

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



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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

18 October 2018

Thursday



Honor. Patriotism. Duty

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152 seeking Senate seats as filing ends

By SHEILA CRISOSTOMO

A total of 152 individuals hope to slug it out for the 12 Senate seats up for grabs in the May 2019 mid-term polls.

The Commission on Elections said the number of Senate aspirants who filed their certificates of candidacy (COC) would still be trimmed down as the Comelec still has to purge nuisance candidates from the roster.

Compared to the 2016

general elections, there were fewer candidates for the 2019 polls and the festivities accompanying the filing of the COCs was more subdued.

The only incumbent that filed his COC yesterday was Sen. Sonny Angara of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino party.

A mix of interesting characters, neophytes and veteran politicians beat yesterday's deadline for the filing of COCs.

Former presidential spokesman Harry Roque decided to join the senatorial race under

the People's Reform Party of the late senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

Roque had previously announced that he would run as representative of the party-list Luntiang Pilipinas. *

"My heart really is with the Senate. I've already won in the party-list, been there, done that... what is important now is to pursue the kind of leadership of Miriam Defensor-Santiago," Roque said.

Former presidential adviser on political affairs and erstwhile

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152 seeking From Page 1

chairman of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Francis Tolentino also decided to give it another shot after his failed Senate bid in 2016.

Tolentino landed in 13th spot then, just shy of detained Sen. Leila de Lima in the winning circle.

Tolentino, who has a pending electoral protest against De Lima before the Senate Electoral Tribunal, said he filed a motion to suspend his petition.

He admitted that it took him a long process to decide whether to run for senator again because it might affect the electoral protest against De Lima.

"So what I am asking is to shelve the case temporarily. I do not affirm the proclamation of De Lima because we have not finished the recount. We have not gone over all the ballots that need to be recounted," he said.

Sources, however, revealed the case might be dismissed, saying Tolentino's move to file a COC is virtually abandoning the case.

Among the notables who filed their COCs yesterday were former interior secretary Rafael Alunan III running under Bagumbayan party.

Bacoor, Cavite Mayor Lani Mercado appeared before the Comelec to file the COC in behalf of her detained husband, former senator Ramon "Bong" Re-

villa.

Mercado said they are hoping that Revilla will be allowed to obtain temporary freedom by the court in December to campaign.

Revilla is the last of the three lawmakers charged and detained over the pork barrel scam.

Two of them, former senators Jinggoy Estrada and Juan Ponce Enrile, were allowed to post bail.

Estrada earlier filed his COC, seeking a comeback to the Senate, while Enrile came later.

Enrile appeared before the Comelec yesterday to personally refile his COC which was earlier erroneously filled up.

Former solicitor general Florin Hilbay also filed his COC, running under the Aksyon Demokratiko party.

Former broadcast journalist Jiggy Manicad and veteran election lawyer Romulo Macalintal joined the fray in filing their COC yesterday.

Macalintal vowed to champion the rights and welfare of senior citizens. He is running as an independent.

Two labor leaders also came to file their COCs.

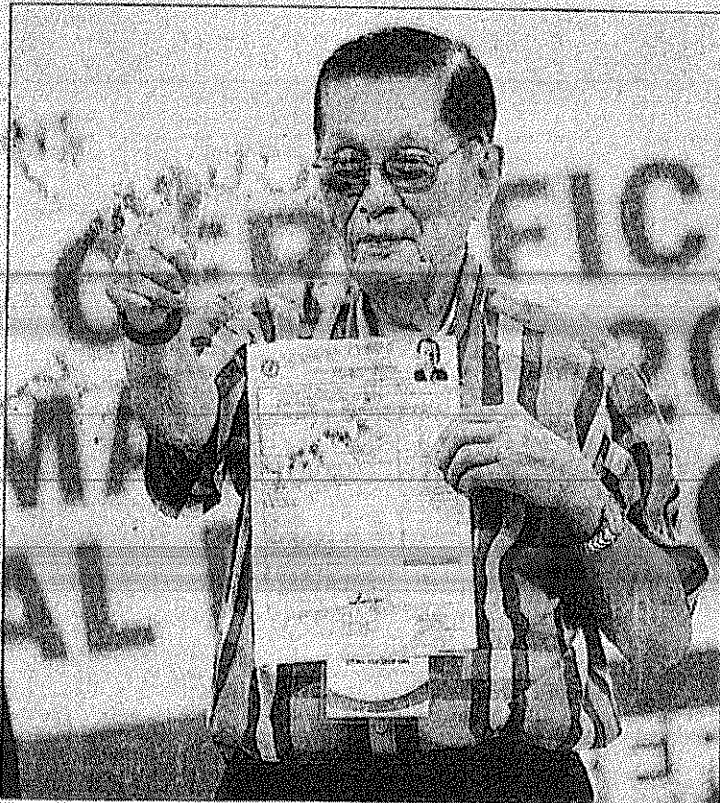
Federation of Free Workers president Jose Matula and Leticiano de Guzman, chairman of the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino, said they would fight for labor rights in the Senate.

Malacañang said it is hopeful that the candidates will help the Duterte

administration push for laws that will promote the welfare of Filipinos, law and order and disaster preparedness.

Presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said the outcome of the 2019 polls is relevant because the winners could reinforce President Duterte's efforts to achieve genuine and meaningful change.

"Given the high level of appreciation exhibited by the people in favor of this administration, we look forward to newly elected officials in Congress coordinating with us towards the advancement of vital pieces of legislation that ensure the promotion of the people's welfare," Panelo said. - With Mayen Jaymalin, Alexis Romero, Edu Punay, Paolo Romero

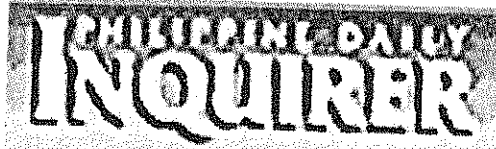


Former Senate president Juan Ponce Enrile files his certificate of candidacy for senator at the Comelec head office in Manila on Tuesday.

KRIZHON ROSALES

18

October 2018



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3 EX-SENATORS IN PORK SCAM RUNNING AGAIN

STORY BY JOVICYEE AND VINCE F. NONATO

Although accused of graft and plunder, Revilla, Estrada and Enrile are again gunning for Senate seats. Until they are convicted, the Sandiganbayan says, they are qualified for public office.

AG

**By Jovic Yee
and Vince F. Nonato**
@Team_Inquirer

Detained former Sen. Bong Revilla entered the 2019 race for the Senate on Wednesday, completing the senatorial triumvirate implicated in the P10-billion pork barrel scam that is trying to return to power.

Revilla, through his wife, reelectionist Bacoor Mayor Lani Mercado, filed a certificate of candidacy (COC) for the Senate at the Commission on Elections (Comelec) main office in Intramuros, Manila.

Two others accused in the pork barrel scam, former Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Jinggoy Estrada, registered for the senatorial race on Tuesday.

The three are accused of graft and plunder for allegedly pocketing hundreds of millions of pesos in kickbacks in the scam allegedly masterminded by businesswoman Janet Lim-Napoles, who is facing the same charges and is jailed in Taguig City.

Enrile and Estrada are out on bail. Revilla's efforts to regain his freedom while under trial have been unsuccessful.

Not convicted yet

The cases against the three men are no hindrance to their bid for reelection to the Senate.

Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Amparo M. Cabotaje-Tang said on Wednesday that until the defendants had been convicted with finality, they could not be disqualified from holding public office.

"The mere pendency of a criminal case is not a disqualifying circumstance," Tang told reporters.

"The judgment of conviction must be final and executory. This means that the judgment of conviction is ripe for execution, which is realized by the service of the sentence by the convicted accused," she said.

Several public officials accused of corruption and plunder have registered for the congressional and local elections, including former Masbate Rep. Rizalina Seachon-Lanete, who is appealing to the Supreme Court her dismissal as governor by the

In June 2014, the Office of the Ombudsman indicted then Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Jinggoy Estrada and Bong Revilla for plunder and multiple counts of graft in connection with the pork barrel scam.

The P10-billion pork barrel scam, first reported on by the Inquirer in 2013, involved the use of non-government organizations (NGOs) to channel money from the Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF) allocations of lawmakers to fictitious projects over 10 years.

Janet Lim-Napoles, the businesswoman who allegedly masterminded the scam, was named a coaccused. She is held at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology detention center in Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig City.

Revilla was accused of plunder and 16 counts of graft after allegedly pocketing P224.5 million in kickbacks, the biggest among the three senators.

Estrada was accused of plunder and 11 counts of graft for allegedly accepting P183 million in kickbacks from his PDAF allocations from 2004 to 2010.

Enrile was accused of receiving P172.8 million in kickbacks

from his PDAF allocations.

He also faces 15 counts of graft for the alleged misuse of the PDAF.

Surrender, detention

After warrants for their arrest were issued, the three senators surrendered and Enrile was detained at the Philippine National Police General Hospital while Estrada and Revilla were detained at the PNP Custodial Center, both in Camp Crame.

Citing his advanced age and poor health, the Supreme Court granted bail to Enrile in August 2015.

In April 2017, the Sandiganbayan's Third Division denied Enrile's appeal to throw out the charge on the grounds that the allegations did not constitute the elements of a valid plunder case.

Estrada won his bail petition in September 2017 but a separate graft trial denied his motion to dismiss the case.

Revilla's case was the first to go to trial, which began in June 2017.

He remains detained at Camp Crame. —INQUIRER RESEARCH

Source: Inquirer Archives



The mere pendency of a criminal case is not a disqualifying circumstance

Amparo M. Cabotaje-Tang

Sandiganbayan presiding justice

Ombudsman over the pork barrel scam.

Former Vice President Jejomar Binay Sr. and former Makati Mayor Jejomar Erwin Binay Jr., both facing trial for alleged overpricing in the construction of the Makati City Hall car park and Makati Science High School, are also running—the father for the House of Representatives and the son,

for mayor.

In a statement read for him by his wife, Revilla said he was running for a third term in the Senate because he wanted to help solve the problems facing Filipinos.

Love of country

"They may have imprisoned me but they cannot imprison my love for my country," Revilla said.

Mercado expressed confidence that detention would have no negative impact on the comeback bid of her husband, who is running as a candidate of Lakas-CMD, the party of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who is now the Speaker of the House.

"The truth will come out. I believe justice will prevail," Mercado said.

Mercado said she and her husband were expecting the court's decision to go in their favor. They are expecting the decision to come down by Dec. 10, she said.

But no matter the situation, she said they had agreed that they would campaign for Revilla as a family.

Like Revilla, Estrada is confident that his alleged role in the pork barrel scam will not negatively affect his campaign, similar to his situation in 2004 when he was elected to the Senate despite plunder charges that had been filed against him.

PMP candidate

Enrile's lawyer filed a COC for him on Tuesday but he returned to the Comelec on Wednesday to revise his registration.

According to the original filing, Enrile is running as an independent candidate.

In the revision, he is running as a candidate of Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino (PMP), the party of former President Joseph Estrada, who is now mayor of Manila.

Despite being charged with plunder, a nonbailable offense, Enrile, 94, was allowed bail due to his frail health.

His run for a fifth term in the Senate has made critics say that if he is strong enough to mount a campaign, he is strong enough to be detained.

To this, Enrile said: "I'll leave it to the courts. If they want to

cancel my bail, I leave it to them."

Enrile explained that his small room at Camp Crame made him "physically infirm."

"If I stayed there until today, maybe I'm dead now, I'm not running for the Senate. But because I was released, I was mobile. I go to my province every month by car and it added to my stamina. That's why I can still stand today and walk erect," he said.

If he wins, Enrile will be the oldest candidate to be elected to the Senate. He will be 101 when he completes his term in 2024. INQ

China warms up ahead of Xi visit

By Elmer N. Manuel

China has recognized the Philippine's willingness to work together as a result of the Duterte administration's open arms in the coming visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping, Chinese diplomatic experts said.

The Philippines and China are ready to work together despite competing claims in the West Philippine Sea (WPS), Deputy Director-General of the Department of External Affairs for China Center for International Economic Exchanges (CCIEE) Yuan Youwei said.

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China warms up ahead of Xi visit

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Yuan added the visit of Xi, who is set to visit Manila and hold talks with President Duterte next month after the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit in Papua New Guinea, will surely benefit both countries.

Xi's coming visit will also serve as a fitting background as China and the Philippines hold their third meeting of the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism (BCM) in China today that is expected to further lay down the foundation for greater cooperation between China and members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Kong Xuanyou and Philippine Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Enrique Manalo will attend the meeting, with representatives of other government agencies, Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said.

The two sides will discuss the current WPS situation and the possibility of deeper pragmatic cooperation, including joint oil and gas exploration, Lu said.

Concrete progress seen

Chen Xiangmiao, a research fellow at the Hainan-based National Institute for the South China Sea, said he expects to see concrete progress in joint oil and gas exploration, including outlined sea areas and cooperation model building.

The meeting will continue to focus on dispute management, joint search and rescue operations and other topics of mutual concern, Chen said.

Lu said China believes the meeting will boost the development of ties between both countries and contribute to peace and stability in the WPS.

In August, China and the ASEAN

agreed on a draft text of the Code of Conduct (CoC) in the WPS during the China-ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting in Singapore.

If China and the Philippines agree on some areas, they will serve as the basis for negotiations with other ASEAN members, Chen said.

The BCM was signed in 2017 to resolve maritime issues through talks and negotiations, Lu said, noting the platform has also contributed to dispute management.

"It's a very important positive sign for both countries, the high level exchanges between our two countries. It will benefit the two sides despite what happened in the past. We look at the future," Yuan added.

The BCM was signed in 2017 to resolve maritime issues through talks and negotiations.

"I think if you have this picture in your mind, you think the difference as just one point in the overall bilateral relations," Yuan said. "It is very small. You cannot blind your eye. You cannot overshadow the other things."

Since Mr. Duterte took office, relations between the Philippines and China have improved considerably as the President had temporarily set aside the arbitral ruling that invalidated Beijing's excessive claims over WPS in order to forge stronger trade and economic ties with the Asian power.

Advance party

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi will have a meeting with Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) officials ahead of Xi's visit to formalize a framework agreement between the Philippines and China on the joint energy exploration agreement in

the WPS.

Wang was supposed to be in the Philippines from 16 to 18 September for the talks but it was postponed due to typhoon "Ompong."

Malacañang earlier had said a joint exploration deal would help the Philippines meet its energy requirements in the face of rising global fuel costs which impact local prices and it underscored the need to iron out a deal with China as the supply from the Malampaya gas project in Palawan, which accounts for 20 percent of the country's electricity requirements, is forecast to start declining by 2022.

Outgoing Foreign Affairs Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano had said the Philippines was open to a 60-40 deal, in favor of Manila, should a joint development undertaking push through with China.

Exploration sites known

He previously mentioned that Reed Bank or Recto Bank, which is within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone, could be a site for exploration.

The Philippines suspended exploration in the Reed Bank in 2014 as it pursued international arbitration of its maritime dispute with China.

Cayetano said any planned energy exploration deal with China would comply with the Philippine Constitution and international laws.

"We need to look at the future. What is the most important thing to both countries? That is the goal we are thinking. We have to look at the bigger picture that is for the benefit of both countries," Yuan said.

Xi last visited Manila in 2015 for the APEC meetings with the Philippines still under Benigno Aquino III who pursued the arbitration case.

China, Malaysia, Thailand to hold drill

BELJING – Chinese, Malaysian and Thai armed forces have scheduled a joint drill in Malaysia later this month, according to the Chinese Ministry of National Defense.

Code-named "Peace and Friendship 2018," the drill will last from 20 October to 29 in two states of Malaysia and offshore areas, said a ministry statement.

It does not target any country.

A total of 692 members of the Chinese People's Liberation Army will participate in the drill, as well as three naval vessels, two shipboard helicopters, three Il-76 airlifters and four vehicles from the Chinese side.

"The exercise aims to further demonstrate the common will of the armed forces of the three countries in maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea region, strengthen practical exchanges and cooperation, and enhance their ability to jointly respond to various security threats," the statement said. "It does not target any country."

Xinhua

First PH missile-armed frigate takes form in SK
 Philippine Navy chief Vice Adm. Robert Empedrad attended in Ulsan, South Korea, on Tuesday the keel laying of the first of two new frigates due for delivery to the country in 2020. The ceremony was held at the naval dock of Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI). Keel laying is the start of the construction of the ship's backbone, around which the hull is built. The Philippines and HHI signed in October 2016 a P16-billion contract for two missile-armed frigates with another P2-billion set aside for their weapon systems. Steel-cutting for the frigate took place in April. —JEANNETTE LANDRADE

LICUANAN'S REPLACEMENT
DUTERTE APPOINTS DE VERA NEW CHED CHAIR

President Duterte has named Prospero De Vera III, a political analyst and University of the Philippines (UP) professor who was an adviser to Sen. Grace Poe in the 2016 presidential elections, the new chair of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

Until his appointment on

Friday last week, De Vera served as officer-in-charge of CHED for several months after the resignation of former Chair Patricia Licuanan in January.

Until July 2022

He will serve until July 21, 2022, according to his appointment papers, dated Oct. 12.

De Vera advised the government panel in the ill-fated peace talks with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, the umbrella organization of the communist movement in the country, and was a commissioner of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

He is a professor of public administration at UP and served as its vice president for public affairs from 2011 to 2016.

De Vera finished his undergraduate history degree and doctorate in public administration at UP, and master's degree in social science at De La Salle University. —DJYAP INQ *AS*

to

De Vera named CHED chairman

PRESIDENT Duterte has appointed Commission on Higher Education (CHED) officer in charge Prospero de Vera III as chairman.

Malacañang also released yesterday the appointment papers of Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. and Social Welfare Roldo Joselito Bautista.

De Vera, who has been serving as CHED OIC since chairwoman Patricia Licuanan resigned in January, would be chairman until July 21, 2022. He was CHED Commissioner since September 13, 2016.

Before joining government in 2016, De Vera was Vice President for Public Affairs of the University of the Philippines, a position he held since 2011. He was also professor of Public Administration in University of the Philippines (UP) since 1993.

Locsin has been Ambassador

to the United Nations since 2017.

He was Makati congressman from 2001 to 2009, and former press secretary of the late President Corazon Aquino.

Locsin, a product of Ateneo de Manila University, is a former journalist.

Bautista, who retired from the military service this week, was initially considered by Duterte to be the new administrator of the National Food Authority.

The former Philippine Army Commander is a member of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) "Sandiwa" Class of 1985. He was also former commander of Duterte's Presidential Security Group (PSG) before he was named as commander of the Army's 1st Infantry Division. He was also a former commander of the Army's 104th Brigade. — *Jocelyn Montemayor*

• 2nd PH humanitarian mission to Indonesia

The Philippines sent on Monday the second batch of the humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) mission to Indonesia. The team has been sent to provide assistance to the victims of the 7.4 magnitude earthquake and tsunami that devastated the Central Sulawesi Region in Indonesia which resulted in 2,088 deaths, 4,612 injuries and 680 missing persons. The team is composed of personnel from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Office of Civil Defense (OCD) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). The send-off ceremony was held at Villamor Airbase, Pasay City and was attended by Undersecretary Cardozo Luna representing Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Undersecretary Ricardo B Jalad, Administrator of OCD and Executive Director of NDRRMC and Mme. Trini Gunarti from the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia to the Philippines. The 2nd PH Mission Team is headed by Director Romulo Cabantac, Regional Director of OCD NCR and is set for deployment to Palu, Indonesia on October 15-19. (Francis Wakefield)

Airforce, babawi sa Armymen

GAGANAPIN ang second round-robin ng AFP-PNP-PCG Olympics 2018 Chess Team Championships kung saan ang defending champion Army ay inasanang muling mangingibabaw sa pagpapatuloy ngayon ng aksyon sa PNP Sports Center sa Camp Crame, Quezon City.

"I'm excited to get back at Army," sabi ni Allan Cantonjos.

"Those matches in the first round were really tough fight and it's just unfortunate that we lost 7 aniya.

Sa kanilang first round encounter nitong Oktubre 4 sa double round-robin, match points system format, ang Army woodpushers na nasa kandili nina team Manager Brigadier General Rodel Mauro Alarcon, Special Service Center Director Lieutenant Colonel Raymond Lachica at coach Corporal Ildefonso "Ponching" Datu ay giniba ang defending champion Airforce, 3.5-8.5, salamat sa kabayanihang panalo na naitarak nina Team Captain Lieutenant Colonel Perpetuo Tan Jr., Major Edgar Gonzales, Captain Marlou Daguito, National Master, Captain at lawyer Bob Jones Liwag.

Namayani rin ang Army sa Navy, 12-0, nitong Oktubre 12 para manatili sa ituktok ng liderato na may total four match points.

Habang ang Airforce naman ay may four wins at two loses

kasama na ang 12-0 victory kontra sa Philippine Navy nitong Oktubre 16.

Ang Army ay pambato din sina Grandmaster Darwin Laylo, Grandmaster Jayson Gonzales, Grandmaster candidate Ronald Dableo, International Master Joel Pimentel, National Master Carlo Rosaupan, Kevin Arquero at Lieutenant Colonel Lebrito Olmiguez habang ang Airforce ay bukod kay Cantonjos ay aasa naman kina International Master Barlo Nadera, International Master Richelieu Salcedo III, National Master Ronald Llavanes, National Master Onofre Espiritu, National Master Raymond Salcedo at Nigel Galan.

Ang Philippine National Police na nasa magiling na pamumuo naman nina PSSUPT Jonnel Estomo, coaches SPO3 James Mendoza Pascua at SPO1 Renato "Buboy" Abalos ay winasiwas naman ang Philippine Coast Guard, 12-0, nitong Oktubre 16 sapat para manatili sa solong ika-2 puwesto na may five wins at one loss.

Kasama din sa matitikas na manlalaro ng PNP ay sina National Master Ali Branzuela, National Master Rolando Andador, Jerry Tolentino, Leandro Macasinag, Ruvillo Paulin, PSI Horizon Villanueva, PSUPT Jaime Santos, PSUPT Antonieto Canete, PINSP Ronald Agabao at PCINSP Christopher Muego.



PNP, AFP pumorma vs poll violence

HULING araw kahapon sa paghahain ng certificate of candidacy ng mga kandidato sa darating na midterm elections. Ibig sabihin, painit na nang painit ang political season. Mabuti kung puro paninira lamang at palitan ng akusasyon ang mangyayari. Kaso, karaniwan na sa mga nagaganap na eleksyon ang pagpaslang sa mga kandidato.

Dahil dito'y nagsanib-lakas ang Philippine National Police at Armed Forces of the Philippines upang sugpuin ang mga umiiral na private armed groups na siyang ginagamit ng mga tiwaling politiko sa pag-utas sa kanilang

mga malalakas na katunggali sa eleksyon

Tiniyak ni PNP Director General Oscar Albayalde na magtutulungan ang PNP at militar para siguruhin ang mapayapang eleksyon sa Mayo 2019. Iyan naman ang gusto nating lahat: Mapayapang halalan. Hindi eleksyong marami ang mamamayapa

Ngunit kahapon pa lang, sa huling araw ng paghahain ng COC ay may isa nang pagtatangka sa buhay ng isang kandidato ang nangyan. Tinutukoy natin ang tangkang pananambang umano kay House Majority leader Rolando Andaya na nangyari matapos siyang magharap ng kanyang COC sa Capitol complex sa Pili, Camarines Sur. Hawak na umano ng pulisya ang isang sikyu na nagtangka sa buhay ng Kongresista na tatakbo bilang Gobernador ng lalawigan.

Ganyan lagi ang kalakaran ng pulitika sa ating bansa. Walang pagbabago. Keya tama lang na maghigpit ang mga tagapagpatupad ng batas sa pagmamamamahon sa mga masasamang element upang mapigil ang kanilang mga buktol na balak.

At harinawa, sana'y huwag silang magpagamit na kasangkapan ng mga masasamang pulitiko sa paghahasik ng kaguluhan sa eleksyon.

Mag-utol na sundalo namaril sa party, arestado

NORTH COTABATO - Inaresto ng mga otoridad ang magkapatid na sundalo matapos na iturong may kagagawan sa pamamaril sa loob ng isang Disco party sa bayan ng Mlang, ng lalawigan ng Ito kamakalawa ng gabi.

Kinilala ni Chief Supt. Eliseo Tam Rasco, police director ng Region 12 ang dalawang mga sundalo na sina Private First Class Ares Santillan Espino, 28, ng 101st Infantry Brigade at Pfc. Al Santillan Espino, 25, nakatalaga sa Philip-

pine Navy BRP Apolinario Mabini at pawang ng Brgy. Lika, Mlang, North Cotabato.

Ang magkapatid ay dinakip matapos silang ituro sa pagbaril sa dalawang construction worker na sina Ruel Cadaydayon, 32-anyos at Diduk Rueza, pawang residente ng President Roxas, North Cotabato.

Sa ulat, nagkaroon umano ng mainitang pagtatalo sa pagitan ng mga biktima at magkapatid na suspek sa loob ng disco hall dakong alas-11:00

ng gabi nang aksidenteng mabanggan ni Cadaydayon si Pfc. Al Espino. Kahit pa umano humingi ng tawad ang biktima ay agad na bumunot ng baril ang kapatid ni Al na si Ares at binaril si Cadaydayon sa dibdib. Dahil sa malapit lang si Rueza, nahagip siya sa pamamaril.

Agad na isinugod sa pinakamalapit na hospital ang mga biktima para sa medikasyon. Narekober sa crime scene ang isang basyo ng bala mula sa caliber 45 pistola. *(Rhoderick Benez)*

Rebs can't oust Du30, Sison tells military

By **Delfin T. Mallari Jr.**
and **Jeannette I. Andrade**
@Team_Inquirer

LUCENA CITY—Forget Red October, Black November or White December.

Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria Sison has admitted that rebels are incapable of unseating



REBELS CAN'T OUST DUTERTE, SISON TELLS MILITARY

FROM A1

President Duterte in the face of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' obsession with conspiracy plots.

"What the revolutionary forces and the people are capable of is only to establish democratic government of workers and farmers in the countryside. These are the organs of democratic power," Sison said in an online interview from Utrecht, the Netherlands, where he lives in exile.

Responding to Sison, AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edgard Arevalo said in a statement: "Indeed the CPP-NPA (New People's Army) cannot attain their vile objectives militarily."

Reds weakened

The surrender of rebels and capture of high-ranking communist leaders have weakened the NPA, the CPP's armed wing, Arevalo said.

But then again, Sison warned, Mr. Duterte could be toppled from power, like what happened to strongman Ferdinand Marcos and President Joseph Estrada, without the NPA deploying its fighters to the capital.

Marcos was toppled in a people-backed military revolt in 1986, while Estrada quit the presidency following a civilian-supported military withdrawal of support in 2001.

'Rolling plan'

The AFP has claimed that the Red October plot to oust the President fizzled out after it came to light.

The military, however, said Red October was a "rolling plan" that would culminate in December, when the CPP marks its 50th anniversary.

Last month, Mr. Duterte said he had evidence of a "loose conspiracy" involving opposition Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, the Magdalo group, Liberal Party and the CPP-NPA to overthrow him. All parties have denied his claim.

The military decided to call the rebel plot "Oplan Talsik (Ouster)," which, it said, was aimed at summoning a critical mass for a broad united front to remove the sitting President. This is akin to the objective of Red October, according to Arevalo.

"What the CPP wants is to weaken [the] government prior to its takeover ... They shall agitate people to rebel against [the] government by foment-

ing unrest, sow discord and highlight issues of alleged human rights abuses by government," he said.

'Oplan Aklasan'

Under Oplan Talsik, the CPP-NPA intends to stir labor unrest through its "Oplan Aklasan (Revolution)," given that the workforce is the "most vulnerable due to increasing prices of commodities and inflation," Arevalo said.

The rebels would move to discredit the government in the international community, he added.

The goal, Arevalo said, is to create a "backlash on the economy."

"If the CPP-NPA succeeds in fomenting chaos and discord, and in successfully peddling conjectures of government abuses in the Philippines, foreign and local investors are seen to either withdraw or cancel their investments," he said.

The planned end game, he pointed out, is to force Mr. Duterte's hand into declaring martial law.

"The CPP will then claim before the international community that a despot rules in the Philippines," Arevalo said. INQ

AFP chief refutes Joma

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff General Carlito Galvez Jr. dismissed claims made by Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria Sison that the military is behind the terminated peace talks between his group and the government.

Sison earlier said Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and then AFP Chief of Staff General Eduardo Año

dictated the outcome of informal talks last June.

"Jose Maria Sison is once again frothing lies in his mouth as he desperately attempts to circumvent the facts on the ground and regain relevance in their so-called armed struggle," Galvez said.

"The communist armed group cannot force the people into thinking that the terror group is representative of the public and is in any position to negotiate with the government," he added.

"We advise Joma Sison to get over his delusions on his relevance and the strength of the NPA. It is only a matter of time, and it is quite sooner than he expects, that the terror of the communist group will end and communities on the ground will be liberated," Galvez said.

As of October 10, 2018, over 9,795 regular members, Militia ng Bayan, underground organization members, and supporters have surrendered nationwide this year. 2

125 ex-rebels get E-CLIP benefits

By **FREDDIE G. LAZARO**
and **FREDDIE C. VELEZ**

SAN FERNANDO CITY, La Union - The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has welcomed 125 former New People's Army (NPA) rebels from Northern Luzon during the two-day peace summit at the headquarters of the Northern Luzon Command (NOLCOM) in Camp Aquino, Tarlac City earlier this week.

Lieutenant General Emmanuel B. Salamat, NOLCOM chief, said the peace summit was realized through the joint efforts of the Philippine Army's 5th Infantry Division and 7th Infantry Division and other key government agencies.

The peace summit was conducted to facilitate the distribution of the benefits to the rebel returnees through the Enhanced Comprehensive Localized Integration Program (E-CLIP).

The E-CLIP program extends reintegration assistance, firearm remuneration livelihood assistance, housing, conditional transitional grant, livelihood materials and

implements or employment assistance, access to government service, loan and market access, medical assistance, alternative learning system, psychosocial assistance, college tuition and stipend, and legal assistance.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Eduardo Año, both represented President Duterte during the ceremonial acceptance of the consolidated firearms from the rebel returnees.

During the summit, two of the rebel returnees, "Ka-Angel" and "Ka-Cris," recalled the struggles they experienced as NPA rebels, as well as the life-changing benefits they received after their surrender.

"NOLCOM will continue to work together with different government agencies and stakeholders to pursue its mission of bringing peace to the nation and strive to spark the consciousness of more NPA rebels to turn in to the government and to become productive citizens of the nation," Lt. Gen. Salamat said. **S**

Duterte ditches peace talks with Reds

By GENALYN D. KABILING

President Duterte is not yet ready to resume the government's peace negotiations with the communist rebel group amid its involvement in atrocities against the people.

The President admitted that his administration tried but failed to make peace with the communist rebels.

"I do not think there will be talks again," Duterte said in a speech during a recent Philippine Army event in Taguig City.

The government earlier suspended peace negotiations with the communist rebels set last June pending a review of the past signed agreements and public consultation.

Duterte has said peace talks would only resume if the talks are held in the country, a ceasefire pact is forged, and that the collection of revolutionary taxes by the rebels is stopped.

"I will make peace with the enemies. We have tried. We failed with the NPAs (New People's Army). I do not think that I'd ever be ready again to talk to them," he said.

The President recalled that he used to go to the mountains to talk to the communists but lamented their insincerity, citing their attacks on troops and civilians alike.

Duterte, however, still offered assistance to any rebels who would lay down their arms and surrender to authorities.

"Sabi ko sa NPA pagkain, medisina, magbigay ako I told the NPAs I will give them food, medicines], he said.

Duterte ruled out giving the rebels any weapons and bullets.

"Alam mo kung sinong papatay sa

akin? Kayong mga Army. Pagbaba ko dito, aambushin ako niyan. Do you know who will kill me? You, the Army. When I come down here, you'll ambush me], he added.

Early this month, the President ordered government troops to neutralize communist rebels engaged in atrocities, saying there was no need to present any court warrant.

Duterte said the government was "not into crime prevention" but "neutralization" since the insurgents were committing rebellion "24 hours a day."

Plot hatched overseas

Reds exploited talks

Other acts of manifest perfidy by the CPP-NPA prompted the President to lift the ceasefire and cancel the peace negotiations

By Mario J. Mallari and Kristina Maralit

Goodwill was never present in the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) even when peace negotiations were being held

in Norway from 2016 to 2017 which was when the communist group hatched the "Red October Project" designed to oust President Duterte, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said citing recovered documents. AFP spokesman Brig. Gen.

Edgard Arevalo said while the President ordered the release of several detained communist leaders to show sincerity and goodwill to push the peace negotiations, the CPP-NPA plotted for his ouster.

Turn to page 2

The doors for reconciliation with the communist movement remain open despite the government's relentless effort to curb insurgency

From page 1

"The AFP discovered that the CPP-NPA was plotting the ouster of the President they termed as Red October. They hatched this plan while the government negotiating panel was in Norway talking to Mr. Sison, Jalandoni, Tiamzon, *et al.*," Arevalo said.

Arevalo was referring to Jose Maria Sison, the self-exiled founding chairman of the CPP, Benito Tiamzon, head of the CPP-Central Committee and National Democratic Front (NDF) leader Luis Jalandoni, who was leading the communist panel in the negotiations.

No less than the President publicly announced the plot to oust him early last month—tagging the communist group, the "yellows" and supporters of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV as behind it.

The military confirmed Mr. Duterte's pronouncements, citing the 21 September plan called the "Red October Project"—both designed to remove the President from office.

No reciprocation

Brig. Gen. Antonio Parlade Jr., AFP assistant deputy chief of staff for operations, said the communist, in connivance with Tindig Pilipinas, initially wanted to launch the ouster plot during the 46th anniversary of martial law but the plan was preempted after Mr. Duterte made a public announcement about it.

Parlade added the groups tasked to mass up rallyists failed to come up with numbers.

The "Red October Project," on the other hand, was set to be launched between 11 and 17

October.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the "Red October" fizzled out after it was exposed.

Arevalo said the CPP-NPA committed other acts that proved detrimental to the peace talks and eventually prompted the President to cancel the negotiations.

Among these was the brutal ambush-killing of three soldiers who were on a humanitarian mission in Bukidnon last year.

"Other acts of manifest perfidy by the CPP-NPA prompted the President to lift the ceasefire and cancel the peace negotiations," Arevalo said.

"Despite his (Mr. Duterte's) goodwill in releasing top CPP-NPA leaders to form part of the negotiating team per NDF request, the latter had the temerity to blame the AFP for the collapse of the talks," he added.

The communist, in connivance with Tindig Pilipinas, initially wanted to launch the ouster plot during the 46th anniversary of martial law.

Doors still open

The doors for reconciliation with the communist movement remain open despite the government's relentless effort to curb insurgency, Malacañang maintained yesterday.

Presidential spokesman and Chief Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo turned the tables on Sison who earlier had pinned the blame on the Duterte administration's security cluster for the "doomed" peace talks.

"The reason it was stalled was that they did not keep their end of the deal. There's supposed to be a ceasefire, no killings, no ambush. But they violated that. If you were in the position of the President, why would you still negotiate when the other party doesn't seem true to its word?" Panelo said at a press briefing.

According to the Armed Forces, the communists' armed

unit, the NPA, has pressed on with its extortion activities, burning of farm implements and destroying government-owned heavy equipment doing public works projects.

Add to that its supposed recruitment and regrouping for the reported "Red October" plan to oust the President from Malacañang, Panelo said.

Lack of capability admitted

Sison also admitted the CPP-NPA does not have the ability to unseat Duterte from the presidency by force and that the conditions for a regime change do not exist at the moment, a statement echoed by Panelo.

"That's why they have been trying to get allies from other sectors. But they have not so far been successful for the last 50 years," Panelo said, also alluding to how the communists did not prosper in toppling previous administrations from power.

Still, according to Panelo, Duterte may be swayed into going back to the negotiating table if only to prevent any more bloodshed.

"For now, that's unlikely to happen because they did not honor what was previously agreed upon. But definitely the President—his mind is always open to reconciliation as he said," Panelo said.

"He (Duterte) does not like Filipinos killing each other," he added.

Lies abound

The AFP also clobbered Sison for claiming the country's security officials are to blame for the termination of peace talks.

"Jose Maria Sison is once again frothing lies in his mouth as he desperately attempts to circumvent the facts on the ground and regain relevance in their so-called armed struggle," AFP chief of staff Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. said in a statement.

Sison earlier had alleged the security sector sabotaged the informal talks between the government and the communist movement in June.

Duterte not ready to talk peace with Reds

By GENALYN KABILING

President Duterte is still not ready to resume the government's peace negotiations with the communist rebel group amid its involvement in atrocities against the people.

The President admitted that his administration tried but failed to make peace with the communist rebels.

"I do not think there will be talks again," Duterte said in a speech during a recent Philippine Army event in Taguig City.

"I will make peace with the enemies. We have tried. We failed with the NPAs (New People's Army). I do not think that I'd ever be ready again to talk to them," he said.

The President recalled that he used to go to the mountains to talk to the communists but lamented their insincerity given their attacks on troops and civilians alike.

Duterte, however, still offered assistance to any rebels who would lay down their arms and surrender to authorities. "Sabi ko sa NPA pagkain, medisina, magbigay ako," he said.

Duterte however ruled out giving the rebels any weapons and bullets, saying the military will be the one might run after him.

"Alam mo kung sinong papatay sa akin? Kayong mga army. Pagbaba ko dito, aambushin ako niyan," he added.

Early this month, the President ordered government troops to neu-

tralize communist rebels engaged in atrocities, saying there was no need to present any court warrant.

Duterte said the government was "not into crime prevention" but "neutralization" since the insurgents were committing rebellion "24 hours a day."

The government earlier suspended peace negotiations with the communist rebels set last June pending a review of the past signed agreements and public consultation.

Duterte has said peace talks would only resume provided conditions are met such as holding the negotiations in the country, cease-fire pact, no collection of revolutionary tax, and no coalition government.

Duterte sa peace talks: 'Di pa ako handa

2

Hindi pa handa si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa pakikipag-usap ng pamahalaan sa mga komunistang rebelde upang maipagpatuloy ang naunsiyaming usapang pangkapayapaan.

Ito ay sa kabila ng naiulat na pagmamalupit ng mga rebelde sa mga mamamayan.

Aminado ang pangulo na sinubukan ng kanyang administrasyon na makipagbati sa mga komunista ngunit hindi ito nagtagumpay.

"I do not think there will be talks again," ang bahaging talumpati nito nang dumalo ito sa nakamang Philippine Army event sa

Taguig City.

"I will make peace with the enemies. We have tried. We failed with the NPAs (New People's Army). I do not think that I'd ever be ready again to talk to them," sabi niya.

Binalik-tanaw pa ng punong ehekutibo ang pag-akyat nito sa bundok upang makipag-usap lamang sa mga komunista ngunit dismayado ito sa hindi rila (komunista) pagiging tapat dahil sa mga pag-atake sa mga kawal ng pamahalaan, gayundin sa mga sibilyan.

Gayundin, nag-aalok pa rin ito ng tulong sa mga rebelde ng nagbabalik-loob sa pamahalaan.

"Sabi ko sa NPA, pagkain, medisina, magbigay ako," arito.

Ngunit isinasantabi nito ang pagbibigay ng mga armas at bala sa mga rebelde dahil tinutugis ang mga ito ng militar.

"Alam mo kung sino ang papatay sa akin? Kayong mga Army. Pagbala ko dito, aambushin ako niyan," sabi pa ng pangulo.

Kamakailan, inutos ng pangulo ang pagpulis sa komunistang rebelde dahil sa pagmamalupit ng mga ito at hindi na na kailangan ng anumang warrant mula sa hukuman upang maisagawa ito.

Genalyn Kabiling



NOLCOM ASSURES BENEFITS FOR 125 REBEL RETURNEES

CAMP AQUINO, Tarlac City: The Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom) assured some 125 New People's Army returnees that their benefits would be fully provided after their return to the mainstream society. Maj. Ericson Bulosan, Nolcom public information officer, announced this during the two-day Peace Summit for former rebels held at the Nolcom headquarters here to ensure that each returnee received the benefits from the Enhanced Comprehensive Localized Integration Program (E-CLIP). The summit was highlighted by a series of moral recovery activities to help the rebel returnees revive their spiritual and inner strength as they reintegrate to the society and their families.

JERRY M. HERNANDEZ

Military belittles NPA strength

BY VICTOR REYES

THE Armed Forces yesterday said the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army, do not have the manpower to oust President Duterte.

AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Edgard Arevalo said the communists would not succeed in their plan to oust Duterte because NPA regulars and supporters have been "surrendering in droves," and their "guerrilla fronts were dismantled or downgraded and high-ranking leaders are neutralized in succession."

With these developments, he said, the NPA will be neutralized "by next year."

On Friday last week, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the supposed plot to oust Duterte, which the military tagged as "Red October," fizzled out after it was uncovered and subsequently exposed by the Armed Forces. Last Monday, Arevalo said the communists have set a new target for ousting, and this is in December as part of its celebration of the

MILITARY

CPP's foundation anniversary on December 26.

The supposed ouster plot, which is allegedly led by CPP founding chairman Jose Maria Sison, reportedly calls for the staging of massive rallies similar to the EDSA "people power revolt" that ousted President Ferdinand Marcos in February 1986, and the launching of offensives on military and police targets.

Figures released by the Armed Forces showed that nearly 10,000 rebels and supporters have surrendered since January this year because of what it said was military pressure and the rebels' desire to join government's social integration program.

Arevalo yesterday said the CPP and NPA "wants is to weaken government prior to its takeover."

"They planned to summon for a critical mass of supporters to form a broad united front to remove the sitting president," he added.

Duterte resumed peace negotiations with the communists shortly after he assumed the presidency in 2016. He cancelled it after four rounds of formal talks because of continued attacks by the NPA even while the negotiations were ongoing.

A Marine died while another was wounded in a brief firefight

with an NPA group on Kalamansig town, Sultan Kudarat on Sunday.

In Aurora province on Monday, a policeman died and while another policeman was wounded in an NPA ambush in Maria Aurora town.

The policemen were responding to a report of an arson incident in Sitio Dipawan in Barangay Villa.

Chief Supt. Amador Corpus, Central Luzon Police Regional Office director, said the fatality, PO2 Ronald Martial Ruidera, a member of provincial mobile force company, was with a combined team of policemen and soldiers who were out to check a reported burning incident in the barangay. They were fired at upon reaching Sitio Dipawan.

Wounded was SPO2 Angelo Gawat, detailed with the Maria Aurora municipal police.

In the Sultan Kudarat incident, soldiers from the 63rd Marine Company were conducting security operations in Sitio Lumoton, Barangay Dau Wasay following reports from residents about the rebel presence of NPA rebels in their area.

Maj. Arvin Encinas, spokesman of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said the troops encountered about 10 NPA rebels and a five-minute firefight ensued.

He named the slain soldier as Cpl. Jonas Reyes and the wounded as Cpl. Bryan dela Cruz.

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CPP-NPA 'constraining' Du30 to declare martial law

THE Communist Party of the Philippines wants nothing less than to plunge the country into martial law.

To do this, the CPP and its armed wing, the New People's Army, are 'constraining' President Rodrigo Duterte to declare martial law by "inciting massive unrest and lawless violence," according to Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesman Brigadier General Edgard Arevalo.

"What the CPP wants is to weaken government prior to its takeover. They planned to summon a critical mass of supporters to form a broad united front to remove the sitting president ('Oplan Talsik')" Arevalo said in a statement.

The AFP official said that by using alleged human rights abuses and inflation, the CPP-NPA is agitating the people to rebel against the government.

Insurgents also use domestic issues as weapons to destroy the image of the government in the international community to discourage foreign investors and to prompt capital flight, he added.

"If the CPP-NPA succeeds in painting chaos and discord, and in peddling conjectures of government abuses in the Philippines, foreign and local investors are seen to either withdraw or cancel their investments. By inciting massive unrest and lawless violence, they want to constrain the President to declare martial law," the AFP spokesman added.

At the same time, the AFP slammed claims of CPP founder Jose Maria "Joma" Sison that the country's security officials are to blame for the termination of peace talks, saying these are all lies.

"Jose Maria Sison is once again frothing lies in his mouth as he desperately attempts to circumvent the facts on the ground and regain relevance in their so-called armed struggle," said AFP Chief of Staff, Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., in a statement Tuesday.

Sison had alleged that the security sector sabotaged the informal talks between the government and the communist movement in June.

"The communist armed group cannot force the people into thinking that the terror group is representative of the public and is in any position to negotiate with the government," Galvez added. **With PNA A3**

Albayaalde: No guns for indigenous people

BY RAYMOND AFRICA

PNP CHIEF Oscar Albayaalde yesterday turned down a request of indigenous peoples (IPs) to be allowed to carry firearms to protect themselves from communist rebels who they claimed kill tribal leaders who refused to join the underground movement.

Albayaalde said he cannot allow the IPs to carry arms because this is illegal.

"What I gave them is the assurance that we will guard their tribes. All they have to do is coordinate with the nearest police stations because according to them, they stay most of the time in military camps," Albayaalde said after IP groups led by Lipatuan Unad, chairman of the Mindanao Indigenous Peoples' Coalition for Cultural Justice and Integrity, paid him a courtesy call in observance of the National Indigenous Peoples' Month celebration.

"We will give the appropriate protection by way of patrolling the area. Our government troops, the AFP and PNP including our mobile troops, will visit their places regularly," Albayaalde added.

Unad told the PNP chief they needed to arm themselves to protect their people against the New People's Army (NPA) rebels who allegedly threaten and kill tribal leaders who refuse to join the communist movement.

"What's negative to us is what the NPAs are doing, they kill our tribal leaders if they refuse to join them," Unad said.

Unad took the visit as an opportunity to stress that indigenous peoples are not members of the NPA amid media reports saying and showing IPs with their children during protest actions against the government to solicit public sympathy. He said that while it was not in the culture of IPs to join protest actions, groups with vested interests have allegedly been exploiting their people to join

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ALBAYALDE

mass demonstrations without them really knowing what they are "fighting" for during such occasions.

He sought Albayalde's help in identifying the people behind the exploitation of the lumads and to help them file charges against them "for destroying our culture."

Unad also claimed schools operating in some of their ancestral lands are being run by

communists.

"The NPAs said they want to help us so they set up schools but they are teaching our children the wrong things like how to bear arms, they even changed our national anthem. What they are teaching us are against our culture," Unad said.

Albayalde said these schools can be shut down once authorities verify that they are operating without licenses.

On the protest actions, Albayalde said the lumads are given

money to entice them to join mass demonstrations.

"They are being used. They are given small amounts of money for them to participate. Just imagine, they will be brought here from Mindanao and they will be the frontliners during protests and then the rally organizers will say they were hurt by the police," Albayalde said.

Albayalde said the NPAs brainwash IPs by painting the picture that government has been neglect of their needs, such as building schools and roads to make it easier

for them to bring and sell their produce to centers of commerce.

Albayalde said he explained to the IPs the government has been wanting to bring progress to remote areas but NPA rebels prevent them from doing so by burning heavy equipment working on infrastructure projects.

"This is what I told them and they fully understand - the NPAs do not want progress in an area so they can continue to poison the minds of the people, our minority," Albayalde said.

Lumads not rebels

Many of those wearing tribal clothes in rallies are not members of their indigenous tribe

Lumad leaders met with Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Oscar Albayalde yesterday to deny allegations that tribe members have joined the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA).

The indigenous peoples (IP) leaders made a courtesy call on Albayalde in observance of the National Indigenous People's Month.

Albayalde said he was told during the meeting with Lumad leaders, led by Lipatnan Unad, 54, chairman of Mindanao Indigenous Peoples' Coalition for Cultural, Justice and Integrity, that many of those wearing tribal clothes in rallies are not members of their indigenous tribe.

"Now, it is clear that those are not indigenous people and they just don't wear tribal clothes. Just as some of the youth said that none of them participate in rallies," Albayalde said.

Exploited for political gains

The IP heads added that many of their fellow Lumads are unaware that they are being exploited by left-leaning groups.

"They do not know why they are here in Manila. They get hurt in rallies. They are being used. Some offer a measly amount for their participation. Just imagine, they will bring them here to be in the frontlines of rallies and then they will be hurt. Then these groups will say the police mauled the IPs or the minorities," he added.

Albayalde said they will also look into the complaints of IPs

that NPA members influence them to take up arms against the government.

"We will have that verified. We will look into these schools to determine whether these are legitimate. The CHED (Commission on Higher Education) won't just sit back and let these schools do that, to the point that they are changing the national anthem," he said.

Lumads are unaware that they are being exploited by left-leaning groups.

IP indoctrinated

Authorities have long accused NPA members of indoctrinating Lumads with the communist ideology.

Recently, the NPA has been implicated in the Red October plot, a supposed plan to unseat President Rodrigo Duterte.

Albayalde assured protection of Lumads and other tribes, as he urged them to coordinate with the police.

"We instructed their leaders to coordinate with the police officers. Although we cannot provide them arms because that is illegal, we will give them protection through constant police patrols in their areas," he added.

The National Indigenous People's Month is celebrated every October pursuant to Presidential Proclamation 1906.

Soldier dies in encounter with terrorist group

With the expected flooding of cheap imported rice in the country it would become close to impossible for our local farmers to compete, unless they get help from the government

A soldier was killed and one wounded in an encounter with a terrorist group last Sunday in Sultan Kudarat.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) slammed the "insincerity, duplicity and cunning" of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and New People's Army (NPA) and said they will not succeed with their plans to disrupt the government.

The military also twitted CPP founder Joma Sison for comparing the strength and force of AFP to that of the CPP-NPA.

"He could be dreaming or hallucinating. The CPP-NPA cannot attain their vile objectives militarily," the AFP said in a statement released by spokesman BGen. Edgard Arevalo.

The army also noted the terrorist group is doing its

utmost and using its resources to weaken the government and disrupt the country through "Oplan Taisik."

"They shall agitate people to rebel against government by fomenting unrest, sow discord and highlight issues of alleged human rights abuses by government," the military statement said.

"With their evil designs uncovered and the people and groups targeted for recruitment have backed out or dissociated from them, the CPP-NPA now feigns innocence saying they do not have the capability to oust the President," the AFP added.

Kathleen Mae Bulquerin

Sundalo todas, 1 pa sugatan 5 sa sagupaan

Napatay ang isang sundalo habang isa pang kasamahan niya ang natulad na nasugatan nang makasagupa ng tropa nito ang grupo ng New People's Army (NPA) sa Sultan Kudarat, kamakailan.

Nasawi si Corporal Jonas Reyes dahil sa matinding pinsala sa katawan, ayon kay Captain Arvin Encinas, tagapagsalita ng 6th Infantry Division (ID) ng Philippine Army (PA).

Ginagamot naman sa isang tagong lugar ang isa pang sundalong si Corporal Bryan Dela Cruz.

Nagpapatrilya lang ang mga tauhan ng 63rd Marine Company (Force Reconnaissance Group) nang makasaguparila ang mga tauhan ng Guerilla Front 73 ng South Mindanao Regional Committee sa Sitio Lumoton, Bgy. Datu Wasay, Kalamansig, dakong 8:25 ng umaga nitong Linggo.

Umabras, ariya, ang mga rebelde matapos ang ilang minutong bakbakan na nagresulta sa pagkasawi ni Reyes at pagkasugat ni Dela Cruz.

"One of our troops has offered his life and one was wounded, not minding their own safety to protect our communities from communist terror group," pagbibigay-diin naman ni Joint Task Force Central Commander Maj. Gen. Cirillo.

Francis T. Wakefield



Police killed in ambush

By Gladys Mae Ablon

A police officer was killed while another was injured in an ambush staged by suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Aurora province Tuesday, according to a report from the Central Luzon police in Camp Olivas in Aurora.

The policemen were on their way to respond to an arson incident when they were fired upon by suspected NPA rebels.

Chief Supt. Amador Corpus, regional police director, on

Wednesday condemned the attack as an "act of terrorism" and pointed out that rebels attacked policemen from Maria Aurora town and the First Provincial Mobile Force Company who were only responding to a call of duty.

PO2 Marcial Ronald Buendicho Ruidera, whom Corpus describes as a "dedicated police officer, a great person and father," was killed in the ambush that also wounded SPO2 Angelo Nobleza Gawat, chief investigator of the Maria Aurora police.

Reds kill cop, soldier in separate attacks

By MAR T. SUPNAD •
FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

CAMP TOLENTINO, Bataan – A policeman was killed while another one was wounded when some 30 heavily armed rebels ambushed government troopers who were about to respond to an arson incident Tuesday in Sitio Dipawan, Brgy Villa, Maria Aurora town, Aurora province.

A police report stated that the teams of Supt. Dennis Wenceslao and Chief Inspector Bartolome Antolin of the Aurora PNP were on their way to an arson incident allegedly perpetrated by heavily-armed NPA rebels who burned one transit mixer owned by RNGM Construction.

The responding cops were attacked upon reaching the hilly area of Sitio Dipawan, Brgy. Villa, Ma. Aurora town that led to the death

of PO2 Martial Ronald Ruidera and wounded SPO2 Angelo Gawat.

The report added that most of the rebels were said to be amazons and were the ones who fired their rifles in an apparent scheme to invite the attention of the authorities for them to stage the daring daylight ambush.

Meantime, a government soldier was killed while another was wounded following an encounter against rebels in Sultan Kudarat over the weekend.

Captain Arvin Encinas, the Spokesman of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, identified the killed soldier as Corporal Jonas D. Reyes.

The wounded, meanwhile, was identified as Corporal Bry-an M. Dela Cruz.

Encinas said the encounter between troops from the Philippine Marines and New People's Army

took place at Sitio Lumoton, Barangay Datu Wasay, Kalamansig, Sultan Kudarat at about 8:25 a.m. Sunday.

It was learned that operating troops of the 63rd Marine Company of Force Reconnaissance Group encountered members of Guerilla Front 73 of Far South Mindanao Regional Committee (FSMRC).

Unfortunately, troops sustained casualties as a result of the fierce encounter.

"One of our troops has offered his life and one was wounded, not minding their own safety to protect our communities from communist terror group," said Joint Task Force Central

Commander Maj. Gen. Cirilito E. Sobejana.

"Our soldiers have fought many battles to keep Central Mindanao free from threat of terrors," he added.

NPA rebs' attack in Aurora condemned

POLICE Regional Office 3 director, Chief Superintendent Amador V. Corpus yesterday led the Central Luzon police force in condemning a New People's Army attack in Aurora province which left one policeman dead and another wounded on Tuesday afternoon.

"Our men from the Maria Aurora Municipal Police Station and the 1st Provincial Mobile Force Company were responding to a reported arson incident in Sitio Dimani, Barangay Villa when they were ambushed by an undetermined number of NPA guerrillas who were in a vantage position," said Corpus.

"It is sad to note that one of our men was killed in action and another one was wounded. Our hearts are broken from the loss of Police Officer 2 Martial Ruidera who is not only a dedicated police officer but also a great person and a father," he said.

Wounded in the ambush was Senior Police Officer 2 Angelo Gawat, the chief investigator of the Maria Aurora police station.

Corpus assured the family of PO2 Ruidera of all financial support and benefits due him. The fallen cop will also be given a hero's burial.

He also said they will shoulder all the medical needs of SPO2 Gawat.

Alfred Dalizon

NPA ambush: Parak todas, 1 grabe

Isang pulis ang nasawi habang isa pa ang malubhang nasugatan makaraang tambangan ng mga rebeldeng New People's Army (NPA) sa liblib na bahagi ng Brgy. Villa, Maria Aurora, Aurora nitong Martes ng hapon.

Kinilala ang nasawina si Police Officer 2 Ronald Martial Ruidera, kasapi ng Aurora Provincial Force Mobile Company habang isinugod sa pagamutan ang sugatang si SPO2 Angelo Gawat, nakataga sa Maria Aurora Municipal Police Station (MPS).

Sa ulat ni Police Regional Office (PRO) 3

Director P/Chief Supt. Amador Corpus, bandang alas-2:30 ng hapon nang mangyari ang pansarabang sa nabanggit na lugar.

Ayon sa imbestigasyon kasalukuyang bumabagtas sa lugar ang mga elemento ng pulisya at Army's 91st Infantry Battalion (IB) upang magresponde sa napaulat na panunong ng grupo ng NPA rebels, pero pagsapit sa bisinidad ng Brgy. Villa ng bayang ito ay bigla na lamang pinaulanan ng bala ng mga nakaposisiyong kalaban.

Sa kabila ng nasa mataas na bahagi ang mga rebeldeng terorista ay

nakipagpalitan ng putok ang mga awtoridad pero sinawimpalad na masawi si PO2 Ruidera.

"We assure the surviving family of the financial support and benefits due to him as well as for SPO2 Gawat who is now under medical attention," ayon kay Corpus.

Kasabay ng pakikiparamay sa nauulang pamilya ng pulis, kinondena ng opisyal ang NPA dahil sa patuloy na paghahasik ng terorismo na pinupuntirya ang mga PNP personnel na tumutupad lamang sa kanilang tungkulin. **(Joy Cantos with trainee Hermie Rivera)**

Pulis todas, 1 sugatan sa NPA ambush

MARIA AURORA, Aurora - Dead on the spot ang isang pulis habang sugatan

NI LIGHT A. NOLASCO

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naman ang isa pa nang tambangan sila ng mga pinaniniwalaang miyembro ng New People's Army (NPA) sa liblib na bahagi ng bayan ng Maria Aurora sa Aurora, nitong Martes ng hapon.

Kinilala ang napatay na si PO2 Martial Ronald Buendicho Ruidera, nakatalaga sa naturang bayan.

Nakaligtas ngunit sugatan naman

ang kasamahan niyang si SPO2 Angelo Nobleza Gawat, hepe ng Ma. Aurora Police, nang madaplisan ng bala sa ulo.

Nagresponde lang ang dalawa sa Siffo Dimani kaugnay ng panununog ng mga rebelde sa isang heavy equipment nang pagtabarin sila ng mga hinihinalang rebelde.

Inaresto sa 'Red October' iginiit palayain

Sumugod kahapon sa Camp Crame sa Quezon City at nagsagawa ng kilos-protesta ang nasa 20 miyembro ng grupong Gabriela para ipanawagan ang pagpapalaya sa kanilang mga kasamahan at consultant, na inaresto kamakailan sa Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

Iginiit ng militanteng grupo na human rights activists ang mga inaresto, at hindi mga terorista.

Ayon sa Gabriela, hindi gawaing terorismo ang pambabatikos sa pamahalaan.

Inaresto kamakailan ng magkasanib-pwersa ng

Philippine National Police (PNP) at Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) si Adelberto Silva, consultant ng National Democratic Front (NDF); at ang mga aktibistang sina Ediecel Legazpi, Irene Atadero, Herda de Luna Calderon, at ang driver na si Julio Lusania kaugnay ng sinasabing "Red October" plot laban sa gobyerno.

Inihayag kamakailan ng militar na nalusaw na ang Red October, subalit nagbabal: na inilipal lang ang petsa ng umano'y destabilisasyon.

Fer Taloy

US commits P1.35B for Marawi rehab

The United States has pledged P1.35 billion more in aid to help rebuild Marawi City, which remains in ruins a year after government forces, backed by nine countries that provided intelligence and military equipment, liberated it from terrorists linked to the Islamic State (IS) jihadi group in Iraq and Syria.

US Ambassador to Philippines Sung Kim announced the additional three-year development package under the US Agency for International Development (USAID) Marawi Response Project worth \$25 million during his visit to the Islamic city on Tuesday.

The latest package brings the total USAID funding commitment to the rehabilitation of Marawi City to almost P3.2 billion (\$59.1 million).



READ-ALONG US Ambassador Sung Kim tells a story to pupils of Amai Pakpak Elementary School at Barrio Green, Marawi City, during a read-along session on Tuesday. —RICHEL V. UMEL

government to allow them to return home.

First anniversary

Once a beautiful Islamic city by a lake in Lanao del Sur province, Marawi was reduced to rubble in the fighting between government forces and hundreds of Maute and Abu Sayyaf terrorists and some foreign fighters who seized the city on May 23, 2017, to establish an IS province in Southeast Asia.

Backed by the United States, Australia, Brunei, China, Indonesia, Israel, Malaysia, Russia and Singapore—which provided intelligence, technical assistance and military equipment—government forces battled the terrorists for five months, killing 974 of them, including their leaders, and capturing 12.

The government lost 168 soldiers and policemen in the battle for Marawi.

Eighty-seven civilians died and hundreds of thousands of residents of Marawi and surrounding areas were displaced.

President Duterte declared Marawi liberated on Oct. 17, 2017, but military operations to flush out the remnants of the terrorist force continued until Oct. 23, 2017.

On Wednesday, the people of Marawi marked the first year of their city's liberation from the terrorists not in the city square with singing and dancing but in the shelters, pleading to the

'We don't need money'

"We want to go home, whether they pay us, we don't need it," Jalilah Hadji Saplin, a community development officer in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and member of the Bangsamoro Youth Leaders Program-Leadership Communities, said, referring to the reparation promised by the national government to Marawi residents displaced by the conflict.

Among the displaced living in the shelters in Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte province are 75 Christian families.

They receive aid from "Duyong Marawi," a program launched by the Prelature of St. Mary's Marawi that provide food and shelter for both Muslim and Christian evacuees.

Malacañang on Wednesday pleaded for more time to launch a reconstruction and recovery program, with presidential spokesperson Salvador Panelo saying groundbreaking was expected to be held soon.

The additional US aid will go toward recovery.

The US ambassador said the new package under the Marawi Response Project would help build the foundation for the longer-term recovery of the displaced communities.

"As the situation evolves, so does the nature of our response to the crisis," Kim said.

The US Embassy said the new development package

would expand livelihood activities and help restart local businesses in and around Marawi through microgrants and programs to link the youth to Mindanao's thriving services sector and supply chains.

Economic activities

"The US government shares the concern of the Philippine government for ongoing economic, social, health and education needs of the people of Marawi and neighboring municipalities," Kim said in a news conference at Amai Pakpak Elementary School on Tuesday.

During his visit the US envoy met with Lanao del Sur Gov. Bedjoria Soraya Alonto Adiong, Vice Gov. Mamintal Alonto Adiong Jr., Marawi Mayor Majul Gandarara and Brig. Gen. Ramiro Rey, commander of Joint Task Force Lanao.

At Camp Ranao, Kim laid a wreath at a memorial for soldiers killed in action during the battle for Marawi.

Kim also launched the second phase of the US government's Empowering Madrasa Educator Program worth P12.7 million (\$235,000).

The program trains 175 madrasa educators and 25 madrasa administrators from Marawi, Lanao del Sur and other Mindanao communities to improve their English proficiency and computer literacy, and to learn student-centered teaching methods emphasizing critical thinking and creativity. —REPORTS FROM DONA Z. PAZZIBUGAN, RICHEL V. UMEL AND JIGGER J. JERUSALEM INQ

MARAWI LIBERATION DAY

Maranaos protest delays in Marawi rehabilitation

BY TED KHAN R JUANITE

MARAWI CITY: Thousands of Maranao Muslims displaced by last year's Marawi war demanded Tuesday that they be immediately allowed to return to their destroyed homes, a year after the Islamic State-led siege left more than 1,200 people dead.

Dubbed "Anyare Marawi" (a short Maranao version for "What happened Marawi?"), local leaders took turns criticizing the government for its slow response and lack of understanding of the needs of the displaced Maranao residents.

President Rodrigo Duterte declared Marawi liberated a year ago following a five-month war against the local Islamic State group who attacked Marawi in May last year, engaging the security forces in fierce running gun battles, and prevented the military advance by holding dozens of hostages the Maute group used as human shields.

Drieza Abato-Lininding, a displaced Marawi resident who led the Bangsamoro National Movement for Peace said, "One year

since it was touted that Marawi has been liberated, we do not feel any liberation."

"One year since we were promised the rebuilding of our homes and yet we still live in tent cities and temporary shelters, living off the overspent generosity of our relatives until now," he said.

He said the government had assured them that plans were being made for their return to the city, although the government has yet to present concrete plans.

Task Force Bangon Marawi (TFBM), the government arm leading the rehabilitation process, had previously announced it would begin reconstruction of the city's most affected area (MAA) in late August.

The agency confirmed that the

city's full rehabilitation would be completed by December 2021.

Bashari Latiph, a local leader, said: "Boracay is even better. Boracay will open soon. We, when are we going to go home? They cannot fulfill their promises. We are not begging for relief. What we need is their (government leaders) understanding that we need to go back to our homes. Are there still terrorists in Ground Zero? Let's not call it Ground Zero. The war in Marawi was an overkill. The government should take responsibility for it."

The protesters cited the substantial foreign aid received for Marawi rehabilitation — from Australia, Japan, China, Thailand, the European Union, and the United States.

TFBM had presented blueprints, although choosing the consortium that would lead the rehabilitation had recently come into delays. One consortium that was backed by a Chinese developer was disqualified in June after authorities determined that it did not have the funds to complete the project.

The government selection committee is consolidating its due diligence on another Chinese-led

group, the Power Construction Corp. of China or PowerChina.

Task force head Eduardo del Rosario on Tuesday appealed for the public's patience. The ceremonial groundbreaking for the rehabilitation of the 24 villages within a 250-hectare area hardest hit in the fighting is set for this month, he said.

The International Committee of the Red Cross estimates that at least 65,000 Marawi residents remain displaced, either staying with their relatives or in evacuation centers and in transitional shelters.

Col. Romeo Brawner, deputy military chief of the Joint Task Force Lanao (JTFR), said there were still many unexploded ordnances in the area, making it dangerous for residents to check their homes.

But Marawi can now be considered one of the safest city in the country, since a large portion of the city remains under tight military control, he said.

"We believe the terrorists have already left the city. However, we are not resting and are making sure the city is indeed safe because of the martial law implementation," said Brawner. *A2*

Remembering Marawi: Rehab still in progress

By Nat Mariano

THE groundbreaking for the reconstruction in the Islamic state of Marawi will happen by the end of October, Malacañang said Wednesday as it commemorated the liberation of Marawi from terrorists.

"Efforts to build a vibrant and prosperous Marawi from the rubbles of war and conflict will soon come into fruition as we expect the groundbreaking of reconstruction activities by the end of the month," Presidential Spokesman Salvador Panelo said in a statement.

The Palace said Marawi's liberation from the "malevolent hands of terrorist" conveyed a strong message that Filipinos would unceasingly stand united against terrorism.

"As we celebrate the triumphs of our government troops against the Daesh-inspired Maute rebels, we pay tribute to those who fell during the siege of Marawi and gave the ultimate sacrifice to make our nation safer and more secure," Panelo said.

"The end of the intense firefighting in Marawi a year ago likewise marked the beginning of the healing and rebuilding of the Islamic city and its residents."

President Rodrigo Duterte's Administrative Order 3, which created the Task Force Bangon Marawi, has started the rehabilitation of the city with various agencies helping the internally displaced people rebuild their homes.

"We ask everyone to remain fully supportive of the government's initiatives in this regard," Panelo said.

On May 23, 2017, homegrown terrorists laid siege to Marawi, prompting Duterte to return from his visit to Russia and put Mindanao under martial law.

The Palace said the deaths of terrorists Omar Maute and Isnilon Hapilon thwarted the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in the area. K2

One year after liberation

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Palace: Continue support for Marawi rehabilitation

By EFREN MONTANO

MALACANANG yesterday called for continued public support in the government's rehabilitation efforts in Marawi City exactly one year after it was liberated from the ISIS-inspired Maute group.

In a statement, Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo said the liberation of Marawi City on October 17, 2017 marked the beginning of healing and rebuilding in the Islamic city.

"As we celebrate the triumphs of our government

troops against the Daesh-inspired Maute rebels, we pay tribute to those who have fallen in the fierce battles during the siege of Marawi and gave the ultimate sacrifice to make our nation safer and more secure," he said.

"The liberation of Marawi conveyed one strong message: Our people stand - and will unceasingly stand - united against the evils of terrorism," he added.

On May 23 last year, the Maute Group attacked Marawi City, prompting President Rodrigo Duterte to place the entire island of Mindanao under martial law.

But after almost five



Panelo

months of battle, Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon and Omar Mauta, one of the leaders of the Maute group, were killed.

Panelo said the deaths of Hapilon and Mauta prevented the establishment of

an Islamic caliphate in the area and stopped the possible spread of rebellion to the rest of the country.

"Despite this feat, the government, with the help of its armed forces, will remain vigilant in the midst of quiet for possible terrorist threats that may again strike our nation," he said.

Since then, the government has started its rehabilitation efforts in the city. Duterte has likewise issued Administrative Order No. 3 creating Task Force Bangon Marawi which is responsible for the recovery and reconstruction of the city.

"Efforts to build a vibrant and prosperous Ma-

rawi from the rubbles of war and conflict will soon come into fruition as we expect the groundbreaking of reconstruction activities, designed with due recognition of the cultural sensitivities of its residents, by the end of the month," Panelo said.

"We therefore ask everyone to remain fully supportive of the government's initiatives in this regard," he added.

The declaration of martial law in Mindanao, however, has not been lifted. It will lapse on December 31 this year after Congress granted Duterte's request for another extension.

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Liberation of Marawi remembered

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

A year after its liberation from Islamic State (IS)-linked militants, Marawi City is inching its way to total recovery and freedom from terrorism and violence, with P20 billion earmarked to help its citizens rebuild their homes and livelihood, Malacañang said yesterday.

Turn to Page 2

"Today we commemorate the liberation of Marawi from the malevolent hands of terrorists," presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said from Davao City.

"As we celebrate the triumphs of our government troops against the Daesh-inspired Maute rebels, we pay tribute to those who have fallen in the fierce battles during the siege of Marawi and gave the ultimate sacrifice to make our nation safer and more secure," he said.

He was mum on the whereabouts of President Duterte, who skipped the anniversary rites attended by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Carlito Galvez and other ranking officials.

"Our people stand - and will unceasingly stand - united against the evils of terrorism," Panelo said.

He also lauded the military's action that led to the death of suspected terror leaders Omar Maute and Isnilon Hapilon.

Scars of months-long fighting were still visible in most parts of the country's only Islamic city.

The government's military action - including aerial bombing and massive infantry attack - had thwarted the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in the area and staved off the possibility of violence spreading to other parts of the country, Duterte's spokesman said.

He assured the public that the government will not waiver in the fight against terrorism.

"Despite this feat, the government, with the help of its armed forces, will remain vigilant in the midst of quiet for possible terrorist threats that may again strike our nation," Panelo said.

Duterte has not withdrawn his declaration of martial law in Mindanao. Armed men held the city under siege on May 23 last year, while the Chief Executive was on an official trip to Moscow. Congress would later approve martial law extension until the end of the year.

Duterte also issued administrative order No. 3 creating Task Force Bangon Marawi.

"Efforts to build a vibrant and prosperous Marawi from the rubble of war and conflict will soon come into fruition as we expect the groundbreaking of reconstruction activities, designed with due recognition of the cultural sensitivities of its residents, by the end of the

month," Panelo said.

"We therefore ask everyone to remain fully supportive of the government's initiatives in this regard," he said.

Honoring the dead

Galvez said there is much to celebrate for the "liberation of Marawi City from the siege that had destroyed a beautiful city and ruined the lives and dreams of many of our beloved countrymen."

In commemorating the first year of Marawi's liberation, the nation – Galvez said – is also honoring the memory of 168 government troops who died in the fighting.

He led a wreath laying ceremony for the fallen soldiers at the Heroes' Wall inside the headquarters of the Army 103rd Brigade at Kampo Ranao.

Assisted by Maj. Gen. Roseller Murillo, commander of the 1st Infantry Division, and other key ground military commanders, Galvez also pinned medals on 20 officers and enlisted personnel.

Also present during the ceremony was Catholic priest Chito Sukanob, one of the civilian hostages who escaped his captors.

Galvez pointed out that by winning the peace, "it is but fitting to honor the fallen ones and reward those who have valiantly fought the terrorists with all their hearts, blood, sweat and tears."

"One year ago, we showed the world our bravery. Every terrorist fighter lured to Marawi City by false promises and extremist ideology of hate saw our bravery and felt our wrath," Galvez said.

Galvez was the overall commander of the five-month battle, being the commander of the Zamboanga City-based AFP-Western Mindanao Command (AFP-Wescom).

"They continue to see our fearlessness as we stand watch over our country, ever vigilant against the resurgence of terror on our shores," Galvez said, referring to the terrorists.

But despite the government's promise of massive reconstruction and rehabilitation of the devastated city, hundreds of displaced families are still staying at various evacuation camps.

The military said it has to restrict the movement of civilians in the city as troopers have yet to complete their bomb clearing operations, especially at ground zero.

- With Jaime Laude

A year after Marawi's liberation: Losses, victory, new chapter

By ARGYLL B. GEDUCOS, ROY C. MABASA, and BONITA L. ERMAC

One year after the bloody five-month Marawi siege, Malacañang remembered the losses and victory which resulted from the fight against Islamic

State (ISIS)-inspired terrorists and how a new chapter is waiting for those who were affected.

President Duterte officially an-

nounced the liberation of Marawi City in Lanao del Sur on October 17, 2017, a day after its leaders — Isnilon Hapilon and Omar Maute — were killed by government forces. A year later, Malacañang is remembering ► **10**

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A year after Marawi's...

◀1

the events which transpired during the siege.

Malacañang on Wednesday paid tribute to those who risked their lives so the country can be freed from the hands of the terrorists.

"As we celebrate the triumphs of our government troops against the Daesh-inspired Maute rebels, we pay tribute to those who have fallen in the fierce battles during the siege of Marawi and gave the ultimate sacrifice to make our nation safer and more secure," Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo said.

The war claimed the lives of 168 government forces, 12 of which were killed by friendly fire, and 87 civilians. The government forces, on the other hand, were able to neutralize 974 militants, including 13 foreigners since the war started on May 23, 2017.

US aid

The United States government's assistance and funding commitment to the war-ravaged Marawi City has now reached nearly P3.2 billion (US\$59.1 million), according to a fact-sheet released by the US Embassy in Manila on Wednesday.

The total amount was bolstered by the launching of USAID's P1.35 billion Marawi Response Project the other day - a three-year program designed to improve economic and social conditions of communities affected by the siege last year.

In a statement, the Embassy said the funding will address short-term needs, support employment readiness for the youth, and help connect them to various service sectors in Mindanao.

During and right after the siege, the USAID provided humanitarian and early recovery assistance to Marawi returnees, as well as displaced and host communities, totaling P1.84 billion during and after the siege.

Among these projects are: the P338 million to ongoing water, sanitation, and hygiene activities, and launch early recovery livelihoods and transitional shelter interventions in

Lanao del Sur Province; P100 million to boost food security in Marawi and surrounding areas by partnering with the World Food Program to deliver 1.8 million kilograms of rice - enough to feed 45,000 people for four months - to families displaced by the conflict; P480 million to work with vulnerable populations, including youth, to enhance job skills and attain livelihoods; P431.6 million to support conflict-affected communities in Marawi City and the surrounding areas in their early recovery and rehabilitation, including restoring access to markets, livelihoods, and services such as water, electricity, health, and education. This includes providing essential maternal, newborn, and child health training and supplies for affected populations; P127.5 million (\$2.55 million) to work with diverse groups of women to promote community dialogue and encourage civic engagement, as well as counter gender-based violence and trafficking in persons, and help displaced girls return to school; and P156 million (\$3 million) in life-saving humanitarian assistance that improved conditions in evacuation centers and host communities, in collaboration with the Philippine government and development organizations.

In the next three years, the new assistance through USAID will be implemented in close partnership with the Philippine government to assist people displaced by the fighting and the communities that have hosted them on their journey to recovery, said Ambassador Kim.

At the provincial Capitol, Kim discussed with the key leaders in Lanao del Sur Governor Soraya Alonto-Adiong, Vice Governor Mamintal Adiong, and Mayor Gandamra some of the challenges that displaced persons continue to face.

"As a friend, partner and ally, we are honored to help the people of Marawi recover and rebuild. We will continue to do everything we can for you", assured Kim.

Victory

According to Panelo, the victory of the government in Marawi City is a result of unity against forces that pose as threat to the country.

"The liberation of Marawi conveyed one strong message: Our people stand - and will unceasingly stand united against the evils of terrorism," he said.

"The deaths of Omar Maute and Isnulon Hapilon have thwarted the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in the area and curbed the possibility of the rebellion from spreading to other parts of the country," he added.

Even after the Philippines' win, Panelo assured that the government remains vigilant for possible threats.

"Despite this feat, the government, with the help of its armed forces, will remain vigilant in the midst of quiet for possible terrorist threats that may again strike our nation," he said.

New chapter

Panelo said that the intense fire-fighting in Marawi likewise marked the beginning of the healing and rebuilding of the Islamic city and its residents.

The Palace official noted that with the creation of the Task Force Bangon Marawi, the government has started the "arduous" tasks of recovery, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of the war-torn city.

"Various agencies converged with the aim of easing the sufferings of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and helping them begin rebuilding their lives, their homes, and their communities," he said.

Panelo, however, asked for the understanding and support of those affected by the siege as he assured that the government is working rebuilding the city.

"Efforts to build a vibrant and prosperous Marawi from the rubbles of war and conflict will soon come into fruition as we expect the groundbreaking of reconstruction activities, designed with due recognition of the cultural sensitivities of its residents, by the end of the month," he said.

"We therefore ask everyone to remain fully supportive of the government's initiatives in this regard," he added.

Yo

Marawi liberation remembered

Three hundred and sixty-five days after the bloody five-month Marawi siege, Malacañang remembered the losses and victory in the fight against Islamic State (ISIS)-inspired terrorists, and how a new chapter is waiting for those affected.

President Duterte officially announced the liberation of Marawi City in Lanao del Sur on October 17, 2017, a day after its leaders Isnilon Hapilon and Omar Maute, were killed by government forces.

A year later, Malacañang is remembering the events which transpired during the siege.

Despite the event being worthy of celebration, Malacañang on Wednesday paid tribute to those who risked their lives so the Philippines can be freed from the hands of the terrorists.

"As we celebrate the triumphs of our government troops against the Daesh-inspired Maute rebels, we pay tribute to those who have fallen in the fierce battles during the siege of Marawi and gave the ultimate sacrifice to make our nation safer and more secure," presidential spokesperson Salvador Panelo said.

The war claimed the lives of 168 government forces, 12 of whom were killed by friendly fire, and 87 civilians.

The government forces, on the other hand, had neutralized 974 militants, including 13 foreigners, since the war started on May 23, 2017. (Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos)

Marawi City siege ginunita

"Hindi pa tapos ang laban sa terorismo at marahas na extremist."

Ito ang maring deklarasyon kahapon ni Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Carlito Galvez sa paggunila sa ika-1 taon anibersaryo ng Marawi City siege.

Ang Marawi City liberation ay idineklara ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte noong Oktubre 17, 2017 matapos namang mapatay sa assault operation ang mga lider ng Maute ISIS na sina Isnilon Hapilon, ang itinalagang lider ng ISIS sa Southeast Asia; magkapatid na Omar khayam at Abdulla Maute. Una namang napaslang sa kasagsagan ng bakbakan sina Otto at Abdullah Maute, ang magkakapatid na lider ng Maute-ISIS.

Samantala, inianunsyo naman ni Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana ang pagtatapos ng combat operation sa Marawi City

noong Oktubre 23 ng taong ito.

Kasabay nito, nagpugay ang AFP sa 168 bayaning sundalo na nagbuwis ng buhay para makamit ang kalayaan ng Marawi City laban sa Maute-Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) na sumakop sa lungsod noong Mayo 23, 2017.

Ang Marawi City siege ay tumagal nang limang buwan kung saan ang paghahasik ng terorismo ng Maute-ISIS ay nagbunsod upang magdeklara ng martial law si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa buong Mindanao Region na pinalawig hanggang Disyembre ng taong ito.

Sa nasabing okasyon ay pinarangalan din ng AFP ang nasa 20 personnel nito kung saan ang pinakamataas na pangal ay Gold Cross Medal habang pinagkalooban din ng award ang Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) PNP Battalion. (Joy Cantos)

Marawi City habangon na

3 Nina ROY C. MABASA, ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS at MARTIN A. SADONGDONG

Isang taon matapos ang madugong limang buwang digmaan sa Marawi, ginunita ng Malacañang ang mga pagkatalo at tagumpay na bunga ng paglaban sa Islamic State (ISIS)-inspired terrorists, at kung paano magsisimula ang bagong kabanala sa buhay ng mga apektado nito.

Opisyal na ipinahayag ni Pangulong Duterte ang paglaya ng Marawi City sa Lanao del Sur noong Oktubre 17, 2017, isang araw matapos mautas ng puwersa ng gobyerno ang mga lider nitong sina Isnilon Hapilon at Omar Maute. Makalipas ang 360 araw, ginugunita ng Malacañang ang mga nangyari sa Marawi siege.

"As we celebrate the triumphs of our government troops against the Daesh-inspired Maute rebels, we pay tribute to those who have fallen in the fierce battles during the siege of Marawi and gave the ultimate sacrifice to make our nation safer and more secure," sinabi ni Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo.

Nasawi sa digmaan ang 168 puwersa ng gobyerno at 87 sibilyan. Napaslang ng mga tropa ng pamahalaan ang 974 na militant, kabilang ang 13 banyaga simula nang sumiklab

ang digmaan noong Mayo 23, 2017. Ayon kay Panelo, ang tagumpay ng gobyerno sa Marawi City ay resulta ng pagkakaisa laban sa mga puwersang nagbalanta sa bansa.

Sinabi ni Panelo na nagsisimula ngayon ang paghilom at pagbangon ng Islamic City at ng kanyang mga residente. Sa paglikha ng Task Force Bangon Marawi, sinimulan ng gobyerno ang "arduous" tasks of recovery, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of the war-torn city.

"Sa ating pagtutulongan at pagkakaisa, babangon muli ang Marawi tungo sa isang tahimik at maunlad na siyudad na hangad natin lahat," aniya.

HEROES OF MARAWI

Ginunita rin ng Philippine National Police (PNP) nitong Marais ang tinang anibersaryo ng paglaya ng Marawi City mula sa mga kamay ng teroristang Maute.

Nagbigay-pugay si PNP chief, Director General Oscar Albayalde sa lahat ng uniformed at non-uniformed policemen, state forces at sibilyan na nagbuwis ng buhay sa digmaan.

Unang-una sa mga nasawi tayu ay nakikiramay sa kanilang mga pamilya at doon sa tinatawag nating 'Heroes of Marawi'

Once again, tayo ay very proud for all of them dahil sila ay once upon a time naging part of the history, not only of the PNP or AFP [Armed Forces of the Philippines] but the whole country at tayu ay nagpapasalamat sa kanilang kabayanihan," ani Albayalde sa Camp Crame.

Sinabi ni Albayalde na marami pa ang kailangan gawin sa Mindanao, lalo na sa Marawi City, dahil ang terorismo ay isang pandaigdigang isyu. "Siguro mag-sama-sama magtulong-tulong tayu para maubos na kasi di lang isang grupo 'yan,' aniya.

TULONG NG AMERIKA

Sa tuwina'y rakaalalay sa Pilipinas, umabot na sa halos P32 bilyon (US\$59.1 milyon) ang ayuda at pondong inabot ng gobyerno ng United States sa Marawi City ayon sa fact-sheet na inilabas ng US Embassy sa Manila kahapon.

Ang kabuuang halaga ay pinalakas ng paglulusad nitong nakaraang taon P1.35 bilyon Marawi Response Project ng USAID - isang three-year program na dinisenyo para pagtubuhin ang economic at social conditions ng mga komunidad na apektado ng digmaan.

AFP chief appeals for help in fight vs terrorism

BY VICTOR REYES

ARMED Forces chief Gen. Carlito Galvez yesterday appealed to Filipinos to continue supporting the military in the fight against terrorist groups which he said continue to build up their forces.

"This fight, the fight against violent extremism and terror, is not yet over. Even now, our enemies gather their strength and plot our nation's downfall. Even now, they try to weaken and divide us. We

cannot let this happen, we must remain steadfast and vigilant," said Galvez.

Galvez spoke in Camp Ranao, home to the Army's 103rd Brigade in Marawi City, where he led commemoration rites for first anniversary of the "liberation" of Marawi City from the Maute terror group. The Maute, which pledged allegiance to Islamic State of Iraq and Syria years ago, attacked at least five barangays in the city on May 23 last year to establish a "wilaya"

or ISIS province.

President Duterte declared Marawi City "liberated from the terrorist influence" on October 17 last year following the death of key Maute leaders. The military terminated all offensive operations in the city on Oct. 23, 2017.

The conflict resulted in the death of nearly a thousand terrorists, 168 soldiers and policemen, and 47 civilians. The fighting

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AFP

also brought devastation in the city which is still being rebuilt by government.

Galvez led wreath-laying ceremonies for the fallen soldiers and policemen. He also conferred medals on 20 soldiers who were part of the liberation of the city. Three of them -- 1Lt. Raydez Acosta, Sgt. Marvin Enolpe and Cpl. Ronald Pedtoza -- received the Gold Cross Medal, the third highest military decoration in combat.

Galvez said while the military is full of courageous soldiers, "the AFP cannot win the fight against violent extremism and terrorism alone."

"Now, one year later, we must

continue to work together, still united in a common cause to root all forms of violent extremism and terrorism from our motherland," he said.

Galvez asked Filipinos to always remember the "gallant heroes," referring to the government troops who died during the five-month conflict.

"One year ago, we showed the world our bravery. Every terrorist fighter lured to Marawi by false promises and the extremist ideology of hate saw our bravery and felt our wrath. They continue to see our fearlessness as we stand watch over our country, ever vigilant against the resurgence of terror on our shores," he said.

Ft. Chito Sukanob, vicar-general of the Prelature of St. Mary in

Marawi, who was among those held hostage by the Maute during the siege, were among guests in the commemoration.

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel and concurrent presidential spokesman Salvador Panelo said the country celebrates the triumph against the Maute and pays tribute to those who have died.

"The liberation of Marawi conveyed one strong message: Our people stand -- and will unceasingly stand -- united against the evils of terrorism. The deaths of Omar Maute and Isnilon Hapilon have thwarted the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in the area and curbed the possibility of the rebellion from spreading to other parts of the country. Despite this

feat, the government, with the help of its armed forces, will remain vigilant in the midst of quiet for possible terrorist threats that may again strike our nation," he said.

Maute and Hapilon were among the leaders of the attack.

Ten Maute men have surrendered this month, with the latest two last Tuesday.

Dimasangkay Bassit and Alinok Muntik surrendered to the military's Joint Task Force Ranao in Lumbaca-Unayan town in Lanao del Sur.

Capt. Clint Antipala, spokesman of the Army's 1st Infantry Division, said the two also turned over a cal. 50 and a Garand rifle. They are undergoing custodial debriefing by the military Lanao del Sur.

— With Jocelyn Montemayor

4 BIFF terrorists nasakote

Naaresto nang pinagsanib na elemento ng militar at pulisya ang apat na miyembro ng Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) sa isinagawang operasyon sa Brgy. Lumabao, General SK Pendatun, Maguindanao kahapon ng umaga.

Isa sa apat na teroristang nahuli ay si Datu Parido Balabacan alvas

Commander Banog.

Sa ulat, dakong alas-5:00 ng umaga nang ikasasag ang law enforcement operation ng pinagsanib na puwersa ng Army's 33rd Infantry Battalion, PNP-Special Action Force, Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao at 2nd Mechanized Bat-

2 talion ng Phil. Army sa nasabing lugar.

Nakumpiska mula sa mga suspek ang dalawang M14 rifles, dalawang RPG at tatlong grenade launcher.

Ang nasabing operasyon ay bunsod sa intelligence report na merong mga teroristang BIFF ang nagtitipon para sa planong pag atake sa Sultan Kudarat. -Joy Cantos-

PROBINSIYA⁵

BIFF, umatake sa Maguindanao

Sinalakay ng Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighter (BIFF) ang isang bayan sa Maguindanao at hinarass umano ang mga residente, ayon sa Philippine National Police (PNP).

Dehi dito, sapilitang lumikas ang ilang pamilya nang gambalan ng mga miyembro ng BIFF ang kanilang lugar sa Barangay Talapas, Datu Montawal, Kamakailan.

Sinabi ni Maguindanao Police Provincial Office (MPPO) director, Senior Supt. Edwin Wigan na ang nasa likod ng pagsalakay ay ang grupo ni Gapor Balatawan, aliyas "Kumander Gapor".

Ayon kay Wigan, kitang-ikta umano ng mga residente ang pagnanakaw ng isang baka at dalawang kalabaw ni Gapor.

Nagsumbong ang mga residente sa mga opisyal ng barangay, na nag-report raman sa militar na kaagad na magreponle sa lugar.

Nagwa pa anyang makipagbarlan ng mga bandido sa tropa ng pamahalaan hanggang sa umatras din ang mga ito.

Fer Taboy

2 teroristang Maute sumuko

Dalawang miyembro ng Dawlah Islamiyah-Maute terrorist group ang sumuko sa Joint Task Force (JTF) Ranao sa Lumbaca-Uhayan, Lanao del Sur nitong Martes ng hapon.

Kinilala ni Captain Clint Antipala, Acting Deputy Public Affairs (DPAO) Of-

ficer ang mga sumuko na sina Dimasangkay Bassit at Alinok Muntik.

Bandang alas-3 ng hapon ng sumurender sina Bassit at Muntik sa tropa ni Lt. Col Ian Noel Ighes, Commanding Officer ng Army's 55th Infantry Battalion (IB) sa ilalim ng Joint Task Force

Ranao. Isinuko rin nila ang kanilang mga armas na isang cal. 50 at isang garand rifle.

Sa tala ng military, ang grupo ng mga teroristang suspek ay sangkot sa pag-atake sa Pantar detachment sa Brgy Lumitatan sa kasagsagan ng Marawi City siege noong Setyembre ng nakalipas na taon.

"The continuous surrender of Mautes entails weakening of their organizational leadership and capabilities, and we encourage others to lay down their arms and live peacefully," pahayag ni Army's 1st Infantry Division at Task Force Zampelan Commander Major Gen. Roseller Muriño.

Sa tala, sa loob lamang ng buwang kasalukuyan ay nasa 10 teroristang Maute na ang nagsisuko sa JTF Ranao. (Joy Cantos)



PATULOY NA TULONG: Masayang nagsunmit ng kanyang certificate of candidacy si 1st Pacman Party-list Rep. Mikee Romero (ikalawa mula kaliwa) kamakailan sa Comelec kasama sina Rep. Eric Pineda (pangalho) at nakakatandang kapatid ni Sen. Bong Revilla at Rep. Strike Revilla na si 3rd nominee Marlon Bautista Revilla (kaliwa). "Salamat po sa tiwala... sa halos 1.4 milyon na boto noong nakaraang eleksyon. Asahan niyo na patuloy ang magiging pag-tulong namin sa ating mga kababayan," ani ni Rep. Romero.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT 101 FOR DND

THE system of records safe-keeping in the Department of National Defense (DND) should be the focus of the hearing on Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV's missing amnesty application form.

1) Have all documents supporting the amnesty grant been collected into one amnesty applicant's chart?

2) Is the chart audited and certified complete?

3) Are all contents digitized and archived according to a standard timetable?

4) If a sensitive document is missing, is this reported immediately and a thorough search conducted?

5) If all search efforts are exhausted, is an affidavit of loss and incident report describing the efforts submitted to highest authorities?

6) Is there a logbook on which are noted request/

issuance/return of a chart?

7) Are charts kept in locked cabinets that not even top authorities can open without a formal request?

Whatever inadequacies there are in the DND records system, what has an amnesty applicant got to do with it? Nothing. In a corporate or any sane organizational setting, if a client's files are missing, it isn't the client's task to look for them.

Solicitor General Jose Calida, being the last person who out of the blue signified an interest in resurrecting a document supposedly dead for a decade, should be invited to court again for motivational probing. Trillanes should be the complainant, not the respondent, in this absurd foolery of a case.

FERNANDO P. GARCIA,
fg78636@gmail.com

Things are heating up in the South China Sea

It's been slow in coming. But next month, the United States Navy, maybe with some allied war-



REPUBLIC
SERVICE
RICARDO
SALUDO

ships in tow, will stage what it bills as its largest defense exercise in the South China Sea — bringing the superpower confrontation

► SaludoAS

between Washington and Beijing to a more intense and potentially explosive level.

America's apparent aim: to ratchet up the challenge to China's territorial claims and military dominance in East Asia's most strategic body of water, where most of the region's sea-borne energy supplies flow.

In this tussle on the high seas, members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, especially the five around the South China Sea — Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam — have long been of two minds: wanting to avoid tension-stoking brinkmanship, while seeking to restrain Chinese maritime aggressiveness.

What China wants

The good news is neither America nor China want a full-scale war, which would be disastrous for global security and prosperity, and could very well go nuclear.

Short of that nightmare scenario, the contending superpowers seem keen to assert their interests, even if it raises tension and perhaps provokes limited conflict. Analyzing their stra-

tegic interests explains why.

For Beijing, dominating the South and East China Sea has been a paramount defense objective, to counter potentially hostile forces within the so-called First Island Chain, the Indonesian, Philippine and Japanese archipelagos circumscribing the seas near China.

The South China Sea is even more crucial for China due to vital sea lanes where four-fifths of its oil imports pass, plus the valuable fishing and offshore oil and gas deposits found in those waters.

These maritime security objectives are tightly intertwined with Beijing's assertion of sovereignty over Taiwan and nearly the entire South China Sea, under its "nine-dash line" claim first enunciated in 1947 by the mainland's Nationalist regime before losing power to the communists two years later and fleeing to Taiwan.

Geopolitically, moreover, as a rising power, China needs to at least be dominant in its region, just as the United States sought preeminence in the Western Hemisphere two centuries ago.

In 1823, then-President James Monroe warned European powers not to expand imperial rule

in the Americas, especially in colonies fighting for liberation. In effect, this Monroe Doctrine barred Europe from militarily intervening in the region.

With Europe occupied with the Napoleonic Wars between France and the continent's monarchies, the Monroe Doctrine was largely unchallenged, enabling the US to dominate the Americas on its way to becoming a global power.

Now, it's China's turn. If it cannot be preeminent in Asia, forget the world. And any Chinese leader who fails to assert the nation's territorial claims would lose nationwide support and could fall from power.

What America wants

The United States wants to maintain its global clout, increasingly challenged in this decade by China and Russia. In Asia, that means maintaining and building up defense alliances, and curbing Chinese military assertiveness.

Plainly, if America can't stop China from dominating other countries, then the region would seek accommodations with Beijing, which weakens US clout.

Key to Washington's plan was to move 60 percent of its naval assets to East Asia. That was supposed to happen under the 2014 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), escalating deployment of US forces in the Philippines and granting them access to our military bases.

But President Rodrigo Duterte stopped full EDCA implementation. Result: America cannot maintain large enough naval and air forces in the region to match the thousands of missiles and warplanes which the People's Liberation Army (PLA) can unleash from land batteries and bases.

While the US can deter invasions across vast seas, it would be hard put to defend Taiwan from full-scale PLA attack across the narrow Taiwan Strait, which Beijing has threatened to mount if the island ever declares formal independence.

And having allowed China to take over both Mischief Reef in 1995 and Scarborough Shoal in 2012 from Philippine control, plus build artificial island bases in the Spratlys, America will now conduct its so-called freedom of navigation operations (fonops) to challenge Chinese claims of 12-mile territo-

rial waters and airspace around its illegally reclaimed islands.

The US has also formed the Quadrilateral alliance with Australia, India and Japan, and its Quad partners have also sent warships into the South China Sea. So have America's allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization defending Europe.

Throughout the year, the US Navy conducts fonops where Washington does not recognize sovereign maritime rights claimed by various nations, including the Philippines, where the second most frequent sailings are usually done, next to Iran.

The US disputes our Constitution's claim of territorial waters within our maritime baseline circumscribing our main islands. And Washington has not ratified the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which grants our exclusive economic zone 200 nautical miles from our baseline, as well as our extended continental shelf (ECS) 320 nm away.

Will there be war?

The big question for Asia and the world, of course, is whether

US fonops might spark armed confrontation with the PLA Navy. As reported on October 1, a PLAN destroyer sailed just 45 yards close to a US destroyer sailing near Chinese-occupied Gaven Reef, also claimed by the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam.

While wanting to avoid full-scale war, America may find strategic use in incidents stirring tension and provoking more PLA activity and buildup, which may then make Asean states more willing to accept protection from and provide facilities to US or Quad forces.

And one scenario that could get Washington the EDCA reactivation it wants is a flare-up in which Philippine facilities or forces are adversely affected or even attacked. That could force President Duterte to backtrack from his close Beijing ties and allow EDCA.

Could that happen? One thing is expected: By 2022 Duterte will step down, and a new regime can reverse his foreign policy and allow US forces en masse, with nuclear-capable armaments able to hit most of China from the Philippines.

Then the real danger begins.

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Red recruitment in Metro universities

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) recently identified a number of universities in the National Capital Region as recruitment centers of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its oxymoronic political arm, the National Democratic Front. They said the CPP concentrates on young, impressionable and gullible college students to join its fight against the duly constituted government of the Philippines, and its replacement with a Maoist state patterned after Red China.

“**Communists in the faculty often deviate from their course syllabi and lecture instead on the ills of the government.**

Soon thereafter, many of the identified universities disagreed with the AFP, and even challenged the military to prove their point. They were also against a military crackdown inside their campuses.

The response of the universities was expected because it's bad for business if a university will actually admit, expressly or tacitly, to being a recruitment center for the communist movement. Responsible parents do not want their children to disregard academics in favor of a radical life that may end anytime in a chance shootout with government troops. They sent their children to school to study and finish college and not to sacrifice their lives in the altar of communism.

That alarm at the possibility of a military crackdown inside university campuses is an over-reaction. It will be foolish for the military to do that considering the expected backlash the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte is bound to get should that scenario ever happen.

At best, that over-reaction is an attempt to transfer public attention to the possibility of a military crackdown on university campuses, instead of the existence of red recruitment centers in university campuses.

Raising the "military crackdown" bogeyman is also a clever scheme to associate the soldiers of today to the government troops of the martial law regime under President Ferdinand Marcos.

The universities concerned can denounce the AFP statement, but at the end of the day, it is difficult to conceal the obvious. The military does not even need to prove its point.

Red recruitment exists in university campuses today because that was the strategy the CPP used during the years prior to the proclamation of martial law in the country in September 1972. From experience, the CPP knows this strategy works because college students are at the height of their idealism and this makes them vulnerable to brainwashing by the more experienced communist cadres.

Equally appealing to students is the idea of being at rallies, rather than attending classes and studying for one's subjects. That isn't much of a problem when faculty members themselves are also red recruiters or newly red converts, willing to cancel classes in favor of rallies.

Actually, those recruiters or converts joined the faculty not to teach, but to entice students to join the communist movement in its plans to destabilize the State. That is why they don't really care if they don't

get to do any teaching or if the students don't get any learning done. Suspending classes meant less work for the red professors and more warm

bodies for the anti-government rallies.

The historical record reveals that the numerous anti-government demonstrations in 1971 and 1972 were dominated by college students, supported by sympathetic red professors who did not mind not holding classes over protracted periods.

As it was decades ago, it is not too difficult to spot a communist student or teacher in a university campus.

Many communist youth spend more time for rallies than for school work.

They often have failing grades and it takes them more than the usual four years to finish their course, that is, if they even finish at all.

Communists in the faculty often deviate from their course syllabi and lecture instead on the ills of the government. They pretend to be proficient in Pilipino but end up speaking in Taglish, like what Kris Aquino does.

Like their counterparts in the past, today's campus communists engage in sloganeering and mantras.

They can easily organize small, noisy mobs. In most universities, they are the noisy minority.

Their mantras are very predictable. If it isn't against the martial law regime of President Marcos, it's against President Duterte who they like to associate with President Marcos.

None of the communist youth today was around during martial law so their dislike for martial law was based only on what they heard about it from other student activists and similarly-minded faculty members. They either do

not research on martial law, or confine their readings to anti-Marcos literature recommended by the older communists. Those who cite so-called "facts and figures" simply assume the truth of such information, without even bothering to find out how such purported data had been arrived at in the first place.

They also don't realize that many of the student activists in the 1970s and the 1980s are now working for foreign companies, or for the same political order they used to oppose when they were students.

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Today's red students and teachers narrow-mindedly assume that all students and professors in the 1970s and the 1980s were against martial law. On that mistaken assumption, they presume that they can speak for all students and professors of that period.

They claim to be advocates of freedom, but they have no tolerance for dissenting views, especially positive views about martial law. That is expected of communists – they have no tolerance for freedom of speech.

Anyone who disagrees with them is either accused of historical revisionism or labelled a fascist.

It is also an open secret among students of contemporary times that some of their classmates have abandoned college to go the boondocks.

The AFP did right in ruling out a military crackdown on university campuses in Metro Manila. Their revelation on red recruitment in those campuses, however, should not be ignored by those universities. Since most of the identified universities are Christian schools, it is their moral duty to see to it that they do not host recruitment activities of a godless ideology seeking the violent overthrow of the elected government.

No postscript to Marawi

“A series of consultations was conducted among individuals and associations of Marawi refugees.

It seems as though the horrors of all-out war in Marawi City have been forgotten. The government launched a military siege against the Islamist Maute group on 23 May 2017 and declared Marawi free from terrorist groups since 17 October 2017. But we cannot write a postscript to Marawi's 220,000 war-scarred residents who continue to face the horrors of displacement and are not allowed to move on with their lives.

There are many issues and questions regarding the conduct of the siege such as the lack of attention to humanitarian concerns leading to deaths of civilians not just as a result of warfare but from the evacuation management, search for the missing and identifying the bones from their next of kin or the accusations by eyewitnesses of massing looting by the military. All these also remain still subject to public and official inquiry as long as martial law remains in force in all over Mindanao. These also demand redress from the authorities.

The 27,000 residents of the 24 barangays of "ground zero" or the city center remain in temporary housing in evacuation centers and have not even been allowed to return to their damaged homes almost a year. This raises a lot of questions and doubts, especially for

the residents and the rest of Mindanaoans.

The administration set up Task Force Bangon Marawi to coordinate the government line agencies involved in implementing programs for healing and rebuilding the lives of the internally displaced person in Marawi. The task force promised nine times to hold the ground-breaking ceremony for the rehabilitation

in Marawi. A year has passed but the evacuees remain in shelters and not one of the 11,000 houses destroyed by government bombing has been rebuilt with government support.

Ground zero or the so-called most affected area which was targeted with bombing remains untouched and wholesale leveling of the rubble of war is being planned. But what is unclear to the residents is how their individual and communal property boundaries are to be respected or restored. At least 87 mosques and 44 Madrasah facilities and 22 public schools have been bombed out – how are these to be rebuilt and will the public buildings retain the cultural heritage and ambiance of Marawi?

In coordination with the task force a series of consultations was conducted among individuals

and associations of Marawi refugees. They have organized themselves into the *Sowara O miyamagoyag* (or Voices of Marawi Internally Displaced Persons). The consultation was facilitated by Bangon Marawi CSO Platform which brings together several non-governmental organizations many of them existing in Marawi before the siege.

“
The residents have been through tremendous emotional and psychological impact of war.

The consultation put together a set of aspirations and demands to the government:

- Provide support for an enabling and dignified survival for internally displaced persons
- Provide just reparation and compensation for damage
- Provide support for livelihood recovery and access to employment
- Provide options for shelter and prioritize the most vulnerable
- Facilitate a peace-enabling and sustainable rehabilitation of Marawi
- Recognize the ancestral land ownership of Maranaos and enable peace-enabling land dispute resolutions

Further, they demand that the government:

- Ensure security and protection of rights of the internally displaced persons especially in the context of martial law extension

• Institutionalize a peace-enabling program in Lanao and the whole of Mindanao

In a separate move, the Merano Sultanate organized a summit on 31 December 2017 and released their Merano Sultanate Peace Declaration signed by more than 10 Maranao sultans led by Abdul Hamidulla Atar, the Sultan of Marawi. This echoes the same demands by the refugees and demanding government respect for the traditional leadership role of the sultanate.

The looming issue now is the threat whether commercial and military interests are allowed to take precedence in Marawi considering its geographic security and tourist potential. In the face of uncertainty for the rehabilitation and the lack of transparency complicated by the martial law situation, residents are unclear about plans of building a military camp within the city itself and the foreign investors who seek to cash in on the potential of the once glorious Islamic city by the lake Lanao.

The residents have been through tremendous emotional and psychological impact of war. This remains largely unaddressed. The existence of martial law continues to sow fear and confusion over the residents who only want to rebuild their lives. But only for long – when displacement and suffering combine with opposition to business and military interests then we have another recipe for further conflict in Marawi. J

ONLINE NEWS 18 OCTOBER 2018

Army to closely monitor poll bets seeking NPA permit

By Rhoda Grace Saron October 17, 2018, 10:45 pm

DAVAO CITY — The military will closely monitor political candidates who may give in to the demand of the New People's Army (NPA) to seek a so-called permit to campaign (PTC) and permit to win (PTW) in far-flung areas in the Davao Region.

"Laging meron yan. Hindi nawawala yan (It happens. It has never stopped) during elections but we want to emphasize that seeking permit to campaign and win from the NPA is not allowed," said Col. Gilbert Saret, commander of the Army's 1001st Infantry brigade based in Barangay Mapaang, Maco, Compostela Valley.

Saret said politicians are aware of their responsibilities and duties, and he hopes the practice of soliciting any support from the NPA would be stopped.

Saret said based on the accounts of NPA surrenderers, a number of politicians are providing support to the armed group.

"We can't say it is really confirmed but they are not just big politicians," he said.

Saret said the military will strengthen their intelligence monitoring to know the NPA scheme in pressuring candidates to give in to its demands.

"We all know that it is difficult on the part of the candidate because they need to go to the barrios to let people know of their programs. It will be a very challenging task of the candidate," Saret said. *(Rhoda Grace Saron/PNA)*

www.pna.gov.ph

Malacañang pays tribute to fallen soldiers in Marawi siege

By Jelly Musico October 17, 2018, 5:49 pm

MANILA – Malacañang on Wednesday paid tribute anew to fallen soldiers, exactly one year after President Rodrigo Duterte declared Marawi City liberated from “terrorist influence”.

“Today we commemorate the liberation of Marawi from the malevolent hands of terrorists,” Presidential Spokesperson and Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo said in a statement.

“As we celebrate the triumphs of our government troops against the Daesh-inspired Maute rebels, we pay tribute to those who have fallen in the fierce battles during the siege of Marawi and gave the ultimate sacrifice to make our nation safer and more secure,” he added.

Panelo said the liberation of Marawi conveyed one strong message that Filipino people “stand -- will unceasingly stand -- united against the evils of terrorism”.

A total of 168 government troops were reportedly killed during the five-month armed conflict that reduced a once vibrant Islamic city in ruins.

The battle for Marawi also left over 900 militants dead, including their leaders Omar Maute and Isnilon Hapilon.

“The deaths of Omar Maute and Isnilon Hapilon have thwarted the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in the area and curbed the possibility of the rebellion from spreading to other parts of the country,” Panelo said.

Despite this feat, Panelo said the government and its armed forces will remain vigilant “in the midst of quiet for possible terrorist threats that may again strike our nation”.

Panelo assured that the government will remain committed to rebuild the war-torn city through the Task Force Bangon Marawi, which was created through Administrative Order No. 3 issued by Duterte.

“Various agencies converged with the aim of easing the sufferings of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and helping them begin rebuilding their lives, their homes, and their communities,” Panelo said.

He expressed optimism that through unity and cooperation of everyone, Marawi will rise again as one of the peaceful and prosperous cities in Mindanao.

“Efforts to build a vibrant and prosperous Marawi from the rubbles of war and conflict will soon come into fruition as we expect the groundbreaking of reconstruction activities, designed with due recognition of the cultural sensitivities of its residents, by the end of the month. We therefore ask everyone to remain fully supportive of the government’s initiatives in this regard,” he said. **(PNA)**

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