol region will continue under the Build, Build, Build program,” Go said during the anniversary of the 9th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army.

Among the projects he cited was the long haul project of the Philippine National Railways (PNR), which will be fully implemented by 2023.

“The construction of the 639-kilometer long-haul passenger freight rail from Manila to Batangas, Albay and

Sorsogon is ongoing. This can serve 100,000 passengers daily, and will cut travel time from Manila to Bicol of 12 hours via car to just six hours. Partial operations will start by 2022,” he added.

Go also recognized the contribution of Camarines Sur and the Bicol region to the country’s economy, pointing out that the government’s infrastructure projects for the area should bring in more tourists.

“The transportation projects will surely encourage tourists to visit the watersports parks here and other local attractions throughout the province...

The Department of Finance is working with Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB) to finance the 38-kilometer Pasacao-Balatan Tourism Coastal highway worth P4.74 billion,” he also said.

The special assistant also mentioned the inclusion of the

Camarines Sur-Catanduanes Friendship Road in the Department of Finance’s shortlist of 12 major projects that would be funded by the AIIB.

He also promised to put up Malasakit Centers — a one-stop shop program of President Duterte to hasten the delivery of medical services and give poor patients access to free medicine — in Legazpi and Naga.

For Legazpi, the Bicol Regional Training and Teaching Hospital (BRTTH) is currently being processed, while the one for Naga is still being studied.

Under the program, patients are assisted in availing themselves of the services and financial assistance provided by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., Department of Health and Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Pooled together, the assistance can push the patient’s medical bill, including medicine, to the lowest possible amount.

During the same visit, Go also commended the gallantry of the troopers from the Luzon and Mindanao-based units of the 9th Infantry Division (9ID) as he graced the 14th anniversary celebration of 9ID in Barangay San Jose in Pili, Camarines Sur.

He led the wreath-laying ceremony and awarding of medals to the valiant soldiers of the Philippine Army before delivering his speech.

Go lauded the bravery and devotion of the soldiers in fulfilling their duty to protect and serve the Filipinos and the country and encouraged them to continue their support for Duterte’s three-point campaign against illegal drugs, criminality and corruption.

Go bares Bicol development thrusts

Special Assistant to the President Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go on Monday bared various infrastructure programs of the Duterte administration for the development of Bicol province.

In his visit to Camarines Sur, Go said the government will make sure Bicol region benefits from the various infrastructure and social services programs of the administration.

The government will make sure Bicol region benefits from the various infrastructure and social services programs.

"The government wants a faster flow of cargos and services in and out of Camarines Sur. Under the Build, Build, Build program, we will continuously implement world-class transportation projects for the province and for the whole Bicol region," Go said.

He said the Philippine National Railways South long haul project will be fully implemented by 2023, with partial operations starting 2022.

"The construction of 639-kilometer long haul rail service from Manila to

Batangas, Albay and Sorsogon is ongoing. This can serve 100,000 passengers daily and will cut travel time from Manila to Bicol, from 12 hours via car to just 6 hours. Partial operations will start by 2022," Go said in an interview.

Go also cited the significant contribution of Camarines Sur and the whole Bicol region to the country's economy. He said the administration has been pushing the projects under the "Build, Build, Build" program to encourage more tourists arrivals in the region and improve delivery of government services to "Bicolanos."

"The transportation projects will surely encourage tourists to visit the watersports parks here and other local attractions throughout the province," Go said.

He also bared several road projects to be undertaken by the Duterte administration that are expected to improve transportation to and from the region.

"The Department of Finance is working with Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB) to finance the

38-kilometer Pasacao-Balatan Tourism Coastal highway worth 4.74 billion pesos," Go said.

Last August 2018, the Department of Finance included the Camarines Sur-Catanduanes Friendship Road in their shortlist as part of the 12 major projects to be funded by AIIB. The Department of Public Works and Highways is currently conducting studies on the P2.25 billion Camarines Sur Expressway Project.

Apart from infrastructure projects, Go promised to put up Malasakit Centers in Legazpi and Naga. For Legazpi, the center will be established at the Bicol Regional Training and Teaching Hospital while no definite location has been chosen yet for the center in Naga.

"What is on my mind right now is to put up Malasakit Centers; it's in our priority list. We will strengthen and expand the program so that more Filipinos can benefit from it," Go said.

The Malasakit Center is a one-stop shop program of President Duterte to hasten the delivery of medical services and give poor patients access to free medicine.



Tribute to heroes Special Assistant to the President Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go offers a salute after laying a wreath in honor of gallant soldiers during the 14th anniversary celebration of 9th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army in Barangay San Jose in Pili, Camarines Sur.

OSAP PHOTO

"We will establish Malasakit centers here in Bicol to help those in need of medical attention, especially senior citizens and persons with disabilities," he said.

Under the program, patients get assistance to avail of the services and financial assistance provided by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office,

the Philippine Amusement and Games Corporation, Department of Health and the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

During the same visit, Go also commended the gallantry of the troops as he graced the 14th Anniversary celebration of 9th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army in Brgy. San Jose in Pili,

Camarines Sur.

He led the wreath-laying ceremony and awarding of medals to valiant soldiers.

Go also encouraged the soldiers to continue their support for President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's 3-point campaign against illegal drugs, criminality and corruption.

CRP

AFP chief confirms Trillanes applied for amnesty

By PAOLO ROMERO

Former mutineer turned politician Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV had applied for amnesty but some documents related to his application have gone missing due to some "lapses."

This was according to Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Carlito Galvez who believed there could have been slip-ups in the process.

Galvez cited the fact that Lt. Col. Josefa Berbital, former head of the secretariat of the amnesty committee, already issued a sworn statement attesting that Trillanes did apply for amnesty and the senator personally submitted the application form to her.

"Apparently, there were some lapses, sir. The (amnesty) documents were not handed back to the J1, which is basically the repository of all the documents along with the OTAG (Office of the Adjutant General)," Galvez replied.

He said the case might be similar to the promotion process of officers where not all the documents the AFP sent to the Department of National Defense (DND) are returned.

Galvez was answering the queries of Trillanes during deliberations on the proposed P183-billion budget of the DND for 2019 at the Senate yesterday.

"Regarding my amnesty application - you know the truth - I want to know, did I apply for amnesty as far as your investigation is concerned?" Trillanes asked Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and Galvez.

Lorenzana said he was not in a position to answer the question since the process happened during the previ-

ous administration, but reiterated that Solicitor General Jose Calida called him up last Aug. 16 seeking his help in security documents related to the amnesty granted to Trillanes and other mutinous soldiers.

He also disclosed that Calida wrote to the AFP general headquarters seeking some records in connection with the amnesty process to which an officer of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (J1) issued a certification that Trillanes' application could not be found.

Lorenzana said the DND tried to reach out to members of the amnesty commission that reviewed the applications but they have not yet responded.

The resolution of the question on whether Trillanes applied for amnesty is crucial since the alleged absence of his application form was the basis for President Duterte's issuance of Proclamation 572 revoking the amnesty granted to him by then president Benigno Aquino III in 2011.

Trillanes said he was sure Galvez conducted an internal investigation on the matter and asked him the results of the probe.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who was presiding over the hearing, cautioned Trillanes on his questions, since the proceeding was a budget hearing.

Lacson said there are other venues in the Senate where Trillanes can raise his issues.

Trillanes later in the afternoon delivered a privilege speech hitting Calida anew for allegedly using his position to allow his family-owned security agency to bag contracts in various security agencies.

Trillanes claimed Calida committed conflict of inter-

est in bagging some P358.33 million worth of government contracts for his family's security agency.

Trillanes presented several documents from the Securities and Exchange Commission and other government contracts supposedly showing that Calida violated a provision of Republic Act 6713, or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, that prohibits government officials from engaging in businesses in conflict with their government position.

He said Calida did not divest his shares from his family's Vigilant Investigative and Security Agency Inc. after his appointment in June 2016.

It was Calida who had sought a check on documents on Trillanes' amnesty, which President Duterte voided through Proclamation 572 on Aug. 31.

The proclamation was made public on Sept. 4, the same day Trillanes began an investigation into Calida's government contracts.

So where was it?

Malacañang posed the question to Trillanes as it refuted the statement of Galvez that the opposition senator had filed for amnesty.

"He (Trillanes) applied for amnesty? Well, there's visual that he applied for amnesty, but the question is: where is the form? It all boils down to 'where is the form' and the form is all important because the form contains the admission of guilt, which is a *sine qua non* requirement for grant of amnesty," presidential spokesman Harry Roque said at a press briefing.

"What was confirmed was he had a photo (opportunity), he held a press briefing. We



Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV delivers a privilege speech at the Senate to show Solicitor General Jose Calida's allegedly anomalous contracts as well as documents and videos of him applying for amnesty.

GERESLY PINTOLO

are sure of that. But if he really submitted the document, especially the admission of guilt required by the law, there is no such thing. So we applied the presumption of regularity. He did not file," he added.

Roque said Galvez's statement in the Senate would not help prove that Trillanes had filed for amnesty because Makati City Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 150 had decided that there was no such application.

The court ordered the arrest of Trillanes for rebellion late

last month, citing the senator's failure to present a copy of his amnesty form.

When reminded that the military is the custodian of Trillanes' amnesty document, Roque replied, "Ideally, but that is why his own copy of the received is important. His own received copy of the application is important because if the copy on file cannot be found, then the best evidence to prove that in fact it was filed would have been his duly received copy."

Roque said the burden of

proof does not lie on the military as custodian of the application form, saying, "There's a certification that it cannot be found."

"He (Trillanes) could have gone there, but the truth of the matter is he made that interview; he was not willing to confess to any crime. So he must have gone for purpose of visuals and for purposes of the news. But when it came to actually complying with the requirements of the law, it's lacking," he added.

"Unfortunately, we are governed with the rules of evidence, best evidence rule, you have to prove first and foremost why you cannot produce the original document. He (Trillanes) is unable to produce it."

Roque also shrugged off Galvez's suspicion that there were lapses in securing Trillanes' amnesty papers.

"I do not know about that. I'm talking as a lawyer, best evidence rule. And besides, that's in the courts and one court has said that the pictures and everything else that Sen. Trillanes adduced are not enough and of course, I concur as a lawyer," Roque said.

D - With Alexis Romero

Trillanes' application for amnesty not found – AFP Chief

By VANNE ELAINE P. TERRAZOLA

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) did not find in its records a single document of the applicants for the amnesty issued under the administration of former President Benigno Aquino III, including that of Senator Antonio Trillanes IV.

Trillanes took the opportunity to ask military officials about his missing application records during the deliberation of the Department of Defense's (DND's) proposed 2019 budget yesterday.

General Carlito Galvez Jr., AFP chief-of-staff, told senators they were conducting an investigation on the issue about Trillanes' amnesty application which President Duterte used as a basis to nullify the amnesty granted to the opposition lawmaker seven years ago.

Galvez, citing their probe, said they found that application documents were not handed back to the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel or

J1, which serves as the repository of all documents concerning members of the AFP.

It was the J1 which issued the certification saying that there was "no available copy" of Trillanes' application for amnesty in their records.

Galvez noted the contrast between the certification and the sworn affidavit of Colonel Josefa Berbital, who, as head of the secretariat of the DND amnesty ad hoc committee, confirmed that Trillanes had applied for his amnesty on Jan. 5, 2011.

"Apparently, sir, na-observe namin there is some lapses (sic) na hindi po naibaba 'yong documents from J1, which is basically the repository of all documents... Na-observe namin, sir, is all the papers was not brought down pabalik sa GHQ (General Headquarters). So 'yon po ang nakita namin sa investigation namin kaya po si Lieutenant Colonel Thea Andrade wala pong nakita, wala pong papel," Galvez told Trillanes, referring to the officer who

signed the certification.

"Ang suspicion po namin is ang repository ng mga dokumento po nito ay hindi naibaba sa amin GHQ," he added.

Galvez, however, neither confirmed nor denied that Trillanes had applied for amnesty. He, instead, referred to Berbital's admission.

"Nag-apply ba ako ng amnesty enough para bigyan ako ng amnesty certificate noong past administration?"

Trillanes asked.

"Based po sa ano ni Col. Berbital, it was administered at the GHQ ng members of the secretariat of the committee," Galvez replied.

"So nag-apply ako, sir?" pressed Trillanes.

"According to her," Galvez said.

Berbital, who is currently serving as a commissioned officer in the Judge Advocate General's Office of the AFP, earlier attested that Trillanes filed for

amnesty.

"I know that Sen. Trillanes filed his amnesty application because I was the one who personally received Sen. Trillanes' amnesty application," her affidavit, signed September 20, read.

The ad hoc committee, she said, found Trillanes' application "to be in order, complete and in compliance" with the requirements of Aquino's amnesty proclamation, thus recommending it for approval. 2

AFP chief: Trillanes applied for amnesty

BY JOAN DAIRO

ARMED Forces chief Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. yesterday virtually confirmed that Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV applied for amnesty in 2011.

While maintaining that a copy of the application has yet to be found by the Armed Forces and the Department of National Defense, Galvez affirmed that Col. Josefa Berbigal, former head of the DND ad hoc amnesty committee secretariat, received Trillanes' application.

"It was Col. Josefa Berbigal who administered your oath. I was a

member of the ad hoc committee," Galvez said in reply to Trillanes' question during the Senate finance committee hearing into the proposed 2019 budget of the DND and its attached agencies.

Trillanes' amnesty was voided by Duterte in August, through Proclamation 572 that said the former Navy lieutenant failed to comply with requirements for the clemency. The proclamation said "there is no available copy of the application" of Trillanes for amnesty.

Trillanes has submitted a sworn

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AFP

affidavit of Berbigal attesting to her receipt of his amnesty application to two Makati City regional trial courts as supporting evidence against a Department of Justice move to revive coup and rebellion charges slapped against him, but which were dismissed following amnesty grant.

Galvez said Trillanes' amnesty application is not in the repository of the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (J1) maybe because the documents were not turned over to J1.

"Yung suspicion namin, 'yung papers were not brought down (That is our suspicion. The papers were not brought down)," Galvez said.

"All the papers were not brought back to J1 from GHQ... kaya si Lt. Col. Thea Joan Andrade, wala pong nakitang papeles kaya nag-certify siya

na walang papel."

In voiding Trillanes' amnesty, the Palace cited as evidence the certification from Andrade, from J1, stating that "there is no available copy of his application for amnesty in the records."

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana reiterated it was Solicitor General Jose Calida who looked for Trillanes' amnesty records last August 15.

"My staff was able to produce Proclamation 75 issued by President Benigno Aquino III granting them amnesty, and the document was signed by then Defense Secretary (Voltaire) Gazmin," Lorenzana said.

Also during the hearing, Galvez confirmed the military placed Trillanes under surveillance, but said this was only to ensure his and his family's security.

"We are also aware of some threats to your life, Sir. There are instructions to make sure na walang mangyayari sa

inyo," Galvez said, adding: "Kasi kung may mangyari po sa inyo, Sir, we will be the first to be blamed."

Trillanes grilled Galvez about the AFP intelligence units which he claimed have been observed following his car when it left the Senate on Saturday after his almost one-month stay at his office. An intelligence team was also seen casing the senator's house.

He dropped the subject after hearing Galvez' explanation.

Later during the Senate plenary session, Trillanes stood up and delivered a privileged speech lambasting what he claimed was President Duterte's untiring efforts to "put me behind bars or even kill me."

He vowed he will not be silenced. "I am a legitimate member of the opposition. This is my role - to check the abuses committed by this administration."

DEFENSE CHIEF:

No Palace hand in military purchases

BY BERNADETTE E. TAMAYO

DEFENSE Secretary Delfin Lorenzana on Tuesday said Malacañang did not manipulate the procurement of military equipment under the Armed Forces modernization program.

Lorenzana made the remark in response to the query of Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th about reports

that the Palace was meddling in the "wish list" or "shopping list" of the Army, Air Force, Navy and

the Marines.

During the hearing on the proposed budget of the Department of National Defense (DND) and its attached agencies, Trillanes said he had received complaints from some military officers that some of the procured military equipment were not the ones they requested.

"Their wish list and shopping list was bypassed. The items bought were different from what

they had requested. And these equipment are coming directly from Malacañang and you were being bypassed, Sir," Trillanes told Lorenzana.

The DND chief said: "Just to correct the impression of the senator. That did not happen during my time. Malacañang did not dictate on us. In fact, the President has always reminded us that 'Let us buy what the end users want.' So, that's what we are looking at."

Trillanes claimed his informants gave a specific name at DND who was the point man of Malacañang.

Lorenzana replied: "I asked around. It's not true. Nobody is manipulating the procurement at the DND because the procurement is a collegial decision by me and the service commanders and senior leaders."

"We have what we call the senior leaders and we meet twice a month to decide what will be procured.

We present all the characteristics of products and then the body will decide what to buy. It is not dictated by anybody," the DND chief said. **A2**

He added: "We discuss that. We have passionate discussions sometimes to buy something and we come to a decision. Nobody comes or goes to the services to force the procurement of a certain item that they did not want. That did not happen, Mr. Senator."



No fiddling with AFP purchases

No hand, except the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), meddles with the procurement processes of the military, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana told the Senate yesterday.

Lorenzana clarified not even Malacañang could meddle in the AFP operations, including the procurement of military hardware.

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No fiddling with AFP purchases

From page 1

At the Senate hearing on the proposed P251.5-billion budget of the Department of National Defense (DND) yesterday, Lorenzana dismissed Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV's allegation that Malacañang is imposing on the DND and AFP on what to buy and where.

"That is not happening,

Senator Malacañang never dictated on us," Lorenzana said.

Lorenzana clarified President Rodrigo Duterte is giving the DND-AFP the free hand to acquire what it needs to accomplish its missions.

Lorenzana explained it is highly impossible for somebody to dictate on the procurement of the DND-AFP.

"The President always reminded us to buy what we need," Lorenzana said.

Lorenzana explained it is highly impossible for somebody to dictate on the procurement of the DND-AFP, particularly of big-ticket projects under the modernization program.

He said the DND-AFP has a committee acting as a collegial body in deciding what to procure.

"Nobody is manipulating the procurement in the DND. Our procurement is a collegial decision - we have a committee composed of senior commanders. We meet twice a month to discuss (our plans)," Lorenzana said.

"The whole committee decides what to buy. It's not dictated (upon) by anybody," he added.

Lorenzana's statement was supported by Army chief Lt. Gen. Joselito Bautista, Air Force chief Lt. Gen. Galileo Kintanar and Navy flag officer in command Vice Admiral Robert Empedrad.

Bautista and Kintanar stressed that the Army and the Air Force are buying military hardware on their wish lists, respectively, while Empedrad stressed that nobody had influenced the Navy acquisition program.

The AFP,

meanwhile, took the opportunity to explain before Trillanes that it was not out to harm but to secure him from threats amid the reported plot to oust President Duterte.

Galvez made the claim after Trillanes questioned the AFP chief about elements of intelligence unit were accosted near his house last Saturday.

"Most probably, we are also aware that there is threat to your life," Galvez told Trillanes.

Our procurement is a collegial decision - we have a committee composed of senior commanders.

"We want to make sure that nothing bad happens to you sir. That is the main purpose sir," he added.

The AFP chief, however, did not identify the unit tasked to monitor Trillanes.

On the alleged presence of intelligence elements at Trillanes' house, Galvez vowed "I am not informed about that. We'll investigate this."

The military was apparently out to thwart any plot to compromise Trillanes' security after President Duterte issued Proclamation 572 ordering the revocation of the amnesty granted him by former President Aquino.

Not even Malacañang could meddle in the AFP operations.

Immediately after the issuance of the proclamation, reports of a destabilization plot against Duterte was floated-tagging the Communist Party of the Philippines as the primary mover.

Trillanes was allowed to post a P200,000 bail by the Makati City Regional Trial Court Branch 150 on rebellion charges for his temporary liberty.

Lorenzana said there will be no warrantless arrest to be executed against the senator.

MJM

Palace, military clash

*... and Trillanes' amnesty,
casing of senator's house*

By Macon Ramos-Araneta

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte's spokesman and the top brass of the Armed Forces of the Philippines on Tuesday clashed over Senator Antonio Trillanes IV's application for a general amnesty.

Testifying before the Senate finance committee, Armed Forces chief Gen. Carlito Galvez admitted that Trillanes applied for amnesty contrary to the Palace claim and that there were lapses in the transfer of documents that resulted in the supposedly missing application form of the former mulineer-turned-senator.

"Our suspicion, sir, [is that] the repository of all these documents did not bring the documents to us in GHQ (General Head Quarters)," Galvez said.

"Did I apply for amnesty?" Trillanes asked Galvez.

"According to Berbigal, sir, yes," Galvez said, referring to

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...and Trillanes'...

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Col. Josefa Berbital, the former head of the amnesty committee secretariat.

Malacañang immediately disputed Galvez's claim, with Roque belittling the position of the AFP chief of staff on the amnesty issue.

"Certainly, you don't expect me to take the side of [AFP] Chief Galvez who is not a lawyer over the words of a learned judge," Roque said, adding that one of the two Makati City courts handling Trillanes' criminal cases had already ruled against the senator's claim that he had complied with the amnesty requirements.

"It doesn't matter. He [Galvez] is not a lawyer and under the rules of evidence, if [original copy] is the best evidence. Before you can offer secondary evidence, you need to establish why you can't produce original document," he added.

At the same hearing, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said he was "not knowledgeable" on what happened because the processing of his amnesty application was done during the administration of President Benigno Aquino III.

But he admitted that on Aug. 16, he received a call from Solicitor General Jose Calida asking him if they could produce the amnesty records. He related that his staff was able to produce Proclamation No. 75 issued by Aquino as well as an amnesty document signed by then-Defense secretary Voltaire Gazmin.

"That's all that came from us. Those are the only two documents that were given to him [Calida]," Lorenzana said.

Trillanes, nag-apply ng amnesty—AFP

Kinumpirma kahapon ng panunuan ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) na nag-apply nga ng amnesty si Senador Antonio Trillanes IV, taliwas sa iginigilit sa proklamasyon na ipinalabas ni Pangulong Duterte upang ipawalang-bisa ang nasabing amnestya noong nakaraang buwan.

Sa budget hearing kahapon, kinumpirma ni AFP Chief of Staff Carlito Galvez na si Col. Josefa Berbigal, dating adhoc head ng amnesty committee secretariat, ang nagposom/sa kay Trillanes.

Gayunman, sinabi ni Galvez na hindi nila makita ang kopya ng nasabing mga dokumento.

"There are some lapses po, di po nailabas ang mga dokumento pabalik sa J1 which is the repository of all the documents. All the papers were not brought back to J1 from G1HQ (General Headquarters)," sabi ni Galvez.

"Para pong sa promotion, Sir, pag nag-submit kayo ng recommendation sa laas, di na po bumalita. Yun po ang nakita sa investigation po namin, kaya si Lt. Col. Theo Joan Andrade, wala pong nakitang papeles ng application niyo, kaya nag-certify siya na walang papeles ng application niyo," patibayanag ni Galvez.

Ang sertipikasyon naman ni

Andrade ang naging batayan ng Pangulo upang bawain ang amnestya kay Trillanes.

"So nag-apply ako, sir?" tanong ni Trillanes.

"According to Berbigal, sir, yes," sagot ni Galvez.

Sa naturang pagding, intulit ni Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana na si Solicitor General Jose Calida ang nagpahanap ng amnesty records ni Trillanes at ng ibang mga kasapi ng Magdalo, noong Agosto 15.

2 **Leonel M. Abasola**

OCD stops retrieval ops in Cebu, Benguet

BY DEMPSEY REYES

RETRIEVAL operations in Naga City in Cebu and Itogon, Benguet, where landslides have buried people in the wake of typhoon "Ompong," have been stopped after the ground became too soft for the activities to continue, authorities said on Tuesday.

Concepcion Omopia, director for the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) in Western Visayas, said stopping of search and rescue operations in Naga City has been discussed at the OCD's regional level along with concerned local government units.

By Wednesday, she added, the stoppage will be declared in unison, so the public will be witness to it.

The search and rescue operations were stopped because the

Mines and Geosciences Bureau has determined that the ground was too soft for the retrieval to resume.

Omopia said the latest casualty report from authorities showed 72 fatalities, 10 missing and 18 injured. Sixty-five of the fatalities recovered had complete body parts and were already identified while seven other are yet to be recognized by their relatives.

The extent of the landslide area that stemmed from quarrying op-

erations was about 80.12 hectares, where responders are conducting search and rescue operations.

Meanwhile, in Itogon, Mayor Victorio Palangdan confirmed that search and rescue operations in the municipality has stopped.

Palangdan said a total of 91 bodies have been recovered in Barangay Licab in Itogon, where a bunkhouse crashed after the landslide.

When search and rescue operations stopped, responders and the

locals spent the day holding a program after retrieving the bodies.

To prevent future landslides if a typhoon hits the area, Palangdan stressed that officials from the Department of the Interior and Local Government, OCD, Philippine National Police and Philippine Army will hold a meeting. **A7**

"[This will involve putting a stop] to mining, quarrying and illegal cutting of trees," he said.

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CIVILIANS SURRENDER ASSORTED FIREARMS IN MAGUINDANAO

CAMP SIONGCO, Awang, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao: Civilian residents in the towns of Shariff Saydona Mustapha and Sultan Sa Barongis, surrendered assorted firearms to the 40th Infantry Battalion (40IB) in Barangay Zapakan, Radjah Buayan, Maguindanao on Monday. Maj. John Arvin Encinas, spokesman for the 6th Infantry Division (6ID), on Tuesday said among the high powered firearms handed over were four M79, one Ultimax, two Barrett sniper guns, carbine, a KG9 and two .38-caliber pistols. Encinas said this endeavor is part of the 601st Brigade efforts to recover loose firearms in the area. Since January this year, a total of 1,146 loose firearms were turned over to this Army Command in Central Mindanao. **A7 JULMUNIR I. JANNARAL**

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'RED OCTOBER' PLOT

AFP CLEARS LIBERAL PARTY, TRILLANES

By Leila B. Salaverria
@LeilasINQ

The military on Tuesday insisted that the "Red October" plot to oust President Duterte this month was real but the Liberal Party (LP) and opposition Senators Francis Pangilinan and Antonio Trillanes IV were not involved.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff, Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., said the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), had sought a coalition with the political opposition but no alliance was formed.

The alleged plot was a side-light to the Senate hearing on the defense department's budget, in which both Trillanes and Pangilinan strongly disavowed any link to the reported oust-Duterte conspiracy.

House probe urged

Despite Galvez's statement, presidential spokesperson Harry Roque maintained that "individual members of the Liberal Party, as the President said, may be in collusion with the CPP-NPA."

He cited Trillanes' repeated

calls on the President to step down and for him to be jailed.

The Makabayan bloc on Tuesday sought a House investigation of the alleged plot, saying it may just be a "prelude to a massive crackdown" against opponents of Mr. Duterte that would put the lives and safety of the individuals and leaders of opposition groups in "grave danger."

Akbayan Rep. Tom Villarin noted that the military initially did not comment when the President last month accused the LP and the CPP of working to foment his downfall.

Villarin said it was Mr. Duterte himself who had entered into an alliance with the communists when he appointed former militant lawmakers to various Cabinet posts at the beginning of his term.

The GPP has dismissed the military's claim as "nothing but an AFP invention" and a "poorly concocted story."

'Protests, offensives'

Galvez told senators that Red October was a combination of armed and legal struggles where the rebels would stage simultaneous labor protests and tactical offensives

intended to force the President to declare martial law.

He said the plot entailed presenting the atrocities during the Marcos dictatorship to students to show the same things were happening under Mr. Duterte.

The CPP-NPA had "already organized 10 universities" in Metro Manila to join the ouster move, he added without identifying the schools.

Trillanes, a former Navy lieutenant and Mr. Duterte's archcritic in Congress, said he has been trying to convince the opposition to steer clear of the communists.

"For as long as they (rebels) are killing our soldiers, this would be a water and oil situation. We can't mix," said Trillanes, who belongs to the Magdalo group that includes former military mutineers.

Pangilinan, the president of LP, said his party would not join such a plot. A2

"I will categorically state that there is no desire on the part of the Liberal Party to oust President Duterte. We will not support any unconstitutional approach or unconstitutional move," he said. —WITH REPORTS FROM DELFIN T. MALLARI JR., JULIE M. AURELIO AND MARLON RAMOS INQ

Over 'Red October' plot

By Macon Ramos-Araneta and Nat Mariano

RMED Forces chief Gen. Carlito Galvez on Tuesday said the Liberal Party and the Magdalo Group were not in cahoots with communist rebels in the alleged "Red October" plot to oust President Rodrigo Duterte even as Malacañang insisted that individual members of the opposition were involved.

"Basically this is a sinister plot of the CCP-NPA [Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army]," Galvez said. "[T]hey would like to have a coalition with the opposition."

Galvez's statement before the Senate finance committee contradicted Duterte's assertion that Senator Antonio Trillanes IV and Liberal Party president Senator Francis Pangilinan had formed an alliance with communist rebels to remove him from office.

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Over 'Red...

From AP

When Trillanes asked if the alleged coup plotters had indeed coalesced, Galvez said no.

Pangilinan also categorically asked Galvez about the coalition being claimed by Malacañang.

"So there is no coalition between the Liberal Party, [Magdalo], and the Communist Party to oust Duterte?" Pangilinan said.

"Sir, none sir," Galvez said.

But Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque insisted that "individual members" of the Liberal Party were involved in efforts to oust Duterte.

"I am sure individual members of the Liberal Party, as the President said, maybe in collusion with the CPP-NPA," Roque said.

He insisted that Trillanes has repeatedly called for the President's ouster.

"He [Trillanes] has actually verbalized time and again, that he [Duterte] should step down, that he should be removed from office and sent to jail. There's absolutely no inconsistency," said Roque.

"It could be true that there is no formal memorandum of agreement between the party itself and the CPP-NPA, [but] it does not prevent leading personalities within the Liberal Party from [colluding with the communists]," Roque added.

Duterte, for his part, ordered the mil-

itary and the police to shift from crime prevention to "neutralization" tactics against the NPA.

"We are not into crime prevention. Even the police are now involved. It's now neutralization. Then, we can solve the problem," the President said in his speech Tuesday before members of the Philippine Army's 803rd Infantry Brigade in Catarman, Northern Samar.

"We are now on neutralization mode. There is no need to produce a warrant [of arrest]," the President added. "If you get them, it's neutralization. I will be criticized but I'm telling you, I am guiding you what is practical and what is true and legal."

Pangilinan, for his part, said his party had no desire to forcibly remove the President.

"We will not support any unconstitutional approach or unconstitutional move... We swore an oath to uphold and defend this Constitution, and any unconstitutional act, we will not be party to, and we will oppose," he said.

Pangilinan likewise expressed concern that the military was being used in partisan politics, particularly when it was giving out information to the media about ouster plots.

But Galvez insisted that the military was steering clear of politics.

In the same hearing, Galvez said the communists have reportedly organized students in 10 Manila universities to support an information drive that likened the administration to the martial law regime of the late President Ferdi-

nand Marcos.

Galvez said the communists have also penetrated labor groups who will mobilize against Duterte.

He said they would begin by heightening agitation against the government, as they did during the First Quarter Storm.

He added that the communists wanted to create chaos and force the President's hand to declare martial law and form a revolutionary government.

In a statement, the CPP said Duterte and his minions in the AFP have gone "completely cuckoo" in claiming that they were "pushing" the President to declare martial law.

"Again, there is no Red October plot orchestrated by the CPP. The more Duterte and the AFP are trying to prove this so-called plot, the more they sound incredulous," the communists said.

"To now claim that the CPP will create chaos, supposedly like in Plaza Miranda to force Duterte to fulfill his most ardent wish, is at best, lazy and clumsy. Why should the CPP push for martial law nationwide when it has repeatedly condemned and called for the lifting of martial law in Mindanao? Why should it push for something which has relentlessly inflicted atrocious crimes on the people?" it asked.

Also on Tuesday, the Associated Labor Unions-Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (ALU-TUCP) denied allegations that it is being recruited by the communists to help in their alleged "Red October" plot. With Vito Barcelo

'Reds recruiting in 10 universities'

BY BERNADETTE E. TAMAYO

THE Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) is trying to recruit college students in 10 universities in Metro Manila as well as workers in their attempt to oust the Duterte administration under its alleged "Red October" plot.

PLATFORM

▶ RecruitingA2

'Reds recruiting in 10 universities'

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Carlito Galvez revealed this during a budget hearing on Tuesday, when Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th asked him to clarify the supposed destabilization plot that the military had uncovered.

"The 'Red October' plot is a combined armed struggle and legal struggle that will be conducted by the CPP and NPA (New People's Army) using the broad coalition with the opposition and also using the infiltration of the different youth sectors and labor sector," Galvez said.

"In fact, they have already organized 10 of the universities in Manila. Right now, they are making a lot of information drives wherein they will tell high school and college students the different atrocities during the Marcos regime and equate that to the present administration," he added, without naming the universities.

"And they have the 'Operation Talsik' and 'Operation Aklasan' wherein they have a template like the Nutri Asia [labor dispute]. They will simultaneously conduct labor protests and at the same time conduct tactical offensives in the far-flung areas. They will use issues including inflation, high prices,

dictatorship and tyranny."

Galvez said the military unearthed Oplan Aklasan with the publication of the constitution of the CPP-NPA in 2016.

He said the CPP-NPA's plan was to mount successive mobilizations beginning September 21, the commemoration of the declaration of Martial Law, "then October, then November until such time they will also have their 50th anniversary in December. Our intention is to disrupt their massive recruitment especially of our students."

Liberals cleared

Trillanes asked Galvez to "categorically" indicate if the military indeed received a report that he and Sen. Francis Pangilinan, the Liberal Party president, had entered into a coalition with the CPP-NPA to oust Duterte.

"Based on your intelligence report, while the CPP would like to form a coalition, did we coalesce with them?" Trillanes asked Galvez.

The military chief replied, "No, Sir."

"It is a sinister plot of the CPP-NPA. They would like to have a coalition with the opposition. The intention is to protect the legitimate opposition," Galvez said.

Galvez refused to answer directly when Trillanes asked whether the Magdalo Group, where the senator belongs, was recruiting people to destabilize the government. Galvez said he would answer him in an executive session.

Trillanes was prompted to say, "Let me just assure you that if there's recruitment (for the destabilization plot), it's not coming from Magdalo. Sir, we took this parliamentary route to address the grievances of the soldiers. We have been consistent about that. We would not abandon that even at the worst of times."

Pangilinan also denied being part of a conspiracy with the communists to unseat the President.

"I will categorically state that there is no desire on the part of the Liberal Party to oust President Duterte. We will not support any unconstitutional approach or move. We swore an oath to uphold and defend this Constitution, and any unconstitutional act, we will not be party to, and we will oppose."

Magdalo Rep. Gary Alejano questioned the budget of the Armed Forces, citing its "weak" intelligence information on the so-called Red October plot.

"Our point here is, the estimated

confidential intelligence fund of the government amounts to more than P5 billion...if this is the kind of information that they are getting which are not validated, then we are wasting money," Alejano told reporters in a news briefing at the House of Representatives.

Palace: 'No inconsistencies'

Matacañan Palace on Tuesday insisted there were no inconsistencies in the statements of President Duterte and the Armed Forces, after the military denied that the Liberal Party was involved in the Red October ouster plot.

"It could be true that there is no formal memorandum of agreement between the party itself and the CPP-NPA; it does not prevent leading personalities with the Liberal Party from having such collusion," Palace spokesman Hany Roque Jr. said.

"[Trillanes] has repeatedly called for the ouster of the President. So, there is no inconsistency. He has told — he has actually verbalized time and again, that he should step down. He should be removed from office, he should be sent to jail. There's absolutely no inconsistency," Roque added.

'Completely cuckoo'

The CPP on Tuesday again denied

being behind the supposed Red October plot, saying "Duterte and his minions... have gone completely cuckoo."

"Again, there is no Red October plot orchestrated by the CPP. The more Duterte and the [military] are trying to prove this so-called plot, the more they sound incredulous. To now claim that the CPP will 'create chaos,' supposedly 'like in Plaza Miranda' to 'force' Duterte to fulfill his most ardent wish, is at best, lazy and clumsy," it said in a statement.

The communist rebels chided the government for misrepresenting the "broad coalition against tyranny as a mere conspiracy," to make its members "open to suppression through state terrorism."

The CPP nonetheless admitted that it had been calling on the people to unite and struggle to overthrow the Duterte regime.

"But as the CPP has also repeatedly pointed out, it will be the confluence of various democratic forces that will ultimately bring down Duterte. Given the increasingly difficult economic conditions of the people and rising internal political conflicts within the Duterte regime, the Party anticipates protests to continue to mount in the coming months," it said.

**WITH RALPH EDWIN U.
VILLANUEVA
AND GLEE JALEA**



STRIKES, 'FQS' IN OCTOBER PLOT

'Red' brews in campuses

We have documents, I can't expose their contents but I can reveal them in the executive session so that we can see the vast efforts of the CPP-NPA to oust Duterte

By Mario J. Mallari and Elmer N. Manuel

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Tuesday claimed the alleged "Red October" plot to oust President Rodrigo Duterte had long been percolating in several colleges and universities even as it added that extreme Left groups were "taunting" the Chief Executive to declare martial law and ignite

public discontent.

Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., the AFP chief of staff, revealed that at least 10 universities in Metro Manila had allegedly been organized by a broad coalition led by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) for the so-called "Red October" campaign.

Galvez Jr. detailed the plot during the hearing of the Senate Committee

on Finance on the proposed 2019 budget of the Department of National Defense and its attached agencies.

The revelation came after he was asked for details on the ouster design by Sen. Antonio

Turn to page 2

'Red' brews in campuses

We unearthed this Oplan Aklasan with the publication of the Constitution of the CCP-NPA, dated 2016. It's a very elaborate plan, sir, wherein they started the heightening of the agitation using the First Quarter Storm model

From page 1

Trillanes IV, a staunch critic of Duterte.

Galvez explained that "Red October" is a combined armed and legal struggle by the CPP-NPA using a broad coalition of armed rebels and above-ground activists with all the opposition, including the youth, student and labor sectors.

"In fact, they have already organized 10 universities in Manila," Galvez revealed. "And right now, they are making a lot of information drive wherein they will show to (all) high school and even college students the different atrocities committed during the Marcos regime and equate (those with the) present administration."

Galvez said they also have a document which shows that CPP founder Jose Maria "Joma" Sison, presently in The Netherlands on an asylum, had conducted conferences at the University of the Philippines.

"We have documents, I can't expose their contents but I can reveal them in the executive session so that we can see the vast efforts of the CPP-NPA to oust Duterte," he said.

Galvez added the CPP wanted to coalesce with the opposition groups in plotting against Mr. Duterte.

The plot, he said, involves the so-called "Operation Talsik" (ouster) and "Operation Aklasan" (protest), where plotters will organize labor protests and tactical military offensives in the countryside.

Galvez said the plan also includes "successive mass mobilization that started on 21 September up to the 50th anniversary of the CPP in December. The students, he said, will orchestrate the "Lakbayan Europe." He did not provide details about "Lakbayan Europe."

"We unearthed this Oplan Aklasan with the publication of the Constitution of the CCP-NPA, dated 2016," he said. "It's a very elaborate plan, sir, wherein they started the heightening of the agitation using the First Quarter Storm model."

The First Quarter Storm, popularly known as the FQS, was a student-led series of protests against the late President Ferdinand Marcos who was ousted in 1986.

The AFP chief said the guilty verdict of the International

People's Tribunal on President Duterte was also part of the ouster plot.

Galvez added part of "Red October" is to goad the President into declaring a nationwide martial law.

Galvez said the military is taking note of Sison's pronouncement of seeing Duterte's ouster by mid-2019.

"They will force the President to declare martial law. That is the sinister plot of the CPP-NPA," Galvez said. "We have identified previous destabilizers (as involved)," he added without elaborating.

Galvez added the communist group would then equate the

"Our intention is to disrupt the (CPP's) massive recruitment, especially of students," Galvez said.

During the hearing, Galvez added the CPP wanted to coalesce with the opposition groups in plotting against Mr. Duterte -- riding on the issues of the rising inflation, alleged dictatorship and tyranny.

"This (Red October Project)

was planned extensively to oust the President," Galvez said.

On Monday, Brig. Gen. Antonio Parlade Jr., AFP assistant deputy chief of staff for operations, revealed the CPP is set to launch "nationwide coordinated tactical offensives" on 11 to 17 October -- targeting vital government installations and projects.

According to Parlade, the communist plans were coded "Supermarket" to target police and military stations to amass

firearms; "Casino" to aim at the assassination of government assets and intelligence agents; "Bulldozer" to attack mining companies and burn down government projects; "Tabasco" to put down "Tokhang" agents and alleged extrajudicial killing suspects and "Hades" which targets government personalities.

This is part of the recovered documents which should be known by the people and government force.

"These are listed in a memo by the national operations command (of the CPP-NPA). All part of 'Red October,'" Parlade said.

Parlade added declassifying the information is necessary to stop the plot.

"This is part of the recovered documents which should be known by the people and government forces," Parlade said.

"The best way is to preempt them with the help of the communities helping to watch the NPA's every move," he added.

The AFP, however, cleared the Liberal Party and the Magdalo Group of soldiers of involvement in the Duterte ouster plot.

Reds recruiting students for oust-Duterte plot: AFP

BY JOAN DAIRO

ARMED Forces chief Gen. Carlito Galvez yesterday said the Communist Party of the Philippines and its allied groups have been recruiting students for a reported plot to oust President Duterte.

He said "Red October" plotters have "organized" 10 universities in Metro Manila as part of its move to infiltrate the youth sector.

Galvez spoke during a hearing of the Senate finance committee on the proposed 2019 budget of the Department of National Defense and its attached agencies.

"The Red October plot is a combined armed struggle and legal struggle that will be conducted by the CPP/NPA (New People's Army) using its broad coalitions with the opposition, and also using the infiltration of the different youth sectors and labor sector," Galvez said in reply to a question of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV who was linked last month by Duterte to those allegedly plotting to oust him.

Aside from Trillanes, Duterte also linked the political opposition and the communist movement in the ouster plot. The political opposition has denied involvement in any plot, saying it is the government that is destabilizing itself.

Galvez said the plotters have been conducting supposed information drives "wherein they will show to the whole high school and even college students the different atrocities during the Marcos regime and equate that to the present administration."

"It is a very elaborate plan. They started heightening the agitation (of students) using the 'first quarter storm' model. (CPP founder) Josea Sison has conducted a lot of conferences with the University of the Philippines. We have documents (to prove this)," he added.

Galvez also said the Armed Forces exposed the Red October plot to "dis-

rupt the massive recruitment, especially of students" who are allegedly being tapped for the group's "Lakbay Europe" scheme which supposedly kicked off with the guilty verdict handed down by the International People's Tribunal on Duterte last month.

Galvez said the ouster plot has two fronts, "Operation Talsik" and "Operation Aklasau," which include labor protests and tactical offensives in the countryside, with the participation of the youth, labor and indigenous people sectors.

"It involves successive mass mobili-

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REDS

zation starting on September 21 up to the 50th anniversary of the CPP in December," he said, adding: "We unearthed this Oplan Aklasan with the publication of the constitution of the CCP-NPA, dated 2016."

Also during the hearing, Galvez cleared the Liberal Party and the Magdalo group of involvement in the ouster plot.

The Magdalo group of junior military officers staged the short-lived Oakwood mutiny against then President now Speaker Gloria Arroyo in July 2003. One of its core leaders is Trillanes, who was then a Navy lieutenant.

Galvez, pressed by Trillanes and Sen. Francis Pangilinan, LP president, on who are behind the ouster move, replied: "It is the sinister plot of the CPP-NPA. They would like to have a coalition with opposition groups, and the intention of the military is to pro-

tect the legitimate opposition."

Pangilinan asked Galvez, "Is there a coalition between the party (LP) and the CPP to oust the President?"

Galvez replied, "None, sir."

Pangilinan reiterated the LP has "no desire" to oust Duterte.

"We will not support any unconstitutional approach. If you have information that any member of the party is involved with this, we will expel that party member. We swore to an oath to defend the Constitution," he added.

Late last month, Brig. Gen. Antonio Parlade, assistant AFP deputy chief of staff operations, said the political opposition and the Church recently cut ties with a communist coalition after learning that the latter was aiming to oust Duterte.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque maintained some LP members might still be conspiring with the communists in ousting the President.

He said there is "no inconsistency" or contradiction between Galvez' state-

ment and Duterte's pronouncement that the LP is conniving with the CPP-NPA and the Magdalo group.

"No inconsistency, I'm sure individual members of the Liberal Party, as the President, said may be in collusion with the CPP-NPA. It could be true that there is no formal memorandum of agreement between the party itself and the CPP-NPA. It does not prevent leading personalities with the Liberal Party from having such collusion," Roque said.

He said in Trillanes' case, the senator has repeatedly called for Duterte's ouster and has "verbalized time and again that he should step down, he should be removed from office, he should be sent to jail."

Roque said it is expected that "no one will admit" to a collusion but Malacañang considers intelligence information on ouster moves as "valid information and we are ready to face them." — *With Jocelyn Montemayor*

Galvez clears Trillanes, Pangilinan of involvement in Red October plot

By VANNE ELAINE P. TERRAZOLA

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has cleared opposition Senators Antonio Trillanes IV and Francis Pangilinan of involvement in the supposed plan of communist groups to oust President Duterte, a plot dubbed as "Red October."

During the deliberation of the Senate Subcommittee on Finance E on the Department of Defense's (DND's) P251-billion proposed 2019 budget yesterday, Trillanes asked military officials on their pronouncements about an alleged destabilization plot slated this month.

General Carlito Galvez Jr., AFP Chief of Staff, explained that they started making statements about the supposed Red October to prevent the "massive recruitment" of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) and affiliated groups to actualize their plan to oust the Chief Executive, through successive mass mobilization and tactical offensives in the countryside.

"Since basically this is the plot of the CPP-NPA, kung makikita po natin (if we look at it), they would like to have a coalition with the opposition, sir. That's why the intention is to protect our legitimate opposition," Galvez told Trillanes.

Trillanes then pressed Galvez: "While the CPP would like to force a coalition, nakipag-coalition ba kami (did we coalesce with them)?"

"No, sir," Galvez replied.

Impossible allies

Trillanes lamented about their implication in the destabilization plot, saying the opposition has been "sounding the alarm" about the supposed plan of the communists since President Duterte assumed his post and appointed leaders of activist groups into his Cabinet.

Trillanes, being a former Navy officer, said it would be impossible to be allies with communist rebels who killed his fellow soldiers.

"Maliwanag na hindi namin gagawin 'yon (It's clear that we will not do that). In fact, we try to exert our influence also within the legitimate opposition to steer clear of these communists," the Magdalo lawmaker said.

"Magiging tubig at langis ito, sir. Hindi talaga pwedeng paghatuin ito, sir (This would be like oil and water. We cannot go together)," he assured Galvez.

LP stance

Pangilinan, who leads the opposition Liberal Party (LP), thanked Galvez for clarifying intelligence reports tagging them in the Red October plot.

Speaking for his party, Pangilinan said, "I will categorically state that there is no desire on the part of the Liberal Party to oust President Duterte. We will not support any unconstitutional approach or move."

"In fact, if you have any information about a member of the Liberal party involved, you tell us, we will expel this party member because we swore an oath that we will uphold the Constitution," he added.

Valid information

Malacañang is still "convinced" that some members of the LP might be in cahoots with communist rebels in a plot to overthrow the President.

Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque issued the statement even after Galvez clarified that the opposition party was not conniving with the CPP-NPA to oust the President next month.

"No inconsistency. I'm sure individual members of the Liberal Party, as the President said, may be in collusion with the CPP-NPA," Roque said during a Palace press briefing. 2

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AFP: 'Red October' plot, pakana ng CPP-NPA

Nilinaw ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) na hindi sangkot sa "Red October plot" ang Liberal Party (LP), Magdalo Group at ilang senador, taliwas sa mga naunang pahayag ng Malacañang na nakikipagsabwatan ang mga ito sa mga komunista para patalsikin sa puwesto si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Sa deliberasyon kahapon ng Senate Subcommittee on Finance sa panukalang P251-bilang budget ng Department of Defense (DND) para sa 2019, kinoniyonta ni Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV ang mga opisyal ng militar kaugnay sa kanilang mga pahayag tungkol sa diumanong planong desaktibisasyon ng ayong buwan.

Ipinaliwanag ni AFP Chief of Staff General Carlito Galvez Jr. na naglathas sila ng mga pahayag tungkol sa Red October para mapigilan ang "massive recruitment" ng Communist Party of the Philippines-National Peoples'

Amy (CPP-NPA) at mga kaalyadong grupo na maisakatuparan ang kanilang planong patalsikin ang Punong Ehekutibo sa pamamagitan ng sunod-sunod na mass mobilization at tactical offenses sa kanayunan.

Aniya, may sampung unibersidad at kolehiyo sa Metro Manila ang naganisa na ng mga komunista.

"Since basically this is the plot of the CCP-NPA, kung makitila po natin, they would like to have coalition with the opposition, sir. That's why the intention is to protect our legitimate opposition," ani Galvez kay Trillanes.

Kasunod nito ay dirididik ni Trillanes si Galvez: "While the CPP would like to force a coalition, rakipag coalition ba kami?"

"No, sir," sagot ni Galvez.

IMPOSSIBLE

Ikaw tungkol ni Trillanes ang paglalawit sa kanila sa desalah plot, sirabi na matagal nang

nagbabala ang oposisyon tungkol sa mga plano ng komunista simula nang maupo sa puwesto si Pangulong Duterte at naglalagan mga lider ng akribislang grupo sa kanyang Gabinete.

Iginint din ni Trillanes na ibang isang daling Navy officer, imposibleng makikiloy-alyansa siya sa mga komunistang pumalay sa mga kapwa niya sundalo.

"Magiging tubig at lamig ito, sir. Hindi talaga pwedeng pagbalutin ito, sir," paniniyak niya kay Galvez.

Pinasalamanat naman ni Sen. Francis Pangilinan, namumuno sa LP, si Galvez sa paglalawit sa intelligence reports na nag-ungay sa kanila sa Red October.

Tiniyak ni Galvez na manarating tapat ang AFP sa Saligang Batas at kailanman ay hindi magpapagmit sa mga politika.

3 **Leonel M. Abasola**
at **Vernie Elaine P. Terrarola**

Palasyo nanindigan Trillanes sangkot sa 'Red October'

Nanindigan ang Palasyo na sangkot pa rin si Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV at ilang miyembro ng Liberal Party sa pakikipagsabwatan sa mga rebeldeng komunista para ibagsak ang gobyerno ni Pangulong Duterte.

Sinabi ni Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque, nakatatay ito sa intelligence report na hawak mismo ni Pangulong Duterte na nagsasangkot kay Trillanes at ilang LP members.

Sa kabila ito ng naging pahayag ni AFP Chief Carlito Galvez sa pagdilig ng Senado katarpon kung saan ay nililinis nito si Trillanes at LP sa sinasabing "Red October" plot para patalsikin si Duterte.

Wika ni Roque, mismong sa bibig ni Trillanes at ilang miyembro ng LP nagmula kung saan ay nanawagan sila sa taumbayan para matanggal sa puwesto ang Pangulo.

Idinagdag pa ng presidential spokesman, hindi imbenito ang sinasabing "Red October ouster plot" dahil suportado ito ng intelligence report na nasa kamay mismo ni Pangulong Duterte. (Rudy Andal) ✓

LP p'wera sa 'Red October' - AFP

NI MALOU ESCUDERO

Nilinis ng Armed Forces of the Philippines ang Liberal Party (LP) sa ulolulong "Red October" plot na nagbabalak na guluhin at patalsikin ang kasalukuyang administrasyon.

Sa pagdinig kahapon ng Senate committee on finance sa panukatang budget ng militar sa 2019, sinamantala ni Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV ang pagkakataon upang tarungin ang AFP at Department

of National Defense kung sangkot sila ni Sen. Francis Pangilinan sa tinatawag na "Red October" plot.

Ayon kay AFP Chief of Staff General Carlito Galvez Jr., ang "Red October" ay pakana ng Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army na nagbabalak magkaroon ng kowalisyon sa oposisyon sa paglulunsad ng plano laban sa gobyerno.

Ipinahiwatig ni Galvez

na hindi gaganapin ang CPP-NPA ang oposisyon kaya pino-protektahan nila ito.

"Kung makikita po natin talaga they would like to have coalition with the opposition that is why our intention is really to protect yong ating legitimate opposition," sabi ni Galvez.

Tinanong ni Trillanes kung nagkaroon ba sila ng kowalisyon sa CPP-NPA na sinagot naman ni Galvez ng "no sir."

Nauna rito, tiniyala ni Galvez sa komite na totoo ang Red October plot na isang armed struggle na gagamitin pati ang mga

kabataan, estudyante at labor sector.

Nagkakaroon na rin umano ng recruitment sa mga paaralan at nakapag-organisa na sila sa 10 unibersidad sa Metro Manila.

Kabilang umano sa ginagawa ng mga nasa likod ng Red October ang "Operation Talsik" at "Operation Aklasan" kalulad ng nangyaring pag-aaklas sa NutriAsia.

Ayon pa kay Galvez, ginagamit sa naturang oust plot ang malawakang information drive tungkol sa nangyari noong Marcos

regime na ikinukumpara sa kasalukuyang administrasyon.

Batak umano ng mag-sagawa ng sabay-sabay na labor protests at "tactical offensive" sa mga probinsiya.

"There is no coalition between the Liberal Party and the Communist Party to oust Duterte. But there is a desire on the part of the Communist Party. Because I would categorically state that there is no desire on the part of the Liberal Party to oust President Duterte. We will not support any unconstitutional approach or unconstitutional move," sabi naman ni Pangilinan.

IMPORMASYON NG AFP LALONG TUMIBAY

Witness sa 'Red October', lumutang sa NBI

NI EDU PUNAY

Nagkaroon na ng breakthrough sa isinasagawang imbestigasyon ng National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) kaugnay sa planong pagpapataksik sa pwesto kay Pangulong Duterte sa ilalim ng 'Red October'.

Ito ay matapos na lumutang sa tanggapan ng NBI ang isang testigo at magbigay ng 'significant details' na nagpatibay sa naunang mga impormasyon na natanggap ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) na ang mga grupong komunista at ilang opposition personalities ay nagsasabwatan para patalsikin ang kasalukuyang administrasyon.

Ayon sa isang opisyal ng NBI, na nakuhanan na ng statement ang naturang testigo Lunes ng gabi. Bagamat hindi nagbigay ng ibang detalye sa naging pagbubunyag ng testigo sinabi ng opisyal na napagtibay nito ang impormasyong nakuha na ng Armed Forces.

Bagamat tumanggi naman si Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra na kumpirmahin ang impormasyon, sa pagsasabing hindi pa niya natatanggap ang report ng NBI, inamin naman nito na talagang nagsisimula na nga ang ahensya sa fact-finding probe sa 'Red October' plot.

Ipinaliwanag pa ni Guevarra na partikular na tinutukan ng imbestigasyon ng NBI ang veracity sa AFP report at kilalanin ang mga personalidad na sangkot para sa posibleng pag-

sasampa ng kasong rebelyon, sedition at kudeta sa mga ito.

Nauna nang ibinunyag ni Brig. Gen. Antonio Parlade, AFP deputy chief of staff for operations ang naturang plano na pinangungunahan ni Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) leader Jose Maria Sison.

Binanggit din nito ang mga dokumento na nagli-link sa opposition 'Tindig Pilipinas' sa ouster plot, pero sinabi nito na nag-withdraw ang grupo matapos na malaman nilang mga lider ng komunista ang nagpapasimula nito.

Ang 'Tindig Pilipinas, na nagpapakitalang movement against tyranny ay nagpapanong patalsikin sa pwesto ang Pangulong Duterte at nakikipag-alyansa sa ilang oposisyon partikular sa Liberal Party (LP).

Nauna na itong itinanggi ng LP

Magugunitang kamakailan lamang sa isinagawang raid ng NBI sa isang farm sa Teresa, Rizal ay nasamsam ang mataaas na kalibre ng armas at mga pampasabog kung saan anim na katao ang nadakip. Sinislip pa rin hanggang ngayon kung konektado ito sa sinasabing 'Red Oct' plot dahil, ayon na rin sa AFP sa kanilang isinagawang surveillance sa lugar madalas na makita sa farm ang dalawang mataas na lider ng New Peoples Army (NPA).

Hindi pa naman ito makumpirma sa ngayon ng NBI.

NPA captured in Surigao del Sur

By MIKE U. CRISMUNDO

CAMP DATU LIPUS MAKAPAN-DONG, Awa, New Leyte, Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur - An alleged member of the New People's Army (NPA) was captured after a gun battle with government security forces in Raki area, Barangay San Ramon, Hinatuan, Surigao del Sur, military officials reported Tuesday.

Maj. Rodolfo S. Cordero, Jr., Civil Military Operation Officer (CMO) of the Army's 401st Infantry (Unity) Brigade told The Manila Bulletin that peace and development teams of Charlie Company, 75th Infantry (Marauder) Battalion (75thIB) were on patrol when they were by about 20 NPA terrorists, under certain Commander Satur or Arpak, in the Raki area at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday.

"The fire fight lasted for 20 minutes and the rebels hastily withdrew in different directions to nearby forested area, after sensing they were outnumbered and outpositioned" said the 401st CMO officer.

"Our field troops took the vantage position during the heavy firefight forcing the CNTs to withdraw and ran away to the different directions leaving their wounded comrade behind," claimed further the Army officer.

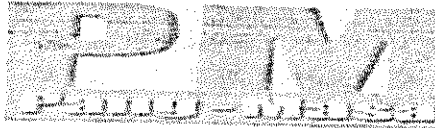
During clearing operations, the soldiers discovered and took custody of the wounded rebel, who was apparently left behind by his comrades as they made their retreat.

The troops immediately extended initial medical aid on the captured wounded rebel, according to Cordero. |D

ACROSS THE NATION

3 rebels give up arms

Three New People's Army (NPA) terrorists surrendered to the military over the weekend in Davao del Norte. The surrenderees were identified through their aliases as Arvin/Isak, 45, single; alias Ramo, 30; and alias Joa, 38. A military report disclosed that the NPA fighters coming from Pulang Bagani Command 1, Southern Regional Committee 5, Southern Mindanao Regional Command, turned themselves in at the headquarters of the Army's 16th Infantry Battalion in Brgy. Dalisay, Panabo City, Davao del Norte, at 10 a.m. Sunday. The three voluntarily surrendered to the 16th IB through the joint efforts of local chief executives of Brgy. Lumiad, Paquibato District, Davao City, Brgy. Magsaysay, Carmen, Davao del Norte, and the Davao City PEACE 911. The three revealed that they surrendered because of their corrupt leaders and were subjected to sexual abuse that is happening within their ranks. **(Francis T. Wakefield)**



Utos ni Duterte sa militar...

NPA REBELS ARESTUHIN KAHIT WALANG WARRANT

Ipinag-utos ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa militar na unahan nang arestuhin ang New People's Army (NPA) da-

hil hindi na kailangan ang arrest warrant para sa mga rebeldeng komunista.

"Neutralization na tayo ngayon. There is no crime

Ni RUDY ANDAL prevention because the crime is being perpetrated 24 hours a day," mensahe

ni Pangulong Duterte sa mga sundalo sa pagdalaw nito sa Catarman, Samar.

"Di mo na kailangan mag-tanong ng warrant-

warrant. Kung may dala kang baril, Sparrow ka, you can be neutralized." wika pa ng Pangulo.

Binatikos din ni Duterte ang rebeldeng komunista dahil sa loob ng mahigit 50 taon ay wala namang ginawa ang mga ito kundi pumatay ng sundalo, pulis at sibilyan.

Dinalaw kahapon ni Pangulong ang heavy NPA infested kaya namigay siya ng side arm sa mga sundalo para may short firearm sila kapag lumalabas ng kampo.



PH ready vs terror – Palace

By Kristina Maralit

Malacañang yesterday assured the public that the government is now in a better position to combat the threat of terrorism.

"We assure the public that we are in a better position to deal with terrorists. They can try to instill fear all they want but we are ready to enforce the laws," presidential spokesman Harry Roque said during a press briefing.

Roque issued the statement following an article published in the Washington Times which noted the rise in numbers of Islamic State (IS)-affiliated foreign fighters in Southeast Asia, particularly jihadi groups who converged in Mindanao.

In the report, five countries were mentioned as sites with nearly 60 percent of terrorist attacks last year, with the Philippines topping the list followed by Afghanistan, India, Iraq and Pakistan.

Roque said that despite the report of growing IS threat the US State Department has noted the readiness of the Philippine government to address such problem.

"The Philippines improved its counter-terrorism capabilities in the face of an evolving and increasingly robust terror threat," said Roque, quoting the US State Department.

Roque said the US officials recognized concrete steps the government took to combat terrorism and violent extremism.

He said these actions included the country's continued interagency information sharing among Philippine law enforcement agencies, increased aviation security capacity, as well as active participation in training on crisis response, border security and investigations on cybercrimes.

A proposal to further strengthen the country's anti-terrorism capability is pending deliberations in the Senate.

Among others, the measure seeks a longer period to hold terrorist agents under the Human Security Act (HSA) of 2007.

Five countries were mentioned as sites with nearly 60 percent of terrorist attacks last year, with the Philippines topping the list.

Describing the country's anti-terror act as the "weakest in the world," senators supported proposed amendments to strengthen the law – including the extension to 30 days of the current 72-hour reglementary period of detention for suspected terrorists.

Senate President Vicente Sotto III and Sen. Panfilo Lacson, chairman of the Senate Committee on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs, were one in saying that Republic Act 9372 or the HSA is the weakest in the world and should be amended now. B



Gov't, MILF play ball to promote BOL

Government troopers and members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) fought each other in a friendly sporting match here on Sunday to promote the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL).

Allan Almolte, area manager of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) for Northern Mindanao, said the initiative of using basketball to disseminate the objective of the BOL comes directly from the civil society organizations, Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, and the MILF.

"The idea here is to use a new approach or a creative way to educate the people of the essence of the BOL. And to show to the people on the ground that the government and the MILF are on the same page in promoting peace," he said.

Around 65 peace players composed of the Army's 2nd, 4th, and 5th Infantry Brigades, police officers, and members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF) battled their way not through the barrel of the gun but through basketball and other sporting events to show unity and harmony.

Almolte said local leaders and villagers will not only get to witness and be entertained by the games but will also be informed of the salient points and provisions of the law. (Francis T. Wakefield) 4

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Party-list system has spawned hundreds of Bertizes and worse characters

THE arrogance demonstrated at the airport by "ACTS OFW" representative Anice-to Bertiz 3rd that triggered netizens' outrage should remind us how absurd our so-called party list system is.



RIGOBERTO D. TIGLAO

► TiglaoA6

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Party-list system has spawned hundreds of Bertizes and worse characters

Purportedly set up to represent the country's marginalized sectors, it has merely become the means for millionaires, religious cults, and most importantly, Communist Party cadres to enter Congress.

While supposedly representing OFWs, Bertiz is not an OFW, and is in fact the 11th richest party-list congressman now. While he claims to have been an OFW in his youth, Bertiz owns and heads the Global Asia Alliance Consultant Inc., one of the biggest employer of OFWs. For each deployment his company charges a substantial fee. For him to claim that he represents OFWs is like saying that a capitalist who was once a salaried employee and then set up his own business represents the workers of that enterprise.

To explain what this party-list system that Cory Aquino and the Yellows made a part of our Constitution, I am reprinting below (with some minor edits) the first part of a series I wrote last February this year ("The party-list system is utterly absurd, a mockery of democracy" and "Cory Constitution gave fake parties House seats").

Thank you, Mr. Bertiz, for reminding us that we really have to do away with this mockery of people's representation. Abolish the party-list system, which has spawned hundreds of Bertizes since 1998, and even worse, Magdalo mutineer Gary Alejano, Akbayan's Torn Villarin, and Carlos Zarate.

Start of February column

If there's any provision in our Constitution that indisputably has

to be deleted, it is the one that called for 20 percent of the House of Representatives seats to be reserved for so-called "party-list representatives" who supposedly represent the country's marginalized sectors.

Unlike the usual congressmen who are elected by voters registered in a political district, party-list representatives are elected by any voter anywhere in the country. The voters elect not the individual but the party-list group, which then designates him as its representative.

Cory Aquino pushed for such a system in 1987, partly to crush the two-party system she hated. But the system has proven to be so utterly absurd, a scandalous mockery of our democracy. And we taxpayers shoulder the party-list representatives' and their staffs salaries as well as expenses in the amount of about P2 billion per year.

Instead of empowering the powerless sectors — "labor, peasant, urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, women, youth, and such other sectors" as the Constitution puts it — it has only succeeded in giving political clout to multi-millionaires, even two billionaires, so they could defend or expand their business interests. It has also given additional seats in Congress to provincial or regional political clans, for them to increase their political clout.

Most ironically, the party-list system has put cadres of the Communist Party in the House of Representatives — seven at present — giving the insurgency the resources and especially the funds — raised from our taxes — to advance their agenda to violently overthrow our democracy.

The political power of Red party-list

representatives and how strategic — and bad for our democratic system — it has been, was demonstrated by their push for the enactment in 2013 — helped a lot by President Aquino — of Republic Act 10368, or the Human Rights Victims Reparations Law. While the law's title makes it appear that it was for a noble cause, the communist party-list representatives designed the measure such that government would pay as much as P1.7 million to its cadres, activists, and NPA guerillas (or their heirs) detained or killed during martial law. Because of this law, even its leader Jose Ma. Sison and his wife got P2.4 million.

It is ironic that the communist atheists are colleagues in Congress of two bible-quoting religious party-list representatives.

The Constitution's Article VI, Section 5 (2) categorically excludes the "religious sector" from having party-list representatives. Yet "Brother" Mike Velarde who heads the huge born-again-Christian charismatic group El Shaddai set up his Buhay party-list in 2001 and since 2004 has had two to three representatives in Congress. Buhay's incumbent representatives are the preacher's son Michael Velarde Jr. and former Manila mayor Jose "Lito" Atienza.

The perfect example of how scandalous the system has become is the fact that the purportedly richest member of the present Congress — both of the Senate and the House of Representatives, that is — is a party-list representative: Michael ("Mikee") Romero, who has reported his net worth at P7 billion.

Who is Romero? He and another congressman represent the party "1-Pacman," a name which is as ridiculous as it is a travesty of our system of representative democracy. 1-Pacman doesn't have anything to do with our boxing hero (and now senator) Manuel Pacquiao.

The party's name is intended to fool careless, impatient, or even ignorant voters that they are electing their hero Manny "the Pacman" Pacquiao. What the name stands for mocks our representative system. 1-Pacman purportedly is the acronym for "One Patriotic Coalition of Marginalized Nationals."

The "1" in this outfit's name — just as a dozen other groups have done — is there so it would be higher up in the list of the ballot form, so its chances of being picked are enhanced.

1-Pacman doesn't even pretend to be representing any marginal group; merely says that "among its platform is to prioritize sports development." That is the kind of party-list representative we have.

Romero's case though would explain why somebody who is so fond of the luxurious lifestyle, who never thought of helping the "marginalized," would want to be a party-list representative. Being a party-list representative obviously gives him the political clout in his bitter feud against his father for control of the billion-peso Romero conglomerate.

Clout for business

Other multi-millionaires who have become party-list representatives

Representative	Party List	Net Worth PM
ROMERO, MICHAEL	1-PACMAN	7,009.0
AGLIPAY VILLAR, EMMELINE	DIWA	1,409.1
LACSON VIRGILIOS	MANILA TEACHERS	768.8
MANALO, JESULITO	ANGKLA	114.9
ROQUE, HARRY JR.*	KABAYAN	104.4
CO, CHRISTOPHER	ARO BICOL	95.7
AQUINO-MAGSAYSAY, MILAGROS	SENIOR CITIZEN	94.6
PINEDA, ENRICO	1-PACMAN	84.0
ANTONIO, MICHELLE	AGBIAG	79.1
VELARDE, MARIANO MICHAEL JR.	BULIAY	53.8
BERTIZ, ANICETO "JOHN" III	ACTS OFW	53.0
VILLARAZA-SUAREZ, ANNA	ALONA	43.4
LEE, DELPHINE GAN	AGRI	39.1
BELMONTE, RICARDO	SBP	38.2
PANGANIBAN, JOSE JR.	ANAC	37.9
BATOCABE, RODEL	ARO BICOL	36.2
ORTEGA, VINI NOLA	ABONO	34.5
BELARO, SALVADOR JR.	1-ANG EDUKASYON	33.2
HERRERA-DY, BERNADETTE *	BH	31.2
ESTRELLA, CONRADO III	ARONO	30.5

■ Representatives of marginalized sectors: The 20 richest party-list representatives and their wealth. *Roque resigned his post to become presidential spokesman last October.

though aren't in such deep trouble as Romero. They, or their clans, probably calculate that a seat in Congress gives them clout for their business interests.

The second richest member of the entire Congress is another party-list representative, Emeline Aglipay-Villar, who reported a net worth of P1.4 billion. She is the nominee of the DIWA party, which stands for Democratic Independent Workers' Association.

Has the 35-year-old Aglipay-Villar ever been a leader or organizer or counsel for a union or federation?

No. She is the wife of Public Works Secretary Mark Villar, the son of one of the richest real-estate magnates in the country, Manuel Villar. Her P1.4 billion net worth is probably her estimated conjugal share in her husband's wealth as shareholder and executive of his father's conglomerate.

She is also the daughter of a retired police general who became Philippine National Police chief during the Arroyo administration, Edgardo Aglipay. The latter is chairman of DIWA, whose treasurer is of course Mrs. Aglipay.

How do such multi-millionaires get to be party-list representatives? Believe it or not, it is unbelievably easy, as long as one has no scruples in trampling democratic values, and of course if one sees the investment as a worthwhile one.

A party-list gets a seat in Congress, if it gets 2 percent of total votes, with another seat given if it gets an additional 2 percent to a maximum of three seats, with 20 percent of Congress seats required by the Constitution to be allocated to such representatives.

In the 2016 elections, 59 seats were allocated to party-list representatives. To fill up these number, 33 out of the 46 party-list winners which got less than 2 percent of the votes were given congressional seats. Thus, the party which got the lowest number of seats, Agbiag, got only 240,000 votes — just 0.7 percent total votes — to get a representative in Congress. An Ilocos-based "party-list," Agbiag, is represented by another millionaire, Michelle Antonio. Romero's I-Pacman party got 1.3 mil-

lion votes, so it got him and another representative, multimillionaire Enrico Pineda, into Congress.

Fake parties

How do artificial, really fake "parties" get the votes needed to win a seat in Congress?

One, they piggy-back on the electoral campaign of a local political boss and its network — of course after a huge payment — so the party-list is "carried" in their campaign for the traditional territorial-based representatives. As will be discussed [in the next column in the series], this is the reason why many party-list representatives are in reality mere extensions of provincial and regional political clans.

Second, I was told by many sources in the past several years that most party-lists get to have their numbers by sheer manipulation of returns by corrupt Comelec officials. The going rate in the 2016 elections, I was told, was from P20 million to as high as P30 million to ensure that a party list wins.

Several years ago, I nearly fell off my seat when a Chinese-Filipino businessman mentioned over dinner that he was celebrating as his "party-list" had won two seats in Congress, and he spent only P5 million.

It has been actually the easiest form of graft income in the Comelec, as the operators need not worry that a losing candidate would protest, as the party-list contest is not a one-on-one fight, with nearly every party-list aware that it is after all a bidding game.

That is how depraved the party-list system has become, which had been billed by the Left and the Yellow Cult in 1987, when the Constitution was being drafted, as Cory Aquino's legacy to give political power to marginalized sectors and weaken the traditional *pulitiko* parties.

As with all of the Yellow Cult's noble ideals, the reality is so rotten.

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Legal issues that High Court must settle

THE Trillanes case is a legal issue that is bound to reach the Supreme Court.

The presidential amnesty granted by former President Benigno S. Aquino III to 95 military officers facing rebellion and coup d'etat charges is now being questioned as it applies to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, on the ground that he did not apply for amnesty.

The prosecution produced a certification from the Judge Advocate General's Office of the Armed Forces of the Philippines stating that Trillanes was granted amnesty on January 21, 2011, but "there is no copy" of his application for amnesty in the records. This appears to have been accepted by the Makati court as supporting the prosecution contention that Trillanes did not apply for amnesty and that, therefore, the amnesty he has since enjoyed was void. The court thus issued a warrant for his arrest, for prosecution on the original charge of rebellion and coup d'etat.

There is a fundamental principle of presumption of innocence in the Philippines, in the United States, in several other countries, and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is in Article III, Bill of Rights, of the Philippine Constitution, which provides: "Section 14. (1) No person shall be made to answer for a criminal offense without due process of law. (2) In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall be presumed innocent until the contrary is proved..."

In the Trillanes case in the Makati court, the Judge Advocate General's Office certified that Trillanes was granted amnesty but that "there is no copy" of the senator's application for amnesty. "Since Senator Trillanes wants to establish a legal right on the amnesty granted to him, he has therefore the burden of proving his compliance with the minimum requirements to entitle him to be granted amnesty," the court ruled. Trillanes was asked to prove he was innocent of the charge that he did not fulfill the legal requirements for his amnesty.

With the voiding of his amnesty, Trillanes now faces trial in another Makati court on the coup case against him in connection with the Oakwood mutiny. Coup d'etat is a non-bailable offense.

Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon has joined calls for the Supreme Court to rule on the constitutionality of President Duterte's Proclamation 572 voiding Trillanes' amnesty. "It is the High Court that must decide on Trillanes' case and provide stability in the country's legal system," he said.

This is as it should be. All political issues aside, it is important that the legal questions are settled, beginning with President Duterte's proclamation, the principle of presumption of innocence, and now the coming trial on the coup case dismissed seven years ago because of President Aquino's amnesty. Would that constitute double jeopardy? That would be another legal issue that the Supreme Court must rule on. 8

ONLINE NEWS 03 October 2018

No Palace intervention in military procurement

By Jose Cielito Reganit October 2, 2018, 5:44 pm

MANILA -- The Department of National Defense (DND) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Tuesday categorically denied allegations that Malacañang is meddling in the procurement of military equipment.

The allegations were raised by Senator Antonio Trillanes IV during the Senate hearing of the proposed 2019 budget of the DND and its attached agencies.

Trillanes said there are concerns that some military procurements were against the wishes of the major military services.

"Bypassed *yung kanilang* (of their) wish list or shopping list. There is a wish list *pero iba ang binibili* (but bought a different equipment), and these equipment are coming directly from Malacañang and you are being bypassed. *Kaya nabibili ito* (That's why they were bought) against you wishes," the opposition senator said.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana categorically belied the allegation, stressing that President Rodrigo Duterte has always urged them to buy what they needed.

"That (meddling) did not happen during my time. The Palace never dictated on us. In fact, the President has always reminded us to buy what the user wants. *Laging sinasabi sa atin yan* (We are always reminded of that), so that's what we are doing," he told the Subcommittee "E" of the Senate Finance Committee, chaired by Senator Panfilo Lacson.

Trillanes said he received reports that there are equipment in the pipeline that two major services have not requested.

However, the heads of the three major military services – Philippine Air Force (PAF), Philippine Army (PA) and Philippine Navy (PN) – said the procurement process within the military establishment precludes any intervention from higher authority.

"For the Airforce, we have no known projects that has been imposed upon us. It is always the product of a process through our senior leadership. So we are getting what we need and what we want," PAF commanding general Lt. Gen. Galileo Gerard Kintanar Jr. said.

Meanwhile, Major Gen. Robert Arevalo, the vice commander of the Philippine Army, said a stringent process is being followed within Army headquarters.

"Once it goes up to the DND, there is also a procedure and apparently the proceedings are very transparent. Whatever our request or wish, it is decided upon by the august body within the senior leaders' roundtable discussion," Arevalo said.

For the Philippine Navy, Vice Admiral Robert Empedrad said the requirements of the service is decided by a technical working group created by the Navy itself.

"This is submitted to the senior leaders of the AFP as well as the senior leaders of the DND. So there are no influence coming from the higher ups," Empedrad said.

Lorenzana said he has received such information on the supposed procurement of equipment not on the "wish list" of the major services.

However, the defense secretary pointed to Trillanes as the source of the information.

"We've heard that information but I think it also came from you, that there was one guy who is cornering or directing the procurement of certain items," he told Trillanes.

"I asked around and it's not true. Nobody is manipulating the procurement at the DND because the procurement there is a collegial decision by me and the service commanders and the senior leaders," Lorenzana said.

He added that they have what they call as the "senior leaders' defense position system" that meets twice a month to decide what will be procured.

It is during these meetings that all the products being considered are presented, after which the collegial body will decide what to buy.

"It is not dictated by anybody," Lorenzana said.

Trillanes maintained that his information came from supposed active officers and there were allegations that an Undersecretary from the DND is involved.

Lorenzana again debunked the claims, saying the minutes of the twice a month senior leaders' meeting to decide the modernization procurement will prove that this could not have happened.

"We can show you the minutes -- how it is done, we discuss, very passionate discussions sometimes to buy something, and we come to a decision," he said.

"Nobody comes and goes to the services to force the procurement of certain items that they do not want. That did not happen senator," Lorenzana said. **(PNA)**

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