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09 September 2018

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Duterte: SolGen did research on amnesty

By EDITH REGALADO

DAVAO CITY – The truth is out. It was Solicitor General Jose Calida who did the research used as basis to void the grant of amnesty to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, President Duterte revealed yesterday.

The President said it was Calida's research that paved the way for his issuance of Proclamation 572 effectively voiding the amnesty that former president Benigno Aquino III granted to Trillanes in 2010 for the latter's role in the Oakwood Mutiny in 2003.

"Yung kay Trillanes, alam mo ang totoo niyan ang nag-research, si Calida, just like kay Sereno (On Trillanes, you know the truth is Calida did the research, just like in the case of Sereno)," Duterte said, referring to Maria Lourdes Sereno whose ouster as chief justice through quo warranto – instead of impeachment – was reportedly contrived by Calida.

The President said he could not afford to ignore or refuse legal advice from Calida, whom he described as "quite bright" and *matino* (upright).

"Pag sinabi ng SolGen may mali (If the SolGen says something is wrong) and this has to

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Duterte: SolGen From Page 1

be corrected, I cannot refuse," the President said upon arrival yesterday at the Davao International Airport from Israel and Jordan.

But the President said he'd rather not expound on the issue as the Supreme Court is already deliberating on it.

"It's already at the Supreme Court. We leave it at that. If the Supreme Court would say my proclamation was null and void, then let it fall," the President said.

"In the first place, the amnesty allowing his release was void. Therefore his getting out of custody was also void because there was no basis. The amnesty was defective, fatally flawed," the President said.

He stressed he was only enforcing the law and that whatever flaw is found in Trillanes' amnesty, it should be corrected.

"He is the government lawyer. I am not, though I am a mayor or a mayor and a President, I cannot insist, especially in view of the fact it was already recorded as a public paper," the President said, referring to Calida.

"So kung ano 'yang sinabi niya doon, then 'yun ang paniwalaan ko. Eh kung hindi ko pinaniniwalaan 'yun si Calida eh di nat...

Itinapon ko na 'yan sa... ewan ko kung saan (So whatever he says, I believe. If I don't believe in Calida then I'd rather dump him...I don't know where," the President added.

Duterte also stressed that the matter of granting pardon and even amnesty is a constitutional mandate of the President.

"It cannot be delegated to anybody else. It's a constitutional mandate. The power, the President has the power to grant pardon and amnesty with the concurrence of Congress," he added.

"You know, as a lawyer, you will ask me, and I will just advance my answer to you. What's your basis? I cannot discuss with you the merits. I do not know if the... it has been filed but or if it is already assigned to a division," he said.

Friends with Gazmin

He said he knew there were questions regarding Trillanes' amnesty but he chose "not to rattle the boat" as he has friends even in the other political camp.

Even in the Armed Forces, Duterte said he has many friends, including former defense chief Voltaire Gazmin who recommended and ap-

proved the granting of amnesty to Trillanes.

"Si Volts ang nagrekomenda tapos siya rin ang nag-apruba...lahat sila may tama dyan (Volts recommended and approved...all of them was at fault)," the President said, referring to Gazmin by his nickname.

Gazmin, Duterte pointed out, could be charged with usurpation of authority.

Duterte said he and Gazmin had been friends for a long time and that they used to drink till the wee hours in the After Dark Piano Bar in Davao City.

"This is the problem - it was Gazmin who was probably one of those who investigated the case - the coup de' etat, the mutiny or rebellion at the very least. Then he recommended for the amnesty of everybody," the President said in a mix of Filipino and English.

Duterte again cited Trillanes' reported failure to comply with the requirements for amnesty.

"The problem is there are requirements. One is that you have to do it in a particular office in the Armed Forces of the Philippines organization," he said.

"And it must be J-1 administrative. J-2 is a... J-3 is intelligence," he added.

"I hope that it would not get to this far. Remember we

never started the ruckus. It was all Trillanes pretending to be a crusading soldier, when as a matter of fact, *wala naman silang ginawa* (he did nothing)," he added.

Gazmin earlier said Trillanes and the others granted amnesty followed required procedures. "As far as I can remember all those who were granted amnesty went through the process," Gazmin said in a text message to reporters.

He said he was getting in touch with the Ad Hoc committee "so that facts can be refreshed as these happened many years ago."

The Department of National Defense Ad Hoc Committee was then chaired by now Col. Josefa Berbigal, of the Armed Forces of the Philippines-Judge Advocate General Office (AFP-JAGO).

It was Berbigal who administered the oath to Trillanes in 2011 when the latter's amnesty application was approved.

She was in a closed door meeting with key defense officials last Thursday. Details of the meeting were not made public.

Coincidental

Meanwhile, Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra dismissed as "purely coincidental" the voiding of the amnesty for Trillanes and the filing of a libel case against him just days later.

Guevarra was downplaying insinuations that the voiding of Trillanes' amnesty through Proclamation No. 572 and the filing of a libel case against him were part of an orchestrated plot to bring down Trillanes.

Duterte's son and former vice mayor Paolo Duterte and son-in-law Manases Carpio filed libel cases on Sept. 6 against the senator, whom they accused of defaming them in a radio interview with allegations that they had extorted from Uber and other groups regulated by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board.

President Duterte's Proclamation 572 was signed last Aug. 31 and was disclosed to the public only last Sept. 2 when he was in Israel.

Carpio is the husband of presidential daughter and Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio.

"The timing of the filing of the libel complaints vs. Senator Trillanes, according to the complainants, had nothing to do with the nullification of the senator's amnesty. The libel complaints were filed on the anniversary date of the utterance of the allegedly derogatory defamatory statements," Guevarra explained.

"The timing was purely coincidental with the amnesty issue," he added.

The justice chief promised not to intervene in the libel cases.

Davao City Assistant Regional Prosecutor Karl Andre Salcedo received the libel cases.

"No, I will not interfere in the conduct of the preliminary investigation. It is not proper," he added.

But just as government prosecutors were examining the libel cases, Labor Undersecretary Jacinto Paras said yesterday he too is planning to sue Trillanes – possibly for inciting to sedition.

Paras said Trillanes' calling on the military not to follow Duterte's order to arrest him was tantamount to inciting to sedition or even rebellion.

In a phone interview, Paras said he and his lawyer-friends are now studying cases that could be lodged against Trillanes over the "shortened statements" he made during media interviews at the Senate after Duterte revoked his amnesty.

The case will likely be filed next week with the Pasay City regional trial court. "We believe we have a strong case against Trillanes because he incited the soldiers to disobey the President. He committed a very serious crime," he noted.

He added Trillanes also insulted Duterte by questioning his capability to lead the country.

Paras also accused Trillanes of plotting a coup against the President. – Evelyn Macairan, Jaime Laude, Sheila Crisostomo

TRILLANES AMNESTY ROW: 'T WAS CALIDA AB INITIO

STORY BY LEILA B. SALA VERRIA, FRINSTON LIM AND JEOFFREY MAITEM

The President admitted that he issued the proclamation ordering the senator's arrest based on the Solicitor General's advice. For Mr. Duterte, ex-defense chief Gazmin usurped authority by recommending and approving the mutineer's pardon. **A4**

Trillanes amnesty row: 'Twas Calida ab initio

FROM A1

By Leila B. Salaverria,
Friston Lim
and Jeoffrey Maitem
@Team_Inquirer

President Duterte on Saturday admitted that he issued Proclamation No. 572 voiding the amnesty granted to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV in 2011 and ordering the former rebel military officer's arrest based on a research conducted by Solicitor General Jose Calida.

In a speech at Davao International Airport upon his arrival from official visits to Israel and Jordan, Mr. Duterte defended his proclamation while raising new arguments against the grant of amnesty to Trillanes.

"The truth is, it was Calida who did the research on Trillanes' case. When the SolGen says there's something wrong, it has to be corrected. I cannot refuse," said the President, who described Calida as "bright and *mainio* (straight)."

"He is the government lawyer. I am not. Even if I'm a mayor or President, I cannot insist, especially if it is already recorded as a public paper. So I have to believe in him," he added.

The spokesperson for the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Col. Edgard Arevalo, had earlier said it was Calida who

initiated the proceedings that led to the revocation of the senator's amnesty.

In his new arguments, the President said Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin usurped the authority of then President Benigno Aquino III by recommending and then approving Trillanes' amnesty.

Trillanes, Mr. Duterte said, also failed to submit an affidavit narrating his wrongdoing in connection with his participation in the 2006 Oakwood mutiny and the 2007 Manila Peninsula hotel siege by rebel soldiers.

According to Mr. Duterte, it is the President who has the power to grant amnesty with the concurrence of Congress.

Usurpation of authority

"The power to pardon and the power to grant amnesty with the concurrence of Congress is a presidential power. It cannot be delegated to anybody else," he said.

The President pointed out that it was Gazmin who recommended that a general amnesty be given to rebel soldiers, including Trillanes, and then approved it.

"So what's the crime of Volts? I will tell you—usurpation of authority," he said. "Imagine, you pardon criminals in the country and you can delegate it to just somebody [else]."

But Department of Nation-

al Defense documents show that it was the Ad Hoc Amnesty Committee that recommended to Gazmin the approval of amnesty applications and informed Aquino about the development.

Mr. Duterte also said Trillanes should have submitted an affidavit to go with the amnesty application.

The Chief Executive's fresh arguments were not mentioned in his proclamation, which said that the senator did not file a proper application and admit guilt for his role in coup attempts against former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

In a decision that eased tension between him and Trillanes on Friday, the President said he would not seek the senator's arrest without a warrant from a civilian court.

Trillanes said Mr. Duterte's statements indicated that he was scrambling to patch the holes in the proclamation.

'Patching holes'

"It just shows that [Mr. Duterte] is not just an evil person, he also has a weak mind," he told reporters at the Senate, where he has been holed up since last Tuesday to avoid arrest.

"Look, they're patching the holes that Calida left," he added.

The mutineer-turned-politician also said the filing of a li-

bel case against him by the President's son, Paolo, and Labor Undersecretary Jacinto Patas' threat to take him to court on a complaint of inciting to sedition showed the weakness of the amnesty revocation.

Mr. Duterte denied that he revoked Trillanes' amnesty to silence him.

Asked if he ordered Calida to do the research on the grant of amnesty to his fiercest critic, the President said the senator had it coming.

Golden rule

"Do not do unto others what you don't want others do unto you," Mr. Duterte said. "Did I target him? I did not. It was Calida who found something wrong in [Trillanes'] documents. I don't have problems with the others [who were granted amnesty]."

Trillanes said he was "shocked" by the President's allegation against Gazmin.

Aquino's former Solicitor General, Florio Hilbay, called the government's shifting tones on the revocation of Trillanes' amnesty as a "dawning realization" that the President may have made a mistake.

"I think it's a dawning realization that they made a mistake with [Proclamation No. 572], Hilbay told reporters when he visited the senator at the Senate on Friday night. —WITH A REPORT FROM JULIE M. AURELIO INQ

**BRP Gregorio del Pilar
now in Subic**

The Philippine Navy flagship BRP Gregorio del Pilar has finally reached safe harbor more than a week after it run aground in the vicinity of Hasa-Hasa Shoal (Half-Moon Shoal) in a disputed part of the West Philippine Sea last Aug. 29. In a statement, the Philippine Navy Public Affairs Office reported that the frigate had arrived at the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority port in Olongapo City on Friday. Inspection was ongoing to determine the extent and cost of repairs needed, though Navy spokesperson, Commander Jonathan Zapata, said the ship was really scheduled to undergo repair and maintenance this year. The last time it was "dry docked" was in 2011. —JAYMIE T. GARCIA

BRP Del Pilar probe commences

With the arrival of the stricken *BRP Gregorio Del Pilar* in Subic, Zambales Friday, a special investigation committee yesterday started determining how the vessel ran aground at Hasa-Hasa Shoal in the West Philippine Sea (WPS).

The former US Coast Guard cutter converted by the Philippine Navy into a frigate arrived at the Subic dock at 11:50 a.m. the other day for repairs.

The committee will determine

the facts surrounding the grounding of *BRP Del Pilar* with key Navy officers, backed by technical experts, leading the probe.

Commodore Toribio Adaci Jr. will serve as chairman of the Special Investigation Committee, whose report and recommendations will be submitted to the Navy Flag Officer in Command.

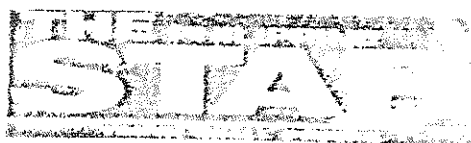
The extent of the damage and the cost of the repairs have yet

to be established.

The vessel was patrolling WPS when it ran aground last 29 August, 60 nautical miles from Itizal, Palawan, sustaining damage on its propellers. No crew was hurt in the incident.

Del Pilar was extricated six days later and was towed by two commercial tugboats to Subic. The dry-docking will be the ship's first since 2015.

KMB



Duterte to talk with Trump on arms purchase

By EDITH REGALADO

DAVAO CITY – President Duterte plans to talk to US President Donald Trump about the possible purchase of military equipment for the military and the police.

The President reportedly still has to discuss with the military and the police what more they need in terms of weapons and armaments before taking the matter up with Trump.

The Palace earlier scoffed at the US threat of possible sanction over the purchase of Russian arms.

The President then rejected the US government's recent offer to give weapons and defense equipment to the military.

The President said that Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Defense Secretary James Mattis and Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross have sent a letter to him offering US weapons and other defense equipment to the Philippines.

The letter from the three US officials even mentioned the F-16 fighter jets and attack helicopters that Duterte preferred.

Duterte, however, did not seem keen on the US offer, saying he found the letter "distasteful" as he brought up anew the criticism of the US government, then under president Barack Obama, of his crackdown on illegal drugs.

Canada had earlier refused to sell helicopters to the Philippines over human rights issues involving the Duterte administration's war on illegal drugs that resulted in the death of thousands of drug pushers and users.

The President said he watched the demonstration at a military training facility in Jordan during his recent visit. Jordanian officials promised to give the Philippines two Cobra attack helicopters and rifles, mortars and rocket-propelled grenades.

Phi-Russia

The Philippines and Russia lauded positive developments in bilateral defense cooperation as Moscow expressed gratitude for the firm position of the Philippine military and political leadership.

Russian Deputy Defense Minister Colonel General Alexander Fomin held talks with Defense Minister Delfin Lorenzana on the sidelines of the 2018 International Military and Technical Forum in Moscow last Aug. 22.

During the meeting, the two sides gave a positive assessment of bilateral cooperation in the military and military-technical fields and outlined steps for their further expansion.

"Colonel General Alexander Fomin thanked the Philippine delegation for participating in ARMY 2018 International Military and Technical Forum and National Security Week, and also expressed gratitude for the firm position of the military-political leadership of the Philippines on the development of military-technical cooperation with Russia," the Russian Ministry of Defense said in a statement.

Ambassador to Russia Carlos Sorreta said the Philippine-Russian defense engagement like exchange of visits, consultations and other confidence-building activities has been on the upswing in the past two years.

"This is a direct result of President Duterte's foreign policy rebalancing which catapulted Philippine-Russian relations to the forefront of Philippine diplomacy," Sorreta said.

In 2017, Philippine and Russian defense establishments signed an Agreement on Defense Cooperation, which now serves as the framework for military-to-military engagement between the two sides.

According to Sorreta, this was a landmark document that paved the way for the establishment of the Office of the Defense and Armed Forces Attaché of the Philippines at the Philippine embassy in Moscow in May this year.

Russia will soon appoint a defense attaché to Manila following the signing of a decree by President Vladimir Putin on the opening of a similar office in Manila.

The Ambassador noted that for the first time in the history of bilateral relations, the Philippine Army competed in this year's International Army Games co-hosted by Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Iran and Kazakhstan from July 28 to Aug. 11.

In 2017, the Russian Navy made three goodwill visits to the Philippines. This will be reciprocated this year with the upcoming port call of the Philippine Navy to Vladivostok in the last week of September.

While in Moscow, Lorenzana also met with Rosoboronexport Director General Alexander Mikheev and checked Russian military hardware, including transport and attack helicopters that were on exhibit at the International Military and Technical Forum in Patriot Park, Kubinka just outside Moscow.

Lorenzana was accompanied by Undersecretary for Finance and Materiel Raymundo Elefante and other high-ranking defense officials.

Russian Ambassador to Manila Igor Khovaev said on Monday Russia has no intention to inflict any damage to the Philippines' close relationship with the United States and its traditional allies and partners.

He said it is possible for the Philippines to have strong security cooperation with Russia while at the same time maintaining its strong alliance with the US and other traditional allies.

Russia believes it is time for the Philippines to "diversify" defense and other forms of cooperation with other countries, without damaging its traditional alliances.

As part of a blossoming "partnership," Russia is proposing, among others, a joint project with the Philippines for the production of assault rifles, including Kalashnikovs, in this country.

The Kalashnikov range of assault rifles includes the AK-47 – Avtomat Kalashnikov or Kalashnikov's Automatic Rifle, arguably the most widely used of its kind in the world. Developed by Mikhail Kalashnikov, the AK-47 was first used by Soviet forces in 1949.

Kalashnikov also produces shotguns, rifles, pistols and ammunition.

The Department of National Defense (DND) is opening its doors for defense contractors to put up their manufacturing plants inside the proposed defense economic and industrial zone in Limay, Bataan.

This was bared Friday by senior defense officials in support of the previous announcement of Lorenzana on the planned putting up of the first economic and industrial zone for defense and security in the country.

— With Pia Lee-Brago, Jaime Laude

Duterte warns of move to oust him by October



DAVAO CITY – President Duterte warned yesterday of a unified effort from three groups that have connived to oust him by October.

"Tatlo yan, bantayan

ninyo. Yang (There are three, watch out for the) Yellow, Liberal (party), (Sen. Antonio) Trillanes, *pati ang* (even the) politburo (communists)," the President said upon arrival yesterday at the Davao In-

ternational Airport from his trips to Israel and Jordan.

Duterte said he is aware of the plan of the three groups who have connived to oust him from power.

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Duterte

From Page 1

"I have my sources from other countries that provide me with the information," the President further said.

Duterte said he has sources of information regarding the movements of the three groups toward the same purpose.

However, the President did not provide details of the plan of the three groups.

Duterte said the prevailing issues that have been hurled against his administration, including the reported rice shortage, the increase in inflation rate as well as other matters, were all part of the grand effort to remove him from office.

The President likewise accused Trillanes of having conspired with the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) in the senator's desire to remove him from office.

"Ang problema dito kay (the problem with) Trillanes is he is also playing with the Communist Party of the Philippines, *basta makuha lang niya gusto niya* (just to get what he wants)," the President said.

But Duterte was quick to point out he is ready for any eventuality and that he is ready to step

down from office when the time comes.

The President also explained that the military and the police do not have to kill each other should they want to grab power from him.

"I cannot allow my soldiers to kill each other just for them to oust me. They can even just have coffee with me and then I will transfer power to you without any trouble," the President said.

Duterte also disclosed that he plans to meet with the military top brass to discuss the latest intelligence reports in his hands on this supposed October plot.

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Oscar Albayalde said there is no need for a loyalty check in the police force, saying that they have not monitored anyone from their ranks who are sympathetic to Trillanes.

He said the PNP remains loyal to the Filipino people and will always adhere to the provisions of the 1987 Constitution.

Trillanes claimed that some military officers informed him of their sentiments and expressed support after President Duterte revoked his amnesty for leading two failed mutinies during the

term of former president and now Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

According to Albayalde, nobody from their ranks are dismayed or disgruntled at the government because of Trillanes' current situation.

"We really do not know where he got that information but as far as the PNP is concerned, it's zero," he said.

Albayalde also downplayed the presence of police officers from the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) at the Senate where Trillanes has been holed up since Duterte's proclamation revoking his amnesty became public on Monday.

He said the presence of the policemen at the Senate is just to maintain peace and order.

"A group might take advantage of the situation. That is the reason why we have a presence in the Senate," said Albayalde.

He said they will not make any move unless an arrest warrant against Trillanes is issued by the Makati City regional trial court.

"We will wait for the decision of the court," said Albayalde.

— Edith Regalado, Emmanuel Tupas

AMID OUSTER TALK, RODY REMINDS TROOPS OF LOYALTY TO FLAG

President Duterte reminded the military and police on Saturday that he expected them to be loyal to the country's flag and not to him.

Mr. Duterte merely shrugged off the claim of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV that a "very significant" number of military officers were concerned about the revocation of his amnesty, and that the people's voice of outrage could prompt the armed forces to take action.

"You don't have to be loyal to me, just be loyal to the Philippine flag," the President said in a press briefing after arriving from his official visits to Israel and Jordan.

He does not even want to conduct a loyalty check on the military and police, he said.

"Right at the beginning of my term as President, I fully stressed to the men in uniform that they should not nurture (loyalty to me) or anybody in the government. They should focus their loyalty to the flag," Mr. Duterte added.

Trillanes on Friday said he

was confident that the military was united and he never doubted its loyalty to the Constitution.

But he claimed that many military officers had expressed concern over the turmoil created by the President's Proclamation No. 572, which voided the senator's amnesty and ordered his arrest and court martial.

Staying professional

"They are hoping that they won't be used in this political exercise of Mr. Duterte. They want to remain professional," the former mutineer said.

Mr. Duterte slammed Trillanes for "pretending" to care for the military when, he said, the senator had actually done nothing to improve their conditions ever since he became a lawmaker.

Trillanes was among the leaders of the mutinies in 2006 and 2007 that demanded, among others, an end to alleged corruption in the administration of President Gloria Maca-

A6

DU30 REMINDS TROOPS TO BE LOYAL TO FLAG

FROM A4

pagal-Arroyo, an ally of Mr. Duterte and now Speaker of the House of Representatives.

"It was all Trillanes, pretending to be a crusading soldier when, as a matter of fact, he has not done anything. Did the soldiers' pay increase by at least 5 percent?" the President said.

"He did not only abandon the vision of the military, he became corrupt, like collecting from businessmen," he added.

The President warned that Trillanes had joined forces with communist leaders and the "yellows," apparently referring to the opposition Liberal Party, in a plot to remove him from office.

Addressing the military, he said he had received an intelligence report detailing the plot from "sources from a foreign power."

Playing with Reds

"It's Trillanes, the yellows and the [Communist Party of the Philippines] politburo. The problem with Trillanes, he is also playing with the communists," the President said.

"So, you soldiers, before you jump into conclusion, let me show you the intelligence report. Trillanes is colluding with the enemy. They are praying for my ouster, these three," he added.

The senator denied Mr. Duterte's allegations, saying he was instrumental in the passage of laws that benefited the members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

"If I can only make a list, we'll probably have to stay here the whole day ... The soldiers know that," said Trillanes, who effectively left the military in 2007 after he ran for a Senate seat and won.

If anybody collaborated with the communists, it was Mr. Duterte, said Trillanes.

—HUNTON LIM, GEOFFREY MAITEM,
LEILA B. SALAVERRIA, CATHERINE
GONZALES, DELFIN Y. MALLARI JR.
AND FAYE GRELLANA INQ



Rody: No need for loyalty check

By EDITH REGALADO

DAVAO CITY – President Duterte yesterday assured the people that there is no need to conduct a loyalty check among the military and police forces amid the standoff with Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, who is now holed up at the Senate after his amnesty was revoked through Proclamation 527.

Trillanes has hinted that a coup d'état could possibly take place against the President.

Duterte said he does not need loyalties and that he has been frank with all the military and police officers about it.

The President said the military and the police should focus their loyalty on the flag of the Philippines and the Constitution and not to him as

Chief Executive of the country.

"Look, right at the beginning of my term as President, I've had several discussions and in between the months that followed, I've always stressed to the uniformed people of our government that they should not nurture in me or in anybody else in my Cabinet and government loyalties," the President said upon arrival here yesterday.

day from official visits to Israel and Jordan.

Duterte likewise said that he has been duly elected by the people and that he intends to serve.

"I was elected as President and I intend to serve. But if somehow there is anything that is really demanded of the moment, then there is no problem," he said, adding that he is ready to step down anytime.

The President said there are many ways to oust him from office.

"So there are many ways – impeachment, mutiny, coup d'état, lahat 'yan. Well, ako mag-trabaho lang. Kung ayaw ng Pilipino eh 'di talagang bababa ako. Walang problema 'yan (I only do my duty, if the people don't want me anymore, I will step down, no problem)," he added.

Duterte said he will never allow the military and even the police to shoot each other.

"Hindi ko ipapasubo 'tong mga 'to na magpatayan. Kasi Armed Forces pati police, magkaharap 'yan, hindi naman ako (I won't let them kill each other). So why would I sacrifice the lives of people, my own countrymen to do that? We can go somewhere else," he said. }C

Comelec sets filing of COCs on Oct. 1 to 5

By SHEILA CRISOSTOMO

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) has set the filing of certificates of candidacy (COCs)

for the May 13 midterm elections next year from Oct. 1 to 5.

Comelec's Resolution No. 10420 outlines the rules and regulations on the filing of COCs

for senators; House of Representatives members; city and municipal mayors, vice mayors and council members; provincial governors, vice governors and

board members; and Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao governor, vice governor and members of the regional

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legislative assembly.
The Comelec also set the same deadline for the filing of Cer-

tificate of Nomination and Certificate of Acceptance of Nomination of party-list groups at the

agency's law department.

According to the Comelec, those who are holding appointive positions, including members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and other officers and employees in gov-

ernment-owned and controlled corporations, shall be considered resigned from office when they file their COCs.

"But any person holding an elective office or position shall not be considered resigned from

office upon the filing of a COC whether for the same or any other elective office or position," the resolution, promulgated Sept. 8, said.

The Comelec noted that those who will be nominated by party-list organizations are also considered automatically resigned if they are holding appointive positions.

As this developed, civil society group Democracy Watch is appealing for greater transparency in next year's midterm polls, saying it is the key to credible elections.

In a statement, Democracy Watch secretary general Claudette Guevarra said with the great strides brought about by the switch to automated polls starting in 2010, the country could ill afford to go back to its old ways.

"Transparency is a key principle in ensuring credible elections as it helps establish trust and confidence in the process by guaranteeing that the results

reflect the true will of the people," he pointed out.

The group said it finds comfort in President Duterte's assurance of "clean and orderly" polls, amid rumors of a "no-election" scenario in 2019.

It added the 2016 election was "widely believed to be the most credible in recent memory," underpinning the gains achieved with electoral reforms.

"In May 2016, the world saw more than 44 million Filipinos troop to their respective polling precincts and made their voices heard through a process that has long been a cornerstone of our democracy," she added.

Guevarra also said there is a need to improve the polls by investing in the "retooling and building of an adequate IT infrastructure and developing the human resources for the Commission on Elections."

She added "such investments are also investments in our political stability."

Palparan faces sentencing for 2006 kidnapping

By JAIME LAUDE

Detained former Army major general Jovito Palparan Jr. would finally be judged before the Malolos regional trial court (RTC) in Bulacan during his promulgation on Monday for the kidnapping and serious illegal detention charges filed against the controversial military officer in connection with the disappearance of two University of the Philippines (UP) students in 2006.

In a notice sent by the Malolos RTC to the Army, the court ordered

the military to present the accused Palparan, Lt. Col. Felipe Anotado, Jr. and Staff Sgt. Edgardo Osorio before the court on Monday.

Papalaran is currently detained at the Army Custodial Center in Fort Bonifacio in Taguig for his alleged role in the abduction and illegal detention of UP students Karen Empeno and Sherlyn Cadapan.

Unidentified armed men wearing bonnets seized Cadapan and Empeno in a house in Barangay San Miguel, Hagonoy, Bulacan on

June 26, 2006.

At the time of their abduction, Cadapan, a triathlete, was a senior sports science student while Empeno was taking up sociology in UP Diliman. The bodies of the two have yet to be found.

Palparan was then the commander of the 7th Infantry Division and leftist groups tagged him as the brains behind the abduction and disappearance of the two students who were suspected as members of the communist New People's Army (NPA).

When the case was filed against him and the court issued a warrant for his arrest, Palparan went into hiding and was arrested in Sta. Mesa, Manila in 2014.

At the time when he went into hiding Palparan had already retired from the service after reaching the mandatory retirement age of 56 four months after the disappearance of Empeno and Cadapan.

Following his arrest, Palparan was initially detained at the Bulacan provincial jail but due to mounting security concerns, the court granted

the request of his counsel that he be detained at the Army Custodial Center at Fort Bonifacio.

Palparan continues to maintain his innocence over Empeno's and Cadapan's disappearance, saying he has no knowledge whatsoever of the kidnapping and illegal detention cases filed against him.

Leftist groups tagged Palparan as the culprit while his colleagues within the military looked up to him with high esteem for being, as they described him, a no-nonsense and a dedicated officer. 8

Trillanes: No arrest order another lie

By MARVIN SY

Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV yesterday said he has no intention to leave the Senate at this time in spite of assurances from Malacañang that he will not be arrested.

Trillanes said he does not trust the pronouncements coming from Malacañang, which President Duterte himself reiterated yesterday during a press briefing upon his arrival from Jordan.

"Through our contacts from the Armed Forces, there is still a standing

order to arrest me so that's another lie. So unless and until that order is relayed to the operating units, that has no bearing," he said.

Trillanes, who has been staying at his office at the Senate since Tuesday, said it would be easy for the military

and police waiting for him to step out of the Senate to arrest him.

He said the President was only joking when he said he would not be arrested.

Trillanes has refused to recognize
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the legality and validity of Proclamation 572 issued by Duterte revoking the amnesty granted to him by the previous administration and ordering his arrest.

Trillanes maintained the arrest order was not valid. He said he would only surrender if the court issues a warrant for his arrest.

In deciding to remain within the protective custody of the Senate, Trillanes said that by surrendering now, his efforts to question the validity of Proclamation 572 would be adversely affected.

Trillanes said he would also be deprived of the ability to continue speaking out against the President and his dictatorial ways.

Vice President Leni Robredo welcomed Duterte's order to the Armed Forces of the Philippines not to arrest Trillanes without a warrant.

"For me it's the right thing to do instead of insisting on a warrantless search, warrantless arrest, which is baseless," Robredo said.

"We thank them for saying that they will adhere to the rule of law," said Robredo, a lawyer by profession.

At his press briefing yesterday, the President said the amnesty granted to Trillanes was fatally flawed because it was approved by former defense secretary Voltaire Gazmin, whom he accused of usurpation of authority.

Trillanes said he was "shocked" by the statement of the President, who he said did not understand the process for granting amnesty and the law even though he is a lawyer.

He said then president Benigno Aquino III, who granted the amnesty by issuing Proclamation 75, and Gazmin's action to process the amnesty

applications filed by him and his fellow Magdalo group members was all part of the normal procedure under the law.

Edwin Lacierda, who served as spokesman for Aquino, maintained politics was behind the revocation of the amnesty granted to Trillanes.

"Of all the number of Magdalo officials, officers and men, rank and file, who filed for the application, how is it that it's only Trillanes that you're going after?" Lacierda said in an interview with "The Chiefs" on *One News*.

He noted Trillanes is one of the most vocal critics of the administration.

"You cannot say that there's no politics here," Lacierda said.

Trillanes reiterated that he complied with all of the requirements for the grant of amnesty, which includes completing the application form, admitting guilt to the crimes he committed and go-

ing through the process set by the DND.

He pointed out the application form was sufficiently completed, processed and upon seeing that this was sufficient, was recommended by the DND ad hoc committee headed by Gazmin to approve his amnesty application.

"You can see here that they are covering up for all the loopholes (in the proclamation) that (Solicitor General Jose) Calida came up with," Trillanes said.

In using the certification of Lt. Col. Thea Joan Andrade that there was no available copy of Trillanes' application for amnesty on record a day before Proclamation 572 was issued, the opposition senator said it showed just how "hastily and sloppily this was done by these people."

"Did that Lt. Col. have any authority to sign it? Was (Defense) Secretary (Delfin) Lorenzana aware of this? Was the (Armed Forces) Chief

of Staff aware of this? They went directly (to Andrade). Somebody violated the chain of command by doing this," Trillanes pointed out.

"It appears that he (Duterte) is not only an evil person, but also stupid," he added.

The President also said that it was his prerogative to nullify the amnesty of Trillanes, which the senator said was unconstitutional.

"That is not in the Constitution. The Constitution only provides for the grant (of amnesty). This guy is amazingly stupid. Sorry for the word, but it is really coming out and he can't hide it," Trillanes said.

"Do your worst, Mr. Duterte. At least with what he is doing now, we can see there are no more pretensions. My claims in the past two years are being validated. His true nature is coming out and he just wants to turn us into a dictatorship," he

added.

Battle on all fronts

While Trillanes is fighting his legal battle against Proclamation 572, the family and allies of the President have also stepped up by pursuing other cases against him.

These include another libel case filed by Duterte's son Paolo and the plan of Labor Undersecretary Jacinto Paras to file charges of inciting to sedition or inciting to coup d'etat.

Trillanes said he is not bothered by these cases against him because he was used to this already.

He recalled how, during the presidency of now Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, he faced around 12 cases filed against him.

"I'm not bothered at all. You do your worst, I will not be cowed. Sorry, but that's just how it is," Trillanes said.

— Helen Flores, Jose Rodol Clapano

Courts can proceed with Trillanes cases sans SC ruling

— Guevarra

By JEFFREY G. DAMICOG

The Makati City Regional Trial Court (RTC) need not wait for the Supreme Court (SC) to act on the petition of Senator Antonio Trillanes IV, said Justice secretary Menardo Guevarra.

The secretary said the Makati RTC can proceed with acting on the criminal cases against

the beleaguered senator over his involvement in the 2001 Oakwood mutiny and the 2007 Manila Peninsula siege. "Unless restrained by the SC, the trial courts may proceed," said Guevarra yesterday.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) has already filed separate motions before Makati RTC Branches 118 and 120 asking that arrest

warrants and hold departure orders (HDO) be issued against Trillanes.

The DOJ filed the motions after President Rodrigo Duterte issued Proclamation No. 572 which declared as "void ab initio" or void from the start the amnesty granted to Trillanes for failing to comply with the requirements.

Duterte's take

In Davao City, the President emphasized that he would not have signed Proclamation No. 572 if he did not know that Trillanes' amnesty was, in the first place, faulty.

Duterte made the statement during his arrival speech yesterday morning, following his visits to Israel and Jordan.

"Pag sinabi ng SolGen may mali (if the SolGen said that something is wrong) and this has to be corrected, I cannot refuse. He is the government lawyer," he said of Solicitor General Jose Calida who started digging up information about Trillanes' amnesty, just like what he did with the case of former Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno.

"I cannot insist, talo na in view of the fact that it was already recorded as a public paper. So kung ano sinabi niya doon, yun ang paniwalaan ko (So I believe whatever he said there)," he said, adding that he had long known from military sources that Trillanes' amnesty was faulty.

'Rape of justice'

A "rape of justice." That is how opposition Sen. Leila M. de Lima, another tough critic of the President, described Duterte's

revocation of the amnesty granted by the Aquino administration on Trillanes.

De Lima, incarcerated on drugs charges in Camp Crame, said the revocation was an illegal act meant only to target Trillanes for his criticism of the President.

"No army of lawyers large enough, and stupid enough, can defend it. No amount of legal verbosity and pedantry can justify it. It is nothing less than an assault on the law and the rape of justice," De Lima said in her Dispatch from Crame No. 374.

No mass at Senate

Senate President Vicente "Tito" Sotto III expressed disappointment over the Senate minority bloc's decision to invite supporters to come into the Senate premises during the weekend.

Sotto said he hopes that the minority bloc would understand that the Senate is closed on weekends and only a limited number of persons are allowed to come inside due to security reasons.

Trillanes has been holed up inside the Senate since the revocation of his amnesty.

"I was expecting them to help me preserve the integrity and the sanctity of the institution and not abuse the hospitality of the Senate leadership," Sotto said in a text message to reporters.

He also said he would not allow Trillanes' supporters to hold a mass this weekend at the Senate.

"(There's) no need. There is a church nearby. Senate is closed on weekends. Only staff of senators are allowed," he said. **6**

DUTERTE: CALIDA BEHIND TRILLANES, SERENO CASES

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte on Saturday revealed that it was Solicitor General Jose Calida who did the spadework that led to the revocation of an amnesty granted to opposition Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th and the ouster of then-Chief Justice Maria

Lourdes Sereno.

Speaking to reporters upon his arrival in Davao City from his visits to Israel and Jordan, Duterte said Calida initiated the review of the amnesty granted to the embattled senator, just like what the gov-

ernment lawyer did to Sereno, whom the President called his "enemy."

"Ang totoo niyan, ang nag-research si Calida; just like kay Sereno. Si Calida, medyo bright na matino (It was Calida who did all the research, just like what he

did to Sereno. You know, Calida is kind of bright and upright)," he said during a news conference.

"Pagsinabi ng SolGen may mali (If the Solicitor General said something is wrong)

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DUTERTE

and this has to be corrected, I cannot refuse. He is the government lawyer," the President added.

In a presidential proclamation, Duterte revoked the amnesty to Trillanes, who was involved in a failed coup 15 years ago, and ordered the lawmaker's arrest.

The news broke out just before a Senate panel headed by Trillanes started its probe of possible conflict of interest in the awarding of government contracts to the security agency owned by Calida and his family.

Duterte said he already knew that Trillanes' amnesty was faulty even before Calida started digging up, adding that he got the information from the military.

"Ito noon pa pero alam ko (I've known this for quite some time). I just don't want to rattle the boat. Magkaibigan kaming lahat, eh (We are all friends here)," he added.

"Nalaman ko 'yun kasi malapit din naman ako sa military. Hindi lang sila (I learned of that information because I'm also close to the military like them)," the President said.

But Duterte denied that he was targeting Trillanes, as he explained why the latter was the only one named in the proclamation when the amnesty was granted to a group.

"Magsabi si Trillanes, 'Bakit ako lang? Karami-raming pumasok diyan sa coup d'etat na 'yan.' Sagot ko sa kanya (Trillanes is asking why is it only him when there were many of them who participated in the coup. My answer to him) is, it's the President's prerogative," he said.

The President then cited the golden rule, with some coaching from his officials to get all the words right. "Do not do unto oth-

ers what you do not want others to do unto you."

"Bakit tinarget ko siya? (Why did I target him?) Well, I only have one word: Do not do unto others, what you don't want them to do unto you," Duterte said.

"May nakita si Calida na mali. Wala man akong problema sa ibang nag-coup d'etat kaibigan ko man 'yan. So sabi ko, bakit ko sila ipakulong (Calida found that something was wrong. I have no problems with the others because they are my friends. So why should I send them to prison?)" he added.

Duterte said he would allow the courts to decide on whether his proclamation was unconstitutional.

He added that he would no longer pursue a court-martial against Trillanes as no one would believe it.

Citing "privileged communication," Calida has been silent on whether his office had a hand in the Palace's review of the amnesty granted to Trillanes.

The military earlier confirmed that the government's chief legal counsel started the review of the amnesty.

Duterte alleged that former Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin usurped his authority when he recommended to grant Trillanes amnesty and then signing it himself.

"The power to pardon and the power to grant amnesty with the concurrence of Congress is a presidential power. It cannot be delegated to anybody else," he said.

"You know he (Gazmin) recommended that a general amnesty be given and then after his recommendation, he approved it. *Siya mismo (It was him),*" he added. "So what's the crime of Volt (Gazmin's nickname)? Usurpation of authority. *Lahat sila 'yan may tama diyan (All of them will be affected)."*

CATHERINE S. VALENTE

Golden rule nags Trillanes

Calida made research on edict

Be wary of the three of them. The yellow liberals, Trillanes and the politburo.

By Eimer N. Manuel

"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" was the lesson President Rodrigo Duterte wanted his fierce critic Sen.

Antonio Trillanes IV to learn amid his multiple legal ordeals as a result of the voiding of his amnesty through Proclamation 572.

Mr. Duterte, who arrived

yesterday from his trips to Israel and Jordan, said the proclamation he issued invalidated only Trillanes' privilege since "it is a presidential prerogative" to choose who gets an amnesty.

"It's the President's prerogative. You read the Philippine Constitution. The President shall have the power to pardon and grant amnesty with the concurrence, with the

agreement of Congress," Duterte told reporters at a briefing at the Davao International Airport.

"Well I have only this to say: We both work with government.

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I will just quote, correct me if I'm wrong: 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,'" he said.

The President also confirmed Solicitor General Jose Calida made the research that formed the basis for the proclamation.

"Calida saw something wrong. I did not have any problems with other soldiers who were part of the *coups d'etat*, all of them are my friends. So why should I send them to jail?" he added.

How can I refuse?

"The truth about it is, Calida did his research, just like in the case of Sereno," Duterte said, referring to Ma. Lourdes Sereno who was ousted from the Supreme Court (SC) through a *quo warranto* petition filed by Calida.

"If the SolGen says there is something wrong and this has to be corrected, then I cannot refuse," he added. "How can I refuse? He is the government lawyer...I have to enforce the law."

Duterte also reiterated his stance that he would abide by the decision of the SC on Trillanes' case.

Where Trillanes came from

"If the Supreme Court says my proclamation is invalid, let it fall," Duterte said. "Let the court decide on it whether he [Trillanes] should go back to jail because that is where he came from."

Pressed by the media if there is already a need for loyalty check in the military after Trillanes' claims that the government is losing the loyalty of the military and the police, Duterte stressed that he does not need the loyalty of the uniformed personnel.

"I don't need loyalty," Duterte said. "I have made this clear from the beginning, the military should not nurture—for me or for anyone in my Cabinet, any loyalty...I said you should focus your loyalty on the flag of the Philippines and the Constitution."

The President also reiterated that he is willing to resign if the people do not like him anymore as their President.

If the Supreme Court says my proclamation is invalid, let it fall.

"I was elected as President and I intend to serve, but if somehow there is really anything demanded at the moment, then there is no problem...don't bring the armor or anything, just tell me. We can have coffee... impeachment, mutiny, *coup d'etat*, well, for me, I will just do my job. If I am not wanted by Filipinos, then I will step down."

He also accused Trillanes of being in cahoots with the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) to oust him from power.

"Be wary of the three of them. The yellow liberals, Trillanes and the politburo [communist party]," Duterte said.

"They are part of the oust-Duterte,"

(movement). Watch out for them. They are all connected," he added.

Pretender

The President reserved his most stinging attacks on Trillanes, saying the former rebel soldier was "pretending to be a crusading soldier who did nothing."

"It was all Trillanes, pretending to be a crusading soldier when as a matter of fact, did nothing," Duterte said. "He not only abandoned the vision of the military, he became a corrupt guy, collecting from businessmen."

"He was like a lawyer. We know that because you know businessmen, no matter how you try to hide, they will tell," he added.

The President also said Trillanes made the military believe he was concerned about soldiers' welfare but did nothing for them.

Trillanes is pretending to be a crusading soldier who did nothing.

"Trillanes, he was a soldier. He made soldiers believe that he was all for the military. And he never gave a hoot," Duterte said.

"Me, I just said it once during the campaign. 'I will double your salary.' Period. At the right time, I gave that. He was in the military. He was close to former President Benigno Aquino III. Voltz (former Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin) was there," he added.

New raps loom

Trillanes may also soon be facing a new predicament courtesy of Labor Undersecretary Jacinto Paras with whom the senator had verbal clashes.

Paras said he is set to file a case of inciting to sedition or inciting to *coup d'etat* against Trillanes.

The labor undersecretary said the fresh charges he plans to file stemmed from Trillanes' alleged efforts to prod soldiers to mount a mutiny against the President and for supposedly calling the Chief Executive "insane."

"As a Filipino, even if I am in government, I am taking a stand against a person who is mocking the government. He is mocking the President," Paras said on radio.

Paras earlier had filed charges of grave threats against Trillanes over statements the senator allegedly made against him at the sidelines of a Senate inquiry in June.

In a six-page complaint before the Pasay City Prosecutor's Office, Paras said Trillanes told him "*yayariin kita*" (I'll go after you) at the sidelines of a Senate hearing last week which they both attended.

"Trillanes suddenly approached me, raised his hand and pointed a finger at me. He said, 'I'll go after you. You have the gall. Your President will end and I'll go after you,'" Paras said.

Paras then replied: "Mr. Senator, it is my right to file a case in the same way that you filed a case versus the President."

Trillanes walang nagawa sa mga sundalo

Ipinahiwatig kahapon ni Pangulong Duterte na mas may nagawa siya para sa mga sundalo kaysa kay Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV.

Sa kanyang talumpati sa Davao City, kinuwestiyon ng Pangulo kung tumaaas ba ang sahod ng mga sundalo noong naging senador si Trillanes gayong malapit umano ito kay dating Pangulong Benigno Aquino III.

Ipinagmalaki ng Pangulo na isang beses lamang umano niyang sinabi na dodoblehin niya ang sahod ng mga sundalo at nagawa niya ito.

Ayon pa kay Duterte, pinaniniwala lamang umano ni Trillanes ang tala na para siya sa kapakanan ng militar.

Inakusahan din ng Pangulo si Trillanes na isa umano ng corrupt na kumalapat sa mga negosyante.

"He (Trillanes) became a corrupt guy, collecting diyari sa mga negosyante," pahayag ni Duterte.

Samantala, sinabi rin ng Pangulo na hindi niya kailangang magsagawa ng loyalty check sa militar.

Matagal na umano niyang sinabi sa militar na dapat ay sa bandila lamang ng Filipinas at sa Konstitusyon ibibigay ang

kanilang katapatan.

Pinasinungalingan naman ni Trillanes ang paratang ni Duterte na wala siyang nagawa sa mga sundalo.

Alam umano ng mga kasundalohan ang mga pasilidad na kanyang mga nalipagawa at nasa ilang din niya ang Armed Forces of the Philippines Modernization Act (Malou-Encomienda).

Trillanes walang nagawa sa sundalo- DU30

Sinabi kagapon ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na wala umanong nagawa si Senator Antonio Trillanes IV para sa kapakanan ng mga sundalo, imbes ay siya ang maraming nagawa at naitulong sa militar.

Sa kanyang talumpati sa Davao City, kinuwestiyon ng Pangulo kung tumas ba ang sahod ng mga sundalo

naonong naging senador si Trillanes gayong malapit umano ito kay dating Pangulong Benigno Aquino III.

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katangang magsagawa ng loyalty check sa militar.

Matagal na niya umanong sinabi sa milis na sa banda lamang ng Pilipinas at sa Konstitusyon ibibigay ang kumulang katapatan.

Pinasimungalingan naman ni Trillanes ang paratang ni Duterte na wala siyang nagawa sa mga sundalo.

Aniya, alam umano ng kasundaluhan ang mga pasilidad na kanyang mga naipagawa at naisulong din niya ang Armed Forces of the Philippines Modernization Act. - *Malou Escudero*

PEOPLE POWER ULI?

Trillanes: You can feel it when the time is right

Taumbayan lang ang makapagpapasya kung maghulunsad muli ng panibagong People Power laban sa administrasyon ni Pangulong Duterte, ayon kay Senator Antonio Trillanes IV.

"These things are out of my hands, desisyon ng taumbayan kung hanggang saan na lang 'yung kanilang pasensiyas," bunga ni Trillanes nang kapanayamin ng mga mamamahayag kahanon.

Aniya, nakatanggap na siya ng mga mensahe mula sa kanyang mga tagasuporta dito sa bansa at sa abroad na nagpahayag ng pag-alala sa pagkakasangkot ng senador sa kontrobersiyang kasunod ng pagbawing Pangulo sa amnestiya ni Trillanes na ipinagkaloob ni Pangulong Benigno Aquino III, noong 2011.

"Our countrymen have been expressing not only [from] here, but also overseas and they are all concerned of what is happening in our country," anang senador.

Nabababala rin, aniya, ang mga concerned citizens sa madugang gyera ng administrasyon laban sa droga at sa lalakim na kaniwala sa pambalalan.

Dukod dito, disamayado rin, aniya, ang mga tanong at sa kaniyang kasig sa bigas sa bansa at sa tahy-tuloy na laro-presyo ng mga bilhin na epekto ng Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law.

Ibinunyag din ni Trillanes na naghihintay din siya ng "very significant" sa mga tauhan ng Armed Forces of Philippines (AFP) na nakaantabay umano na magsalita ang taumbayan laban sa pamahalaan.

"Hinahintay ang mga kababayan natin. Pag punung-punong 'yung mga kababayan natin at magsalita na sila, we will never know. Hindi naman automatic 'yun na garoon ang mangyayari, but history will tell us garoon ang nangyari. It's palpable, you can feel it when the time is right," aniya, tinukoy ang umang dalawang People Power movement.

Daydag pa ng senador, nagtutulunan din ang ilang aktibong miyembro ng AFP sa pagpapawalang-bisa ng Pangulo sa amnestiya, at nanatili ang hindi siya magsalita ng laud din sa court martial dalalabihan na siya bago pa mamahayag ang amnestiya.

Vanne Elaine P. Terrazola

MILITARY TOLD: BE LOYAL TO THE FLAG

By Vito Barcelo

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte on Saturday said the military and police should not nurture loyalties to him or any of his Cabinet members but to remain loyal to the flag, saying he is willing to discuss with them (military and police) if they wanted him out as President of the Republic.

Duterte made the pronouncement after Senator Antonio Trillanes IV claimed some members of the military were "extremely bothered" with the presidential proclamation that voided his 2011 amnesty.

"I said, 'You should focus your loyalty to the flag of the Philippines and the Constitution.' I told them, frankly, I said 'I do not need loyalties,'" Duterte said in a speech on his arrival in Iloilo City from a six-day state visit to Israel and Jordan.

He said he was elected as President and intended to serve the people, adding "But if somehow, there is anything that is really demanded of the moment, then there is no problem."

"Do not bring me an armor or any thing. Just tell me. We can have coffee, I'll invite you and I will listen. If anybody who is interested, I will administer the oath. Now, what followed or what will follow, rather, that's not my problem," he said.

Duterte said there were many ways to oust a president, which included impeachment, mutiny, and coup d'état.

"Well, I just want to work. If the Filipinos do not like me, then I will step down. No problem," he said.

Trillanes, the most vocal critic of the Duterte administration, said he received messages from some military personnel he did not identify who conveyed their "conflicted" thoughts on the issue of voiding his amnesty.

"They are bothered. They are extremely bothered by this political move of their commander-in-chief that they are being subjected to this uncertainty," the senator said.

The President said he was not afraid of any coup to oust him, but will step down if the people wanted him out.

He said: "I don't want them to shout each other. The military shouting police. So why would I let them do the...? Well, my own countrymen to do the...? We can go somewhere else."

TWIN TRIPS REAP \$143M; ALLIANCES RENEWED — RODY

By Vito Barcelo and Maricel V. Cruz

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte's trip to Israel and Jordan reaped more than \$143 million in investments expected to generate thousands of jobs, Malacañang said after the President arrived in Davao City Saturday.

The President, who arrived a day earlier than his official scheduled arrival, said the renewed friendship with Israel and Jordan was very significant to the country's development, particularly for the improved welfare of thousands of Filipino workers in the two Middle East countries.

"In Israel, I met Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu who we identified ways and means of broadening cooperation to combat terrorism and transnational crimes, enhance security and defense, intensify two-way trade and investment and improve people-to-people exchanges," Duterte said in his arrival speech Davao City.

"With President Reuven Rivlin, I discussed the need to improve technical cooperation, particularly in capacity and capability building," he said.

In Jordan, Duterte met King Abdullah II where the two leaders identified the areas for concrete collaboration to address terrorism and extreme violence.

"Together with His Majesty's Cabinet, we discussed ways to expand cooperation in two-way trade and investment, human resource development, interfaith dialogue and tour-

ism, and other areas of governance," Duterte said.

Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said the multi-million investments was the result of business meetings between the Filipino and Israeli businessmen.

"They have also met about defense and security cooperation and of course, we now recognize Israel as major partner in the Armed Forces of the Philippines modernization program," the Palace spokesperson said.

In a related development:

• A Palace ally lauded Duterte for engaging Israel and Jordan in the quest for peace and unity.

CamSur Rep. Luis Raymund Villafuerte said Duterte also put on the spotlight anew the crucial role of overseas Filipino workers in his government's inclusive growth and development policy.

"After successfully recalibrating Philippine foreign policy in training its focus on our Asean [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] neighbors and our major trading partners in Asia, the President has pushed the envelope once more by mooring his latest overseas stint to the message of global peace and unity," said Villafuerte, who was part of the

President's delegation to his visits in Jordan and Israel.

According to Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez, a total \$82.9 million worth of private business agreements and letters of intent were signed during the four-day official visit.

Israel and the Philippines also signed three agreements, namely, a Memorandum of Agreement on the temporary employment of home-based Filipino caregivers; Memorandum of Understanding on scientific cooperation; and Memorandum of Intent on the collaboration on promotion on bilateral direct investment.

In Jordan, over \$60 million in investment pledges were also secured by the Philippines.

Duterte and King Abdullah II witnessed the signing of five agreements covering labor, defense and investment, among others.

The agreements were memoranda of understanding on political consultations, defense cooperation, labor cooperation, investment, and a memorandum of agreement between the Jordan Maritime Commission and the Maritime Industry Authority of the Philippines concerning the recognition of certificates under the Terms of the 1978 STCW (Standards of Training Certification and Watch-keeping for Seafarers) Convention.

Jordan also donated two Bell Cobra attack helicopters to the Philippines.

In Malacañang, Roque said the Philippines was now one of the most important markets for arms made in Israel.

The Chief Executive has been consistently saying that apart from enhancing the Philippines' bilateral relations with its foreign counterparts, his main priority will always be the Filipino people, and this was also evident in his official visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

During the President's meeting with King Abdullah II, he mentioned that one of his principal interests was the situation of the Filipinos in Jordan.

"Although most are in a good position, there are some who are still in the predicament of not having proper documents," the President observed.

In Israel, the signing of the agreement on the employment of Filipino caregivers will help address the issue of exorbitant placement fees that cost our OFWs anywhere from \$8,000 to \$12,000.

By any measure, this agreement shows the commitment of both governments to uphold the interests of Filipino workers, he said.

In Jordan, two labor agreements will enhance the standards of protection for Filipinos employed as household service workers and regulate labor deployment, exchanges, and communication and further studies on labor.

"As I have repeatedly said, your Government will continue to do its part to ensure that the rights of our nationals working abroad are protected, enhanced and upheld," Duterte said.

"We also concluded a number of government to government and business to business sector agreements," he added. A2



Mideast trip shows Rody's policy works

Deals on labor, foreign affairs and trade were signed even as Jordan also promised to donate two attack helicopters and other military equipment

his independent foreign policy which had written "a new chapter" for the country.

The President also announced that the working conditions of overseas Filipino workers (OFW) in Israel and Jordan are expected to improve further, saying his administration is showing that the Philippines is indeed a friend to all and enemy to no one.

In his arrival speech at the Davao City International Airport, **Turn to page 2**

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte said yesterday his seven-day official visits to Israel and Jordan successfully showcased

We need investments. We need the money to finance the huge population

From page 1

Mr. Duterte said "with these landmark visits, the Philippines continues to write a new chapter of enhanced bilateral partnerships based on mutual respect, sovereign equality, shared interests and common values."

Mr. Duterte said he was pleased to renew the Philippines' friendship with the two Middle East countries, adding his administration will continue to look after the welfare of OFW in the Middle East.

"I am pleased to renew the country's friendship with the two important countries in the region," Duterte said. "Your government will continue to do its part to ensure that the rights of Filipinos working abroad will be protected," he added.

I am not apologizing, there is really inflation in the Philippines and we are trying to control it.

P145M in new money

Duterte brought home \$60.875 million in Jordanian investments on top of the \$84.9 million worth of pledged capital during his trip to Israel earlier this week. Although his trip was cut a day short, Mr. Duterte was able to push through with all the scheduled meetings.

During his trip, Duterte met Jordan's King Abdullah bin Al-Hussein, who personally welcomed him to his Palace on Thursday and among the issues the two leaders talked about was the plight of undocumented Filipinos in Jordan.

The Philippine and Jordanian governments also signed deals on labor, foreign affairs and trade even as Jordan also promised to donate two attack helicopters and other military equipment to the country.

On Thursday, the President gave a speech at the Philippine-Jordanian business forum and promised to create a department that would make it easy for foreign investors to do business in the country.

Duterte assured Jordanian businessmen the Philippines is a good place to invest in but admitted he could not say that the country is "trouble-free" and pointed out that "South going back to Indonesia and Malaysia" was where trouble could erupt, referring to Mindanao and the security problems posed by the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters.

Capital needed

"We need investments. We need the money to finance the huge population in terms

of education, medical care, everything," the President said, giving his audience his "solemn commitment that if you go there, it will be business with ease."

As the first Philippine President to go on an official visit to Israel, Duterte also met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Reuven Rivlin and visited the Yad Vashem, Israel's official memorial for victims of the Holocaust.

The President capped off the Israel leg of his trip with a visit to the Open Doors Monument which commemorates the Philippines' "open door" policy for Jews fleeing the Holocaust.

On Friday, Duterte pledged that his administration would immediately find solutions regarding the predicaments of Filipinos abroad without legal documents.

The President capped his three-day visit to Jordan to meet with the Filipino community at the Royal Cultural Palace.

The Chief Executive has been consistently saying that apart from enhancing the Philippines' bilateral relations, his priority is the Filipino people.

During the President's meeting with King Abdullah II on 6 September, he mentioned that one of his principal interests is the situation of the Filipinos.

Although most are in a good position, there are some who are still in the predicament of not having proper documents.

The President expressed his admiration for the King's sincerity and for having a human soul.

The President added his administration is looking for possible solutions to the problem. "I will send maybe a senator, or [Foreign Affairs] Secretary [Alan Peter] Cayetano to fix this thing. Why? All of you should not be hiding. His Majesty is a man of his words. That is true," Mr. Duterte added.

The President expressed his admiration for the King's sincerity and for having "a human soul" when he brought up this issue to him. "You can see the human spirit in his words. So I hope to work on it right away," he said.

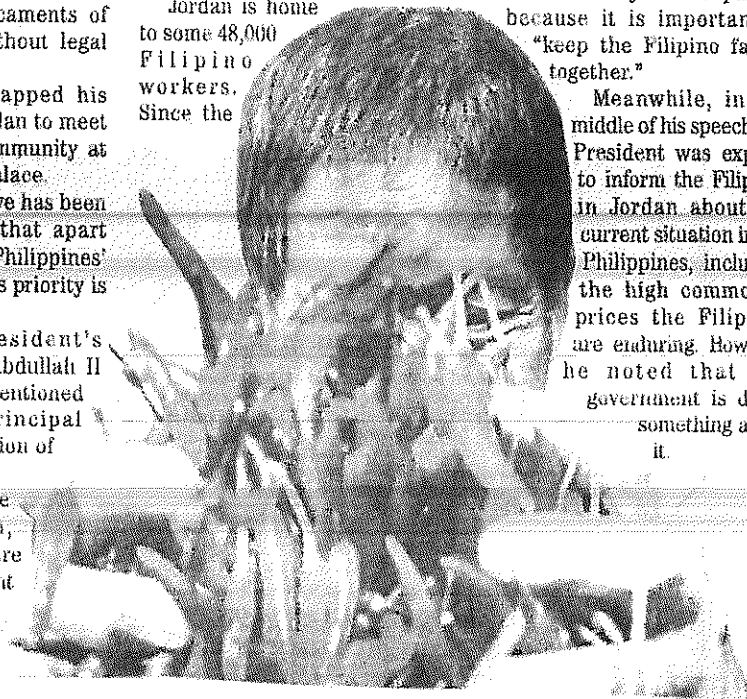
Jordan is home to some 48,000 Filipino workers. Since the

government is eager to advance the Filipinos' living conditions abroad, the Chief Executive encouraged the Filipinos in Jordan to avail themselves of services the two governments offer to help them improve their skills.

"(1) encourage overseas Filipinos to take advantage of programs for self-improvement and training offered by the Philippine Embassy and various organizations in Jordan or in the Philippines. I would also reiterate the significance of self-improvement in nation-building and becoming true agents of change," Mr. Duterte added.

Furthermore, he also stressed the government's initiatives to make "working abroad a choice, not a necessity for Filipinos," because it is important to "keep the Filipino family together."

Meanwhile, in the middle of his speech, the President was explicit to inform the Filipinos in Jordan about the current situation in the Philippines, including the high commodity prices the Filipinos are enduring. However, he noted that the government is doing something about it.



Bomba sumabog sa Maguindanao: 1 dedo, 3 grabe

MAGUINDANAO - Isang 69-anyos na sibilyan ang nasawi habang tatlong iba pa ang malubhang nasugatan nang sumabog ang isang 'di pamatukoy na uri ng bomba sa Barangay Bialong, bayan ng Shariff Aguak, ayon sa ulat kahapon.

Kinilala ang nasawi na si Abdul Azis Asim, residente ng Sitio Diyati, Barangay Tina na idenklarang dead-on-arrival sa ospital.

Kabilang naman sa mga sugatan ay ang may-bahay ni Asim na si Farida, 49-anyos; Siden Maulana, 21 at Sema Bedo, 55, na kapwa ginagamot sa Maguindanao Provincial Hospital.

Ayon kay P/Inspector Abidin Arasa, hepe ng Shariff Aguak Police, sumabog ang nasabing bomba alas-10 ng gabi kung saan patuloy pa nilang inaalam kung ang pagsabog ay may kinalaman sa sagupaan ng puwersa ng pamahalaan at ng mga lawless group sa lugar.

Sa hiwalay na pahayag ni Capt. Arvin John Encinas, ang tagapagsaila ng 6th Infantry Division ng Philippine Army, wala naman silang isinagawang military law enforcement operations sa "SPMS" box nitong nakalipas na limang araw, kung saan kabilang dito ang bayan ng Shariff Aguak. **(Rhoderick Beñez)**

Dating sundalo, nalunod

CAMILING, Tariat Nasawi ang isang dating sundalo nang lumangoy ito sa isang irrigation canal sa Barangay Matubog, Camiling, Tariat, karnakailan. Kinilala ni desk officer on-duty PO 1 John Ronald Cruz ng Camiling police, ang nasawi na si Modesto Malenab, 71, may-asawa, ng nasabing lugar. Sa himpilan ng pulisya, inihayag ni Arnold Dela Cruz, 58, nagtungo sya sa ingasyon para mamingwit ngunit nakita niyang lumulutang ang bangkay ni Malenab. Sa panig ng pamilya ni Malenab, dalawang beses na itong nagtangkang magpakamatay dahil sa problema.

Leandro Alborote

'Yellows, leftists praying for my ouster'

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte on Saturday cautioned the public against the opposition and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), whom he accused of conspiring to oust him from power.

In a news conference in Davao City upon his arrival from Israel and Jordan, Duterte said the "Yellows," the members of the Liberal Party, and the communist group "are praying for his ouster."

"*Tatlong 'yan, bantayan ninyo. Iyang [The] Yellows, Liberals, Trillanes, pati ang [as well the] politburo (CPP's policy-making body). They have a... We will show it to you. Kaya kayong mga sundalo (That's why you soldiers) before you jump into the conclusion about... tanungin*

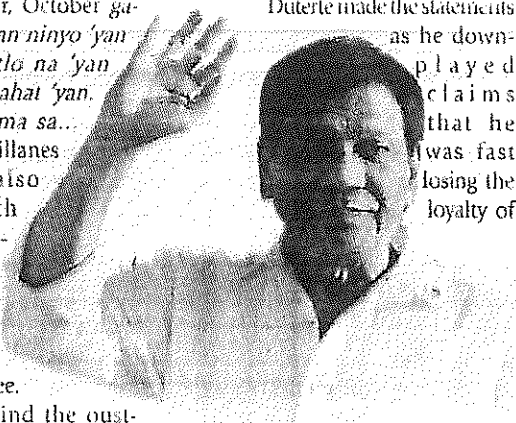
ninyo intelligence ninyo (you ask first your intelligence) and they will show you," he added.

"*Yang tatlong 'yan bantayan ninyo. Iyan 'yung mag-a-oust na... oust Duterte and it will go into a higher, October ga-*

nun. Bantayan ninyo 'yan kay 'yan tatlo na 'yan konektado lahat 'yan. Ang problema sa... itong kay Trillanes is, he is also playing with the Communist Party of the Philippines," (Watch out for those three. They're behind the oust-

Duterte move and they will step it up in October. Watch out for them. They are connected. The problem is that Trillanes is playing with the communists)," the President said.

Duterte made the statements as he downplayed claims that he was fast losing the loyalty of



the military and the police.

"I've always stressed to the uniformed people of our government that they should not nurture in me or in anybody else in my Cabinet and government loyalties. I said, 'You should focus your loyalty [on] the flag of the Philippines and the Constitution.' *Sabi ko sa kanila, prangkha, sabi ko (I am frank with them), 'I do not need loyalties,'*" Duterte said.

"I was elected as President and I intend to serve. But if somehow there is anything that is really demanded of the moment, then there is no problem. Do not bring me the armor or anything.

Ouster A2

President Rodrigo Duterte

OUSTER FROM A1 Yellows

Just tell me. We can have coffee, I'll invite you and I will — well, anybody who is interested, I will administer the oath. Now, what followed or what will follow, rather, *eh hindi ko na problema 'yan* (that's not my problem anymore)," he added.

Trillanes earlier claimed that some active and retired members of the Armed Forces were "very bothered" and "conflicted" by Duterte's order to invalidate the amnesty granted to him.

"They are definitely conflicted

because they are aware that this is all politics. They are not comfortable with that," the senator said.

Without mentioning particular officials, he said some soldiers were hesitant to follow "illegal orders" from the President.

"The Duterte administration does not have a strong hold of the DND (Department of National Defense) and the AFP. I am receiving a lot of help because they don't want the AFP to be used in this political exercise," Trillanes said.

But Duterte said he would rather not be President if the military stood up for someone like Trillanes, who left them behind.

"*Kung magkagulo ito* because of

Trillanes, *diyan na talaga ako hindi bumitib* (If there will be chaos because of Trillanes, then that will be the one thing I will not admit about the military)," he added.

"They believed in his word. *Ano nagawa niya sa military na para mag-pakamatay sila* (What did he do for the military for them to die for him)? If that is the value that you'd want to preserve, fine. Count me out. If that is the kind of culture of our military, without offending anybody here, I'd rather be not President," Duterte said.

He added that Trillanes could have urged former Defense chief Voltaire Gazmin or former President Benigno Aquino 3rd to increase the salary of the military by

even just five percent but he did not do it.

The President said Trillanes not only left the mission and vision of the military, but also became a "corrupt guy."

"*Nandiyan siya ha* (He was there), in Malacañang. And he was taking the cudgels for the military. He not only abandoned the vision of the military, he became a corrupt guy collecting *diyan sa mga negosyante* (from the businessmen)," he added.

"Remember we never started the ruckus. It was all Trillanes pretending to be a crusading soldier, when as a matter of fact, *wala naman silang ginawa* (he has done nothing)," the President said.

TRILLANES IN BED WITH REDS—DU30

By Nat Mariano
and Vito Barcelo

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte said Saturday Senator Antonio Trillanes IV was conspiring with the Communist Party of the Philippines to depose him from office,

warning the public to keep an eye on the opposition senator, the communists and even the Liberal Party of the Philippines, as the three "pray" for his ouster.

"Those three, watch them closely. The yellow Liberals, Trillanes, and the

Turn to A2

TRILLANES... From A1

[communist] politburo... Watch them closely, those three. They are all connected," warned Duterte in a speech during his arrival from a week-long visit to Israel and Jordan.

Duterte said Trillanes, who recently made headlines following the sudden revocation of his amnesty, was currently "collaborating [and] sleeping with the enemy."

"We will show it to you. To the soldiers, before you jump into conclusion, ask your intelligence [Service] first and they will show you. It [the information] is not for public consumption, but when the right time comes, and if I'm compelled by the Supreme Court to say, 'Now state your case, I will expose everything. But it will be detrimental as they will know where we get [the information]," said Duterte.

"Now, they don't know [our sources]. I even said, 'It's being supplied by a foreign power, not here.' But if you really want [to know], to the military who have strong ideals, just ask your intelligence community," said the President, stressing that Trillanes, the Liberals, and the communists were plotting his ouster.

"Coup d'etat, coup d'etat, it's nonsense. The word does not even appeal to me at all. If you're an idealist or a man with principles, watch those three. They are the ones who will oust me and it will

go into a higher [level next] October," he added.

The President made the remarks when asked if there was a need to do a loyalty check among the military and the police forces.

Duterte, however, stressed he did not need loyalties, sharing he frankly told the military ranks to focus their loyalty to the flag of the Philippines, and the Constitution.

"I was elected as President and I intend to serve. But if somehow there is anything that is really demanded of the moment, then there is no problem," Duterte said, implying the possibility of a movement to overthrow him.

"Do not bring me the armor or anything. Just tell me. We can have coffee, I'll invite you and I will—well, anybody who is interested, I will administer the oath. Now, what will follow is not my problem," said Duterte.

"So, there are many ways: impeachment, mutiny, coup d'etat, everything. Well, I only work. If the Filipino people does (sic) not want my service then I will step down. That should not be a problem," he added, pointing out he would not let the armed forces and the police to wage war against each other.

"For me to order [them] to shoot at each other, I will not do it. Find another president. I will not do it," he said.

On the declaration to nullify Trillanes' amnesty, Duterte admitted he could not refuse Solicitor General Jose Calida's request to investigate the conditions of the amnesty granted to the senator.

Duterte said it was Calida's initiative to review the amnesty given to Trillanes, triggering its revocation through a presidential proclamation.

Duterte signed Proclamation 572 on Aug. 31 that revoked Trillanes' amnesty given by former President Benigno Aquino III in 2010.

In the proclamation, Duterte said Trillanes—who urged Filipinos Saturday not to vote for candidates on Duterte's slate—did not file an Official Amnesty Application Form as per certification dated Aug. 30, 2018, issued by Lt. Col. Thea Joan Andrade, stating "there is no copy of his application for amnesty in the records."

The President admitted that Calida, whom Trillanes accused of cornering government contracts to the security agency owned by Calida's family, had initiated the research on the circumstances of the granting of amnesty to Trillanes.

"I cannot refuse because I have no power. I have to enforce the law," Duterte said.

"It was Calida who did all the research on Trillanes' amnesty just like what he did to Sereno. You know, Calida is bright," Duterte said, denying there was any politics behind it.

"If the solicitor general said there's a mistake and it has to be corrected, I cannot refuse," the President said.

Duterte, a former Davao prosecutor, explained the power to pardon and the power to grant amnesty with the concurrence of Congress was a presidential power and it could not be delegated to

anybody else.

The President also insisted that the amnesty allowing the senator's release was void.

"Therefore his getting out of custody was also void because there was no basis. The amnesty was defective [and] fatally flawed," Duterte said.

Trillanes accused Duterte of ordering his arrest because he was the most vocal and prominent critic of his administration.

The senator described the executive order as "stupid" and vowed to resist the order.

Duterte has said Calida is a government lawyer. As a President, he said he could not insist another view since the proclamation was already recorded as a public paper.

"So, whatever he put down in that, I will believe it. If I doubted him in the first place, I [would] already have him disposed somewhere else," said Duterte.

He added: "The power to pardon and the power to grant amnesty with the concurrence of Congress is a presidential power. It cannot be delegated to anybody else. That's a constitutional mandate."

"In the first place, the amnesty allowing his [Trillanes] release was void. Therefore, his getting out of custody was also void because there was no basis. The amnesty was defective [and] fatally flawed."

Duterte said he would leave the execution of arresting Trillanes in the hands of the Judiciary department.

AFP-BIFF Maguindanao clash: 3 bandits, civilian killed

By JOHN UNSON

MAGUINDANAO – Three members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) were killed in an encounter with government troops in Datu Montawal town in Maguindanao on Friday.

The fatalities were identified only as Monib,

Bitong and Sanggutin.

Also killed was civilian Babai Masukat, who was hit in the crossfire.

Authorities said five other bandits, three of them identified by residents as Sanjid, Mundas and Dampil, and civilians Dangalo, Dangwa and Serente Manginlas were wounded.

The military said the

hostilities erupted when BIFF men, who arrived in pumpboats, fired at government troopers who responded to reports that armed men were sighted in a river in Barangay Tunggol.

The bandits, who were led by a certain Gapang Sapal, strafed houses on the riverbank as they fled toward Liguasan Delta.

Abdula Minola and Mohamid Kabimbian, who admitted that they are with the group of BIFF leader Abu Toraife, were arrested.

Toraife's group was tagged in the bombings in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat on Aug. 28 and Sept. 2. Five persons were killed and more than 40 others wounded in the incidents. 15

**3 BIFF men, civilian dead
in North Cotabato clash**

Three members of Islamic State-linked Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) and a civilian were killed in a military operation that prevented a bomb attack in North Cotabato. Two BIFF members, believed to be behind the bombings in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat that killed five and wounded 48 others, were also arrested and were now being interrogated. Capt. Arvin John Bacinas, speaking for the 6th Infantry Division, said the Army was tipped off by residents of the village of Tunggol in Datu Montawal, Maguindanao about the transport of improvised explosive devices to Kabacan, North Cotabato. Soldiers were deployed to Tunggol and initially clashed with a group of at least 10 BIFF members who fled. Soldiers pursuing the fleeing gunmen clashed with another BIFF group in another village in Datu Montawan where two BIFF members were killed. —EDWIN FERNANDEZ

2 suspected Isulan bombers captured in Maguindanao

By **JOSEPH JUBELAG**
and **MARTIN A. SADONGDONG**

COTABATO CITY – Two suspected members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) said to be responsible in the recent twin bombings in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat were captured after an encounter between government troops and the Daesh-inspired Abu Turaiife Group (DITG) in Maguindanao Friday afternoon.

According to Capt. Arvin John Encinas, spokesperson of the Sixth Infantry Division (6th ID), Mohamid Kambilan and Abdullah Minola were nabbed after the encounter that also resulted in the unverified killing of three BIFFs, and the death of a civilian in the crossfire.

Kambilan and Minola were brought

to Datu Montawal Municipal Police Station for detention and filing of appropriate charges.

Encinas said troops from the Seventh Infantry Battalion (7th IB) clashed with at least 10 suspected BIFF militants, who were led by a certain Gapang Sapal, in Barangay Tunggol, Datu Montawal in Maguindanao.

He said the government forces were conducting checkpoint in the area following information that criminal elements will be transporting improvised explosive devices from Sultan Barongis town, Maguindanao to Kabacan, North Cotabato when they were fired upon by the suspects.

Troops launched pursuit operation against the suspects who fled toward Barangay Dungan, Datu

Montawal while firing at a civilian area.

This resulted in the death of local resident Babay Dansalan, and wounding of Maula Mangimbas and Dangalao Akad.

The military has yet to verify whether there were casualties on the side of the enemies, but said civilians reported that the bodies of three suspects slain in the clash were fetched by unidentified men onboard two motorized boats around 7 p.m.

Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, Joint Task Force Central commander, said the group of BIFF militants was among those involved in the spate of bomb attacks in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat last August 28 and September 2 which left five people dead and 50 others injured. **B**

FLEEING BFF BANDITS KILL CIVILIAN, HURT 2 OTHERS

By Francisco Tuyay

A CIVILIAN was killed while two of his companions were wounded after Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters bandits fired at them while retreating from pursuing security forces following a firefight at the outskirts of Maguindanao province.

Reports said Babay Dansalan was initially placed in critical condition following the attack but later died in a hospital while being treated. His wounded companions were identified as Maula Rerente Mangimblas and Dangalao Dangwa Akad, all residents of Barangay Dungan, Datu Montawal, Maguindanao.

The incident occurred after troops responded to a tip from a civilian on the plan by the terrorists to transport three Improvised Explosive

Devices (IEDs) from Sitio Kabasalan, Barangay Darumpua, Sultan in Barongis, Maguindanao to Kabacan, North Cotabato.

As government forces approached the areas the BIFF bandits fired at them while fleeing towards the southern direction.

Troops from the 7th Infantry Battalion immediately conducted pursuit operations and chanced upon the bandits in Barangay Dungan.

Reports said the bandit decided to leave the area, but while fleeing, deliberately fired at the civilians, wounding three of them.

Later, a suspected terrorist identified as Mohanid Kambilan and Abdulah Minilo were arrested and the military recovered two M16 rifles, one Garand rifle and a Caliber .45 pistol. 13

1 dead, 2 hurt as troops arrest bombing suspects

A civilian died, two of his companions were wounded while two suspected members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) said to be responsible for the twin bombings in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat were arrested when government troops clashed with the Daesh-Inspired Abu Turaife Group (DITG) in Maguindanao Friday afternoon.

The military identified the fatality as Babay Dansalan while wounded were Maula Rerente Mangimblas and Dangalao Dangwa Akad.

Meanwhile, troops identified the arrested militants as Muhamid Kambilan and Abdulah Minola, suspected members of Daesh-inspired group led by Gapang Sapal and under the command of BIFF commander Esmael Abdulmalik alias Abu Turaife.

Turaife's group is said to be responsible in the twin bombings in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat on August 28 and September 2, killing five persons and wounding 48 others.

According to Brig. Gen. Cudito Sobejana, Joint Task Force Central commander, they received intelligence information that three improvised explosive devices (IEDs) would be transported from Sitio Kabasalan, Brgy. Darampua, Sultan sa Barongis, Maguindanao to Kabacan, North Cotabato.

The Joint Task Force Central conducted appropriate security measures to intercept the reported bomb transport but around 3

p.m., at least 10 fully armed men engaged the troops in a firefight, Sobejana said.

The armed men immediately fled but troops of Bravo Company of 7th Infantry Battalion conducted pursuit operation.

The pursuing troops, however, engaged with another armed group in Barangay Dunguan, Datu Montawal, Maguindanao.

A fifteen-minute firefight ensued, Sobejana said.

Just as the armed men were fleeing, Sobejana said the militants fired upon civilians living near a river which resulted in the wounding of Dansalan, Mangombias and Akad.

The three were rushed to a nearby hospital but Dansalan expired while undergoing treatment.

The military managed to capture Kambilan and Minola.

Kambilan and Minola were brought to Datu Montawal Municipal Police Station for detention and filing of appropriate charges.

The military also recovered two M16 rifles, one M1 Garand, one caliber 45 pistol, assorted magazines and ammunition after the encounter.

The military has yet to verify whether there were casualties on the side of the enemies but accordingly, civilians reported that the bodies of three suspects slain in the clash were fetched by unidentified men on board two motorized boats around 7 p.m. **(Martin Sadongdong)**

Shariff Aguak town under red alert after IED blast

SHARIFF AGUAK, Maguindanao: Tension gripped this once peaceful town after the Philippine National Police (PNP) placed it under red alert over a Wednesday night explosion of an improvised explosive device (IED) that killed a 59-year-old man and wounded his wife and two relatives in Barangay Bialong here, police said on Saturday.

While in Datu Montawal, also in Maguindanao, a civilian was killed and two others were wounded when they were caught in the crossfire between Army soldiers and Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) combatants.

Inspector Abdin Arasa, Shariff Aguak town police chief, said investigators from the explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) team are still determining if the explosion was related to ongoing sporadic clashes between government forces and the BIFF.

Capt. Arvin John Encinas, spokesman for the Army's 6th Infantry Division (6th ID), said in the past five days, there were no military law enforcement operations in the so-called "SPMS" box, where Shariff Aguak belongs.

SPMS box is a military term referring to the adjoining towns of Shariff Aguak, Pagatin, Masapano and Datu Salibo, a stronghold of the Islamic State (IS) linked BIFF.

Arasa identified the slain victim as Abdul Azis Asim, a resident of Sitio Diyati, Barangay Tina, Shariff Aguak who was declared dead at a hospital.

Injured were Asim's wife, Farida, 49, Siden Maulana, 21 and Sema Bedo, 55, both residents of Barangay Bialong also of this town who are confined and getting medical treatment at Maguindanao Provincial Hospital here.

According to Arasa, two weeks ago, the military launched a law

enforcement operation against the BIFF in the villages of Malingao, Bgong, Tina and Bialong near the Liguasan Marsh.

"The village officials have been told to ask their constituents to vacate their villages due to the ongoing law enforcement operation," he said.

Arasa added that some of the evacuees returned home to attend to their farms while others refused to leave despite repeated appeals from local officials.

Rocky Romancap, Shariff Aguak social welfare officer, said some 1,254 families, about 7,500 individuals, evacuated from three villages in Shariff Aguak after the Army launched offensives against the armed group.

The evacuees now being attended to by the local government units.

"Emergency food assistance was extended to displaced families and we put up a common kitchen for everyone to use and provided safe drinking water supply," Romancap said.

Firefight in Datu Montawal

In Datu Montawal, fighting broke out on Friday between government troops and BIFF combatants, killing a civilian identified as Babay Dansalan and wounding Maula Rerente Mangimblas and Dangalao Dangwa Akad.

Soldiers later captured the two militants — Mohamid Kambilan and Abdulah Minola — and recovered three rifles and a pistol, including ammunition.

The duo was being linked by the 6th Infantry Division to the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters under the faction of militant leader Abu Turaike, who had pledged allegiance to the IS. Soldiers handed the captured

militants to the municipal police force, according to Encinas.

He said the fighting erupted after troops received reports that gunmen were transporting improvised explosives to North Cotabato's Kabacan town. And that soldiers caught up with the terrorists in the village of Tunggol and a firefight broke out.

Encinas added that civilians reported that the bandits who escaped from soldiers had fled on a boat with their five casualties later in the night. The report, however, could not be independently confirmed or verified.

The military has blamed the group — which is fighting for the establishment of a caliphate — for recent bombings in Isulan town in North Cotabato that left scores of civilians dead and wounded.

The AFP along with the local government unit of Datu Montawal is in close coordination to help wounded civilians in their medical requirements, Joint Task Force Central Commander Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana said.

"Joint Task Force Central has sustained its focused military operations targeting the suspects of the Isulan IED bombings, to give justice to the civilian victims. The manhunt has been strengthened in coordination with the PNP," Sobejana added.

"We further enhance our security posture to ensure the safety and security of the community to preempt terror attacks in various areas," he added.

There was no immediate statement from Maguindanao Gov. Ismael Mangudadatu on the latest breakout of violence in his province. He was in

Davao City on Friday where he received an honorary doctorate degree during the 20th International Conference and Conferment Ceremony of the Royal Institution (Singapore). It was held at the Kingdom of Jesus Christ Hall. **AT**

**JULMUNIR I. JANNARAL
AND AL JACINTO**

Marawi residents approve of BOL

Some Marawi City residents see the ratification of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) as an effective way to expedite the rehabilitation of the Islamic city in Mindanao following the five-month armed conflict that turned the once-flourishing urban area into ruins.

Dickson Hermoso, assistant secretary for peace and security unit of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), said the approval by some residents of the BOL is reflected on the positive response of local residents during the forum in the area on Friday.

Carrying banners printed with "YES" in bold letters, Hermoso said residents, mostly students, declared their approval of the BOL inside the Dimaporo Gymnasium right inside the Mindanao State University (MSU) compound during a multistakeholder forum to educate the public of the salient points of the law.

"I saw the ugliness of the conflict but I also saw the real solution. What we are doing now is the ultimate solution to achieve peace in Mindanao," he said, referring to

the collective efforts to campaign for the ratification of law.

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) had earlier said the plebiscite will be on January 21, 2019.

Although the BOL is largely anchored on the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro — a peace agreement between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) — Hermoso said it includes key provisions of all previous Bangsamoro peace agreements signed between the government and the Moro fronts.

"BOL is not only a legal instrument but also a social document that would address the decades-old armed conflict in the Bangsamoro, as well as the recognition of historical injustices committed against the Bangsamoro," Hermoso said.

Normalization, he said, envisions conflict-affected communities to return to conditions where they can achieve their desired quality of life, which includes the pursuit of sustainable livelihoods and political participation within a peaceful deliberate society. (Aaron Recuneco)

BOL para sa mapabilisang agham — Marawi residents

NI AARON RECUECO

Ilan sa mga residente ng Marawi City ang naniniwala na ang pag-apruba sa Bangsamoro Organic Law (BoL) ay isang epektibong paraan upang mapabilis ang rehabilitasyon ng Islamic city sa Mindanao, kasimod ng limang buwang bakhakan na ikinalugmok nito.

Ayon kay Dickson Hermoso, assistant secretary for Peace and Security unit ng Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), ang pag-apruba ng ilang residente sa BoL ay sumasalamain sa positibong tugon ng mga lokal na residente sa forum sa lugar, nilong Biyernes.

Bibit ang mga banner na may nakainaprentang "YES", sinabi ni

Hermoso na ang mga residente, na karamihan ng mga estudyante, ay nagdeklara ng pag-apruba sa BoL sa loob ng Dinaporo Gymnasium ng Mindanao State University (MSU) compound sa kasagsagan ng multi-stakeholder forum.

"I saw the ugliness of the conflict but I also saw the real solution. What we are doing now is the ultimate solution to achieve peace in Mindanao," aniya, tinutukoy ang pagsisikap ng mga residente na ikampanya ang BoL.

Unanang sinabi ng Commission on Elections (Comelec) na ang plebiscite ay sa Enero 21, 2019.

Kahit na ang BoL ay nakaugnay sa Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro — ang usapang pagkapayapaan sa pagitan ng gobyerno at Moro Islamic

Liberation Front (MILF) — sinabi ni Hermoso na kinabibilangan ito ng mga pangunahing probisyon ng lahat ng unang Bangsamoro peace agreements na nilagdaan ng pamahalaan at Moro fronts.

"BoL is not only a legal instrument but also a social document that would address the decades-old armed conflict in the Bangsamoro, as well as the recognition of historical injustices committed against the Bangsamoro," pahayag ni Hermoso.

"As we prepare for the plebiscite, we call on all stakeholders... to watch over and safeguard the implementation and conclusion of the peace process in light of the full flourishing of our country's stability, development, and nation-building," dagdag niya.

BREAKTHROUGH

ELFREN S. CRUZ



True martial law histories

September always reminds me of martial law and the need to educate the new generation of Filipinos about the horrors of the Marcos martial law regime. There have been several books published about that dark period in Philippine history. Here are a few that I would highly recommend.

Marcos Martial Law: Never Again by Raissa Robles, published by Filipinos for a Better Philippines Inc., 2016.

This book is a must-read for anyone who wants to know about the horrors of martial law. The book has detailed stories of victims and torturers during the Marcos regime. In her Preface, Raissa Robles writes: "This book was very difficult for me to write. It was way beyond my comfort zone as a journalist: I was used to covering Muslim rebels and Islamic terrorism but not the Communist rebellion."

"But it had to be written because whenever I write about the Marcoses, I realized that many of my readers did not understand my context. This is the context of what I have been writing about – that Martial law was a despicable period masked by displays of Art, Culture and Infrastructure. This is merely a short and compact introduction to the atrocities and torture committed by the Martial law regime. It is not a detailed history of Martial law nor is it a biography of Ferdinand Marcos. Those elements are mentioned in order to put the atrocities in context. As far as I know, nobody has ever done a compact history like this with this context and detailed references. And it is needed now more than ever given the appalling amnesia and ignorance about the period."

In the Foreword, former Senator Rene Saguisag writes: "Bongbong Marcos asks, what human rights violations during my parents' watch?"

This edifying volume answers the foolish question. Learn more about the terror of 1972-1986 from this magnum opus. Raissa, write on. Reader, read on, this excellent deposition for history."

A Garrison State in the Making and Other Speeches by Senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., Introductory Notes by Nick Joaquin, published by Benigno S. Aquino Jr. Foundation, 1985.

This is a selection of speeches by Ninoy Aquino in the Senate from 1968 to 1972. The first speech on Feb. 5, 1968 was titled: "A Garrison State in the Making." In this speech, he said: "Our democratic political system is slowly but systematically being strangled by a creeping militarism. All indications point to a steady and determined militarization of our civilian set-up."

The last speech was given on Sept. 13, 1972, a week before martial law. The title of the speech was "Operation Sagittarius."

In this speech, Ninoy said: "I have just received information from confidential sources in the Armed Forces of the Philippines regarding a top secret military plan, ordered by President Marcos sometime ago, to put Greater Manila, twelve towns of Rizal, and the whole province of Bulacan under PC control – and as a prelude, maybe, to clamping martial law." In the end he says: "Therefore, I should conclude that Operation Sagittarius is properly named because as the arrow and the dart, it may spearhead what we may actually find as the end of the Republic."

Nick Joaquin wrote: "After the blow had fallen on the nation, Ninoy's words would be recalled with a pang – no longer as delicious scandalmongering but as an oracle's auguries that, alas, went unheeded."

Martial Law In The Philippines: My Story by Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr. published by Cacho Publishing, 2006.

In this book, Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel writes primarily about the experience that he and his family underwent during the martial law regime that President Ferdinand E. Marcos had instituted in 1972 and implemented until he was forced to flee to the US in 1986.

He candidly posits the view that martial law was a gross criminal act that Marcos and his collaborators per-

petrated upon the people. Also, he details how Marcos by means of cajolery, bribery and threats laid its foundation in the 1973 Constitution with the indispensable assistance of his lieutenants in the Constitutional Convention of 1971.

He recalls that soon after the declaration of martial law, he was jailed in Camp Crame and thrown into a cell for hardened criminals. That was the first of his four arrests during martial rule. He also describes how he and his fellow human rights activists like Sen. Lorenzo Tanada, Sen. Joker Arroyo, Sen. Soc Rodrigo, Jr., Archie Intengan, SJ, Tito Quingona, and Ernie Rondon were in the military camp in Bicutan for waging a demonstration against the farcical Interim Batasan Pambansa elections in 1978.

Citing pertinent documents, he describes how some detainees in the martial law detention centers were tortured and who the torturers were. In 1980, he was elected mayor of Cagayan de Oro. But even after his election as mayor and later as a member of the regular Batasan Pambansa, the martial law harassments continued. Through it all, he retained his faith in the Almighty, who, he says worked through friends to see him through the martial law years.

Laban: His Story by Jose Cojuangco Jr. et al. Published by Jose Cojuangco & Sons Inc., 2011.

This is a 25-chapter book that gives firsthand accounts of the period that began with the proclamation of martial law to the four days at EDSA. Aside from Jose Cojuangco Jr. the different chapters were written by a heavy of writers: Marisse Reyes, Ninoy Aquino, Nick Joaquin, Corazon Aquino, Lupita Aquino, Maria Elena Aquino-Cruz, Dr. Rolando Solis, and Margarita Cojuangco.

Among the most interesting chapters are those about the 1978 Interim Batasan Pambansa elections when a group of oppositionists led by Ninoy Aquino dared to run against the Marcos forces. Though cheated in the elections, it marked the birth of the "Laban" slogan and a Metro Manila-wide noise barrage. It was a prelude to the snap elections and the EDSA People Power revolution.

Creative writing classes }3 for kids and teens

Young Writers' Hangout on Sept. 15
(1:30 pm-3 pm; stand-alone sessions)
fiction writing with Sarge Lacuesta on
Sept. 22 (1:30-4:30 pm) at Fully Booked
BCC. For details and registration,
email writethingsph@gmail.com.

Email: elfrencruz@gmail.com

★

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BABE'S EYE VIEW

FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.

Ambassador B. ROMUALDEZ

ASEAN summit without President Trump

The White House informed us that US president Donald Trump will not be attending the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit in Singapore this November, and will instead send vice president Mike Pence.



As expected, there was some speculation on President Trump's decision to skip the ASEAN summit because of domestic issues, but we were told that the US president will be traveling to Ireland in November before proceeding to Paris for the 100th anniversary commemoration of the armistice that ended World War I.

The trip to Europe, in particular to Paris, is not surprising since President Trump and French president Emmanuel Macron got along quite well. In his speech during the recent French Ambassadors' Conference, Macron said that continuing dialogue with Washington remains essential, and also echoed the call of Trump for Europe to be self-sufficient in its defense instead of relying solely on the US for its security.

The domestic political situation is the more critical issue for President Trump. The upcoming midterm elections on November 6 will be electing 35 senators, all the 435 members of the House of Representatives, 36 state governors as well as local legislative officials. The Republicans will want to maintain control of the federal government because a majority victory by the Democrats could severely limit the Trump administration's ability to govern for the remainder of his first term. Of course, there is also talk that the Democrats – should they manage to wrest control of the House – would try to impeach President Trump. Every single Republican victory in the midterm polls will definitely matter.

Whether ASEAN nations are disappointed or not at Trump's decision to skip the leaders' summit in Singapore, the significance of the event will not be diminished as there are very important issues that must be tackled, among them the South China Sea Code of Conduct (COC). ASEAN foreign ministers and their Chinese counterpart previously agreed on a single draft negotiating text (SDNT) to serve as the basis for adopting a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.

While the COC is not meant to resolve the maritime disputes, it is aimed at managing disputes through direct negotiations or arbitration among claimants in order to avoid conflict. The SDNT echoes the text in the Framework Code of Conduct that it is "not an instrument to settle territorial disputes or maritime delimitation issues."

Experts say a dispute settlement mechanism will be needed for the COC to be effective as disagreements over interpretation and application are sure to arise.

Specific and detailed provisions must also be outlined regarding utilization of natural resources including gas and oil in the disputed maritime territories.

Then there is the matter of economic integration in light of projections that by 2030, ASEAN will become the world's fourth largest economy. In his speech during the opening of the 50th ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong cited ASEAN's educated and young workforce as well as its emerging middle class, noting that economic integration and cooperation has become a key pillar that underpinned the regional bloc's success and cohesion over the years.

Lee also said that an open and economically integrated ASEAN will be more attractive to other economies, calling on leaders to fully implement the ASEAN Economic Continuity Blueprint 2025 to enable businesses to "operate more seamlessly across the region and make companies and economies more competitive globally."

As one of the founding countries of ASEAN, the Philippines through President Rodrigo Duterte has been intensely trying to make the country an attractive investment destination as well as globally competitive. The president's historic official visits to Israel and Jordan – the first time a Philippine president visited these countries – underscores the importance of reaching out to nations that are supportive of us and are also US allies at the same time.

The Philippines and Jordan signed five cooperation agreements on defense, maritime cooperation, political consultation, labor and investment. Jordan also donated two Cobra attack helicopters to the Philippines, which will be turned over in July next year after a nine-month training for Filipino pilots.

During President Duterte's visit to Israel, 21 business agreements valued at \$82.9 million were inked between private companies. Of these, six were security-related, covering the areas of cybersecurity, intelligence data mining, technology transfer and the development of various intelligence and military products.

A deal between Armscor and EMTAN was also signed. Armscor is a Philippine company which is the oldest and biggest arms and ammunitions manufacturer in the Philippines. Martin Tuason is the president and he is hopeful the technology transfer from EMTAN, an Israeli manufacturer of military weapons, will enable the Philippines to develop its own defense industry and manufacture firearms and ammunitions for our military and police with less dependence on other countries.

This came to the fore during a Senate hearing on the proposed creation of a Special Defense Economic Zone when a resource person revealed that our troops almost ran out of ammunition during the siege of Marawi City. Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana has been battling for the revival of the self-reliant defense posture (SRDP) program to support our internal security capability.

We are currently preparing for the visit of DND Secretary Lorenzana in Washington, D.C. this September. I will accompany him for meetings with State Secretary Mike Pompeo, Defense Secretary James Mattis and White House National Security Adviser John Bolton. Both President Duterte and President Trump want us to achieve the goal of making our Armed Forces strong and less dependent on US aid. These meetings will hopefully put that in the right perspective. *BR*

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Holding Senate hostage

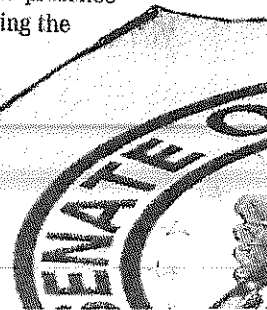
“
*Solicitor
General
Jose Calida
challenged
him to
resign from
his post
and come
out of the
Senate to
face the
charges
against
him.*

The yellow opportunists led by the Liberal Party (LP) have taken the agenda of turning the Senate into a circus with the rebel in a senator's cloak Antonio Trillanes IV as main attraction.

Senate President Tito Sotto got wind of the yellow attempt to mass up at the premises of the chamber in a prelude to another People Power mischief and showed his displeasure that resulted in the minority senators to back down.

LP president Sen. Francis Pangilinan's statement early Friday bared the yellow agenda as he called "on friends and supporters who value democracy to come to the Senate and show their support to Sen. Sonny (Trillanes). Our presence there will hopefully make those effecting the illegal arrest think twice."

Apparently sensing that the stunt won't work since no one outside of the yellow mob and some paid supporters went to the Senate and as the racket was only reaping



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the displeasure of Senate employees and testing the patience of Sotto, the yellow senators changed their tune.

By late evening, apparently after a Senate caucus called by Sotto, Pangilinan's message turned into "de-escalation of tensions."

His excuse was that the call for people to converge in the Senate "was in response to reports gathered from sources both in the AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) and the media that an illegal arrest was to be effected."

The Senate leader sensed something was afoot on the fourth day of Trillanes' campout to avoid arrest as a result of Proclamation 572 that invalidated the amnesty granted by his yellow principal former President Noynoy Aquino.

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**Sotto's
action on
his hunch
may have
preempted
another
adventure
of
Trillanes.**

Trillanes is notorious in laying siege to buildings as what he and his Magdalo putschists did in the Oakwood Mutiny and the Manila Peninsula takeover.

Sotto may have hinted at a brewing plot that he got a whiff of in saying "what happens now if there is a takeover of the Senate or lock the building when some group springs an evil plan?"

The influx of supporters of Trillanes at the Senate during the past four days has brought tension in the supposedly august hall.

The Senate is also on a break last Friday but people were moving about in the compound following the swing of the baton of Trillanes and the members of the yellow minority.

"What is their business in the Senate when they know there is no work? Don't test my patience and leniency on the matter because I will not allow the Senate to be used for any unruly plot," Sotto said.

He added he was expecting his peers to help him "preserve the integrity and the sanctity of the institution and not abuse the hospitality of the Senate leadership."

"I am protecting the Senate as an institution," Sotto said.

In his desperation to evade arrest, Trillanes only exposed his real self which is that he is full of hot air and is reduced to a wimp when deflated.

Solicitor General Jose Calida challenged him to resign from his post and come out of the Senate to face the charges against him to back up his boast that he is not afraid of being arrested.

Sotto's action on his hunch may have preempted another adventure of Trillanes.

The Senate should consider looking into what looks like an ongoing yellow maneuver to take over the Senate as a result of the Trillanes standoff.

The Senate leader has done his best to preserve respect for the institution that President Rody Duterte also vowed to honor but the rebel senator is bent on eluding accountability for his past transgressions which are the botched coup attempts.

Rody had cut short the ambitions of Trillanes which the yellow mob uses as its leading attack dog against Rody and his administration.

Trillanes in using the Senate as cover for his cowardice shows that he will not think twice to take hostage the whole government to advance his and the yellow interest.

And as was his record in staging coups, the Senate siege is bound to fail.

Cornered rat

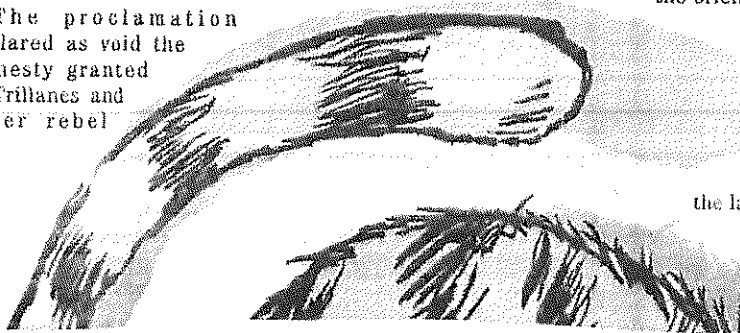
Like a cornered rat, Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV has been holed up in the Senate for almost a week now after the news on President Rodrigo Duterte's Proclamation 572 broke out.

The proclamation declared as void the amnesty granted to Trillanes and other rebel

soldiers involved in the Oakwood Mutiny and Manila Peninsula siege for failing to comply with the legal requirements as *sins qua non* for the State to forget the offenses they committed.

It seems that Trillanes never learned his lessons as his current predicament can be traced to the very same cavalier attitude that he had for the law in the first place.

Take the case of the 27 July 2003 Oakwood Mutiny. Trillanes and his group



claimed they staged the uprising to expose alleged corruption in government.

Protesting against graft in government is the right of every citizen; doing so in fact can be seen as a noble act. But going against the law for the purpose isn't. Unfortunately, Trillanes and his group took the option of rising up in arms against the duly constituted authorities purportedly to right the wrongs.

Inevitably, it ended in a disaster for Trillanes and his ilk. They took over Oakwood around 1 a.m. of 27 July like invincible warriors only to surrender like meek lambs around 11 p.m. the same day.

Trillanes and his co-conspirators to the coup were charged before a court of law and stood trial for their actions. It looked as if Trillanes' days of adventurism were over.

But four years later he was at it again.

On the morning of 29 November 2007, Trillanes and other fellow mutineers walked out of their trial in connection with the Oakwood mutiny and marched through the streets of Makati. They sought the ouster of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and seized the Rizal function room of the Manila Peninsula Hotel.

That was the second egregious blunder Trillanes committed. Driven by his anger against the Arroyo administration he chose to defy a court of law by walking out of the hearing.

That act gave authorities all the legal justification needed to arrest him and his cohorts, with the option of using force if necessary. In fact Judge Oscar Pimentel of the Makati Regional Trial Court who was handling the case against Trillanes and his group issued a warrant of arrest against them.

Three infantry battalions, consisting of about 1,500 troops were rushed to the scene to crush the mutiny. After an armored vehicle stormed the lobby of the hotel, Trillanes and his group surrendered.

Despite the ignominious failure of his twin capers, Trillanes was still lucky because he found a friend in then President Benigno Aquino III, who issued a proclamation to absolve him of

his sins against the State.

Proclamation 75 issued on 24 November 2010 exonerated police and military personnel, including their supporters, who took part in the Oakwood and Manila Peninsula uprisings.

But Trillanes' inflated estimation of his ego and his disregard for the law would haunt him anew. According to Proclamation 572, Trillanes not only failed to apply for amnesty but also did not admit his guilt in connection with the twin coup attempts as required by the Aquino amnesty proclamation.

Faced with impending arrest, Trillanes was forced to stay in the Senate, turning his office into his temporary home.

He did try to put up a brave face—as he did in his previous misadventures—and said he would not cower against the administration, adding that he is not afraid of being arrested because he had been in that situation. His behavior says otherwise.

In contrast, President Duterte said he would respect the law and ordered the military to refrain from arresting Trillanes until the courts issue a valid warrant of arrest against the senator in hiding.

Like what New York Yankee legend Yogi Berra said, it's *déjà vu* all over again for Trillanes.

Twice in his previous escapades, he was cornered like a rat and faced embarrassment.

By all indications it is bound to happen again. **Concept News Central**



TRILLANES

Bombings in Morolandia

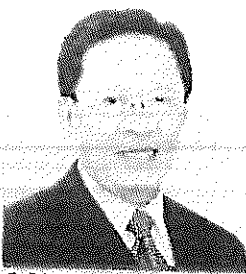
“There maybe a need for government policy-makers to take a second look at the strategy they have been adopting.”

I had a chance meeting with the editorial staff of the *Daily Tribune*. They were in the midst of deliberating, evaluating and vetting various news reports for publication the following day. It was didactically enriching for me. I was educated on the dynamics in determining the preponderance of a particular news item and whether it merits a frontpage story or relegated to other pages and space in the layout of the broadsheet. When the report about the recent bombing in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat was mentioned I gave my two cents' worth which found print in the paper the following days.

I expressed exasperation over the unabated violence in the areas of the Moros despite amelioration programs and policies proffered by government addressing their concern, the latest of which is the enactment into law of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL). It has even escalated in recent months with the siege of Tubaran, Lanao del Sur, alleged suicide bombing in Basilan and recently the twin bombings in Sultan Kudarat.

There maybe a need for government policy-makers to take a second look at the strategy they have been adopting. Take the BOL as an example – we were hopeful that with its enactment into law we will enjoy at least a respite from the bombings what with the forthcoming decommissioning of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) as part of the peace deal. But violence continues.

The culprit could be the flaw in the planning and implementation of government



SOUTHERN VOICES
Macabangkit B. Lanto

policies *vis-a-vis* the Moros that did not involve all stakeholders forgetting that we have a highly fractious tribes among them. When one tribe is seen to lord over whatever bounty the government will offer you invites grumble. Some tribes fear that the forthcoming political Bangsamoro entity will be dominated by Maguindanaoan who outnumber other tribes in the Front.

The government has not been wanting in addressing the so-called Moro problem. Peace talks and rehabilitation programs for the rebels have been tried unfortunately with very little effect. It seems that after a peace talk with one rebel group is concluded with a treaty, another group sprouts to take up the fight. It's a cycle that defies easy explanation.

Even before the ink has dried in the 1996 peace pact with Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) by the Ramos administration, a breakaway group, the MILF came to life to continue what was started by the MNLF. Now that we have struck a peace deal with the MILF culminating into a law (BOL), there are indications that the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), a splinter soldiers of the MILF, is continuing the fight of the MILF. What does that tell us? The peace deals are half-baked and definitely not inclusive because major combatants of the Front were not involved. It doesn't augur well also that Chairman Misuari has not come out openly to support the BOL. This might imperil its ratification (set by

Comelec on 21 January 2019) in the Sulu areas where “Maas” Misuari still wields considerable influence.

“Peace talks and rehabilitation programs for the rebels have been tried unfortunately with very little effect.”

Government planners should be told that they are now fighting a different genre of *mujahideens* in the South and enemy “who looks at the barrel of the gun and sees paradise.” It is a different ballgame as shown by the Marawi war. In the past, the battlecry of the Moro fighters who were first separatists but now autonomists, was to get government attention for their myriad of problems ranging from injustice, neglect of government to provide basic needs, lack of representation, etc. They wittingly spliced and sugar-coated their cause with a shade of religious dogma to court the sympathy and petro-dollars of rich Arab nations. They projected to the Islamic world that they were fighting a *jihad* or Holy War. Thus, we saw Kadafi of Libya and rich emirs openly bankrolling the MNLF war against government.

But now, these terrorists have less care for the Moro cause anymore. It's all a fight for a caliphate upon order of megalomaniac Al-Baghdadi who dreams of being a caliph in the tradition of the caliphate of Prophet Mohamad, PBUH of yore.

This is the situation and government strategists should revise and attune their strategy with the present realities. The Moro cause is substantially addressed but a new kind of enemy has emerged.

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Trillanes vs Duterte

TALAGANG hindi yata tatantanan ni President Rodrigo Roa Duterte (PRD) si Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, pinakamatindi niyang kritiko, para ito ay makasuhan, mapag-usig at mapakulong tulad ng isa pang kritiko

na ngayon ay nakabilanggo sa Camp Crame -- si Sen. Leila de Lima.

Subalit tulad ni Mano Digong, si Trillanes na mahigit pitong taong nakulong buhos ng paglulunsad ng kudeta o Oakwood Mutiny laban sa gobyerno ni ex-Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (GMA), ay hindi rin nagtatantan sa pagbira sa ating pangulo.

Ginulantang ang mga Pinoy nilong Martes nang sumabog ang balita na binabawi ni Pangulong Duterte ang ipinagkaloob na amnesty kay Trillanes noong 2011. Inutus niya sa Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) at Philippine National Police (PNP) na dakpin ang senador.

Gayunman, hindi basta-basta papayag ang Senado sa ganitong kautusan. Sinabihan ni Senate Pres. Tito Sotto ang Senate sergeant-at-arms na huwag papasukin ang mga tauhan ng PNP-CIDG o sinumang sundalo na magtatangkang dakpin si Trillanes.

Hahang isinusulat ko ito, naghain ng mosyon ang Department of Justice (DoJ) sa Regional Trial Court sa Makati na magpalabas ng Hold Departure Order (HDO) at warrant of arrest laban sa kritiko ng Presidente. Macaraming isyung legal tungkol sa kasalanan ng Trillanes kung kayabangab natin laing araw ang kalinatnahan nito.

Balay sa Proclamation No. 572

na nilagdaan ni PRRD bago siya nagtungo sa Israel, ang amnesty na ipinagkaloob kay Trillanes ay walang bisa sapul sa simula (ab initio) dahil sa kanyang pagkabigo na tumalima sa minimum requirements upang maqualify sa amnesty program, tulad ng "no amnesty application at no admission of guilt." Pinabulaanan ito ni Trillanes.

Samantala, naniniwala ang mga eksperto sa batas at maging ang mga kongresista na ang tinanggap na amnesty ni Trillanes mula kay ex-Pres. Noytoy Aquino ay "valid, final at irrevocable." Para kay Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman, ang amnesty na ibinigay sa senador ay hindi

puwedeng ipawalang-saysay ni PRRD sapagkat ito ay pinagtibay ng Kongreso.

Sinabi ng Bikolandang kongresista na dahil dumaaan sa proseso si Trillanes at siya'y binigyan ng amnesty ni Aquino, ito ay balido at may bisa. Wala raw kumontra sa amnesty application noon ni Trillanes at ng mga kasamahan na nagrebelde sa gobyerno ni GMA.

Sa ngayon, si Trillanes ay nasa ilalim ng kustodiya ni Sen. Sotto at ng Senado. Sa katulung executive meeting, lahat ng senador ay hindi papayag na dakpin ang kritiko. Sana raw ay igelang ng AFP at PNP ang Senado.